SUNDAY'S SERMON.

ONE OF REV. DR. TALMAGE'S STRIKING DISCOURSES.

Subject: "The Burden Bearer."

TEXT: *"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee."*—Psalm lv. 22.

David was here taking his own medicine. If anybody had on him heavy weights, David had them, and yet out of his own experience he advises you and me as to the best way of getting rid of burdens. This is a world of burden bearing. Coming into the house of prayer there may be no sign of sadness or sorrow, but where is the man who has not a conflict? Where is the soul that has not a struggle? And there is not a day or of all the year when my text is not gloriously appropriate, and there is never an audience assembled on the planet where the text does not fit the occasion: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee." In the far east wells of water are so infrequent that when a man owns a well he has a property of very great value, and sometimes battles have been fought for the possession of one well of water; but there is one well that every man owns—a deep well, a perennial well, a well of tears. If a man has not a burden on this shoulder, he has a burden on the other shoulder.

The day I left home to look after myself and for myself, in the wagon my father sat driving, and he said that day something which has kept with me all my life: "Do Will, it is always safe to trust God." I have many a time come to a crisis of difficulty. You may know that, having been sick for fifteen years, it was no easy thing for me to support a family; but always God came to the rescue. I remember the time," he said, "when I didn't know what to do, and I saw a man on horseback riding up the farm lane, and he announced to me that I had been nominated for the most lucrative office in the gift of the people of the county, and to that office I was elected, and God in that way met all my wants, and I tell you it is always safe to trust Him.

Oh, my friends, what we want is a practical religion! The religion people have is so high up you cannot reach it. In the Straits of Magellan, I have been told, there is a place where whichever way a captain puts his ship he finds the wind against him, and there are men who all their lives have been running in the teeth of wind, and which way to turn they do not know. Some of them may be here this morning, and I address them face to face, not perfunctorily, but as one brother talks to another brother, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee."

First—There are a great many men who have business burdens. When we see a man harried and perplexed and annoyed in business life we are apt to say: "He ought not to have attempted to carry so much." But that man may not be to blame at all! When a man plants a business he does not know what will be its outgrowths, what will be its roots, what will be its branches. There is many a man with keen foresight and large business faculty who has been flung into the dust by unforeseen circumstances springing upon him from ambush. When he buy, when to sell, when to trust and to what amount of credit, what will be the effect of this new invention of machinery, what will be the effect of that loss of crop and a thousand other questions perplex business men until the hair is silvered and deep wrinkles are plowed in the cheek, and that man goes up by the mountains and go down by the valleys, and they age at their wits' ends and stagger like drunken men.

There never has been a time when there have been such rivalries in business as now. It is hardware against hardware, books against books, chandlery against chandlery, imported article against imported article. A thousand stores in combat with another thousand stores. Never such an advantage of light, never such a variety of assortment, never so much splendor of show window, never so much adroitness of salesmen, never so much acuteness of advertisement, and amid all the severities of rivalry in business how many men break down! Oh, the burden on the shoulder! Oh, the burden on the heart! You hear that it is avarice which drives these men of business through the street, and that is the commonly accepted idea. I do not believe a word of it.

Ah! my friend, do you say that God does not care anything about your worldly business? I tell you God knows more about it than you do. He knows all your perplexities; He knows what mortgages is about to foreclose, He knows what note you cannot pay, He knows what unsalable goods you have on your shelves; He knows all your trials, from the day you took hold of the first yardstick down to the sale of the last yard of ribbon, and the God who helped David to be king, and who helped Daniel to be prime minister, and who helped Havelock to be a soldier, will help you to discharge all your duties. He is going to see you through. When loss comes, and you find your property going, just take this Book and put it down by your ledger, and read of the eternal possessions that will come to you through our Lord Jesus Christ. And when your business partner betrays you, and your friends turn against you, just take the insulting letter, put it down on the table, put your Bible beside the insulting letter, and then read of the friendship of Him who "sticketh closer than a brother."

A young accountant in New York City got his accounts entangled. He knew he was honest, and yet he could not make his accounts come out right, and he toiled at them day and night until he was nearly frenzied. It seemed by those books that something had been misappropriated, and he knew before God he was honest. The last day came. He knew if he could not that day make his accounts come out right he would go into disgrace and go into banishment from the business establishment. He went over there very early, before there was anybody in the place, and he knelt down at the desk and said: "Oh, Lord, Thou knowest I have tried to be honest, but I cannot make these things come out right! Help me to-day—help me this morning!"

The young man arose and hardly knowing why he did so opened a book that lay on the desk, and there was a leaf containing a line of figures which explained everything. In other words, he cast his burden upon the Lord and the Lord sustained him. Young man, do you hear that? Oh, yes; God has a sympathy with anybody that is in any kind of toil! He knows how heavy is the hod of bricks that the workman carries up the ladder of the wall; He hears the picker of the miner down the coal shaft; He knows how strong the tempest strikes the sailor at masthead; He sees the face of a girl among the spindles and knows how her arms ache; He sees the sewing woman in the fourth story and knows how few pence she gets for making a garment; and louder than all the din and roar of the city comes the voice of a sympathetic God, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee."

Second—There are a great many who have a weight of persecution and abuse upon them. Humanitarian society gets a grudge against a man. All his motives are misinterpreted, and his good deeds are despatched. With more virtue than some of the honored saints launched to martyrdom against idolatry and sharp criticism [illegible] begins to go down he has not only the force of natural gravitation, but a hundred hands to help him down. Jesus Christ was persecuted for their virtues and their success. Germanicus said he had just as many bitter antagonists as he had adherents. The character sometimes is so luminous that the weak eyes of envy and jealousy cannot bear to look at it. It was their longevity that put Joseph in the pit, and Daniel in the lions' den, SHADRACH in the fire, and sent John the Evangelist to desolate Patmos, and Calvin to the castle of persecution, and John Huss to the stake, and Korah into the earth, and after John the Baptist Herod after Christ. Be sure if you have anything to do for church or state, and you attempt it with all your soul, the lightning will strike you.

The world always had a cross between two thieves for the one who comes to save it. High and holy enterprise has always been followed by abuse. The most sublime tragedy of self sacrifice has come to burlesque. The graceful gait of virtue is always followed by grimace and travesty. The sweetest strain of poetry ever written has come to ridiculous parody, and as long as there are virtue and righteousness in this world, there will be something for impurity to grin at. All along the line of the ages, and in all lands, the cry has been: "Not this man, but Barabbas. Now, Barabbas was a robber."

And what makes the persecutions of life worse is that they come from people whom you have helped, from those to whom you have loaned money or have started in business, or whom you rescued in some great crisis. I think it has been the history of all our lives—the most acrimonious assault has come from those whom we have benefited, whom we have helped, and that makes it all the harder to bear. A man is in danger of becoming cynical.

A clergyman of the Universalist church went into a neighborhood for the establishment of a church of his denomination, and he was anxious to find some one of that denomination, and he was pointed to a certain house and went there. He said to the man of the house, "I understand you are a Universalist; I want you to help me in the enterprise." "Well," said the man, "I am a Universalist, but I have a peculiar kind of Universalism." "Well," replied the other, "I have been out in the world, and have been cheated and slandered and outraged and abused until I believe in universal damnation!"

Third—There are others who carry great burdens of physical ailments. When sudden sickness has come, and fierce cholera and malignant fevers take the castles of life by storm, we appeal to God, but in these chronic ailments which wear out the strength day after day, and week after week, and year after year, how little resorting to God for solace! Then people depend upon their tonics and their plasters and their cordials rather than upon heavenly stimulants. Oh, how few people there are completely well! Some of you by dint of perseverance and care have kept living to this time; but how you have had to war against physical ailments! Antediluvians, without medical college and infirmary and apothecary shop, multiplied their years by hundreds; but he who has gone through the gantlet of diseases in our time, and has come to seventy years of age, is a hero worthy of a palm.

The world seems to be a great hospital, and you run against rheumatisms and consumptions and scrofulas and neuralgias and scores of old diseases baptized by new nomenclature. Oh, how heavy a burden sickness is! It takes the color out of the sky, and the sparkle out of the wave, and the sweetness out of the fruit and the beauty out of the night. When the limbs ache, when the respiration is painful, when the mouth is hot, when the ears are with unhealthy obstructions, how hard it is to be patient and cheerful and assiduous! "Cast thy burden upon the Lord." Does your head ache? His wore the thorn. Do your feet hurt? His were crushed of the spikes. Is your side painful? His was struck by the spear. Do you feel like giving way under the burden? His weakness gave way under a cross.

A prominent merchant of New York said to a member of my family, "My mother was a Christian and died in Christ." Then this was the case. He said: "My mother has a dreadful abscess, from which she had suffered untold agonies, and all surgery had been exhausted upon her, and she was worse and worse grew until we called in a few Christian friends and proceeded to pray about it. We commended her case to God, and the abscess began immediately to be cured. She is entirely well now, and without knife and without any surgery." So that case has come to me, and there are a score of other cases coming to our ears from all parts of the earth. Oh, ye who are sick, go to Christ! Oh, ye who are worn out with agonies of body, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee!"

Another burden some have to carry is the burden of bereavement. Ah! these are the troubles that wear us out. If we lose our property, by additional industry perhaps we may bring back the estranged fortune; if we lose our good name, perhaps by reformation of morals we may achieve again reputation for integrity; but who will bring back the dear departed? Alas me! for these empty cradles and these trunks of childish toys that will never be used again. Alas me! for the empty chair and the silence in the halls that will never echo again to those familiar footsteps. Alas! for the cry of widowhood and orphanage.

What bitter Marahs in the wilderness, what cities of the dead, what long black shadow from the wing of death, what eyes sunken with grief, what hands tremulous with bereavement, what instruments of music shut now because there are no fingers to play on them! Is there no relief for such souls? Aye, let the soul ride into the harbor of my text.

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

There are many who carry the burden of sin. Ah, we all carry it until in the appointed way that burden is lifted. We need no Bible to prove that the whole race is ruined. What a spectacle it would be if we could tear off the mask of human dissimulation; or beat a drum that would bring up the whole army of the world's transgressions—the deception, the fraud, and the rapine, and the murder, and the crimes of all these centuries! Aye, if I could sound the trumpet of resurrection to the soul of the best man in this audience, and all the dead sins of the past should come up, we could not endure the sight. Sin, grim and dire, has put its clutch upon the immortal soul, and that clutch will never relax unless it be under the heel of Him who came to destroy the works of the devil.

Oh, to have a mountain of sin on the soul! Is there no way to have the burden moved? Oh, yes. "Cast thy burden upon the Lord." The sinless One came to take the consequence of our sin! And I know He is in earnest. How do I know it? By the streaming temples and the streaming hands as He says, "Come unto Me all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Why will prodigals live on swines' husks when the robe, and the ring and the Father's welcome are ready? Why go wandering over the great Sahara desert of your sin when you are invited to the gardens of God, the trees of life and the fountains of living water? Why be homeless and homeless forever, when yet we may become the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty?

Fourth—There are others who carry great burdens of bereavement. Death has come into your family, and you have lost the companion of your bosom, the child of your heart, the parent whose prayers followed you all your life long. Oh, the burden of bereavement! Is there no balm? Is there no balm? Yes, there is balm in Gilead. The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose, I will not, I will not desert to its foes; That soul, though all hell shall endeavor to shake, I'll never, no never, no never forsake.

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Sixth—There are others who carry great burdens of spiritual darkness. Ah! how many there are who have lost the way to the Lord! Ever since they were born they have been groping their way through the darkness, and they have fallen into the ditch, and they have been bruised by the rocks, and they have been torn by the briars, and they have been drenched in the pitiless storm, and they have been chilled in the cold night, and they have been hunted by the wolves, and they have been pursued by the lions, and they have been ready to perish. Ah! how many there are who have lost the way to the Lord! Ever since they were born they have been groping their way through the darkness, and they have fallen into the ditch, and they have been bruised by the rocks, and they have been torn by the briars, and they have been drenched in the pitiless storm, and they have been chilled in the cold night, and they have been hunted by the wolves, and they have been pursued by the lions, and they have been ready to perish. Oh,