

ACROSS THE CONTINENT.

DR. TALMAGE TELLS OF HIS JOURNEYS FROM SEA TO SEA.

"America for God," His Theme—This Continent Must Be Thoroughly Dominated by the Christian Religion—How to Spread the Gospel.

BROOKLYN, Sept. 22.—It was a great anthem of praise that went up from the crowded throngs at the Brooklyn Tabernacle this morning, where the Rev. T. De Witt Talmage, D. D., preached as usual. The opening hymn was:

No more let human blood be spilt,
Vain sacrifices for human guilt;
But to each conscience be applied
The blood that flows from Jesus' side.

The subject of the sermon was, "From Ocean to Ocean, or My Transcontinental Journey." Text: Psalms lxxii, 8: "He shall have dominion from sea to sea." The preacher said:

What two seas are referred to? Some might say that the text meant that Christ was to reign over all the land between the Arabian sea and Caspian sea, or between the Red sea and the Mediterranean sea, or between the Black sea and the North sea. No; in such case my text would have named them. It meant from any large body of water on the earth clear across to any other large body of water. And so I have a right to read it: He shall have dominion from the Atlantic sea to the Pacific sea. My theme is, America for God!

THE IMMENSITY OF AMERICA.

First, consider the immensity of this procession. If it were only a small tract of land capable of nothing better than sage brush and with ability only to support prairie dogs, I should not have much enthusiasm in wanting Christ to have it added to his dominion. But its immensity and affluence no one can imagine unless, in immigrant wagon or stage coach or in rail train of the Union Pacific or the Northern Pacific or the Canadian Pacific or the Southern Pacific, he has traversed it. Having been privileged six times to cross this continent, and twice this summer, I have come to some appreciation of its magnitude. California, which I supposed in boyhood from its size on the map, was a few yards across, a ridge of land on which one must walk cautiously lest he hit his head against the Sierra Nevada on one side or slip off into the Pacific waters on the other, California, the thin slice of land as I supposed it to be in boyhood, I have found it to be larger than all the states of New England and all New York state and all Pennsylvania added together; and if you add them together their square miles fall far short of California. North and South Dakota, Montana and Washington territory, to be launched next winter into statehood, will be giants at their birth. Let the congress of the United States strain a point and soon admit also Idaho and Wyoming and New Mexico. What is the use keeping them out in the cold any longer? Let us have the whole continent divided into states with senatorial and congressional representatives and we will all be happy together. If some of them have not quite the requisite number of people, fix up the constitution to suit these cases. Even Utah will be dropping polygamy soon be ready to enter. Monogamy has triumphed in parts of Utah and will probably triumph at this fall election in Salt Lake City. Turn all the territories into states and if some of the sisters are smaller than the elder sisters, give them time and they will soon be as large as any of them. Because some of the daughters of a family may be five feet in stature and the others only four feet, do not let the daughters feel five high shut the door in the faces of those who are only four feet high. Among the dying utterances of our good friend, the wise statesman and great author, the brilliant orator and magnificent soul, S. S. Cox, was the expressed determination to move next winter in congress for the transference of other territory into states.

"But," says some one, "in calculating the immensity of our continental acreage you must remember that vast reaches of our public domain are uncultivated, heaps of dry sand, and the 'bad lands' of Montana and the great American desert." I am glad you mentioned that. Within twenty-five years there will not be between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts a hundred miles of land not reclaimed either by farmers' plow or miners' crowbar. By irrigation the waters of the rivers and the showers of heaven in what are called the rainy season will be gathered into great reservoirs and through aqueducts let down where and when the people want them. Utah is an object lesson. Some parts of that territory which were so barren that a spear of grass could not have been raised there in a hundred years are now rich as Lancaster county farms of Pennsylvania or Westchester farms of New York or Somerset county farms of New Jersey.

Experiments have proved that ten acres of ground irrigated from waters gathered in great hydrological basins will produce as much as fifty acres from the downpour of rain as seen in our regions. We have our freshets and our droughts, but in those lands which are to be scientifically irrigated there will be neither freshets nor droughts. As you take a pitcher and get it full of water and then set it on a table and take a drink out of it when you are thirsty and never think of drinking a pitcherful all at once, so Montana and Wyoming and Idaho will catch the rains of their rainy season and take up all the waters of their rivers in great pitchers of reservoirs and drink out of them whenever they will and refresh their land whenever they will.

The work has already been grandly begun by the United States government. Over four hundred lakes have already been officially taken possession of by the nation for the great enterprise of irrigation. Rivers that have been

rolling idly through these regions, doing nothing on their way to the sea, will be lassoed and corralled and penned up until such time as the farmers need them. Under the same processes the Ohio, the Mississippi and all the other rivers will be taught to behave themselves better, and great basins will be made to catch the surplus of waters in times of freshet and keep them for times of drought. The irrigating process by which all the arid lands between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans are to be fertilized is no new experiment. It has been going on successfully hundreds of years, in Spain, in China, in India, in Russia, in Egypt. About eight hundred million of people of the earth today are kept alive by food raised on irrigated land. And here we have allowed to lie waste, given up to rattlesnake and bat and prairie dog, lands enough to support whole nations of industrious population. The work begun will be consummated. Here and there exceptional lands may be stubborn and refuse to yield any wheat or corn from their hard fists, but if the whole fail to make an impression the miner's pick-ax will discover the reason for it and bring up from beneath those unproductive surfaces coal and iron and lead and copper and silver and gold. God speed the geologists and the surveyors, the engineers and the senatorial commissions and the capitalists and the new settlers and the husbandmen who put their brain and hand and heart to this transfiguration of the American continent!

A WONDERFUL COUNTRY.

But while I speak of the immensity of the continent, I must remark it is not an immensity of monotone or tameness. The larger some countries are, the worse for the world. This continent is not more remarkable for its magnitude than for its wonders of construction. What a pity the United States government did not take possession of Yosemite, California, as it has of Yellowstone, Wyoming, and of Niagara Falls, New York! Yosemite and the adjoining California regions! Who that has seen them can think of them without having his blood tingle? Trees now standing there that were old when Christ lived. These monarchs of foliage reigned before Caesar or Alexander, and the next thousand years will not shatter their scepter. They are the masts of the continent, their canvas spread on the winds while the old ship bears on its way through the ages. Their size, of which travelers often speak, does not affect me so much as their longevity. Though so old now, the branches of some of them will crackle in the last conflagration of the planet.

That valley of the Yosemite is eight miles long and a half mile wide and three thousand feet deep. It seems as if it had been the meaning of Omnipotence to crowd into as small a place as possible some of the most stupendous scenery of the world. Some of the cliffs you do not stop to measure by feet, for they are literally a mile high. Steep so that neither foot of man nor beast ever scaled them, they stand in everlasting defiance. If Jehovah has a throne of earth these are its white pillars. Standing down in this great chasm of the valley you look up and yonder is Cathedral Rock, vast, gloomy minster built for the silent worship of the mountains. Yonder is Sentinel Rock, 3,270 feet high, bold, solitary, standing guard among the ages, its top seldom touched until a bride one Fourth of July mounted it and planted the national standards and the people down in the valley looked up and saw the head of the mountain turbaned with stars and stripes. Yonder are the "Three Brothers," four thousand feet high; "Cloud's Rest," North and South Dome and heights never captured save by the fiery bayonets of the thunder storm.

No pause for the eye, no stopping place for the mind. Mountains lurled on mountains. Mountains in the wake of mountains. Mountains flanked by mountains. Mountains split. Mountains ground. Mountains fallen. Mountains triumphant. As though Mount Blanc and the Adirondacks and Mount Washington were here uttering themselves in one magnificent chorus of rock and precipice and waterfall. Sifting and dashing through the rocks, the water comes down. The Bridal Veil falls, so thin you can see the face of the mountain behind it. Yonder is Yosemite falls, dropping 2,634 feet, sixteen times greater descent than that of Niagara. These waters dashed to death on the rocks, so that the white spirit of the slain waters ascending in robe of mist seeks the heaven. Yonder is Nevada falls plunging seven hundred feet, the water in arrows, the water in rockets, the water in pearls, the water in amethysts, the water in diamonds. That cascade flings down the rocks enough jewels to array all the earth in beauty, and rushes on until it drops into a very hell of waters, the smoke of their torment ascending forever and ever.

AN IMPRESSION THAT WILL LAST FOREVER.

But the most wonderful part of this American continent is the Yellowstone park. My visit there last month made upon me an impression that will last forever. After all poetry has exhausted itself and all the Morans and Bierstadts and the other enchanting artists have completed their canvas, there will be other revelations to make and other stories of its beauty, and its wrath, splendor and agony, to be revealed. The Yellowstone park is a geologist's paradise. By cheapening of travel may it become the nation's playground! In some portions of it there seems to be the anarchy of the elements. Fire and water, and the vapor born of that marriage, terrific. Geyser cones or hills of crystal that have been over five thousand years growing. In places the earth, throbbing, sobbing, groaning, quaking with aqueous paroxysm.

At the expiration of every sixty-five minutes one of the geysers tossing its boiling water 185 feet in the air and then descending into swinging rainbows. Caverns of pictured walls large enough for the sepulcher of the human race. Formations of stone in shape and color of calla lily, of helio-

trope, of rose, of cowslip, of sunflower, and of gladioli. Sulphur and arsenic and oxide of iron, with their delicate pencils, turning the hills into a Luxembourg or a Vatican picture gallery. The so called Thanatopsis geyser, exquisite as the Bryant poem it was named after, and the so called Evangeline geyser, lovely as the Longfellow heroine it commemorates. The so called Pulpit Terrace from its white elevation preaching mightier sermons of God than human lips ever uttered. The so called Bethesda geyser, by the warmth of which invalids have already been cured, the Angel of Health continually stirring the waters. Enraged craters, with heat at five hundred degrees, only a little below the surface.

Wide reaches of stone of intermingled colors, blue as the sky, green as the foliage, crimson as the dahlia, white as the snow, spotted as the leopard, tawny as the lion, grizzly as the bear, in circles, in angles, in stars, in coronets, in stalactites, in stalagmites. Here and there are petrified growths or the dead trees, and vegetation of other ages kept through a process of natural embalment. In some places waters as innocent and smiling as a child making a first attempt to walk from its mother's lap, and not far off as foaming and frenzied and ungovernable as a maniac in murderous struggle with his keepers.

But after you have wandered along the geyserite enchantment for days and begin to feel that there can be nothing more of interest to see, you suddenly come upon the peroration of all majesty and grandeur, the Grand canyon. It is here that it seems to me—and I speak it with reverence—Jehovah seems to have surpassed himself. It seems a great gulch let down into the eternities. Here, hung up and let down and spread abroad, are all the colors of land and sea and sky. Upholstering of the Lord God Almighty. Best work of the Architect of worlds. Sculpturing by the Infinite. Masonry by an omnipotent trowel. Yellow! You never saw yellow unless you saw it there. Red! You never saw red unless you saw it there. Violet! You never saw violet unless you saw it there. Triumphant banners of color, in a cathedral of basalt, Sunrise and Sunset married by the setting of rainbow ring.

Gothic arches, Corinthian capitals and Egyptian basilicas built before human architecture was born. Huge fortifications of granite constructed before war forged its first cannon. Gibraltars and Sebastopols that never can be taken. Alhambras, where kings of strength and queens of beauty reigned long before the first earthly crown was emperored. Thrones on which no one but the King of heaven and earth ever sat. Fount of waters at which the lesser hills are baptized while the giant cliffs stand round as sponsors. For thousands of years before that scene was unveiled to human sight, the elements were busy, and the geysers were hewing away with their hot chisel, and glaciers were pounding with their cold hammers and hurricanes were cleaving with their lightning strokes and hailstones giving the finishing touches, and after all these forces of nature had done their best, in our century the new and divinely inspired revelation, the Old Testament written on papyrus, the New Testament written on parchment, and now this last Testament written on the rocks.

Hanging over one of the cliffs I looked off until I could not get my breath, then retreating to a less exposed place I looked down again. Down there is a pillar of rock that in certain conditions of the atmosphere looks like a pillar of blood. Yonder are fifty feet of emerald on a base of five hundred feet of opal. Wall of chalk resting on pedestals of beryl. Turrets of light tumbling on floors of darkness. The brown brightening into golden. Snow of crystal melting into fire of carbuncle. Flaming red cooling into russet. Cold blue warming into saffron. Dull gray kindling into solferino. Morning twilight flushing midnight shadows. Auroras crouching among rocks.

Yonder is an eagle's nest on a shaft of basalt. Through an eyeglass we see among it the young eagles, but the stoutest arm of our group cannot hurl a stone near enough to disturb the feathered domesticity. Yonder are heights that would be chilled with horror but for the warm robe of forest foliage with which they are enveloped. Altars of worship at which nations might kneel. Domes of chalcedony on temples of porphyry. See all this carnage of color up and down the cliffs; it must have been the battle field of the war of the elements. Here are all the colors of the wall of heaven, neither the sapphire nor the chrysolite nor the topaz nor the jacinth, nor the amethyst nor the Jasper nor the twelve gates of twelve pearls wanting. If spirits bound from earth to heaven could pass up by way of this canyon, the dash of heavenly beauty would not be so overpowering. It would only be from glory to glory. Ascent through such earthly scenery in which the crystal is so bright and the red so flaming would be fit preparation for the "sea of glass mingled with fire."

Standing there in the Grand canyon of the Yellowstone park on the morning of Aug. 9, for the most part we held our peace, but after a while it flashed upon me with such power I could not help but say to my comrades: "What a Hall this would be for the last Judgment!" See that mighty cascade with the rainbows at the foot of it. Those waters congealed and transfixed with the agitations of that day, what a place they would make for the shining feet of a Judge of quick and dead. And those rainbows look now like the crowns to be cast at his feet. At the bottom of this great canyon is a floor on which the nations of the earth might stand and all up and down those galleries of rock the nations of heaven might sit. And what reverberation of archangels' trumpet there would be through all these gorges and from all these caverns and over all these heights. Why should not the greatest of all the days the world shall ever

see close amid the grandest scenery Omnipotence ever built!

Oh, the sweep of the American continent! Sailing up Puget sound, its shores so bold that for fifteen hundred miles a ship's prow would touch the shore before its keel touched the bottom. I said: "This is the Mediterranean of America." Visiting Portland and Tacoma and Seattle and Victoria and Fort Townsend and Vancouver and other cities of that northwest region I thought to myself, These are the Boston, New York, Charleston and Savannahs of the Pacific coast. But after all this summer's journeying and my other journey westward in other summers, I found that I had seen only a part of the American continent, for Alaska is as far west of San Francisco as the coast of Maine is east of it, so that the central city of the American continent is San Francisco.

ASIA AND AMERICA.

I have said these things about the magnitude of the continent and given you a few specimens of some of its wonders and yet you know the comprehensiveness of the text when it says that Christ is going to have dominion from sea to sea; that is, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Beside that, the salvation of this continent means the salvation of Asia, for we are only thirty-six miles from Asia at the northwest. Only Behring straits separate us from Asia, and these will be spanned by a great bridge before another century closes, and probably long before that. The thirty-six miles of water between these two continents are not all deep sea, but have three islands and there are also shoals which will allow piers for bridges, and for the most of the way the water is only about twenty fathoms deep.

The Americo-Asiatic bridge which will yet span those straits will make America, Asia, Europe and Africa one continent. So you see America evangelized, Asia will be evangelized, Europe taking Asia from one side and America taking it from the other side. Our great-grandchildren will cross that bridge. America and Asia and Europe all one, what subtraction from the pangs of seasickness! and the prophecies in Revelation will be fulfilled. There shall be no more sea. But do I mean literally that this American continent is going to be all gossiped? I do. Christopher Columbus, when he went ashore from the Santa Maria, and his second brother Alonso, when he went ashore from the Pinta, and his third brother Vincent, when he went ashore from the Nina, took possession of this country in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Satan has no more right to this country than I have to your pocket book. To hear him talk on the roof of the Temple, where he proposed to give Christ the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them, you might suppose that Satan was a great capitalist or that he was loaded up with real estate, when the old miscreant never owned an acre or an inch of ground on this planet. For that reason I protest against something I heard and saw this summer and other summers in Montana and Oregon and Wyoming and Idaho and Colorado and California. They have given devilistic names to many places in the west and northwest.

As soon as you get in Yellowstone park or California you have pointed out to you places cursed with such names as "The Devil's Slide," "The Devil's Kitchen," "The Devil's Thumb," "The Devil's Pulpit," "The Devil's Mule Pot," "The Devil's Tea Kettle," "The Devil's Saw Mill," "The Devil's Machine Shop," "The Devil's Gate" and so on. Now it is very much needed that geological surveyor or congressional committee or group of distinguished tourists go through Montana and Wyoming and California and Colorado and give other names to these places. All these regions belong to the Lord and to a Christian nation, and away with such Plutonic nomenclature.

HOW TO DO THE GOOD WORK.
But how is this continent to be gossiped? The pulpit and a Christian printing press harnessed together will be the mightiest team for the first plow. Not by the power of cold, formalistic theology, not by ecclesiastical technicalities. I am sick of them and the world is sick of them. But it will be done by the warm hearted, sympathetic presentation of the fact that Christ is ready to pardon all our sins and heal all our wounds and save us both for this world and the next. Let your religion of glaciers crack off and fall into the Gulf Stream and get melted. Take all your creeds of all denominations and drop out of them all human phraseology and put in only scriptural phraseology and you will see how quick the people will jump after them.

On the Columbia river a few days ago we saw the salmon jump clear out of the water in different places, I suppose for the purpose of getting the insects. And if when we want to fish for men we could only have the right kind of bait they will spring out above the flood of their sins and sorrows to reach it. The Young Men's Christian associations of America will also do part of the work. All over the continent I saw this summer their new buildings rising. In Vancouver's I asked: "What are you going to put on that slightly place?" The answer was: "A Young Men's Christian association building." At Lincoln, Neb., I said: "What are they making those excavations for?" Answer: "For our Young Men's Christian association building." At Des Moines, Ia., I saw a noble structure rising and I asked for what purpose it was being built, and they told me for the Young Men's Christian association.

These institutions are going to take the young men of this nation for God. These institutions seem in better favor with God and man than ever before. Business men and capitalists are awaking to the fact that they can do nothing better in the way of living beneficence or in last will and testament than to do what Mr. Marquand did for Brooklyn when he made our Young Men's Christian association possible.

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