

THE WORLD TO BE SAVED

DR. TALMAGE SAYS IT CAN BE DONE IN TEN YEARS.

A Fitting Close to One of the Grandest Centuries in the History of the World.

Brooklyn, April 14.—At the Tabernacle today, after expounding passages descriptive of the world as it shall be when gospelized, Dr. Talmage gave out the hymn:

People and realms of every tongue Dwell on his love with sweetest song. Text, Revelation xix, 4: "Amen: Alleluia!"

The Nineteenth century is departing. After it has taken a few more steps, if each year be a step, it will be gone into the eternities. In a short time we shall be in the last decade of this century, which fact makes the solemnest book outside the Bible, the almanac, and the most suggestive and the most tremendous piece of machinery in all the earth, the clock. The last decade of this century upon which we shall soon enter will be the grandest, mightiest and most decisive decade in all the chronologies. I am glad it is not to come immediately, for we need it as a new baptism of the Holy Ghost to prepare for it. That last ten years of the Nineteenth century, may we all live to see them! Does any one say that this division of time is arbitrary? Oh, no, in other ages the divisions of time may have been arbitrary, but our years date from Christ. Does any one say that the grouping of ten together is an arrangement arbitrary? Oh, no, next to the figure seven, ten is with God a favorite number. Abraham dwelt ten years in Canaan. Ten righteous men would have saved Sodom. In the ancient tabernacle were ten curtains, their pillars ten and their sockets ten. In the ancient temple were ten lavers and ten candlesticks and ten tables and a molten sea of ten cubits. And the commandments written on the granite of Mount Sinai were ten, and the kingdom of God was fifteen hundred years ago. And the reward of the greatly faithful is that they shall reign over ten cities, and in the effort to take the census of the New Jerusalem the number ten swings around the thousands, crying "ten thousand times ten thousand." So I come to look toward the closing ten years of the Nineteenth century with an intensity of interest I can hardly describe.

I have also noticed that the favorite time in many of the centuries for great events was the closing fragment of the century. In America to be discovered, it must be in the last decade of the Fifteenth century, namely 1492. Was free constitutional government to be well established in America, the last years of the Eighteenth century must achieve it. Were three cities to be submerged by one pitch of scoria, Herculaneum and Strabian and Pompeii in the latter part of the first century must go under. The Fourth century closed with the most agitating ecclesiastical war of history, Urban the Sixth against Clement the Seventh. The Great Schism was in the Ninth century and Edward Ironsides the Eleventh century with his resounding deeds. The Sixteenth century closed with the establishment of religious independence in the United Netherlands. Aye, almost every century has had its peroration of towering achievements. As the closing years of the centuries seem a favorite time for great scenes of emancipation or disaster, and as the number ten seems a favorite number in the Scriptures written by divine direction, and as we are soon to enter upon the last ten years of the Nineteenth century, what does the world propose? What does the church of Christ propose? What do reformers propose? I know not; but now in the presence of this consecrated assembly I propose that we make ready, get all our batteries planted and all our plans well laid in what remains of this decade, and then in the last decade of the Nineteenth century march up and take this round world for God.

When I say mean the five hundred million Christians now alive. But, as many of them will not have enough heart for the work, let us copy Gideon, and as he had thirty-two thousand men in his army to fight the Midianites, but many of them were not made of the right stuff, and he promulgated a military order saying "whoever is fearful and afraid let him return and depart early from Gideon," and twenty-two thousand were afraid of getting hurt and went home and only ten thousand were left, and God told them that even this reduced number was too large a number, for they might think they had triumphed independent of divine help, and so the number must be still further reduced and only those should be kept in the ranks who in passing the river should be so in haste for victory over their enemies that, though very thirsty, they would without stopping a second just scoop up the water in the palm of their right hand and scoop up the water in the palm of their left hand, and only three hundred men did that, and those three hundred men with the battle about, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," scattered the Midianites like leaves in an equinox, so out of the five hundred million nominal Christians of today let all unbelievers and cowards go home and get out of the way. And suppose we have only four hundred million left, suppose only two hundred million left, suppose only one hundred million left, yes, suppose we only have fifty million left, with them we will undertake the divine crusade, and each one just scooping up a palm full of the river of God's mercy in one hand and a palm full of the river of God's strength in the other, let us with the cry, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," the sword of the Lord and of John Knox, the sword of the Lord and of Matthew Simpson, the sword of the Lord and of Bishop Melvaine, the sword of the Lord and of Adoniram Judson, the sword of the Lord and of Martin Luther, go into the last decade of the Nineteenth century.

NOTHING IMPRACTICABLE IN THE PROPOSITION. Is it audacious for me to propose it? Oh, no, a captive servant in the kitchen of Haman told the commander-in-chief where he could get rid of the blotches of his awful leprosy and his complexion became fair as a babe. And didn't Christ in order to take the ophthalmia out of the eyes of the blind man use a mixture of spittle and dust? And who showed blucher a short cut for his army so that instead of taking the regular road by which he would have come up too late, he came up in time to save Waterloo and Europe? Was it not an unknown lad who perhaps could not write his own name? And so I, "who am less than the least of all saints," propose a short cut to victory, and am willing to be the expectation on some blind eye and tell some of the brigadier generals of the Lord of hosts how this leprosed world may in the final decade of the Nineteenth century have its flesh come again as the flesh of a little child.

Is there anything in prophecy to hinder this speedy consummation? No. Some one begins to quote from Daniel about "times, times and a half time," and that from Revelation the seven trumpets, blowing them all at once in my ear. But with utmost reverence I take up all the prophecies and hold them toward heaven and say God never has and never will stop consecrated effort and holy

determination and magnificent resolve, and that if the church of God will rise up to its full work it can make Daniel's time twenty years and his half time ten years. Neither Isaiah, nor Ezekiel, nor Micah, nor Malachi, nor Jeremiah, nor any of the major or minor prophets will hinder us a second. Suppose the Bible had announced the millennium to begin the year 3889, that would be no hindrance. In one sense God never changes his mind, being the same yesterday, today and forever. But in another sense he does change his mind, and times without number, every day, and that is when his people pray. Didn't he change his mind about Nineveh? By God's command Jonah, at the top of his voice, while standing on the steps of the merchants' exchange and the palatial residences of that city, cried out, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown." Was it overthrown in forty days? No. The people gave up their sins and cried for mercy, and though Jonah got mad because his whole course of sermons had been spoiled and went into a disgraceful pouting, we have the record so sublime, I cannot read it without feeling a nervous chill running through me. "God saw their works that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them, and he did it not." God is a father, and some of us know what that means, and some time when we have promised chastisement and the child desisted, the little darling has put her arms around our neck and expressed such sorrow and such promises of doing better that her tears landed on the lips of our kiss, and we held her a half hour after on our knee and would as soon think of slapping an angel in the face as of even striking her with the weight of our little finger. God is a father, and while he has promised this world castings, though they were to be for a thousand years or five thousand years he would, if the world repented, substitute benediction and divine cares. God changed his mind about Sodom six times. He had determined on its destruction. Abraham asked him if he would not spare it if fifty righteous people were found there; and, narrowing down the number, if forty-five people were found there; if forty people; if thirty people; if twenty people; if ten people were found there. And each of the six times the Lord answered, Yes. Oh, why didn't Abraham go on just two steps further and say if five be found there, if one be found there, for then for the sake of Lot, its one good citizen, I think Sodom would have been spared. Eight times does the Bible say that God repented when he had promised punishments and withheld the stroke. Was it a slip of Paul's pen when he spoke of God's cutting short the work in "righteousness"? No, Paul's pen never slipped. There is nothing in the way of prophecy to hinder the crusade I have proposed for the last decade of the Nineteenth century.

PROCRUSTATION IS THE THIEF OF TIME. The whole trouble is that we put off the completion of the world's redemption to such long and indefinite distances. The old proverb that "what is everybody's business is nobody's business," might be changed a little and be made truthfully to say what is the Gospel business of all the ages is the Gospel business of no age. We are so constituted we think up much enthusiasm about something five hundred years from now or a thousand years from now. We are fighting at too long a range. That gun called the "Swamp Angel" was a nuisance. It shot six miles, but it hardly ever hit anything. It did its chief destructive work when it burst and killed those who were setting it off. Short range is the effective kind of work, whether it be for worldly or religious purpose. Some man with his eyes half shut drones out to me the Bible quotation: "A thousand years are as one day;" that is, ten centuries are not long for the Lord. But why do you not quote the previous sentence which says that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years? That is, he could do the work of ten centuries in twenty-four hours. The mightiest obstacle to Christian work is the impression that the world's evangelization is away off. And we take the telescope and look on and on through centuries until we see two objects near each other, and we strain our vision and guess what they are, and we call great conventions to guess what they are, and we get down our heads and theological works and balance our telescopes on the lid and look and look and finally conclude that they are two beasts that we see and the one has hair and the other has wool, and we guess it must be the lion and the lamb lying down together. In that great cradle of postponement and somnolence we rock the church as though it were an impatient child and say, "Hush, my dear, don't be impatient! Don't get excited by revivals! Don't cry! Your Father's coming! Don't get uneasy! He will be here in two or three or ten or twenty thousand years." And we act as though we thought that when Macaulay's famous New Zealander in the far distance is seated on a broken arch of London bridge sketching the ruins of St. Paul's his grandchild might break in and jolt his pencil asking him if he thought the millennium ever would appear. Men and women of the eternal child, Sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty! We may have it start in the decade that is soon to commence, and it will be done if we can persuade the people between now and then to get ready for the work.

What makes me think it can be done? First, because God is ready. He needs no long persuasion to do his work, for if he is not willing that any should perish, he is not willing that any of the people of the next decade shall perish; and the whole Bible is a chime of bells ringing out "Come, come, come," and you need not go round the earth to find out how much he wants the world to come, but just to walk around one stripped and bare and leafless tree with two branches notched but horizontal. But he is waiting, as he said he would, for the co-operation of the church. When we are ready God is ready. And he certainly has all the weapons ready to capture this world for the truth, all the weapons of kindness or devastation. On the one hand, the Gospel and sunshine and power to orchardize and gardenize the earth and fountains swinging in rainbow color and Chateaufortian verdure and armies poured out of the vials of heaven, while on the other hand he has the weaponry of devastation, thunderbolt and conflagration and forces planetary, solar, lunar, stellar or meteoric, that with loose rein thrown on the neck for a second would leave constellations and galaxies so many split and shivered wheels on the boulevards of heaven. And that God is on our side, all on our side. Blessed be his glorious name! Blessed was the hour when through Jesus Christ my sinful soul made peace with him!

THERE IS NOTHING IMPRACTICABLE ABOUT IT. If you continue to ask me why I think that the world can be saved in the final decade of the Nineteenth century, I reply, because it is not a great undertaking, considering the number of workers that will go at it, if once persuaded it can be done. We have fifty-five hundred million of workers down to four hundred million and three hundred million and two hundred million and one hundred million and to fifty million. I went to work to cipher out how many souls that number could bring to God in ten years, if each one brought a soul every year, and if each soul so brought should bring another each succeeding year. I found out, aided by a professor in mathematics, that we did not need anything like such a number of workers

enlisted. You see it is simply a question of mathematics and in geometrical progression. Then I gave to the learned professor this problem: How many persons would it require to start with, if each one brought a soul into the kingdom each year for ten years, and each one brought another each succeeding year in order to have fourteen hundred million people saved, or the population of the earth at present? His answer was two million seven hundred and fifty-four thousand three hundred and seventy-five workers. So you see that when I sifted the five hundred million nominal Christians of the earth down to fifty million and stopped there, I retained for this work forty-seven million people too many. There it is in glorious mathematics, quod erat demonstrandum. Do you tell me that God does not care for mathematics? Then you have never seen the Giants' Causeway, where God shows his regard for the hexagonal in whole ranges of rocky columns with six sides and six angles. Then you have not studied the geometry of a bee's honeycomb with six sides and six angles. Then you have not noticed what regard God has for the square, the altar of the ancient tabernacle four square, the breastplate four square, the court of the temple in Ezekiel's vision four square, the New Jerusalem laid out four square. Or you have not noticed his regard for the circle by making it his throne, "sitting on the circle of the earth," and fashioning sun and moon and stars in a circle and sending our planetary system around other systems in a circle and the whole universe sweeping around the throne of God in a circle. And as to his regard for mathematical numbers, he makes the fourth book in his Bible the Book of Numbers, and numbers the hosts of Israel and numbers the troops of Sennacherib and numbers Solomon's horses in the forest, and numbers the spearmen and numbers the footmen and numbers the converts at Pentecost and numbers the chariots of God rolling down the steps of heaven. So I have a right to enlist mathematics for the demonstration of the easy possibility of bringing the whole world to God in the coming decade by simple process of solicitation, each one only having to bring one year; although I want to take in forty thousand, and I know men now alive who I think by pen or voice or both, directly or indirectly, will take hundreds of thousands each. So you see that that will discharge some of the 2,754,375 from the necessity of taking any.

Another reason why I know it can be done is that we may divide the work up among the denominations. God does not ask any one denomination to do the work or any dozen denominations. The work can be divided and is being divided up, not geographically, but according to the temperaments of the human family. We cannot say to one denomination, You take Persia, and another, You take China, and another, You take India, because there are all styles of temperaments in all nations. And some denominations are especially adapted to work with people of sanguine temperament or phlegmatic temperament or choleric temperament or bilious temperament or nervous temperament or lymphatic temperament. The Episcopal church will do its most effective work with those who by taste prefer the stately and ritualistic. The Methodist church will do its best work among the emotional and demonstrative. The Presbyterian church will do its best work among those who like strong doctrine and the stately service softened by the emotional. So each denomination will have certain kinds of people whom it will especially affect. So let the work be divided up. There are seven hundred and fifty thousand Christians of the Presbyterian church, north, and other hundreds of thousands in the Presbyterian church, south, and all foreign Presbyterians, more especially Scotch, English and Irish, making, I guess, about two million Presbyterians. The Methodist church is still larger; the church of England on both sides the sea still larger; and many other denominations as much, if not more, consecrated than any I have mentioned. Divide up the world's evangelization among these denominations after they are persuaded it can be done before the Nineteenth century is dead, and the last Hotentot, the last Turk, the last Japanese, the last American, the last European, the last Asiatic, the last African will see the salvation of God before he sees the opening gate of the Twentieth century. EVERYTHING IS IN CONDITION FOR THE CONSUMMATION.

Again, I feel the whole world can be saved in the time specified, because we have all manner of machinery requisite. It is not as though we had to build the printing press; they are all built and running day and night, those printing religious papers (925 of those religious papers in this country), those printing religious tracts and those printing religious books. And thousands of printing presses now in the service of the devil could be brought and set to work in the service of God. Why was the printing press invented? To turn out billheads and circulars of patent medicines and tell the news which in three weeks will be of no importance? From the old time Franklin printing press on up to the Lord Stanhope's press and the Washington press and the Victory press to Hoe's perfecting printing press that machine has been improving for its best work and its final work, namely, the salvation of the world. Great joy which shall be to all people. We have the presses, or can have them, before the first of January when the new decade is to begin, enough to put a Bible in the hand of every son and daughter of Adam and Eve now living, and if such person cannot read we can have a colporteur, an evangelist or a missionary to read it to him or her.

But this brings me to the adjoining thought, namely, we have the money to do the work. I mean the fifty million of Christians now alive. Aye, the two million seven hundred and fifty-four thousand Christians, and the dam which is beginning to leak will soon break and there will be rushing floods of hundreds and millions and billions of dollars in holy contribution when you persuade the wealthy men of the kingdom of God that the speedy conversion of the world is a possibility and that Isaiah and Ezekiel and Daniel and John will not stand in the way of it but help it on. I have no sympathy with this bombardment of rich men. We would each one be worth five million dollars if he could, and by hard persuasion perhaps might be induced to take fifteen million. Almost every paper I take up tells of some wealthy man who has endowed a college or built a church or a hospital or a free library, and that thing is going to multiply until the treasury of all our denominations and reformatory organizations will be overwhelmed with munificence if we can persuade our men of wealth that the world's evangelization is possible and that they may live to see it with their own eyes. I have always cherished the idea that when the world is converted we would be allowed to come out on the battlements of heaven and see the bannered procession and the bonfires of victory. But I would like to see the procession closer by and just be permitted myself to throw on a fagot for a bigger bonfire. And if you persuade our men of wealth that there is a possibility for them to join on earth in the universal glee of a redeemed planet, instead of laborious beseeching for funds and arguing and flattering in order to get a contribution for Christian objects, you get a man of wealth will stand in line as at a postoffice window or a railroad ticket office, but in this case waiting

for their turn to make charitable deposit. The Gentiles are not long going to allow themselves to be eclipsed by Mr. Hirsch, the Jew who has just given forty million dollars for schools in France, Germany and Russia. I rejoice that so much of the wealth of the world is coming into the possession of Christian men and women. And although the original church was very poor and its members were fish dealers on the banks of Galilee and had only such stock on hand as they could take in their own net, today in the hands of Christian men and women there is enough money to print Bibles and build churches and support missionaries under God in ten years to save the world.

Again, I think that the world's evangelization can be achieved in the time specified because we have already the theological institutions necessary for this work. We do not have to build them, they are built and they are filled with tens of thousands of young men, and there will be three sets of students who will graduate into the ministry before the close of this century, and once have them understand that instead of preaching thirty or forty years and taking into the kingdom of God a few hundred souls, right before them is the Sedan, is the Armageddon, and these young men, instead of entering the ministry timid and with apologetic air, will feel like David, who came up just as the armies were set in array and he left his carriage and shouted for the battle and cried: "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" and with five gravelstones skillfully flung sent sprawling the bragging tin footer, his mouth into the dust and his heels into the air.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO TO A GREAT CENTURY? My friends, what but such a consummation could be a fit climax to this century! You notice a tendency in history and all about us to a climax. The creation week rising from herbs to fish and from fish to bird and from bird to quadruped and from quadruped to immortal man. The New Testament rising from quiet genealogical table in Matthew to apocalyptic dogology in Revelation. Now we can be an appropriate climax to this century, which has heard the puff of the first steamer and the throb of the first telescope and the click of the first telegraph and the clatter of the first sewing machine, and saw the flash of the first electric light and the revolution of the first steam plow; and the law of storms was written; and the American Bible society and American Tract society were born; and instead of an audience laughing down Dr. Carey for advocating foreign missions, as was done at Northampton in England in the last century, now all denominations vying with each other as to who shall go the furthest and the soonest into the darkest of the New Hebrides; and three hundred thousand souls have been born to God in the South Sea Islands, and Micronesia and Melanesia and Malayan Polynesia have been set in the crown of Christ, and David Livingstone has unveiled Africa and the last bolted gate of barbaric nations has swung wide open to let the Gospel in. What, I ask, with a thousand interrogation points uplifted, can be a fit, an appropriate and sufficient climax except it be a world redeemed!

Yes, I believe it can be done if we get prepared for it, because the whole air and the whole heaven is full of willing help. "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth?" We make an awful mistake if we calculate only on the forces we can see. The mightiest army is in the air. My brethren, so much of selfishness and pride and rivalry and bad motives of all kinds get into our work here that we are hindered. But the mighty souls that have gone up to the flying armies of the sky have left all imperfection behind; and these souls are with us and without a fault and with perfect natures are on our side. They cannot make me believe that after tolling here for long years for the redemption of the world, until from exhaustion some of them fell into their graves, they have ceased their interest in the stupendous conflict now raging, or that they are going to decline their help. Irenaeus Prime! Honored on earth but now glorified in heaven, have you forgotten the work toward which you gave for more than half a century your gracious life, your loving voice and your matchless pen! No! Then come down and help. Alexander Duff! Have you forgotten the millions of India for whose salvation you suffered in Hindoo jungle and thundered on missionary platforms? No! Then come down and help. David Brainard! Have you forgotten the aborigines to whom you preached and for whom you prayed until you could preach and pray no more, lying down, delicious amid the miasmas of the swamp? No! Then come down and help. Moncrieff and Freeman and Campbell! Have you forgotten Lucknow and Cawnpore? No! Then come down and help. I rub out of my eyes the stupidity and unbelief, and I, the servant of these great Elias in the Gospel, see the mountains all round about are full of horses of fire and chariots of fire, and they head this way. Hovered over are we by great clouds of witnesses and helpers! Clouds of apostles in the air led on by Paul! Clouds of martyrs in the air led on by Stephen! Clouds of prophets in the air led on by Isaiah! Clouds of patriarchs in the air led on by Abraham! Clouds of ancient warriors in the air led on by Joshua, and that Bible warrior at whose prayer Astronomy once halted over Aijalon and Gibeon seems now to lift one hand toward the descending sun of this century and the other hand toward the moon of the last decade saying: "Stand thou still till the church of God gets the final victory!"

THE WORLD IS BOUND TO BE SAVED. Then let us take what remains of this decade to get ready for the final decade of the Nineteenth century. You and I may not live to see that decade or may not live to see its close, but that shall not hinder me from declaring the magazine possibility. I confess that the mistake of my life has been, not that I did not work hard—for I could not have worked harder and lived, as God knows and my family know—but that I have not worked under the realization that the salvation of this world was a near by possibility. But whether we see it, the beginning or the closing of that decade is of no importance, if only that decade can get the coronation and then all decades shall kneel before this enthroned decade, and even the gray grown centuries will cast their crowns before it and it will be the most honored decade between the time when the morning stars sang together as the libretto of worlds was opened and the time when the mighty angel, robed in cloud and garlanded in rainbow, shall with one foot on the sea and the other foot on the land ever by him that liveth forever and ever that time shall be no longer. Alleluia! Amen!

The Rice Lily. A lovely flower, called the rice lily, grows thickly in parts of southwestern Georgia. It is extremely sensitive to the light. The blossoms fold up at night, but open in the morning. At night, while the lovely white blossoms are closely enfolded in their purple covering and the flowers are asleep, if a lamp is placed near them they will gradually open and turn towards it. If a strong light is placed on one side of the case containing them, the half of the bouquet that faces the lamp will be unfolded, while the other half that is in the shadow will remain tightly closed.—Detroit Free Press.



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