

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

"GOD IN LITTLE THINGS," LAST SUNDAY'S SUBJECT.

"Are Not Two Sparrows Sold For a Farthing, and One of Them Shall Not Fall on the Ground Without Your Father?"—Mat 10:29.

YOU see the Bible will not be limited in the choice of symbols. There is hardly a beast, or bird, or insect, which has not been called to illustrate some Divine truth—the ox's patience, the ant's industry, the spider's skill, the hind's surefootedness, the eagle's speed, the dove's gentleness, and even the sparrow's meanness and insignificance. In Oriental countries none but the poorest people buy the sparrow and eat it—so very little meat is there on the bones, and so very poor is it, what there is of it. The comfortable population would not think of touching it any more than you would think of eating a bat or a lamprey. Now, says Jesus, if God takes such good care of a poor bird that is not worth a cent, will he not care for you, an immortal?

We associate God with revolutions. We can see a Divine purpose in the discovery of America, in the invention of the art of printing, in the exposure of the Gunpowder Plot, in the contrivance of the needle-gun, in the ruin of an Austrian or Napoleonic despotism; but how hard it is to see God in the minute personal affairs of our lives! We think of God as making a record of the starry host, but cannot realize the Bible truth that he knows how many hairs are on our head. It seems a grand thing that God provided for hundreds of thousands of Israelites in the desert; but we cannot appreciate the truth that, when a sparrow is hungry, God stoops down and opens its mouth and puts the seed in. We are struck with the idea that God fills the universe with his presence, but cannot understand how he encamps in the crystal palace of a dewdrop, or finds room to stand between the alabaster pillars of the pond lily. We can see God in the clouds. Can we see God in these flowers at our feet?

We are apt to place God on some great stage—or to try to do it—expecting him there to act out his stupendous projects, but we forget that the life of a Cromwell, an Alexander, or a Washington, or an archangel, is not more under Divine inspection than your life or mine. Pompey thought there must be a mist over the eyes of God because he so much favored Caesar. But there is no such mist. He sees everything. We say God's path is in the great waters. True enough; but no more certainly than he is in the water in the glass on the table. We say God guides the stars in their courses. Magnificent truth! but no more certain truth than that he decides which road or street you shall take in coming to church. Understand that God does not sit upon an indifferent or unsympathetic throne, but that he sits down beside you to-day, and stands beside me to-day, and no affair of our lives is so insignificant but that it is of importance to God.

In the first place, God chooses our occupation for us. I am amazed to see how many people there are dissatisfied with the work they have to do. I think three-fourths wish they were in some other occupation, and they spend a great deal of time in regretting that they got in the wrong trade or profession. I want to tell you that God put into operation all the influences which led you to that particular choice. Many of you are not in the business that you expected to be in. You started for the ministry and learned merchandise; you started for the law and you are a physician; you preferred agriculture and you became a mechanic. You thought one way; God thought another.

Hugh Miller says, "I will be a geologist." David goes out to attend his father's sheep; God calls him to govern a nation. Saul goes out to hunt his father's asses, and before he gets back finds the crown of regal dominion. How much happier would we be if we were content with the places God gave us! God saw your temperament and all the circumstances by which you were surrounded, and I believe nine-tenths of you are in the work you are best fitted for. I hear a great racket in my watch, and I find that the hands and the wheels and the springs are getting out of their places. I sent it down to the jeweler's and say, "Overhaul that watch, and teach the wheels, and the spring, and the hands to milt their own business." You know a man having a large estate. He gathers his working hands in the morning, and says to one, "You go and trim that vine;" to another, "You go and weed those flowers;" to another, "You plough that tough gleebe;" and each one goes to his particular work. The owner of the estate points the man to what he knows he can do best, and so it is with the Lord.

I remark further that God has arranged the place of our dwelling. What particular city or town, street or house you shall live in seems to be a mere matter of accident. You go out to hunt for a house, and you happen to pass up a certain street, and happen to see a sign, and you select that house. Was it all happening so? Oh, no! God guided you in every step. He foresaw the future. He knew all your circumstances, and he selected just that one house as better for you than any of the ten thousand habitations in the city. Our house, however humble the roof

and however lowly the portals, is as near God's heart as an Alhambra or a Kremlin. Prove it, you say. Proverbs 3: 33, "He bleaseth the habitation of the just."

I remark further that God arranges all our friendships. You were driven to the wall. You found a man just at that crisis who sympathized with you and helped you. You say, "How lucky I was!" There was no luck about it. God sent that friend just as certainly as he sent the angel to strengthen Christ. Your domestic friends, your business friends, your Christian friends, God sent them to bless you, and if any of them have proved traitorous, it is only to bring out the value of those who remain. If some die, it is only that they may stand at the outposts of heaven to greet you at your coming.

I remark again, that God puts down the limit to our temporal prosperity. The world of finance seems to have no God in it. You cannot tell where a man will land. The affluent fall; the poor rise. The ingenious fail; the ignorant succeed. An enterprise opening grandly, shuts in bankruptcy, while out of the peat dug up from some New England marsh the millionaire builds his fortune. The poor man thinks it is chance that keeps him down; the rich man thinks it is chance which hoists him; and they are both wrong. It is so hard to realize that God rules the money market, and has a hook in the nose of the stock-gambler, and that all the commercial revolutions of the world shall result in the very best for God's dear children.

My brethren, do not kick against the Divine allotments. God knows just how much money it is best for you to lose. You never gain unless it is best for you to gain. You go up when it is best for you to go up, and go down when it is best for you to go down. Prove it, you say. I will. Rom. 8: 28, "All things work together for good to them that love God." You go into a factory, and you see twenty or thirty wheels, and they are going in different directions. This band is rolling off this way, and another band another way; one down and another up. You say, "What confusion in a factory!" Oh, no. All these different bands are only different parts of the machinery. So I go into your life and see strange things. Here is one providence pulling you in one way and another in another way. But these are different parts of one machinery by which he will advance your everlasting and present well-being.

Now you know that a second mortgage, and a third and fourth mortgage, are often worth nothing. It is the first mortgage that is a good investment. I have to tell you that every Christian man has a first mortgage on every trial, and on every disaster, and it must make a payment of eternal advantage to his soul. How many worriments it would take out of your heart, if you believed that fully. You buy goods and hope the price will go up, but you are in a fret and a frown for fear the price will go down. You do not buy the goods using your best discretion in the matter, and then say, "O Lord, I have done the best I could; I commit this whole transaction into Thy hands!" That is what religion is good for or it is good for nothing.

A man of large business concludes to go out of his store, leaving much of his investments in the business, and he says to his sons, "Now, I am going to leave this business in your hands. Perhaps I may come back in a little while, and perhaps not. While I am gone you will please to look after affairs." After awhile the father comes back and finds everything at loose ends, and the whole business seems to be going wrong. He says, "I am going to take possession of this business—you know I never fully surrendered it; and henceforth consider yourselves subordinates." Is he not right in doing it? He saves the business. The Lord seems to let us go on in life, guided by our own skill, and we make miserable work of it. God comes down to our shop, or our store, and says, "Things are going wrong, I am going to take charge. I am Master, and I know what is best, and I proclaim my authority." We are merely subordinates. It is like a boy at school with a long sum that he cannot do. He has been working at it for hours, making figures here and rubbing out figures there, and it is all mixed up; and the teacher, looking over the boy's shoulder, knows that he cannot get out of it, and, cleaning the slate says, "Begin again." Just so God says to us. Our affairs get into an inextricable entanglement, and he rubs everything out and says, "Begin again!" Is he not wise and loving in so doing?

I think the trouble is, that there is so large a difference between the Divine and the human estimate as to what is enough. I have heard of people striving for that which is enough, but I never heard of anyone who had enough. What God calls enough for man, man calls too little. What man calls enough, God says is too much. The difference between a poor man and a rich man is only the difference in banks. The rich man puts his money in the Washington bank or the Central bank or the Metropolitan bank, or some other bank of that character, while the poor man comes up and makes his investments in the bank of him who runs all the quarries, all the mines, all the gold, all the earth, all heaven. Do you think a man can fall when he is backed up like that?

You may have seen a map on which is described, with red ink, the travels of the children of Israel through the desert of the promised land. You see how they took this and that direction, crossed the river and went through the sea. Do you know God has made a map of your life with paths leading

up to this bitterness and that success, through this river and across that sea? but, blessed be God, that path always comes out at the Promised Land. Mark that! Mark that!

I remark, again, that all those things that seem to be but accidents in our life are under the Divine supervision. We sometimes seem to be going homeless and anchorless. You say, "If I had some other trade; if I had not gone there this summer; if I had lived in some other house." You have no right to say that. Every tear you wept, every step you have taken, every burden you have carried is under Divine inspection, and that even which startled your whole household with horror God met with perfect placidity, because he knew it was for your good. It was part of a great plan projected long ago, in eternity. When you come to reckon up your mercies, you will point to that affliction as one of your greatest blessings.

God has a strange way with us. Joseph found his way to the prime minister's chair by being pushed into a pit; and to many a Christian down is up. The wheat must be flailed; the quarry must be blasted; the diamond must be ground; the Christian must be afflicted; and that single event which you supposed stood entirely alone, was a connecting link between two great chains, one chain reaching through all eternity past and the other chain reaching through all eternity future—so small an event fastening two eternities together.

There is a man who says, "That doctrine cannot be true, because things do go so very wrong." I reply it is no inconsistency on the part of God, but a lack of understanding on our part. I hear that men are making very fine shawls in some factory. I go in on the first floor, and see only the raw materials, and I ask, "Are these the shawls I have heard about?" "No," says the manufacturer, "go up to the next floor;" and I go up, and there I begin to see the design. But the man says, "Do not stop here; go up to the top floor of the factory, and you will see the idea fully carried out." I do so, and, having come to the top, see the complete pattern of an exquisite shawl. So in our life, standing down on a low level of Christian experience we do not understand God's dealings. He tells us to go up higher and higher, until we begin to understand the Divine meaning with respect to us, and we advance until we stand at the very gate of heaven, and there see God's idea all wrought out—a perfect idea of mercy, of love, of kindness. And we say, "Just and true are all Thy ways." It is all right at the top. Remember there is no inconsistency on the part of God, but it is only our mental and spiritual incapacity.

Some of you may be disappointed this summer—vacations are apt to be disappointments—but whatever your perplexities and worriments, know that "Man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps." Ask these aged men in this church if it is not so. It has been so in my own life. One summer I started for the Adirondacks, but my plans were so changed that I landed in Liverpool. I studied law and I got into the ministry. I resolved to go as a missionary to China, and I stayed in the United States. I thought I would like to be in the east, and I went to the west; all the circumstances of life, all my work, different from that which I expected. "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps."

So, my dear friends, this day take home this subject. Be content with such things as you have. From every grass-blade under your feet learn the lesson of Divine care, and never let the smallest bird flit across your path without thinking of the truth, that two sparrows are sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. Blessed be His glorious name forever. Amen.

"Mr. Ten Minutes." In the Christian Observer the following touching story is told of the late Prince Napoleon. He had joined the English army in Africa, and was one day at the head of a squad riding horseback outside the camp. It was a dangerous situation. One of the company said: "We had better return. If we don't hasten, we may fall into the hands of the enemy."

"Oh," said the prince, "let us stay here ten minutes and drink our coffee." Before the ten minutes had passed, a company of Zulus came upon them, and in the skirmish the prince lost his life. His mother, when informed of the facts, in her anguish, said: "That was his great mistake from babyhood. He never wanted to go to bed at night in time, nor to rise in the morning. He was ever pleading for ten minutes more. When too sleepy to speak, he would lift up his two little hands and spread out ten fingers, indicating that he wanted ten minutes more. On this account I sometimes called him 'Mr. Ten Minutes.'"

How many have lost not only their lives, but their precious, immortal souls, by this sin of procrastination! When God calls, we should promptly obey. He Protects and Saves. The following beautiful thought is by the Rev. Wm. L. Worcester: "As we learn to know the Lord more truly we see that he can never lead us into temptation, nor can he ever desire that we shall be exposed to evil and its distress. The Lord is always working to protect us, to save us from danger and from suffering. To say even that he permits evil and temptation is to speak in accommodation to our imperfect thoughts; for the Lord always protects and saves and nothing else."

Lively French Town. The record for quickly increasing population, as shown by the recent census, says a Paris correspondent, certainly belongs to Roubaix. In 1800 the population of this town was 8,302; at the taking of the last census it was 114,917, of which 53,075 were Belgians. Of this increase 61,600 were immigrants, while the remaining 53,075 were due to the excess of births over deaths. There is certainly no other town in France where the population has increased so rapidly. The rate of increase is ten times that of the rest of France and three times that of Paris.

The New England Conservatory of Music, in Boston, Mass., has furnished instruction to over 60,000 pupils since 1833, and its popularity as an institution of the highest excellence is constantly increasing. Its curriculum is not confined to music alone, but Oratory and Modern Languages have fine equipped departments and the best instructors money can procure. Special attention also is given to instruction in pianoforte tuning. The charges are low when compared with those of other musical schools. Prospectus mailed free on application.

Washed Like a Lobster. Gussie—"Look at Mary Mashem blushing. I bet her mother is giving her fits for flirting with young Poorleigh." De Cynicus—"Yes; that girl always reminds me of a lobster—turns red when she's in hot water."—New York World.

The Glorious Fourth. The C. & E. I. R. R. are making elaborate preparations for a grand celebration on the 4th of July at their beautiful picnic grounds, Island Park. A rate of \$1 for the round trip will be made from Chicago. Excellent boating, fishing and plenty of room for everybody makes this one of the most popular resorts near Chicago.

A Woman's Question. Mr. Gumme (reading from the morning paper)—"Several hundred pounds of nitroglycerine went off in the oil regions last night." Mrs. Gumme—"When do they expect it back?"—New York World.

The Modern Beauty. Thrives on good food and sunshine, with plenty of exercise in the open air. Her form glows with health and her face blooms with its beauty. If her system needs the cleansing action of a laxative remedy she uses the gentle and pleasant Syrup of Figs. Made by the California Fig Syrup Company.

Had She Made a Show of Him. Wyld—They say Mrs. Epoc treats her husband like a dog. Dyer—Worse. She doesn't even exhibit him.—Truth.

One's Ought Business. In the abstract and book. It will break up a Cold quicker than anything else. It is always reliable. Try it.

French Paste. "French paste," out of which artificial diamonds are made, is a mixture of best glass and oxide of lead.

For Lung and Chest Diseases. Pilo's Cure is the best medicine we have used.—Mrs. J. L. Northcott, Windsor, Ont., Canada.

Gunpowder exerts a force of twenty-three tons to the square inch; nitroglycerin, 24 tons.

Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally. Price, 75c.

According to the St. Louis city directory, just issued, the population of that city is 611,263.

MRS. GOULD'S GRATITUDE. Her Story of How She Was Restored to Health.

Condition Before and After the Birth of Her Child.

From every city, town and hamlet on this vast continent, come letters from suffering women; from those whose physicians have been unable to assist them, or from that numberless class whose confidence in Mrs. Pinkham's advice and the curative properties of her Vegetable Compound is unbounded. Every letter received from women is recorded, and hundreds of volumes of cases treated aid in furnishing practical information for the women of to-day.

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One Fare to Washington, D. C., and Return. On July 3, 4, 5 and 6 tickets will be sold from all points north and west of Chicago to Washington and return at one fare account International Convention Young People's Society Christian Endeavor. Ask for tickets via the Big Four Route and Chesapeake and Ohio R'y. This route combines every essential feature of a first-class tourist line. Finest mountain scenery in America, Virginia battlefields, electric-lighted trains, perfect track and dining car service unsurpassed. Tickets may be extended returning until July 31. For further particulars, beautifully illustrated pamphlet and sleeping car reservations address U. L. Truitt, N.W. F. A., C. & O.—Big Four Route, 236 Clark street, Chicago.

Not to Be Wiped Out. "Strange," murmured the rich man, "that after giving so many millions of dollars to churches and colleges I should yet bear such a hard name." It was Mr. Rockefeller who spoke.—New York World.

Smouldering fires of old disease lurk in the blood of many a man, who fancies himself in good health. Let a slight sickness seize him, and the old enemy breaks out anew. The fault is the taking of medicines that suppress, instead of curing disease. You can eradicate disease and purify your blood, if you use the standard remedy of the world, Ayer's Sarsaparilla.

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