

LESSONS OF THE SNOW.

A Midwinter Discourse by Rev. T. DeWitt Talbot.

A Sermon That is Greatly Marginalized—Great Comfort in Small Things—Righteousness Often Blameless—The Only Part-

In a late sermon at Brooklyn Rev. T. DeWitt Talbot took his text from Job xxxviii. 22: "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?"

Grossly maligned in the season of winter. The spring and summer and autumn have had many admirers, but winter, both had more enemies than friends. Yet without winter the human race would be insane and effeminate.

You might speak of the winter as the mother of temperance; I take it as the father of a whole family of physical, mental and spiritual energies. At this season of the year the cold is so familiar with the snow, these frosty showers, the falling blossoms of the sky, those white angels of the atmosphere, I turn over the leaves of my Bible and

through most of it was written in a time when snow seldom or never fell and which were so full of beautiful conceptions. Though the writers may seldom or never have felt the cold touch of the snowflake on their cheek, they had in sight two mountains, the tops of which were suggestive.

The first time we find a deep fall of snow in the Bible is where Samuel describes a fight between Benaiiah and a lion in a pit, and though the snow may have crimsoned under the wounds of both man and brute, the shaggy monster rolled over dead and the giant was victor. But the snow is not fully recognized in the Bible until God interrogates Job, the scientist, concerning its wonders, saying: "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?"

I rather think that Job may have examined the snowflake with a microscope; for, although it is supposed that the microscope was invented long after Job's time, there had been wonders of glass long before the microscope and the scope of later days were thought of. Whether through the microscope or without it, I can not say, but I am sure that Job somehow went through the galleries of the snowflake and counted its pillars and found wonders, raptures, mysteries, theologies, majestic infinitesimals, reaching up and down its corridors, as a result of the question which the Lord had asked him: "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?"

After a fresh fall of snow, in one walk you crush under your feet Tuilleries, Windsor Castle, St. Peter's, St. Mark's Cathedral, Alhambra and Sydenham palaces innumerable. I know it depends much on our own condition which impression these flying meteors of the snow make.

And now I propose to make spiritual and everlasting profit, if you will accept my guidance, to take you through some of these wonders of crystallization. And notice first God in the lilies. I take up the snow in my hand and see the corners of each petal as if paving these crystal pavements. The telescope is grand, but I must confess that I am quite as much interested in the microscope. The one reveals the universe above us; the other just as much a universe beneath us. I want and I want especially is a God in lilies. If we were seraphic or archangelic in our natures we would want to study God in the great; but such small, weak, short lived beings as you and I are, want to study God in the little.

When I see the Maker of the universe giving Himself to the architecture of a snowflake and making its shafts, its domes, its curves, its walls, its irradiations so perfect, I conclude He will look after our insignificant affairs. And if we are of more value than a sparrow, most certainly we are of more value than an inanimate snowflake. So the Bible would chiefly impress us with God in the lilies. It does not say, "Consider the clouds," but it says, "Behold the lilies." It does not say, "Behold the tempests," but, "Behold the fowls," and it applauds a cup of cold water, and the widow's two mites, and says the hairs of your head are numbered. Do not fear, we are not going to do anything to you in the crowd. Do not think that because you estimate yourself as only one snowflake among a three days' January snowstorm that you will be forgotten. The birth and drop of chilled vapor is the creation and demitition of a planet. Nothing is big to God and nothing is small.

What a comfort that he is a God in lilies. The Emperor of all the Russias would spread before him his vast dominions, and he could not find Great Britain on the map, and he called in his secretary and said: "Where is Great Britain that I hear so much about?" "It is under your thumb," said the secretary, and the Emperor raised his hand from the map and saw the country he was looking for. And it is high time that we find this mighty realm of God close by and under our own little finger. To drop our own out of His memory would be to resign His omnipotence. To refuse His protection would be to abdicate His omnipotence. When you tell me He is the God of Jupiter, and the God of Mercury, and the God of Saturn, you tell me something so vast that I can not comprehend it. But if you tell me He is the God of the snowflake you tell me something I can hold and measure and realize. Thus the smallest snowflake contains a jewel case of comfort. Here is an open treasure of God's mercy. Here is one of the treasures of the snow. Take it for your present and everlasting comfort.

Behold, also, in the snow the treasure of accumulated power. During a snow storm let an apostle of the Kingdom of God weigh most delicate quantities, hold his weighing scales out of the window and let one flake fall on the surface of the scales and it will not even make it tremble. When you want to express extreme frailty of weight you say: "Light as a feather," but a snowflake is much lighter. It is just twenty-four times lighter than water. And yet the accumulation of these flakes broke down, a few days ago, in sight of my house, six telegraph wires, made helpless police and fire departments, and halted rail trains with two thundering locomotives. We have already learned so much of the power of electricity that we have become so used to it that we do not think of it. In many cases a touch has been death. But, a few days ago, the snow put its hand on most of these wires and tore them down as though they were cobwebs.

The snow puts its finger on the lip of cities that are talking with each other and they went into silence, uttering not a word. The snow is mightier than the lightning. In March, 1888, the snow stopped America. It said to Brooklyn: "Stay home!" To New York: "Stay home!" To Philadelphia: "Stay home!" To Washington: "Stay home!" To Richmond: "Stay home!" It put into a white sepulchre most of this Nation. Commerce, whose wheels stopped before, stopped there. What was the matter, stopped there? It was the power of the snow. On the top of the Apennines one flake falls, and others fall, and they pile up, and they make a mountain of snow on the top of a mountain of snow, and one day a great wind, or even a voice,

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