

TRIALS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Rev. Dr. Talmage Talks of Their Struggles.

Jacob's Combat With an Unknown Visitor--Men's Conflict With Evil Habits--With the Help of the Lord They Triumph--Prosperity and Trouble Compared.

A despatch from Washington says: Rev. Dr. Talmage, preached from the following text: "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint as he wrestled with him. And he said, 'Let me go for the day breaketh.' And he said, 'I will not let thee go except thou bless me.'"—Genesis xxxii, 24, 25, 26.

The dust arose from a travelling herd of cattle, and sheep, and goats, and camels. They are the present that Jacob sends to gain the good-will of his offended brother. That night Jacob halts by the brook Jabbok. But there is no rest for the weary man. No shining ladder to let the angel down into his dream; but a fierce combat, that lasts until morning with an unknown visitor. They each try to throw the other. The unknown visitor, to reveal his superior power, by a touch wrenches Jacob's thigh bone from its socket, perhaps maiming him for life. As on the morning sky the clusters of purple cloud begin to ripen, Jacob sees it. The angel, for whom he has been contending, and not one of his brother's coadjutors. "Let me go," cries the angel, lifting himself up into increasing light, "the day breaketh."

You see, in the first place, that God allows good people sometimes to get into a terrible struggle. Jacob was a good man; but here he was left alone in the mortal wrestle with a tremendous influence by the brook Jabbok. For Jacob a pit; for Daniel, a wild beast den; for David, de-thronement and exile; for John the Baptist, a bitter death; for the executioner's axe; for Peter, a prison; for Paul, shipwreck; for John, desolate Patmos; for Vashti, most insulting cruelty; for Josephine, banishment; for the agony of a drunkard's wife; for John Wesley, stones hurled by an infuriated mob; for Catherine, the Scotch girl, the drowning surges of the sea; for Mr. Burns, the burning anger with them; for John Brown, of Edinburgh, the pistol-shot of Lord Claverhouse; for Hugh McCall, the scaffold; for Luther, the stake; for Christ, the Cross. For whom the rocks, the gibbets, the guillotines, the thumb screws? For the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. Some said to a Christian reformer, "The world is against you." "Then," he replied, "I am against the world."

I will go further and say that every Christian has his struggle. With financial misfortune, you have had. THE MIDNIGHT WRESTLE. Red-hot disasters have dropped into your store from left to cellar. What you bought you could not sell. Whom you trusted fled. The help you expected would not come. You were in a panic, with long arms, and grip like death, took hold of you in an awful wreath, from which you have not yet escaped. And it is uncertain whether it will throw you, or you will throw it. Here is another soul, in struggle with some bad appetite. He knew how to steal; but it was growing upon him. One hour he woke up. He said, "For the sake of my soul, and of my family, and of my children, and of my God, I must stop this!" And behold he found himself alone, by the brook Jabbok; and it was midnight. That evil appetite seized upon him, and he seized upon it; and O, the horror of the conflict! When once a bad habit hath roused itself up to destroy a man, and the man has sworn that, by the help of it, all heaven draws itself out in long line of light, to look from above, and all hell stretches itself in myriads of spite to look up from beneath. It is a struggle that kills, and that saves. While the Israelites were on the march, amid great privations and hardships, they benumbed well. After awhile they prayed for meat, and the sky rained manna with a great flock of quails, and these quails fell in great multitudes all about them; and the Israelites ate and ate, and stuffed themselves until they died. Oh, my friends, it is not hardship, or trial, or starvation that injures the soul, but abundant supply. It is not the vulture of trouble that eats up time, the Christian's life; it is the quail! It is the quail! You will yet find out that your midnight wrestle by the brook Jabbok is with an angel of God, come down to bless and to save.

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Learn again from this subject, that people sometimes are surprised to find out that what they have been struggling with in the darkness is really an "angel of blessing." Jacob found in the morning, that this strange personage was not an enemy, but a God-despatched messenger to promise prosperity for him and for his children. And so, many a man, at the close of his trial, has found out that he has been trying to throw down his own blessing. If you are a Christian man, I will go back in your history and find that the greatest things that have ever happened to you, have been your trials. Nothing short of scourging, imprisonment, and shipwreck, could have made Paul what he was. When David was fleeing through the wilderness, pursued by his own son, he was being prepared to become the sweet singer of Israel. The pit and the dungeon were the best schools at which Joseph ever graduated. The hurricane that swept the sea, and killed Job's children, prepared the man of Uz to write the magnificent poem that has astounded the ages. There is no way to get the wheat out of the straw but to thresh it. There is no way to purify the gold but to burn it. Look at the people who have always had it their own way. They are proud, discontented, and unhappy. If you want to find a happy folk, go among those who have been purified by the fire. After Rossini had rendered William Tell for the five hundredth time, a company of musicians came under his arm in Paris, and serenaded him. They put upon his brow

ness with the cry, "Thanks be unto Him that giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." There is a widow's heart, that first was desolated by bereavement, and since, by the anxieties and trials that come in the support of a family. It is a sad thing to see a man contending for a livelihood under disadvantages; but to see a delicate woman, with helpless little ones at her back, fighting the giants of poverty and sorrow, is more affecting. It was a humble home, and passers by knew not that within those four walls were displays of courage more admirable than that of Hannibal crossing the Alps, or in the Pass of Thermopylae, or at Balaklava, where, "into the jaws of death, rode the six hundred." These heroes had the whole world to cheer them on; but there were none to applaud the struggle in that humble home. She fought for bread, for clothing, for fire, for shelter, with aching head, and weak side, and exhausted strength, through the long night by the brook Jabbok. Could it be that none would give her help? Had God forgotten to be gracious? Not contenting soul. The midnight air is full of wings, coming to the rescue. She hears now, in the sough of the night wind, in the ripple of the brook Jabbok—the

PROMISE MADE SO LONG AGO. ringing down the sky: "Thy fatherless children I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in Me." Some one said to a very poor woman, "How is it that in such distress you keep cheerful?" She said, "I do it by what I call cross prayers. When I had my rent to pay, and nothing to pay it with, and had bread to buy and nothing to buy it with, I used to sit down and cry. But now I do not get discouraged. If I go along the street, when I come to a corner of the street, I say, 'The Lord help me!' I will go until I come to another crossing of the street, and again I say, 'The Lord help me!' And so I pray for every one, and since I have got into the habit of saying these words, I have been able to keep up my courage."

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On the Farm.

HOW TO ESTABLISH A CREAMERY.

The proper way to organize a creamery is for the farmers to call a meeting, talk the matter over and adjourn for a couple of weeks. At the end of this time elect a committee which shall visit two or three creameries, inspect them carefully, get prices of machinery, building, etc., and compare notes at the next meeting. If then there is a desire to continue, organize a stock company, elect a building committee and let this committee hire a carpenter and put up their own building. Buy the necessary dairy machinery from some good supply house. When everything is ready, hire a good buttermaker and pay him good wages, as an expert cannot be expected to work for small pay. The buttermaker should refuse to accept dirty or bad milk, as he cannot make good butter from anything but the best milk. The directors should stand by the buttermaker in case of a dispute concerning bad milk, there are always some patrons who will forget to wash their cans, and the best way to have them remember this is to make them feed a can or two of this tainted milk to their hogs or calves. The buttermaker should have a reliable commission house. Do not change commission men unless it is absolutely necessary, as one man's customers will soon recognize your brand of butter and will want it all the time if it is good. If you happen to have a poor lot, do not brand it, but put it on the market and sell it on its merits.

Above all things, a creamery must have good drainage into a running stream if possible, a good water supply and a good ice house. The patrons should hold monthly meetings and discuss the best method of feeding cows, caring for the milk and listen to the suggestion of the buttermaker. These meetings if properly conducted may be made of much benefit.

A GOOD GARDEN.

If one desires to have a good garden this year he should begin to prepare for it very early. One of the important items is a quantity of well-rotted manure made fine. A coarse, strawy manure, has no place on the garden in the spring. If put on in the fall and plowed under it will serve to make the land lighter and more porous, and the surface will dry out in condition to work earlier in the spring, but it should not be plowed back to the surface again. Plow it down deep in the fall, and in the spring plow shallow, or better still, do not plow at all, but work the surface fine with disc harrow and smoothing harrow. But about the time manure, if there is not a pile already made, make one at once of the best manure to be had, and heap it up that way, my ferment. As soon as it begins to throw off steam in the morning, fork it over, making a new heap, breaking up all lumps, or, if any is frozen at time of working over, throw such lumps well into the centre of the pile. This may mean some labor, but if it has to be forked over three or four times to get it fine enough, it will pay.

The garden soil should be drained well enough to allow working it early, working this fine manure into the surface and making a good seed bed. But if it is not so drained, do not touch it until it can be worked to a proper condition. Before planting or sowing time comes, be sure that good seed is at hand. Do not run too much after novelties, or be kept from getting good seed by a little extra cost. Plant as early as the early crops may be followed by another crop later in the season.

SOME OF THE BEST APPLES TO GROW.

I have had 20 years' experience in raising apples and have found very few varieties that are worth planting writes Mr. D.A. Blalock. Some of the best are: For summer, Red June, which is the earliest of all. It is of medium size and a handsome red, the flesh is white, tender, juicy and sub-acid. It is an abundant bearer. After this comes the Yellow Transparent, which is a Russian. This is pronounced by all who have seen it to be the most valuable early apple. The tree is an upright grower and a very early and abundant bearer. The fruit is of good size, pale yellow, and the flavor is acid. After the Yellow Transparent comes the Tetsky, also a Russian variety, which has proved to be a profitable apple. The fruit is large, yellow, beautifully striped with red, and the flesh is white. Early Harvest is an old variety, but it is always ready to bear every year. Red Astrachan is also a good summer variety.

I have found the following autumn varieties good for both home and market: Maiden's Blush, Duchess of Oldenburg, Fameuse or Snow, and Rambo. Good winter varieties are Ben Davis, Salome, Belle De Baskow, Pevaukee, Lawyer, R.I. Greening Grimes' Golden, McIntosh Red, Stark, Northern Spy, Winesap and Wealthy.

DAMPNESS IN THE HEN HOUSE.

If you must have a cold hen house have it, but never have a damp one. In other words, a damp house is a hundred times worse than a cold house. It is the damp house that always has ailing inmates. Colds and roup make sad havets. In short there never has been and there never will be a damp hen house in which the bird will be at all satisfactory.

Sick, moping fowls never are able to do anything in the way of filling the egg basket. So, my friend, if your

hen coop is not situated upon a dry site, at your earliest opportunity proceed to rectify the error. Dig out the dirt from the bottom say a foot or two in depth then fill in with rocks, large ones first, then smaller ones, cover top with a few inches of gravel, and then you will have a dry house, providing any outside water has a good chance to drain away.

Provisional use of dry coal ashes will serve to absorb any moisture accruing from the droppings of the birds, the coal ashes also serving to fix ammonia and therefore keep the air of the house pure and wholesome.

Too often we find the coop or run where the little chicks are penned, from one cause or another, sadly damp. This will not do. Chicks even more than hens require dry quarters. And even duckings and goslings in their first tender days are peculiarly susceptible to dampness.

We as poultry keepers, must keep guard against a brief, but still fall of success in poultry culture.

PLOUGHING WET GROUND.

When the upturned furrow presents a slick, newly varnished-like appearance it is a good indication that the ploughing should be postponed a few days. If plowing land when wet is freezed in a day or so by a heavy freeze, the damage is not so great as when it dries out and becomes almost as hard as iron. This of course can only occur in clay or sticky soil. In no case does the grain in two or three days' time compensate for the injury done the land by plowing wet.

MILK SIGNS IN DAIRY COWS.

The appearance and form of the udder is an important point in selecting a milk cow. A large udder is not always an indication that the cow is a good milker. The skin of the udder should have the appearance of having been dusted over with bran and have a fatty feeling. It is generally conceded that the ewaldcheon is of no importance in selecting a dairy cow.

WHAT A BEAVER DID.

Assistants the Superintendent of the London Zoo.

Mr. A. D. Bartlett, son of the late superintendent of the London Zoo, has an interesting story of a captive Canadian beaver. A large willow-tree in the gardens had blown down. A branch about twelve feet long and thirty inches in circumference was firmly fixed in the ground in the beaver's enclosure. Then the beaver was watched to see what he would do.

The beaver soon visited the spot, and walking around the limb, commenced to bite off the bark and gnaw the wood about twelve inches from the ground. The rapidity of his progress was astonishing. He seemed to put his whole strength into his task, although he left off every few minutes to rest and look upward, as if to determine which way the tree would fall.

Now and then he went into his pond, which was about three feet from the base of the tree. Then he would come out again with renewed energy, and his powerful teeth would set at work again upon the branch. About our o'clock, to the surprise of those who saw him, he let his work and came hastily toward the iron fence. The cause of this sudden movement was soon apparent. He had bored in the distance the sound of the whistling, which was brought daily to his paddock, and from which he was anxiously expecting his supper.

Now keeper, not wishing to disappoint the beaver, although a sorry to see his task interrupted, gave him his usual allowance of carrots and bread. The fellow ate it, and was seen swimming about the pond until about half past five. Then he returned to his work.

In ten minutes the "tree" fell to the ground. Afterward the beaver cut the log into three convenient lengths, one of which he used in the under part of his house.

THE WAR FEELING IN JAPAN.

It is Fed by News of Great Naval Preparations by Russia.

Mail advices say that the war feeling grows rapidly throughout Japan, and while the imminence of a conflict has been much exaggerated, it is admitted by even the most conservative press that diplomatic relations are strained. The news of vast Russian naval preparations at Port Hamilton and Masanpo has stimulated the war feeling, and counter preparations, involving the expenditure of several millions, have been initiated in Japan while arrangements are going forward for the greatest review in the history of the Orient.

It is stated that Russia is collecting warships in Korean waters, the squadron now consisting of the flagship Russia and nine modern warships, three of which recently visited Nagasaki.

AT THE SEAT OF WAR.

First Correspondent—A native runner has arrived, but the Boers would lay him and he swallowed his dispatches.

Second Correspondent—Oh, well, that's probably more than the public would have done.

UTILIZING HIS MISFORTUNE.

First Tramp—Say, you did get a bad eye in that scrap?

Second Tramp—Yes, but I've got it feller got two. Why, he's workin' it on do public as an explosion!

THE FACTS OF THE CASE.

I understand that Banker Bustupp was really the victim of people in whom he had placed confidence.

I guess it is so. Poor man, he was more skinned against than skinning.

GOING INTO THE BATTLE

THE EMOTIONS WITH WHICH SOLDIERS FACE THE BULLETS.

How Men Go Into a Firing Line and How They Come Out of It—Magnificent Sight for Study.

The contemplation of the frenzy of battle and the exultant joy of being loosed upon one's country's enemies, and the actual marching with a steady front up to a firing line are two vastly different things, writes a war correspondent in the London Daily Mail. The enlisted man with a rampant imagination, who has allowed himself to become the victim of glorious day dreams on a matter of this kind, is very apt to have his imaginings shattered by a reality that, though very stern, if his spirit be brave, yet has its compensations. For there is nothing naturally, that so tries a man's true courage as standing up to be shot at, or gives him better opportunity for displaying it.

For when a man wheels into a firing line he never knows how soon he will come out of it, or, for that matter, whether he will ever come out of it at all; but he must not think of such things or he will lose his nerve. There is, indeed, no poetry about soldiering in war time; as a matter of fact, it is really very hard work. But what we have to deal with here is how men go into a firing line and how they come out of it.

When orders come to move forward, after the anxiety of the weary waiting all is cheering along the line, and the men advance with the eager steps of expectancy; but when they come within the zone of fire, and bullets begin to spit and spatter about their feet, and the first man is down, then the individual temperament of each soldier stands out. Men begin to look into each other's eyes to see what the other is going to do. It is almost entirely a question of how cool the officer in charge of them is as to how cool the men will remain.

THE FIRST SHOCK

of realization over, a timely, cool word from an officer will set the men's nerves straight in a moment, but a reprimand, or anything in the nature of scolding, is apt to jar on them, and that is to be avoided, for it affects the aim.

Perhaps the most trying fashion for troops to go into action is reserving their fire until the very last moment, marching with faces toward the enemy, with bullets dropping all around, and men falling in the ranks, without returning a shot, waiting for the command to fire from an officer who wants a better range, so as to waste the least possible ammunition—waiting, in fact, for that historical moment when they "can see the whites of the enemy's eyes."

But when the men's nerves are straight and the waste line is unfaltering it is a magnificent sight for study. It does not always need a trained eye to discover which men have small powder before and which have not. Here is one man bent almost double, so that if the enemy are firing high the bullets will go over his head, and here another is marching as erect as an arrow.

It is not mere bravado on his part, either, in fact, it is the more sensible plan, and one that old soldiers who have seen many campaigns generally follow, for if the man who is bent over gets a bullet the chances are it will run through perhaps a great part of the length of his body, making it difficult to probe, and, perhaps, in this course touching some vital part. On the other hand, if the man who stands upright is hit, the bullet may come out the other side of him, according to the range and power of the enemy's guns, or at least be the easier to get out if it doesn't kill. And in an instance of this sort it is better to take one's chances of being a better target than to get a "running shot," as those which take a downward course are called.

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