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BRILLIANTS  
FROM  
TALMAGE

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BRILLIANTS  
FROM  
REV. T. DEWITT TALMAGE.

244  
T14 b

# BRILLIANTS

SELECTED FROM  
THE WORKS OF

REV. T. DEWITT TALMAGE.

ILLUSTRATED BY  
RAVEN S. CROFT.

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## TALMAGE.

\* \* \* \*

Prescribed forms are mockeries unless they are accompanied by holy acts; ostentation, whether in actions or in worship, is repugnant to the spirit of true righteousness, for God regards only the merciful, the compassionate, the charitable, and these He accepts whether their offerings be made on altars before men, or by prayer in the retirement of one's closet, or wherever the heart is lifted up in homage to God.

\* \* \*

In Christ we behold the second coming, not to destroy but to fulfil; not to prescribe new formularies of worship, but to establish a church in which there should be no other requirement for membership than love, whose creed should be love, whose precepts and practices, and ambitions should be love.



*TALMAGE.*

I am an optimist, and instead of thinking everything is going to ruin, I think everything is going to salvation ; and instead of its being eleven o'clock at night with our suffering and dying world, it is half past five o'clock in the morning.

\* \* \*

Where God hath put exquisite tinge upon the shell washed in the surf, and planted a paradise of bloom in a child's cheek, let us leave it to the owl to hoot, and the frog to croak, and the fault-finder to complain.

\* \* \*

One good, hearty laugh is a bombshell exploding in the right place, while spleen and discontent are a gun that kicks over the man who shoots it off.

\* \* \*

A man cannot be so much of a Christian on Sunday that he can afford to be a worldling all the rest of the week. If a steamer put out for Southampton, and go one day in that direction and the other six days in another direc-





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tion, how long before the steamer will get to Southampton? It will never get there. And though a man may seem to be voyaging heavenward during the holy Sabbath day, if, during the following six days of the week, he is going towards the world, the flesh, and the devil, he will never ride up into the peaceful harbor of Heaven. You cannot eat so much at the Sabbath banquet that you can afford religious abstinence the other six days. Heroism and princely behavior on great occasions are no apology for lack of right demeanor in circumstances insignificant and inconspicuous. The genuine Christian life is not spasmodic, does not go by fits and starts, is not an attack of chills and fever.

\* \* \*

However talkative we may be, there will come a time when the stoutest and most emphatic interrogation will evoke from us no answer. As soon as we have closed our lips for the final silence no power on earth can break that taciturnity. But where, O Christian! will be your spirit? In a scene of infin-

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ite gladness. The spring morning of heaven waving its blossoms in the bright air. Victors fresh from battle showing their scars. The rain of earthly sorrow struck through with the rainbow of eternal joy.

\* \* \*

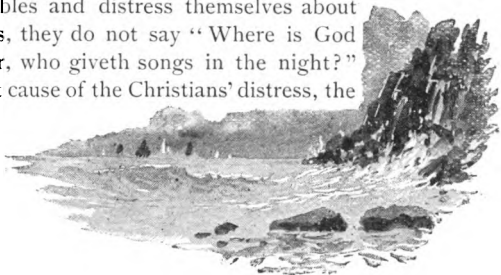
Oh, this is a thirsty world! Hot for the head, and blistering for the feet, and parching for the tongue. The world's great want is a cool, refreshing, satisfying draught. We wander around and find the cistern empty. Long and tedious drought has dried up the world's fountains, but nearly nineteen centuries ago a Shepherd, with crook in the shape of a cross, and feet cut to the bleeding, explored the desert passages of this world, and one day came across a well a thousand feet deep, bubbling and bright, and opalescent, and looked to the north, and to the south, and the east and the west, and cried out with a voice strong and musical that rang through the ages: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters!" . . . We want a great multitude to come around this Gospel

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well. . . . We ought to be anxious that all the people should come. Go out into the highways and the hedges and compel them to come in. Go to the rich and tell them they are indigent without the Gospel of Jesus. Go to the poor and tell them the affluence there is in Christ. Go to the blind and tell them of the touch that gives eternal illumination. Go to the lame and tell them of the joy that will make the lame man leap like a hart. Gather all the sheep off of all the mountains. None so torn of the dogs, none so sick, none so worried, none so dying, as to be omitted. Why not gather a great flock? This well of the Gospel is deep enough to put out the burning thirst of the fourteen hundred million of the race.

\* \* \*

Surely if men be tried and troubled exceedingly, it is because, while they think about their troubles and distress themselves about their fears, they do not say "Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night?" The great cause of the Christians' distress, the



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reason of the depths of sorrow into which many believers are plunged, is simply this — that while they are looking about, on the right hand and on the left, to see how they may escape their troubles, they forget to look to the hills whence all real help cometh; they do not say, “Where is God my Maker who giveth songs in the night?”

\* \* \*

Man's power consisteth not in what he can lift, or how fast he can run, or how strong a wrestler he can throw — for in these respects the ox, the ostrich, and the hyena are his superior — but by his reason he comes forth to rule all; through his ingenious contrivance to outrun, outlift, outwrestle, outsee, outhear, outdo. At his all-conquering decree, the forest that had stood for ages steps aside to let him build his cabin and cultivate his farm. The sea which raved and foamed upon the race has become a crystal pathway for commerce to march on. The thunder-cloud that slept lazily above the mountain is made to come down and carry mailbags. Man, dissat-

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isfied with his slowness of advancement, shouted to the Water and the Fire, "Come and lift!" "Come and draw!" "Come and help!" And they answered "Ay, ay, we come;" and they joined hands — the fire and the water — and the shuttles fly, and the rail-train rattles on, and the steamship comes coughing, panting, flaming across the deep. He elevates the telescope to the heavens, and as easily as through the stethoscope the physician hears the movement of the lung, the astronomer catches the pulsation of distant systems of worlds throbbing with life. He takes the microscope and discovers that there are hundreds of thousands of animalcula living, moving, working, dying, within a circle that could be covered with the point of a pin — animals to which a raindrop would be an ocean, a roseleaf a hemisphere, and the flash of a firefly lasting enough to give them light to several generations.

\* \* \*

Morning! — a summer morning. — I wish I had a rousing-bell to wake the whole world

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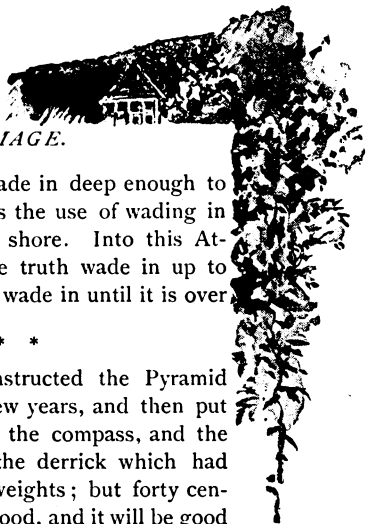
up to see it. Every leaf a psalm. Every flower a censer. Every bird a chorister. Every sight, beauty. Every sound, music. Trees transfigured. The skies in conflagration. The air as if sweeping down from hanging-gardens of Heaven. The foam of celestial seas plashed on the white tops of the spiræa. The honey-suckle on one side of the porch challenges the sweet-brier on the other. The odors of heliotrope overflow the urns and flood the garden. Syringas, with bridal blossoms in their hair, and roses bleeding with a very carnage of color. Oh, the glories of day-dawn in the country! My pen trembles, and my eyes moisten. Unlike the flaming sword that drove out the first pair from Eden, these fiery splendors seem like swords unsheathed by angel hands to drive us in.

*In "Ladies Home Journal."*

\* \* \*

I do with perplexing passages of Scripture what I do in summer-time with the Atlantic Ocean. I go down to the beach and wade in and get from the mighty deep, health and





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strength. I do not wade in deep enough to get drowned. What is the use of wading in until you cannot reach shore. Into this Atlantic Ocean of Divine truth wade in up to your heart, but do not wade in until it is over your head.

\* \* \*

The men who constructed the Pyramid worked at it only a few years, and then put down the trowel, and the compass, and the square, and lowered the derrick which had lifted the ponderous weights; but forty centuries has their work stood, and it will be good for forty centuries more.

All Egypt has been shaken by terrible earthquakes, and cities have been prostrated or swallowed, but that pyramid has defied all volcanic paroxysms. It has looked upon some of the greatest battles ever fought since the world stood. Where are the men who constructed it? Their bodies gone to dust, and even the dust scattered. . . . So men die, but their work lives on. We are all building pyramids, not to last four thousand years, but forty

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thousand, forty million, forty trillion, forty quadrillion, forty quintillion. For a while we wield the trowel, or pound with the hammer, or measure with the yard-stick, or write with the pen, or experiment with the scientific battery, or plan with the brain, and for a while the foot walks, and the eye sees, and the ear hears, and the tongue speaks. All the good words or bad words we speak are spread out into one layer for a pyramid. All the kind deeds or malevolent deeds we do are spread out into another layer. All the Christian or un-Christian example we set is spread out in another layer. All the indirect influences of our lives are spread out in another layer. Then the time soon comes when we put down the implement of toil and pass away, but the pyramid stands.

\* \* \*

We say nothing against the marble or the bronze of the necropolis. Let all that sculpture and florescence and arborescence can do for the places of the dead be done, if means will allow it. But if after one is dead there is noth-

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ing left to remind the world of him but some pieces of stone, there is but little left. . . . This pyramid, which Isaiah says is a sign and a witness, demonstrates that neither limestone nor red granite is competent to keep one affectionately remembered ; neither can bronze ; neither can Parian marble ; neither can Aberdeen granite do the work. But there is something out of which to build an everlasting monument, and that will keep one freshly remembered four thousand years — yea, for ever and ever. It does not stand in marble-yards. It is not to be purchased at mourning-stores. Yet it is to be found in every neighborhood, plenty of it, inexhaustible quantities of it. It is the greatest stuff in the universe to build monuments out of. I refer to the memories of those to whom we can do a kindness, the memories of those whose struggles we may alleviate, the memories of those whose souls we may save.

\* \* \*

As in Egypt on a December afternoon, . . . we mounted to return to Cairo, we took

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our last look of the pyramid at Gizeh. You know there is something in the air toward evening that seems productive of solemn and tender emotion, and that great pyramid seemed to be humanized and with lips of stone it seemed to speak and cry out :

“ Hear me, man, mortal and immortal! My voice is the voice of God. He designed me. Isaiah said I would be a sign and a witness. I saw Moses when he was a lad, I witnessed the long procession of the Israelites as they started to cross the Red Sea and Pharaoh’s host in pursuit of them. The falcons and the eagles of many centuries have brushed my brow. I stood here when Cleopatra’s barge landed with her sorceries, and Hypatia for her virtues was slain in yonder streets. Alexander the Great, Seostris, and Ptolemy admired my proportions. Herodotus and Pliny sounded my praise. I am old, I am very old. For thousands of years I have watched the coming and going of generations. They tarry only a little while, but they make everlasting impression. I bear on my side



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the mark of the trowel and chisel of those who more than four thousand years ago expired. Beware what you do, oh, man! for what you do will last long after you are dead! If you would be affectionately remembered after you are gone, trust not to any earthly commemoration. I have not one word to say about any astronomer who studied the heavens from my heights, or any king who was sepulchred in my bosom. I am slowly passing away. I am a dying pyramid. I shall yet lie down in the dust of the plain, and the sands of the desert shall cover me, or when the earth goes I will go. But you are immortal. The feet with which you climbed my sides to-day will turn to dust, but you have a soul that will outlast me and all my brotherhood of pyramids. Live for eternity! Live for God! With the shadows of the evening now falling from my side, I pronounce upon you a benediction. Take it with you across the Mediterranean. Take it with you across the Atlantic. God only is great! Let all the earth keep silence before Him.

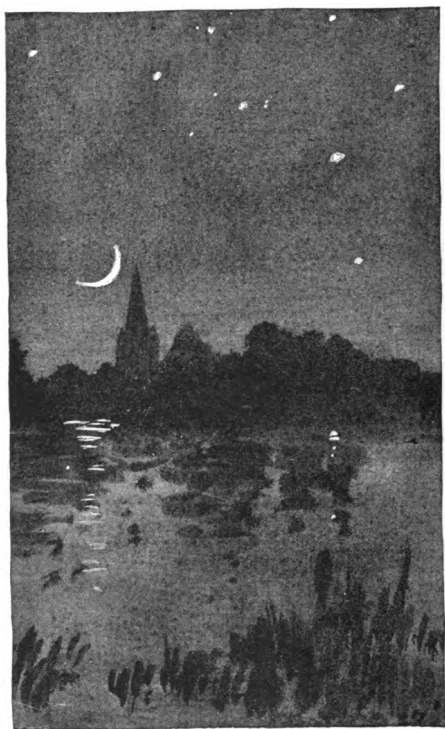
TALMAGE.

June and October, if they could see each other, would soon be married. Not much difference between their ages : the one fair and the other ruddy ; both beautiful to look upon, and typical : the one holding a bunch of flowers, and the other a basket of fruit. The south winds would harp at the nuptials, and against the uplifted chalices would dash the blood of strawberry and grape. To that marriage altar January would bring its cups of crystal, and April its strung beads of shower, and July its golden crown of wheat.

*In "Ladies Home Journal."*

\* \* \*

Christ came asking, Are you just? are you pure? are you God-fearing and God-serving? do you love one another? do you keep the commandments? He did not care to know, for it was unimportant, whether the people observed all the feast and fast days, or whether they went regularly to the synagogue services, or whether they were faithful to the rigorous laws respecting the Sabbath. All these were but travesties on holy ordinances,



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as long as their observance was wanting in the true spirit of righteousness.

\* \* \*

Jesus not only contravened the old and thoroughly ingrained belief that all manner of ill fortune was an evidence of God's displeasure, but declared that afflictions should rather be counted as blessings, for it is not by prosperity, but by tribulation, that we are brought to seek God.

\* \* \*

The woman of Samaria told the truth when she said, "The well is deep;" and no wonder she cried out, "Thou hast nothing to draw with." She knew not that Christ was speaking of spiritual supply. For that well God gives every one a pail if he will only let it down into the floods.

\* \* \*

It is appropriate that the ascent to the Mount of the Saviour's Blesseds should be difficult, for some of the attainments commended there by our Lord are heights most difficult to reach. For instance: Who really loves his enemies?



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We may not wish them harm, indeed you may wish them well. But there are not many who have a real affection for those who maltreat them.

\* \* \*

We cry at weddings, but not bitter tears; for when the heart is stirred, and smiles are insipid, and laughter is tame, the heart writes out its joy on the cheek in letters of crystal.

\* \* \*

In the lottery of life there are more prizes drawn than blanks, and to one misfortune there are fifty advantages. Despondency is the most unprofitable feeling a man can indulge in.

\* \* \*

Some people have an idea that they comfort the afflicted when they groan over them. Don't drive a hearse through a man's soul.

\* \* \*

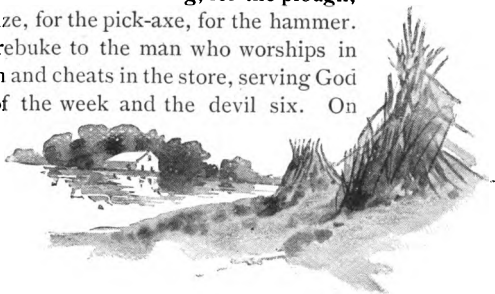
To-night the heavens were full of ladders: first a ladder of clouds, then a ladder of stars, and all up and down the heavens are the angels of beauty, angels of consolation, angels of God ascending and descending. "Surely

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God is in this place," said Jacob, "and I knew it not." But to-night God is in this place and I know it!

\* \* \*

Foreseeing that the whole tendency of the human race would be toward a religion of Tabernacles and Temples, and Synagogues and Churches, the two greatest things ever written, namely, the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount, were delivered in the open air. No depreciation of consecrated edifices, but all places consecrated where a good word is spoken, or a merciful deed done. The world needed a portable religion, one that the business man could take along the street, the farmer to the field, and the mechanic to the house-scaffolding, and the soldier in the long march, and the sailor in the ratlines; a religion for the sheaf-binding and the corn-husking, for the plough, for the adze, for the pick-axe, for the hammer. What a rebuke to the man who worships in the church and cheats in the store, serving God one day of the week and the devil six. On



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Sunday night he leaves his religion in the pew and shuts the pew-door, saying: "Good-by, Religion, I will be back next Sunday." A religion that we do not take with us wherever we go is not the open-air religion of which our Lord was the founder.

\* \* \*

While "night," in all languages, is the symbol for gloom and suffering, it is often really cheerful, bright, and impressive. I speak not of such nights as come down with no star pouring light from above, or silvered wave tossing up light from beneath, — murky, hurtling, portentous, — but such as you often see when the pomp and magnificence of heaven turn out on night-parade; and it seems as though the song which the morning stars began so long ago were chiming yet among the constellations, and the sons of God were shouting for joy.

\* \* \*

Actual commission of an offence against moral laws is not more worthy of punishment in the eyes of God than the instigation or

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impulse to do a wrong which is only prevented through fear of retribution, for the full magnitude of the sin is in the prompting of an evil heart.

\* \* \*

Prayer is not acceptable to God except it be the expression of the heart's holy desires, and nowhere can the heart so well seek God as in private.

\* \* \*

If we continue not exclusive in our faith, but use our influence at all times for the betterment of the world, the fruits of our persistent and goodly labors will appear to gladden our hearts and give us greater favor with God.

\* \* \*

Mercy postponed is only mercy augmented. If the waters of the soul come to the flood-tide, they will break away the dam. If the arrow-head be drawn clear back to the bow, it is only that it may be projected farther. If Christ turn His back to any one, it is only that the dawn on His face may be more effulgent.

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“ Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” Many a man has put his hand over his shoulder to find the cross, and lo, it was gone ; but in bringing his hand back again he has struck the crown on his head, radiant with pardon and glory.

\* \* \*


It is sufficient to know that where affliction exists your duty is to relieve it ; that where sin abounds, strive to save the sinners ; that where the sorrowful are found, use your gifts to console them.

\* \* \*

The Kingdom of God can only be obtained by a wise use of our advantages, in which the happiness of others shall be quite as much our ambition as the enrichment of ourselves.

\* \* \*

It is a grand thing to see a young man or an old man when he is wrong, confess it, and try to do right. I want nothing to do with a man who does not know how to make an apology.



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I hear some say, "If I only had this, that, or the other thing, I would do so much for God." In the last day it may be found that a cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple gets as rich a reward as the founding of a kingdom, and that the sewing-girl's needle may be as honorable in God's sight as a king's sceptre, and that the grandest eulogium that was ever uttered about any one was, "She hath done what she could."

\* \* \*

In all ages religious persecutors are the fiercest of all persecutors, and when the devil does get possession of good men he makes up by intensity for brevity of occupation.

\* \* \*

Was not the zealous spirit of Peter like that of the rich young man, who felt no sacrifice was too great for him to make that he might inherit eternal life, until Jesus asked him to give away his riches? True courage cannot be shown in the absence of peril, nor can devotion be proved except in the presence of sacrifices.

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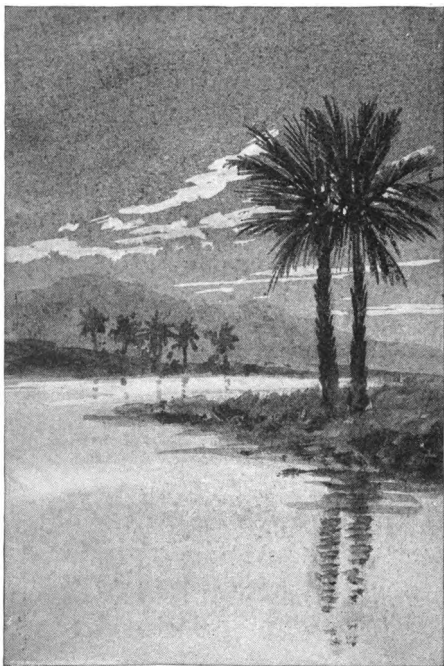
Our love is like our senses : If we lose an eye, the other receives additional strength ; if one of our arms be cut off, the other becomes abnormally developed ; if we lose hearing in one ear, the other grows more acute, and thus it is that nature compensates somewhat for such losses.

\* \* \*

Beyond the hurtling clouds lies heaven ;  
beyond the storm lies the sunshine.

\* \* \*

The Valley of Hattin is an amphitheatre, as though the natural contour of the earth had invited all nations to come and sit down and hear Christ preach a sermon in which there were more startling novelties than were ever announced in all the sermons that were ever preached. His word must have seemed a contradiction of everything they had ever heard or read or experienced. The world's theory had been, " Blessed are the arrogant ; blessed are the supercilious ; blessed are the tearless ; blessed are they who have everything their own way ; blessed are the war eagles ;





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blessed are the persecutors ; blessed are the popular ; blessed are the Herods and the Cæsars and the Ahabs." " No ! No !! No !!! " says Christ, with a voice that rings over these rocks, and through yonder Valley of Hattin, and around the earth, till the globe shall yet be girdled with the Nine Beatitudes.

\* \* \*

This is the River Nile. A brown or yellow or silver cord on which are hung more jewels of thrilling interest than on any river that was ever twisted in the sunshine. It ripples through the Book of Ezekiel, and flashes in the Books of Deuteronomy and Isaiah and Zechariah and Nahum, and on its banks stood the mighties of many ages. It was the crystal cradle of Moses, and on its banks Mary, the refugee, carried the infant Jesus. To find the birthplace of this river was the fascination and defeat of expeditions without number. . . . The greatest damage that ever came to Egypt came by the drying up of the River Nile, and the greatest blessing by its healthful and abundant flow. The famine in Joseph's time

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came from the lack of sufficient inundation from the Nile. Not enough Nile is drought; too much Nile is freshet and plague. The rivers of the earth are the mothers of its prosperity.

\* \* \*

Alexandria, fascinating for this or that thing, according to the taste of the visitor, was to me most entertaining because it had been the site of the greatest library that the world ever saw, considering the fact that the art of printing had not been invented. Seven hundred thousand volumes, and all the work of a slow pen. But down it all went under the torch of besiegers. Built again, and destroyed again. Built again; but the Arabs came along for its final demolition, and the four thousand baths of the city were heated with those volumes, the fuel lasting six months, and were ever fires kindled at such fearful cost? What holocausts of the world's literature! What martyrdom of books! How many of them have gone down under the rage of nations!

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The voice of those ancient cities is hoarse from the exposure of forty centuries, and they accentuate slowly with lips that were palsied for ages; but all together those cities along the Nile intone these words: "Hear us, for we are very old, and it is hard for us to speak. We were wise long before Athens learned her first lesson. We sailed our ships while yet navigation was unborn. These obelisks, these pyramids, these fallen pillars, these wrecked temples, these colossi of black granite, these wrecked sarcophagi under the brow of the hills, tell you of what I was in grandeur and of what I am coming down to be. We sinned and we fell. Our learning could not save us. See those half obliterated hieroglyphics on yonder wall. Our architecture could not save us. See the painted columns of Philæ, and the shattered temple of Ecneh. Our heroes could not save us. Witness Menes, Diodorus, Rameses, and Ptolemy. Our gods Ammon and Osiris could not save us. See their fallen temples all along the four thousand miles of Nile. Oh, ye modern

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cities! get some other God; a God who can help, a God who can pardon, a God who can save. Called up as we are for a little while to give testimony, again the sands of the desert will bury us. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust!" And as these voices of porphyry and granite ceased, all the sarcophagi under the hills responded, "Ashes to ashes!" and the capital of a lofty column fell grinding itself to powder among the rocks, and responding "Dust to dust!"

\* \* \*

Amidst the roughest rural scenes would I have every American pastor spend his summer, all through until the month of September. Congregations would be advantaged by it if for a few weeks of every year they would allow their pastors a little farm-life. Three weeks at a fashionable watering-place will not do the work. . . . Rather turn us out to physical work. A sharp hoe will hack to pieces all your dyspepsia. A pruning-knife will cut off the excrescences of your disposition. The dash of the shower that wets you to the skin

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will cool your spirit for ecclesiastical strife. Daily swinging of the axe will tone up your nerves. Trampling down the hay as it is tossed into the mow will tread into forgetfulness your little perplexities. In the wake of the plough you may pick up strength with which to battle public iniquity. Neighbors looking over the fence may think we are only weeding cantaloupes, or splitting rails, or husking corn, when we are rebuilding our strength, enkindling our spirits, quickening our brain, purifying our theology, and blessing our souls.

*In "Ladies Home Journal."*

\* \* \*

The city of Thebes and all the other dead cities of Egypt iterate and reiterate the veracity of the Scriptures, telling the same story which Moses and the prophets told. Have you noticed how God kept back these archæological confirmations of the Bible until our time, when the air is full of unbelief about the truthfulness of the dear old book? He waited until the printing-press had been set up in its perfected shape, and the submarine

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cable was laid, and the world was intelligent enough to appreciate the testimony, and then He resurrected the dead cities of the earth, and commanded them, saying: "Open your long sealed lips and speak! Memphis and Thebes, is the Bible true?" "True!" responds Memphis and Thebes. "Babylon, is the Book of Daniel true?" "True!" responds Babylon. "Ruins of Palestine and Syria, is the New Testament true?" "True!" responds the ruins all the way from Joppa to the Dead Sea and from Jerusalem to Damascus.

\* \* \*

Aboard the Egyptian rail-train going up the banks of the Nile one may look out of the window and see camels kneeling for the imposition of their load. I think we may take from them a lesson, and, instead of trying to stand upright in our own strength, become conscious of our weakness and need of divine help before we take upon us the heavy duties of the year or the week or the day, and so kneel for the burden.



*TALMAGE.*

He who has faith is better than the stoic. The stoical philosopher bore sufferings because he believed it must be; the Christian bears it, because he believes it is working for his good.

\* \* \*

“They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.” Steep your seed in tears, and then put it into the ground, and you shall reap in joy.

\* \* \*

Some men think that religion lies in great things. It does not, it lies in little things. Our life is made up of little things; and if we are not careful of little things, the great ones must go wrong.

\* \* \*

Providence is wonderfully intricate. Ah! you want always to see through Providence, do you not? You never will, I assure you. You have not eyes good enough. You want to see what good that affliction was to you; you must believe it. You want to see how it can bring good to the soul; you may be enabled in a little time; but you can not see it

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now ; you must believe it. Honor God by trusting Him.

\* \* \*

There are moments in every one's life when the tongue is no interpreter of the heart, when words would be obtrusive and an impediment to thought. Better let the tongue lie still than to allow it to break a sacred spell by voiceful interruption.

\* \* \*

The cruel world took Christ in at the start on a cradle of straw, and at last thrust Him out with the point of a spear ; but benediction ! Ascending until beneath He saw on one side the Bethlehem where they put Him among the cattle, and Calvary on the other side, where they put Him among the thieves ; but benediction ! As far as the excited and intensified vision of the group on Olivet could see Him, and after He was so far up they could no longer hear His words, they saw the gesture of the outspread hands : the benediction ! And that is His attitude to-day. His benediction upon the world's climates, and they



*TALMAGE.*

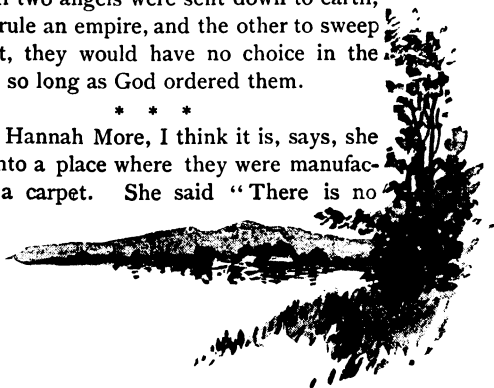
are changing, and will keep on changing until the atmosphere shall be a commingling of October and June. Benediction upon the deserts till they whiten with lily, and blush with rose, and yellow with cowslip, and emerald with grass. Benediction upon the governments till they become more just and humane. Benediction upon nations till they kneel in prayer. Benediction upon the whole earth until every mountain is an Olivet of consecration, and every lake a Galilee on whose mosaic of crystal, and opal, and sapphire, divine splendors shall walk.

\* \* \*

Do you know that there is such a thing as glorifying God by sweeping the street crossing? If two angels were sent down to earth, one to rule an empire, and the other to sweep a street, they would have no choice in the matter, so long as God ordered them.

\* \* \*

Mrs. Hannah More, I think it is, says, she went into a place where they were manufacturing a carpet. She said "There is no



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beauty there." The man said, "It is one of the most beautiful carpets you ever saw." "Why, here is a piece hanging out, and it is all in disorder." "Do you know why, ma'am? You look at the wrong side." So it is often with us. You and I think Providence is bad, because we are looking at the wrong side. We do look at the wrong side while we are here; but when we get to heaven we shall see the right side of God's dealings, and when we do we shall say, "Lord how wonderful are thy works; in wisdom Thou hast made them all; glorious are Thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well."

\* \* \*

In a wheel there is one portion that never turns round, that stands steadfast; and that is the axle. So in God's providence, there is an axle which never moves. Thy state is ever changing: sometimes thou art exalted, and sometimes depressed; yet there is an unmoving point in thy state. What is that axle. What is the pivot upon which all the machinery revolves? It is the axle of God's

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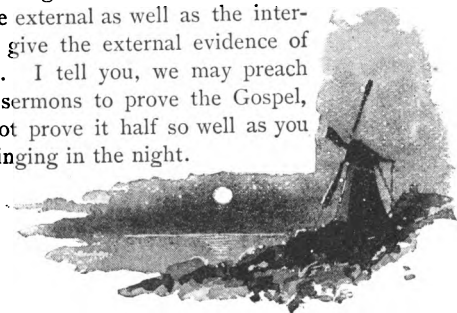
everlasting love. The exterior of the wheel is changing but the centre stands forever fixed. Other things may move; but God's love never moves.

\* \* \*

The songs we warble in the night are those that show we have *real faith* in God. Many men have just enough faith to trust God as far as they can see Him, and they always sing as far as they can see providence go right; but true faith can sing when its possessors cannot see. It can take hold of God when they cannot discern Him.

\* \* \*

Instead of disputing, let me tell thee how to prove your religion. Live it out! live it out! Give the external as well as the internal evidence: give the external evidence of your own life. I tell you, we may preach fifty thousand sermons to prove the Gospel, but we shall not prove it half so well as you will through singing in the night.

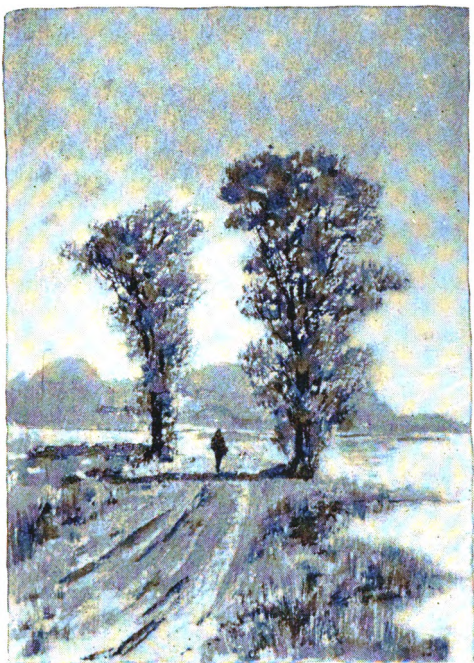


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When the cup is full, man draws inspiration from it; when wealth rolls in abundance around him, any man can sing to the praise of a God who gives a plenteous harvest, or sends home a loaded argosy. It is easy enough for an Æolian harp to whisper music when the winds blow: the difficulty is for music to come when no wind bloweth. It is easy to sing when we can read the notes by daylight; but the skilful singer is he who can sing when there is not a ray of light to read by, — who sings from his heart, and not from a book that he can see, because he has no means of reading, save from that inward book of his own living spirit, whence notes of gratitude pour out in songs of praise.

\* \* \*

God has adapted everything to our comfort and advantage. Pleasant things for the palate; music for the ear; beauty for the eye; aroma for the nostril; kindred for our affections; poetry for our taste; religion for our soul. We are put in a garden, and told that from all the trees we may eat except here and





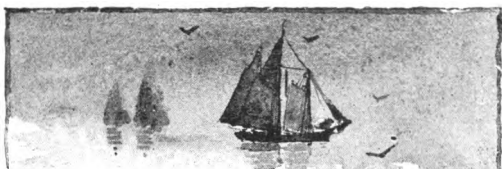
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there one. He gives the sun to shine on us, and the waters to refresh us, and food to strengthen us; and the herbs yield medicine when we are sick, and the forests lumber when we build a house, or cross the water in a ship. The rocks are transported for our foundation; and metals upturned for our currency; and wild beasts must give us covering; and the mountains must be tunnelled to let us pass; and the fish of the sea come up in our net; and the birds of the air drop at the flash of our guns; and the cattle on a thousand hills come down to give us meat. For us the peach-orchards bend down their fruit, and the vineyards their purple clusters. To feed and refresh our intellect, ten thousand wonders in nature and providence—wonders of mind and body, wonders of earth and air, and deep analogies and antitheses; all colors and sounds; lyrics in the air; idyls in the field; conflagrations in the sunset; robes of mist on the mountains; and the “Grand March” of an Omnipotent God in the storm.

There stretches a hand from heaven toward the head of the worst man living. It is a hand, not clenched as if to smite, but outspread as if to drop a benediction. Other seas have a shore and may be fathomed; but the sea of God's love — eternity has no plummet to strike the bottom, and immensity no iron-bound shore to confine it. Its tides are lifted by the heart of infinite compassion. Its waves are the hosannahs of the redeemed. The argosies that sail on it drop anchor at last amid the thundering salvo of eternal victory.

\* \*

Rascally and vagabond people for the most part come forth from unhappy homes. Parents harsh and cruel on the one hand, or on the other lenient to perfect looseness, are raising up a generation of vipers. A home in which scolding and fault-finding predominate is blood relation to the gallows and penitentiary. Petulance is a reptile that may crawl up into the family nest and crush it. There are parents who disgust their children even



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with religion. They scold their little ones for not loving God. They go about even their religious duties in an exasperating way. . . . O traveller for eternity! with your little ones gathered up under your robes, are you sure you are on the right road, or are you leading them on a dangerous and winding bridal-path, off which their inexperienced feet may slip, and up which comes the howling of the wolf and the sound of loosening ledge and tumbling avalanche? Blessed the family altar where the children kneel. Blessed the song the little ones sing at nightfall when sleep is closing their eyes and loosening their hands from the toy on the pillow. Blessed the mother's heart whose every throb is a prayer to God for her children. The world grows old, and soon the stars will cease to illuminate it, and the herbage to clothe it, and the mountains to guard it, and the waters to refresh it, and the heavens to overspan it, and the long story of its sin and shame and glory and triumph will turn into ashes; but parental influences, starting in the early home,

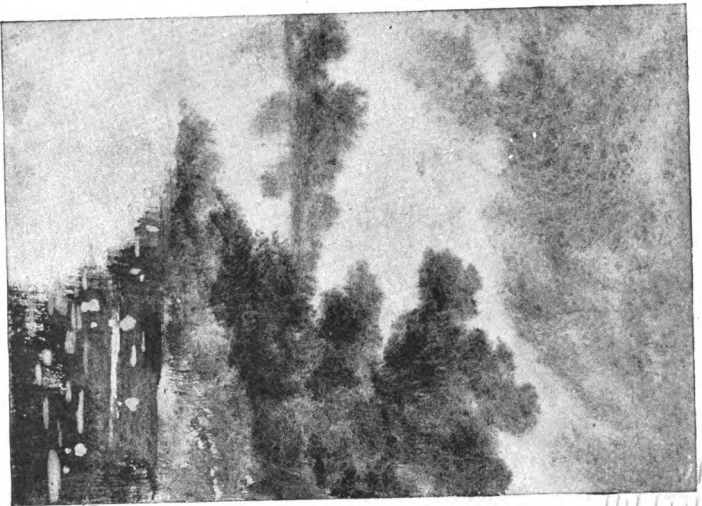


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will roll on and up into the great eternity, blooming in all the joy, waving in all the triumph, exulting in all the song of heaven, or groaning in all the pain, and shrinking back into all the shame of the great prison-house. O father! O mother! in which direction is your influence tending?

\* \* \*

Unhappy and undisciplined homes are the source of much iniquity. A good home is deathless in its influences. Parents may be gone. The old homestead may be sold and have passed out of the possession of the family. The house itself may be torn down. The meadow brook that ran in front of the house may have changed its course or have dried up. The long line of old-fashioned sunflowers and the hedges of wild rose may have been graded, and in place thereof are now the beauties of modern gardening. You say you would like to go back a little while and see that home; and you go, and oh, how changed it is! Yet that place will never lose its charm over your soul. That first earthly



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home will thrill through your everlasting career. The dew-drops that you dashed from the chickweed as you drove the cows afield thirty years ago; the fire-flies that flashed in your father's home on summer nights when the evenings were too short for a candle; the tinged pebbles that you gathered in your apron on the margin of the brook; the berries that you strung into a necklace, and the daisies that you plucked for your hair, — all have gone into your sentiments and tastes, and you will never get over them. The trundle-bed where you slept, the blue-edged dish out of which you ate; . . . your mother's smile; your father's frown, — they are all part of the fibre of your immortal nature.

\* \* \*

I am in full sympathy with those who are opposed to carrying politics into religion; but our cities will never be reformed and purified until we carry religion into politics.

\* \* \*

Fashion sometimes makes a reasonable demand of us, and then we ought to yield to

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it. The daisies of the field have their fashion of color and leaf; the honeysuckles have their fashion of ear-drop; and the snowflakes flung out of the winter heavens have their fashion of exquisiteness. After the summer shower the sky weds the earth with ring of rainbow. And I do not think we have a right to despise all the elegancies and fashions of this world, especially if they make reasonable demands upon us; but the discipleship and worship of fashion are death to the body, and death to the soul.

\* \* \*

You will never be truly happy until you allow Christ to take full possession of your soul. He will be your comfort in every trial. He will be your defender in every strait. I do not ask you to bring, like Mary, the spices to the sepulchre of a dead Christ, but to bring your all to the feet of a living Christ. His word is peace. His look is love. His hand is help. His touch is life. His smile is heaven. Oh, come, then, in flocks and groups! Come, like the south wind over

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banks of myrrh. Come, like the morning light tripping over the mountains. Wreath all your affections for Christ's brow, set all your gems in Christ's coronet, pour all your voices into Christ's song, and let this Sabbath air rustle with the wings of rejoicing angels, and the towers of God ring out the news of souls saved!

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