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[illegible]LMAGE DISCOURSES [illegible] "OBSCURATION."

[illegible]le the Only Restraint Against [illegible] Evil Passions of the World—Atheism and Infidelity Arrayed Against Christianity.

BROOKLYN, May 13.—This morning the Rev. T. De Witt Talmage preached at the Tabernacle to an overflowing congregation. The hymn beginning,

Stand up, my soul; shake off thy fears,
And gird the Gospel armor on,

was sung with magnificent effect. Dr. Talmage's subject was "Obscuration," and his text, "The sun shall be turned into darkness."—Acts ii, 20. He said:

Solar eclipse is here prophesied to take place about the time of the destruction of ancient Jerusalem. Josephus, the historian, says that the prophecy was literally fulfilled, and that about that time there were strange appearances in the heavens. The sun was not destroyed, but for a little while hidden.

Christianity is the rising sun of our time, and men have tried with the unrolling vapors of skepticism and the smoke of their blasphemy to turn the sun into darkness. Suppose the archangels of malice and horror should be let loose a little while and be allowed to extinguish and destroy the sun in the natural heavens. They would take the oceans from other worlds and pour them on this luminary of the planetary system, and the waters go hissing down amid the ravines and the caverns, and there is explosion after explosion, until there are only a few peaks of fire left in the sun, and these are cooling down and going out until the vast continents of flame are reduced to a small acreage of fire, and that whitens and cools off until there are only a few coals left, and these are whitening and going out until there is not a spark left in all the mountains of ashes and the valleys of ashes and the chasms of ashes. An extinguished sun. A dead sun. A buried sun. Let all worlds wail at the stupendous obsequies.

Of course, this withdrawal of the solar light and heat throws our earth into a universal chill, and the tropics become the temperate, and the temperate becomes the Arctic, and there are frozen rivers and frozen lakes and frozen oceans. From Arctic and Antarctic regions the inhabitants gather in toward the center and find the equator as the poles. The slain forests are piled up into a great bonfire, and around them gather the shivering villages and cities. The wealth of the coal mines is hastily poured into the furnaces and stirred into rage of combustion, but soon the bonfires begin to lower, and the furnaces begin to go out, and the nations begin to die. Cotopaxi, Vesuvius, Etna, Stromboli, Californian geysers cease to smoke, and the ice of hail storms remains unmelted in their crater. All the flowers have breathed their last breath. Ships with sailors frozen at the mast, and helmsmen frozen at the wheel, and passengers frozen in the cabin; all nations dying, first at the north and then at the south. Child frosted and dead in the cradle. Octogenarian frosted and dead at the hearth. Workmen with frozen hand on the hammer and frozen foot on the shuttle. Winter from sea to sea. All congealing winter. Perpetual winter. Globe of rigidity. Hemisphere shackled to hemisphere by chains of ice. Universal Nova Zembla. The earth an ice floe grinding against other ice floes. The archangels of malice and horror have done their work, and now they may take their thrones of glacier and look down upon the ruin they have wrought.

What the destruction of the sun in the natural heavens would be to our physical earth, the destruction of Christianity would be to the moral world. The sun turned into darkness. Infidelity in our time is considered a great joke. There are people who rejoice to hear Christianity caricatured, and to hear Christ assailed with quibble, and quirk, and misrepresentation, and badinage, and harlequinade.

I propose this morning to take Infidelity and Atheism out of the realm of jocularity into one of tragedy, and show you what they propose, and what, if they are successful, they will accomplish. There are those in all our communities who would like to see the Christian religion overthrown, and who say the world would be better without it. I want to show you what is the end of this road, and what is the terminus of this crusade, and what this world will be when Atheism and Infidelity have triumphed over it, if they can. I say, if they can. I reiterate it, if they can.

In the first place, it will be the complete and unutterable degradation of womanhood. I will prove it by facts and arguments which no honest man will dispute. In all communities and cities and states and nations where the Christian religion has been dominant, woman's condition has been ameliorated and improved, and she is deferred to and honored in a thousand things, and every gentleman tips off his hat before her. If your associations have been good, you know that the name of wife, mother, daughter, suggest gracious surroundings. You know there are no better schools and seminaries in Brooklyn or in any city of this country than the schools and seminaries for our young ladies. You know that while woman may suffer injustice in England and the United States, she has more of her rights in Christendom than she has anywhere else.

Now compare this with woman's condition in lands where Christianity has made little or no advance—in China, in Barbary, in Borneo, in Tartary, in Egypt, in Hindostan. The Burmese sell their wives and daughters as so many sheep. The Hindoo Bible makes it disgraceful and an outrage for a woman to listen to music, or to look out of the window in the absence of her husband, and gives as a lawful ground for divorce a woman's beginning to eat before her husband has finished his meal. What mean those white bundles on the ponds and rivers in China in the morning? Infanticide following infanticide. Female children destroyed simply because they are female. Woman harnessed to a plow as an ox. Woman veiled and barricaded, and in all styles of cruel seclusion. Her birth a misfortune. Her life a torture. Her death a horror. The missionary of the cross today in heathen lands preaches generally to two groups—a group of men who do as they please and sit where they please; the other a group of women hidden and carefully secluded in a side apartment, where they may hear the voice of the preacher, but may not be seen. No refinement. No liberty. No hope for this life. No hope for the life to come. Ringed nose. Cramped foot. Disfigured face. Embruted soul. Now compare these two conditions. How far toward this latter condition that I speak of would woman go if Christian influences were withdrawn and Christianity were destroyed? It is only a question of dynamics. If an object be lifted to a certain point and not fastened there, and the lifting power be withdrawn, how long before that object will fall down to the point from which it started? It will fall down, and it will go still further than the point from which it started. Christianity has lifted woman up from the very depths of degradation almost to the skies. If that lifting power be withdrawn she falls clear back to the depth from which she was resurrected, not going any lower because there is no lower depth. And yet, notwithstanding the fact that the only salvation of woman from degradation and woe is the Christian religion, and the only influence that has ever lifted her in the social scale is Christianity—I have read that there are women who reject Christianity. I make no remark in regard to those persons. I make no remark in regard to them. In the silence of your own soul make your observations.

If infidelity triumph and Christianity be overthrown, it means the demoralization of society. The one idea in the Bible that atheists and infidels most hate is the idea of retribution. Take away the idea of retribution and punishment from society, and it will begin very soon to disintegrate; and take away from the minds of men the fear of hell, and there are a great many of them who would very soon turn this world into a hell. The majority of those who are indignant against the Bible because of the idea of punishment are men whose lives are bad or whose hearts are impure, and who hate the Bible because of the idea of future punishment for the same reason that criminals hate the penitentiary. Oh, I have heard this brave talk about people fearing nothing of the consequences of sin in the next world, and I have made up my mind it is merely a coward's whistling to keep his courage up. I have seen men flaunt their immoralities in the face of the community, and I have heard them defy the judgment day and scoff at the idea of any future consequence of their sin; but when they came to die they shrieked until you could hear them for nearly two blocks, and in the summer night the neighbors got up to put the windows down because they could not endure the horror.

I would not want to see a rail train with five hundred Christian people on board go down through a drawbridge into a watery grave. I would not want to see five hundred Christian people go into such disaster, but I tell you plainly that I could more easily see that than I could for any protracted time stand and see an infidel die, though his pillow were of eider down and under a canopy of vermilion. I have never been able to brace up my nerves for such a spectacle. There is something at such a time so indescribable in the countenance. I just looked in upon it for a minute or two, but the clutch of his fist was so diabolical, and the strength of voice was so unnatural, I could not endure it. "There is no hell, there is no hell, there is no hell!" the man had said for sixty years; but that night when I looked in the dying room of my infidel neighbor there was something on his countenance which seemed to say: "There is, there is, there is, there is!"

The mightiest restraints today against theft, against immorality, against libertinism, against crime of all sorts—the mightiest restraints are the retributions of eternity. Men know that they can escape the law, but down in the offender's soul there is the realization of the fact that they cannot escape God. He stands at the end of the road of profligacy, and he will not clear the guilty. Take all idea of retribution and punishment out of the hearts and minds of men, and it would not be long before Brooklyn and New York and Boston and Charleston and Chicago became Sodoms. The only restraints against the evil passions of the world today are Bible restraints.

Suppose now these generals of Atheism and Infidelity got the victory, and suppose they marshaled a great army made up of the majority of the world. They are in companies, in regiments, in brigades—the whole army. Forward, march! ye hosts of infidels and atheists, banners flying before, banners flying behind, banners inscribed with the words: "No God! No Christ! No punishment! No restraints! Down with the Bible! Do as you please!" The sun turned into darkness.

Forward, march! ye great army of infidels and atheists. And first of all you will attack the churches. Away with those houses of worship! They have been standing there so long deluding the people with consolation in their bereavements and sorrows. All those churches ought to be extirpated; they have done so much to relieve the lost and bring home the wandering, and they have so long held up the idea of eternal rest after the paroxysm of this life is over. Turn the St. Peters and St. Pauls and the temples and tabernacles into club houses. Away with those churches!

Forward, march! ye great army of infidels and atheists, and next of all they scatter the Sabbath schools—the Sabbath schools filled with bright eyed, bright cheeked little ones who are singing songs on Sunday afternoon, and getting instructions when they ought to be on the street corners playing marbles, or swearing on the commons. Away with them! Forward, march! ye great army of infidels and atheists, and next of all they will attack Christian asylums—the institutions of mercy supported by the Christian philanthropies. Never mind the blind eyes and the deaf ears and the crippled limbs and the weakened intellects. Let paralyzed old age pick up its own food, and orphans fight their own way, and the half reformed go back to their evil habits. Forward, march! ye great army of infidels and atheists, and with your battle axes hew down the cross and split up the manger of Bethlehem.

On, ye great army of infidels and atheists, and now they come to the graveyards and the cemeteries of the earth. Pull down the sculpture above Greenwood's gate, for it means the resurrection. Tear away at the entrance of Laurel Hill the figure of Old Mortality and the chisel. On, ye great army of infidels and atheists, into the graveyards and cemeteries; and where you see "Asleep in Jesus," cut it away, and where you find a marble story of heaven, blast it, and where you find over a little child's grave: "Suffer little children to come unto me," substitute the words "delusion" and "sham," and where you find an angel in marble, strike off the wing, and when you come to a family vault, chisel on the door, "Dead once, dead forever."

But on, ye great army of infidels and atheists, on! They will attempt to scale heaven. There are heights to be taken. Pile hill on hill and Pelion upon Ossa, and then they hoist the ladders against the walls of heaven. On and on until they blow up the foundations of jasper and the gates of pearl. They charge up the steep. Now they aim for the throne of him who liveth forever and ever. They would take down from their high place the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost. "Down with them!" they say. "Down with him from the throne!" they say. "Down forever! Down out of sight! He is not God. He has no right to sit there. Down with him! Down with Christ!"

A world without a head, a universe without a king. Orphan constellations. Fatherless galaxies. Anarchy supreme. A dethroned Jehovah. An assassinated God. Patricide, regicide, deicide. That is what they mean. That is what they will have, if they can, if they can, if they can. Civilization hurled back into semi-barbarism, and semi-barbarism driven back into Hottentot savagery. The wheel of progress turned the other way and turned toward the dark ages. The clock of the centuries put back two thousand years. Go back, you Sandwich Islands, from your schools and from your colleges and from your reformed condition to what you were in 1820, when the missionaries first came. Call home the five hundred missionaries from India and overthrow their two thousand schools, where they are trying to educate the heathen, and scatter the one hundred and forty thousand little children that they have gathered out of barbarism into civilization. Obliterate all the work of Dr. Duff in India, of David Abeel in China, of Dr. King in Greece, of Judson in Burmah, of David Brainard amid the American aborigines, and send home the 3,000 missionaries of the cross who are toiling in foreign lands, toiling for Christ's sake, toiling themselves into the grave. Tell these 3,000 men of God that they are of no use. Send home the medical missionaries who are doctoring the bodies as well as the souls of the dying nations. Go home, London Missionary society. Go home, American Board of Foreign Missions. Go home, ye Moravians, and relinquish back into darkness and squalor and filth and death the nations whom ye have begun to lift.

Oh, my friends, there has never been such a nefarious plot on earth as that which infidelity and atheism have planned. We were shocked a few years ago because of the attempt to blow up the parliament houses in London; but if infidelity and atheism succeed in their attempt, they will dynamite a world. Let them have their full way, and this world will be a habitation of three rooms—a habitation with just three rooms—the one a madhouse, another a lazaretto, the other a pandemonium. These infidel bands of music have only just begun their concert—yea they have only been stringing their instruments. I today put before you their whole programme from beginning unto close. In the theatre the tragedy comes first and the farce afterward; but in this infidel drama of death the farce comes first and the tragedy afterward. And in the former atheists and infidels laugh and mock, but in the latter God himself will laugh and mock. He says so. "I will laugh at their calamity and mock when their fear cometh."

From such a chasm of individual, national, world wide ruin, stand back. Oh, young men, stand back from that chasm! You see the practical drift of my sermon. I want you to know where that road leads. Stand back from that chasm of ruin. The time is going to come (you and I may not live to see it, but it will come, just as certainly as there is a God, it will come) when the infidels and the atheists who openly, and out and out and above board preach and practice infidelity and Atheism will be considered as criminals against society, as they are now criminals against God. Society will push out the leper, and the wretch with soul gangrened, and ichorous, and vermin covered, and rotting apart with his bestiality, will be left to die in the ditch, and be denied decent burial, and men will come with spades and cover up the carcass where it falls, that it poison not the air, and the only text in all the Bible appropriate for the funeral sermon will be Jeremiah xxii, 19: "He shall be buried with the burial of an ass."

A thousand voices come up to me this morning saying: "Do you really think infidelity will succeed? Has Christianity received its death blow? and will the Bible become obsolete?" Yes, when the smoke of the city chimney arrests and destroys the noonday sun. Josephus says about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem the sun was turned into darkness; but only the clouds rolled between the sun and the earth. The sun went right on. It is the same sun, the same luminary as when at the beginning it shot out like an electric spark from God's finger, and today it is warming the nations, and today it is gilding the sea, and today it is filling the earth with light. The same old sun, not at all worn out, though its light steps one hundred and ninety million miles a second, though its pulsations are four hundred and fifty trillion undulations in a second. Same sun with beautiful white light, made up of the violet and the indigo and the blue and the green and the red and the yellow and the orange—the seven beautiful colors now just as when the solar spectrum first divided them.

At the beginning God said: "Let there be light," and light was, and light is, and light shall be. So Christianity is rolling on, and it is going to warm all nations, and all nations are to bask in its light. Men may shut the window blinds so they cannot see it, or they may smoke the pipe of speculation until they are shadowed under their own vaporing; but the Lord God is a sun! This white light of the Gospel, made up of all the beautiful colors of earth and [illegible]—violet plucked from [illegible] and the indigo [illegible] and the [illegible] and the green of [illegible] yellow of the [illegible] the orange of [illegible] the red of the [illegible]ies of earth and [illegible] by this spiritual [illegible]ritain is going to take all [illegible]. The United States are going to take all America for God. Both of them together will take all Asia for God. All three of them will take Africa for God. "Who art thou, oh, great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain." The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. Hallelujah, amen!

DAUGHTERS OF EVE.

Mrs. Langtry owns a stable full of blooded horses.

Ellen Terry is fond of eccentric costumes and big bunches of roses.

Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton has been president of the Woman Suffrage association twenty years.

Mrs. Hicks-Lord wears the costliest fan in the country suspended from a chain of diamonds and pearls.

Miss Emma Thursby says she does not see the necessity of going to Europe to cultivate the voice, as we have as fine teachers as are to be found anywhere.

A subscription of more than $1,200 has been raised in Boston for the plucky Nebraska school ma'am, who buffeted the blizzard with her pupils tied to a string.

An old lady of 76 living in Dooly county, Ga., is able to perform the feat of dancing a jig with a tumbler of water balanced on her head without spilling a drop.

Ida C. Allen, of Dover, N. H., has been offered a professorship in Smith's college at a salary of $2,700 a year. There are professional baseball players who do not make more than this.

Lexington, Miss., has three feminine residents who play an important part in keeping the town in communication with the rest of the world. One of the ladies aforesaid is postmistress, another express agent, and the third has charge of the telegraph office.

Mrs. Lillian M. Pavy, of London, England, is a commercial traveler now visiting the western states in the interest of an English house. She travels alone and finds that in this country a woman does not need an escort to protect her from annoyance.

The following advertisement recently appeared in The London Standard: "A lady of good family, without means, with a thorough knowledge of everything, would be grateful to any one who would give her occupation, not particular as to what."

The years clutch all alike, and Queen Victoria has fallen into the habit of taking little "cat naps" in her chair, even when visitors are present. At such times the royal lady goes through the same routine followed by the most humble of her subjects. Her head falls a little forward, swaying slightly from side to side; then she sits bolt upright, opens her eyes very wide and assumes an appearance of great intelligence and alertness.

Aunt Becky Young, of Cedar Rapids, Ia., is a member of the Grand Army of the Republic, and attends all its reunions in her state. Left a widow with two children at the age of 32, she left her home in Ithaca, N. Y., to go to the front as an hospital nurse. Aunt Becky is 60 years old now, and her brown hair is streaked with gray, but she is full of life and energy, and no old soldier finds a keener relish in shouldering his crutch and showing how fields were won than does Aunt Becky in relating stories of her hospital experiences on the field.

It seems queer to hear of the life the Queen of Sweden's doctors are making her lead to overcome a distressing nervous malady with which she is afflicted. They make her get up almost at day break, wash in cold water, make her own bed, clean her own room, do garden work, take long walks and go to bed early. They have on several occasions, in order to secure fatigue and give her mind the necessary interest and occupation, required her to cook and even wash clothes. Under this regime she is getting strong and hearty, but one does not need to be a queen to enjoy such an experience.

There is one woman in the department of the interior who cannot be dispensed with. Administrations may come and go, but she goes on forever. She was left over from the last Republican administration, and somebody wanted her place. Her salary was $700 a year. She worked only five days in the week, as she was a Hebrew. Assistant Secretary Muldron said: "We cannot get along without her. She can write a letter that can be understood. She knows just where to put her capitals. She can punctuate with exactness. Her sentences are models of lucid brevity." So she not only staid, but her salary is raised to $1,100 a year, and she is worth it.—Washington Letter in Detroit Free Press.

"The German empress," says a writer in The Journal des Debats, "is the soul of the imperial honsehold. She is much better loved there than outside, where people are unjust to her. She has committed the mistake of remaining English—as all the English do—and to carry the pride of her race into the middle of a people which admires itself with a naive and enormous complaisance; she brought the pride of her birth into a family which believes itself the first in the world; her aristocratic tastes into a town where art shows itself in clumsy imitations and patchwork; the independence of her views into a court where everything is regulated and prearranged; and the liberty of her religious and political sentiments into a center where religion has its narrow forms, as the politics of which it is the servant."

A man in a western town seriously proposed to issue an edition of the Bible, with pages devoted to advertising inserted in the text, but he gave up the idea when he learned what indignation it excited.