

HIS THEME MOUNTAINS

THEY TEACH US OMNIPOTENT
STRENGTH OF THE CREATOR.

LIKEWISE THE LOVE OF GOD

Mountains Reveal God to Men For No
One Man and No One Race of Men
Have Lived Long Enough to Do
What Was Necessary to Do For the
Creation of the Hills.Entered according to Act of Parliament of Canada,
in the year 1905, by Frederick Dyer, of Toronto,
at the Department of Agriculture, Ottawa.Los Angeles, Cal., Sept. 17.—In this
sermon the preacher takes as his theme
the mountains, now assuming the hues
of autumn, and finds in them a lesson
of God's strength and providence and
the love and care he has for all his
children. The text is Amos iv, 13, "He
that formeth the mountains."Have you ever visited the Schreiner
lake of the Alps? Have you ever slept
under the shadows of the snow capped
Rigi, with its horizon sweep of 300
miles in circumference? Then you have
visited Lake Lucerne, one of the most
romantic and picturesque lakes that
ever lapped the foot of a hill or
nestled to sleep like a smiling babe in
lap of a gigantic mountain. The old
poet sings of the charms of Lake Ge-
neva, another of Switzerland's scenic
wonders, with its battle scarred castle
standing sentinel over it, a castle
whose walls are seamed with defying
the cannonading of the elements, as
well as resisting the attacks of man.But though others may sing about
the beauties of Lake Geneva or Lake
Windermere or Lake Samia of Fin-
land or Lake George of New York or
the "Lake of the Woods" of Minne-
sota, all of them beautiful lakes, I still
believe that Lake Lucerne is the queen
of romantic lakes for many of us.
There we not only saw some of the
most beautiful of the world's scenery,
but also stood before Thorwaldsen's great-
est masterpiece, "The Lion of Lu-
cerne." Most of you know the history
of that marvelous piece of statuary.When the French throne was tottering
and the upheaval of the awful revolu-
tion which has made the names of
Robespierre and Marat and Barere
infamous for all time, Louis XVI. and
Marie Antoinette dare not trust their
lives and those of their children to the
loyalty of their own soldiers. They
sent across the northern border and
hired some Swiss soldiers to be their
bodyguard. Eight hundred of these
were quartered in the Tulleries. Fatal
August 10, 1792, came, and the mob
broke loose and started for their royal
prey. They battered down the gates
and doors of the king's residence.
They slew the Swiss soldiers who
ever their hated uniforms were seen as
mercilessly as the Sioux Indians tomahawked
Custer and his little handful of
followers on the Little Big Horn river.
They literally annihilated the whole
band of royal guards at their head
rulers. Thorwaldsen, the great Danish
sculptor, to commemorate the death
of these brave soldiers of the Swiss
guard, chiseled into the solid rock of
Lucerne the colossal form of the dying
Swiss lion struck to the heart by a
spear, yet in his death agony still de-
fending the lilled shield of France.
What a wonderful statue is that, which
thousands of tourists every year travel
miles and miles to study!But as I stood before that marvelous
piece of stone under the shadow of the
overhanging Rigi I said to myself
"Yes, many Swiss soldiers have been
struck down by foreign bullets, but
more, far more, have brooded their
lives away because their hearts have
plined under homesickness when they
have been removed from the sight of
yonder hills." When Nebuchadnezzar
took his bride, Amytis, to the glorious
capital of Babylon, she could not get
over her longing for the hills of her
childhood. Babylon was built in a flat
country. To satisfy her longing for
the mountain scenes of her youth her
loving husband erected for her the
famous "hanging gardens." But
what earthly king could erect for his
loved ones such gigantic hills as those
which cradle the youth of the Swiss
peasantry? We who were born in the
mountainous countries of the west
or east can sympathize with those
Swiss peasants if we have been com-
pelled to live on prairie lands and can
never overcome our longing for the
mountains. As the hills, the mighty
hills have spoken of God to Amos, the
herdsman, they have also spoken to us
living among the mountains of the
western hemisphere. I thought to-dayI would try to find God among the
mountains.The gigantic hills in the first place
teach us the omnipotent strength of
the God who created them. They seem
to speak to us something like this: "O
man, why wilt thou not look upon me
even as thou wouldst regard the works
of human hands? When thou standest
before the huge pyramids of Egypt
with their great blocks of stone thou
dost not say they were built by a race
of pygmies, about whom Homer and
Hesiod wrote. Thou dost not go in
the moonlight and dream dreams upon
the Acropolis overlooking old Athens
and see there visions of its ancient
splendor, with its Parthenon and its
columns and its statuary and its mar-
ble of purest white and say there lived
not giants in those days. Thou dost
not walk through the corridors of the
Alhambra, with its mosaic floors and
its magnificent walls, and say that the
ancient Moors were not master archi-
tects and master designers and master
workmen. Thou canst not study the
footprints of the Aztecs without seeing
there the indentation of a great race.
Is not a watchmaker greater than his
own watch? Is not the naval con-
structor greater than the iron and steel
warship he gets afloat? Is not the
creator greater than the thing he cre-
ates? Therefore, O man, is not the
creator of the mountains a mighty, an
omnipotent God, because he has cre-
ated me?" "Yes, yes," we answer,
"the God of the hills must be an omni-
potent God, for none but omnipotence
could have laid their foundations and
erected their heights."Great is the omnipotent power of
God. No one man and no one race of
men could live long enough to do what
is necessary to do for the creation of
the hills. We look with amazement
upon the great cathedral called St.Peter's of Rome. This cathedral was
supposed to have been begun by
Michael Angelo in 1534. Every gen-
eration since then has had a part in its
construction. But, though St. Peter's
of Rome was building for 500 years,
the seven hills upon which Rome was
originally built have been building
for a longer time than that.Away back in the past millennium God
began to collect the materials for the
foundation of the hills. He spoke the
word and manufactured a gaseous sub-
stance—poor stuff, some people might
think—out of which to build the
strength of the hills, yet that was the
substance God created out of which
to make the mountains. In all proba-
bility this earth in the beginning
was nothing but a nebulous gas. After
awhile God cooled this gas, transform-
ing it from gaseous to liquid form. As
a thousand years in his sight are but
as yesterday or a week in ours, God
through long ages kept up the
cooling process. He cooled this liquid
substance until there was a thin crust
over its surface, as a floating film
might form on the surface of the cof-
fee cooling on the breakfast table. He
kept on cooling the planet until wind
kisses and creases began to appear, like
ridges on an orange skin after the
juices have been squeezed out of it.
Then the waters ran down into the val-
leys or the ocean beds and the dry
hills revealed themselves in mighty
mountain ranges, which ran up and
down the continents, giving strength
to the land as the vertebra does to the
human frame.The work went on for ages upon
ages. The divine workman's tools
were fire and storm and hail and pen-
cil of ice and volcanic eruption. A mighty
workman is God. Mighty are the ele-
ments and the times which he used as
the means for his creation of the hills.
We must honor the divine strength of
the Creator of the hills. That strength
alone was sufficient to pile up the Mat-
torn and Mount Chimborazo and
Mount Gualahera and Mount Nevada
de Sorata and Mount Everest. Omni-
potent as well as eternal is our Lord.
He alone hath created the hills and
created us. Who is "He that formeth
the mountains and treadeth upon the
high places of the earth?" The Lord,
the God of hosts, is his name.But as I go wandering over the east-
ern valleys with this herdsman of my
text I say to him, "Amos, why do you
praise the hills? Of course it is right
and proper for one of your poetic tem-
perament to admire the gigantic cliffs
and the rocks. In the evening hour it
is beautiful to see the white clouds
waving their garments in the faces of
these grim monsters, but, Amos, you
are not a Nimrod nor an Esau. You do
not leave your flocks and as a mighty
hunter pursue the wild goats their leap
from crag to crag. You care nothing
about slaying the hungry lion, unless
he comes down to steal one of your
lambs. Why do you not praise the val-
leys and the green fields and harvests
and the orchards?" Then I see the old
prophet turn and look at me with a
quiet smile as he answers: "Friend, Iam praising the green fields and the
vineyards and the orchards when I am
praising the mountains. Do you not
know that the beauty and fertility of
the valleys are dependent upon the
strength of the hills? The stork builds
her nest in the fir tree, the grass grows
for the cattle, the grapes hang heavy
upon the vines and the harvest fields
are filled with grain merely because
the mountains shed their waters into
the valleys." Then the old
prophet answers: "Yes, my son. The
Lord of the hills is the God who is the
practical provider for the everyday
wants of his children."But though the God of the hills feeds
and clothes us in the valleys, as he
feeds the birds of the air and the
lilies of the field, how few of us ever
stop to think of his kindness and good-
ness and care. Indeed we have been
accustomed to be fed and clothed by
him so long that few of us ever stop
to give him thanks. We think the
blessings have come from the soil and
are the work of our hands and not
from his hills. We do not recognize the
fact that the divine Father does any-
thing for us. We do not believe that
the God of the hills has any part in
our harvests. We say, "Our hands
planted the corn." We think God has
nothing to do with our clothes because
our sheep grow the wool. We assert
that God has nothing to do with our
homes, because our timber is turned
into the boards which are nailed into
the walls. "Oh, no," says Amos, "that
is not true; the God of the hills waters
the fields. He gives drink and food
to the flocks. He nourishes the trees
into mighty forests. It is God, and
God alone, who provides all." Ought
we not to give thanks to the God of
the hills, who clothes us and feeds us
to-day?Shall we stop here? Was the east-
ern herdsman only symbolizing the
strength of God, and the care taking
providence of God in the strength and
the power of the hills? Was he not
making allusion to the gold and the
silver buried in the depths of the moun-
tains, and to the diamonds hidden in
their subterranean vaults, and to their
many precious stones, some of which
St. John in Apocalypse saw in the
walls of the New Jerusalem? Was he
not using these stones as the symbol
of the joy, and the peace, and the hap-
piness which come from God? Was he
not pointing to the fact that God is
God to those who are living in com-
munion with God? I think he was.
Furthermore, I believe Amos, the
herdsman, not only found these sym-
bols of earthly happiness coming from
God by following the miners with their
little light torches, but he also found
him by following the call of the bird, sing-
ing to him on the top of some moun-
tain ravine or in some hidden glen.Methinks I can follow this sainted
herdsman as he some autumn day hies
away to the hills. We will call it an
autumn day, for that is the time when
every tree becomes a flaming torch.
Amos is longing to go off for awhile
and be alone with God. He turns over
his sheep to the care of one of the
under shepherds. He takes his staff
and climbs up the mountain side.
Higher and higher he goes until he
parched lips call, "Drink, drink; give
me drink." He reaches up and pulls
off a leaf from an overhanging branch.
He twists it into a more beautiful
chalice than was ever handed forth by
the Egyptian cup bearers at Pharaoh's
court. Then he stoops down and lifts
up the water out of the gushing spring.
The rocks seem to close in about him.He seems to be in a temple, and the
waters at his feet seem to be "holy
waters." Holy because they have been
touched by the finger of God. Then he
stretches his tired limbs upon a
couple of mossy stones and the stone
which he called him from his herd now
brings to him his companions, and they
begin to sing. A gentle eyed deer
pokes forth her head from the thicket,
and seems to say: "Who art thou—a
friend or an enemy? Dare I trust my
little fawn in thy sight while I quench
my thirst?" Then the leaves begin to
sway and sigh. That peace of the
woods comes over the happy prophet,
as he says: "Yes, God has made the
mountains. God has made the gold.
God has made the silver and the pre-
cious stones buried deep in the hills.
He has made the woods of the mountains,
the trees and the moss, the birds and the
flowers and the brightly colored leaves.
He has made the brooks to flow as well
as his feathered songsters. Truly God
is the God of peace, the God of joy, the
God of happiness. If man is unhappy,
then it is because he is sinning. He is
out of touch with God." Do you feel that
in the symbols of the gold, the silver,
the precious stones and the moist, frag-
rant leaves of the woods Amos is
speaking to-day?The God of peace of the mountains
is also the God of forgiveness and pardon.
We see the strong limbed hunter and
start forth for the chase. There is
health and vigor in every swing. Or
we see the Alpine climber go forth not
to conquer beast, but glacier and cliff
and to win exultation from reached
heights. The prime of manhood is
there. The bravery that flinches not
when its eye looks into the open jaws
of death is there also. Or I see the
angler wading up and down the trout
streams. But, as I see the sportsman
and the man of health hunting or fish-
ing or climbing in the mountains, I
also see the poor invalid crawling there
or being carried there or lying back
listlessly in an armchair. His eyes
have an unnatural luster; his cheeks
are flushed; he coughs much; he has
the awful pain in his chest. I see him
under the powerful tonic of the
ozone of the Adirondacks or the Alps,
growing stronger and stronger. The
cough grows less and less and finally
dies away. The tottering gait is changed
for the healthful stride. The in-
valid who was carried to the woods
thenceforth walks and physically reno-
vated. Oh, why cannot the God of the
hills be to-day the God of health? Can-
not he, will not he cure that old chronic
disease of sin which has been cursing
us for many years? Cannot, will not he
do this, if we only climb up to him on
the Mount of Transfiguration and
throw ourselves at his feet, as we cry,
"Jesus, my Saviour, my Lord?"But I must not stop here, even if I
would. The love of God is found in the
strength of the hills, but God's limit of
forgiveness, and pardon are found there
also. Though God is ready to receive
us if we come to him now, the figure
of my text distinctly proves that there
will come a time when he will say:
"Not unto all who call Lord, Lord,
unto me will I come and save them."unto many in that day I will say, I
know you not." The future destruc-
tion of the hills symbolizes it.In Java, a few years ago, the great
Krakatoa volcano, after erupting for a
few days, suddenly exploded. The is-
land of Java was literally split in
twain. Sixty thousand corpses floated
upon the surface of the sea. A great
tidal wave forty feet high arose and
swept on and lifted a German man-of-
war and carried it twenty miles inland,
and there left it stranded. Java is
to-day over 200 miles from India. This
island was once connected with the
mainland. The inhabitants of India
and Java have the same customs. They
speak almost the same language. They
worship the same gods. In their for-
ests they hunt the same kind of wild
beasts as are found in India. Yet
all of that connecting belt of 200
miles of land with its mountains has
entirely disappeared. As the God of
the hills is some day going to destroy
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