TABERNACLE SERMON.

"The Choice of a Wife."

DR. TALMAGE BEGINS A SERIES OF SERMONS ON "THE MARRIAGE RING."

BROOKLYN, N. Y., Jan. 10.

THE REV. T. DE WITT TALMAGE preached this morning in the Brooklyn Tabernacle, the first of his series of sermons on "The Marriage Ring," the subject being "The Choice of a Wife." In the series will be treated the following subjects of the greatest importance to every person: "The Choice of Husband and Wife;" "Clandestine Marriages and Escapades;" "Duties of Husbands to Wives;" "Duties of Wives to Husbands;" "In Matters of Religion, Should the Wife go with the Husband or the Husband go with the Wife;" "The Wrong Ways of Women;" "Costume and Morals;" "Competent Housewifery;" "Sensible Young Womanhood;" "Women Who Will Pass Life Single;" "Influence of Sisters over Brothers;" "The Modern Novel and Woman;" "Boarding-house and Hotel Life;" "Treatment of Man-servant and Maid-servant." The hymn sung on the occasion was:

"The Morning Light is breaking,
The darkness disappears."

An organ solo was rendered by Professor Henry Eyre Browne, who selected the first sonata in D minor by Ritter for his musical theme. After expounding a passage of Scripture, Dr. Talmage took for his text: Judges xiv, 3: "Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?" Dr. Talmage said:

Samson, the giant, is here asking consent of his father and mother to marriage with one whom they thought unfit for him. He was wise in asking their counsel, but not wise in rejecting it. Captivated with her looks, the big son wanted to marry a daughter of one of the hostile families, a deceitful, hypocritical, whining and saturnine creature who afterward made for him a world of trouble till she quit him forever. In my text his parents forbade the banns, practically saying: "When there are so many honest and beautiful maidens of your own country, are you so hard put to for a lifetime partner that you propose conjugality with this foreign flirt? Is there such a dearth of lillies in our Israelitish gardens that you must wear on your heart a Philistine thistle? Do you take a crab apple because there are no pomegranates? 'Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?'"

Excuseless was he for such a choice in a land and amid a race celebrated for female loveliness and moral worth, a land and a race of which self-denying Abigail, and heroic Deborah, and dazzling Vashti, and pious Esther, and glorious Ruth, and Mary who hugged to her heart the blessed Lord, were only magnificent specimens. The midnight folded in their hair, the lakes of liquid beauty in their eye, the gracefulness of spring morning in their posture and gait, were only typical of the greater brilliance and glory of their soul. Likewise excuseless is any man in our time who makes lifelong alliance with any one who, because of her disposition, or heredity, or habits, or intellectual vanity, or moral twistification, may be said to be of the Philistines.

The world never owned such opulence of womanly character, or such splendor of womanly manners, or multitudinous instances of wifely, motherly, daughterly, sisterly devotion, as it owns to-day. I have not words to express my admiration of good womanhood. Woman is not only man's equal, but in affectional and religious nature, which is the best part of us, she is seventy-five per cent. his superior. Yea: during the last twenty years, through the increased opportunity opened for female education, the women of the country are better educated than the majority of men; and if they continue to advance in mentality at the present ratio before long the majority of men will have difficulty in finding, in the opposite sex, enough ignorance to make appropriate consort. If I am under a delusion as to the abundance of good womanhood abroad, consequent upon my surroundings since the hour I entered this life until now, I hope the delusion will last until I embark from this planet. So you will understand, if I say in this course of sermons something that seems severe I am neither cynical nor disgruntled.

There are in almost every farm house in the country, in almost every home of the great town, conscientious women, worshipful women, self-sacrificing women, holy women, innumerable Marys, sitting at the feet of Christ, innumerable mothers helping to feed Christ in the person of his suffering disciples, a thousand capped and spectacled grandmothers Lois, bending over Bibles whose precepts they have followed from early girlhood, and tens of thousands of young women that are dawning upon us from school and seminary, that are going to bless the world with good and happy homes, that shall eclipse all their predecessors, a fact that will be acknowledged by all men except those who are struck through with moral decay from toe to cranium; and more inexcusable than the Samson of the text is that man who amid all this unparalleled munificence of womanhood marries a fool. But some of you are abroad suffering from such disaster, and to halt others of you from going over the same precipice, I cry out in the words of my text: "Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?"

There are thousands of American pulpits, among them this pulpit, guilty in the fact on some of the subjects on which men and women need practical advice they have been silent or teaching them only in forceless circumlocution. About the choice of a lifetime companion, a question in which so much of time and all of eternity are involved, what almost universal silence in the church, so that there are not ten people in this house who have ever heard a discourse upon this theme; and the fairest one I have ever heard is the one I am preaching. We leave to the flippant novel, or the spectacular play, or the jingle of a doggerel rhyme, that which ought to burden the most tremendous sermon a minister ever preaches, from the day when he takes ordination to the day when in judgment he meets his God. And so, in this course of sermons, I am going to hitch up my best team to the whiffletree, and put the coulter of the plough clear up to the beam, and go straight on from fence to fence, however many nests of moles and serpents may be ripped up by the furrow, and however many alarmed people may cry "Whoa!"

That marriage is the destination of the human race is a mistake that I want to correct before I go further. There are multitudes who never will marry, and still greater multitudes who are not fit to marry. In Great Britain to-day there are 948,000 more women than men, and that, I understand, is about the ratio in America. By mathematical and inexorable law, you see millions of women will never marry. The supply for matrimony greater than the demand, the first lesson of which is that every woman ought to prepare to take care of herself if need be. Then there are thousands of men who have no right to marry, because they have become so corrupt of character that their offer of marriage is an insult to any good woman. Society will have to be toned up and corrected on this subject, so that it shall realize that if a woman who has sacrificed her honor is unfitted for marriage, so is any man who has ever sacrificed his purity. What right have you, O masculine beast, whose life has been loose, to take under your care the spotlessness of a virgin reared in the sanctity of a respectable home? Will a buzzard dare to court a dove?

But the majority of you will marry and have a right to marry, and as your religious teacher I wish to say to these men: in the choice of a wife first of all seek Divine direction. About 35 years ago, when Martin Farquhar Tupper, the English poet, urged men to prayer before they decided upon matrimonial association, people laughed. And some of them have lived to laugh on the other side of their mouth. The need of Divine direction I argue from the fact that so many men, and some of them strong and wise, have wrecked their lives at this juncture. Witness Samson and this woman of Timnath. Witness Socrates pecked of the historical Xantippe. Witness Job, whose wife had nothing to prescribe for his carbuncles but allopathic doses of profanity. Witness Ananias, a liar, who might, perhaps, have been cured by a truthful spouse, yet marrying as great a liar as himself—Sapphira. Witness John Wesley, one of the best men that ever lived, united to one of the most outrageous and scandalous of women, who sat in City Road Chapel making mouths at him while he preached. Witness the once connubial wretchedness of John Ruskin, the great art essayist, and Frederick W. Robertson, the great preacher. Witness a thousand hells on earth kindled by unworthy wives, termagants that scold like a March northeaster; female spendthrifts, that put their husbands into fraudulent schemes to get money enough to meet the lavishment of domestic expenditure; opium-eating women—about 400,000 of them in the United States—who will have the drug though it should cause the eternal damnation of the whole household; heartless and over-bearing, and namby-pamby and unreasonable women, get married; married, perhaps, to good men. These are the women who build the low club-houses, where the husbands and sons go because they can't stand it at home. On this sea of matrimony, where so many have been wrecked, am I not right in advising Divine pilotage?

Especially is devout supplication needed, because of the fact that society is so full of artificialities that men are deceived as to whom they are marrying, and no one but the Lord knows. After the dressmaker, and the milliner, and the jeweller, and the hair-adjuster, and the dancing-master, and the cosmetic artist have completed their work, how is an unsophisticated man to decipher the physiological hieroglyphics, and make accurate judgment of who it is to whom he offers hand and heart. That is what makes so many recreant husbands. They make an honorable marriage contract, but the goods delivered are so different from the sample by which they bargained. They were simply swindled, and they backed out. They mistook Jezebel for Longfellow's Evangeline, and Lucretia Borgia for Martha Washington.

Aye, as the Indian chief boasts of the scalps he has taken, so there are in society to-day many coquettes who boast of the masculine hearts they have captured. And these women, though they may live amid richest upholstery, are not so honorable as the cyprians of the street, for these advertise their infamy, while the former profess heaven while they mean hell. There is so much counterfeit womanhood abroad it is no wonder that some cannot tell the genuine coin from the base. Do you not realize you need Divine guidance when I remind you that mistake is possible in this important affair, and, if made, is irrevocable?

The worst predicament possible is to be unhappily yoked together. You see it is impossible to break the yoke. The more you pull apart the more galling the yoke. The minister might bring you up again, and in your presence read the marriage ceremony backward, might put you on the opposite sides of the altar from where you were when you were united, might take the ring off the finger, might rend the wedding veil asunder, might tear out the marriage leaf from the family Bible record; but all that would fail to unmarry you. It is better not to make the mistake than to attempt its correction. But men and women do not reveal all their characteristics till after marriage, and how are you to avoid committing the fatal blunder? There is only one Being in the Universe who can tell you whom to choose, and that is the Lord of Paradise. He made Eve for Adam, and Adam for Eve, and both for each other. Adam had not a large group of women from whom to select his wife, but it is fortunate, judging from some mistakes which she afterwards made, that it was Eve or nothing.

There is in all the world some one who was made for you as certainly as Eve was made for Adam. All sorts of mistakes occur because Eve was made out of a rib from Adam's side. Nobody knows which of his twenty-four ribs were taken for the nucleus. If you depend entirely upon yourself in the selection of a wife, there are twenty-three possibilities to one that you will select the wrong rib. By the fate of Ahab, whose wife induced him to steal; by the fate of Macbeth, whose wife pushed him into massacre; by the fate of James Ferguson, the philosopher, whose wife entered the room while he was lecturing and wilfully upset his astronomical apparatus, so that he turned to the audience and said:—"Ladies and gentlemen, I have the misfortune to be married to this woman;" by the fate of Bulwer, the novelist, whose wife's temper was so incompatible that he furnished her a beautiful house near London and withdrew from her company, leaving her with the one dozen dogs whom she entertained as pets; by the fate of John Milton, who married a termagent after he was blind, and when some one called her a rose, the poet said: "I am no judge of colors, but it may be so, for I feel the thorns daily;" by the fate af an Englishman, whose wife was so determined to dance on his grave, that he was buried in the sea; by the fate of a village minister whom I knew whose wife threw a cup of hot tea across the table because they differed in sentiment—by all these scenes of disquietude and domestic calamity, we implore you to be cautious and prayerful before you enter upon the connubial state, which decides whether a man shall have two heavens or two hells, a heaven here and heaven forever, or a hell now and a hell hereafter.

By the bliss of Pliny, whose wife, when her husband was pleading in court, had messengers coming and going to inform her what impression he was making; by the joy of Grotius, whose wife delivered him from prison under the pretence of having books carried out lest they be injurious to his health, she sending out her husband unobserved in one of the book-cases; by the good fortune of Roland, in Louis' time, whose wife translated and composed for her husband, while Secretary of the Interior—talented, heroic, wonderful Madame Roland; by the happiness of many a man who has made intelligent choice of one capable of being prime counsellor and companion in brightness and grief—pray to Almighty God, morning, noon and night, that at the right time and in the right way, He will send you a good, honest, loving, sympathetic wife; or if she is not sent to you, that you may be sent to her.

At this point let me warn you not to let a question of this importance be settled by the celebrated matchmakers, in almost every community. Depend upon your own judgment, Divinely illumined. These brokers in matrimony are ever planning how they can unite impecunious innocence to an heiress, or celibate woman to millionaire or marquis, and that in many cases makes life an unhappiness. How can any human being, who knows neither of the two parties as God knows them, and who is ignorant of the future, give such direction as you require at such a crisis. Take the advice of the earthly matchmaker instead of the Divine guidance, and you may some day be led to use the words of Solomon, whose experience in home life was as melancholy as it was multitudinous.

One day his palace with its great wide rooms and great wide doors and great wide hall, was too small for him and the loud tongue of a woman belaboring him about some of his neglects, and he retreated to the housetop to get relief from the lingual bombardment. And while there he saw a poor man on one corner of the roof with a mattress for his only furniture, and the open sky his only covering. And Solomon envies him and cries out: "It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop than with a brawling woman in a wide house."

And one day during the rainy season, the water leaked through the roof of the palace and began to drop in a pail or pan set there to catch it. And at one side of him all day long the water went Drop! Drop! Drop! while on the other side a female companion quarelling about this and quarrelling about that, the acrimonious and petulent words falling on his ear in ceaseless pelting—Drop! Drop! Drop! and he seized his pen and wrote: "A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike."

If Solomon had been as prayerful at the beginning of his life as he was at the close how much domestic infelicity he would have avoided. But prayer about this will amount to nothing unless you pray soon enough. Wait until you are fascinated, and the equilibrium of your soul is disturbed by a magnetic and exquisite presence, and then you will answer your own prayers, and you will mistake your own infatuation for the voice of God.

If you have this prayerful spirit you will surely avoid all female scoffers at the Christian religion; and there are quite a number of them in all communities. It must be told that, though the only influence that keeps woman from being estimated and treated as a slave—aye, as a brute and a beast of burden—is Christianity, since where it is not dominant she is so treated; yet there are women who will so far forget themselves and forget their God that they will go and hear lecturers malign Christianity and scoff at the most sacred things of the soul. A good woman, over-persuaded by her husband, may go once to hear such a tirade against the Christian religion, not fully knowing what she is going to hear; but she will not go twice. A woman, not a Christian but a respecter of religion, said to me: "I was persuaded by my husband to go and hear an infidel lecturer once, but going home I said to him: 'My dear husband, I would not go again though my declinature should result in our divorcement forever.'" And the woman was right. If, after all that Christ and Christianity has done for a woman, she can go again and again to hear such assaults, she is an awful creature, and you had better not come near such a reeking lepress. She needs to be washed and for three weeks to be soaked in carbolic acid, and for a whole year fumigated, before she is fit for decent society. While it is not demanded that a woman be a Christian before marriage, she must have regard for the Christian religion or she is a bad woman and unworthy of being your companion in a life charged with such stupendous solemnity and vicissitudes.

What you want, O man! in a wife, is not a butterfly of the sunshine, not a giggling nonentity, not a painted doll, not a gossipping gad-about, not a mixture of artificialities which leave you in doubt as to where the humbug ends and the woman begins, but an earnest soul, one that can not only laugh when you laugh, but weep when you weep. There will be wide, deep graves in your path of life, and you will both want steadying when you come to the verge of them, I tell you! When your fortune fails you will want some one to talk of treasures in Heaven, and not charge upon you a bitter, "I told you so." As far as I can analyze it, sincerity and earnestness are the foundation of all worthy wifehood. Get that and get all. Fail to get that and you get nothing but what you will wish you never had got.

Don't make the mistake that man of the text made in letting his eye settle the question in which coolest judgment directed by Divine Wisdom, are all important. He who has no reason for his wifely choice except a pretty face, is like a man who should buy a farm because of the dahlias in the front dooryard. Beauty is a talent, and when God gives it He intends it as a benediction upon a woman's face. When the good Princess of Wales dismounted from the railtrain last summer, and I saw her radiant face, I could understand what they told me the day before that, when at the great military hospital where are now the wounded and the sick from the Egyptian and other wars, the Princess passed through, all the sick were cheered at her coming, and those who could be roused neither by doctor or nurse from their stupor, would get up on their elbows to look at her, and wan and wasted lips prayed an audible prayer: "God bless the Princess of Wales! Doesn't she look beautiful?"

But how uncertain is the tarrying of beauty in a human countenance. Explosion of a kerosene lamp turns it into scarification, and a scoundrel with one dash of vitriol may dispel it, or Time will drive his chariot wheels across that bright face, cutting it up in deep ruts and gullies. But there is an eternal beauty on the face of some women whom a rough and ungallant world may criticize as homely, and though their features may contradict all the laws of Levater on physiognomy, yet they have graces of soul that will keep them attractive for time and glorious through all eternity.

There are two or three circumstances in which the plainest wife is a queen of beauty to her husband, whatever her stature or profile. By financial panic or betrayal of business partner the man goes down, and returning to his home that evening he says: "I am ruined; I am disgraced forever; I care not whether I live or die." It is an agitated story he is telling in the household that winter night. He says: "The furniture must go, the house must go, the social position must go," and from being sought for obsequiously they must be cold-shouldered everywhere. After he ceases talking, and the wife has heard all in silence, she says: "Is that all? Why, you had nothing when I married you, and you have only come back to where you started. If you think that my happiness and that of the children depend on these trappings you do not know me, though we have lived together thirty years. God is not dead, and the National Bank of Heaven has not suspended payment, and if you don't mind I don't care a cent. What little we need of food and raiment the rest of our lives we can get, and I don't propose to sit down and mope and groan. Mary, hand me that darning needle. And, John, light one of the other gas burners. And, Jimmy, open the register for a little more heat. Fanny, fetch your father's slippers. I declare! I have forgotten to set the rising for those cakes! And while she is busy at it he hears her humming Newton's old hymn, "To-morrow."

"It can bring with it nothing
But He will bear us through;
Who gives his lillies clothing
Will clothe his people too;
Beneath the spreading heavens
No creature but is fed;
And he who feeds the ravens
Will give his children bread.

"Though vine nor fig-tree either
Their wonted fruit should bear,
Though all the fields should wither
Nor flocks nor herds be there;
Yet God the same abiding,
His praise shall tune my voice;
For while in Him confiding
I cannot but rejoice."

The husband looks up in amazement and says: "Well, well, you are the greatest woman I ever saw. I thought you would faint dead away when I told you." And as he looks at her, all the glories of physiagnomy in the court of Louis XV. or the modern fashion plates, are tame as compared with the superhuman splendors of that woman's face. Joan of Arc, Mary Antoinette and La Belle Hamilton, the enchantment of the court of Charles II. are nowhere.

There is another time when the plainest wife is a queen of beauty to her husband. She has done the work of life. She has reared her children for God and Heaven, and though some of them may be a little wild they will yet come back, for God has promised. She is dying and her husband stands by. They think over all the years of their companionship, the weddings and the burials, the ups and the downs, the successes and the failures. They talk over the goodness of God and His faithfulness to children's children. She has no fear about going. The Lord has sustained her so many years she would not dare to distrust Him now. The lips of both of them tremble as they say good bye and encourage each other about an early meeting in a better world. The breath is feebler and feebler, and stops. Are you sure of it? Just hold that mirror at the mouth and see if there is any vapor gathering on the surface. Gone! as one of the neighbors takes the old man by the arm gently and says: "Come, you had better go into the next room and rest;" he says: "Wait a moment; I must take one more look at that face and those hands!" Beautiful! Beautiful!

My friends, I hope you do not call that death. That is an autumnal sunset. That is a crystalline river pouring into a crystal sea. That is the solo of human life overpowered by halielujah chorus. That is the Queen's coronation. That is Heaven. That is the way my father stood at eighty-two, seeing my mother depart at seventy-nine. Perhaps as your father and mother went. I wonder if we will die as well?

Removal of Snow
From Sidewalks.

NOTICE is hereby given that the Bylaw of this city, compelling every citizen to remove "so much of the Snow and Ice from the sidewalks as shall lodge immediately in front of every HOUSE, STORE, WAREHOUSE, BUILDING or PROPERTY, owned or occupied by him or her, to the width of EIGHT FEET, within TWENTY-FOUR HOURS from and after every snow-storm,"—will, this winter, be rigidly enforced.

The following streets are subject to this By-law:—

Queen Street, to Euston Street
Pownal Street, " "
Great George St., " "
Prince Street, " "

AND so much of all the streets in this city, running EAST AND WEST as lie between POWNAL Street and WEYMOUTH Street.

No further Notice will be given, but all delinquents will be prosecuted for the penalties fixed by the Bylaw.

By order,
THOMAS FLYNN,
City Marshal.

Ch'town, Jan. 11, 1886—3i eod

JAMES PATON & CO.,

SUCCESSORS TO

W. A. WEEKS & CO.,

BEG to announce that the business lately carried on in the old store, Queen Street, under the name of W. A. WEEKS & CO., has been removed to their new establishment, Brown's Block, Market Square (a few doors from Stamper's Corner), where they hope to meet all their old customers and many new ones.

In the name of the old firm we tender the public our best thanks for past favors and support; and, on behalf of our present establishment, beg to assure you that our earnest endeavors shall be used on all occasions to serve you well.

JAMES PATON & CO.,

MARKET SQUARE.

Ch'town, Jan. 7, 1886.

THE MUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE CO. OF NEW YORK.

ESTABLISHED, 1842.

—:o:—

Assets, One Hundred and Five Millions ($105,000,000.)

Amount of Policies Now in Force about Four Hundred Millions ($400,000,000).

—:o:—

DIVIDENDS to Policy Holders LARGER than those of any other Company.

It has no Stock Holders to claim any part of the Profits,—the Assets and Surplus all belong to the Assured.

It is the BEST COMPANY in which to Insure, as it combines all the advantages of Age, Large Membership, Financial Strength, Absolute Security, and the Cheapest Insurance that is honestly possible under any contract, which has a definite value to the beneficiary.

J. W. FITZPATRICK, Travelling Agent for the Maritime Provinces.
JOHN MACEACHERN, Agent for P. E. Island.

Ch'town, Dec. 22, 1882—1mo mon sat

Shoddy Boots Played Out.

—o—

Get a Pair of Our Own Make of Solid Leather Boots—Cheapest and Best.

DORSEY, GOFF & CO.

Ch'town, Dec. 16, 1885.

GREAT DISCOUNT SALE

—o—

A CHANGE AND A CHANCE.

—o—

Extraordinary Inducements to Purchasers of Dry Goods.

—o—

IT is our intention to make a change in our business early in the New Year, and we shall for a time offer our whole stock of STAPLE AND FANCY DRY GOODS AND MILLINERY at immense reductions in price, commencing MONDAY, the 14th inst.

Our stock of Goods is so large it is impossible for us to enumerate it, but in every department our prices will be

REDUCED 20 to 30 PER CENT

and a lot of Odds and Remnants will be closed out at HALF PRICE.

Our Goods are always marked in plain figures and customers will see that the discounts are made *bona fide*.

Orders by letter will receive careful and prompt attention.

We will also prepay freight to the country on all purchases exceeding ten dollars.

The above discounts are for Cash only, but for purchases exceeding fifty dollars we will allow three months' credit.

This is our first Big Discount Sale, and we intend to fulfil all the promises of our advertisement.

—o—

W. W. BEER.

Ch'town, Dec. 10, '85—dy wy 2mos

THE BEST YET!

—o—

No Change in Business Contemplated; but a Bona Fide Change in Prices.

—o—

UNTIL the end of JANUARY NEXT, I will give such Bargains in DRY GOODS AND CLOTHING as will make everyone who will buy from me Happy, and in addition will give you some of my Choice TEA GRATIS. To every buyer of

$2.00	worth of	DRY GOODS	1lb	Good Tea.	
$4.00	"	"	"	2lb	"
$6.00	"	"	"	3lb	"
$8.00	"	"	"	or Clothing,	4lb Good Tea.
$10.00	"	"	"	" "	5lb "

Purchasers not requiring the Tea can have the equivalent value in other goods in the Store.

The Quality of my Tea is well and favorably known. This offers a rare opportunity to get Good Tea Free of Cost

J. B. MACDONALD'S,

Queen Street.

Ch'town, Dec. 10, '85.