

LEARN HOW TO FLY LOW.

The Rev. Dr. Talmage Discourses
Repentance.

A despatch from Washington says:—Rev. Dr. Talmage preached from the following text: "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?"—Isaiah lx. 8.

When persons apply for membership into any society, the question is asked, "Who are they, and where do they come from?" and as this multitude of people to-day present themselves for membership, it is right that we should ask "Who are these that come as doves to their windows?" They are captives whose chains have been broken; they are soldiers who have enlisted for thirty years' war. They are heirs of heaven.

They come as doves to the windows, first, because they fly low. The eagle darts up as if to strike its beak into the sun. There are birds that seem to dwell under the eaves of heaven; you see them as little specks against the sky, so far off that you cannot guess the style of their plumage or the shape of their bodies. They float so far away that if the hunter's gun be discharged at them they do not change their course. Not so with doves or pigeons; they never take any high excursions. They fly around your roof, and alight on the fence, and seem to dislike great altitudes. So these souls, who come to Christ and to his Church to-day, fly low. They ask no great things; they seek an humble place at the feet of Christ. They are not ashamed to be called beggars for mercy; they are willing to get down on their knees, and to crawl under the table, and to pick up the crumbs of Gospel provision. There were days when they were proud and puffed up; but now, the highest throne of earth could not tempt Mary away from Jesus's feet. Stoop, O pardoned soul, if thou wouldst enter heaven. A high look and a proud heart God hates. Fly low. It is a mercy that thou canst fly at all. Remember all the years of thy sin; thy days of youthful wandering; thy days of manhood transgression; thy sins—dark, brooding, deathly—sins against thy soul, against thy Bible, against thy God.

It is an offended God before whom thou comest. Thou deservest his wrath. He scattered the one hundred and eighty-five thousand of Sennacherib's host in a night.

HE ABHORRS SIN.

He will judge the nations. "Holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty." Fly low.

Again: These persons who come to-day are like doves on their way to the dove-cot, because they fly for shelter. The albatross makes a throne of the tempest; the seagulls find their grandest frolic in the storm—their merriest hour seems to be that in which the surf of the sea piles most high. Not so with doves; at the first blow of a northeaster they fly to the coop. Eagle contends with eagle in midair, and vulture fights vulture on the bosom of the carcass, but doves, at the first dash of the bird of prey, speed for shelter from fiery eye, and iron beak, and loathsome talon. So to-day these souls come here for shelter. Everyone has a besetting sin; that sin is always after you. Wherever you go, sin goes; where you stay, sin stays. You have watched the hawk above the barn-yard; it sails around and around over the brood of chickens—around and around, now almost down to the flock, then back again, until at last it drops and seizes its prey. There is a hawk ready to pounce on every dove, and that is the reason that these doves come to-day to the windows—they want shelter in the grace of God and in Christian associations. They say, "If there is any power in your prayers, let me have them; if there be any virtue in good counsels, give them to me; if there be anything elevating in Christian associations, let me dwell their influence." "Where thou dwellest, I will dwell. Thy people shall be my people, thy God my God." Open your doors, O Church of God, and let them come in "as doves to their windows."

Christ is the only shelter of the soul in trouble. What can you do without him when sorrow comes? Perhaps at first you take valiant to quiet your nerves, or alcohol to revive your spirits; but have you found anything in the medicines or physical stimulants sufficient? Perhaps in the excitement of the money-market, or in the merry making of the club-room, you have sought relief. This world has no balm for a wounded soul, no shelter for a bruised spirit. The dove, in the time of the deluge, flew north, and it was all water; and south, and east, and west, and it was all water, in which were tossed the carcasses of the dead world; and the first solid thing the dove's feet touched was the

WINDOW OF THE ARK.

So the soul in trouble goes out in one direction, and finds nothing substantial to rest upon; and in another direction, and every whither, but there is no rest for the dove save the ark. Again: These souls, like doves, fly

home. Most of the winged denizens have no home; now they are at the north, and now at the south, as the climate indicates. This year a nest one tree; next year a nest in another tree. The golden oriole remains but three months of the year in Germany, and is then gone. The linnet of Norway crosses the ocean to find rest away from the winter's blast. The heron, the goldfinch, and the cross-bill call each other together several days before going, choose their leader, arrange themselves in two lines, forming an angle, and are gone. But the pigeons, alluded to in the text, summer, and winter, and always, have a home in the dove-cot. And so Christ is the home of those who come to him. He is a warm home; they rest under the "feathers of the Almighty." Christ tells us that chickens find not a warmer place under the wing of the hen than we in him. He is a safe home; our fortunes may go down ten degrees below zero, the snows of trouble may fall, the winds of persecution may howl, the jackals of death may stalk forth—all is well, for "great peace have they who trust in God." From this home we shall never be driven out. The cheriff may sell us out of our earthly house, or the fires may burn it down, or the winds carry it away, but that home shall always be ours.

Again: These souls to-day, gathering for membership, are like doves, because they come in flocks. The buzzard, with dripping beak, fluttering up from the carrion, is alone. You occasionally look up against the wintry sky, and see a solitary bird winging past. But doves or pigeons are in flocks; by scores and hundreds do they fly. You hear the loud whir of their wings as they pass. So to-day we see a great flock coming into the kingdom. It is not a straggler, trying to catch up with his regiment; it is a solid phalanx.

TAKING THE KINGDOM.

It is not a drop on your hand or cheek, that leaves you in doubt whether it rains or not, but the rush of an unmistakable shower. It is not the raking up of the gleanings, but the tossing up of the full sheaves into the mow—"as doves to their windows." There are all ages in this flock. Some of them are young, and the very first use they make of their wings is to fly into the kingdom; some of them are old, and their wings have been torn with shot and ruffled with the tempest, and they had almost dropped into the sea. Some of them have been making a very crooked course. They dipped their wings in fountain of sin—they wandered near the gulf of perdition; but they saw their danger—they changed their course. They have come, at last, "as doves to the windows."

But while a great flock this day comes to the dove-cot of mercy, the largest flock are going the other way. It is a very easy thing to tame doves. Go out with a handful of corn to feed the pigeons, and they will fly on your shoulders and your hands, so tame are they. God has fed those who are before me with "the finest of the wheat," and yet you have flown from him all your lives long. You have taken your clothes out of his wardrobe, and your bread out of his hands. God's Spirit will not always strive. In the morning, after a severe night, you have gone out and seen the birds dead on the snow; so, after awhile, God's mercy will cease, and the earth will be covered with the bodies of those who perished in the storm. That storm is coming. It will shiver the mast of pride—it will drive into the white reefs of death every cargo of sin. The cedars of the mountain will split in the hurricane, and the islands shall be moved out of their places, and the continents shall be rent asunder, and the hemispheres shall whirl like a top in the fury of that day. The mountains will be blasted, and the beasts, in affright, be pitched from the cliffs in an avalanche of terror. The dead shall rush forth from the sepulchres to see what is the matter, and all those who despise God SHALL HORRIBLY PERISH.

Now, do you suppose that I can stand here and know that that day is coming without telling you about it? My last resting-place will probably be near yours. What if, when I got up in the resurrection day, I should see you rushing at me across the lots of the cemetery, and hear you cry, "Why did you not tell me of this? If it had not been for your neglect, I should have been on the way to glory." I cannot prepare myself for such a consternation.

"Can you tell me how far it is to hell?" said a young man, as, on Sunday, on horseback, he dashed past a good Christian deacon. At the next turn in the road, the horse threw the scolding rider, and he was dead. He

wanted to know how far it was to hell, and found out without the deacon's telling him.

So thou art mounted on a swift steed, whose hoofs strike fire from the pavement as he dashes past, and you cry out, "How far is it to ruin?" I answer, "Near—very near!"

Oh that my Lord God would bring you now to see your sin, and to fly from it; and your duty, and help you to do it; so that when the last great terror of earth shall spread its two black wings, and clutch with its bloody talons for thy soul, it cannot hurt thee, for that thou art safe in the warm dove-cot of a Saviour's mercy.

"Come in! Come in!

Eternal glory shalt thou win."

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON, JAN. 27.

"Christ Silences the Pharisees," Matt. 23. Golden Text, Matt. 23. 45.

PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 34. When the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence they were doubtless delighted. It was more than they had been able to do. But there were many differences between their teachings and that of Jesus, and he was as real a force in the life of the times for them to ignore him, as it was strange that they gathered themselves together against him. Nevertheless, bitterly as they opposed him, either party would have been glad if Jesus had joined them.

35. A lawyer. A layman who had made himself an authority in the interpretation of the written and oral law. He added the duties of a theological professor to those of a professional scribe. Asked him a question. Religious and philosophical discussion in those days was apt to take the form of answering and asking questions. Tempting him. Testing him. There are reasons to believe that this lawyer was not captious and hostile. He may have been an earnest and honest inquirer, while holding very definite, positive views himself.

36. Master. His manner is respectful. Which is the great commandment in the law? Which is the essential command? What is the gist of the law? It was a very important question. Detailed laws had been multiplied until it was assumed on all hands that no man could obey all the specifications. Which of them all, then, might be innocently omitted? What principle was essential to obedience? The rabbis used to say that there was six hundred and thirteen laws given by Moses—two hundred and forty-eight positive commandments, and three hundred and sixty-five prohibitions. "To keep them," said the Jews, "was the mark of an angel."

37. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. See Deut. 6, 5, 10, 12. To obey commands is always easier to the one who loves the commander. The division of human nature into heart, soul, and mind is not made with the definiteness of modern science. But it is singularly descriptive and comprehensive.

38. The first and great commandment. The essence of the whole system.

39. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. "Neighbor" is a word that has come down to us from the Saxons, and it means a "near dweller" or "near farmer," and as our Lord interpreted it at another time, "our fellow-man," whoever or wherever he is. This commandment is said to be like the first because it is equally comprehensive.

41. While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus follows up his successful defense by a vigorous attack on their superficial reasoning. The question and response that follow need careful study on the part of the teacher, or the point will not be apprehended by the pupil. The cardinal sin of the Pharisees was that they had become mere formalists, keepers of the letter of the law. They studied words and phrases, and thought little of the deeper meaning.

42. What think ye of Christ? Not, "What is your opinion of me?" but, "What is your opinion concerning the Messiah in the particular that I am now about to state?" Whose son is he? The Pharisees did not see the drift of his question, and answered from the surface of Holy Scripture. The son of David. That is, the descendant of David. This royal descent was claimed for Jesus, but, of course, not every descendant of David was the Christ. Our Lord now exalts the ideal of Christ, and makes it possible if their prejudices be not too dense, for them to see the Christ in himself.

43. How then doth David in spirit call him Lord? "In spirit" means by inspiration of the Holy Ghost. It is not merely a poetical phrase. And "call him Lord" does not mean "call him Jehovah." It is the frankest expression of Christ's supe-

riority to David. As a nation so given to reverencing their ancestors as were the Jews (for they were second only to the Chinese in this reverence) it would seem astounding for any man, and certainly for any inspired man, to call his descendant his superior. The word "Lord," kurios, with its Hebrew equivalent, was "a title bestowed on a superior by an inferior, on a master by a slave. Now, the king of Israel called no man Lord. God was his only Lord."

44. The Lord said unto my Lord. Turn to the Old Testament, and you will see that the first "Lord" is printed in small capitals, and therefore stands for "Jehovah;" so that the statement is, "Jehovah said unto my Lord," which later "Lord" refers to Christ. Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. This is an invitation by God to the coming Messiah to accept the seat of honor in the universe.

45. How is he his son? How can the son be Lord of his father? If he is, his leadership must be founded on something much higher than a descent from royalty. The force of the question is in its suggestiveness.

46. No man was able to answer him a word. There were skillful debaters there, but they could not answer this question without stultifying themselves. Neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions. They were baffled, and so resorted to the most infamous methods to square accounts.

Do not let the scholars leave the lesson with the impression that the argument was simply a test of wit between our Lord and his critics. It all had direct bearing on himself and his claims, and on their craft plans already begun to overthrow him.

WINTER WRINKLES.

Maude—Don't you think that the Count de Verdreuil is a very intelligent man? Ethel—Yes, indeed! Why he can even understand my French.

Tom—I confess I'd prefer riches to love. A kiss, for instance, may be sweet, but it isn't worth anything. Dick—Well, it's always worth its face value.

The Aunt—Has Gigilamps an independent fortune? The Niece—[should say he had; he says there is no such thing as living with it in any degree of comfort.

What is the matter, Hercules? Jove asked as the former poured in his arduous work of cleaning the Augean stables. I was merely longing for the horseless age, replied Hercules.

You're a big boy now, but your father still whips you, does he? That shows the force of habit, said the boy's uncle. No, blurted the boy, it shows the habit of force.

Over the Telephone—Is Pat O'Brien there? No. Well, when he comes in please tell him that his son-in-law is dead. I am his son-in-law, but not the one that's dead.

First Boy—I've got to take a lickin' when I get home to-night. Second Boy—Father or mother? First Boy—Mother. Second Boy—Oh, well, that won't amount to much.

Roberts—I hope you were not angry at Toomey when he stepped on your foot last night? Stephens—Not with him; but I'll tell you in confidence that I hate being stepped on in the abstract.

Adele, said the fond mother, is reaching the age where a girl naturally thinks of marriage. True, replied the father regretfully, but do you think we can afford a son-in-law?

Life is full of uncertainties, said the mournful person. Cheer up, old man, rejoined the jovial friend. You don't have to read the weather reports and the horse race news if you don't want to.

My wife told me this morning that she must have a new bonnet, said Mr. Northside, gloomily. You are well off, replied Mr. Shadyside. My wife told me last night that she had ordered two.

Aunt Hannah—Have a high ideal, and try to live up to it. Edith—Yes, I suppose that would be nice. But isn't it more practical to get a handsome photograph of yourself, and endeavor to look like it?

Miss Pertie Goodwin—So you've asked papa? It wasn't such a terrible ordeal was it? All you had to do was to keep perfectly cool. The Young Man—Cool? I was so cool you could have heard my teeth chatter!

Kash—What was Jones fired for? De Sales—For giving away one of the trade secrets, I believe. Kash—You don't say? De Sales—Yes, he told one of the customers that the boss was an old blockhead and the boss overheard him.

THE SUGGESTION OF VIOLETS.

One may keep one's room sweet with the fragrance of violets all winter by setting little bowls of powdered orris root about in them. The orris root should be renewed once or twice a month and the bowls washed whenever it is changed. Dainty Japanese bowls and quaint dishes and vases make the best receptacles, and it is wise to cover them during the night to preserve the sweetness of the powder.

By hanging sachets of orris root in the clothes-presses one's garments will be given an evasive fragrance, unobjectionable even to those who adhere to the paradox that "a woman should smell only of the open."

CANADIANS GOT CRONJE.

CONAN DOYLE PAYS A TRIBUTE TO OUR BRAVE MEN.

Turn in the Tide Due to the Victory at Paardeberg—Graphic Description of the Great Battle.

In his book, "The Great Boer War," Dr. A. Conan Doyle pens a graphic description of the eventful battle at Paardeberg and pays an eloquent tribute to the Canadians who participated.

"On the night of Feb. 26," says the celebrated author, "it was determined that Smith-Dorrien's men should try their luck. The front trenches of the British were at that time 700 yards from the Boer lines. They were held by the Gordons and by the Canadians, the latter being nearer to the river. It is worth while entering into details as to the arrangement of the attack, as the success of the campaign was at least accelerated by it. The orders were that the Canadians were to advance, the Gordons to support, and the Shropshires to take such a position on the left as would outflank any counter attack on the part of the Boers.

"The Canadians advanced in the darkness of the early morning, before the rise of the moon. The front rank held their rifles in the left hand, and each extended right hand grasped the sleeve of the man next it. The rear rank had their rifles slung and carried spades. Nearest the river bank were two companies (G. and H.) who were followed by the 7th Company of Royal Engineers, carrying bags full of earth.

A PITCH DARK NIGHT.

"The long line stole through a pitchy darkness, knowing that at any instant a blaze of fire such as flamed before the Highlanders at Magersfontein might crash out in front of them. A hundred, two, three, four, five hundred paces were taken. They knew that they must be close upon the trenches. If they could only creep silently enough they might spring upon the defenders unannounced. On and on they stole, step by step, praying for silence. Would the gentle shuffle of feet be heard by the men who lay within stone-throw of them? Their hopes had begun to rise when there broke upon the silence of the night a resonant metallic rattle, the thud of a falling man, an empty canteen. They had walked into line of meat cans slung upon a wire. By measurement it was only 50 yards from the trench.

"At that instant a single rifle sounded and the Canadians hurled themselves down upon the ground.

BOERS BEGIN TO FIRE.

"Their bodies had hardly touched it when, from a line 600 yards long, there came one furious glare of rifle fire, with a hiss like water on a red-hot plate, of speeding bullets. In that terrible red light the men, as they lay and scraped desperately for cover, could see the heads of the Boers pop up and down and the fringe of rifle barrels quiver and gleam. How the regiment, lying helpless under this fire, escaped destruction, is extraordinary. To rush the trench in the face of such a continuous blast of lead seemed impossible, and it was equally impossible to remain where they were. In a short time the moon would be up, and they would be picked off to a man.

"The outer companies up on the plain were ordered to retire. Breaking up into loose order, they made their way back with surprisingly little loss, but a strange contretemps occurred, for, leaping suddenly into a trench held by the Gordons, they were mistaken by the men, who seem to have been asleep, for Boers. A subaltern and twelve men received bayonet thrusts—none of them fortunately of a very serious nature—before the mistake was discovered.

CANADIANS DID IT.

"A better fate meanwhile had befallen the two companies who had been followed by the engineers. It is difficult to understand why in the whole regiment the rear rank might not have carried a sackful of earth instead of a spade. With these two flank companies, the experiment was most successful. On the outbreak of the fire the sacks were cast down, the men crouched behind them, and time was given for further trenching. By the morning they were not only secure themselves, but they found themselves in such a position that they could enfilade the first lines of Boer trenches. No doubt Cronje had already realized that the extreme limit of his resistance had come, but it was to those two companies of Canadians that the credit is immediately due for that white flag which fluttered upon the morning of Magersfontein over the lines of Paardeberg."

NEW YEAR'S THE WORLD ROUND.

Functions in European Courts and Festivities in China and Japan.

The celebration of the first day of the year by exchanging gifts dates from old Roman times. So costly were the presents in the time of the Caesars that they were a great source of profit to the Emperors and quite burdensome to their subjects.

Several hundred years ago in Eng-

land it was customary for the nobility to send purses of gold to the king. In the courts of Europe New Year's is a great day. All the monarchs begin the day by attending church, afterward, they receive the dignitaries of Church, State, Army and diplomatic corps.

At the Russian capital the princes of the Imperial family, personages of the court, functionaries, and servants of the palace come in regular order to present their homage and good wishes to the Emperor, who kisses all the members of his family, and all the high officials three times according to the Russian fashion. People meeting in the street in Russia on New Year's kiss each other, whether acquainted or not. The favored ones who have been kissed by the Czar are permitted to kiss the hand of the Empress. The ceremony of hand kissing was suppressed for a time, but reestablished a few years ago under the reign of Alexander III.

Jan. 1 is in Berlin the day for the Court of Congratulation which is held by the Emperor and Empress. Early in the morning the streets near the Royal Schloss are crowded with people, all waiting to see the state carriages of the ambassadors, princes and nobles, who are on their way to attend the Court of Congratulation. The ceremony is preceded by a short service in the Castle chapel. All the princes and princesses come to this court as well as all those who have the privilege of attending court festivities, so that it is a very long, and rather fatiguing affair, especially for the ladies.

EMPRESS AND HER LADIES.

During the next few weeks all the great court festivities take place, and there is a constant succession of court and private gayeties.

In China, the New Year's rejoicings extend over three weeks, during which time little or no business is transacted. The Chinamen endeavor to start the new year free of debt, and all obligations are discharged before the close of the old year, and a fresh supply of charms is laid in. At midnight, a general discharge of crackers and fireworks ushers in the New Year, the houses are decorated with flowers and lanterns and family parties are in order.

Much the same programme is carousing lasts for ten days; every one appears in a brand new suit of clothes. The Japanese New Year was formerly a movable feast like that of the Chinese, but it is now celebrated on a day corresponding to our first of January.

Bonfires of mammoth proportions are kindled on New Year's eve in Persia—New Year's is March 21—and people dance about them. This holiday is the most important of the year, and feasting lasts for ten days; every one appears in new clothes.

No people in the world make more of New Year's than the Scotch, and innumerable are the superstitions connected with the day. In the first place, on getting out of bed in the morning one must step on something higher than the bed that the first step may be taken upward. In dressing if unfortunate enough to put the left shoe on first or a garment on wrong side out one must entirely undress again even to the taking down of one's hair, and dress over again. It is bad luck to be late for breakfast and good luck to be the first one to speak to the cook. All salt-cellars must be full and the bread basket well supplied; if a basket of eggs or of oranges is brought as a present it indicates the best kind of good luck. All garments if possible should be new and a torn garment should on no account be worn. Neither hair nor nails must be cut; money must be in the purse and the purse in the pocket. To stumble or fall is a bad luck sign, unless it be upstairs, in which case do not look behind.

LONG-LIVED ANIMALS.

Fabulous ages have been ascribed to the elephant and whale, but it is now thought that they may be capable of attaining the age of 400 years. It is recorded that when Alexander the Great invaded the dominions of Porus, one of the Rajas of Upper India, he took a huge elephant from the conquered Prince, named him Ajax, dedicated him to the sun, and let him go, with the inscription, "Alexander, the son of Jupiter, hath dedicated Ajax to the sun." Fastened round his leg this elephant, the story goes on to say, was found 350 years later, with the inscription still intact. The average age for an elephant is, however, 100 years. The age of whales is ascertained by the size and number of layers of whalebone, which increase yearly, and a period of 300 or 400 years has been indicated thus. In the Seychelles Islands tame tortoises are habitually kept, and are handed down from father to son as legacies. Many of these are known to be more than 200 years old. In Ceylon there is now living in the Government Gardens a tortoise said to be 500 years old; while another historic tortoise was kept as a pet by Archbishop Land, who commended it to the care of a friend, and it eventually died in London in the reign of Queen Anne.

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