

THE FLIGHT OF TIME.

DR. TALMAGE PREACHES ON THE SUNDIAL OF AHAZ.

The shadows are controlled by the hand of Omnipotence—Time's flight marked by the sun—Daybreak on the mountain top.

Brooklyn, Jan. 10.—Dr. Talmage's sermon this morning was full of brightness and good cheer. He might have called it a discourse of temperance which characterizes him were conspicuous throughout. He must have been inspired to his heart's content. His text was II King ix, 11, "And said the prophet cried unto the Lord; and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz."

Here is the first clock or chronometer or timepiece of which we have any knowledge. But it was a watch that did not tick and a clock that did not strike. It was a sundial, Ahaz, the king, invented it. Between the hours given to statecraft and the cares of office he invented something by which he could tell the time of day. This sundial may have been a great column, and when the shadow of that column reached one point it was nine o'clock, a. m., and when it reached another point it was three o'clock, p. m., and all the hours and half hours were so measured. Or it may have been a flight of stairs such as any now to be found in Hindostan and other old countries, and when the shadow reached one step it was ten o'clock, a. m., or another step it was four o'clock, p. m., and likewise other hours may have been indicated.

THE WORLD'S CHRONOLOGICAL. The clepsydra or water clock followed the sundial, and the sand glass followed the clepsydra. Then came the candle clock of Alfred the Great and the candle was marked into three parts, and while the first part was burning he gave himself to religion, and while the second part was burning he gave himself to politics, and while the third part was burning he gave himself to rest. After awhile came the wheel and weight clock, and Pope Sylvester the Second was its most important inventor. And the skill of contriving exquisite mechanism tolled at the timespieces until the world had the Vicks' clock of the fourteenth century and Huyghens's clock of the seventeenth century, and the American clockmaker took the recoil escapement, and the "endless chain" followed and the watch and pocket watch took its place, and the compensation balance and the jeweled escapement followed, and now we have the buzz and clang of the great clock and the factories of Switzerland and Germany and England and America turning out what seems to be the perfection of timepieces. It took the world six thousand years to make the present chronometer. So with the measurement of time, minutes and seconds and thirds were calculated from new moon to new moon, from harvest to harvest. Then the events were measured from the birth of the Saviour to the present. The measurement of time, minutes and seconds and thirds were calculated from new moon to new moon, from harvest to harvest. Then the events were measured from the birth of the Saviour to the present. The measurement of time, minutes and seconds and thirds were calculated from new moon to new moon, from harvest to harvest. Then the events were measured from the birth of the Saviour to the present.

"Oh, yes; we acknowledge God in the sunshine of a bright day or the sunshine of a great prosperity. But suppose the darkness of a gloomy day, or the gloom of a great adversity. You have to light the gas at noon. The sun does not show himself all day long. There is nothing but shadow. How slow we are to realize that we are made of the same stuff as the shadows of the sun. You have to light the gas at noon. The sun does not show himself all day long. There is nothing but shadow. How slow we are to realize that we are made of the same stuff as the shadows of the sun." "We buy the day before the market's retreat, or we make an investment that never pays, or we purchase goods that we cannot dispose of, or a crop of grain we never raise by drought or frost, or when we took account of stock on the 1st of January we found ourselves thousands of dollars poorer than we expected. Who under such circumstances says, "This loss is from God. I must have been allowed to go into that unfortunate enterprise for some special reason. God controls the east wind as well as the west wind?"

God controls the shadows. My friends, I cannot look for encouragement on that retrograde shadow on Ahaz's dial without learning that God controls the shadows and that lesson we need all to learn. That he controls the shadows is not so necessary a lesson, for anybody can be happy when things go right. When you sleep eight hours a night and rise with an appetite for food, that is what we call luck, and you go over to the store and open your mail to read more orders than you can fill, and in the next letter you find a dividend for the largest stock you own, and I tell you some flattering thing he has just heard said about you, and you find that all the styles of good in the world have been invented by you, and you find that you have advanced 10 per cent. in value, and on your way home you meet your children in full rump and there are roses on the center of the tea table, and roses of health in cheeks all around the table, what more do you want of consolation? I don't pity you a bit. You feel as if you could boss the world. But for these just opposite circumstances your text comes in with an omnipotence of meaning. The shadow! Oh, the shadow! Shadow of bereavement! Shadow of sickness! Shadow of bankruptcy! Shadow of mental depression! Shadow of persecution! Shadow of death! Speak out, oh, dial of Ahaz, and tell all the people that God manages the shadow! As Hezekiah said, his palace window wrapped in ivy and surrounded by anemones and catanans and looked upon the black hand of the only clock known at that time, and saw it move back ten degrees, he learned a lesson that a majority of the human race never has. He learned that God controls the shadow. The setbacks are sometimes the best things that can happen. The great German author, Schiller, could not work unless he had in his room the scent of rotten apples, and the decay of the fruits of earthly prosperity may become an inspiration instead of a dejection. The setbacks are sometimes the best things that can happen. The great German author, Schiller, could not work unless he had in his room the scent of rotten apples, and the decay of the fruits of earthly prosperity may become an inspiration instead of a dejection. The setbacks are sometimes the best things that can happen. The great German author, Schiller, could not work unless he had in his room the scent of rotten apples, and the decay of the fruits of earthly prosperity may become an inspiration instead of a dejection.

SET BACK THE CLOCK. Make the shadow of the sundial of Ahaz retreat ten degrees. Keep old days, themselves old by always talking about being old, and wishing for the good old days, which were never as good as these days. From all I can hear the grandmothers are not in the line of the grandmothers were. Matters have been hushed up. But if you have ever been in a room adjoining a room where some very old people, a little deaf, and looking very much like old men, and that his eyes do not monopolize all the young people. It may now be hard to get young people up early enough in the morning, but their grandmothers say, "Lead to be pulled out bed. It is wrong now to play mischievous tricks on the unsuspecting, but thirty years ago at night, that most respectable man set down on a crooked pin not accidentally placed there, and purposely drove the sleigh riding party too near the edge of the mountain, or he might see how they would look when tumbled into the snow. And that man who has so little patience with childish exuberance was in a dozen times as much fun, one of the best practiced by the eight-year-old of to-day could set grandfathers and grandmothers in a roar of merriment of what they were before. But back the shadow, agree, but fifty and also by entering on an old man. In our days we have in our about what has the young of one when he was a boy, who had some of the things of England and who died at the age of a hundred and two. The old man who wrote the history of the world, who had some of the things of England and who died at the age of a hundred and two. The old man who wrote the history of the world, who had some of the things of England and who died at the age of a hundred and two.

Don't be frightened out of life by the gripas many are. At the first sneeze of an influenza many give up all as lost. No new terror has come on the earth. The microbes are the cause of disease were described in the Talmud seventeen hundred years ago as "invisible legions of dangerous ones. Don't be scared out of life by all this talk about heart failure. That trouble has always been in the world. That is what all the people that ever passed out of this life have died of—heart failure. Adam had it and all his descendants have had it or will have it. Do not be watching for symptoms, or you will have symptoms of everything. Some of you will get die of symptoms. Symptoms are often only what we sometimes see in the country—a dead owl nailed on a barn door to scare living owls. Put your trust in God, go to bed at ten o'clock, have the window open six inches to let in the fresh air, sleep on your right side, and four or five hours. The old maxim was right, "Get thy spindles and distaff ready, and God will send the flax."

"SEE THE SHADOW MOVE." But while looking at this sundial of Ahaz, I see the shadow of my life. I notice that it went back toward the sunrise instead of forward toward the sunset—to ward the morning instead of toward the night. That thing the world is willing now to do, and in many cases has done. There have been great many things been written and spoken about the shadow of life. I have said some of them myself. But my text suggests a better idea. The Lord who turned back that day from going toward sunset and sent it toward sunrise, is willing to do the same thing for all of us. The theologians who stick to old religious technicalities until they become superstitious would not call it anything but converting. I call it a change from going toward sunset down to going toward sunrise. That man who never tries to unblock the clasp of the door and who sits at the door all the day and ignores the one redemption made by the only one who could redeem, if that man will exchange that prayer, and let the shadow be going forward and he is on the way to sundown. His day is on the road to night. All the watches that tick, and the clocks that chime, and the sundials that move on all the sundials indicate the approach of darkness. But now, if you say, "Lord, I pray, let the change be in answer to prayer, the pardoning Lord reverses things and the man starts toward sunrise instead of sunset. He turns the other way. The entrance of salvation gives him the military command, "Attention! Right about face!" He is marching toward indifference, marching toward hardness of heart, marching toward selfishness, marching toward sin, marching toward gloom, marching toward death. Now he turns and marches toward peace, marches toward light, and marches toward comfort and marches toward high hope and marches toward a triumph still pendous and everlasting, toward happiness, peace, and halcyon days that ever roll. Now if that is not the turning of the shadow on the dial of Ahaz from going toward sundown to going toward sunrise—what is it?

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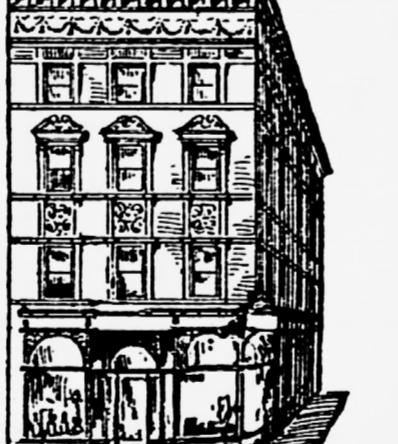
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