

SERMON.

Rev. Dr. Talnage in His Discourse Shows that the Good or Evil We Do Returns to Bless or Blast Us.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 8.—In this discourse Dr. Talnage shows that the good or evil we do returns to bless or blast us; text, Isaiah xl, 22: "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth."

While we people thought that the world was flat and thousands of years before they found out—that it was round, Isaiah, in my text, intimated the shape of it, God sitting upon the circle of the earth. The most beautiful figure in all geometry is the circle. God made the universe on the plan of a circle.

There are in the natural world straight lines, angles, parallelograms, diagonals, quadrangles, but these only are not God's favorites. Almost everywhere you find him geometrising you find the circle dominant, and if not the circle then the curve, which is the circle that died young. If it had lived long enough, it would have been a full orb, a periphery. An ellipse is a circle pressed only a little too hard at the sides.

Giant's Causeway, in Ireland, shows what God thinks of mathematics. There are over 35,000 columns of rocks—octagonal, hexagonal, pentagonal. These rocks seem to have been made by rule and compass. Every artist has his molding room, where he may make fifty shapes, but he chooses one shape as preferable to all others. I will not say that the Giant's Causeway was the world's molding room, but I do say out of a great many figures God seems to have selected the circle as the best.

It is he that sitteth on the circle of the earth. The stars in a circle, the moon in a circle, the universe in a circle, and in the throne of God the center of that circle.

Appreciation of this would correct the architecture of churches whose shape is often a defiance of divine suggestion. When men build churches they ought to imitate the idea of the Great Architect and put the audience in a circle, knowing that the tides of emotion roll more easily that way than in straight lines. Six thousand years ago God flung this world out of his right hand, but he did not throw it out in a straight line, but curvilinear, with a leash of love holding it so as to bring it back again. The world started from his hand pure and Edenic. It has been rolling on through regions of moral loss and distemper. How long it will roll God only knows, but it will in due time make complete circuit and come back to the place where it started, the hand of God, pure and Edenic.

The history of the world goes in a circle. Why is it that the shipping in our day is improving so rapidly? A scientific shipbuilder says it is because men are imitating in some respects what the small wits desire, the old model of Noah's ark, not as we see it in old time pictures, but as it really was according to the account given. Great ships have we now, but where is the ship on the sea today that could outride a deluge in which the heaven and the earth were wrecked, jangling all the passengers in which were a kind of living creature, hundreds of thousands of creatures.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF POMOLOGY. Pomology will go on with its achievements until after many centuries the world will have plums and pears equal to the paradisaical. The art of gardening will grow for centuries, and after the Downings and Mitchells of the world have done their best in the future the art of gardening will come up to the arborescence of the year 1. The makers of colored glass go on improving. They may in some centuries be able to make something equal to the east window of York minister, which was built in the year 1230. We are six centuries behind those artists, but the world must keep on tolling until it shall make the complete circuit and come up to the skill of those very men.

If the world continues to improve in masonry, we shall have after a while, perhaps after the advance of centuries, mortar equal to that which I saw in the wall of an exhumed English city built in the time of the Romans, 1,600 years ago, that mortar today is as good as the day in which it was made, having outlasted the brick and stone. I say after hundreds of years masonry may advance to that point.

If the world stands long enough, we may have a city as large as they had in old times—Babylon, five times the size of London. You go into the potteries of England, and you find them making cups and vases after the style of Pompeii. The world is not going back. Oh, no! But it is swinging in a circle and will come around to the styles of Pompeii known so long ago as the days of Pompeii. The world must keep on progressing until it makes the complete circuit. The curve is in the right direction; the curve will keep on until it becomes the circle.

Well, now, what is true in the material universe is true in God's moral government and spiritual arrangement. That is the meaning of Ezekiel's wheel. All commentators agree in saying that the wheel means God's providence. But a wheel is of no use unless it turns, and if it turns it turns around, and if it turns around it moves in a circle. What then? Are we parts of a great iron machine whirled around whether we will or not, the victims of inexorable fate? No! So far from that I shall show you that we ourselves start the circle of good or bad actions and that will surely come around again to us unless by divine intervention it be hindered. Those bad or good actions may make the circuit of many years, but come back to us they will as certainly as that God sits on the circle of the earth.

Jezabel, the great woman of the Bible, Shakespeare copying his Lady Macbeth from her picture, slew Naboth because she wanted his vineyard. While the dogs were eating the body of Naboth Elijah, the prophet, put down his compass and marked a circle from those dogs clear around to the dogs that should eat the body of Jezabel. The scriptures "impossible" the people said. "That will never happen. Who is that being hung out of the

palace window? Jezabel. A few hours after they came around, hoping to bury the good or evil we do returns to bless or blast us; text, Isaiah xl, 22: "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth."

But it is sometimes the case that this circle sweeps through a century or through many centuries. The world started with a theocracy for government—that is, God was the president and emperor of the world. People got tired of a theocracy. They said: "We don't want God directly interfering with the affairs of the world. Give us a monarchy." The world had a monarchy. From a monarchy it is going to have a limited monarchy. After while the limited monarchy will be given up and the republican form of government will be everywhere dominant and recognized. Then the world will get tired of the republican form of government, and it will have anarchy, which is no government at all. And then all nations, finding out that man is not capable of righteously governing man, will cry out again for a theocracy and say: "Let God come back and conduct the affairs of the world."

THE CIRCLE OF CENTURIES. But it is sometimes the case that this circle sweeps through a century or through many centuries. The world started with a theocracy for government—that is, God was the president and emperor of the world. People got tired of a theocracy. They said: "We don't want God directly interfering with the affairs of the world. Give us a monarchy." The world had a monarchy. From a monarchy it is going to have a limited monarchy. After while the limited monarchy will be given up and the republican form of government will be everywhere dominant and recognized. Then the world will get tired of the republican form of government, and it will have anarchy, which is no government at all. And then all nations, finding out that man is not capable of righteously governing man, will cry out again for a theocracy and say: "Let God come back and conduct the affairs of the world."

What though God should take 10,000 years to draw a circle? Shall we take our little watch, which we have to wind up every night lest it run down, and hold it up beside the clock of eternal ages? If, according to the Bible, six thousand years are in God's sight as one day, then, according to that calculation, the 6,000 years of the world's existence has been only to God as from Monday to Saturday.

But it is often the case that the return is quicker, the return is much quicker than that. The circle is sooner completed. You resolve that you will do what good you can. In one week you put a word of counsel in the heart of a Sabbath school child. During that same week you give a letter of introduction to a young man struggling in business. During the same week you make an exhortation in a prayer-meeting. It is all gone. You will never hear of it perhaps, you think. A few years after a young man struggling in business, during the same week you make an exhortation in a prayer-meeting. It is all gone. You will never hear of it perhaps, you think. A few years after a young man struggling in business, during the same week you make an exhortation in a prayer-meeting. It is all gone. You will never hear of it perhaps, you think.

Yes, you say. He says, "That is where the good is." "Do you see that the governor's house? That is where I live."

THE CIRCLE OF GOOD DEEDS. One day a man comes to you and says, "Good morning." You look at him and say, "Why, you have the advantage of me. I cannot place you." He says, "Don't you remember 30 years ago giving a letter of introduction to a young man—a letter of introduction to William B. Dodge?" "Yes, I do," he says. "I am the man." That was my first step toward a fortune, but I have retired from business now and am giving my time to philanthropic and public interests. Come up to my home and see me."

Or a man comes to you and says: "I want to introduce myself to you. I went into a prayer-meeting some years ago. I sat back by the door. You came to make an exhortation. We talked during the course of my life, and if I ever get to heaven under God I will owe my salvation to you." In only ten, 20 or 30 years the circle swept out and swept back again to your own grateful heart.

But sometimes it is a wider circle and does not return for a great while. I saw a bill of expenses for burning of Lattimer and Ridley. The bill of expenses has these lines: "Shillings. Pence. One load of fire fagots . . . 3 4 Cartage for four loads of wood 2 1 Item, a post 1 Item, two staples 6 Item, four laborers 2 8 making in all 28s. 8d. That was cheap fire, considering all the circumstances, but it kindled a light which shone all around the world and aroused the martyr spirit, and out from this burning of Lattimer and Ridley rolled the circle wider and wider, starting other circles, convoluting, overrunning, circumscribing, overarching, all heaven, or circle.

But what is true of the good is just as true of the bad. You utter a slander against your neighbor. It has gone forth from your teeth. It will never come back to you think. You have done the man all the mischief you can. You rejoice to see him wince. You say to "Didn't I give it to him!" That word has gone out—that slanderous word—on its poisonous and blasted way. You think it will never do you any harm. But I am watching the word, and see it beginning to curve around, and it is aiming at your heart. You had better dodge it. You cannot dodge it. It rolls into your bosom, and after it rolls in a word of an old book rolls in after it, saying, "With what measure you mete it shall be measured to you again."

THE ECHO OF PAST MISDEEDS. You maltreat an aged miser. You begrudge him the room in your house.

You are impatient of his whimsicalities and garrulity. It makes you mad to hear him tell the same story twice. You give him food he cannot masticate. You wish he was away. You wonder if he is going to live forever. He will be gone very soon. His steps are shorter and shorter. He is going to stop. But God has an account to settle with you on that subject. After death you will be alone. The grinding will be low, and you will tell the same story twice, and your children will wonder if you will never be taken away. They called you "father" once; they now call you "man". If you live a few years longer, they will call you the "old chap." What are those rough words with which your children are accosting you? They are the echo of your fatherly words you used in the ear of your old father forty years ago. What is that which you are trying to chew, but find it unmanageable, and your jaws ache, and you surrender the attempt? Perhaps it may be the gristle which you gave to your son for his breakfast forty years ago.

A gentleman passing along the avenue saw a son dragging his father in a street by the hair of the head. The gentleman, outraged at this brutal conduct, was about to punish the offender, when the old man arose and said: "Don't hurt him. It's all right. Forty years ago this morning I dragged the old man by the hair of his head." It is a circle. Other circles are made quickly, very quickly. Oh, what a stupendous thought that the good and the evil we do start, and come back to us! Do you know that the judgment day will be only the points at which the circles join, the good and the bad we have done coming back to us, and the evil we have done coming back to us with the light or curse of condemnation?

Oh, I would like to see Paul, the "invaluable missionary," at the moment when his influence comes to full orb, his influence rolling through Antioch, through Cyprus, through Lystra, through Corinth, through Athens, through Asia, through Europe, through America, through the first century, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, the seventh, the eighth, the ninth, the tenth, the eleventh, the twelfth, the thirteenth, the fourteenth, the fifteenth, the sixteenth, the seventeenth, the eighteenth, the nineteenth, the twentieth, the twenty-first, the twenty-second, the twenty-third, the twenty-fourth, the twenty-fifth, the twenty-sixth, the twenty-seventh, the twenty-eighth, the twenty-ninth, the thirtieth, the thirty-first, the thirty-second, the thirty-third, the thirty-fourth, the thirty-fifth, the thirty-sixth, the thirty-seventh, the thirty-eighth, the thirty-ninth, the fortieth, the forty-first, the forty-second, the forty-third, the forty-fourth, the forty-fifth, the 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