

THE SUICIDE CRAZE.

REV. DR. TALMAGE PREACHES A VERY TIMELY SERMON.

TEXT: CURSE GOD AND DIE.

Causes of the Present Increasing Suicidal Epidemic Pointed Out in Graphic Language, and the Gospel Remedy for This as Well as All Other Evils Effectively Upheld.

Selected according to Act of Parliament of Canada, in the year 1883, by William Baily, of Toronto, at the Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa.

Chicago, July 12.—In view of the startling increase in the crime of self destruction, as shown by the latest statistics, the subject chosen by Dr. Talmage for his discourse to-day is a most timely one. His text is Job ii, 9, "Curse God and die."

Two incitements—desperate, fierce, definite, outrageous! The one urges the broken hearted father, the financial bankrupt, the physically tormented man, to grit his teeth and, with flashing eyes and uplifted hand, hurl a futile malediction at the Almighty, to curse God with an eternal blasphemy. What a shocking appalling suggestion! Enough to make all heaven stand aghast in horror and to render even the demon infested caverns of a hopeless inferno silent with fear and to turn the flushed cheeks ashen with the fires of eternal woe white with terror. Curse God! Who could do that but a human being crazed and desperate and reckless under intolerable anguish?

The second incitement puts in the hands of the sufferer the suicide's knife, the hangman's noose or the vial labelled with the two fatal words, "Deadly Poison." To how many in every age has that insidious temptation come? In the United States alone more than 30,000 persons have yielded to it during the past four years. In Chicago alone 1,294 persons passed out of life by the suicide's gate in three years—nine victims on a single Sabbath. In two months of the present year seventy-five lives have ended in self immolation. How long will the human race listen to that hideous voice which bade Job seek in death escape from his misery? The tempter's voice is sounding louder and louder every day. Shall the crime of self murder be allowed longer to spread the pernicious doctrine that with one stroke of the razor across the jugular vein or with one plunge in front of a flying locomotive or with one leap from high building or lofty plateau the weary being can find rest, eternal rest, God given, blissful oblivion for all who are weary of life and peace for souls sick of the results of sin?

The increasing suicidal epidemic of the present generation should be halted in its onward march of destruction. I lift my voice to-day in warning against this evil. It cannot be stayed by upbraiding a mangled corpse or by calling a dead man a coward. I would prayerfully and earnestly try to indicate some of the causes which produce it.

First, I charge atheism with the chief responsibility for the crime. Self murder is the hideous black visage of the monster of the materialist. We call atheism, agnosticism, infidelity. It is the old, slimy serpent coiled up under the overhanging branches of the garbled and worm eaten tree of unbelief, at the foot of which sits the grinning, bearded hag misery crooning a dirge for a lullaby. It is the death rattle of a human being whose parched lips have been set to the rim of the chalice filled with the scorching, poisonous concoction of blasphemy and falsehood compounded by a Voltaire, a Rousseau, a Thomas Paine or a Robert G. Ingersoll. It is the whetstone, wet with human blood, upon which moral sensibilities can be blunted and at the same time the suicide's knife sharpened, for it teaches the mortal man that there is no hereafter and that he is responsible for his life's actions to no Divine Maker and King.

No suicidal razor was ever honed

upon the leaves of the opened Bible. Though the morning newspapers almost every day are blackened with the awful obituary tragedies of men and women who have deliberately taken their lives by the bloody hand of self murder, you cannot find among those who perished, in the full possession of reason, a single consecrated Christian church member. You cannot find one person among them all who realized that he was a beloved child of God and that he expected to go to meet a loving Heavenly Father unless the person killed himself during a fit of temporary insanity as did Hugh Miller, the great Scotch scientist, who blew out his brains during mental derangement, or that eminent New York clergyman who, in delirium, leaped from a window. Why? The Bible distinctly and emphatically declares that no man has a right to commit self murder. It warns men that they must answer for this terrible crime before the judgment seat of Christ, and it holds out to them no hope of pardon during all eternity. Read the eighth chapter of Revelation: "And murderers and whoremongers and idolaters and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." Read the first epistle of John, third chapter and fifteenth verse: "No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." In the sound of such a divine warning, does any Christian man, with his eyes wide open, attempt to sound the "open sesame" of the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem with the crack of a suicidal pistol? Dare any Christian, by self destruction, obliterate that life which God alone can give and which God alone has a right to take away?

The whole tendency of the gospel of Jesus Christ is opposed to this suicidal epidemic; the whole tendency of unbelief is to promote and increase it. To the atheist life is a single span, one abutment of which is the cradle and the other the grave, at which he meets annihilation. To such a man there is no better principle of life than to eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow he dies. He would make life a comedy for all and death a great finale. The earnest Christian disciple says, "Life is not a joke; death is not a finale." Life is an opportunity for doing good and for struggling against evil. Because the good as well as the evil lives on for ever and ever we ought to put ourselves in the hands of the Almighty, who arranges our lot for us, and say, as did Job, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come."

The unbeliever in the gospel says: "If there is a hell it is to be found this side and not the other side of the grave. When things go wrong the best way to escape suffering is to snap the silver cord of human life and silence the beating heart." The Christian disciple says, "Sanctified troubles are a spiritual means by the grace of God for raising an immortal soul on up. Unsantified troubles are the inexorable means of dragging a sinful, defiant soul on and forever down. He that is unjust let him be unjust still, and he that is filthy let him be filthy still, and he that is righteous let him be righteous still, and he that is holy let him be holy still." Such are the two extremes—the tenets of the believers in total annihilation at the brink of the grave and those of the earnest disciple of Jesus Christ.

False standards for happiness can be catalogued among the frequent, prolific causes of the suicidal sin. They are the deceiving mirages which tempt the weary life's traveler to lose himself in the midst of a Sahara of sand. They are the deceitful stars, twinkling their benedictions over altars of silver and of gold and of fame, which suddenly go out and leave the devotees worshipping in total darkness. They are the musical voices of the sirens singing their sweetest songs when luring their victims on to fatal shipwreck.

In the false standard of happiness can be found the origin of the disappointments which so often end in suicide. Men do not first seek wealth or fame to possess those

treasures, as a miser might hoard up his gold. They desire the merchant prince's palace and the king's throne because they foolishly think that happiness is a coy maiden who loves to robe herself in silks and to have her throat and fingers aglitter with precious jewels, and therefore they can the more readily find her in the rich man's mansion than in the poor man's hut. If they cannot have wealth or fame or worldly honor is about to be taken away from them, then they feel they cannot have happiness. Then, with one pull of the pistol's trigger, they fling away their blighted lives.

Now, my friends, the human being who commits suicide merely because the golden breasted oriole of wealth has plumed her wings and disappeared from sight or because the iconoclast of trouble has shattered the idol of fame is doing a foolish business. Happiness, true happiness, the happiness for which we all long, and for which some of us are seeking, is not dependent upon outside surroundings, but upon the condition of the heart. Some of the most unhappy human beings have been the so-called worldly successful men. Did not the unlimited financial wealth of Nathan Rothschild make him happy? For many years he was the universally recognized financial king of Europe. In a single day he made over \$9,000,000. But, though Nathan Rothschild was the wealthiest financier in all Europe he was one of the most unhappy of men. When a friend visited him one day he said, "You ought to be a happy man with all this wealth." Nathan turned and, with a look of scorn, answered, "Happy! Happy! I happy! Bosh! Let us change the subject."

If wealth does not in itself produce happiness neither does worldly fame nor honor. Men strive for place and power as if with them they were sure of happiness. They plot and conspire and murder that they may mount the steps of a throne, and when they succeed they find that they have gained nothing but anxiety and worry. When the Serbian King and Queen, Alexander and Draga, were assassinated Pope Leo XIII. was said to exclaim in the Vatican, "Oh, when will the people learn that thrones stained with blood are not worth having?" And yet for financial wealth and worldly honor thousands of men will surrender their all. They will follow these will-o'-the-wisps, though the shining lights may lead them over miasmic swamps and quaking bogs and into the fatal quicksand. Then, when they have been defeated in the struggles of life they sometimes drive the destroying dagger into their own arteries, as a tantalized serpent buries his poisonous fangs in his own flesh.

Moral application: Do not try to build the temple of happiness out of yellow bricks. Think not that the broad highway which leads to the throne room of joy is always lined with applauding and vociferating multitudes. The ground mole may tunnel his way into a gold mine, but he still remains a ground mole. The bat, flying about in the darkness, may be able to push his claws into trembling men's pockets, but he is still nothing but a hateful bat.

Envy and covetousness also lead to suicide. These are the two great sins of our neighbors as ourselves is one of the indirect causes of this dreadful sin. Two ways of looking at this old world—the one is through the green glasses of envy, the result of unhappiness; the other way is through the sanctified crystals of a tender, a holy love, the result of gospel joy. The one way is to bitterly bemoan because some people are supposed to be better off than we are. The other way is to try to find out how many people are worse off than we are and then with a Christian desire to try to help them as we would like to be helped if we were in their places. Through what kind of lenses have you been scrutinizing the human race? Through the green glasses of envy, which make all the world look dark, or through the clear, transparent crystals of gospel love, which always make all the world look bright? No happy man ever wanted to commit suicide. No man can be truly unhappy who is trying to help his fellow man. When he finds that he is making others happy, their joys become part of his joys.

The suicidal knife is blunted upon the whetstone of kindness and love and self sacrifice for another reason: When a Christian earnestly consecrates his life to helping his fellow men he is amazed how many troubles are piled at his neighbor's door and, instead of repining at his lot, thanks God for the mercies he enjoys. He becomes more contented to carry his own burdens because as his brother's sorrows grow larger and larger in his eyes his own necessarily by comparison shrink and dwindle and become less and less. Beautifully illustrated is this thought by an old Latin classic. The gods hearing the continual grumblings of the human race, decreed that all men should be able to choose their own burdens, but they must choose some. They decreed that every man, woman and child should bring their load of trouble in a pack and throw it in one place. Then the different troubles of the world were piled in a heap. The rich man came from his palace; the poor man came from his hut. The old man came tottering upon his staff; the young man came leaping as a roe upon the mountain side. The father came, followed by his swarm of children; the single man came alone. The bridegroom came, leading his bride; the widower came after his wife had been snatched from his side. All came with their troubles. All threw their packs in the one pile. "Now," said the gods to the assembled people, "let each individual select any one pack of trouble that he would." Of course the multitudes were overjoyed. Each man at first lifted and weighed the troubles of every other man. "Then at last," so goes the fable, "each individual at a given signal was satisfied to lift up again his own troubles and in contentment go his own

A coward's heart is a direct cause for the suicidal sin. "Oh, no," says some one, "that cannot be. A suicide may be this or that or the other thing, but he is not a coward. No man is a coward who dares to commit self murder. No man is a coward who will calmly look death in the face and defy the grinning skeleton of the tomb."

Ah, my friend, you are wrong. The direct cause of the suicidal sin is invariably the result of a coward's heart. It is the act of a man who runs away from trouble instead of courageously grappling with it. The bravest of deeds is to die if necessary to save others. But it would not be heroic for men to die merely because they are too cowardly to fight. Neither is it heroic or brave for any man to commit suicide merely because he is too craven hearted to meet the responsibilities of life as they arise. The noblest word in some respects in all the English language is "duty." That word will sometimes compel its followers to plunge into and endure the bayonet thrusts of a thorny hedge, as it will sometimes give the pleasanter command of following that stern word through an embowered pathway.

Now, my friends, as the suicidal sin is often caused by a coward's heart, how best can we become brave and true? How can we better fight this tendency to self murder than by nobly and conscientiously and dauntlessly meeting the most pressing duty which is nearest at hand? How can we cease to be cowards better than by fulfilling our honorable obligations which we know we owe to our God and our Christ? He has placed us here to do our duty, to live his life in the world, to serve him by serving our fellow men. Shall we cravenly desert our post? Shall we declare that the task assigned us is too hard for us? Rather let us look to him for the almighty strength that he promises to his faithful servants that we may endure as seeing him who is invisible. So let us stand undaunted beneath his standard until his summons reaches us and we quit with the triumphant shout: "I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

The bravest act in all the world for some men is to publicly confess Christ. While we are preaching to-day on the suicidal sin are you ready to be as brave as William Cowper once was? In a time of great mental depression he was on his way to the river Thames to take his own life. When he arrived near the fatal waters he saw a man fishing at the end of the dock from which he intended to throw himself into the stream. He turned back. Then he went home and tried to stab himself to death, but the knife snapped in two. Then he tried to hang himself, but the rope broke. Then William Cowper realized that he was doing and how cowardly he was. He confessed his error before the world and gave himself up, as never before, to sound forth the divine praise. Oh, my friends, will you not realize that one of the chief reasons of the cowardly tendency to suicide is the unwillingness to publicly confess and work and live for Christ? As all roads were once supposed to lead to Rome, every act and deed and thought of your life should lead you to the foot of the cross. Then, oh, then, if you are true to Christ, you will never be false to yourself. Then, oh, then, your life, instead of having suicidal tendency, will be an eternal life of triumphal joy!

"SALADA"

Uncolored Green tea of Ceylon is being exploited by us on account of its vast superiority over Japans, and we know tea. Sold only in sealed lead packets. 25c. and 40c per lb. By all grocers.

Meat for Children

One of the most unfortunate evil consequences of an early and liberal meat diet, says Dr. Winters, is the loss of relish it creates for the physiological foods of childhood—milk, cereals and vegetables. "A child that is allowed a generous meat diet," he adds, "is certain to refuse cereals and vegetables. Meat, by its stimulating effect, produces a habit as surely as does alcohol, tea or coffee and a distaste for less satisfying foods. The foods which the meat eating child eschews contain in large proportions certain mineral constituents which are essential to bodily nutrition and health, and without which the processes of fresh growth and development are stunted. There are more so called nervousness, anemia, rheumatism, valvular disease of the heart and chorea at the present time in children from an excess of meat and its preparations in the diet than from all other causes combined."—Medical Journal.

Now, my friends, as the suicidal sin is often caused by a coward's heart, how best can we become brave and true? How can we better fight this tendency to self murder than by nobly and conscientiously and dauntlessly meeting the most pressing duty which is nearest at hand? How can we cease to be cowards better than by fulfilling our honorable obligations which we know we owe to our God and our Christ? He has placed us here to do our duty, to live his life in the world, to serve him by serving our fellow men. Shall we cravenly desert our post? Shall we declare that the task assigned us is too hard for us? Rather let us look to him for the almighty strength that he promises to his faithful servants that we may endure as seeing him who is invisible. So let us stand undaunted beneath his standard until his summons reaches us and we quit with the triumphant shout: "I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

MOST DIRECT ROUTE

To the Cemetery—That's What Indigestion is Unless Promptly Checked and Cured by Dodd's Dyspepsia Tablets.

Indigestion leads to Dyspepsia. Dyspepsia breeds Appendicitis, and so weakens the body that it easily yields to any infectious or contagious disease. The moral is that Indigestion is the most direct route to the cemetery.

But that's not the worst of it. The disease itself so fills every day with despondency, every night with wakefulness or bad dreams that life itself is not worth living. Can't you see why you should stop your Indigestion before it gets fairly going. Can't you realize why you should use Dodd's Dyspepsia Tablets. They will stop it. Anyone who has used them will tell you so. Alphonse Caron, of Montmagny, Quebec, tried them. He says: "I used Dodd's Dyspepsia Tablets for Dyspepsia. They are excellent. They cured me completely."

When a man has decided to mend his ways he likes to fix a future date for commencement.

—The Master Mechanic's Pure Tar Soap heals and softens the skin, while promptly cleansing it of grease, oil, rust, etc. Invaluable for mechanics, farmers, sportsmen. Free sample on receipt of 2c. for postage. Albert Toilet Soap Co. Mfrs., Montreal. If

No man ever did a designed injury to another, but at the same time he did a greater to himself.

Only \$10.00 to Atlantic City

Cape May, Sea Isle City or Ocean City and return. Three Sea Shore Excursions, via Lehigh Valley Railroad—August 4, 18 and 25.

Tickets good 15 days, and only \$10 from Suspension Bridge to above Seashore Resorts and return. Tickets allow stop-over at Philadelphia.

For further particulars call on or address ROBT. S. LEWIS, Passenger Agent, 33 Yonge St., Toronto, Ont. 1wk-eod

Horses Wanted.

Until further notice, HAROLD W. SMITH of Toronto, will be at Wm. Gray & Co. Factory.

EVERY SATURDAY to purchase horses. The highest cash prices will be paid.

MILLINERY!

ALL THE LATEST SPRING NOVELTIES IN Hats, Veilings, Laces, &c. Children's Wear, a Specialty.

MRS. J. B. KELLY

Opp. GRAND OPERA HOUSE.

SAND AND GRAVEL

Having the tug "Vick" and a sand scow, I am prepared to enter into contracts for the supply of sand and gravel at lowest prices. Apply to, Capt. V. Robinson.

SOMETHING NEW IN ADVERTISING

We have now on hand a lot of men's white canvas slippers at \$1.75, which we are bound to sell regardless of price.

We offer them now at \$1.50 and we will reduce the price of them each day until all have been disposed of.

SIGN OF BIG CLOCK.

A. A. JORDAN

BUILDERS' MATERIAL.

Lumber, Lath and Shingles, Sash, Doors and Blinds. Also a limited quantity of Cedar Posts.

BUILDERS' HARDWARE of every description and many quantity always on hand. Lawn mowers, screen doors, hoes, rakes, etc. Painting, paper hanging and graining in the highest style of the art. Give us a call.

Blonde LUMBER MANUFACT'G CO.

Builders and Contractors Phone 52.

WALL PAPERS.....

We carry a large assortment of the most Modern Patterns, and give you an exact estimate of what it will cost you to have your Spring papering done.

Call and see our Large assortment.

JOS. A. TILT,

Next to Rankin House

E. R. Parrott. Benj. Rothwell.

PARROTT & BOWELL.

If you want to buy or sell real estate, or to get a loan, or to insure your life or your property, or to have your accounts written up, or to have collections made, just interview

PARROTT & BOWELL

Office King Street, Opp. Market.

Chatham.

THE GIBSON PICTURES

AT THE—GIBSON STUDIO.

Cor. King and Fifth Sts CHATHAM.

R. E. SMITH CHRIS. SMITH

SMITH & SMITH

FIRE, LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE Companies. Money to loan at 4% and 5 per cent. Real estate for sale or exchange. Office up stairs next to Balkie's Photo Gallery. Telephone 167 CHATHAM, ONT.

There is an old Chinese proverb, "The brain is in the stomach." A simpler Anglo-Saxon maxim is, "A clean stomach makes a clear head."

Abbey's Effervescent Salt

Is a wonder rectifier of that weary, tired-out feeling that comes to us all in the

Hot Weather.

It clears the bowels regularly and without the slightest discomfort. Keeps the stomach clean and sweet, quickens the action of the liver, clears the head and tones up the whole nervous system.

Abbey's Salt is made from the juice of fresh fruits and contains no minerals. It is at once the simplest, most natural and most effective remedy for all the ills and ails of the Hot Summer Months.

SOLD BY DRUGGISTS.