

LESSONS IN FARMING.

REV. DR. TALMAGE SEES A SERMON IN RURAL LIFE.

He Finds Food For Thought In Plowing, Planting, Reaping, Threshing and Garnering—An Eloquent and Hortatory Peroration—The Harvest Home.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 18.—This sermon, at this season, after most people have had a good, long breath of the country, if they do not actually live there, will revive many pleasant memories, while it deals with great religious truths. Dr. Talmage's text was John xv, 1, "My Father is the husbandman."

This last summer, having gone in different directions over between 5,000 and 6,000 miles of harvest fields, I can hardly open my Bible without smelling the breath of new mown hay and seeing the golden light of the wheatfield. And when I open my Bible to take my text, the Scripture leaf rustles like the tassels of the corn.

We were nearly all of us born in the country. We dropped corn in the hill, and went on Saturday to the mill, trying the grist in the center of the sack so that the contents on either side the horse balanced each other, and drove the cattle afield, our bare feet wet with the dew, and rode the horses with the halter to the brook until we fell off, and hunted the mow for nests until the feathered occupants went cackling away. We were nearly all of us born in the country, and all would have staid there had not some adventurous lad on his vacation come back with better clothes and softer hands, and set the whole village on fire with ambition for city life. So we all understand rustic allusions. The Bible is full of them. In Christ's sermon on the mount you could see the full blown lilies and the glossy back of the crow's wing as it flies over Mount Olivet. David and John, Paul and Isaiah, find in country life a source of frequent illustration, while Christ in the text takes the responsibility of calling God a farmer, declaring, "My Father is the husbandman."

Noah was the first farmer. We say nothing about Cain, the tiller of the soil. Adam was a gardener on a large scale, but to Noah was given all the acres of the earth. Elisha was an agriculturist, not cultivating a 10 acre lot, for we find him plowing with 12 yoke of oxen. In Bible times the land was so plenty and the inhabitants so few that Noah was right when he gave to every inhabitant a certain portion of land, that land, if cultivated, ever after to be his own possession—just as in Nebraska the United States government on payment of \$16 years ago gave pre-emption right to 160 acres to any man who would settle there and cultivate the soil.

In the fields. All classes of people were expected to cultivate ground except ministers of religion. It was supposed that they would have their time entirely occupied with their own profession, although I am told that sometimes ministers do plunge so deeply into worldliness that they remind one of what Thomas Frasier said in regard to a man in his day who preached very well, but lived very ill, "When he is out of the pulpit, it is a pity he should ever go into it, and when he is in the pulpit it is a pity he should ever come out of it."

They were not small crops raised in those times, for though the arts were rude, the plow turned up very rich soil, and barley, and cotton, and flax, and all kinds of grain came up at the call of the harvesters. Pliny tells of one stalk of grain that had on it between 300 and 400 ears. The rivers and the brooks, through artificial channels, were brought down to the roots of the corn, and to this habit of turning a river wherever it was wanted Solomon refers when he says, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, and he turneth it as the rivers of water are turned, whithersoever he will."

The wild beasts were caught, and then a hook was put into their nose, and then they were led over the field, and to that God refers when he says to wicked Sennacherib, "I will put a hook in thy nose and I will bring thee back by the way which thou earnest." And God has a hook in every bad man's nose, whether it be Nebuchadnezzar or Ahab or Hored. He may think himself very independent, but come time in his life, or in the hour of his death, he will find that the Lord Almighty has a hook in his nose.

This was the rule in regard to the culture of the ground, "Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together," illustrating the folly of ever putting intelligent and useful and pliable men in association with the stubborn and the unmanageable. The vast majority of troubles in the churches and in reformatory institutions comes from the disregard of this command of the Lord, "Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together."

There were large amounts of property invested in cattle. The Moabites paid 100,000 sheep as an annual tax. Job had 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen. The time of vintage was ushered in with mirth and music. The clusters of the vine were put into the wine press, and then five men would get into the press and trample out the juice from the grape until their garments were saturated with the wine and had become the emblems of slaughter. Christ himself, wounded until covered with the blood of crucifixion, making use of this allusion when the question was asked, "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel and thy garments like one who treadeth the wine vat?" he responded, "I have trodden the wine press alone."

In all ages there has been great honor paid to agriculture. Seven-eighths of the people in every country are disciples of the plow. A government is strong in proportion as it is supported by an athletic and industrious yeomanry. So long ago as before the fall of Carthage, Strabo wrote 28 books on agriculture. Hesiod wrote a poem on the same subject, "The Weeks and Days." Cato was prouder of

his work on husbandry than of all his military conquests. But I must not be tempted into a discussion of agricultural conquests. Standing amid the harvests and orchards and vineyards of the Bible, and standing amid the harvests and orchards and vineyards of our own country—larger harvests than have ever before been gathered—I want to run out the analogy between the production of crops and the growth of grace in the soul, all these sacred writers making use of that analogy.

The Plow. In the first place, I remark, in grace as in the fields, there must be a plow. That which theologians call conviction is only the plowshare turning up the sins that have been rooted and matted in the soul. A farmer said to his indolent son, "There are \$100 buried deep in that field." The son went to work and plowed the field from fence to fence, and he plowed it very deep, and then complained that he had not found the money. But when the crop had been gathered and sold for \$100 more than any previous year, then the young man took the hint as to what his father meant when he said there was \$100 buried down in that field. Deep plowing for a crop. Deep plowing for a soul. He who makes light of sin will never amount to anything in the church or in the world. If a man speaks of sin as though it were an inaccuracy or a mistake instead of the loathsome, abominable, consuming, and damning thing that God hates, that man will never yield a harvest of usefulness.

When I was a boy, I plowed a field with a team of spirited horses. I plowed it very quickly. Once in a while I passed over some of the sod without turning it, but I did not jerk back the plow, with its rattling devices. I thought it made no difference. After awhile my father came along and said, "Why, this will never do; this isn't plowed deep enough; there you have missed this, and you have missed that." And he plowed it ever again. The difficulty with a great many people is that they are only scratched with conviction when the subsoil plow of God's truth ought to be put in up to the beam.

My word is to all Sabbath school teachers, to all parents, to all Christian workers: Plow deep! Plow deep! And if in your own personal experience you are apt to take a lenient view of the sinful side of your nature, put down into your soul the Ten Commandments, which reveal the holiness of God, and that sharp and glittering colter will turn up your soul to the deepest depths. If a man preaches to you that you are only a little out of order by reason of sin and that you need only a little fixing up, he deceives. You have suffered an appalling injury by reason of sin. There are quick poisons and slow poisons, but the druggist could give you one drop that could kill the body. And sin is like that drug; so virulent, so poisonous, so fatal that one drop is enough to kill the soul.

Deep Plowing. Deep plowing for a crop. Deep plowing for a soul. Broken heart or no religion. Broken soil or no harvest. Why was it that David and the jailer and the publican and Paul made such ado about their sins? Had they lost their senses? No. The plowshare struck them. Conviction turned up a great many things that were forgotten. As a farmer plowing sometimes turns up the skeleton of a man or the anatomy of a monster long ago buried, so the plowshare of conviction turns up the ghastly skeletons of sins long ago entombed. Geologists never brought up from the depths of the mountain mightier ichthyosaurs or megatherium.

But what means all this crooked plowing, these crooked furrows, the repentance that amounts to nothing, the repentance that ends in nothing? Men groan over their sins, but get no better. They weep, but their tears are not counted. They get convicted, but not converted. What is the reason? I remember that on the farm we set a standard with a red flag at the other end of the field. We kept our eye on that. We aimed at that. We plowed up to that. Losing sight of that, we made a crooked furrow. Keeping our eye on that, we made a straight furrow. Now, in this matter of conviction we must have some standard to guide us. It is a red standard that God has set at the other end of the field. It is the cross. Keeping your eye on that, you will make a straight furrow. Losing sight of it, you will make a crooked furrow. Plow up to the cross. Aim not at either end of the horizontal piece of the cross, but at the upright piece, at the center of it, the heart of the Son of God, who bore your sins and made satisfaction. Crying and weeping will not bring you through. "Him hath God exalted to be a prince and a Saviour to give repentance." Oh, plow up to the cross!

The Sowing. Again I remark, in grace, as in the field, there must be a sowing. In the autumnal weather you find the farmer going across the field at a stride of about 23 inches, and at every stride he puts his hand into the sack of grain, and he sprinkles the seed corn over the field. It looks silly to a man who does not know what he is doing. He is doing a very important work. He is scattering the winter grain, and, though the snow may come, the next year there will be a great crop. Now, that is what we are doing when we are preaching the gospel—we are scattering the seed. It is the foolishness of preaching, but it is the winter grain. And though the snows of worldliness may come down upon it, it will yield after awhile glorious harvest. Let us be sure we sow the right kind of seed. Sow no mullen stalk and mullen stalk will come up. Sow Canada thistles and Canada thistles will come up. Sow wheat and wheat will come up. Let us distinguish between truth and error. Let us know the difference between wheat and hellbore, oats and henbane. The largest denomination in this country is the denomination of Nothingarians. Their religion is a system of negations. You say to one of them, "What do you believe?" "Well, I don't

believe in infant baptism." "What do you believe?" "Well, I don't believe in the perseverance of the saints." "Well, now tell me what you do believe?" "Well, I don't believe in the eternal punishment of the wicked." So their religion is a row of ciphers. Believe something and teach it; or, to resume the figure of my text, scatter abroad the right kind of seed.

A minister the other day preached a sermon calculated to set the denominations of Christians quarreling. He was sowing nettles. A minister the other day advertised that he would preach a sermon on the superiority of transcendental and organized forces to untranscendental and unorganized forces. What was he sowing? Weeds. The Lord Jesus Christ 19 centuries ago planted the divine seed of doctrine. It sprang up. On one side of the stalk are all the churches of Christendom. On the other side of the stalk are all the free governments of the earth, and on the top there shall be a flowering millennium after awhile. All from the gospel seed of doctrine. Every word that a parent, or Sabbath school teacher, or city missionary, or other Christian worker speaks for Christ comes up. Yea, it comes up with compound interest—you saving one soul, that one saving ten, the ten a hundred, the hundred a thousand, the thousand ten thousand, the ten thousand one hundred thousand—on, on, on, forever.

The Harrowing. Again I remark, in grace, as in the farm, there must be a harrowing. I refer now not to a harrow that goes over the field in order to prepare the ground for the seed, but a harrow which goes over after the seed is sown, lest the birds pick up the seed, sinking it down into the earth so that it can take root. You know a harrow. It is made of bars of wood nailed across each other, and the undersides of each bar is furnished with sharp teeth, and when the horses are hitched to it it goes tearing and leaping across the field, driving the seed down into the earth until it springs up in the harvest. Bereavement, sorrow, persecution are the Lord's harrows to stak the gospel truth into your heart. These were truths that you heard 30 years ago. They have not affected you until recently. Some great trouble came over you, and the truth was harrowed in, and it has come up. What did God mean in this country in 1857? For a century there was the gospel preached, but a great deal of it produced no result. Then God harrowed a wild panic to a harrow of commercial disaster, and that harrow went down Wall street and up Wall street, down Third street and up Third street, down State street and up State street, down Pennsylvania avenue and up Pennsylvania avenue, until the whole land was torn to pieces as it had never been before. What followed the harrow? A great awakening, in which there were 500,000 souls brought into the kingdom of our Lord. No harrow, no crop.

The Reaping. Again I remark, in grace, as in the farm, there must be a reaping. Many Christians speak of religion as though it were a matter of economics or insurance. They expect to reap in the next world. Oh, no! Now is the time to reap. Gather up the joy of the Christian religion this morning, this afternoon, this night. If you have not as much grace as you would like to have, thank God for what you have and end pray for more. You are no worse enslaved than Joseph, no worse troubled than was David, no worse scourged than was Paul. Yet, amid the rattling of fetters and amid the gloom of dungeons and amid the horror of shipwreck, they triumphed in the grace of God. The weakest man in the house today has 500 acres of spiritual joy all ripe. Why do you not go and reap it? You have been grooming over your infirmities for 30 years. Now give one round shout over your emancipation. You say you have it so hard. You might have it worse. You wonder why this great cold trouble keeps revolving through your soul, turning and turning with a black hand on the crank. Ah, that trouble is the grindstone on which you are to sharpen your sickle. To the fields! Wake up! Take off your green spectacles, your blue spectacles, your black spectacles. Pull up the corners of your mouth as far as you pull them down. To the fields! Reap, reap!

The Threshing. Again I remark, in grace, as in farming, there is a time for threshing. I tell you bluntly that is death. Just as the farmer with a flail beats the wheat out of the straw, so death beats the soul out of the body. Every sickness is a stroke of the flail, and the sickbed is the threshing floor. What, say you, is death to a good man only taking the wheat out of the straw? That is all. An aged man has fallen asleep. Only yesterday you saw him in the sunny porch playing with his grandchildren. Calmly he received the message to leave this world. He bade a pleasant goodby to his old friends. The telegraph carries the tidings, and on swift rail trains the kindred come, wanting once more to look on the face of dear old grandfather. Brush back the gray hairs from his brow. It will never ache again. Put him away in the slumber of the tomb. He will not be afraid of that night. Grandfather was never afraid of anything. He will rise in the morning of the resurrection. Grandfather was always the first to rise. His voice has already mingled in the doxology of heaven. Grandfather always did sing in church. Anything ghastly in that? No. The threshing of the wheat out of the straw. That is all.

The Saviour folds a lamb in his bosom. The little child filled all the house with her music, and her toys are scattered all up and down the stairs just as she left them. What if the hand that plucked four-o'clocks out of the meadow is still? It will wave in the eternal triumph. What if the voice that made music in the home is still? It will sing the eternal hosanna. Put a white rose in one hand, a red rose in the other hand and a wreath of orange blossoms on the brow; the white flower for the

victory, the red flower for the Saviour's sacrifice, the orange blossoms for her marriage day. Anything ghastly about that? Oh, no! The sun went down and the flower shrank. The wheat thrashed out of the straw. "Dear Lord, give me sleep," said a dying boy, the son of one of my elders; "dear Lord, give me sleep." And he closed his eyes and awoke in glory. Henry W. Longfellow, writing a letter of condolence to those parents, said, "Those last words were beautifully poetic." And Mr. Longfellow knew what is poetic. "Dear Lord, give me sleep."

"Twas not in cruelty, not in wrath, That the reaper came that day. 'Twas an angel that visited the earth And took the flower away."

So it may be with us when our work is all done. "Dear Lord, give me sleep."

I have one more thought to present. I have spoken of the plowing, of the sowing, of the harrowing, of the reaping, of the threshing. I must now speak a moment of the garnering. Where is the garner? Need I tell you? Oh, no! So many have gone out from your own circles—yea, from your own family—that you have had your eyes on that garner for many a year. What a hard time some of them had! In Gethsemane of suffering they sweat great drops of blood. They took the "cup of trembling," and they put it to their hot lips, and they cried, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." With tongues of burning agony they cried, "O Lord, deliver my soul!" But they got over it. They all got over it. Garnered! Their tears wiped away; their battles all ended; their burdens lifted. Garnered! The Lord of the harvest will not allow those sheaves to perish in the equinox. Garnered! Some of us remember, on the farm, that the sheaves were put on the top rack which surmounted the wagon, and these sheaves were piled higher and higher, and after awhile the horses started for the barn, and these sheaves swayed to and fro in the wind, and the old wagon creaked, and the horses made a struggle, and pulled so hard the harness came up in loops of leather on their backs, and when the front wheel struck the elevated door of the barn it seemed as if the load would go no farther until the workmen gave a great shout, and then, with one last tremendous strain, the horses pulled in the load; then they were unharmed, and forful after forful of grain fell into the mow. Oh, my friends, our getting to heaven may be a pull, a hard pull, a very hard pull; but these sheaves are bound to go in. The Lord of the harvest has promised it. I see the load at last coming to the door of the heavenly garner. The sheaves of the Christian soul sway to and fro in the wind of death, and the old body creaks under the load, and as the load strikes the floor of the celestial garner, it seems as if it can go no farther. It is the last struggle, until the voices of angels and the voices of our departed kindred and the welcoming voice of God shall send the harvest rolling into the eternal triumph, while all up and down the sky the cry is heard: "Harvest home! Harvest home!"

Li Had His Doubts. An amusing story of Li Hung Chang is told in official circles. Whether or not it is accurate in all particulars is no concern to know, but the tale is as follows: When John W. Foster and Mrs. Foster were first in China, they were handsomely entertained by the viceroy, and a warm friendship sprang up between the former American secretary of state and the greatest man of the eastern world. Then, as now, Li Hung Chang was disposed to ask all manner of questions, and at the first opportunity he asked Mrs. Foster if her husband was not a very great man and a very rich man in his own country. Mrs. Foster replied, with becoming modesty, that Mr. Foster had held many high official positions. He had been minister to Spain, minister to Mexico, minister to Russia, a special envoy to Spain, and, finally, the greatest honor being reserved for the last, secretary of state, next in the cabinet to the president himself. "But Mr. Foster is not wealthy. In fact, he is a comparatively poor man," Mrs. Foster frankly explained. Li shook his head. "You say Mr. Foster has been minister to Mexico, to Spain, a special envoy to Spain and secretary of state?" "Yes," "And he is still poor?" "Yes, comparatively speaking." The old viceroy looked Mrs. Foster in the eye for a moment, and then, placing his two hands over his nose and one eye, he winked roughly with the other optic and tittered. A sly old dog is Li Hung Chang.—Washington Letter in Chicago Times-Herald.

Horseless Fire Engines. It is proposed to add two horseless steam fire engines to the equipment of the Boston fire department. They were once tried in New York, but were abandoned. "Horseless," says The Transcript, "do not yet take kindly to the steam roller, and if they should see it plunging madly along our congested streets at a three minute gait, belching smoke and flame, their fears would not be likely to be much allayed. The self-propeller on its travels bears a close resemblance to the steam roller. The only city that uses this style of engine to any considerable extent in the east is Hartford. Her Jumbo is well known to fire departments all over the country. It is nearly twice the weight and twice the price of an ordinary engine, though its water throwing capacity bears no such ratio of increase."

He Often Suggests Such Problems. There is a consensus of opinion among the well informed that the present czar aims at the maintenance of peace. It remained for the German emperor to represent him as the crowned providence on whose will its preservation depends. Was it in order that the words "in complete accord with me" might be interpolated that this testimony to character was so conspicuously given?—London Standard.

SMALLPOX SPREADING

Over a Thousand Deaths In Havana Last Month.

YELLOW FEVER ALSO ON INCREASE

Spanish Soldiers Die Like Sheep In the Military Hospitals—Likely to Die Many Months Before the Scourge Is Over—The Report of Sanitary Inspector Burgess of the Marine Hospital Service.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 13.—Sanitary Inspector Burgess of the Marine Hospital Service reports from Havana, Cuba, that there were 1,034 deaths in that city during September, 179 of which were from yellow fever. During the week ended Oct. 1 there were 251 deaths, 43 of which were from yellow fever. Forty of the 43 deaths from yellow fever occurred among the Spanish soldiers in the military hospitals.

The inspector, in a recent communication to the bureau, calls attention to the wharf Tallapiedra, at Havana, at which the American steamship Herman M. Duntzler went to discharge a load of lumber brought from Pensacola. While the vessel was there one of its men caught the yellow fever. This wharf, Dr. Burgess says, "is in close proximity to the old and badly infected military hospital, and is probably, and has been for many years, the most dangerous place for vessels to discharge at in the whole harbor on account of the invasion of yellow fever. It is a pity that some way cannot be devised to prevent vessels from going there, particularly American vessels and those subsequently bound to ports in the United States."

Speaking generally about the yellow fever and smallpox, the inspector says: "It will be seen by statistical reports sent on that yellow fever continues to be an active epidemic here, and I am informed that it is so in most of the places where Spanish soldiers are found. The steamers plying between this place and the western end of the island bring on their return trip from ports along the coast numerous cases of that disease. It is reported that the hospitals of Guanajay de las Vegas, San Antonio de Los Baños, Artemisa and other places have many sick of that complaint. The large Casa de Beneficencia y Maternidad, or Foundling and Lying-in hospital, by orders of the government, been emptied of its women and children, and is now being occupied as a hospital for Spanish soldiers. Smallpox, instead of diminishing, increases daily, not only in Havana proper, but in its suburbs. In Regla, on the opposite side of the bay from Havana, there are many cases, amounting to an epidemic there. It is difficult to see when this epidemic will come to an end, with the influx of unvaccinated people from the country driven in by the conditions of war, and the frequent arrival of Spanish steamers from the mother country with cases of that disease aboard. As practically no precautions are taken to prevent smallpox spreading on these vessels, I am afraid that it will be many months before this scourge is over."

Gladsstone May Be Needed. LONDON, Oct. 12.—The Times expresses the belief that the rival claims of Sir William Vernon Harcourt and Mr. Asquith for the succession to the leadership of the Liberal party will compel the recall of Mr. Gladstone to try to unite the party. Lord Rosebery has canceled all of his political engagements, but he does not intend to withdraw permanently from public life.

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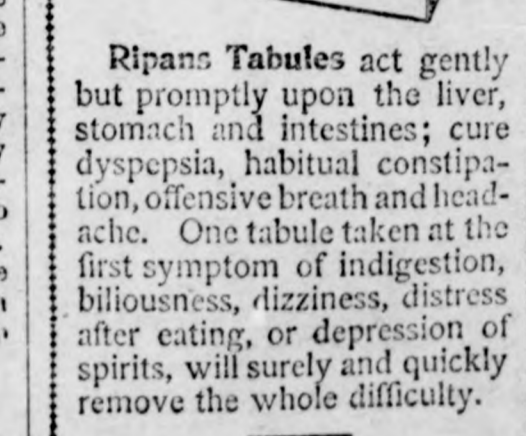
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being twisted up in knots. I was unable to dress myself, except with assistance, and could only hobble about by using a cane. I had no appetite, and was assailed by the doctors, that I could not live. The pain, at times, were so awful, that I could procure relief only by means of hypodermic injections of morphia. I had my feet shrouded in clay, in sulphur, in lead; but these gave only temporary relief. After trying everything, and suffering the most excruciating tortures, I began to take Ayer's Sarsaparilla. Inside of two months, I was able to walk without a cane. In three months, my limbs began to strengthen, and in the course of a year, I was cured. My weight has increased to 165 pounds, and I am now able to do my full day's work as a railroad tracksmith."

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Nos. 35 and 36—United States Fast Mail. Pullman sleeping cars between New York, Atlanta and New Orleans. Pullman parlor cars between Richmond and Danville. Pullman sleeping cars between Birmingham and Charlotte. Nos. 11 and 12—Pullman sleeping cars between Richmond and Danville. The Air Line Belle train, Nos. 17 and 18, will from June 1st to October 1st, 1896, be operated between Atlanta and Mt. Airy, Ga., daily except Sunday. W. H. GREEN, J. M. OULP, Gen'l Supt., Traffic Mgr., Washington, D. C., Washington, D. C. W. A. TURK, S. H. HARDWICK, Gen'l Pass. Agt., Asst. Gen'l Pass. Agt., Washington, D. C., Atlanta, Ga.