

CALAMITY MAKES MAN KIN.

Rev. Dr. Talmage Speaks on the Brotherhood of Man.

A despatch from Washington says:—Rev. Dr. Talmage preached from the following text:—"And it came to pass that when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces."—Genesis, xv. 17.

When the ancients wanted to take an oath they would slay an animal, points, and midway between the pieces opposite to each other. Then the parties would advance from opposite points, and midway between the pieces take the oath. God wished to take an oath. He ordered a heifer and some birds slain and divided, and the pieces laid opposite to each other; then between the pieces passed first a furnace, typical of suffering, and then a lamp, emblem of deliverance.

So it is in the history of individuals, cities and nations. First, the awful furnace, then the cheerful lamp. The furnace of conviction, the lamp of pardon. The furnace of trial, the lamp of consolation. The furnace of want, the lamp of prosperity. The furnace of death, the lamp of glory. "And it came to pass that when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces."

It is the duty of the minister to interpret solemn providences. Shall a ship founder, carrying down hundreds of passengers; or a gunpowder plot be discovered; or a revolution break forth; or a pestilence put its leprosy bandage over the white lips of an empire; or a great city crouch down at the nation's gate, beggared, while the long tongues of the flame lick its sores, and the ministry be dumb?

On the eve of the great Chicago fire, children had folded their hands in evening prayer, and all over the city the "good-night" had been given, when destruction broke forth. The two couriers of hurricane and conflagration, yoked together, drew on the chariot in which white Want, and cursing Despair, and shrieking Terror were mounted. Store-houses that had been the pride of the continent surrendered their bolts and bars, and iron safes, at the first touch of this irresistible burglary. Churches of God, that had gone up with a self-denial worthy of an angel's eulogy, dropped their organs, galleries, vestments and consecrated plate into the ashes. And, worse than all, the homes took fire, and away went sacred relics, and the last pillow on which to sleep, and the last loaf of bread, and millionaire and pauper, trudged down the street, the flaming sword swung at the gate of their paradise, forbidding them ever again to enter. Hark to that explosion of blocks, that fall to stop the ravages; to the shrieking of that family, gathered on the house-top, begging for help, until the wife falls, and the children faint, and the father staggers, and all die; and to the cry of those men and women who go down the street hatless, raving mad, wringing their hands and fearing their hair! This child cries, "Where are my father and mother? I wonder if they are burned up?" And this man, seizing hold of another cries, "I wonder if this is the day of judgment!" and another exclaims, "This is hell!" and an infidel, standing at the street-corner cries out, "Where is your God now? Carry out those sick children in your arms and flee! Wrap up that corpse and get it away from this funeral pyre! Lift that sick woman, with the child just born, opening its eyes in torment! Get out this life-long invalid, and do not stop for medicines or blankets, for the stairs are crumbling away—they are gone now! Quick! leap from the window! No use in flying to the water's edge, for the army of horrors have crossed, and pulled up the bridges after them. With carts and drays, off to the prairies! The night may be cold, and the prospect hopeless, but anything is better than the sting of these cinders, and the falling of these walls, and the wailing of this dying city. But how shall they get out? To the north—fire! to the south—fire! to the east—fire! to the west—fire!

Yet deliverance is coming. Telegrams from London, from Edinburgh, from Vienna, from New York, from Brooklyn—from two continents, announcing help. Trains come with the speed of an express, bearing food and blankets; and he who, when things looked dark in the Shenandoah Valley, got into lightning stirrups, has just in time ridden into the scene to spread tents for the shelterless, to scatter rations for the hungry.

It was an awful furnace! But it has passed, and now I see a light that gets brighter and brighter as it is fed by the alms and sympathies, and prayers of a world. It is the glowing lamp, the cheerful lamp, the glorious lamp of God's deliverance!

From all this you learn, without any preacher telling you, that we are all one. The thrill of sympathy that went through all of this country, and

through all of Europe, shows that we belong to one family. All the people, white, black, and copper-colored, Protestant and Catholic, find their hearts thrilled with the impulse of one common brotherhood.

There are those who do not like this idea. They say that God made the Indian, and set him down this side of the Atlantic, and the Spaniard on the other side, and the African, and placed him in the snaky jungles, and so on, and that then from these different representative men the human family descended. But Paul knocks down that when, standing in the presence of one of the most aristocratic audiences of the world, he proclaims, in the name of God, this democratic doctrine, "God hath made of one blood all the nations of men." They started from one garden, and they fell in one transgression; they are redeemed by the same almighty grace, and are to shine for ever in the same heavenly kingdom.

This feeling of consanguinity is constantly illustrated. A mine in England falls upon the workmen, and all nations feel the suffocation. Prince Albert dies, and Victoria has the sympathy of all Christendom. A plague falls upon London, and all the cities of the world weep at her agonies. An earthquake rocks down a Mexican city, and both hemispheres feel the shock. Famine stalks through India and distant nations send their cargoes of bread.

This doctrine of universal brotherhood will not make all alike. Difference in soil and climate will make differences in men. As with plants and animals, so with men. The torrid zone will yield the yams and tamarinds, and the best culture will only make better yams and tamarinds. The wintry regions will yield the barley and berries; and culture will only make this difference, that they will produce better barley and larger berries. You will not expect to find the same vegetable products in Paraguay as in Lapland. Cloves and cherries cannot well drink the same air. Nutmegs and currants will not grow side by side. When God made one part of the earth, he said, "You yield bananas;" and to another, "You yield plums and pears;" and that portion thrives best which attempts to produce and export that which God ordained it to raise. So, in the animal kingdom, you will not expect to find the ichneumon where you hunt for the otter and walrus. As with plants and animals, so with man. The tropical regions will make passionate natures, and arctic severities will form temperaments cold, and stolid, and sullen. In the regions of the Gospel there will be the same great characteristics as now, although somewhat moderated and modified. The Frenchman will be characteristically polite; the German, persistent and plodding; the English, self-reliant; the American restless and enterprising; the Italian aesthetic; the Spaniard, quick and impulsive. Gospel triumphs will not steal the Scotchman's plaid, or break the German's pipe, or dash down the Italian's easel. Differences for ever, but no quarrel. Christ spreading his treaty of peace over all monarchies and republics, the potentates, presidents, and princes of the earth will come up and sign it. Vessels of war will be anchored at the ship-yards, and changed into the navy-yard, to be kept as relics of a barbarous age, to be looked upon as in our museums we now examine scalping-knives and thumb-screws. The masterly treaties on military tactics will be sold for wrapping-paper, or kept for curious examination, as we now have in our libraries an old Koran or a Chinese Almanac. The surgical discoveries made in the treatment of gun-shot fractures will be employed in alleviating the accidents to labourer, farmer, and mechanic. The hammer of the shipwright, as it beats against the spikes in the ship's beam, will sound "Life! Life!" instead of, as now, rattling "Death!" "Death!"

O day of universal brotherhood, begin! It comes skipping upon the mountains, and singing through the vales. I hear its footsteps in the tread of the multitudes of the devout this day, on their way to church. I hear its voice in the billowing up of that great song of praise that the world rises from all the churches of God, illuminated for worship. I see its banner lifted upon the fallen ramparts of great iniquities, the fold of light streaming with the stars of promise and good cheer. This wave of Gospel influence dashes higher up toward full tide. This song of joy, now tremulous and faint, will burst into million-voiced acclaim. The towers that have so long been tolling the sorrows of the world shall peal another sound—Scotch kirk, and American church, and mission chapel, and great St. Paul's chiming the clear, sweet, silvery song of the Millennium.

The Church of God, no more a barrack for fighting Christians, shall become a great temple, on whose walls shall be hung olive-branches of peace. The flags of all nations, once carried in front of hostile armies, shall hang in graceful festoons above those who once were full of hate. The "Marseillaise Hymn," and "Bonny Doon," and "Hail Columbia," and "God save the Queen," shall mingle in one great song; but, touched into resurrection, it shall mount into a harmony of unimagined sweetness and power, that shall soar, and melt, and pour into the hallelujah that, like the voice of many waters, and the voice of mighty thunders, comes surging up to the feet of Jesus.

I learn from the Chicago fire what a poor place the earth is to put our treasures in. Millions of dollars of property destroyed in a day and a night! How much toil of brain, and hand, and foot represented in that property! All the anxiety and sweat of twenty years gone in one day of destruction. We have been accustomed to think that if property were insured, all was well. But even insurance companies have gone down. Set not your affections on anything you can build, for it is perishable. Do not worship your fine reputation, or your wealthy store, or your large house, or your swift ship, but build up in your soul a temple of Christian character. Disasters cannot crush it, nor fire consume it, nor iconoclast deface its altars, nor time chisel down its walls. Yet politicians have worshipped their office, and merchants their business, and musicians their attainments, and architects their buildings, and historians their books; and how often have they seen their works perish! What a poor place to put one's treasure in! A painter, busy in making the fresco of a building, standing high up on the scaffolding, was entranced with his own work, and stepped back to admire it, and in his excitement forgot that he stood upon a high scaffolding, stepped back too far, and fell—his life dashed out, far beneath, on the marble. So men admire their worldly achievements, and in their enchantment step back to look, and step back too far, and fall—ruined for life and lost for eternity.

Again: Learn from the recent awful calamity the beauty of heroism and self-denial. Scene after scene of self-denying heroism. How grand it is, amid the selfishness of the world, to find such generous deeds! The Moravian missionaries were told that they could not enter the lazaretto where the lepers were dying unless they stayed there. "Then," they said, "we will go and stay there." They went in to nurse the sick, and perished. You have read the life of pure-hearted Elizabeth Fry, toiling among the degraded. But the full biographies of the world's martyrs will never be written. The firemen in all our cities who have rescued people from blazing buildings; the sailors who have helped the passengers off the wreck, themselves perishing; the nurses who have waited upon the sick in yellow fever and cholera hospitals, and sunk down to death from exhaustion; the Christian men who, on the battle-field, have administered to the fallen amid rattling canister and bursting shell.

Christian heroism has ever been ready to face the fire, and swim the flood, and dare the storm, if good might be done. And in that day when men who sat in places of power shall go down to shame and contempt, these humble ones shall have their names written high on the pillars of heaven. Better than to have been commemorated in poetry or song will it be for them who hear the good cheer from Christ, "I was hungry, and ye fed me; I was sick, and ye visited me. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!" Again: Learn from disaster the importance of being prepared for the great future. Five thousand people were known to have perished; I fear there were many more. They had no time for preparation. Many of you are daily exposed to perils. You walk on scaffolding; you drive fractious animals; you fly over the country on swift wheels; you work among dangerous chemicals. The voice that comes on the wind to-night says, "Prepare to meet thy God." By the revolutions of the days and nights you are hurried on to your last hour of earth and your first hour of eternity. Sleeping and waking, you heart beats the double quick step of an immortal spirit. See you not, through the fogs and mists of earth, in the distance, the looming up of the heavenly shore, over which white-robed inhabitants walk, for ever free from toil and pain, and sin and tears? Hark to the cry that comes over the waters from the castles of the blessed, from the lips of princes, and garlanded, from harps that never felt the rough twang of woe, and from trumpets that peal forth the victory of many conquerors. The trees of God bend with immortal fruitage, and under them rest the toil-worn of earth looking down toward you, ready for your coming up to shout, amid the rustle of palms and the clang of of celestial towers, "Hail! hail!"

But there is an obligation growing out of the service, and that is the

duty of giving prompt relief to the houseless, homeless, exhausted, and dying. They want something besides "God bless you"—namely, tippets, and sashes, and shoes, and hats, and coats, and dresses—yea, all the articles of a winter's wardrobe.

You will not turn your back on this suffering. Your bed to-night will be softer if you feel that you have provided some sufferer with a mattress to lie on. Your own food will be sweeter if you make provision for the hunger-struck. Your own children will seem brighter-faced if you provide stockings for the little bare feet.

Get ready for a grand contribution of money and clothes. When the box comes around, let it seem like the wasted hand of suffering stretched out for help. Let the church officials move slowly down the aisles as they gather the alms, remembering that the amount they gather will decide whether some groaning man or woman shall live or perish. As in the last day we hope to find mercy of the Lord, let us to-night show mercy to others.

O thou self-denying one of Gethsemane and the cross, drop upon us thy Spirit.

PRISONERS OF ST. HELENA

IRISH SKIPPER VISITS THE BOERS' HILLTOP CAMP.

Saw Commandant Roux, but Missed Traje—Prisoners, Pretty Comfortable, but Schiel, the Captured German Artillery, Very Cross—Red Bulletins of Cape Town News.

The latest news by British freighter from the Boer prisoners at St. Helena arrived recently aboard the Hogan Line steamship Masconomo, which made a slow voyage from the famous little island, because she has clinging to her hull the retarding collection of barnacles accumulated by lying two months in tropic waters. She is so foul that she was able to do only about 6 knots an hour.

Capt. Alfred Mann of the Masconomo is an Irishman, proud of his nationality, but loyal to his British Government. He called at St. Helena merely because the ship's machinery had broken down and he thought he might get it repaired there. He found that there were no shops ashore that could do the job, so he told his plight to the Governor of the island, who got the engineers' force of the British cruiser Niobe, lying off the island, to fix things. They could not take any pay for it, but the skipper gave them a present on behalf of the Hogan Line.

The ship was thirty-six hours anchored within 200 yards of the precipitous shore of the island, off the only port, Jamestown, which lies between two steep ridges and is so narrow that it can afford to have only one street without a slant to starboard or port. When you try to get off the street you have to use an alpenstock unless you are a natural-born mountain climber. When the Masconomo dropped anchor she was quickly surrounded by a fleet of bumboats filled with natives with things to sell. They had fruit, necklaces, bracelets and purses made of bright brownish seeds, and photographs of everything on the island. The room in which Napoleon died, his house at Longwood and every memorial of the Little Corporal on the island were among the things photographed. There were also pictures of the Boers as they marched through the streets of Jamestown under escort of British soldiers. Nearly every one of the ship's company bought one or more pictures and sent them home to friends and relatives in Britain.

Capt. Mann had never been on the island, and he decided to go ashore and take a look around, incidentally visiting the camp of the Boer prisoners. He says that the camp is about five miles from the shore in a direct line, but by the zigzag roads winding up the east side of the mountain it is about twelve miles away. He went up in a two-wheeled trap and on the way passed many groups of Boers bound for Jamestown. Some of them were working for the farmers of the island. They gave the Irish skipper a military salute. Some of them smiled, but most looked somewhat sullen. They smoked long-stemmed pipes and wore no uniforms. Capt. Mann saw among all that he fell in with only three hats that were apparently intended originally to be parts of a uniform. He found the prisoners who were not on parole or had not the privilege of working for the farmers in an inclosure about a quarter of a mile square, surrounded by a high wire fence. Outside of this fence and about twelve feet from it was another, along which the sentinels patrolled. There were notices posted on the inside fence in English and Dutch warning prisoners that if they went beyond the first fence they would be likely to be shot. A week before the skipper visited the place one of the prisoners, a cook, was killed by a sentinel because he went out of the first inclosure and refused to halt when ordered to do so. The sentinel was tried by court-martial and exonerated.

The Boer camp is on the top of a hill in a place called Deadwood Plain. It is a healthy spot and the southeast trades blow constantly over it. There

was no sickness among either the soldiers or the Boers. The original garrison of the island is from a black West India regiment. They have nothing to do with the Boers, who are guarded entirely by men of the Gloucester Regiment, Lieut.-Col. Evans commanding. The officers of the regiment and the Boer officers, all of whom have the liberty of the island, on parole, fraternize in Jamestown and talk about the events of the war. There is close connection with Cape Town, and the printer of Jamestown gets out at intervals a little scrap of cable news of the war on a sheet of red paper about four inches square and sells it to Boers and Britons for a penny a copy. It is also posted in the St. Helena Club house at Jamestown where it is discussed by men from the ships that may be in port and the officers of the British cruiser Niobe, which is anchored off the town to see that none of the Boers escape, or is assisted in escaping, by sea. Capt. Mann said:

"What impressed me most about the Boers was the great difference in their ages. I saw many gray-haired and patriarchal-looking men of 70 and a lot of boys who could not have been more than 15 or 16 years old. Men of middle age seemed to be the exception. They were chiefly very old or very young. I talked with Col. Schiel, the German artillery officer, and cannot say that I like him. He was inclined to be everybody. The Boer officers were apparently satisfied with their condition. I also spoke with Commandant Roux, who, I believe, captured Winston Churchill. Roux is more than six feet tall and is one of the handsomest men among the prisoners, most of whom are big fellows. He said that he believed the war would soon be over and expressed the hope that the British might end it by giving the Boers terms that would not be humiliating. I did not see Cronje, who lives at the Governor's house, some five miles from the Boer camp. I heard that Cronje and the Governor are very friendly and frequently dine together. The Boer officers that I met struck me as men of intelligence, but most of the rank and file did not seem to me of a very high order intellectually. The Boers live twelve in a tent and get the same rations as the men who guard them. Every month a steamship from England with bullocks aboard anchors off Jamestown. The cattle are taken ashore on floats and lifted to the cliff by a big crane. Our own soldiers live thirteen in a tent, and so are a little more crowded than the Boers. The latter have increased their accommodations by building shacks of bamboo and tree branches. They make tin roofs for the shelters by flattening out Standard Oil cans that once contained the kerosene used in the camp. There are about 2,400 prisoners in the wired inclosure. It is in full view of the sea, and the prisoners spend much time looking out on the water, which most of them never saw until they were put aboard the ship that took them to the island."

BITS OF GENERAL INFORMATION

A railway with wooden rails has been constructed near Quebec for the transport of persons and light goods. The rails are of maplewood, the line is about thirty miles long, and the running is smooth.

In Vienna telephone call-boxes, or "booths," are provided with napkins bearing the request, "Wipe, if you please." The cloths are frequently changed, and the practice of wiping the mouth-piece of the transmitter is a sanitary precaution.

Edward Hale, an expert cyclist, has brought to a successful finish, his remarkable feat of riding 100 miles or more a day for a year, Sundays excluded. His road has lain through the Midlands, Scotland, and the West and South of England. His total distance was 32,496 miles.

A magnificent machine for weighing gold, in daily use at the Bank of England is so sensitive, that a postage-stamp dropped on the scale will turn the index on the dial a distance of 2 in.

An electrical horsewhip gives the animal a shock instead of a cut. A small battery is embedded in the celluloid handle, and this is controlled by a push-button.

Many native princes in India have enthusiastically volunteered for service in China. Among the most distinguished names are the Maharajah of Bikaner, Sir Pertab Singh, and two princes of the house of Jodhpur.

It has been ascertained that in 1896 China bought indirectly 50,000 Vetterli rifles from Switzerland for £30,000. They were purchased by a London firm through agents and then forwarded to China.

Japan has dispatched a large body of police to the town of Wilu, on the famous Yalu River, where the Japanese settlers from the Lion-Tung border have been forced by the Chinese insurgents to take temporary shelter. These police are really old soldiers who have taken part in some of Japan's previous military undertakings. During times of peace, however, they act in the capacity of policemen, but are usually called upon in time of war.

THE FUTURE OF CHINA.

Views of Englishmen Recently Returned From a Tour of the Empire.

Sir George Goldie reached England recently by the steamship Majestic, on his return from China, where he has traveled for several months in the interior. Replying to an inquiry whether his visit had enabled him to form any definite idea as to the best way of dealing with the Chinese question generally, he said:

"The time has long gone by since a simple remedy could have overcome that malady from which China has been suffering for the last sixty years—namely, a struggle between the civilization of China and that of the west. In 1870, the Franco-German war opened a new era in the history of colonization by Europe, and, in consequence of this new movement, the Chinese puzzle is now so complex that any treatment which would not do infinitely more harm than good must be also of a complex nature. It must, however, endanger, or appear to endanger some legitimate ambitions and interests. Our government has a difficult task in dealing with perhaps the most critical juncture in the history of civilization since the fall of Napoleon.

"My travels were confined to southern and central China, for like most people, I believed that the long-expected revolution would proceed from these regions. That the Pekin government took this view was shown by their sending down to the vice-royalty of the two Kwangs the most experienced, astute and powerful statesmen of the empire. It is certain that Li Hung Chang's arrival at Canton last January alone saved the south from a new edition of the Taiping rebellion. So late as two months ago the idea of a vitally serious outbreak in the north was not entertained by the most experienced residents, and the war vessels of various nationalities, which had been dispatched to the Gulf of Pechili during the earlier Boxer troubles in April, had been sent back to their former stations. No doubt the threatened movement in the south and center of the empire would have differed in motive from the Boxer outbreak in the north; but I doubt whether, in the long run, it would have been more favorable to foreigners.

"The plain fact is that, apart from the small proportion interested in European commerce, the Chinese people—although, as a rule, most courteous to individual travelers do not want us or our customs. No doubt Europe has much to teach the Chinese in the art of war, in pure science, and in those mechanical and other arts which have developed with such leaps and bounds in the western world during the nineteenth century. But their code of ethics is as high as ours, and their system of local government, by parish councils, had, until the first intrusion of Europeans, a durability which every western nation must admire and envy.

"It does not wish to say anything about the so-called central government at Pekin. Unfortunately, the real religion of the Chinese—ancestor worship—on which their entire social system and their daily life have been based for millenniums, cannot co-exist with Christianity, like Taoism or Buddhism, in the same individual. These two creeds are essentially and necessarily antagonistic; and this fact is fully recognized by the majority of the missionaries of all denominations in China, as well as by the 400,000,000 of its people; but whether it is to be tolerated that one-fourth of the human race should be allowed to isolate themselves from the rest of mankind is too large a question to discuss in a brief interview."

1900 IN A NUTSHELL.

This century received from its predecessors the horse, we bequeath the bicycle, the locomotive, and the motor-car.

We received the goosequill and bequeath the typewriter.

We received the scythe, and bequeath the mowing-machine.

We received the hand printing press, we bequeath the cylinder press.

We received the painted canvas; we bequeath lithography, photography, and colour photography.

We received the handloom, we bequeath the cotton and woollen factory.

We received gunpowder, we bequeath dynamite.

We received the tallow-dip, we bequeath the electric lamp.

We received the galvanic battery, we bequeath the dynamo.

We received the flintlock, we bequeath the steamship.

We received the beacon signal-fire, we bequeath the telephone and wireless telegraphy.

We received ordinary light, we bequeath the incandescent lamp.

We received the bow, we bequeath the revolver.

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