A SEASONABLE SERMON.

Dr. Talmage on the Christmas Jubilee.

The Gladdest Commemoration of the Centuries—The House Where Jesus Lived in Cairo—The Cradle of the Lord—Three Christmas Gifts.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., Dec. 28.—Dr. Talmage's sermon to-day was appropriate to the season. Its subject was "The Christmas Jubilee," and his text Luke, ii., 15: "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem."

Amid a thousand mercies, said the preacher, we give each other holiday congratulations. By long-established custom we exhort each other to healthful merriment. By gift, by Christmas trees which blossom and fruit in one night, by early-morning surprise, by clusters of lighted candles, by children's procession, by sound of instruments sometimes more blatant than musical, we wake up the night and prolong the day. I wish you all in the grandest, noblest and best sense, a merry Christmas. The event commemorated is the gladdest of the centuries. Christ's cradle was as wonderful as his cross. Persuade me of the first and I am not surprised at the last. The door by which he entered was as tremendous as the door by which he went out.

I was last winter at the house where Jesus lived while he was in Africa. It was in Cairo, the terminus of that terrible journey which he took when Joseph and Mary fled with him from Bethlehem to Egypt to escape the massacre of Herod. All tradition as well as all history point out this house in Cairo as the one in which these three fugitives lived while in Africa. The room is nine steps down from the level of the street. I measured the room and found it twenty feet long and seven and a-half feet high. There are three shelvings of rock, one of which I think was the cradle of our Lord. There is no window, and all the light must have come from lantern or candle. The three arrived here from Bethlehem, having crossed the awful desert.

On the Mediterranean steamer going from Athens to Alexandria, I met the eminent scholar and theologian, Doctor Lansing, who for 35 years has been a resident of Cairo, and he told me that he had been all over the road that the three fugitives took from Bethlehem to Egypt. He says it is a desert way, and that the forced journey of the infant Christ must have been a terrible journey. Going up from Egypt, Doctor Lansing met people from Bethlehem, their tongues swollen and hanging out from the inflammation of thirst. Over this dreadful route Joseph and Mary started for this land of Egypt. No time to make much preparation. Herod was after them, and what were these peasants before an irate king? Over the hills and down through the deep gorge they urge their way. By Hebron, by Gaza, through hot sand, under a blistering sun, the babe crying, the mother faint, the father exhausted. How slowly the days and weeks pass, but at last here they are at Cairo, Egypt. They wind through the crooked streets, which are about ten feet wide, and enter the humble house where I have been to-day. But the terminus journey of these three fugitives was not as humble as their starting point, Bethlehem. If that journey across the desert ended in a cellar, it started from a barn. In and around that barn in Bethlehem we tarry today. Everything humble around the barn, but everything glorious overhead. Christ's advent was in the hostlery called the house of Chim Ham; the night with diamonded finger pointing down to the place; the door of heaven set wide open to look out; from orchestral batons of light dripping the oratorios of the Messiah; on lowest doorstep of heaven the minstrels of God discoursing of glory and goodwill. Soon after the white-bearded astrologists kneel, and from leathern pouch chink the shekels, and from open sack exhale the frankincense and rustle out the bundles of myrrh. The loosened star; the escaped doxology of celestials; the chill December night aflush with May morn; our world a lost star, and another star rushing down the sky that night to beckon the wanderer home again shall yet make all nations keep Christmas.

Are there no new lessons from the story not yet hackneyed by oft repeatal? Oh, yes. In the first place, it was a sidereal appearance that led the way. It was a star, and that means joy, hope, good cheer, ascendancy. A star! That means creative power, for did not the morning stars sing together when the portfolio of the worlds was opened? A star! That means defense, for did not the stars fight in their courses against Sisera and for the Lord's people? A star! That means brilliant continuance, for are not the righteous to shine as the stars forever and ever? A star! That means the opening of eternal joy. The day star in the heart. The morning star of the Redeemer. The unusual appearance that night may have been a strange conjunction of worlds. As the transit of Venus in our time was foretold many years ago by astronomers, and astronomers can tell what will be the conjunction of worlds 1,000 years from now, so they can calculate backward; and even infidel astronomers have been compelled to testify that about the year one there was a very unusual appearance in the heavens. The Chinese record, of course entirely independent of the Word of God, gives as a matter of history that about the year one there was a strange and unaccountable appearance in the heavens. But it may have been a meteor such as you and I have seen flash to the horizon. Not a black cloud of threat, but a gleaming star of hope, is our glorious Christianity. Notice also in this scene that another world that night joined our world in worship. The star made a bow of obeisance.

But this scene also impresses me with the fact that the wise men of the East came to Christ. They were not fools, they were not imbeciles. The record distinctly says that the wise men came to Christ. They were the Magi, the most splendid and magnificent men of the century. They were the naturalists and the scientists. They knew all that was known. It was the life-long business of these astrologers to study the stars. Twenty-two hundred and fifty years before Christ was born the wise men knew the procession of the equinoxes and they had calculated the orbit and the return of the comets and the three wisest men of all the century came to the manger. So it has always been—the wisest men come to Christ, the brainiest men come to the manger. Who was the greatest metaphysician this country ever has produced? Jonathan Edwards, the Christian. Who was the greatest astronomer of the world? Herschel, the Christian. Who was the greatest poet ever produced? John Milton, the Christian. Who was the wisest writer on law? Blackstone, the Christian. In post mortem examinations the brains of distinguished men have been examined, and I will find the largest, the heaviest, the weightiest brain ever produced in America, and I will ask what that brain thought of Christ. Here it is, the brain weighing 63 ounces—the largest brain ever produced in America. In his dying moment that man said: "Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief. Whatever else I do, Almighty receive me to thyself for Christ's sake. This night I shall be in light and joyousness." So Daniel Webster died. The wise men of the East came by the wise men of the West.

Know this scene that it was a winter night God chose for his son's nativity.

It was December that he was born, when that this is a Christ for people in blast; for people under clouds—people with frosted hopes; for people whose thermometer below zero. That is why he is so often found among the destitute. You can find him on any night off the moors. You can see him night coming through the dark lanes of the city. You can see him putting his head under the fainting head in the cabin. He remembers how the wind blew around the caravansery in Bethlehem December night, and he is in sympathy with all those who in the poverty stricken shutters clatter on a cold night.

Note the fact that no one seems to notice his Christ was born among the sheep, the cattle, and the horses, and that, in order that he might be an all influence to the whole animal kingdom. It means mercy for overdriven, poorly sheltered, galled maltreated animal creation. To alleviate the condition of the brute creation was born in the cattle pen. The bleat of the lamb of God heard he tired flocks of the Bethlehem fields. The white horse of eternal stables in a barn.

But also in this account the three Christ presents that were brought to the manger, frankincense and myrrh. Gold, gold—that means all the affluence of the world rendered to him. For lack of money asylums limping on their way, cripples whom they helped, feeling their way like the blind people whom they relieved. Millions of dollars for Christ there are now thousands for Christ. Then the pungent gum resin of Abyssinia myrrh was brought to the feet of Christ. That means bitterness. Bitterness, bitter persecution, bitter of suffering, bitter nights of weeping. That is what they put into his hand he was dying. Myrrh. That they put under his head in the tomb. Myrrh. That is what they put in his path with all the way from the manger in Bethlehem to the mausoleum of Joseph's country seat. Myrrh," says the Psalmist, "All thy garments smell of myrrh." That is what is used in wrapped in the swaddling of the babe. That is what the Magi used in the shroud of a crucified Christ. The myrrh. Oh, the height, the depth, the length, the breadth of the Saviour's love. Well might the wise men offer the myrrh.

But another sack they shake out the frankincense. That means worship. Frankincense. That is to fill all the homes, and churches, and all the capitals, and all nations, from cellar of stalls to the active clear up to the silvery rafters of the dome. Frankincense. That is what we want from our hearts today, the nostrils of Christ once crucified with the hemorrhage of the cross flooded with the perfume of a worshipping adoration. Frankincense. Frankincense in song, and sermon, and offertory, and baking, and decoration. Praise him, sing and hills, valleys and seas, and heaven and earth and heaven—cyclone with trumpets, northern lights with your grand design, morning with your castle cloud, and evening with your billowy clouds of sunset.

TORONTO LETTER.

Fatality of a Barroom Row—The Mayoralty Contest.

TORONTO, Monday, Dec. 29.

Mr. Tait, M.P.P., addressed the men attended the free breakfast at Richmond Hall yesterday.

Mr. Beatty, Q.C., has decided not to run for mayor, and Mayor Clarke will today be nomination meeting in all probability be elected by acclamation for a fourth.

A newsboys enjoyed a Christmas supper at the expense of the Grip Printing Company Saturday evening.

Goldwin Smith said Saturday he thought the present street car system would be superseded by electric cars in the course of few years.

Coleman, U. S. consul here, brands the report of discovery of frauds upon the American Government by its consuls in Ontario a mare's nest. Frauds of the kind alleged would be discovered almost immediately.

Robert Scarlett, who was so severely beaten on Christmas night, died Saturday morning from the effects of his injuries. James Douglas, who put the deceased out of the fantastic saloon, was handed over to the police. Douglas denies that he used his fists, and says that Scarlett's injuries were received elsewhere. Douglas was allowed out on bail in two sureties $2,000 and himself in $400.

A Elgin, a young man, fell from a tree Saturday when lopping off branches and fractured his skull.

The members of the Toronto Women's Enfranchisement Association on Saturday decided to agitate for the reappointment of lady members on the high school board. There were two members formerly, but they grew discouraged and dropped out. They want six members appointed.

The Empire celebrated the third anniversary of its birth on Saturday, and the members of the staff marked the event by dining together at the Albany Club in the evening.

In their report for 1890 to the Waterworks committee, Superintendent Hamilton recommends that the high-level engines be accepted. The mileage of new mains laid during the year has been 162 miles. The final statement is rather on the wrong side, there being an overdraft alike on maintenance and construction — on the former some $1,900 and on the latter of $75,000. This is exclusive of some large sums to be paid, such as $40,000 for new pumping engines. The great increase over estimated expenditure was in pipe-laying, which cost during 1890 some $171,425. The amount paid on the new conduit to date is $119,325. At the coming election the question will be voted on of appropriating $222,000 for new pumping engines.

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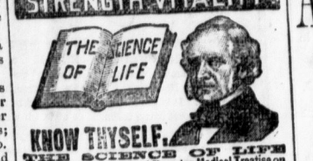

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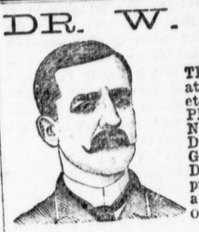

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