

PRE-EMINENT JESUS.

DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON FOR LATE JULY IN SCOTLAND.

"Jesus: the Name High Over All"—The Wonderful Word—A Testimony of Human Sorrow—Dying Testimonies of Many Eminent Men.

LONDON, July 31.—Since his return from Russia Dr. Talmage has been literally flooded with invitations to address congregations and lyceums on the subject of his journey to the land of the czar, whether he went with Mr. Louis Klopsch to direct the distribution of the Christian Herald relief cargo. While expressing his high appreciation of the cordial welcome and splendid hospitality extended by the officials of St. Petersburg and Moscow, of the civic honors heaped upon the American visitors and of Russia's national gratitude to America, as personally expressed by the czarowitz at Peterhof, where he entertained them as guests, Dr. Talmage has been compelled to adhere to his original programme. During the week he has been preaching in the leading Scottish cities. His arrangements for next week include services at Newcastle and Sunderland, and thereafter he goes to the Isle of Man for a few days. The sermon selected for this week is entitled "Pre-eminent," the text being John iii, 31, "He that cometh from above is above all."

The most conspicuous character of history steps out upon the platform. The finger which, diamonded with light, pointed down to him from the Bethlehem sky, was only a ratification of the finger of prophecy, the finger of genealogy, the finger of chronology, the finger of events—all five fingers pointing in one direction. Christ is the overtopping figure of all time. He is the vox humana in all music, the graceful line in all sculpture, the most exquisite mingling of lights and shades in all painting, the acme of all climaxes, the dome of all cathedrals grandeur and the peroration of all splendid language.

The Greek alphabet is made up of twenty-four letters, and when Christ compared himself to the first letter and the last letter, the alpha and the omega, he appropriated to himself all the splendor that you can spell out either with those two letters and all letters between them. "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Or, if you prefer the words of the text, "above all."

It means, after you have piled up all Alpine and Himalayan altitudes, the glory of Christ would have to spread its wings and descend a thousand leagues to touch those summits. Pelion, a high mountain of Thessaly; Ossa, a high mountain, and Olympus, a high mountain; but mythology tells us when the giants warred against the gods they piled up these three mountains and from the top of them proposed to scale the heavens; but the height was not great enough and there was a complete failure. And after all the giants—Isaiah and Paul, prophetic and apostolic giants, Raphael and Michael Angelo, artistic giants; cherubim and seraphim and archangel, celestial giants—have failed to climb to the top of Christ's glory, they might all well unite in the words of the text and say, "He that cometh from above is above all."

THE CENTRAL THEME IN PREACHING. First, Christ must be above all else in our preaching. There are so many books on homiletics scattered through the world that all laymen, as well as all clergymen, have made up their minds what sermons ought to be. That sermon is most effective which most pointedly puts forth Christ as the pardon of all sin and the correction of all evil, individual, social, political, national. There is no reason why we should ring the endless changes on a few phrases. There are those who think that if an exhortation or a discourse have frequent mention of justification, sanctification, covenant of works and covenant of grace, that, therefore it must be profoundly evangelical, while they are suspicious of a discourse which presents the same truth, but under different phraseology.

Now, I say there is nothing in all the opulent realm of Anglo-Saxonism or all the word-treasures that we inherited from the Latin and the Greek and the Indo-European but we have a right to marshal it in religious discussion. Christ sets the example. His illustrations were from the grass, the flowers, the spittle, the salve, the barnyard fowl, the crystals of salt, as well as from the seas and the stars, and we do not propose in our Sabbath school teaching and in our pulpit address to be put on the limits.

I know that there is a great deal said in our day against words, as though they were nothing. They may be misused, but they have an imperial power. They are the bridge between soul and soul, between Almighty God and the human race. What did God write upon the tables of stones? Words. What did Christ utter on Mount Olivet? Words. Out of what did Christ strike the spark for the illumination of the universe? Out of words. "Let there be light," and light was. Of course thought is the cargo and words are only the ship, but how fast would your cargo get on without the ship?

What you need, my friends, in all your work, in your Sabbath school class, in your reformatory institutions, and what we all need is to enlarge our vocabulary when we come to speak about God and Christ and heaven. We ride a few ill-used words to death when there is such an illimitable resource. Shakespeare employed fifteen thousand different words for dramatic purposes; Milton employed eight thousand different words for poetic purposes; Rufus Choate employed over eleven thousand different words for legal purposes, but the most of us have less than a thousand words that we can manage, less than five hundred, and that makes us so stupid.

When we come to set forth the love of Christ we are going to take the tenderest phraseology wherever we find it, and if it has never been used in that direction before, all the more shall we use it. When we come to speak of the glory of Christ, the conqueror, we are going to draw our similes from triumphal arch and oratorio and everything grand and stupendous. The French may have eighteen flags by which they give signal, but those eighteen flags they can put into sixty-six thousand different combinations. And I have to tell you that these standards of the cross may be lifted into combinations infinite and varieties everlasting. And let me say to young men who are after awhile going to preach Jesus Christ, you will have the largest liberty and unlimited resources. You only have to present Christ in your own way.

Jonathan Edwards preached Christ in the severest argument ever penned, and John Bunyan preached Christ in the sublimest allegory ever composed. Edward Payson, sick and exhausted, leaned up against the side of the pulpit and wept out his discourse, while George Whitefield, with the manner and the voice and the

start of an actor, overwhelmed his auditors. It would have been a different thing if Jonathan Edwards had tried to write and dream about the pilgrim's progress to the celestial city or John Bunyan had attempted an essay on the human will. Brighter than the light, fresher than the fountains, deeper than the seas are all these Gospel themes. Song has no melody, flowers have no sweetness, sunset sky has no color compared with these glorious themes. These harvests of grace spring up quicker than we can sickle them. Kindling pulpits with their fire, and producing revolutions with their power, lighting up dying beds with their glory, they are the sweetest thought for the poet, and they are the most thrilling illustration for the orator, and they offer the most intense scene for the artist, and they are to the ambassador of the sky all enthusiasms. Complete pardon for deepest guilt. Sweetest comfort for ghastliest agony. Brightest hope for grimmest death. Grandest resurrection for darkest sepulcher.

Oh, what a Gospel to preach! Christ over all in it. His birth, his suffering, his miracles, his parables, his sweat, his tears, his blood, his atonement, his intercession—what glorious themes! Do we exercise faith? Christ is its object. Do we have love? It fastens on Jesus. Have we a fondness for the church? It is because Christ died for it. Have we a hope of heaven? It is because Jesus went ahead, the herald and the forerunner.

The royal robe of Demetrius was so costly, so beautiful, that after he had put it off no one ever dared put it on; but this robe of Christ, richer than that, the poorest, and the wisest, and the worst may wear it. Where sin abounded grace may much more abound.

THE JOY OF THE CONVERTED. "Oh, my sins, my sins," said Martin Luther to Staupitz; "my sins, my sins!" The fact is that the brawny German student had found a Latin Bible that had made him quake, and nothing else ever did make him quake; and when he found how, through Christ, he was pardoned and saved, he wrote to a friend, saying: "Come over and join us great and awful sinners saved by the grace of God. You seem to be only a slender sinner, and you don't much extol the mercy of God; but we who have been such very awful sinners praise his grace the more now that we have been redeemed."

Can it be that you are so desperately egotistical that you feel yourself in first rate spiritual trim, and that from the crown of the hair to the tip of the toe you are scarless and immaculate? What you need is a looking glass, and here it is in the Bible. Poor and wretched and miserable and blind and naked from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, full of wounds and putrefying sores. No health in us. And then take the fact that Christ gathered up all the notes against us and paid them, and then offered us the pardon. And how much we need him in our sorrows! We are independent of circumstances if we have his grace. Why, he made Paul sing in the dungeon, and under that grace St. John from desolate Patmos heard the blast of the apocalyptic trumpets. After all other candles have been snuffed out, this is the light that gets brighter and brighter unto the perfect day, and after, under the hard words of exhortation, all the pools of worldly enjoyment have been trampled into deep mire, at the foot of the eternal rock the Christian, from cups of granite, lily rimmed and vine covered, puts out the thirst of his soul.

Again, I remark that Christ is above all in dying alleviations. I have not any sympathy with the morbidity abroad about our demise. The emperor of Constantinople arranged that on the day of his coronation the stonemason should come and consult him about his tombstone that after awhile he would need. And there are men who are monomaniacal on the subject of departure from this life by death, and the more they think of it the less they are prepared to go. This is an unmanliness not worthy of you, not worthy of me.

THE HERO'S DEATH. Saladin, the greatest conqueror of his day, while dying, ordered the tunic he had on him to be carried after his death on a spear at the head of his army, and then the soldier ever and anon should stop and say: "Behold, all that is left of Saladin, the emperor and conqueror! Of all the states he conquered, of all the wealth he accumulated, nothing did he retain but this shirt!" I have no sympathy with such shaviness, or such absurd demonstration, or with much that we hear uttered in regard to departure from this life to the next. There is a commonsensical idea on this subject that you and I need to consider—that there are only two styles of departure.

A thousand feet underground, by light of torch toiling in a miner's shaft, a ledge of rock may fall upon us and we may die a miner's death. Far out at sea, falling from the slippery ratlines and broken on the balyards we may die a sailor's death. On mission of mercy in hospital, amid broken bones and reeking leprosy and raging fevers we may die a philanthropist's death. On the field of battle, serving God and our country, the gun carriage may roll over us and we may die a patriot's death. But after all there are only two styles of departure—the death of the righteous and the death of the wicked, and we all want to die the former.

God grant that when that hour comes you may be at home! You want the hand of your kindred in your hand. You want your children to surround you. You want the light on your pillow from eyes that have long reflected your love. You want the room still. You do not want any curious strangers standing around watching you. You want your kindred from afar to hear your last prayer. I think that is the wish of all of us. But is that all? Can earthly friends hold us when the billows of death come up to the girdle? Can human voice charm open heaven's gates? Can human hands pilot us through the narrowness of death into heaven's harbor? Can an earthly friendship shield us from the arrows of death and in the hour when Satan shall practice upon us his infernal archery? No, no, no! Alas! poor soul, if that is all. Better die in the wilderness, far from tree shadow and from fountain, alone, vultures circling through the air waiting for our body, unknown to men, and to have no burial, if only Christ could say through the solitudes, "I will never leave thee. I will never forsake thee." From that pillow of stone a ladder would soar heavenward, angels coming and going; and across the solitude and the barrenness would come the sweet notes of heavenly minstrelsy.

DEATH OF THE CHRISTIAN. Gordon Hall, far from home, dying in the door of a heathen temple, said, "Glorious to thee, O God!" What did dying Wilberforce say to his wife? "Come and sit beside me, and let us talk of heaven. I never knew what happiness was until I found Christ." What did dying Hannah More say? "To go to heaven; think what that is! To go to Christ, who died that I might live! Oh, glorious grave! Oh, what a glorious thing it is to die! Oh, the

love of Christ, the love of Christ!" What did Mr. Toplady, the great hymn maker, say in his last hour? "Who can measure the depth of the third heaven? Oh, the sunshine that fills my soul! I shall soon be gone, for surely no one can live in this world after such glories as God has manifested to my soul."

What did the dying Faneway say? "I can as easily die as close my eyes or turn my head in sleep. Before a few hours have passed I shall stand on Mount Zion with the one hundred and forty and four thousand, and with the just men made perfect, and we shall ascribe riches and honor and glory and majesty and dominion unto God and the Lamb." Dr. Taylor, condemned to burn at the stake, on his way thither broke away from the guards and leaped toward the fire, glad to go to Jesus and to die for him. Sir Charles Hare in his last moment had such rapturous vision that he cried, "Upward, upward, upward!"

And so great was the peace of one of Christ's disciples that he put his fingers upon the pulse in his wrist and counted it and observed it, and so great was his placidity that he said to his wife, "Sleep," and his life had ended here to begin in heaven. But grander than that was the testimony of the worn out first missionary when in the Mamartine dungeon he cried: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand; I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me in that day, and not to me only, but to all them that love his appearing!" Do you not see that Christ is above all in dying alleviations?

Toward the last hour of our earthly residence we are speeding. When I see the sunset I say, "One day less to live." When I see the spring blossoms scattered I say, "Another season gone forever." When I close the Bible on Sabbath night I say, "Another Sabbath departed." When I bury a friend I say, "Another earthly acquaintance gone forever." What nimble feet the years have! The roebucks and the lightning run not so fast. From decade to decade, from sky to sky, they go at a bound.

There is a place for us, whether marked or not, where you and I will sleep the last sleep, and the men are now living who will, with solemn tread, carry us to our resting place. Aye, it is known in heaven, and that from the coronation or a banishment. Brighter than a banquet hall through which the light feet of the dancers go up and down to the sound of trumpeters will be the sepulcher through whose rifts the holy light of heaven streameth. God will watch you. He will send his angels to guard your slumbering ground until, at Christ's behest, they shall roll away the stone.

And how much we need him in our sorrows! The Bible distinctly says that Christ is the chief theme of the celestial ascription, all the thrones facing his throne, all the palms waved before his face, all the crowns dand at his feet. Cherubim to cherubim, seraphim to seraphim, redeemed spirit to redeemed spirit shall recite the Saviour's earthly sacrifice.

THE GLORIOUS COMPANY OF THE REDEEMED. Start on some high hill of heaven, and in all the radiant sweep the most glorious object will be Jesus. Myriads gazing on the scars of his suffering, in silence first, afterward breaking forth into acclamation. The martyrs, all the purer for the flame through which they passed, will say, "This is Jesus, for whom we died." The apostles, all the happier for the shipwreck and the martyrdom, will say, "This is Jesus whom we preached!"

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Edward I was so anxious to go to the Holy Land that when he was about to expire he bequeathed \$100,000 to have his heart after his decease taken to the Holy Land in Asia Minor, and his request was complied with. But there are hundreds today whose hearts are already in the holy land of heaven. Where your treasures are there are your hearts also. John Bunyan, of whom I spoke at the opening of the discourse, caught a glimpse of that place, and in his quaint way he said: "And I heard in my dream, and lo! the bells of the city rang again for joy; and as they opened the gates to let in the men I looked in after them, and lo! the city shone like the sun, and there were streets of gold, and men walked on them, harps in their hands, to sing praises with all; and after that they shut up the gates, which when I had seen I wished myself among them!"

Horses and Riders. Some day an interesting article may be written on horses that have made history. Last month two horses came very near changing the course of events in two empires. On May 27, as Lord Salisbury was driving down St. James street, one of the carriage horses got its leg over the traces and thereby upset the nervous equilibrium of its companion. The two men bolted down the street and could not be stopped until they upset the carriage and made a general spill. Lord Salisbury was lifted out of the overturned vehicle, shaken but uninjured. His hat, however, was smashed. Had it been his head, what a difference it would have made!

In Germany the young emperor's horses have run away with him once more, but this time, beyond rushing over a hedge and across a field—they only afforded the emperor an opportunity for the display of his "customary coolness"—the episode had no result. Had the runaway team broken the emperor's neck what a prospect there would have been before Germany and Europe! The heir to the German throne is a child of ten, who but the other day received his first commission in the German army. There would have been a regency with all its complications.—Review of Reviews.

Ignorant City Folks. City Nice (reprovingly)—Uncle Wayback, why do you pour your coffee into the saucer before drinking it? Uncle Wayback—To cool it. The more air surface you give it, the quicker it cools. Guess these city schools don't teach much science, do they?—New York Weekly.

Surrendering at Discretion. "Tommy, how did you get the back of your neck all sunburned?" "Puddin' weeds in the garden." "But your hair is all wet, my son." "That's perspiration." "Your vest is on wrong side out too." "Put it on that way a-purpose." "And how does it happen, Tommy dear, that you've got Jakey Du Bois' trousers on?" (After a long pause.) "Mother, I cannot tell a lie. I've been a swimmin'."—Chicago Tribune.



So Nice of Heart. Captain Muffet—May I venture to hope that you will give me a waltz or quadrille? Lady Sparker—Oh, I'm so sorry! I'm engaged for every dance. I'm engaged also for supper twice, but I promise you faithfully you shall have my third glass of lemonade!—Du Maurier in Punch.

At the Soda Fountain. A nice party of girls went into a drug store. "I will treat," said the little red-haired one. "Oh, no, you treated last time," objected Katie with the curls. "Say, Min has never treated at all," shouted some others. "Well, go on," said Min. Then they all smiled at once at the soda water man.

"Vanilla!" "Lemon—strawberry—chocolate—coffee—vanilla—me—the same—yes—the—too!" they said, but they said it all at once, and it sounded a good deal as this looks: "Lemon—straw—chocolate—coffee—yesterday—tooth—illa—sss—ste!"

Which said vanilla? This from the soda water man, who was just as calm as anything. Red Hair had changed her mind. Then they all changed their minds and swapped off choices, and they all said again: "Coffee—chocolate—lemon—tooranilla—ter—min—nn—ssstts!" all at once. Meanwhile he had done a chocolate. "Which lady takes chocolate?" "Oh, I guess I will," said Min. "I think it's awful rude to take yourself first," Red Hair criticised, with much candor and ill humor.

"Well, go on, take it yourself." "Me? Oh, I don't want chocolate, I want coffee." "Well, who will have it?" "Nobody wanted it. Min began to breathe hard. "You are all just as mean as you can be," she pouted. "I am sure you should not ask us to have soda if you won't let us choose our own choice." Red Hair said with severity. Then they all hollered together at each other, and presently they flourished out. As their voices died away up the block and silence settled over the drug store the soda water man heaved a sigh and drank the chocolate, remarking pensively as he wiped his chin, "This here trade's going to ruin my temper."—Philadelphia Press.

No More Deathbed Fama. We are again compelled to announce that obituary notices will be charged for at the rate of five cents per line. Announcement of death, not exceeding five lines, free. We have given up much space in these columns to such matters, and in almost every instance neither the parties themselves nor their immediate relatives have ever contributed a nickel to sustain this paper, directly or indirectly. Those who want newspaper fame after death must make arrangements for its publication or they'll be left.—Townsend (Mon.) Messenger.

Supply and Demand. Peddler—Any tins, ma'am? Housekeeper (indignantly)—Those tins you sold me last week have all gone to pieces. Peddler—Yes'm. I knew you'd want some more by this time.—New York Weekly.

Superfluous Work. Mrs. Billus—Mary, you needn't waste any time dusting those balusters. Domestic—I thought yez told me Mrs. Gumpus was a-comin' the day for a visit. Mrs. Billus—Yes, but her three little boys are coming with her.—Chicago Tribune.

Before and After. Pater—Do you think that I would allow a man of your uncertain prospects to marry my daughter? Suitor—Yes; because if I married her, you see, my prospects wouldn't be uncertain.—Harper's Bazar.

The Effect of Contrast. "I thought I was a wealthy young man," said Simpson, "until I threw my fortune at the feet of a Chicago girl. Then I discovered that my pile appeared quite small."—Truth.

On the Reverse Order. I know a young pair who are wedded and poor— For it sometimes happens that way; Who wrestle each day with the wolf at the door. For it sometimes happens that way. Now if this were a novel we'd find them all right. And living on love and a sup and a bite; But I'm sure that they quarrel, and I've heard that they fight— Well, it sometimes happens that way.

There once was a man with a mother-in-law— For it sometimes happens that way— Whom he daily subdued with a vigorous jaw— For it sometimes happens that way. Though we all know she should have been savage and grim, And a gigantic terror who tyrannized him, Yet she really was docile and lacking in vim— For it sometimes happens that way.

There once was a man who went to a "show"— For it sometimes happens that way— Though he was baldheaded he took the back of his wife— For it sometimes happens that way. And he didn't sneak home in fear of his life, Nor, when asked where he'd been, tell lies to his wife. In his actions she saw no occasion for strife— For it sometimes happens that way. —Indianapolis Journal.

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