

REV. DR. TALMAGE.

THE BROOKLYN DIVINE'S SUNDAY SERMON.

Subject of Discourse: "On Trial."

TEXT: "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."—I John ii, 1.

Standing in a court-room you say to yourself: "At this bar crime has often been arraigned; at this witness stand the oath has often been taken; at this jurors' bench the verdict has been rendered; at this judge's desk sentence has been pronounced." But I have to tell you to-day of a trial higher than any Oyer and Terminer or Circuit or Supreme or Chancery. It is the trial of every Christian man for the life of his soul. This trial is different from any other in the fact that it is both civil and criminal. The issues at stake are tremendous, and I shall in my sermon show you, first, what are the grounds of complaint; then, who are the witnesses in the cause, and lastly, who are the advocates.

When a trial is called on, the first thing is to have the indictment read. Stand up then, O Christian men, and hear the indictment of the court of high heaven against thy soul. It is an indictment of ten counts, for thou has directly or indirectly broken all the ten commandments. You know how it thundered on Sinai, and when God came down how the mountain rocked and the smoke ascended as from a smouldering furnace and the darkness gathered thick and the loud deep trumpet uttered the words: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die!" Are you guilty or not guilty? Do not put in a negative plea too quick, for I have to announce that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There is none that doeth good; no, not one. Whosoever shall keep the whole law, yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." Do not, therefore, be too hasty in pronouncing yourself not guilty.

This lawsuit before us also charges you with the breaking of a solemn contract. Many a time did we promise to be the Lord's. We got down on our knees and said: "O Lord, I am thine now and forever." Did you keep the promise? Have you stood up to the contract? I go back to your first communion. You remember it as well as if it were yesterday. You know how the vision of the cross rose before you. You remember how from the head and the hands and the side and the feet, there came bleeding forth these two words: "Remember Me." You recall how the cup of communion trembled in your hand when you first took it; and as in a sea-shell you may hear, or think you hear, the roaring of the surf even after the shell has been taken from the beach, so you recalled the cup of communion, and you heard in it the surging of the great ocean of a Saviour's agony; and you came forth from that communion, face with face shining as though you had been on the Mount of Transfiguration; and the very air seemed tremulous with the love of Jesus, and the woods and the leaves and the grass and the birds were brighter and sweeter-voiced than ever before, and you said down in the very depths of your soul: "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." Have you kept the bargain, O Christian man? Have you not sometimes faltered when you ought to have been true? Have you not been proud when you ought to have been humble? Have you not played the coward when you ought to have been the hero? I charge it upon you and I charge it upon myself—we have broken the contract.

Still further; this law suit claims damages at your hands. The greatest slander on the Christian religion is an inconsistent profession. The Bible says religion is one thing; we by our inconsistency say religion is some other thing, and what is more deplorable about it is that people can see faults of others while they cannot see any in themselves. If you shall at any time find some miserable old gossip, with imperfections from the crown of her head to the sole of her foot, a perfect blotch of sin herself, she will go tattling, tattling, tattling all the years of her life about the inconsistencies of others, having no idea that she is inconsistent herself. God save the world from the gossip, female and male. I think the males are the worst! Now the chariot of Christ's salvation goes on through the world; but it is our inconsistencies, my brethren, that block up the wheels, while all along the line there ought to have been cast nothing but palm branches, and the shout should have been lifted: "Hosanna to the son of David."

Now you have heard the indictment read. Are you ready to plead guilty or not guilty? Perhaps you are not ready yet to plead. Then the trial will go on. The witnesses will be called and we shall have the matter decided. In the name of God I now make proclamation. Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! Whosoever hath anything to offer in this trial, in which God is the plaintiff and the Christian soul the defendant, let him now step forth and give testimony in this solemn trial.

The first witness that I call upon the stand in behalf of the prosecution is the world—all critical and observant of Christian character. You know that there are people around you who perpetually banquet on the frailties of God's children. You may know, if you have lived in the country, that a crow cares for nothing so much as carrion. There are those who imagine that out of the faults of Christians they can make a bridge of boats across the stream of death, and they are going to try it; but, alas, for the mistake! When they get amid stream away will go the bridge, and down will go their souls to perdition. O world of the greedy eye and the hard heart, come on the stand now and testify in behalf of the prosecution against this Christian soul on trial. What do you know about this Christian man?

"Oh," says the world, "I know a great deal about him. He talks about putting his treasures in heaven, but he is the sharpest man in a trade I ever knew. He seems to want us to believe that he is a child of God, but he is just full of imperfections. I do not know but I am a great deal better than he is now. Oftentimes he is very earthly, and he talks so little about Christ and so much about himself. I am very glad to testify that this is a bad man."

Stop, O World, with the greedy eye and hard heart. I fear you are too much interested in this trial to give impartial evidence. Let all those who hear the testimony of this witness know that there is an old family quarrel between these two parties. There always has been a variance between the world and the church, and while the world on the witness stand to-day has told a great deal of truth about this Christian man, you must take it all with some allowance, remembering that they still keep the old grudge good. O World of the greedy eye and the hard heart, that will do. You may sit down.

The second witness I call in this case is Conscience. Who art thou, O Conscience? What is your business? Where were you born? What are you doing here? "Oh," says Conscience, "I was born in heaven; I came down to befriend this man; I have lived with him, I have instructed him, I have warned him, I showed him the right and the wrong, advising him to take the one and eschew the other; I have kindled a great light in his soul; with a whip of scorpions I have scourged his wickedness and I have tried to cheer him when doing right; and yet I am compelled to testify on the stand to-day that he has sometimes rejected my mission. Oh, how many cups of life have I pressed to his lips that he dashed down, and how often has he stood with his hard heel on the bleeding heart of the Son of God! It pains me very much that I have to testify against this Christian man, and yet I must, in behalf of Him who will in no wise clear the guilty, say that this Christian man has done wrong. He has been worldly. He has been neglectful. He has done a thousand things he ought not to have done and left undone a thousand things he ought to have done." That will do, Conscience. You can sit down.

The third witness I call in the case is an angel of God. Bright and shining one, what doest thou here? What hast thou to say against this man on trial? "Oh," says the angel, "I have been a messenger to him and have guarded him. I have watched him. With this wing I defended him, and oftentimes when he knew it not I led him into the green pastures and beside the still waters. I snatched from him the poisoned chalices. When bad spirits came upon him to destroy him, I fought them back with infinite fierceness; and yet I have to testify to-day that he has rejected my mission. He has not done as he ought to have done. Though I came from the sky he drove me back. Though with this wing I defended him and though with this voice I wooed him, I have to announce his multiplied imperfections. I dare not keep back the testimony, for then I should not dare to appear again among the sinless ones before the great white throne."

There is only one more witness to be called on behalf of the prosecution and that is the great, the holy, the august, the omnipotent Spirit of God. We bow down before him. Holy Spirit, knowest thou this man? "Oh, yes," says the Holy One, "I know him. I have striven with him ten thousand times and though sometimes he did seem to repent, he fell back again as often from his first estate. Ten thousand times ten thousand has he grieved me, although the Bible warned him, saying: 'Grieve not the Holy Ghost, which is the Spirit.' Yes, he has driven me back. Though I am the Third Person of the Trinity, he has trampled on my mission, and the blood of the atonement that I brought with which to cleanse his soul, he sometimes despised. I came from the throne of God to convert, and comfort and sanctify, and yet look at that man and see what he is compared with what, unresisted, I would have made him."

The evidence on the part of the prosecution has closed. Now let the defence bring on the rebuttal testimony. What have you, O Christian soul, to bring in reply to this evidence of the world, of the conscience, of the angel and of the Holy Ghost? No evidence? Are all these things true? "Yes, Unclean, unclean," says every Christian soul. What? Do you not begin to tremble at the thought of condemnation?

We have come now to the most interesting part of this great trial. The evidence all in, the advocates speak. The profession of an advocate is full of responsibility. In England and the United States there have arisen men who in this calling have been honored by their race and thrown contempt upon those who in the profession have been guilty of a great many meanesses. That profession will be honorable as long as it has attached to it such names as Mansfield and Marshall, and Story, and Kent and Southard, and William Wirt. The court-room has sometimes been the scene of very marvellous and thrilling things. Some of you remember the famous Girard will case, where one of our advocates pleaded the cause of the Bible and Christianity in masterly Anglo-Saxon, every paragraph a thunderbolt.

Some of you have read of the famous trial in Westminster Hall of Warren Hastings, the despoiler of India. That great man had conquered India by splendid talents, by courage, by bribes, by gigantic dishonesty. The whole world had rung with applause of condemnation. Gathered in Westminster Hall, a place in which thirty Kings had been inaugurated, was one of the most famous audiences ever gathered. Foreign Ministers and Princes sat there. Peers marched in clad in ermine and gold. Mighty men and women from all lands looked down upon the scene. Amid all that pomp and splendor, and amid an excitement such as has seldom been seen in any court-room, Edmund Burke advanced in a speech which will last as long as the English

language, concluding with this burning charge which made Warren Hastings cringe and cower: "I impeach him in the name of the Commons House of Parliament, whose trust he has betrayed. I impeach him in the name of the English nation, whose ancient honor he has sullied. I impeach him in the name of the people of India, whose rights he has trampled on, and whose country he has turned into a desert. And, lastly, in the name of human nature, in the name of both sexes, in the name of every age and rank, I impeach him as the common enemy and oppressor of all."

But I turn from the recital of those memorable occasions to a grander trial and I have to tell you that in this trial of the Christian for the life of his soul the advocates are mightier, wiser and more eloquent. The evidence all being in, Justice rises in behalf of the prosecution to make his plea. With the Bible open in his hand, he reads the law, stern and inflexible, and the penalty: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Then he says: "O, thou Judge and Lawgiver, this is Thine own statute and all the evidence in earth and heaven agrees in stating that this man has sinned against all these enactments. Now let the sword leap from its scabbard. Shall a man go through the very flames of Sinai unscathed? Let the law be executed. Let judgment be pronounced. Let him die. I demand that he die."

O Christian, does it not look very dark for thee? Who will plead on thy side in so forlorn a cause? Sometimes a man will be brought into a court of law and he will have no friends and no money, and the judge will look over the bar and say: "Is there any one who will volunteer to take this man's case and defend him?" and some young man rises up and says: "I will be his counsel," perhaps starting on from that very point to a great and brilliant career; Now, in this matter of the soul, as you have nothing to pay for counsel, do you think that any one will volunteer? Yes, yes; I see One rising. He is a young man, only thirty-three years of age. I see His countenance suffused with tears and covered with blood, and all the galleries of heaven are thrilled with the spectacle. Thanks be unto God, "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." O Christian soul, your case begins to look better. I think perhaps after all you may not have to die. The best advocate in all the universe has taken your side. No one was ever so qualified to defend a man as this advocate is qualified to defend you. He knows all the law, all its demands, all its penalties. He is always ready. No new turn of the case can surprise him, and he will plead for you for nothing as earnestly as though you brought a world of treasures to His feet. Besides that, He has undertaken the care of thousands who were as forlorn as you, and he has never lost a case. Courage, O Christian soul. I think that after all there may be some chance for you, for the great Advocate rises to make his plea, he says: "I admit all that has been proved against my client. I admit all these sins, ay, more; but look at that wounded hand of mine, and look at that other wounded hand and at my right foot and at my left foot. By all these wounds I plead for his clearance. Count all the drops of my tears. Count all the drops of my blood. By the humiliation of Bethlehem, by the sweat of Gethsemane, by the sufferings of the cross I demand that he go free. On this arm he hath leaned; to this heart he hath flown; in my tears he hath washed; on my righteousness he hath depended. Let him go free. I am the ransom. Let him escape the lash, I took the scourging. Let the cup pass from him, I drank it to the dregs. Put on him the crown of life, for I have worn the crown of thorns. Over against my cross of shame set his throne of triumph."

Well, the counsel on both sides have spoken and there is only more thing remaining, and that is the awarding of the judgment. If you have ever been in a court-room you know the silence and the solemnity when the verdict is about to be rendered or the judgment about to be given. About this soul on trial, shall it be saved or shall it be lost? Attention! Above, around, beneath. All the universe cries: "Hear! Hear!"

The judge rises and gives this decision, never to be changed, never to be revoked: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus."

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose, I will not, I will not desert to his foes; That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake, I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

But, my friends, there is coming a day or trial in which not only the saint but the sinner must appear. That day of trial will come very suddenly. The farmer will be at the plough, the merchant will be in the counting-room, the woodman will be ringing his axe on the hickories, the weaver will have his foot on the treadle, the manufacturer will be walking amid the buzz of looms, and the clack of flying machinery, the counsel may be standing at the bar, pleading the law, the minister may be reading the Gospel, the drunkard may be reeling amid his cups, and the blasphemer with the oath caught between his teeth.

Lo! the sun hides. Night comes down at mid-noon. A wave of darkness rolls over all the earth. The stars appear at noon-day. The earth shudders and throbs. There an earthquake opens and a city sinks as a crocodile would crunch a child. Mountains roll in their sockets and send down their granite cliffs in an avalanche of rock. Rivers pause in their chase for the sea, and ocean uprearing cries to flying Alps and Himalayah. Beasts bellow and moan and snuff up the darkness, clouds fly like flocks of swift eagles. Great thunders beat and boom and burst. Stars shoot and fall. The almighty, rising on His throne, declares that time shall be no longer and the archangel's trump repeats it till all the living hear and the continents of dead spring to their feet, crying: "Time shall be no longer!" Oh, on that day will you be ready?

I have shown you how well the Christian will get off in his trial. Will you get off as well in your trial? Will Christ plead on your side or will He plead against you? Oh, what will you do in the last great assay, if your conscience is against you, and the world is against you, and the angels of heaven are against you, and the Holy Spirit is against you, and the Lord God Almighty is against you? Better this day secure an advocate.

MANY SAILORS LOST.

A Whaling Vessel Wrecked in San Francisco Bay.

A Majority of the Crew Drowned in Sight of Land.

At 2:30 o'clock, the other morning, the whaling-bark Atlantic was driven ashore a mile and a half below the Cliff House, San Francisco, and went to pieces in a few minutes, not a spar remaining standing. Wreckage was strewn along the beach for three or four miles. The Captain and mate, with eight or ten men, were saved out of the forty-two men on board.

At the time of the disaster there was a dense fog, and a heavy sea was running. The Atlanta had left San Francisco for a cruise in the South Pacific, after which she was to proceed to the North. The Atlanta was an old vessel, having been built in 1851, and was of 251 tons register. She was owned by J. and W. R. Wing of New Bedford, Mass., and commanded by Captain Thomas F. Warren, who said:

"We were towed out to sea yesterday. There was a heavy swell and no wind, and the currents were so strong that we could not get out of the swell. We let go both anchors, but the sea swept our decks, and was so heavy that the anchors could not hold. We dragged ashore, and struck at 1:30 A. M. The men were being washed off during all this time by the immense waves that washed over us. The vessel went to pieces an hour and a half after she struck. There was a very heavy fog and it was pitch dark. We succeeded in lowering two boats, but both were capsized before getting two boat-lengths from the ship. The first boat contained Z. H. Doty, first mate, Anton Perry, third mate, and four or five of the crew. That was the last we saw of them. In the second boat were myself, Second Mate Ring, and five men. When we were swamped the sea carried us in until we touched bottom, when we dragged ourselves ashore. We made no signals of distress, as it was too foggy for any to be seen."

As soon as the Captain reached shore he made his way in an exhausted condition to the life-saving station a few hundred yards away, and gave the alarm. The life-saving apparatus was immediately got out, but owing to the darkness and fog it was some time before the wreck could be located. A line was then shot over her, but it proved of no service, as it became entangled in some floating wreckage, and the vessel shortly went to pieces.

The Captain and crew numbered forty-two persons, and only eleven persons were known to have been saved. It is rumored that a large portion of the crew were intoxicated, and that twenty-five men were below sleeping off the effects of liquor when the vessel struck and thus met their deaths.

Major Blakeney inspected what was left of the wrecked vessel and called attention to her timbers. He said: "They are so rotten that a slight blow will break them. The same state of things exists in every part. It seems to me that a rigid investigation should be ordered, and those responsible be made an example of. In my opinion this is little short of cold-blooded murder." The statements of a number of the survivors corroborate Major Blakeney's assertions.

PROMINENT PEOPLE.

THEODORE TILTON is writing letters from Paris to a Boston paper.

FERDINAND WARD is now running a printing press in the Sling Sing Prison.

TENNYSON has issued a new volume of poetry—"Locksley Hall Sixty Years After."

GENERAL SHERMAN and his family make their home in a "dozen rooms" at a New York hotel.

MISS ANNA HALLOWELL has been appointed a member of the Philadelphia Board of Education.

LORD WOLSELEY manages to make ends meet on \$13,500, which is his salary as Adjutant-General.

SENATOR VOORHEES has moved his Washington quarters into the house in which John Quincy Adams lived when he was nominated and elected to the Presidency.

EX-QUEEN ISABELLA, of Spain, is still holding court in Paris, where she gives sumptuous entertainments at her magnificent residence, the Hotel de Castille.

GEORGE BANCROFT, the historian, has the rarest roses in his Washington mansion, and his surroundings generally are such as would have delighted Charles Sumner.

SEÑOR LUIS MAZZANTINI, the most famous bull-fighter in Spain, who recently received \$30,000 in gold for fourteen performances in Havana, is coming to the United States.

LAURA BRIDGMAN, the wonderful blind deaf-mute, after an extended absence, has returned to the Institute for the Blind at South Boston. She is now nearly fifty-seven years of age.

MAROUS JORDAN, of Bielefeld, Rhenish Prussia, is the oldest man in Germany. He has completed his 107th year in sound health, and reads the crabbed German letters without spectacles.