

# A NUISANCE ABATED.

Rev. Dr. Talmage Speaks on Three Great Evils.

## THE S. S. LESSON.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON, JAN. 20

"Greeks Seeking Jesus." John 12. 38-33.  
Golden Text. John 12. 31.

### PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 20. Certain Greeks. Not Jews speaking Greek, who are called Hellenes, "Grecians," but Hellene.

"Greeks" by language if not also by race, Gentiles who revered the God of the Jews. Just how far their religious culture had gone we need not guess. They were not fully proselytes. As Dr. Comper Gray says:

"They may have been easygoing Gentile travelers who were accustomed to worship the gods of the place in which they came, as the manner of some in our day is—to do at Rome as Rome does without considering whether or not Rome does right."

We may without much risk, however, regard these men as worshipers of the one God revealed in the Old Testament, like the devout Greeks mentioned in Acta 17. 4. The feast was the annual feast of the passover, the greatest of all Hebrew religious ceremonies, and in this special year it was made of prime importance to the world by the death of Jesus Christ.

21. The same came therefore to Philip. The names of Philip and Andrew are both Greek, though the men themselves were doubtless full-blooded Hebrews. A Greek name may readily have attracted the Greek visitors. Of Bethsaida of Galilee. The residence of Philip was also the residence of Andrew. We would see Jesus. The four words are a marvelously fit starting point for a heart-to-heart talk with pupils. No thoughtful, devout, sympathetic teacher needs any suggestions here.

22. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew. Consulting in his hesitancy the friend and associate of his boyhood. Andrew and Philip tell Jesus:

"What was the cause of the delay in bringing the Greeks to Jesus?" Perhaps we may find it in our Lord's repeated statement that he was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The beautiful old legend of the messengers of Abgarus, though without historic basis, can hardly be overlooked in the study of this lesson.

According to this tradition or legend that good Gentile King, on hearing that Jesus was scorned by his countrymen, sent ambassadors to him to invite him to his home. These Greeks were those ambassadors. The reply of verse 23 would fit such a message as Abgarus is known to have sent, and in any case it is to be inferred that Jesus received these Greeks.

23. The hour is come; that the Son of man should be glorified. Until now he had said, "It is coming." Did he mean that he was glorified in the desire expressed by these Greeks to see him? No; but he foresaw the time after his resurrection and ascension when Greeks and Gentiles from all nations should believe in his name.

24. Verily, verily. A call of attention to the exceptional importance of what is to follow. Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone. This is true of every grain of wheat; except it shrivels and comes to its end, the harvest cannot come to its beginning and grow. The whole verse is a parable of the death of our Lord and his holy consequences (See verse 32).

25. See Matt. 10. 39; 16. 25; Luke 17. 33.

26. If any man serve me, let him follow me. Words have strange histories. The Greek might be literally translated, "If any man is a deacon to me." Deacons and ministers are servants of the churches, and church members are servants of Christ. In this sense we are all deacons. The Master's servants are to follow him; he is on a journey. By the thorny path of holiness, suffering, and toil he proceeds to glory, and constantly his servants must be with him. Where I am, there shall also my servant be. This is a promise of heaven hereafter, but it includes much more. "As the time of his passion drew near our Lord repeated his assurances of his abiding protection and future reception of his servants to share his victory, to live and reign with him."

27. Now is my soul troubled. He foresaw the grief and anguish of soul which should shortly come upon him in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Compare Luke 22. 42. On reading this St. Augustine composed this prayer: "O Lord, our Mediator, God above us, yet for us made man, I acknowledge thy mercy; for in that thou who art so great, yet in thy love to man wast willingly troubled, how many members of thy body, troubled in their own infirmity against their will, hast thou comforted that they should not perish by despair." Christ evidently had a thoroughly human clinging to life, which is as natural as hunger and sleep, and not more sinful than either. What shall I say? Jesus recognized that he is to be the pattern of all good men in coming generations. How shall he meet this trouble? Father, save me from this hour. A better meaning is made by putting a question mark after the word "hour"—"Shall I say, Father, save me from this hour?" For this cause came I unto this hour. The cause or the purpose must not be frustrated by the weakness of a moment spoiling the object and work of a life."

28. Father, glorify thy name. This is what I will say. Words of absolute self-surrender. A voice. Clearly heard by the Saviour. I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

The Father had glorified his name in the incarnation of his Son, in his baptism and miracles, his life and doctrine. But it was to be still further glorified in his passion and, after his passion, when death should have no more dominion over him, when he should be exalted above the heaven, and his glory above all the earth."

29. The people . . . said that it thundered. That is, the crowd of bystanders, among whom doubtless there were believers and unbelievers. What they heard may have been an indistinct noise. Others, however, with clearer physical and spiritual hearing, identified the voice and said:

An angel spoke to him.

30. Compare John 11. 42.

31. Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

The time for the separation of the evil and the good has begun; the time for the deliverance of mankind from him who is here and elsewhere called the prince of this world." John 14. 30. 16. 11. the usurper of God's right, Ezek. 21. 27. He whose rebellious pride exulted him from heaven shall now no more prevail on earth. Luke 10. 18.

32, 33. John 3. 14, 15; 8. 28. The lifting up from the earth has reference both to the crucifixion and the glorification which was to follow it.

The word "man" is supplied by the translators. "Things," "forces,"

will do as well or better. Every

urgency and government, the ingenuity, thrift, nobility of human nature as well as its turbulences, the industry of man and the wrath of man alike, are drawn into the kingdom of god.

— IRISH FUN.

Some Instances of Wit and Humor in the Irish Court Room.

The quaintest repartees and whimsical humor of an Irish witness give a fillip of excitement to the dullest court-room. Quite recently, says a writer, a woman asked for a warrant against a man for using abusive language in the street.

"What did he say?" asked the magistrate.

"He went foreinest the whole world at the corner of Capel street, and called me, yes, he did, ye worship, and could encommunicate gasometer."

"He called me out of me name," said a witness, in a case of assault.

The judge, trying to preserve the relevance of the witness's testimony, said:

"That's a civil action, my good woman."

The witness was once asked the amount of his gross income.

"My gross income is it!" he answered.

"Sure, an' ye know I've no gross income. I'm a fisherman, and me income is all net."

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No man," said a wealthy but rather weak-headed barrister, "should be admitted to the bar who has not an independent landed property."

"May I ask, sir," said a witty and eminent Irish lawyer, "how many acres make a wiseacre?"

The element of the unexpected which characterizes Irish fun crops out in other places beside the court-room. It may be an old story, but it is as perennial as its subject, of the priest who preached a sermon on "Grace." "An' me brethren," he said, in conclusion, "if ye have wan spark av heavenly grace wather it, wather it continually."

Another priest who had delivered what seemed to him an excellent and striking sermon was anxious to ascertain its effect on his flock. "Was the sermon to-day to y' liking, Pat?" he inquired of one of them.

"Throth, y' reverence, it was a grand sermon entirely," said Pat, with such genuine admiration that his reverence felt moved to investigate further.

"Was there any one part of it more

than another that seemed to take hold of ye?" he inquired.

"Well, now, as ye are for axin' me, begorra, I'll tell ye. What tuk hould av me most was y'r reverence's perserence—the way ye wint over the same thing agin and agin and agin."

— THE RECONCILIATION.

You must have had a very serious quarrel with your husband!

Why do you think so?

That's such a handsome sealings quoit he gave you.

— A STITCH IN TIME.

Re-Miss Rusty is awfully old, isn't she?

She—She is just my age.

Ho—Well—oh, I beg your pardon,

word—"hour"—"Shall I say, Father, save me from this hour?" For this cause came I unto this hour. The cause or the purpose must not be frustrated by the weakness of a moment spoiling the object and work of a life."

— DASHAWAY—HERO COMES CAWKERY.

He says that you and he were thrown together quite a good deal last summer.

Clevertown—Yan. We were both engaged to the same girl.

— CLASSIFICATION CALLED FOR.

Say, ma!

What is it, Freddy?

Are these cold-storage eggs of hen's eggs?

NATURALLY.

Dashaway—Here comes Cawkery. He

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