



New Year's E, and at home. This is a cozy little den of mine, just as it looks now, quiescent anything I ever see at the b; books, pipes, easy chairs, a cheer fire in the grate; pictures, busts, well-beloved etchings all about the walls.

What's the matter with you, old man, tonight? Are you taking an inventory of the surroundings on this last night of the year? Everybody thinks you are of them, don't you know, for you do very little time in their midst, is some provoking little voice. (Was it my conscience?)

It seems that this is the only member of our family not a member of a club. Dorothy pily holds on to the little shaver by the collar, tied to her apron strings, and I am glad of it.



THIS IS A COZY LITTLE DEN.

neighborhood took sudden quiet? The question arose, are those boys? Dorothy and I talk about it, for were we not invited to become honorary members of the club, "The Ollapodrida"? We have foot the hills and evinced an interest in the affairs of the club; we then tent to buy material for an old worn-out chair; there's another item; twenty-five cent lumber, etc., and last, but not least, that which caused Dorothy's suffering, were sundry pieces of to be furnished with all the paraphalia of a trapeze arrangement, ratory to meanderings aloft, all dech caused a rush of blood to the head, as I thought of these ventures boys, three of them at work, experimenting with the cent gravity, walking on their heads; the objective point apparently.

We are happily rejoicing days, however, in a more recent part of the family cradle, who walks feet downward after Union of mortals.

As time goes on, children's youthful exploits, with accompanying worries of theirs, fade into oblivion, as the morbus aspect confronts us.

The Ollapodrida member my family have taken unto lives a few extra years; two of the said members are look-legged, and I seem to worry them in a wonderful way quite myself.

or—? Here it is under my forefinger: "A Shadow." It reads:

I said to myself if I were dead, What would befall these children? What would befall me?

Their fate, who are now looking up to me For help and furtherance? Their lives,

I said, Would it be a volume wherein I have read But the first chapters, and no longer see

To read the rest of their dear history So full of beauty and so full of dread. Be comforted; the world is very old, And generations pass, as they have passed,

A troop of shadows moving with the sun; Thousands of times has the old tale been told; The world belongs to those who come the last, They will find hope and strength as we have done.

Was ever answer sent to a mortal man more clearly?

I think I'm sent for; there's something besides old Father Time after me, surely. Here is the very answer to my dials as to those boys and their doings. But here comes Dorothy, singing, apparently in a very cheerful mood.

"This is perfectly lovely, George Augustus.

"Johnnie's trousers are all right for tomorrow, and I have been looking over my precious tin box, and I find such lovely bits of literature and all sorts; suppose we look them over tonight."

Perhaps Dorothy noticed an unusual expression on my many countenance, for she paused and said: "What are you thinking about? What has this old year been saying to you? Are you having a retrospective sort of revival meeting all by yourself?"

"Only a few ideas have struck me, Dorothy. I rather like this den of mine, especially tonight, and one or two articles in these books here seem to have been written especially for me, and an uncomfortable little voice has been questioning me. A thought strikes me that we, you and I, have drifted apart rather more than I ever dreamed we could. There has been a sort of 'we follows at the club' air and manner about me, that I really think now, as I sit here, has been a foolishness on my part that I shall endeavor to discontinue; a sort of desire to be 'in with the boys' and 'off with my wife.' I hope, Dorothy, that you do not think my past is really a dreadful one to look back upon."

"O, no," Dorothy replied, with something of a twinkle in her eyes; "but, then, you know, you might be more of a saint, if you tried, dear."

"And perhaps, most noble and adorable (my temper rising) and twentieth century wife, if I should give up my Sunday evenings at the club, possibly you may be willing to sacrifice a few of these insufferable 'tees' and bring an appetite uncontaminated with such diet as sipping frappes, Russian tea and chocolate to a respectable, cozy dinner with your George Augustus; and," (pausing for breath) "don't be angry; don't you leave out that tiresome, quarrelsome card party and await my return with unfringed nerves, for instance, meet me at the door just

"I shall not see you till another year Has dawned," she said.

Oh, fickle maid! she turned not pale with fear— She laughed instead.

This seems a tragic lay, till we remember It occurred the thirty-first day of December.

—N. Y. Truth.

None to Earn Over.

"I thought you were going to turn over a new leaf, John," she said.

"I was," he replied, "but I find I can't."

"Why not?"

"There won't be any new leaves until spring." —Chicago Post.

The New Century.

Love's harmonies flow toward his fall and sweet;

His wild, discordant cries are paid him tribute.

With each glad heart and brave, rejoicing soul,

He opens the threshold of the new year.

—Chicago Post.

—Chicago Post.

—Chicago Post.

—Chicago Post.

—Chicago Post.

sort of trapeze swinging high or low with the wings of ambition, up to greater heights."

By the way, Dorothy sketches and paints. I will give her a subject, earth, sky and water, the soft green turf, the blue ethereal, the hazy mountain top, while the lapping waves touch the eager feet of the climbers yet in the valley as they stand on the shore twixt earth and sea, girded and armed for the steep ascent to the shrine on the distant heights.

Send them wings, O guardian angels, and give me sight, I cannot read the all of their dear history. Vanish old year; Forward, the new! —Detroit Free Press.

The New Year Spirit.

The return of New Year's day invites many people to the most somber reflections. Undoubtedly most of us can find abundant occasion for these. But there is such a thing as pushing self-examination and self-condemnation to the point of discouragement. The best temper with which we can enter upon the new year is that of faith, faith in God and faith in ourselves through His help. It is about as certain as anything can be that the new year will bring us new experiences. Our courage, our capacity for endurance, our steadiness of character and power of resistance is to be tested. At the end of the year we are going to be nobler men and women than we are today, or we shall have deteriorated morally, and forever afterward there will be narrowing opportunities. While we think of the latter alternative it is well to strengthen our hearts by the former. Let us believe that we are not going to fall and we have taken a long step towards success. When another New Year's day comes around we are going to be able to reckon solid gains in character won through the trials and temptations and emergencies of the year's experience.—Boston Watchman.



Good-bye, old year! We've journeyed on together many days, And now behold the parting of our ways

is very near; With thoughts of mingled gladness and of dread, I see the winding way that I must tread

To Future Lands; For there awaits the realm of shadows deep— The Silent Land of years that lie asleep

With folded hands.

Good-bye, old year! A few more steps are we forever part— A few more words that wake the throbbing heart

To hope and fear; A farewell smile, a lingering clasp of hand,

Ere thou shalt lie within the shadow-land

All silently; The while I haste a glad new year to greet,

The while I journey on with memories sweet,

Old year, of thee.

Good-bye, old year! Alas, not half I felt or knew till now How kind and brave and true a friend wert thou;

For ah, twice dear A loved one seems when comes the darkened day

When heart and lips all tremulous must say

A last good-bye; Yet, though thy friendly face no more I see,

The memories sweet my heart has kept of thee.

—Alice Jean Cleator.

Tragic.

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TALMAGE'S SERMON.

FOR THE WORLD'S DIS-ENTHRALMENT.

A Sermon Especially Appropriate for the Christmas Season—The Mission of the Saviour of the World—Proof That God Is Love.

(Copyright, 1900, Louis Klopsch, N. Y.) Washington, Dec. 23.—In this discourse Dr. Talmage describes in a new way the sacrifices made for the world's disenthralment and deliverance. His text is I. John IV., 16, "God is love."

Perilous undertaking would it be to attempt a comparison between the attributes of God. They are not like a mountain range, with here and there a higher peak, nor like the ocean, with here and there a profounder depth. We cannot measure infinities. We would not dare to say whether his omnipotence, or omniscience, or omnipresence, or immutability, or wisdom, or justice, or love is the greater attribute, but the one mentioned in my text makes deeper impression upon us than any other. It was evidently a very old man who wrote the chapter from which I take the text. John was not in his dotage, as Prof. Eichhorn asserted, but you can tell by the repetitions in the epistle and the rambling style and that he called grown people "little children" that the author was probably an octogenarian. Yet Paul, in mid-life mastering an audience of Athenian critics on Mars hill, said nothing stronger or more important than did the venerable John when he wrote the three words of my text, "God is love."

Indeed the older one gets the more he appreciates this attribute. The harshness and the combativeness and the severity have gone out of the old man, and he is more lenient and aware of his own faults, is more disposed to make excuses for the faults of others, and he frequently ejaculates, "Poor human nature!" The young minister preached three sermons on the justice of God and one on the love of God, but when he got old he preached three sermons on the love of God and one on the justice of God.

Christ's Descent to Earth. If high intelligences looked down and saw what was going on, they must have prophesied extermination, complete extermination, of these offenders of Jehovah. But no! Who is that coming out of the throne room of heaven? Who is that coming out of the palaces of the eternal? It is the Son of the Emperor of the universe. Down the stairs of the high heavens he comes till he reaches the cold air of a December night in Palestine and amid the beatings of sheep and the lowing of cattle and the moaning of camels and the banter of the herdsmen takes his first sleep on earth and for 33 years invites the wandering race to return to God and happiness and heaven. They were the longest 33 years ever known in heaven. Among many high intelligences, what impatience to get him back! The Infinite Father looked down and saw his Son slumped and split on and suppleless and homeless, and then, amid horrors that made the noonday heavens turn black in the face, his body and soul parted. And all for what? Why allow the Crown Prince to come on such an errand and endure such sorrows and die such a death? It was to invite the human race to put down its antipathies and resistance. It was because "God is love."

Now, there is nothing beautiful in a shipwreck. We go down to look at the battered and split hulk of an old ship on Long Island or New Jersey coast. It excites our interest. We wonder when and how it came ashore and whether it was the recklessness of a pilot or a storm before which nothing could bear up. Human nature wrecked may interest the inhabitants of other worlds as a curiosity, but there is nothing lovely in that which has foundered on the rocks of sin and sorrow. Yet it was in that condition of moral break up that heaven moved to the rescue. It was lovelessness hovering over deformity. It was the life-boat putting out into the surf that attempted its demolition. It was harmony pitying discord. It was a living God putting his arms around a recreant world.

Our World's Wickedness. But for this divine feeling I think our world would long ago have been demolished. Just think of the organized wickedness of the nations! See the abominations continental! Behold the false religions that hoist Mohammed and Epétha and Confucius! Look at the Koran and the Shashtra and the Zend-Avesta that would crowd out of the world the Holy Scriptures! Look at war, digging its trenches for the dead across the hemispheres! See the great cities, with their holoocaust of destroyed manhood and womanhood! What blasphemies assail the heavens! What butcheries sicken the centuries! What processions of crime and atrocity and woe encircle the globe! If justice had spoken, it would have said, "The world deserves annihilation, and let annihilation come." If immutability had spoken, it would have said: "I have always been opposed to wickedness and always will be; opposed to it. The world is to me an affront infinite, and away with it." If omniscience had spoken, it would have said: "I have watched that planet with minute and all comprehensive inspection, and I cannot have the offense longer continued." If truth had spoken, it would have said: "I declare that they who stand the law must go down under the law." But divine love took a different view of the world's abhorrence and pollution. It said: "I pity all these

sufferings. I will go down and reform the world. I will medicate its wounds. I will calm its frenzy. I will wash off its pollution. I will become incarnate. I will take on my shoulders and upon my brow and into my heart the consequences of that world's misbehavior. I start now, and between my arrival at Bethlehem and my ascent from Olivet I will weep their tears and suffer their griefs and die their death. Farewell, my throne, my crown, my scepter, my angelic environment, my heaven, till I have finished the work and come back!" God was never conquered but once, and that was when he was conquered by his own love. "God is love."

Christ the Comforter.

If one paragraph of the creed seems to take you, like a child, out of the arms of a father, let the next paragraph put you in the arms of a mother. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Oh, what a mother we have in God! And my text is the lullaby sung to us when we are ill, or when we are maltreated, or when we are weary, or when we are trying to do better, or when we are bereft, or when we ourselves lie down to the last sleep. We feel the warm cheek of the mother against our cheek, and there sounds in it the hush of many mothers: "God is love."

This was the reason the Bible was written. The world needs no inspired page to tell it that God will chastise sin, for that is proved in the life of many an offender. You can look through the wicket of any prison and see the fact which the world understood thousands of years before Solomon wrote it—"The way of the transgressor is hard." The world needed no Bible to tell it that God is omnipotent, for any one who has seen Mont Blanc or Niagara or the Atlantic ocean in a cyclone knows that. The world needed no Bible to tell it of God's wisdom, for everything, from a spider's web to the upholstery of a summer's sunset, from the globe of dewdrop to the rounding of a world, declares that. But there was one secret about God that was wrapped up in a scroll of parchment, and it staid there until apocalyptic hand unrolled that scroll, and let out upon the world the startling fact, which it could never have surmised, never guessed, never expected, that he loved our human race so ardently that he will pardon sin and subdue the offender with a divine kiss and turn foaming malefactors into worshippers before the throne. Oh, I am so glad that the secret is out and that it can never again be veiled! Tell it to all the sinning, suffering, lying race; tell it in song and sermon, on canvas, and in marble, on arch and pillar; tell it all around the earth—"God is love."

The Domination of Fear. Notice that the wisest men of the nations for thousands of years did not, amid their idolatries, make something to represent this feeling, this emotion. They had a Jove, representing might; Neptune, the god of the sea; Minerva, the goddess of wisdom; Venus, the goddess of base appetite; Ceres, the goddess of corn, and an Odin, an an Oelris, and a Titan, and a Juggernaut, and whole pantheons of gods and goddesses, but no shrine, no carved image, no sculptured form has suggested a god of pure love. That was beyond human brain. It took a God to think that, a God to project that, a God let down from heaven to achieve that.

Fear is the dominant thought in all false religions. For that the devotees cut themselves with lances and swing on iron hooks and fall under wheels and hold up the right arm so long that they cannot take it down. Fear, brutish fear! But love is the queen in our religion. For that we build temples. For that we kneel at our altars. For that martyrs suffered at Brussels marketplace and at Lucknow and Cawnpur and Peking. That will yet bejewel the round earth and put it an emerald on the great, warm, throbbing heart of God.

Proof That God Is Love. Do you want more proof that "God is love"? Yes, disinterested love. No compensation for its bestowal. No reward for its sacrifices. But I call that back. The world did pay him. It paid him on Calvary, paid him with brambles on the brow and four spikes, two for the hands and two for the feet, and one spear for the side near the heart; paid him in execution; paid him with straw pillow in a barn and a cross on a hill; paid him with a third of a century of maltreatment and hardship save one year—yes, is paying him yet in rejection of his mission of mercy. Having dethroned other kings, the world would like to dethrone the King of Kings. But he knew what he was coming to when he left the portals of pearl and the land where the sun never goes down. Yes, he knew the world, how cold it is, and knew pain, how sharp it is, and the night, how dark it is, and expiation, how excruciating it is. Out of vast eternity he looked forward and saw Pilate's criminal courtroom, and the rocky bluff with three crosses, and the lacerated body in mortuary surroundings, and heard the thunders toll at the funeral of heaven's favorite, and understood that the palaces of eternity would bear the sorrow of a bereft God.

What do the Bible and the church liturgies mean when they say, "He descended into hell?" They mean that his soul left his sacred body for awhile and went down into the palace of mortal grief, and swung back its great soul, and heard the shriek of captivity, and felt the awful heat that would have come down on the world's back, and went the length of an eternal journey, and

eternal rescue if we will. Read it slowly, read it solemnly, it with love. "He descended into hell." He knew what kind of pain he would get for exchanging celestial splendor for Bethlehem caravansary, and he dared all and came, the most illustrious example in all the ages of divine

Robbing Bank Drivers. Now, the only fair thing for human hearts to do is to echo back that sovereign love. You and I have stood in mountainous regions where, uttering one distinct word, the schools would come back with a resonance startling and captivating, and from all our hearts there should sound into the heavens responses glorious and long continued. Let the world change its style of payment for heavenly love. No more payment by lances, by hammers, no more payment by blows on the cheek and scourging on the back, and hooting of mobs, but payment in ardors of soul, in true surrender of heart and love to the God that made us, and the Christ who ransomed us, and the eternal spirit who by regenerating power makes us all over again.

Alexander the Great, with his host, was marching on Jerusalem to capture and plunder it. The inhabitants came out, clothed in white, led on by the high priest wearing a mitre and glittering breast plate on which was emblazoned the name of God, and Alexander, seeing that word, bowed and halted his army, and the city was saved. And if we have the love of God written in all our hearts and on all our lives and on all our banners of the sight of it the hosts of temptation would fall back, and we would go on from victory unto victory, until we stand in Zion and before God.

Leander swam across the Hellespont guided by the light which Hero the fair held from one of her tower windows, and what Hellesponts of earthly struggle can we not breast as long as we can see the torch of divine love held out from the tower windows of the King! Let love of God to us and our love to God clasp hands this minute. O ye dissatisfied and distressed souls, who roam the world over looking for happiness and finding none, why not try this love of God as a solace and inspiration and eternal satisfaction? When a king was crossing a desert in caravan, no water was to be found, and man and beast were perishing from thirst. Along the way were strewn the bones of caravans that had preceded. There were harts of reindeer in the king's procession, and some one knew their keen scent for water and cried out, "Let loose the harts or reindeer!" It was done, and no sooner were these creatures loosed than they went scurrying in all directions looking for water and soon found it, and the king and his caravan were saved, and the king wrote on some tablets the words which he had read some time before, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."

Some have compared the love of God to the ocean, but the comparison fails, for the ocean has a shore, and God's love is boundless. But if you insist on comparing the love of God to the ocean, put on that ocean four swift sailing craft, and let one sail to the north, and one to the south, and one to the east, and one to the west, and let them sail on a thousand years, and after that let them all return and some one hail the fleet and ask them if they have found the shore of God's love, and their four voices would respond: "No shore! No shore to the ocean of God's mercy!"

FASTEST TRAINS.

American Leads the World in the Matter of Quick Transportation.

Statistics recently published reveal some interesting facts regarding the fastest regularly scheduled railroad trains in the leading countries of the world. The United States heads the list with four trains run from Philadelphia to Atlantic City. Two of these, running on the Philadelphia and Reading, attain a speed of 66.5 miles per hour for a distance of fifty-five and one-half miles, being the fastest regular runs in the world. The two other trains, on the Pennsylvania line, run at the rate of 64.5 miles per hour, the distance over its line being fifty-nine miles. The Midi of France, in a run from Marseaux to Bordeaux, a distance of sixty-seven and three-quarters miles, maintains a speed of 61.6 miles per hour. England brings up the rear with two trains, which are scheduled to make the run between Dorchester and Wareham, a distance of only fifteen miles, at the rate of 60.1 miles per hour. The fastest long-distance run is made over the Orleans and Midi railway, in France. The run is from Paris to Bayonne, a distance of 484.4 miles, and is made, including six stops, at the rate of 54.15 miles per hour. Then follows the New York Central's empire state express, running from New York to Buffalo, 446 miles, including four stops, at 53.95 miles per hour, and finally again England, with a train on the Great Northern, running between London and Edinburgh, 392.5 miles, at 53.77 miles per hour.—Chicago Chronicle.

American Honored by Italian King. General W. F. Draper of Springfield, Mass., has received from the king of Italy the grand cordon of the Order of St. Maurice and Lazarus in appreciation of his services rendered during his mission in Italy, the grand cordon is one of the highest distinctions conferred by the Italian monarch.