

## The Sculptor of the Deep.

Rev. Dr. Talmage Speaks of God Amid the Reefs of Coral.

This picturesque discourse of Dr. Talmage leads his hearers and readers through unexplored regions of contemplation. Text: Job xxviii. 13: "No mention shall be made of coral." Why do you say that, inspired dramatist? When you wanted to set forth the superior value of our religion, you tossed aside the coral, which is used for making exquisite cameos, and the sapphire, sky-blue and topaz of rhombic prism, and the ruby of frosty blood, and here you say that the coral, which is a miracle of shape and a transport of color to those who have studied it, is not worthy of mention in comparison with our holy religion. "No mention shall be made of coral," Job, in my eye, did not mean to depreciate this divine sculpture in the coral reefs along the sea coasts. No one can afford to depreciate these white palaces of the deep, built under God's direction. He never changes his plans for the building of the islands and shores; for uncounted thousands of years the coral gardens and the coral castles and the coral battlements go on and up. You may find this work of God through the animalcules eighty fathoms deep, or amid the breakers, where the sea dashes the wildest and best of the mightiest, and bellows the loudest. These sea creatures are ever busy. Now they build islands in the center of the Pacific Ocean. Now they lift barriers around the continent, Indian Ocean, Red Sea and coast of Zanzibar have specimens of their infinitesimal but sublime masonry. The Algerian reefs in one year (1875) had at work amid the coral 211 vessels, with 2,460 sailors, yielding in profit \$565,000. But the secular and worldly value of the coral is nothing as compared with the moral and religious, as when, in my text, Job employs it in comparison. I do not know how anyone can look at the size of the thumbnail without thinking himself of God and worshipping him. Nothing impresses me with the fact that our God loves the beautiful. Having garnished this world to please the human race, and lifted the glorious heaven to please the angelic intelligence, I am glad that he has planted these gardens of the deep to please himself. But here and there God allows specimens of submarine glory to be brought up and set before us for sublime contemplation. When I speak, these great nations of zoophytes, medusas and madrepores, with tentacles for towers, are building just such coral as we find in our text. The diamond may be more rare, the crystal may be more sparkling, the chrysopease may be more azure, but the coral is the long, deep, everlasting bluish of the sea. Yet Job, who understood all kinds of precious stones, declares that the beauty and value of the coral are nothing compared with our holy religion, and he picks up this coraline formation and looks at it, and flings it aside with the other beautiful things he has ever heard of, and cries out in ecstasy of admiration for the superior qualities of our religion: "No mention shall be made of coral."

Take my hand, and we will walk through this bower of the sea, while I show you that even exquisite coral is not worthy of being compared with the richer jewels of a Christian soul. The first thing that strikes me in looking at the coral is its long-continued accumulation. In Polynesia there are reefs hundreds of feet deep and one thousand miles long. Who built these bridges leaped the two streams. Well, my friends, the religion of Jesus Christ is two bridges. It bridges all the past. It arches and overtops all the future. It makes the dying pillow the landing place of angels from glory. It turns the sepulchre into a May-time orchard. It catches up the dying into full orchestra. Coralum! And yet, that does not express the beauty. "No mention shall be made of coral."

I take your hand again and walk a little further on in this garden of the sea, and I notice the beauty of the work of the coral. Montgomery speaks of it. He says: "Faint were their forms, ephemeral their life, but their work for God will endure forever. The humblest good accomplished in time last through eternity. I sometimes get discouraged, as I suppose you do, at the vastness of the work and at how little we are doing. And yet, do you suppose the theologian said: 'There is no need of my working; I cannot build the Cordilleras.' And there are the Cordilleras. Ah, my friends, the redemption of this world is a great enterprise. I did not see it start; I will not in this world see its close. I am only an insect as compared with the great work to be done, but yet I must do my part. Help build this eternal coralum I will. My parents toiled on this reef long before I am dead. Insects, all of us, but honored by God to help build up the reef of light across which shall break the ocean's immortal gladness. Better be insignificant and useful than great and idle. The mastodon and megatherium of the earth, what did they do but stalk their great carcasses across the land and leave their skeletons through the strata, while the corallines went on heaving up the islands all covered with fruitage and verdure. Better be a coralline than a mastodon. So now I am trying to make one little corner. The polyp picks out of the wave that smites its carbonate of lime, and with that builds up its own insect masonry. So out of the wave of your tears I take the salt; out of the brine I take the blue, and out of the bleeding heart I take the red, and out of them altogether I make this coral, which I pray may not be dissolved in the day when God makes up his jewels."

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## The Death of The Old Year.

Full knee-deep lies the winter snow,  
And the winter winds are wearily sighing;  
Toll ye the church-bell sad and low,  
And tread softly and speak low,  
For the old year lies a-dying.  
Old Year, you must not die;  
You came to us so readily,  
You lived with us so steadily,  
Old Year, you shall not die.

He lieth still, he doth not move:  
He will not see the dawn of day,  
He hath no other life above.  
He gave me a friend, and a true true-love,  
And the New Year will take 'em away.  
Old Year, you must not go;  
So long as you have been with us,  
Such joy as you have seen with us,  
Old Year, you shall not go.

He froth'd his bumpers to the brim;  
A jollyer year ye shall not see,  
But his eyes were waxing dim,  
And though his footstep spall'd of him,  
He was a friend to me.

Every one for his own,  
We did so laugh and cry with you,  
I've had a mind to die with you,  
Old Year, if you must die.

He was full of joke and jest,  
But all his heart was in his cheer,  
To him, the old year, across the waste  
His son and heir doth ride post haste,  
But he'll be home for his own.

The night is starry and cold, my friend,  
And the New Year blithe and bold, my friend,  
Comes up to take his own.

How hard he breathes! Over the snow  
I heard just now the crowing cock.  
The shadows flicker to and fro:  
The cricket chirps: the light burns

'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.  
Shake hands before you die,  
Old Year, we'll dearly love for you:  
What is it we can do for you?  
Speak out before you die.

His face is growing sharp and thin,  
Alack! his hair is turning grey,  
Close up his eyes: tie up his chin:  
Step from the corpse, and let him in  
That standeth there with wealth at hand.

There's a new foot on the floor, my friend,  
And a new face at the door, my friend,  
A new face at the door,  
A new face at the door.

Boys and Girls.

A SNOW MENAGERIE.

The snow was falling steadily, and the Rodney children, strange as it may seem, were grumbling as they watched it.

"Of course it'll cover the ice for a week!" said Paul, who ached to try his new skates.

"And then everything will thaw all at once, and there won't be any chance at all," added Phil, who was figuring on the ice.

"Vacation'll soon be over, too," sighed Alice. She had to leave enough from the boys to be able to skate alone.

"Oh, dear me!" exclaimed a little voice in the corner. It was Bessie, who was trying to put on her wax doll's nightgown backward.

"We all have our troubles," said Alice. "Come here, pussie, and I'll put it on for you."

"Well, we've got to do something or we'll explode!" exclaimed Phil. "I vote for a snow man as soon as we can get out."

"My vote," said the others, and Bessie added, "Make me a snow doll, won't you, Paul?"

Sometimes a cross-stick or slat helped to brace the whole body. And after the sheep's head fell off two or three times they showed a piece of lath into the neck and then built the head carefully around it. Pieces of coal made very good eyes and nose, and a bit of rope, caught in the split end of a short stick, which was then pushed into the snow animal like a pin, made a very fair tail.

The bear was harder to do, but with a strong, upright stick to which was fastened one set crossways for the paws, they managed very well. The elephant's trunk they tied all out, for it wouldn't stay on until they decided to make believe he was picking up something from the ground and built the trunk that way, around a long, thin stick. Short pieces of wood made the tusks.

How the Rodney children and their little friends did enjoy that Zoo! Of course all the boys and girls helped, and other animals were added. A huge rooster with real tail feathers was one. A cat sitting up soberly, her tail curled round her, was another.

The menagerie lasted several days, for Paul showed them how to pour water gently on the animals so they would freeze harder in the night time. The children's great folks of the neighborhood came to see the animals, and their teacher told the children they were real sculptures.

But alas! a sudden thaw melted them in a hurry. The Rodney children are planning to have a snow menagerie every winter, and it's a capital plan for other children to imitate, for there's no better sport than working in the snow.—Youth's Companion.

A Smile: A Laugh.

"Susie cannot go to the art exhibition; the puppy has torn up her hat."

They were two little children, and they were painting pictures in their school. One youngster finished a cow in blue, and then remembered never to have seen a blue cow.

A visitor to Boston Common, pausing at a gathering of children, heard the peroration of a fluent speech: "When these principles are triumphant, we shall have peace from Canada to Mexico, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from Alpha to Omega."

Donald, aged six, was a minister's son. One morning, when his mother was getting him ready for school, he was quite cross, and said: "O hurry up! When you wash me, you're just going to make me dirty, and never when to quit!"

Uncle Davis thinks that a dictionary is the most useless book ever printed. He says that you can't find out by it how to spell a word unless you know how to spell it in the first place. This remark was made after an hour's search among the A's for the word "kewit."

It was the first time Stewart had seen any small chickens, and he did not understand that the smooth patches on the sides were wings. When one of the chicks tried to spread its wings Stewart cried: "See, he's spreading his wings, and there isn't anything in them."

The late Bill Nye was fond of telling this story of his small daughter. At the dinner table one day there was a party of guests, for whom Mr. Nye was doing his best in the way of entertainment. A lady turned to the little girl.

"Your father is a very funny man," said she. "Yes," replied the child, "when we have company."

A youth to fame and fortune unknown sent Dumas the manuscript of a new play, asking the great dramatist to be his collaborator. Dumas, for a moment petrified, then seized his pen and replied: "How dare you, sir, propose to yoke together a horse and an ass?"

The author by return post wrote: "How dare you, sir, call me a horse?" Dumas, by next mail, "Send me your friend!"

Tommy, aged four, with great expectations as to Christmas, was disappointed to find one of his presents a baby brother. He requested his father to tell Santa Claus to send right away a sheep to look at, and some wooden shovels or spades to shape the heads with, and to scoop out the snow for tails and ears, and shape all the bodies with. We could make other animals, too. Bears—

"And—elephants!" exclaimed Phil, jumping up. "Oh, I wish it would stop snowing, so we could begin!" and he went stamping around the room.

"There's a lot to do to get ready," said Alice. "You know papa says a good workman is always careful to have his tools in order. Let's spend today getting ours ready. You boys'll have to make the shovels, or whatever you'd call 'em."

"Sort of paddles, I should say," remarked Paul, thumping the table in his zeal. "Just flat pieces about four inches wide and about a foot and a half long, with one end whittled down to take hold of. Let's get at 'em, Phil."

"And I'll look up the pictures," said Alice. "We must choose the animals, too."

"My woolly lamb, too, sister," said Bessie. "Of course," said Alice, hugging her. "You're a lamb yourself, and we'll have to make a snow image of you. Wouldn't that be fun?"

By evening the tools were ready and the animals chosen. A sheep for Bessie, a bear, an elephant, and Alice chose a picture of a large dog lying down to make her image from. There were other plans, too, should there be time to carry them out.

"Praps all the boys and girls'll help," said Phil, "and then we could get a lot done and have a Zoo."

"Well, we may let 'em help," said Paul, grandly, "but they've got to do as we tell 'em, for we know just how."

## Picked Up in Passing.

The oldest newspaper in the world is said to be the Kin Pan, of Peking, which has been published continuously for nearly a thousand years. It started, as a monthly, became a weekly in 1381, and since the beginning of the century has been a daily.

A well known Washington horseman has discovered a fact in natural history which may not be generally known. It is that all four-footed beasts, in making the first movement in walking or running, or at any sort of forward movement, always employ the left hind leg as a starter. Even a child, if put on all fours, will make the first movement with its left leg.

The story is told of Mr. Kipling that when a boy he went on a sea voyage with his father, Mr. Lockwood Kipling. Soon after the vessel was under way, Mr. Lockwood Kipling went below, leaving the boy on deck. Presently there was a great commotion overhead, and one of the ship's officers rushed down and banged at Mr. Kipling's door. Mr. Kipling, he cried, "Your boy has crawled out on the yard-arm, and if he lets go he'll drown."

"Yes," said Mr. Kipling, glad to know that nothing serious was the matter, "but he won't let go."

The interesting fact was stated at the jubilee of the Clinton Avenue Congregational Church, in Brooklyn, that during its half century of life the church has given away a million dollars in charity, and has sent a Congregational Church for every year of its existence.

"Amid all the heresies of the age," said Dr. McLeod, the present pastor, "it has maintained the faith delivered to the saints. Its ministers have kept abreast of the times and modern scholarship, and have steered the ship by the North star, with God and the Bible for chart and compass."

Henry George, says the Westminster Gazette, "had a quaint humor of his own, and could tell a good story during his lectures. During his Australian tour one of his friends in Sydney suggested to the secretary of a local racing club that it would be a grand thing to send Mr. George a complimentary ticket for the race meeting then at hand. The papers at the time were devoting many columns to reports of George's meetings and discussions on his doctrines, but the sportsman had evidently not read them. Who is Mr. George?" he asked. "I never heard of him before. Why, he's a man of world-wide celebrity. Does he ever win any horses?" queried the secretary.

"Yes, two very fast trotters, 'Progress' and 'Tovary.' Oh, all right," said the now satisfied secretary, "here's a ticket for him."

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