

TRIALS OF LIFE.

Dr. Talmage Discourses on Battling for Salvation.

The Joys and Sorrows of Life—The Happiness of a Believer in the Heavenly World—Promises for the Weary.

In a recent sermon at Brooklyn Rev. T. De Witt Talmage took for his subject: "The March Homeward," and his text was from 1 Samuel xxx. 8: "Pursue, for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all."

There is intense excitement in the village of Ziklag. David and his men are holding good-bye to their families and are off for the wars. In that little village of Ziklag the defenseless ones will be safe until the warriors, flushed with victory, come home. But will the defenseless ones be safe? The soft arms of children are around the necks of the bronzed warriors until they shake themselves free and start, and handkerchiefs and flags are waved and kisses thrown until the armed men vanish beyond the hills. David and his men soon get through with their campaigns and start homeward. Every night on their way home, no soldier does the soldier put his head on the knapsack than in his dream he hears the weeping of the wife and the shout of the child. O, what long stories they will have to tell their families of how they dodged the battle-axe, and then will roll up their sleeves and show the half-healed wound.

With glad, quick step they march on, David and his men, for they are marching home. Now they come up to the last hill which overlooks Ziklag, and they expect in a moment to see the dwelling places of their loved ones. They look, and as they look their cheeks turn pale, and their lip quivers, and their hand involuntarily comes down on the hilt of the sword. "Where is Ziklag? Where are our homes?" they cry. Alas! the smiling smoke above the hills tells the tragedy. The Amalekites have come down and consumed the village and carried the mothers and the wives and the children of David and his men into captivity. The sorrowful sobs stand for a few minutes, then they turn their backs to the scene, and they look at each other, and they burst into uncontrollable weeping; for when a strong warrior weeps the grief is appalling. It seems as if the emotion might tear them to pieces. They "weep until they are hoarse," says the poet, "and weep." But soon their sorrow turns into rage, and David, as if his sword high in air, cries: "Pursue, for thou shalt overtake them, and without fail recover all." Now the march becomes a "double-quick." Two hundred of David's men stop by the brook Besor, faint with fatigue and grief. They cannot go a step farther. They are left there. But the other 600 men under David, with a sort of pantner step, march on in sorrow and in rage. They find by the side of the road a half-dead man, and they recognize him as the man who had told the whole story. He says: "You do they want, the captives and the captives," pointing in the direction. Forward, ye 600 brave men of fire.

Very soon David and his enraged companions come upon the Amalekites and children and mothers and under Amalekites guard. Here are the officers of the Amalekites army holding a banquet. The cups are full, the music is roused, the dance begins. The Amalekites are laughing and cheer and cheer over their victory. But, without note of battle or warning of trumpet, David and his 600 men burst upon the scene, suddenly as Robert Bruce hurled his Scotsmen upon the revelers at Bannockburn. David and his men stop by the brook Besor, faint with fatigue and grief. They cannot go a step farther. They are left there. But the other 600 men under David, with a sort of pantner step, march on in sorrow and in rage. They find by the side of the road a half-dead man, and they recognize him as the man who had told the whole story. He says: "You do they want, the captives and the captives," pointing in the direction. Forward, ye 600 brave men of fire.

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biated souls. You go about weeping amidst the desolation of your once happy home, thinking of the bright eyes closed, the noble heart stopped, and the gentle hand folded, and you weep until you have no more power to weep. Ziklag in ashes!

A gentleman went to a friend of mine in the city of Washington and asked that through him he might get a consular passport for his friend. My friend said to him: "What do you want to go away from your beautiful home, into a foreign port?" "O," he replied, "my home is gone! My six children are dead! I must get away. Sir, I can't stand it in this country any longer." Ziklag in ashes!

Why these long shadows of bereavement across this audience? Why is it that in almost every assemblage black is the dominant color of the apparel? Is it because you do not like saffron or brown or violet? O, no! You say: "The world is bright to us as it once was; and there is still feet, and of loved ones gone, and still feet, and of loved ones gone, and when you look over the hills, expecting only beauty and loveliness, you find only devastation and woe. Ziklag in ashes!"

In Ulster County, N. Y., the village church was decorated until the fragrance of the flowers was almost bewildering. The maidens of the village had emptied the place of flowers upon one marriage altar. One of their own number was affianced to a minister of Christ, who had come to take her to his home. With hands joined, amidst a congratulatory audience, the vows were taken. In three days from that time one of those who stood at the altar exchanged earth for Heaven. The wedding march broke down into the funeral dirge. There were not enough flowers to decorate the bier, because they had all been taken for the bridal hour. The dead minister of Christ is brought to another village. He had gone from them less than a week before in his strength; now he comes home lifeless. The whole church is in mourning. The solemn procession moved around to look upon the still face that once had beamed with messages of salvation. Little children were lifted up to look at him. And some of those whom he had comforted in days of sorrow, when they passed the funeral home, were now in the presence of their weeping. Another village emptied of its flowers—some of them put in the shape of a cross to symbolize his hopes put in the shape of a crown to symbolize his triumph. A bright light shined out from the open door of a sepulchre. Ziklag in ashes!

I preach this sermon to-day, because I want to rally you as David rallied his men, for the recovery of the loved and the lost. I want not only to win Heaven, but I want to win the world to go along with me. I feel that somehow I have a responsibility for your arriving at that great city. I have on our Sabbath-school other inducements. I mean to-day, for the sake of variety, hoping to reach your hearts, to try another kind of inducement. Do you really want to join the companionship of your loved ones who have gone? Are you anxious to join them as David and his men were, in the name of God, to say that you may, and to tell you how.

I remark, in the first place, if you want to join the companionship of your loved ones who have gone, you must travel the same way they went. No sooner had the half-dead Egyptian been resuscitated than he pointed the way, and David and his men followed in Christ. The other Christian friends have gone into another country, and if we want to reach their companionship we must take the same road. They repented; we must repent. They prayed; we must pray. They trusted in Christ; we must trust in Christ. They led a religious life; we must live a religious life. They were in some things like ourselves. I know now that they are gone, there is a halo around their names, but they had their faults. They said and did things which we never have said or done. They were sometimes rebellious, sometimes cast down. They were far from being perfect. So I suppose that when we have gone, some things in us that are now only tolerable may be almost intolerable. But as they were like us in deficiencies, we ought to be like them in taking a supernatural Christ to make up for the deficits. Had it not been for Jesus, they would have all perished; but Christ confronted them, and said: "I am the way," and they took it.

I have also to say to you that the path that those captives took was a troubled path, and that David and his men had to go over the same difficult way. While these captives were being taken off they said: "How hungry we are, and so I beg you to be so hungry." But the men who had charge of them said: "Stop this crying. Go on!" David and his men also found it a hard way. They had to travel it. Our friends have gone into glory, and it is not for us to follow in their footsteps, but to enter into the kingdom. How our loved ones used to have to struggle how their old hearts ached; how sometimes they had a burden for bread! In our childhood we wondered why they were so many "wondering" about the "wondering" feet on their faces were the marks of the black raven of trouble. Did you never hear of old people, seated by the evening stand, talk over their early trials, the hardships, the accidents, the trials, the disappointments, the empty hour barred when there were so many hungry ones to feed, the sickness almost unto death, where the next dose of morphine decided whether they were to live or to die, and an unbrotherly ghostly attendant and an unbrotherly ghostly attendant? It was trouble that washed the luster from their eyes with the rain of tears until they needed spectacles. It was trouble that made the cane a necessity for their journey. Do you never remember seeing your old father sitting on some rainy day, looking out of the window, her elbow on the window-sill, her hand to her brow—looking out, not seeing the falling shower at all, you well know she was looking into the distant past, where the apron came up to her eyes, because the memory was too much for her?

"O! the best, unbidden tear, Stealing down the furrowed cheek, Dismissing the accident of pain, They shall feel distress no more. Never weep again."

quer us. David will either stay the Amalekites or the Amalekites will stay David. And yet it is not the fort to be taken worth all the pain, all the peril, all the bereavement.

Look! who are they on the bright hills of Haver-yonder? There they are, those who sat at your table, the chair now vacant. There they are, those whom you rocked in infancy in the cradle, or hushed to sleep in your arms. There they are, those whose life your life was bound up. There they are, their brow more radiant than ever before you saw it, their lips waiting for the kiss of heavenly greeting, their cheek rosy with the health of eternal summer, their hands beckoning you up the steep, their feet bounding with the mirth of Heaven. The pallor of their past sickness gone out of their face never more to be sick, never more to cough, never more to limp, never more to be old, never more to weep. They are watching from those heights, through Christ you can see that fort, and whether you will rush in upon them—victors. They know that upon this battle depends whether you will ever join their society. Up! Strike harder! Charge more bravely! Remember that every inch you gain puts you so much further on toward that heavenly reunion.

If this morning while I speak you could hear the cannonade of a foreign navy, coming through the "Narrows" to despoil our city, and if they really should succeed in carrying off our families away from you, how long would you take before you resolved to go after them? Every weapon, whether fresh from Springfield or old and rusty in the garret, would be brought out, and we would urge on, and coming in front of the foe, we would lead them, and then look at the families, and the cry would be: "Victory or death!" and when the ammunition was gone, we would take the bayonet on the point of the bayonet or under the breech of the gun. If you would make such a struggle for the getting back of our dear friends, will you not make as much struggle for the gaining of the eternal companionship of your heavenly friends?

O, yes, we must join them. We must sit in their holy society. We must celebrate with them the same triumph. Let it never be told on earth or in Heaven that David and his men pushed out with heavier hearts for the getting back of their earthly friends for a few years on earth than we do for our departed friends. Let it be that all this implies that our departed Christian friends are alive. Why, had you any idea they were dead? They have only moved. If you should go on May 2 to a house where one of your friends lived, and find him gone, you would not think that he was dead. You would inquire next door where he had moved to. Our departed Christian friends have only taken another house. The secret is that they are richer now than they once were and can afford a larger residence. They are not in physical tortures; they now drink from the King's chalice. "Joseph is yet alive," and Jacob will go up and see him. Living, are they? Why, if a man can live in this damp dark dungeon of earth's captivity, how can you live in the bright atmosphere of the mountains of Heaven? O, yes, they are living!

Do you think that Paul is so near dead now as he was when he was living in the Roman dungeon? Do you think that Frederick Robertson is so near dead as he was when he was in the prison? Do you think that the man who is now in the bottom of a chair, because he could find ease in no other position? Do you think that Robert Hall is so near dead as he was when he was in physical tortures? No. Death gave them the few black drops that cured them. That is all death does to a Christian—cures him. I know that what I have said implies that they are living. But as they were like us in deficiencies, we ought to be like them in taking a supernatural Christ to make up for the deficits. Had it not been for Jesus, they would have all perished; but Christ confronted them, and said: "I am the way," and they took it.

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"Who are these under the altar?" the question was asked, and the response came: "They are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Our friends went by a path of tears into glory. Be not surprised if we have to travel the same path as they.

YOUNG LADIES' LETTERS. A Glance at One of the Writers in All the Agency of Composition.

It is generally admitted that women are better letter-writers than men. Writing a letter is thought to cost them very little trouble; they are supposed to drop into a chair before a desk, dip a pen in the ink-stand, and scribble off any number of bright, chatty pages almost as readily as they could relate the same news by word of mouth.

In many cases this is no doubt true. A young lady writing to her intimate friend seldom experiences any difficulty in composition. She hastily dashes her epistle "Aprilsomething," or simply "Saturday" or "eight p. m.," just before the party," and then dashes at once into her narrative, and scarcely stops for breath until she has finished four sheets, and crossed the last page.

She then reads it rapidly over, dots a few i's, sprinkles in several extra exclamations points, draws two or three more very black lines under her most explosive adjectives, folds it neatly, and puts it into the envelope. She is about to seal it, but pauses a moment before this decisive act to pull it out again, and add another half-sheet filled with postscripts. Then she returns it to the envelope, seals it, adds a piece of omitted information in very fine writing on the wrong side of the envelope, and the task is accomplished!

Her demeanor, however, when writing a formal note or a business letter is very different. She seats herself with a sigh and a countenance expressive of misery. She dips her pen into the ink a great many times before putting it to paper; she gazes thoughtfully at the ceiling, and bites the tip of the penholder. She gives herself a respite to find a blotter, and then another to go in search of postage stamps.

She looks at the morning paper to get the date, and after she has written it down, is seized with the misgiving that perhaps it was yesterday's paper she looked at, and goes back to make sure. She writes nearly a page, and then suddenly decides that the big D of dear is written dreadfully, and that she can't possibly let it go like that. She begins again.

Then she thinks she should have said "My dear" instead of just "Dear." She succeeds, although she refers twice to the dictionary and once to a book of etiquette, before she has finally signed and sealed and laid the troublesome missive away for the post-office.

She says, when she talks on the subject of letter-writing, that she is a very poor hand at it—except, of course, when she writes to people she likes, and who like her; and that is so easy it doesn't count.—London Tid Bits.

COREA'S GOVERNMENT. An Oriental King Who Is as Intelligent as He Is Good-Looking.

But let me tell you how the King looked. He is a man that would attract attention anywhere; not over five feet high. He weighs, perhaps, not over 125 pounds, and his bright, black almond eyes sparkle with intelligence. He has like most Koreans, a very thin mustache and straggling chin whiskers of black. He has a pleasant smile, good, well-kept features, and his face is oval and the color of a rich Jersey cream. His hands are very small and delicate, and he has no pompous airs about him. His hair was combed in a Korean top-knot, and upon his head was the royal cap of dark blue color. This was of open work, and I did not notice that it had the butterfly flaps of his ministers. His costume was a gown of brilliant red or scarlet satin, which came up close around the neck, and which bore upon the breast a square of embroidery, in gold, of the royal dragon. He stood easily during the talk, and he did not look to be over thirty-two years of age, though I am told he is thirty-six. He talked in a simple manner, in one of the sweetest voices I have ever heard. His tones were low but impressive, and I could see from the expressions which came and went across his countenance, and from the answers which he made, that he indeed was the King of Corea.

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