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THE COMING CENTURY.

A Discourse on a Novel Subject by Dr. Talmage.

Washington, Dec. 5.—By a novel mode Dr. Talmage in this discourse shows how the world will look after it has been revolutionized by earth; text, 11 Peter iii, 13, "A new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Down in the struggle to make the world better and happier we sometimes get depressed with the obstacles to be overcome. Will it not be a tonic and an inspiration to look at the world as it will be when it has been brought back to paradisaical condition? So let us for a few moments transport ourselves into the future and put ourselves forward in the centuries and see the world in its rescued and perfected state, as we will see it in those times we are permitted to revisit this planet, as I am sure we will. We all want to see the world after it has been thoroughly gospelized and all wrongs have been righted. We will want to come back, and we will come back to look upon the refulgent consummation toward which we have been on larger or smaller scale toiling. Having heard the opening of the orchestra on whose strings some discords traveled, we will want to hear the last triumphant bar of the perfected orchestra. Having seen the picture as the painter first drew its outlines, upon canvas, we will want to see it when it is as complete as Reuben's "Descent from the Cross," or Michael Angelo's "Last Judgment." Having seen the world under the gloom of the star of Bethlehem, we will want to see it when, under the full shining of the sun of righteousness, the towers shall strike 12 at noon.

There will be nothing in that coming century of the world's perfection to hinder our terrestrial vision. Our power and velocity of locomotion will have been improved infinitely. It will not take us long to come here, however far off in God's universe heaven may be. The Bible declares that such visitation is going on now. "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation?" Surely the gates of heaven will not be bolted against the world as it is, so as to hinder the redeemed from descending for a tour of inspection and congratulation and triumph.

I imagine that we are descending at that period of the world's complete gospelization. There will be no peril in such a descent. Great heights and depths have no alarm for glorified spirits. We can come down through chasms between worlds without growing dizzy and across the spaces of half the universe without losing our way. Down and farther down we come. As we approach this world we breathe the perfume of illimitable gardens. Alights on the redeemed earth, we are first accosted by the spirit of the twenty-first century, who proposes to guide and show us all that we desire to see. Without his guidance, we would be lost. The world is so much changed from the time when we lived in it. First of all, he points out to us a group of abandoned buildings. We ask this spirit of the twenty-first century, "What are those structures whose walls are falling down, and whose gates are rusted on the hinges?" Our escort tells us: "Those were once penitentiaries filled with offenders, but the crime of the world has died out."

After passing on amid columns and statues erected in memory of those who have been mighty for goodness in the world's history, the highest and the most exquisitely sculptured in honor of such good have been most effectual in saving life or improving life rather than those renowned for destroying life, we come upon another group of buildings that must have been transformed from their original shape and adapted to other uses. "What is all this?" we ask our escort. He answers: "Those were almshouses and hospitals, but accuracy in making and prudence in running machinery of all sorts have almost abolished the list of casualties, and sobriety and industry have nearly abolished pauperism, so that those buildings which were once hospitals and almshouses have been turned into beautiful homes for the less prosperous, and if you will look in you will see the poorest have as abundance, and the smallest wardrobe luxury, and the harp, waiting to have its strings thrummed, leaning against the piano, waiting for its keys to be fingered."

And we believe what our escort says, for as we pass on we find health glowing in every cheek and beaming in every eye and springing in every step and articulating in every utterance, and you and I whisper to each other as our escort has his attention drawn to some new sunrise upon the morning sky, and we say, each to the other: "Who would have thought that this is the world we lived in over 100 years ago? Look at those men and women we pass on the road! How improved the human race! Such beauty, such strength, such gracefulness, such gentility! Faces without the mark of one sorrow! Cheeks that seem never to have been wet by one tear! A race sublimated! A new world born!"

But I say to our escort: "Did all this come spontaneously good? How did you get the old shipwrecked world afloat again, out of the breakers into the smooth seas?" "No," he responds, "our twenty-first century escort. Do you see those towers? Those are the towers of church-

es, towers of reformatory institutions, towers of Christian schools. Walk with me, and let us enter some of these temples. We enter, and I find that the music is in the major key and none of it the minor. "Gloria In Excelsis," rising above "Gloria In Excelsis." Tremolo stop in the organ not so much used as the trumpet stop. More of Ariel than of Naomi. More chants than dirges.

But I say to our twenty-first century escort: "I cannot understand this. Have these worshippers no sorrows, or have they forgotten their sorrows?" Our escort responds: "Sorrows? Why, they had sorrows more than you could count, but by a divine illumination that the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries never enjoyed they understand the uses of sorrow and are comforted with a superior machinery. In worn, out, and they realize it is time to go, and that they are certainly and without doubt going into a world where they will be infinitely better off and are to live in a mansion that awaits their momentary occupancy." "But how was all this effected?" I ask our escort. Answer: "By floods of gospel power. You who lived in the nineteenth century have seen a revival of religion to be compared with what occurred in the latter part of the twentieth and the early part of the twenty-first century. The prophecy has been fulfilled that 'a nation will be born in a day'—that is, ten or twenty or forty million of practical Christians."

In our church history we read of the great awakening of 1857, when five hundred thousand souls were saved. But that was only a drop of the coming showers that since then have taken into the kingdom of God everything between the Atlantic and the Pacific, between the Pyrenees and the Himalayas. The evils that good people in the nineteenth century were trying to destroy have been overcome by celestial forces. What human weapons failed to accomplish has been done by omnipotent thunderbolts.

"O spirit of the twenty-first century, will you not show us something of the commercial life of your time?" He answers, "To-morrow I will show you all." And on the morrow he takes us through the great marts of trade and shows us the bargain makers and the shelves of goods, the growing dizzies and hogheads in which they are contained. I notice that the fabrics are of better quality than anything I ever saw in our nineteenth century, for the articles are more skillfully and more tastefully made, and the looms that clack and the engines that rumble are driven by forces that were not a century ago discovered.

The price of the fabrics indicates a reasonable profit, and the firms in the counting room and the clerks at the counter and the draymen at the doorway and the messenger who brings the mail and the steam who open the store in the morning, as well as those who close it at night all look as if they were satisfied and well treated. No swarming up of small houses of merchandise by great hoards of people underling, until those in the same line are bankrupt and then the prices lifted, no unnecessary assignment to default, no over-drawing of accounts, no abscondings, no sharp practice, no snap judgments, but the manufacturer right in his dealing with the wholesaler, and the wholesaler with the retailer, and the retailer with the customer.

"But what is yonder row of buildings, majestic for architecture?" The spirit of the twenty-first century says, "Those are our legislative halls and places of public trust, and if you would like I will show you the political circles, the modes of precedent, the styles of election, the character of public men in this century." "Thank you," I reply. "I can easily understand how gospelization would improve individual life and social life, and commercial life, but I would like to see what it can do for political life." "Let me tell you," says the spirit of the twenty-first century, "that I have read about political chicanery and corruption of more than 100 years ago—the nineteenth century in which you lived here—but the low political caucus has gone from the face of the earth, and the stuffed ballot box, and the bribery by money and by promise of office, and the jobs got by legislators and congresses by lobbyists."

As in company with our escort we pass down from the heights on which these buildings stand I see a dismantled cannon planted on the side of the hill, and I go to examine it, and I read the inscription, cut in letters of bronze: "This is the last gun that was fired in the last battle of the last war that will ever be fought. Preserved by the last regiment of men just disbanded, as a trophy to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men." Then I look up, and our escort says: "Do you see that large structure on our right? That was a fortress, but now it is a college, and instead of gunners aiming out of the port holes are looking the students of a higher literature and a wiser science and a grander civilization than the world ever before imagined. And these students are taught by a prof-

fessors as for science. Archaeologists, hammer and geologist's crowbar, and chemist's laboratory and explorer's journey have joined in a confirmation of the truth of the Holy Scriptures until there is not an unbeliever in all the earth. The astronomer through his telescope has seen the morning star of the Redeemer, and the geologist has found the Rock of Ages, and the geometer has demonstrated that heaven is the city which lieth four square, and the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal."

"What," I say to our escort, "no skeptics, no infidels, no agnostics?" His reply is: "Absolutely none. The last fool who said in his heart there is no God was buried half a century ago without any liturgical service."

"Well," I say to our escort, "where are Tom Paine's 'Age of Reason' and Ingersoll's 'Mistakes of Moses' and David Hume's 'Voltaire's celebrated tirades against the Bible'?" "I never heard of them," says our escort. "What are you talking about? A bigger bonfire of books than that which in apostolic times was kindled in the streets of Ephesus was lighted in all our cities and the corrupt literature of the world turned into ashes many, many years ago. I saw the last leaf curl up in the flame and scatter."

In response to my question as to what had wrought all this change—obliterated all the evil and fully inaugurated all the good—our escort, the spirit of the twenty-first century, tells me that gospelization had directly or indirectly done it. It was a practical gospel that not only changed the heart, but made the man honest. A practical religion which did not expend all its energy in singing, "Fly abroad, thou mighty gospel," but gave something to make it fly.

The good work was helped on by the fact that it became a general habit among millionaires and multimillionaires to provide churches and schools and institutions of mercy, not to be built after the testators were dead, but built so that they might be present at the laying of the cornerstone and at the dedication and leave less inducement for the heirs-at-law to prove in orphan's court that when the testators were last will and testament they were crazy. The telegraphic wires in the air and the cables under the sea thrill with Christian invitation. Phonographs charged with gospel sermons stand in every neighborhood. The 5,000,000,000 of the world's inhabitants in that century are 5,000,000,000 disciples.

"But," I say to our escort, the spirit of the twenty-first century, "you have shown us much, but what about international conditions? When we lived on earth, it was a century that bled with Marengo and Chalons and Lodi Bridge and Lucknow and Solferino and Leipzig and Waterloo and San Juan." Our escort replies, "Come with me to this building of white marble and glittering dome." As we pass up and on we are taken into a room where the mightiest and best representatives of all the nations are assembled to settle international controversies. As we enter I hear the presiding officer opening the council of arbitration, reading the second chapter of Isaiah: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Questions which in our long past nineteenth century caused quarrel and bloodshed, as when Germany and France were deciding about Alsace and Lorraine, as when the United States and Spain were deciding about Cuba—such questions in this twenty-first century are settled in five minutes, one drop of ink doing more than once could have been accomplished by a river of blood.

But we cannot stay long in this hall of arbitration, for it is almost time for us to retrace our way homeward. This voluntary exile must soon end. And, passing out of this hall of arbitration, we go through a national museum, where we are shown among the curiosities an English rifle, a Russian revolver, a Hotchkiss shell, an ambulance—curiosities to that age, but, alas! no curiosity to us of the nineteenth century, for some of our own kindred went down under their stroke or were carried off by the flying wheels.

"But," I say to our escort, the spirit of the twenty-first century, and you and I say to each other, "We must go home now, back again to heaven. We have stayed long enough in this terrestrial visitation to see that all the best things foretold in the Scriptures and which we read during our earthly residence have come to pass, and all the Davidic, Solomonian and Paulinian and Johannan prophecies have been fulfilled, and that the earth, instead of being a ghastly failure, is the mightiest success in the universe. A star redeemed. A planet rescued! A world saved! It started with a garden, and it is going to close with a garden. Farewell, spirit of the twenty-first century! Thanks for your guidance! We can stay no longer away from the doxologies that never end, in temples never closed, in a day that has no sundown. We must report to the immortals around the throne the transformations we have seen, the victories of truth on land and sea, the hemispheres irradiated, and Christ on the throne of earth, as he is on the throne of heaven."

"In that world we have just visited the deserts are all bloom, and the wildernesses are bright with fountains. Sin is extirpated. Crime is reformed. Disease is cured. The case is emancipated. The earth is full of the knowledge of God, as the waters cover the sea." The redeemed of the Lord have come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. "The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, and the Kingdom of the world have become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let the harpers of heaven strike the glad tidings from the strings of their harps, and the trumpeters put them in the mouth of their trumpets, and the orchestras roll them into the grand march of the eternities, and all the cathedral towers of the great capital of the universe shine them all over heaven."

"Dimness of sight, palpitation, shortness of breath, black spots or else shining lights"

before my eyes, terrible headache, numbness in my arms and hands and tongue, also my jaws would get numb; constipation, prostrating, debilitating drains, sickness through my bowels; in fact I was diseased from head to foot," writes Mrs. Mollie R. Linaria, Cum. Tenn. "When Dr. Pierce's health, I was so weak I could only write a few words when I would have to rest. I could hardly walk. Words cannot express my sufferings. No! I cannot do my own washing and cooking. I can take a ten quart pail in one hand and a six quart pail in the other (full of water) and carry both one fourth of a mile and never stop to rest. I am as I was at 10 years (125 lbs). I also had dimness of sight and impaired memory. I had spells that when I would try to speak I couldn't think of the words I wanted to say, but would say something else. I have improved, oh, so much, and Dr. Pierce's medicines have done the good work. It has been about a year since I commenced to use the medicines. My health has been improving slowly but surely. We cannot expect a disease that has been coming on for years to be cured in a few days. If any lady suffering as I have, will write to Dr. R. V. Pierce, at Buffalo, N. Y., and get his advice and use his medicines according to directions, a cure will surely result."

Most dealers in medicine sell Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. There is no other medicine that is "the same" or "just as good." Don't accept a substitute.

But often you and I, who were companions in that expedition from heaven to earth, seated on the green bank of the river that rolls through the paradise of God, will talk over the scenes we witnessed in that parenthesis of heavenly bliss, in that vacation from the skies, in our terrestrial visitation—we who were early residents in the nineteenth century, escorted by the spirit of the twenty-first century, whom we saw what my text describes as "a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." "Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen."

WERE CONQUERORS.

How the World's Great Victors all ways met More Than Their Match.

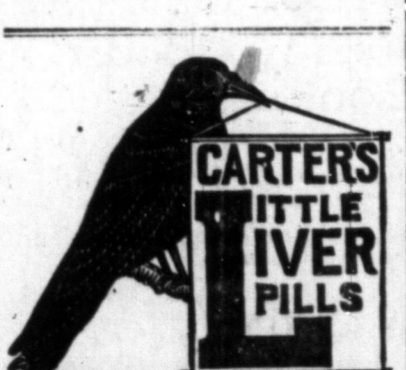
It is a remarkable and instructive fact that the career of four of the most renowned characters that ever lived closed with a violent or mournful death.

Alexander, after looking down from the dizzy heights of his ambition upon a conquered world and weeping that there were no more to conquer, died of intoxication in a scene of debauch, or, as some suppose, by poison mingled in his wine.

Hannibal, whose name carried terror to the heart of Rome itself, after having crossed the Alps and put to flight the armies of the mistress of the world, was driven from his country and died at last of poison administered by his own hands in a foreign land, unlamented and unwept.

Caesar, the conqueror of 800 cities, and his temples bound with chaplets dipped in the blood of a million of his foes, was miserably assassinated by those he considered his nearest friends. Bonaparte, whose mandate kings and emperors obeyed, after tilling the earth with the terror of his name, closed his days in lonely banishment upon a barren rock in the midst of the Atlantic ocean.

Such the four men who may be considered representatives of all whom the world calls great, and such their end—intoxication, or poison, or suicide, murdered by friends, lonely exile!



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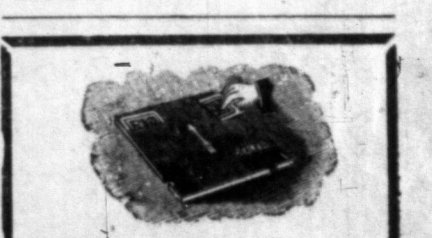
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