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TALMAGE'S SERMON.

A DISCOURSE ON THE LIGHTNING OF THE SEA.

An Unusually Attractive and Eloquent Sermon—The Pathway of the Almighty—An Irradiated Wave of Gladness—The Glow of Good Deeds.

A Path That Shines.
In the Brooklyn Tabernacle last Sunday Rev. Dr. Talmage preached an unusually attractive and eloquent gospel sermon to a crowded audience. The subject was "The Lightning of the Sea," the text selected being Job xli. 32. "He maketh a path to shine after Him."

For the next thousand years ministers of religion should preach from this Bible, there will yet be texts unexpanded and unexplained and unappreciated. What little has been said concerning this chapter in Job from which my text is taken bears on the controversy as to what was really the leviathan described as disturbing the sea. What creature it was I know not. Some say it was a whale. Some say it was a crocodile. My own opinion is it was a sea monster now extinct. No creature now floating in Mediterranean or Atlantic waters corresponds to Job's description.

Lightning of the Sea.

What most interests me is that as it moved on through the deep it left the waters flashing and resplendent. In the words of the text, "He maketh a path to shine after him." What was that illumined path? It was phosphorescence. You find it in the wake of a ship in the night, especially after rough weather. Phosphorescence is the lightning of the sea. That this figure of speech is correct in describing its appearance I am certified by an incident. After crossing the Atlantic the first time and writing from Basle, Switzerland, to an American magazine an account of my voyage, in which nothing more fascinated me than the phosphorescence in the ship's wake, I called it the lightning of the sea. Returning to my hotel, I found a book of John Ruskin, and the first sentence my eyes fell upon was his description of phosphorescence, in which he called it "the lightning of the sea."

Down to the postoffice I hastened to get the manuscript and with great labor and some expense got possession of the magazine article and put quotation marks around that one sentence, although it was as original with me as with John Ruskin. I suppose that nineteenth of you living so near the seacoast have watched this marine appearance called phosphorescence, and I hope that the other one-tenth may some day be so happy as to witness it. It is the waves of the sea diamonded; it is the indolence of the billows; the waves of the sea crimsoned as was the deep after the sea fight of Lepanto; the waves of the sea on fire.

There are times when from horizon to horizon the entire ocean seems in conflagration with this strange splendor as it changes every moment to lammer or more dazzling color on all sides of you. You sit looking over the taffrail of the yacht or ocean steamer, watching and waiting to see what new thing the God of beauty will do with the Atlantic. It is the ocean in transfiguration; it is the marine world casting its garments of glory in the pathway of the Almighty as he walks the deep; it is an inverted firmament with all its stars gone down with it. No picture can present it, for photographer's camera cannot be successfully trained to catch it, and before it the hand of the painter drops its pencil, overworn and powerless.

This phosphorescence is the appearance of myriads of the animal kingdom rising, falling, playing, flashing, living, dying. These luminous animalcules for nearly 150 years have been the study of naturalists and the fascination and solemnization of all who have brain enough to think. Now, God who puts in his Bible nothing trivial or useless, calls the attention of Job, the greatest scientist of his day, to this phosphorescence, and as the leviathan of the deep sweeps past points out the fact that "he maketh a path to shine after him."

Wake Made by a Bad Man.

Is that true of us now, and will it be true of us when we have gone? Will there be subsequent light or darkness? Will there be a trail of gloom or good cheer? Can anyone between now and the next 100 years say of us truthfully as the text says of the leviathan of the deep, "He maketh a path to shine after Him?" For we are moving on. While we live in the same house, and transact business in the same store, and write on the same table, and chisel in the same studio, and thrash in the same barn, and worship in the same church, we are in motion and are in many respects moving on, and we are not where we were ten years ago, nor where we will be ten years hence. Moving on!

Look at the family record, or the almanac, or into the mirror, and see if anyone of us is where you were. All in motion. Other feet may trip and stumble and halt, but the feet of not one moment for the last sixty centuries has tripped or stumbled or halted. Moving on! Society moving on! The world moving on! Heaven moving on! The universe moving on! Time moving on! Eternity moving on! Therefore it is absurd to think that we ourselves can stop, as we must move with all the rest. Are we like the creature of the text, making our path to shine after us? It may be a peculiar question, but my text suggests it.

What influence will we leave in this world after we have gone through it? "None," answer hundreds of voices; "we are not one of the immortals. Fifty years after we are out of the world it will be as though we never inhabited it." You are wrong in saying that. I pass down through this audience and up through these galleries, and I am looking for some one whom I cannot find.

I am looking for one who will have no influence in this world 100 years from now. But I have found the man who has the least influence, and I inquire into his history, and I find that by a yes or a no he decided some one's eternity. In time of temptation he gave an affirmative or a negative to some temptation which another hearing of, was induced to decide in the same way.

Clear on the other side of the next million years may be the first you hear of the long reaching influence of that yes or no, but hear of it you will. Will that father make a path to shine after him? Will that mother make a path to shine after her? You will be walking these streets or along that country road 200 years from now in the character of your descendants. They will be affected by your courage or your cowardice, your purity or your depravity, your holiness or your sin. You will make the path to shine after you or blacken after you.

Why should they point out to us on some mountain two rivulets, one of which passes down into the rivers which pour out into the Pacific Ocean and the other rivulet flowing down into the rivers which pass out into the Atlantic Ocean? Every man, every woman, stands at a point where words uttered, or seeds sown, or prayers offered, decide opposite destinies and opposite eternities. We see a man planting a tree, and treading soil firmly on either side of it, and watering it in dry weather, and taking a great care in its culture, and he never plucks any fruits from its bough. But his children will. We are all planting trees that will yield fruit hundreds of years after we are dead—orchards of golden fruit or groves of deadly upas.

I am so fascinated with the phosphorescence in the track of a ship that I have sometimes watched for a long while and have seen nothing on the face of the deep but blackness. The mouth of watery chasms that looked like gaping jaws of hell. Not a spark as big as the firefly; not a white scroll of surf; not a taper to illumine the mighty sepulchers of dead ships; darkness 3,000 feet deep, and more thousands of feet long and wide. That is the kind of wake that a bad man leaves behind him as he plows through the ocean of this life toward the vaster ocean of the great future.

The Growth of Sin.

Now, suppose a man seated in a corner grocery or business office among clerks gives himself to jolly skepticism. He laughs at the Bible, makes sport of the miracles, speaks of perdition in jokes and laughs at revivals as a trolie, and at the passage of a funeral procession, which always solemnizes sensible people, says, "Boys, let's take a drink." There is in that group a young man who is making a great struggle against temptation and prays night and morning and reads his Bible, and is asking God for help day by day. But that guffaw against Christianity makes him lose his grip of sacred things, and he gives up Sabbath and church and morals and goes from bad to worse, till he falls under dissipation, dies in a lazar house and is buried in the potter's field.

Another young man who heard that jolly skepticism made up his mind that "it makes no difference what we do or say, for we will all come out at last at the right place," and began as a consequence to perdition. Some money that came into his hands for others he applied to his own uses, thinking perhaps he would make it straight some other time, and all would be well even if he did not make it straight. He ends in the penitentiary. That scroffer who uttered the jokes against Christianity never realized what bad work he was doing and he passed on through life and out of it and into a future that I am not now going to depict.

I do not propose with a searchlight to show the breakers of the awful coast on which that ship is wrecked, for my business now is to watch the sea after the keel has plowed it. No phosphorescence in the wake of that ship, but behind it two souls struggling in the wave—two young men destroyed by reckless skepticism, an unillumined ocean beneath and on all sides of them. Blackness of darkness.

You know what a gloriously good man Rev. John Newton was the most of his life, but before his conversion he was a very wicked sailor, and on board the ship Harwich instilled idleness and vice in the mind of a young man—principles which destroyed him. Afterward the two met, and Newton tried to undo his bad work, but in vain. The young man became worse and worse, died a prodigal, horrifying with his profanities those who stood by him in his last moments.

Better look out what bad influence you start, for you may not be able to stop it. It does not require very great force to ruin others. Why was it that many years ago a great flood nearly destroyed New Orleans? A crafty fish had burrowed into the banks of the river until the ground was saturated and the banks weakened until the flood burst.

The Shining Path.

But I find here a man who starts out in life with the determination that he will never see suffering but he will try to alleviate it; and never see discouragement but he will try to cheer it, and never meet with anybody but he will try to do him good. Getting his strength from God, he starts from home with high purpose of doing all the good he can possibly do in one day.

Whether standing behind the counter, or talking in the business office with a man behind his ear, or making a bargain with a fellow trader, or out in the fields discussing with his next neighbor the wisest rotation of the crops, or in the shoemaker's shop pounding sole leather, there is something in his face, and in his phraseology, and in his manner, that demonstrates the grace of God in his heart. He can talk on religion without awkwardly dragging it in by the ears. He loves God and loves the souls of all whom he meets and is interested in their present and eternal destiny.

For fifty or sixty years he lives that kind of life and then gets through with it and goes into Heaven a ransomed

soul. But I am not going to describe the port into which that ship has entered.

I am not going to describe the pilot who met him outside at the "lightship." I am not going to say anything about the crowds of friends who met him on the crystalline wharves up which he goes on steps of chrysopeases. For God in his words to Job calls me to look at the path of foam in the wake of that ship, and I tell you it is all a gleam with splendors of kindness done, and rolling with illumined tears that were wiped away, and a dash with congratulations, and clear out into the horizon in all directions is the sparkling, flashing, billowing phosphorescence of a Christian life. "He maketh a path to shine after him."

And here I correct one of the mean notions which at some time takes possession of all of us, and that is as to the brevity of human life. When I bury some very useful man, clerical or lay, in his thirtieth or fortieth year, I say: "What a waste of energies! It was hardly worth while for him to get ready for Christian work, for he had so soon to quit it." But the fact is that I may insure any man or woman who does any good on a large or small scale for a life on earth as long as the world lasts. Sickness, trolley car accidents, death itself, can no more destroy his life than they can tear down one of the rings of Saturn. You can start one good word, one kind act, one cheerful smile, on a mission that will last until the world becomes a bonfire, and out of that blaze it will pass into the Heavens, never to halt as long as God lives.

What Ordinary Persons Can Do.

There were in the seventeenth century men and women whose names you never heard of who are to-day influencing schools, colleges, churches, nations. You can no more measure the the gracious results of their lifetime than you could measure the length and breadth and depth of the phosphorescence last night following the ship of the White Star Line 1,500 miles out at sea. How the courage and consecration of others inspire us to follow, as a general in the American army, cool amid the flying bullets, inspired a trembling soldier, who said afterward, "I was nearly scared to death, but I saw the old man's white mustache over his shoulder and went on." Aye, we are all following somebody either in right or wrong directions.

A few days ago I stood beside the garlanded casket of a gospel minister, and in my remarks had occasion to recall a snowy night in a farmhouse when I was a boy and an evangelist spending a night at my father's house, who said something so tender and beautiful and impressive that it led me into the kingdom of God and decided my destiny for this world and the next. You will, before twenty-four hours go by, meet some man or woman with a big pack of care and trouble, and you may say something to him or her that will endure until this world shall have been so far lost in the past that nothing but the stretch of angelic memory will be able to realize that it ever existed at all.

I am not talking of remarkable men and women, but of what ordinary folks can do. I am not speaking of the phosphorescence in the wake of a Campania, but of the phosphorescence in the track of a Newfoundland fishing smack. God makes thunderbolts out of sparks, and out of the small words and deeds of a small life he can launch a power that will flash and burn and thunder through the eternities.

How do you like this prolongation of your earthly life by deathless influence? Many a babe that died at 6 months of age by the anxiety created in the parent's heart to meet that child in realms seraphic is living yet in the transformed heart and life of those parents and will live on forever in the history of that family. If this be the opportunity of ordinary souls, what is the opportunity of those who have special intellectual or social or monetary equipment?

Have you any arithmetic capable of estimating the influence of our good and gracious friend who a few days ago went up to rest—George W. Childs of Philadelphia? From a newspaper that was printed for 30 years without one word of defamation or scurrility or scandal, and putting chief emphasis on virtue and charity and clean intelligence, he reaped a fortune for himself and then distributed a vast amount of it among the poor and struggling, putting his invalid and aged reporters on pensions, until his name stands everywhere for large heartedness and sympathy and help and highest style of Christian gentleman.

In an era which had in the chairs of its journalism a Horace Greeley, and a Henry J. Raymond, and a James Gordon Bennett, and an Erastus Brooks, and a George William Curtis, and a Freeman Prime, none of them will be longer remembered than George W. Childs. Staying away from the unveiling of the monument he had reared at large expense in our Greenwood in memory of Professor Proctor, the astronomer, lest I should say something in praise of the man who had paid for the monument. By all acknowledged a representative of the highest American journalism.

If you would calculate his influence for good, you must count how many sheets of his newspapers have been published in the last quarter of a century, and how many people have read them, and the effect, not only upon those readers, but upon all whom they shall influence for all time, while you add to all that the work of the churches he helped build and of the institutions of mercy he helped found. Better give up before you start the measuring of the phosphorescence in the wake of that ship of the Celestial line. Who can tell the post mortem influence of a Savonarola, a Winkelried, a Gutenberg, a Marlborough, a Decatur, a Toussaint, a Bolivar, a Clarkson, a Robert Peck, a Harlan Page, who had 125 Sabbath scholars, 84 of whom became Christians, and six of them ministers of the gospel.

Let Your Light Shine.

But mark you that the phosphorescence has a glow that the night popolizes, and I ask you not only what kind of influence you are going to leave in the world as you pass through it, but what light are you going to throw across the world's night of sin and sorrow? People who are sailing on smooth sea and at noon do not need much sympathy, but what are you going to do for people in the night of misfortune? Will you drop on them shadow, or will you kindle for them phosphorescence?

At this moment there are more people crying than laughing, more people on the round world this moment hungry than well fed, more households bereft than homes unbroken. What are you going to do about it? "Well," says yonder soul, "I would like to do something toward illumining the great ocean of human wretchedness, but I cannot do much."

Can you do as much as one of the phosphori in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, creates smaller than the point of a sharp pin? "Oh, yes," you say. Then do that. Shine! Stand before the looking glass and experiment to see if you cannot get that scowl of your forehead, that peevish look out of your lips. Have at least one bright ribbon in your bonnet. Embroider at least one white cord somewhere in the mid-night of your apparel. Do not any longer impersonate a funeral. Shine! Do say something cheerful about society and about the world. Put a few drops of Heaven into your disposition. Once in awhile substitute a sweet orange for a sour lemon.

Remember that pessimism is blasphemy and that optimism is Christianity. Throw some light on the night ocean. If you cannot be a lantern swinging in the rigging, be one of the tiny phosphori back of the keel. Shine! "Let your light so shine before men that others seeing your good works may glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

Make one person happy every day, and do that for twenty years, and you will have made 7,300 happy. You know a man who has lost all his property by an unfortunate investment or by putting his name on the back of a friend's note. After you have taken a brief nap, which every man and woman is entitled to on a Sunday afternoon, go and cheer up that man. You can, if God helps you, say something that will do him good after both of you have been dead a thousand years.

Shine! You know of a family with a bad boy who has run away from home. Go before night and tell that father and mother the parable of the prodigal son, and that some of the illustrious and useful men now in church and State had a silly passage in their lives and ran away from home. Shine! You know of a family that has lost a child, and the silence of the nursery glooms the whole house from cellar to garret. Go before night and tell them how much that child has happily escaped, since the most prosperous life on earth is a struggle.

Shine. You know of some invalid who is dying for lack of an appetite. She cannot get well because she cannot eat. Broil a chicken and take it to her before night and cheer her poor appetite into keen relish. Shine! You know of some one who likes you, and you like him, and he ought to be a Christian. Go tell him what religion has done for you, and ask him if you can pray for him.

The Failure of Eology.

Shine! Oh, for a disposition so charged with sweetness and light that we cannot help but shine! Remember if you cannot be a leviathan flashing the ocean into fury you can be one of the phosphori, doing your part toward making a path of phosphorescence. Then I will tell you what impression you will leave as you pass through this life and after you are gone. I will tell you to your face and not leave it for the minister who officiates at your obsequies.

The failure in all eulogium of the departed is that they cannot hear it. All that is except the one most interested that we cannot help but shine! Remember if you cannot be a leviathan flashing the ocean into fury you can be one of the phosphori, doing your part toward making a path of phosphorescence. Then I will tell you what impression you will leave as you pass through this life and after you are gone. I will tell you to your face and not leave it for the minister who officiates at your obsequies.

That pillow of flowers on the casket was presented by his Sabbath school class, all of whom he brought to Christ. That cross of flowers at the head was presented by the orphan asylum which he befriended. Those three single flowers—one was sent by a poor woman for whom he bought a ton of coal, and one was by a wife of the street, whom he rescued through the midnight mission, and the other was from the prison cell which he had often visited to encourage repentance in a young man who had done wrong.

Those three loose flowers mean quite as much as the costly garlands now breathing their aroma through this saddened home crowded with sympathizers. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." They rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.

Or if it should be the more solemn burial at sea, let it beater the sun has gone down, and the captain has read the appropriate liturgy, and the ship's bell has tolled, and you are let down from the stern of the vessel into the resplendent phosphorescence at the wake of the ship. Then let some one say, in the words of my text, "He maketh a path to shine after him."

ONE way of being unfair is to compel a merchant to buy tickets you are selling because you trade with him.

WHEN a man gives his boys skates for Christmas, his wife says: "You don't care if they do get drowned."

HEAVY plaid shawls and fur jackets are being used everywhere—by mothers

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