THE ART OF HUNTING

REV. DR. TALMAGE AGAIN DISCUSSES A SEASONABLE TOPIC.

The Crack of the Sportsman's Gun—Hunting the Gains of the World—Religion Is Dividing the Spoil—A Resting Place.

BROOKLYN, Nov. 26.—In the forenoon service at the Tabernacle today Rev. Dr. Talmage took for his subject a most seasonable one, "A Hunting Scene," the text being Genesis xlix, 27, "In the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil."

A few nights ago 800 men encamped along the Long Island railroad so as to be ready for the next morning, which was the first "open day" for deer hunting. Between sunrise and 2 o'clock in the afternoon of that day 15 deer were shot. On the 20th of October our woods and forests resound with a shock of firearms and are tracked of pointers and setters, because the quail are then a lawful prize for the sportsman.

On a certain day in all England you can hear the crack of the sportsman's gun, because grouse hunting has begun, and every man that can afford the time and ammunition and can draw a bead starts for the fields. Xenophon grew eloquent in regard to the art of hunting. In the far east people, elephant mounted, chase the tiger. The American Indian darts his arrow at the buffalo until the frightened herd tumble over the rocks. European nobles are often found in the fox chase and at the stag hunt. Francis I was called the father of hunting. Moses declares of Nimrod, "He was a mighty hunter before the Lord." Therefore, in all ages of the world, the imagery of my text ought to be suggestive, whether it means a wolf after a fox or a man after a lion.

Old Jacob, dying, is telling the fortunes of his children. He prophesies the devouring propensities of Benjamin and his descendants. With his dim old eyes he looks off and sees the hunters going out to the fields, ranging them all day, and at nightfall coming home, the game slung over the shoulder, and reaching the door of the tent the hunters begin to distribute the game, and one takes a coney, and another a rabbit, and another a roe. "In the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil." Or it may be a reference to the habits of wild beasts that slay their prey, and then drag it back to the cave or lair, and divide it among the young.

THE WORLD'S GAIN.

I take my text, in the first place, as descriptive of those people who in the morning of their life give themselves up to hunting the world, but afterward, by the grace of God, in the evening of their life divide among themselves the spoil of Christian character. There are aged Christian men and women in this house who, if they gave testimony, would tell you that in the morning of their life they were after the world as intense as a hound after a hare, or as a falcon swoops upon a gazelle. They wanted the world's plaudits and the world's gains. They felt that if they could get this world they would have everything. Some of them started out for the pleasures of the world. They thought that the man who laughed loudest was happiest. They tried repartee and conundrum and burlesque and madrigal.

They thought they would like to be Tom Hoods or Charles Lambs or Edgar A. Poes. They mingled wine and music and the spectacular. They were worshipers of the harlequin, and the Merry Andrew, and the buffoon, and the jester. Life was to them foam and bubble and cachinnation and roystering and grimace. They were so full of glee they could hardly repress their mirth even on solemn occasions, and they came near bursting out hilariously even at the burial because there was something so dolorous in the tone or countenance of the undertaker.

After awhile misfortune struck them hard on the back. They found there was something they could not laugh at. Under their late hours their health gave way, or there was a death in the house. Of every green thing their soul was exfoliated. They found out that life was more than a joke. From the heart of God there blazed into their soul an earnestness they had never felt before. They awoke to their sinfulness and their immortality, and here they sit at 60 or 70 years of age as appreciative of all innocent mirth as they ever were, but they are bent on a style of satisfaction which in early life they never hunted—the evening of their days brighter than the morning. In the morning they devoured the prey, but at night they divided the spoil.

Then there are others who started out for financial success. They see how limber the rim of a man's hat is when he bows down before some one transpicuous. They felt they would like to see how the world looked from the window of a $4,000 turnout. They thought they would like to have the morning sunlight tangled in the headgear of a dashing span. They wanted the bridges in the park to resound under the rataplan of their swift hoofs. They wanted a gilded baldric, and so they started on the dollar hunt. They chased it up one street and chased it down another. They followed it when it burrowed in the cellar. They treed it in the roof.

Wherever a dollar was expected to be, they were. They chased it across the ocean. They chased it across the land. They stopped not for the night. Hearing that dollar even in the darkness thrilled them as an Adirondack sportsman is thrilled at midnight by a loon's laugh. They chased that dollar to the money vault. They chased it to the government treasury. They routed it from under the counter. All the hounds were out—all the pointers and the setters. They leaped the hedges for that dollar, and they cried: "Hark away! A dollar! A dollar!" And when at last they came upon it and had actually captured it their excitement was like that of a falconer who has successfully flung his first hawk.

In the morning of their life, oh, how they devoured the prey! But there came a better time to their soul. They found out that an immortal nature cannot live on bank stock. They took up a Northern Pacific bond, and there was a hole in it through which they could look into the uncertainty of all earthly treasures. They saw some Ralston, living at the rate of $25,000 a month, leaping from San Francisco wharf because he could not continue to live at the same ratio. They saw the wizen and paralytic bankers who had changed their souls into molten gold stamped with the image of the earth, earthy. They saw some great souls by avarice turned into homunculi, and they said to themselves, "I will seek after higher treasure."

A POOR THING TO HUNT.

From that time they did not care whether they walked or rode, if Christ walked with them; nor whether they lived in a mansion or in a hut, if they dwelt under the shadow of the Almighty; nor whether they were robed in French broadcloth or in homespun, if they had the robe of the Saviour's righteousness; nor if they were sandaled with morocco or calfskin, if they were shod with the preparation of the Gospel. Now you see peace on their countenance. Now that man says: "What a fool I was to be enchanted with this world! Why, I have more satisfaction in five minutes in the service of God than I had in all the first years of my life while I was gaingetting. I like this evening of my day a great deal better than I did the morning. In the morning I greedily devoured the prey, but now it is evening, and I am gloriously dividing the spoil."

My friends, this world is a poor thing to hunt. It is healthful to go out in the woods and hunt. It rekindles the luster of the eye. It strikes the brown of the autumnal leaf into the cheek. It gives to the rheumatic limbs the strength to leap like a roe. Christopher North's pet gun, the muckle-mou'd Meg, going off in the summer in the forests, had its echo in the wintertime in the eloquence that rang through the university halls of Edinburgh. It is healthy to go hunting in the fields, but I tell you it is belittling and bedwarfing and belaming for a man to hunt this world. The hammer comes down on the guncap, and the barrel explodes and kills you instead of that which you are pursuing.

When you turn out to hunt the world, the world turns to hunt you, and as many a sportsman aiming his gun at a panther's heart has gone down under the striped claws, so while you have been attempting to devour this world the world has been devouring you. So it was with Lord Byron. So it was with Coleridge. So it was with Catherine of Russia. Henry II went out hunting for this world, and its lances struck through his heart. Francis I aimed at the world, but the assassin's dagger put an end to his ambition and his life with one stroke. Mary Queen of Scots wrote on the window of her castle:

From the top of all my trust
Mishap hath laid me in the dust.

The queen dowager of Navarre was offered for her wedding day a costly and beautiful pair of gloves, and she put them on, but they were poisoned gloves, and they took her life. Better a bare hand of cold privation than a warm and poisoned glove of ruinous success. "Oh," says some young man in the audience, "I believe what you are preaching. I am going to do that very thing. In the morning of my life I am going to devour the prey, and in the evening I shall divide the spoil of Christian character. I only want a little while to sow my wild oats, and then I will be good."

Young man, did you ever take the census of all the old people? How many old people are there in your house? One, two or none? How many in a vast assemblage like this? Only here and there a gray head, like the patches of snow here and there in the fields on a late April day. The fact is that the tides of the years are so strong that men go down under them before they get to be 60, before they get to be 50, before they get to be 40, before they get to be 30. And if you, my young brother, resolve now that you will spend the morning of your days in devouring the prey the probability is that you will never divide the spoil in the evening hour. He who postpones until old age the religion of Jesus Christ postpones it forever.

Where are the men who 30 years ago resolved to become Christians in old age, putting it off a certain number of years? They never got to be old. The railroad collision, or the steamboat explosion, or the slip on the ice, or the falling ladder, or the sudden cold, put an end to their opportunities. They have never had an opportunity since, and they never will have an opportunity again. They locked the door of heaven against their soul, and they threw away the keys. They chased the world, and they died in the chase. The wounded tiger turned on them. They failed to take the game they pursued. Mounted on a swift courser, they leaped the hedge, but the courser fell on them and crushed them. Proposing to barter their soul for the world, they lost both and got neither.

DIVIDING THE SPOIL.

While this is an encouragement to old people who are still unpardoned, it is no encouragement to the young who are putting off the day of grace. This doctrine that the old may be repentant is to be taken cautiously. It is medicine that kills or cures. The same medicine given to different patients, in one case it saves life and in the other it destroys it. This possibility of repentance at the close of life may cure the old man while it kills the young. Be cautious in taking it.

Again, my subject is descriptive of those who come to a sudden and a radical change. You have noticed how short a time it is from morning to night—only seven or eight hours. You know that the day has a very brief life. Its heart beats 24 times, and then it is dead. How quick this transition in the character of these Benjamites! "In the morning they shall devour the prey, and at night they shall divide the spoil." Is it possible that there shall be such a transformation in any of our characters? Yes. A man may be at 7 o'clock in the morning an all devouring worldling, and at 7 o'clock at night he may be a peaceful, distributive Christian.

Conversion is instantaneous. A man passes into the kingdom of God quicker than down the sky runs zigzag lightning. A man may be anxious about his soul for a great many years; that does not make him a Christian. A man may pray a great while; that does not make him a Christian. A man may resolve on the reformation of his character and have that resolution going on a great while; that does not make him a Christian. But the very instant when he flings his soul on the mercy of Jesus Christ, that instant is lustration, emancipation, resurrection. Up to that point he is going in the wrong direction; after that point he is going in the right direction. Before that moment he is a child of sin; after that moment he is a child of God. Before that moment devouring the prey; after that moment dividing the spoil. Five minutes is as good as five years.

My hearer, you know very well that the best things you have done you have done in a flash. You made up your mind in an instant to buy, or to sell, or to invest, or to stop, or to start. If you had missed that one chance, you would have missed it forever. Now, just as precipitate and quick and spontaneous will be the ransom of your soul. Some morning you were making a calculation. You got on the track of some financial or social game. With your pen or pencil you were pursuing it. That very morning you were devouring the prey, but that very night you were in a different mood. You found that all heaven was offered you. You wondered how you could get it for yourself and for your family. You wondered what resources it would give you now and hereafter. You are dividing peace and comfort and satisfaction and Christian reward in your soul. You are dividing the spoil.

One Sabbath night at the close of the sermon I said to some persons, "When did you first become serious about your soul?" And they told me, "Tonight." And I said to others, "When did you give your heart to God?" And they said, "Tonight." And I said to still others, "When did you resolve to serve the Lord all the days of your life?" And they said, "Tonight." I saw by the gayety of their apparel that when the grace of God struck them they were devouring the prey; but I saw also in the flood of joyful tears, and in the kindling raptures on their brow, and in their exhilarant and transporting utterances that they were dividing the spoil.

If you have been in this building when the lights are struck at night, you know that with one touch of electricity they are all blazed. Oh, I would to God that the darkness of your souls might be broken up, and that by one quick, overwhelming, instantaneous flash of illumination you might be brought into the light and the liberty of the sons of God!

RELIGION DEFINED.

You see that religion is a different thing from what some of you people supposed. You thought it was a decadence. You thought religion was maceration. You thought it was highway robbery; that it struck one down and left him half dead; that it plucked out the eyes; that it plucked out the plumes of the soul; that it broke the wing and crushed the beak as it came clawing with its black talons through the air. No, that is not religion.

What is religion? It is dividing the spoil It is taking a defenseless soul and panoplying it for eternal conquest. It is the distribution of prizes by the king's hand—every medal stamped with a coronation. It is an exhilaration, an expansion. It is imparadisation. It is enthronement. Religion makes a man master of earth, of death and hell. It goes forth to gather the medals of victory won by Prince Emanuel, and the diadems of heaven, and the glories of realms terrestrial and celestial, and then, after ranging all worlds for everything that is resplendent, it divides the spoil.

What was it that James Turner, the famous English evangelist was doing when in his dying moments he said: "Christ is all! Christ is all!" Why, he was entering into light. He was rounding the Cape of Good Hope. He was dividing the spoil. What was the aged Christian Quakeress doing when at 80 years of age she arose in the meeting one day and said: "The time of my departure is come. My grave clothes are falling off." She was dividing the spoil.

She longed with wings to fly away
And mix with that eternal day.

What is Daniel now doing, the lion tamer? And Elijah, who was drawn by the flaming coursers? And Paul, the rattling of whose chains made kings quake? And all the other victims of flood and fire and wreck and guillotine—where are they? Dividing the spoil.

Ten thousand times ten thousand,
In sparkling raiment bright,
The armies of the ransomed saints
Throng up the steeps of light.

'Tis finished, all is finished,
Their fight with death and sin.
Lift high your golden gates
And let the victors.

Oh, what a grand thing it is to be a Christian! We begin now to divide the spoil, but the distribution will not be completed to all eternity. There is a poverty struck soul, there is a business despoiled soul, there is a sin struck soul, there is a bereaved soul—why do you not come and get the spoil of Christian character, the comfort, the joy, the peace, the salvation that I am sent to offer to you in my Master's name?

Though your knees knock together in weakness, though your hands tremble in fear, though your eyes rain tears of uncontrollable weeping—come and get the spoil. Rest for all the weary. Pardon for all the guilty. Rescue for all the bestormed. Life for all the dead. I verily believe that there are some who have come in here downcast because the world is against them, and because they feel God is against them, who will go away saying:

I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary and worn and sad;
I found in him a resting place,
And he has made me glad.

Though you came in children of the world, you may go away heirs of heaven. Though this very autumnal morning you were devouring the prey, now, all worlds witnessing, you may divide the spoil.

For Injuries Strangely Suffered.

Suit to recover damages for personal injuries inflicted by a corpse has been brought against the Pennsylvania railroad by Lawyer J. Howard Morrison for August Johnson. In his statement of claim Johnson asserts that on Aug. 22 last he was at work constructing switches along the line of the Trenton cutoff railroad, which is operated by the Pennsylvania railroad. As a rapidly moving train was approaching him an unknown woman attempted to cross the track in front of it. She was struck by the engine and instantly killed.

Her lifeless body, Johnson asserts, was thrown about 50 feet, striking him in the face and felling him to the earth. He sustained a broken nose and other serious injuries, resulting in a spell of sickness, which forced him to spend a considerable amount of money for doctor's bills. Johnson asks for $5,000 damages.—Philadelphia Record.

We Are Hard Workers.

The following figures regarding the standard number of working days per annum in different countries appeared in a Polish paper: The inhabitants of central Russia labor fewest days in the year—namely, 267. Then comes Canada with 270, followed by Scotland with 273, England 275, Portugal 283, Russian Poland 288, Spain 290, Austria and the Russian Baltic provinces 295, Italy 298, Bavaria, Belgium, Brazil and Luxemberg 300, Saxony, France, Finland, Wurtemburg, Switzerland, Denmark and Norway 302, Sweden 304, Prussia and Ireland 305, United States 306, Holland 308 and Hungary 312.

THE GREAT REVOLUTIONS.

1863—Great rebellion in Poland; provisional government appointed; terrible severities of the Russian government; hundreds of leading Poles shot or hanged; European intervention fruitless; the rebellion suppressed.

1866—Revolution in Roumania; provisional government established; an "hereditary hospodar" elected; declared a "king" in 1881.

1866—Great military revolt at Madrid in favor of Prim; suppressed with unexampled cruelty; many prisoners shot.

1866—The kingdom of Hanover conquered by Prussia, the Hanoverians having taken the side of Austria in the seven weeks' war; the king escaped to Austria, and his property was seized by the Prussians.

1867—Separate constitution granted Hungary, which thus became an autonomous part of the Austro-Hungarian empire; political amnesty granted to all offenders, and a separate parliament allowed for Hungary.

1867—Overthrow of the empire in Mexico; Maximilian shot; since 1821 it is said there have been 246 revolutions or insurrectionary outbreaks in Mexico.

1868—Mutiny on Spanish fleet began a revolution; flight of Isabella; a provisional government formed.

1870—The provisional government of Spain declared at an end and Amadeus crowned as king.

1870—Revolution in Paris, the emperor having been made prisoner at Sedan; a republic proclaimed.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

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