THE WAY OF DESTRUCTION

Dr. Talmage Tells of the Pitfalls for the Unwary in the Great Cities.

The Third Watch of the Night—A Drama in Five Acts.

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WASHINGTON, D. C.—In this discourse Dr. Talmage describes some of the scenes to be witnessed late at night in the great cities and warns the unwary of many perils; text, Isaiah xxi, 11, "Watchman, what of the night?"

When night came down on Babylon, Nineveh and Jerusalem, they needed careful watching, otherwise the incendiary's torch might have been thrust into the very heart of the metropolitan splendor, or enemies, marching from the hills, might have forced the gates. All night long, on top of the wall and in front of the gates, might be heard the measured step of the watchman on his solitary beat; silence hung in air, save as some passer-by raised the question, "Watchman, what of the night?"

It is to me a deeply suggestive and solemn thing to see a man standing guard by night. It thrilled through me as at the gate of an arsenal in Charleston the question once smote me, "Who comes there?" followed by the sharp command, "Advance and give the countersign." Every moral teacher stands on picket or patrols the wall as watchman. His work is to sound the alarm, and whether it be in the first watch, in the second watch, in the third watch or in the fourth watch to be vigilant until the daybreak flings its "morning glories" of blooming cloud across the trellis of the sky.

The ancients divided their night into four parts—the first watch from 6 to 9, the second from 9 to 12, the third from 12 to 3 and the fourth from 3 to 6. I speak now of the city in the third watch, or from 12 to 3 o'clock.

I never weary of looking upon the life of the city in the first watch. That is the hour when the stores are closing. The laboring men, having quitted the scaffolding and the shop, are on their way home. It rejoices me to give them my seat in the city car. They have stood and hammered away all day. Their feet are weary. They are exhausted with the tug of work. They are mostly cheerful. With appetites sharpened on the swift turner's wheel and the carpenter's whetstone they seek the evening meal. The clerks, too, have broken away from the counter and with brain weary of the long line of figures, and the whims of those who go a-shopping seek the face of mother or wife and child. The streets are thronged with young men setting out from the great centres of bargain making. Let idlers clear the street and give right of way to the besweated artisans and merchants! They have earned their bread and are now on their way home to get it. The lights in full jet hang over 10,000 evening repasts—the parents at either end of the table, the children between. Thank God, "who setteth the solitary in families!"

A few hours later and all the places of amusement, good and bad, are in full tide. Lovers of art, catalogue in hand, stroll through the galleries and discuss the pictures. The ballroom is resplendent with the rich apparel of those who on either side of the white, glistening boards await the signal from the orchestra. Concert halls are lifted into enchantment with the warble of one songstress or swept out on a sea of tumultuous feeling by the blast of brazen instruments. Drawing rooms are filled with all gracefulness of apparel, with all sweetness of sound, with all splendor of manner. Mirrors are catching up and multiplying the scene until it seems as if in infinite corridors there were garlanded troops advancing and retreating. The outdoor air rings with laughter and with the moving to and fro of thousands on the great promenades. The dashing span, adrip with the foam of the long country ride, rushes past as you halt at the curbstone. Mirth revelry, beauty, fashion, magnificence, mingle in the great metropolitan picture until the thinking man goes home to think more seriously and the praying man to pray more earnestly. A beautiful and overwhelming thing is the city in the first and second watches of the night.

But the clock strikes 12, and the third watch has begun. The thunder of the city has rolled out of the air. The slightest sounds cut the night with such distinctness as to attract your attention. The tinkling of the bell of the street car in the distance and the baying of the dog. The stamp of a horse in the next street. The slamming of a saloon door. The hiccough of the drunkard. The shrieks of the steam whistle five miles away. Oh, how suggestive, my friends, the third watch of the night!

What a stupendous thought—a whole city at rest! Weary arm preparing for to-morrow's toil. Hot brain being cooled off. Rigid muscles relaxed. Excited nerves soothed. The white hair of the octogenarian in thin drifts across the pillow, fresh fall of flakes on snow already fallen. Childhood, with its dimpled hands thrown out on the pillow and with every breath taking in a new store of fun and frolic. Third watch of the night! God's slumberless eye will look. Let one great wave of refreshing slumber roll over the heart of the great town, submerging care and anxiety and worriment and pain. Let the city sleep.

But, my friends, be not deceived. There will be to-night thousands who will not sleep at all. Go up that dark alley, and be cautious where you tread lest you fall over the prostrate form of a drunkard lying on his own doorstep. Look about you, lest you feel the garroter's hug. Look through the broken window pane and see what you can see. You say, "Nothing." Then listen. What is it? "God help us!" No footlights, but tragedy ghastlier and mightier than Ristori or Edwin Booth ever enacted. No light, no fire, no bread, no hope. Shivering in the cold, they have had no food for twenty-four hours. You say, "Why don't they beg?" They do, but they get nothing. You say, "Why don't they deliver themselves over to the almshouse?" Ah, you would not ask that if you ever heard the bitter cry of a man or a child when told he must go to the almshouse. "Oh," you say, "they are vicious poor, and therefore they do not deserve our sympathy!" Are they vicious? So much more need they your pity. The Christian poor. God helps them.

Pass on through the alley. Open the door. "Oh," you say, "it is locked!" No, it is not locked. It has never been locked. No burglar would be tempted to go in there to steal anything. The door is never locked. Only a broken chair stands against the door. Shove it back. Go in. Strike a match. Now look. Beastliness and rags. See those glaring eyeballs. Be careful now what you say. Do not utter any insult, do not utter any suspicion, if you value your life. What is that red mark on the wall? It is the mark of a murderer's hand! Look at those two eyes rising up out of the darkness and out from the straw in the corner, coming toward you, and as they come near you your light goes out. Strike another match. Ah, this is a babe, not like those beautiful children presented in baptism. This little one never smiled. It never will smile. A flower flung on an awfully barren beach. O Heavenly Shepherd, fold that little one in Thy arms! Wrap around you your shawl or your coat tighter, for the cold wind sweeps through.

Strike another match. Ah, is it possible that the scarred and bruised face of that young woman ever was looked into by maternal tenderness? Utter no scorn; Utter no harsh word. No ray of hope has dawned on that brow for many a year. No ray of hope ever will dawn on that brow. But the light has gone out. Do not strike another light. It would be a mockery to kindle another light in such a place as that. Pass out and pass down the street.

Do you know it is in this third watch of the night that criminals do their worst work? It is the criminals' watch. At half past 8 o'clock you will find them in the drinking saloon, but toward 12 o'clock they go to their garrets, they get out their tools, then they start on the street. Watching on either side for the police, they go to their work of darkness. This is a burglar, and the false key will soon touch the store lock; this is an incendiary, and before morning there will be a light on the sky and a cry of "Fire! Fire!" This is an assassin, and to-morrow morning there will be a dead body in one of the vacant lots.

During the daytime these villains in our cities lounge about, some asleep and some awake, but when the third watch of the night arrives, their eye keen, their brain cool, their arm strong, their foot fleet to fly or pursue, they are ready. Many of these poor creatures were brought up in that way. They were born in a thieves' garret. Their childish toy was a burglar's dark lantern. The first thing they remember was their mother bandaging the brow of their father, struck by the police club. They began by robbing boys' pockets, and now they have come to dig the underground passage to the cellar of the bank and are preparing to blast the gold vault.

Just so long as there are neglected children of the street, just so long we will have these desperadoes. Some one, wishing to make a good Christian point and to quote a passage of Scripture, expecting to get a Scriptural passage in answer, said to one of these poor lads, cast out and wretched, "When your father and your mother forsake you, who, then, will take you up?" And the boy said, "The police!"

I rejoice before God that never are sympathetic words uttered, never a prayer offered, never a Christian almsgiving indulged in but it is blessed. There is a place in Switzerland, I have been told, where the utterance of one word will bring back a score of echoes, and I have to tell you that a sympathetic word, a kind word, a generous word, a helpful word, uttered in the dark places of the town will bring back 10,000 echoes from heaven.

I could give you the history in a minute of one of the best friends I ever had. Outside of my own family I never had a better friend. He welcomed me to my home at the West. He was of splendid personal appearance, but he had an ardor of soul and a warmth of affection that made me love him like a brother. I saw men coming out of the saloons and gambling hells, and they surrounded my friend, and they took him at the weak point—his social nature—and I saw him going down, and I had a fair talk with him, for I never yet saw a man you could not talk with on the subject of his habits if you talked with him in the right way. I said to him, "Why don't you give up your bad habits and become a Christian?" I remember now just how he looked, leaning over his counter, as he replied, "I wish I could. Oh, sir, I should like to be a Christian, but I have gone so far astray I can't get back!" So the time went on. After awhile the day of sickness came. I was summoned to his sickbed. I hastened. It took me but a very few moments to get there. I was surprised as I went in. I saw him in his ordinary dress, fully dressed, lying on top of the bed. I gave him my hand, and he seized it convulsively and said: "Oh, how glad I am to see you! Sit down there." I sat down, and he said: "Mr. Talmage, just where you sit now my mother sat last night. She has been dead twenty years. Now, I don't want you to think I am out of my mind or that I am superstitious, but, sir, she sat there last night, and she said, 'Roswell, I wish you would do better. I wish you would do better.' I said: 'Mother, I wish I could do better. I try to do better, but I can't. Mother, you used to help me; why can't you help me now?' And, sir, I got out of bed, for it was a reality, and I went to her and threw my arms around her neck, and I said: 'Mother, I will do better, but you must help me. I can't do this alone.'" I knelt and prayed. That night his soul went to the Lord who made it.

Arrangements were made for the obsequies. The question was raised whether they should bring him to the church. Somebody said, "You cannot bring such a dissolute man as that into the church." I said: "You will bring him in church. He stood by me when he was alive, and I will stand by him when he is dead. Bring him." As I stood in the pulpit and saw them carrying the body up the aisle I felt as if I could weep tears of blood. On one side of the pulpit sat his little child of eight years, a sweet, beautiful little girl, that I had seen him hug convulsively in his better moments. He put on her all jewels and gave her all pictures and toys, and then he would go away, as if hounded by an evil spirit, to his cups and the house of iniquity, a fool to the correction of the stocks. She looked up wonderingly; she knew not what it all meant; she was not old enough to understand the sorrow of an orphan. On the other side sat the men who ruined him. They were the men who had poured the wormwood into the orphan's cup; they were the men who had bound him hand and foot. I knew them. How did they seem to feel? Did they weep? No. Did they say, "What a pity that so generous a man should be destroyed?" No. Did they sigh repentingly over what they had done? No; they sat there, looking as vultures look at the carcass of a lamb whose heart they have ripped out. So they sat and looked at the coffin lid, and I told them the judgment of God upon those who had destroyed their fellows. Did they reform? I was told they were in the places of iniquity that night after my friend was laid in Oakwood cemetery, and they blasphemed and they drank. Oh, how merciless men are, especially after they have destroyed you! Do not look to men for comfort or help.

But there is a man who will not reform. He says, "I won't reform." Well, then, how many acts are there in a tragedy? I believe there are five acts in a tragedy.

Act the first of the tragedy: A young man starting off from home; parents and sisters weeping to have him go; wagon rising over the hill; farewell kiss flung back. Ring the bell and let the curtain fall.

Act the second: The marriage altar; full organ, bright lights; long white veil trailing through the aisle; prayer and congratulation and exclamation of "How well she looks!"

Act the third: A woman waiting for staggering steps; old garments struck into the broken window pane; marks of hardship on the face; the biting of the nails of bloodless fingers; neglect and cruelty and despair. Ring the bell and let the curtain drop.

Act the fourth: Three graves in a dark place—grave of the child that died for lack of medicine, grave of the wife that died of a broken heart, grave of the man that died of dissipation. Oh, what a blasted heath with three graves! Plenty of weeds, but no flowers. Ring the bell and let the curtain drop.

Act the fifth: A destroyed soul's eternity; no light, no music; blackness of darkness forever. But I cannot look any longer. Woe! woe! I close my eyes to this last act of the tragedy. Quick, quick! Ring the bell and let the curtain drop. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart rejoice in the days of thy youth, but know thou that for all these things God will bring you into judgment." "There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof is death."

OF INTEREST TO WOMEN



Statue to Woman Soldier.

The statue to a woman soon to be unveiled in St. Petersburg is erected in memory of the courageous Nadeyda Dourovna, who entered the Russian army in 1806, disguising herself as a man. She was at first known among the soldiers by the name of Sokoloff, and although her identity was soon discovered she was allowed to remain in the army for eleven years, so pressing was the need for soldiers. The Czar, Alexander I., became much interested in her, even conferring upon her a commission in the regiment of Hussars. At her earnest wish he also gave her the name of Alexandroff, under which she won distinction, and she finally received the decoration of the Cross of St. George. When she retired she held the rank of captain. Her last years were passed quietly at home. Dying at the age of eighty-three years, she was honored with a military funeral, and was buried in the uniform of the Litovish Dragoons.

In Praise of the Needle.

All manner of arguments are being put forward just now—vide silly season correspondence in half a dozen daily and weekly papers—for the purpose of cajoling or frightening women back into becoming the excellent housewives which "our grandmothers" are said to have been. But the cleverest argument in favor of a return to the vanishing domesticities is put forward by a French lady in the columns of a Parisian contemporary. Turning from housewifery in general to the "art of the needle," she says:

"It cannot be denied that a pretty hand, wielding this delicate weapon; a pretty figure bending over a piece of work; a pair of bright eyes, thoughtfully, attentively considering the article in hand, have a charm of their own. The attitude of calm serenity and innocence is, moreover, a delightful piece of coquetry, standing in graceful contrast to the general restlessness of the time."

If anything could bring the non-domesticated woman back to the forsaken worktable, surely this vision of herself ought to do so. It is certainly more attractive than the woman on her wheel, or on her automobile, as she may be seen all over France.—The Westminster Gazette.

Do You Wear a Frowner?

In the days when a delicate skin was the supreme desire of every well-born woman, in the privacy of her own chamber she engaged in such small arts as would enhance this beauty, the most efficacious being a strip of white ribbon or a soft handkerchief tied tightly about her forehead that it might prevent it from puckering, or falling into set lines as she sat reading or thinking. To further aid in smoothing out the brow, the band was dipped in cold water. Often she slept at night with this band tied firmly about her head.

In these days of ultra modernness the subject of wrinkles is still one of vast importance and a new preventive has been evolved. It is called by the suggestive name of "frowner," and consists simply of a rather stiff bit of white paper about the size and shape of a postage stamp, and having on its back a similar coating of gum. Especially is it designed as a preventive of the wrinkles between the brows or at the corners of the eyes; and in these places, after being moistened, these should be pasted whenever one is about to engage in some occupation that causes the habit of wrinkling."

At the fashionable shops of large cities frowners are now as regularly on sale as almost any other accessories of the toilet. Many, however, prefer to make them at home, a process simple and inexpensive. It has also been found by those who are ingenious that it is best to cut them circular in shape instead of square, as they leave less of a trace when removed. Heavy writing paper from which to fashion them is available to all and a little dissolved gum arabic will stick them on good and tight.—New York Sun.

Co-Operative Housekeeping.

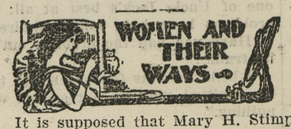
Many persons from neighboring summer resorts have visited Warsaw, Ind., during the season to investigate the workings of the Household Club of that place. The organization was started last spring by the heads of twenty families as a tentative solution of the servant problem, which had been especially knotty in Warsaw.

Surrounded as it is by numerous summer resorts, which attract thousands of guests annually, the good housewives of the place have yearly found themselves relegated to their kitchens during the hot season, because they could not or would not pay the fancy prices offered to domestic help by the hotels and boarding houses. Aware that this condition would confront them again last spring, the mistresses determined to dismiss their servants before their servants dismissed them.

The first step was to rent a large, roomy mansion, known as the Lightfoot home, which, with its ample porches, large grounds and delightful shade, was especially fitted for the purpose. The entire lower floors were converted into dining rooms and the kitchen was enlarged. A competent chef was employed and authorized to secure the best of help. The upper floors were apportioned among the servants. Where families were small two or three combined to furnish together the dining room which they would use in common. Large families furnished their own room and occupied it alone. Every woman took her turn in arranging the bill of fare for one week, and this proved an admirable plan, giving a desirable variety to the dishes. As the house was near the business part of the city, the men of the various households were able to take their luncheons with their families. Prices were paid to the servants which defiled the competition of the hotels and temporary cottagers, and during the summer there was no complaint about help. The buying was all done by the chef. Members paid fifteen cents a meal for guests.

The items of expense which entered into the arrangement were $15 a month for the house, $60 a month for the chef, $8, $10 and $12 a month, respectively for the cooks, waitresses and dishwashers.

The accounting made during one week showed that the expenses had been only $2.50 a week for each adult and $1.25 for every child. All the members of the club testified that they had lived better than they were accustomed to at home, and arrangements are now being considered to make the organization a permanent one.—New York Tribune.



It is supposed that Mary H. Stimpson, of Biddleford, Me., is the youngest telegraph operator in the country. She is only fourteen years old.

The recent innovation in Germany whereby two women were appointed assistants on the Board of Factory Inspectors has proved a great success.

The women of Evanston, Ill., headed by the Evanston Women's Club, have succeeded in introducing a cooking and housekeeping course in the public school system.

The Chester (Penn.) Hospital is to have a nurses' home, the necessary money for its erection having been given by Mrs. J. Frank Black, President of the Board of Managers.

Women have conducted in London 1199 missions during the nine years since they entered upon the present organized system of taking charge of missions and religious services. It is said that there are now about thirty women in that city engaged in the work.

A movement to organize Shakespeare clubs throughout the entire world has been started by Marie Corelli. The headquarters, she thinks, should be placed at Stratford-on-Avon. The object of this movement is to stimulate a more intelligent reading of the poet's works.

One of the learned women of the time is Miss Mary W. Montgomery, who, at the age of twenty-seven, is a doctor of Oriental learning. The young woman is the daughter of the Rev. E. R. Montgomery, whose wife was Emily Reddington, of Rome, N. Y., whence they went as missionaries to Turkey, where Miss Montgomery was born.

Few living women have had personal relations with so many eminent and historic people as Mlle. Janotha, the pianist. As a child she was nursed by Rubinstein, Liszt and Thalberg. She studied under Joachim and Kiel, Brahms, Weber and Schuman; has been led to the platform by Bismarck and Moltke, been praised and petted by Tennyson and Gladstone, and has played before almost every sovereign and royal personage in Europe.



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