SUNDAY'S SERMON.

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

Subject: "God's Week's Work."

TEXT: "And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."—Genesis i., 31.

From Monday morning to Saturday night gives us a week's work. If we have filled that week with success we are happy. But I am going to tell you what God did in one week. Cosmogony, geology, astronomy, or ornithology, ichthyology, botany, anatomy are such vast subjects that no human life is long enough to explore or comprehend any one of them. But I have thought I might in an unusual way tell you a little of what God did in one week. And whether you make it a week of days or a week of ages, I care not, for I shall reach the same practical result of reverence and worship.

The first Monday morning found swinging in space the piled up lumber of rocks and metal and soil and water from which the earth was to be builded. God made up his mind to create a human family, and they must have a house to live in. But where? Not a roof, not a wall, not a door, not a room was fit for human occupancy. There is not a pile of black basalt in Yellowstone Park or an extinct volcano in Honolulu so inappropriate for human residence as was this globe at this early period. Moreover, there was no human architect to draw a plan, no quarryman to blast the foundation stones, no carpenter to hew out a beam, and no mason to trowel a wall.

The first thing needed was light. It was not needed for God to work by, for He can work as well in the darkness. But right may be necessary, for angelic intelligences are to see in its full glory the process of world building. But where are the candles, where are the candelabra, where is the chandelier? No rising sun will roll in the morning, for if the sun is already created its light will not yet reach the earth in three days. Nor moon nor stars can brighten this darkness. The moon and stars are not born yet, or if created their light will not reach the earth for some time yet. But there is need of immediate light. Whence shall it come from?

The record makes me think that, standing over this earth that spring morning, God looked upon the darkness that palled the heights of this world, and the chasms of it and the awful reaches of it, and uttered, whether in the Hebrew of earth or some language celestial I know not, that word which stands for the subtle, bright, glowing and all pervading fluid, that word which thrills and garlands and lifts every thing it touches, that word the full meaning of which all the chemists of the ages have busied themselves in exploring, that word which suggests a force that flies one hundred and ninety thousand miles in a second, and by undulations seven hundred and twenty-seven trillions in a second, that one word that God utters—Light!

And instantly the darkness began to shimmer, and the thick folds of blackness to lift, and there were scintillations and coruscations and flashes and billowing up of resplendence, and in great sheets it spread out northward, southward, eastward, westward, and a radiance filled the atmosphere until it could hold no more of the brilliance. Light now to work by while supernatural intelligences look on. Light, the first chapter of the first day of the week. Light, the joy of the centuries. Light, the greatest blessing that ever touched the human eye. The robe of the Almighty is woven out of it, for He covers Himself with light as with a garment. Oh, blessed light! I am so glad this was the first thing created that week. The lack of it the body stumbles. O thou Father of Lights, give us light!

Now it is Tuesday morning. A delicate and tremendous undertaking is to be spun for this day. There was a great superabundance of water. God, by the wave of His hand, this morning gathers part of it in suspended reservoirs, and part of it He orders down into the rivers and lakes and seas. How to hang whole Atlantic oceans in the clouds without their spilling over except in right quantities and at right times was an undertaking that no one but Omnipotence would have dared. But God does it as easily as you would lift a glass of water. There He hoists two clouds, each thirty miles wide and five miles high, and balances them. Here He lifts the cirrous clouds and spreads them out in great white banks as though it had been snowing in heaven. And the cirrostratus clouds in long parallel lines, so straight you know an infinite geometer has drawn them. Clouds which are the armory from which thunder storms get their bayonets of fire. Clouds which are oceans on the wing. No wonder, long after this first Tuesday of creation week, Elihu confounded Job with the question, "Dost thou know the balancing of the clouds?"

Half of this Tuesday work done, the other half is the work of compelling the waters to lie down in their destined places. So God picks up the solid ground and packs it up into the five elevations, which are the continents. With his finger he makes deep depressions in them, and these are the lakes, while at the piling up of the Alleghanies and Sierra Nevadas and Pyrenees and Alps and Himalayas the rest of the waters start by the law of gravitation to the lower places, and in their run down hill become the rivers, and then all around the earth these rivers come into convention and become oceans beneath, as the clouds are oceans above.

Now it is Wednesday morning of the world's first week. Gardening and horticulture will be born to-day. How queer the hills look, and so unattractive they seem hardly worth having been made. But now all the surfaces are changing color. Something beautiful is creeping all over them. It has the color of emerald. Ay, it is herbage. Hail to the green guest! God's favorite color and God's favorite plant, as I judge from the fact that he makes a larger number of them than of anything else. But look yonder! Something starts out of the ground and goes higher up, higher and higher, and spreads out broad leaves. It is a palm tree. Yonder is another growth, and its leaves hang far down, and it is a willow tree. And yonder is a growth with a mighty sweep of branches. And here they come—the pear, and the apple, and the peach, and the pomegranate, and groves, and orchards, and forests, their shadows and their fruit girdling the earth.

Now it is Thursday morning of the world's first week. Nothing will be created to-day. The hours will be passed in scattering fogs and mists and vapors. The atmosphere must be swept clean. Other worlds are to come in sight. The little ship of the earth has sailed far, but will the ocean of immensity be its port? Heliotrope stars are to be launched to-day on the high seas of space. First, the moon's white sail appears and then very soon all the sun bursts upon the ocean. The light then on the previous Tuesday was struck through some special word from Jehovah, but the sun, moon and stars, the first three of the fourth day, were left to take their place in the sky. Why, that says—I chance to be writing this on the Sabbath—that we are to look upon the Sabbath as a memorial of creation. It seems to me that this is, if you will pardon the expression, a God's Sabbath. It was made for man, but God Himself was the first to keep it