TALMAGE IN LONDON.

HE RECEIVES AN OVATION AND DELIVERS HIS FAREWELL SERMON.

The Close of a Remarkable Campaign. Nothing Like It Since the Days of Whitefield—A Sermon on the Marvels of Nature and the Glories of Heaven.

LONDON, Sept. 18.—The closing week of Rev. Dr. Talmage's preaching tour was marked by several gatherings which in magnitude and enthusiasm eclipsed all that had preceded them. The last service in London was on Sept. 3, when, after addressing three great meetings during the daytime, he spoke to an immense multitude in Hyde park in the evening. Some estimates place the number at 30,000. The crowd was so dense that many women fainted and had to be removed.

During the services the auditors were raised to the highest pitch of religious fervor, and scenes were enacted such as have not been witnessed since the days of Whitefield. On the following Wednesday evening Dr. Talmage addressed a great audience at the Crystal palace, Sydenham, the largest building in the suburbs of London. Prayer meetings invoking the divine blessing on the services were held in various churches the preceding Monday and Tuesday evenings. Before the sermon Dr. Talmage was entertained at a banquet in the large banqueting hall of the Crystal palace by a hundred distinguished clergymen and laymen of every denomination and from every continent, even including Australia.

A vote of thanks was moved rehearsing Dr. Talmage's eminent services to God and humanity; also that he had traveled over 12,000 miles and preached in every prominent city in Great Britain to hundreds of thousands of eager auditors, collected vast sums for various English benevolences, and throughout the entire tour paid his own expenses, not retaining one farthing. Rev. Dr. Thain Davidson seconded the motion, and declared that Dr. Talmage commanded the admiration of the entire Christian world for faithfully preaching the orthodox Gospel in times of fierce religious dissension. The motion was unanimously carried amid great applause.

Dr. Talmage was then presented, in behalf of his English admirers, with a beautiful and costly gold watch of unique design, inscribed "Presented to Rev. Dr. Talmage at Crystal palace, London, in commemoration of his preaching tour through England in the summer of 1892." Dr. Talmage was then escorted to the great hall, where the vote of thanks was unanimously indorsed and ratified by the entire audience.

He then preached his farewell sermon, and shook hands with hundreds at the close. This was the second sermon ever preached in the Crystal palace, the first having been delivered by Pastor Spurgeon thirty-five years ago on the Crimean war. The text selected for today is from Proverbs xxx, 28: "The spider taketh hold with her hands and is in kings' palaces."

Permitted as I was a few days ago to attend the meeting of the British Scientific association at Edinburgh, I found that no paper read had excited more interest than that by Rev. Dr. McCook, of America, on the subject of spiders. It seems that my talented countryman, banished from his pulpit for a short time by ill health, had in the fields and forests given himself to the study of insects. And surely if it is not beneath the dignity of God to make spiders it is not beneath the dignity of man to study them.

THE TEACHINGS OF NATURE.

We are all watching for phenomena. A sky full of stars shining from January to January calls out not so many remarks as the blazing of one meteor. A whole flock of robins take not so much of our attention as one blundering bat darting into the window on a summer eve. Things of ordinary sound and sight and occurrence fail to reach us, and yet no grasshopper ever springs up in our path, no moth ever dashes into the evening candle, no mote ever floats in the sunbeam that pours through the crack of the window shutter, no barnacle on ship's hull, no burr on a chestnut, no limpet clinging to a rock, no rind of an artichoke but would teach us a lesson if we were not so stupid. God in his Bible sets forth for our consideration the lily, and the snowflake, and the locust, and the stork's nest, and the hind's foot, and the aurora borealis, and the ant hills.

One of the sacred writers sitting amid the mountains sees a hind skipping over the rocks. The hind has such a peculiar shaped foot that it can go over the steepest places without falling, and as the prophet looks upon that marking of the hind's foot on the rocks and thinks of the divine care over him he says, "Thou makest my feet like hinds' feet that I may walk on high places." And another sacred writer sees the ostrich leaving its egg in the sand of the desert, and without any care of incubation walk off, and the Scripture says that is like some parents leaving their children without any wing of protection or care.

In my text inspiration opens before us the gate of a palace, and we are inducted amid the pomp of the throne and the courtier, and while we are looking around upon the magnificence inspiration points us to a spider plying its shuttle and weaving its net on the wall. It does not call us to regard the grand surroundings of the palace, but to a solemn and earnest consideration of the fact that "The spider taketh hold with her hands and is in kings' palaces."

It is not very certain what was the particular species of insect spoken of in the text, but I shall proceed to learn from it the exquisiteness of the divine mechanism. The king's chamberlain comes into the palace and looks around and sees the spider on the wall and says, "Away with that intruder," and the servant of Solomon's palace comes with his broom and dashes down the insect, saying, "What a loathsome thing it is." But under microscopic inspection I find it more wondrous of construction than the embroideries on the palace wall and the upholstery about the windows.

All the machinery of the earth could not make anything so delicate and beautiful as the prehensile with which that spider clutches its prey, or as any of its eight eyes. We do not have to go so far up to see the power of God in the tapestry hanging around the windows of heaven, or in the horses or chariots of fire with which the dying day departs, or to look at the mountain swinging out its sword arm from under the mantle of darkness until it can strike with its scimeter of the lightning.

GOD IN LITTLE THINGS.

I love better to study God in the shape of a fly's wing, in the formation of a fish's scale, in the snowy whiteness of a pond lily. I love to track his footsteps in the mountain moss, and to hear his voice in the hum of the rye fields, and discover the rustle of his robe of light in the south wind. Oh, this wonder of divine power that can build a habitation for God in an apple blossom, and tune a bee's voice until it is fit for the eternal orchestra, and can say to a firefly, "Let there be light;" and from holding an ocean in the hollow of his hand, goes forth to find heights and depths and length and breadth of omnipotency in a dewdrop, and dismounts from the chariot of midnight hurricane to cross over on the suspension bridge of a spider's web.

You may take your telescope and sweep it across the heavens in order to behold the glory of God, but I shall take the leaf holding the spider and the spider's web, and I shall bring the microscope to my eye, and while I gaze and look and study and am confounded I will kneel down in the grass and cry, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty!"

Again, my text teaches me that insignificance is no excuse for inaction. This spider that Solomon saw on the wall might have said: "I can't weave a web worthy of this great palace; what can I do amid all this gold embroidery? I am not able to make anything fit for so grand a place, and so I will not work my spinning jenny." Not so said the spider. "The spider taketh hold with her hands." Oh, what a lesson that is for you and me! You say if you had some great sermon to preach, if you only had a great audience to talk to, if you had a great army to marshal, if you only had a constitution to write, if there was some tremendous thing in the world for you to do—then you would show us. Yes, you would show us!

What if the Levite in the ancient temple had refused to snuff the candle because he could not be a high priest? What if the humming bird should refuse to sing its song into the ear of the honeysuckle because it cannot, like the eagle, dash its wing into the sun? What if the raindrop should refuse to descend because it is not a Niagara? What if the spider of the text should refuse to move its shuttle because it cannot weave a Solomon's robe? Away with such folly! If you are lazy with the one talent, you would be lazy with the ten talents. If Milo cannot lift the calf he never will have strength to lift the ox. In the Lord's army there is order for promotion, but you cannot be a general until you have been a captain, a lieutenant and a colonel. It is step by step, it is inch by inch, it is stroke by stroke that our Christian character is builded. Therefore be content to do what God commands you to do.

God is not ashamed to do small things. He is not ashamed to be found chiseling a grain of sand, or helping a honeybee to construct its cell with mathematical accuracy, or tingeing a shell in the surf, or shaping the bill of a chaffinch. What God does, he does well. What you do, do well, be it a great work or a small work. If ten talents, employ all the ten. If five talents, employ all the five. If one talent, employ the one. If only the thousandth part of a talent, employ that. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life." I tell you if you are not faithful to God in a small sphere, you would be indolent and insignificant in a large sphere.

THE REPULSIVE IN HIGH PLACES.

Again, my text teaches me that repulsiveness and loathsomeness will sometimes climb up into very elevated places. You would have tried to have killed the spider that Solomon saw. You would have said: "This is no place for it. If that spider is determined to weave a web, let it do so down in the cellar of this palace or in some dark dungeon." Ah! the spider of the text could not be discouraged. It clambered on and climbed up, higher and higher and higher, until after awhile it reached the king's vision, and he said, "The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces." And so it often is now that things that are loathsome and repulsive get up into very elevated places.

The church of Christ, for instance, is a palace. The King of heaven and earth lives in it. According to the Bible, her beams are of cedar, and her rafters of fir, and her windows of agate, and the fountains of salvation dash a rain of light. It is a glorious palace—the church of God is, and yet sometimes unseemly and loathsome things creep up into it—evil speaking and rancor and slander and backbiting and abuse, crawling up on the walls of the church, spinning a web from arch to arch, and from the top of one communion tankard to the top of another communion tankard. Glorious palace in which there ought only to be light and love and pardon and grace; yet a spider in the palace!

Home ought to be a castle. It ought to be the residence of everything royal. Kindness, love, peace, patience and forbearance ought to be the princes residing there, and yet sometimes dissipation crawls up into that home, and the jealous eye comes up, and the scene of peace and plenty becomes the scene of domestic jargon and dissonance. You say, "What is the matter with the home?" I will tell you what is the matter with it. A spider in the palace.

A well developed Christian character is a grand thing to look at. You see some man with great intellectual and spiritual proportions. You say, "How useful that man must be!" But you find amid all his splendor of faculties there is some prejudice, some whim, some evil habit that a great many people do not notice, but that you have happened to notice, and it is gradually spoiling that man's character—it is gradually going to injure his entire influence. Others may not see it, but you are anxious in regard to his welfare, and now you discover it. A dead fly in the ointment. A spider in the palace.

TOIL FOR THE HIGHER.

Again, my text teaches me that perseverance will mount into the king's palace. It must have seemed a long distance for that spider to climb in Solomon's splendid residence, but it started at the very foot of the wall and went up over the panels of Lebanon cedar, higher and higher, until it stood higher than the highest throne in all the nations—the throne of Solomon. And so God has decreed it that many of those who are down in the dust of sin and dishonor shall gradually attain to the King's palace. We see it in worldly things.

Who is that banker in Philadelphia? Why, he used to be the boy that held the horses of Stephen Girard while the millionaire went in to collect his dividends. Arkwright toils on up from a barber's shop until he gets into the palace of invention. Sextus V toils on up from the office of a swineherd until he gets into the palace of Rome. Fletcher toils on up from the most insignificant family position until he gets into the palace of Christian eloquence. Hogarth, engraving pewter pots for a living, toils on up until he reaches the palace of world renowned art.

And God hath decided that though you may be weak of arm and slow of tongue, and be struck through with a great many mental and moral deficits, by his almighty grace you shall yet arrive in the King's palace—not such an one as is spoken of in the text—not one of marble—not one adorned with pillars of alabaster and thrones of ivory and flagons of burnished gold—but a palace in which God is the King and the angels of heaven are the cupbearers.

The spider crawling up the wall of Solomon's palace was not worth looking after or considering as compared with the fact that we, who are worms of the dust, may at last ascend into the palace of the King Immortal. By the grace of God may we all reach it. Oh, heaven is not a dull place. It is not a wornout mansion, with faded curtains and outlandish chairs and cracked ware. No; it is as fresh and fair and beautiful as though it were completed but yesterday. The kings of the earth shall bring their honor and glory into it.

A palace means splendor of apartments. Now, I do not know where heaven is, and I do not know how it looks, but if our bodies are to be resurrected in the last day I think heaven must have a material splendor as well as a spiritual grandeur. Oh, what grandeur of apartments when that divine hand which plunges the sea into blue, and the foliage into green, and sets the sunset on fire, shall gather all the beautiful colors of earth around his throne, and when that arm which lifted the pillars of Alpine rock, and bent the arch of the sky, shall raise before our soul the eternal architecture, and that hand which hung with loops of fire the curtains of morning shall prepare the upholstery of our kingly residence!

THE PALACES OF GOD.

A palace also means splendor of associations. The poor man, the outcast cannot get into Windsor castle. The sentinel of the queen stands there and cries "Halt!" as he tries to enter. But in the palace of which I speak we may all become residents, and we shall all be princes and kings. We may have been beggars, we may have been outcasts, we may have been wandering and lost as we all have been, but there we shall take our regal power. What companionship in heaven! To walk side by side with John and James and Peter and Paul and Moses and Joshua and Caleb and Ezekiel and Jeremiah and Micah and Zechariah and Wilberforce and Oliver Cromwell and Philip Doddridge and Edward Payson and John Milton and Elizabeth Fry and Hannah More and Charlotte Elizabeth, and all the other kings and queens of heaven. Oh, my soul, what a companionship!

A palace means splendor of banquet. There will be no common ware on that table. There will be no unskilled musicians at that entertainment. There will be no scanty supply of fruit or beverage. There have been banquets spread that cost a million of dollars each; but who can tell the untold wealth of that banquet? I do not know whether John's description of it is literal or figurative. A great many wise people tell me it is figurative; but prove it! I do not know but that it may be literal. I do not know but that there may be real fruits plucked from the tree of life.

I do not know but that Christ referred to the real juice of the grape when he said that we should drink new wine in our Father's kingdom, but not the intoxicating stuff of this world's brewing. I do not say it is so; but I have as much right for thinking it is so as you have for thinking the other way. At any rate, it will be a glorious banquet. Hark! the chariots rumbling in the distance. I really believe the guests are coming now. The gates swing open, the guests dismount, the palace is filling, and all the chalices, flashing with pearl and amethyst and carbuncle, are lifted to the lips of the myriad banqueters, while standing in robes of snowy white they drink to the honor of our glorious King.

"Oh," you say, "that is too grand a place for you and me." No, it is not. If a spider, according to the text, could crawl up on the wall of Solomon's palace, shall not our poor souls, through the blood of Christ, mount up from the depths of their sin and shame, and finally reach the palace of the eternal King? "Where sin abounded, grace shall much more abound, that whereas sin reigned unto death, even so may grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." One flash of that coming glory obliterates the sepulcher.

Years ago, with lanterns and torches and a guide, we went down in the Mammoth cave of Kentucky. You may walk fourteen miles and see no sunlight. It is a stupendous place. Some places the roof of the cave is a hundred feet high. The grottoes filled with weird echoes; cascades falling from invisible height to invisible depth. Stalagmites rising up from the floor of the cave; salactites descending from the roof of the cave, joining each other and making pillars of the Almighty's sculpturing. There are rosettes of amethyst in halls of gypsum. As the guide carries his lantern ahead of you, the shadows have an appearance supernatural and spectral. The darkness is fearful.

Two people, getting lost from their guide only for a few hours, years ago, were demented, and for years sat in their insanity. You feel like holding your breath as you walk across the bridges that seem to span the bottomless abyss. The guide throws his calcium light down into the caverns, and the light rolls and tosses from rock to rock and from depth to depth, making at every plunge a new revelation of the awful power that could have made such a place as that. A sense of suffocation comes upon you as you think that you are two hundred and fifty feet in a straight line from the summit surface of the earth.

The guide after awhile takes you into what is called the "star chamber;" and then he says to you, "Sit here;" and then he takes the lantern and goes down under the rocks, and it gets darker and darker until the night is so thick that the hand an inch from the eye is unobservable. And then, by kindling one of the lanterns and placing it in a cleft of the rock there, is a reflection cast on the dome of the cave, and there are stars coming out in constellations—a brilliant night heavens—and you involuntarily exclaim, "Beautiful! beautiful!"

Then he takes the lantern down in other depths of the cavern and wanders on and wanders off until he comes up from behind the rocks gradually, and it seems like the dawn of the morning and it gets brighter and brighter. The guide is a skilled ventriloquist, and he imitates the voices of the morning, and soon the gloom is all gone and you stand congratulating yourself over the wonderful spectacle.

Well, there are a great many people who look down into the grave as a great cavern. They think it is a thousand miles subterraneous, and all the echoes seem to be the voices of despair, and the cascades seem to be the falling tears that always fall, and the gloom of earth seems coming up in stalagmite, and the gloom of the eternal world seems descending in the stalactite, making pillars of indescribable horror. The grave is no such place as that to me, thank God! Our divine guide takes us down into the great caverns, and we have the lamp to our feet and the light to our path, and all the echoes in the rifts of the rock are anthems, and all the falling waters are fountains of salvation, and after awhile we look up, and behold! the cavern of the tomb has become a King's star chamber.

And while we are looking at the pomp of it an everlasting morning begins to rise, and all the tears of earth crystallize into stalagmite, rising up in a pillar on the one side, and all the glories of heaven seem to be descending in a stalactite, making a pillar on the other side, and you push against the gate that swings between the two pillars, and as that gate flashes open you find it as one of the twelve gates which are twelve pearls. Blessed be God that through this Gospel the mammoth cave of the sepulcher has become the illumined star chamber of the King! Oh, the palaces! the eternal palaces! the King's palaces!

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