

DEAD SEA AND JORDAN.

DR. TALMAGH'S FIFTH SERMON ON HIS TOUR IN THE HOLY LAND.

Topography of the Dead Sea Region. Pompeii and the Volcano—The Lowest Lake in the World—Evidences of God's Wrath.

BROOKLYN, Oct. 26.—Dr. Talmage preached the fifth sermon of the series on his tour in the Holy Land in the Academy of Music in this city this morning. This evening at the Christian Herald service in the Academy of Music, New York, the sermon was repeated before an audience which filled the vast building in every part. Dr. Talmage announced as his text, Ps. civ. 35: "He toucheth the hills and they smoke."

David the poet here pictures a volcano, and what the Church's Copaxasi does on painter's canvas this author does in words. You see a hill, calm and still and for ages immovable, but the Lord out of the heavens puts his finger on the top of it, and from its rise thick vapors intershot with fire. "He toucheth the hills and they smoke."

God is the only being who can manage a volcano, and again and again has he employed volcanic action. The pictures on the walls of Pompeii, the extinct Italian city, as we saw them last November, demonstrate that the city was not fit to live. In the first century that city, engirdled with palaces, emparadised with gardens, pillared into architectural exquisiteness, was at the foot of a mountain up the sides of which it ran with vineyards and villas of merchant princes, and all that marble and bronze and imperial baths and arched culture and rainbow fountains, and a coliseum at the dedication of which nine thousand beasts had been slain, and a supernatural landscape in which the shore gave roses to the sea and the sea gave crystals to the shore; yea, all that beauty and pomp and wealth could give was there to be seen or heard. But the bad morals of the city had shocked the world. In the year 79, on the 4th of August, a black column rose above the adjoining mountain and spread out, Pliny says, as he saw it, like a great pine tree, wider and wider, until it began to rain upon the city first thin ashes and then pumice stones and sulphurous fumes, scooped, and streams of mud poured through the streets till few people escaped, and the city was buried, and some of the inhabitants eighteen hundred years after were found embalmed in the scoriae of that awful doom. The Lord called upon volcanic forces to obliterate that profane city. He toucheth the hills and they smoke.

SCIENCE AND SCRIPTURE AGREE.

Nothing but volcanic action can explain what I shall show you at the Dead sea upon which I looked last December, and of whose waters I took a bitter and stinging taste. Concerning all that region there has been controversy enough to fill libraries, science saying one thing, revelation saying another thing. But admit volcanic action divinely employed and both testimonies are one and the same. Geology, chemistry, geography, astronomy, letheology, ornithology and zoology are coming one by one to confirm the Scriptures. Two leaves of one book are Revelation and Creation, and the penmanship is by the same divine hand. Our horseback ride will not be so steep today, and you can stay on without clinging to the pommel of the saddle, but the scenes amid which we ride shall, if possible, be more thrilling, and by the time the horses snuff the sulphurous atmosphere of Lake Asphaltites, or the Dead sea, we will be ready to dismount and read from our Bibles about what was done that day by the Lord when he touched the hills and they smoked.

Take a detour and pass along by the rocky fortress of Masada, where occurred something more wonderful in the way of desperation than you have ever heard of, unless you have heard of that. Herod built a palace amid these heaps of black and awful rocks which look like a tumbled midnight. A great band of robbers, about one thousand including their families, afterward held the fortress. When the Roman army stormed that spot and the bandits could no longer hold the place, their chieftain, Eleazar, made a powerful speech which persuaded them to die before they were captured. First the men kissed their families a loving and tearful good-by and then put a dagger into their hearts, and the women and children were slain. Then ten men were chosen by lot to slay all the other men, and each man lay down by the dead wife and children and waited for these executioners to do their work. This done, one man of the ten killed the other nine. Then the survivor committed suicide. Two women and five children had hid themselves in a cave, and after all was over came forth to tell of the nine hundred and sixty slaughtered. Great and rugged natural scenery makes the most tremendous nature for good or evil. Great statuesque and great robbers, great orators and great butchers, were nearly all born or reared among mountain precipices. Strong nature is hardly ever born upon the plain. When men have anything greatly good or greatly evil to do they come down off the rocks.

THE LAND OF DESOLATION.

Pass on from under the shadow of Masada, the scene of concentrated diabolism, and come along where the salt crystals crackle under the horses' hoofs. You are near the most God forsaken region of all the earth. You to whom the word lake has heretofore suggested those bewitchments of beauty, Luzerne or Cayuga, some great pearl set by a loving God in the bosom of the luxuriant valley, change all your ideas about a lake, and see this sheet of water which the Bible calls the Salt sea or Sea of the Plain, and Josephus calls Lake Asphaltites. The muleteers will take care of the horses while we go down to the brink and dip up the liquid mixture in the palm of the hand. The waters are a commingling of brimstone and pitch, and have six times larger percentage of salt than those of the Atlantic ocean, the ocean having 4 per cent. of salt and this lake 26 1/2 per cent. Lake Siki-kol, of India, is the highest lake in the world. This lake, on the banks of which we kneel, is the lowest lake. It empties into no sea, among other things, for the simple reason that water cannot run up hill. It swallows up the river Jordan and makes no response of thanks, and never reports what it does with the twenty million cubic feet of water annually received from that sacred river. It takes the tree branches and logs floated into it by the Jordan and pitches them on the banks of bitumen to decay there.

The hot springs near its banks by the name of Callihore, where King Herod came to bathe off his illnesses, no sooner pour into this sea than they are poisoned. Not a fish scale swims it. Not an insect walks it. It hates life, and if you attempt to swim there it lifts you by an unnatural buoyancy to the surface, as much, so to say, "We want no life here, but death is our preference: death." Those who at-

tempt to wade into this lake, and submerge themselves, come out almost maddened, as with the sting of a hundred wasps and hornets, and with lips and eyelids swollen with the strange ablation. The sparkle of its waters is not like the sparkle of beauty on other lakes, but a metallic luster like unto the flash of a sword that would thrust you. The gazelles and the ibexes that live on the hills beside it, and cranes and wild ducks that fly across—for, contrary to the old belief, birds do safely wing their way over it—and the Arab horses you have been riding, though thirsty enough, will not drink out of this dreadful mixture. A mist hovers over parts of it almost continually, which, though natural evaporation, seems like a wing of doom spread over liquid desolation. It is the risings of abomination. It is an aqueous monster coiled among the hills, or creeping with ripples, and stealthful with nauseating malodors.

THE CITIES OF THE PLAIN. In these regions once stood four great cities of Assyria: Sodom, Gomorrah, Adma and Zebonim. The Bible says they were destroyed by a tempest of fire and brimstone after these cities had filled up of wickedness. "No; that is absurd," cries some one. "It is evident that this was a region of salt and brimstone and pitch long before that." And so it was. The Bible says it was a region of sulphur long before the great catastrophe. "Well, now," says some one, wanting to raise a quarrel between science and Revelation, "you have no right to say the cities of the plain were destroyed by a tempest of fire and sulphur and brimstone, because this region had these characteristics long before these cities were destroyed." Volcanic action, is my reply. These cities had been built out of very combustible materials. The mortar was of bitumen easily ignited, and the walls dripped with pitch most inflammable. They sat, I think, on a ridge of hills. They stood high up and conspicuous, radiant in their sins, ostentatious in their debaucheries, four hells on earth.

One day there was a rumbling in the earth, and a quaking. "What's that?" cry the frightened inhabitants. "What's that?" The foundations of the earth were giving way. A volcano, whose fires had been burning for ages, at God's command burst forth, easily setting everything aflame, and first lifting these cities high in air and then dashing them down in chasms fathomless. The fires of that eruption intershot the dense smoke and rolled onto the heavens, only to descend again. And all the configuration of that country was changed, and where there was a hill there came a valley, and where there had been the pomp of uncleanness came widespread desolation. The red hot spade of volcanic action had shoveled under the cities of the plain. Before the catastrophe the cities stood on the top of the salt and sulphur. After the catastrophe they were under the salt and sulphur. Science right; Revelation right. "He toucheth the hills and they smoke."

No science ever frightened believers in Revelation so much as geology. They feared that the strata of the earth would contradict the Scriptures, and then Moses must go under. But as in the Dead sea instance so in all cases, God's writing on the earth and God's writing in the Bible are harmonious. The shelves of rock correspond with the shelves of the American Bible society. Science digs into the earth and finds deep down the remains of plants, and so the Bible announces plants first. Science digs down and says, "Marine animals next," and the Bible says, "Marine animals next." Science digs down and says, "Land animals next," and the Bible responds, "Land animals next." "Then comes man!" says science. "Then comes man!" responds the Bible. Science digs into the regions about the Dead sea, and finds result of fire and masses of rock, and announces a wonderful geological formation. "Oh, yes," says the Bible, "Moses wrote thousands of years ago, 'The Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven,' and David wrote, 'He toucheth the hills and they smoke.'" So I guess we will hold on to our Bibles a little longer. A gentleman in the ante-room of the White House at Washington, having an appointment with Mr. Lincoln at 5 o'clock in the morning, got there fifteen minutes early, and asked the servant, "Who is talking in the next room?" "It is the president, sir." Is anybody with him? "No, sir; he is reading the Bible. He spends every morning from 4 to 5 o'clock reading the Scriptures."

PROFLIGATE CITIES OVERHELMED. My text implies that God controls volcanoes, not with the full force of his hand, but with the tip of his finger. Etna, Stromboli and Vesuvius slain at his feet like hounds before the hunter. These eruptions of the hills do not belong to Pluto's realm, as the ancients thought, but to the divine dominions. Humboldt counted two hundred of them, but since then the Indian archipelago has been found to have nine hundred of these great mouthpieces. They are on every continent and in all latitudes. That earthquake which shook all America about six or seven summers ago was only the raving around of volcanoes pushing against the sides of their rocky caverns trying to break out. They must come to the surface, but it will be at the divine call. They seem reserved for the punishment of one kind of sin. The seven cities which have obliterated were celebrated for one kind of transgression. Profligacy was the chief characteristic of the seven cities over which they put their smothering wing: Pompeii, Herculaneum, Stabia, Adma, Zebonim, Sodom and Gomorrah.

Our American cities do not quit their profligacy, if in high life and low life dissoluteness does not cease to be a joke and become a crime, if wealthy libertinism continues to find so many doors of domestic life open to its faintest touch, if Russian and French and American literature steeped in profligacy does not get banished from the news stands and ladies' parlors, God will let loose some of these suppressed monsters of the earth. And I tell these American cities that it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, whether that day of judgment be in this present century or in the closing century of the earth's continuance. The volcanic forces are already in existence, but in the mercy of God they are chained in the kennels of subterranean fire. Yet let profligacy, whether it stagger into a lazaretto, or sit on a commercial throne, whether it laugh in a faded shawl under the street gas light or be wrapped in the finest array that foreign loom ever wrought or lapidary ever fashioned, know right well that there is a volcano waiting for it, whether in domestic life, or social life, or political life, or in the foundations of the earth from which sprang out the devastations that swallowed the cities of the plain. "He toucheth the hills and they smoke."

But the dragonman was rejoiced when we had seen enough of this volcanic region of Palestine, and he gladly tightens the girths for another march around the horses who are prancing and neighing for departure. We are off for the Jordan, only two hours away. We pass Bedouins who get all the facts I could concerning his earnestness, and faith, and through personal

examination made myself confident he was a worthy candidate. There were among our Arab attendants two robes not unlike those used for American baptistries, and these we obtained. As we were to have a large group of different nationalities present I dictated to my daughter a few verses and had copies enough made to allow all to sing. Our dragonman had a man familiar with the river wade through and across to show the depth and the swiftness of the stream and the most appropriate place for the ceremony. Then I read from the Bible the accounts of baptisms in that sacred stream, and implored the presence of the Christ on whose head the dove descended at the Jordan. Then as the candidate and myself stepped into the waters the people on the banks sang in full and resounding voice:

On Jordan's stormy banks I stand And cast a wistful eye To Canaan's fair and happy land, Where my possessions lie. Oh, the transporting, rapturous scene That rises to my sight: Sweet fields around me growing And rivers of delight! By this time we had reached the middle of the river. As the candidate sank under the floods and rose again under a baptism in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, there rushed through our souls a tide of holy emotion such as we shall not probably feel again until we step into the Jordan that divides earth from heaven. Will those waters be deep? Will those tides be strong? No matter if Jesus steps in with us. Friends on this shore to help us off. Friends on the other shore to see us land. See! The ark on the coming down the hills on the other side to greet us. How well we know their step! How easily we distinguish their voices! From bank to bank we hail them with tears and they hail us with palm branches. They say to us, "Is that you, father?" "Is that you, mother?" and we answer by asking, "Is that you, my darling?" How near they seem, and how narrow the stream that divides us!

Electricity for Gout. Electrical endosmosis to accelerate the passage of drugs through the skin has for some time been regularly practiced under medical sanction. Edison, "the wizard," had noticed that gouty concretions are often treated with the acid of lithium salts, and he determined to facilitate the formation, dissolution and excretion from the body of urate of lithium. The difficulty in this treatment has always been the uncertainty of the absorption of the salts into the system, and it occurred to Edison that more rapid success might be obtained by external application and the employment of electric endosmosis to carry the lithium into the tissues. For the purpose of testing this application he carried out a series of experiments, the results of which were placed before the international medical congress held at Berlin.

The subject experimented upon was 73 years of age, and had lived an active and healthy life until ten years previously, when he contracted the tendency to gouty concretions through sleeping in damp sheets. All the joints except the knees were very much enlarged, and the joints of the little finger almost obliterated by concretion. The patient experienced freedom from pain, which up to that time had been intense, after the first day's treatment, and in fourteen days a solution of nearly an inch and a quarter was effected in the circumference of one of the fingers, whose form was favorable in accurate measurement. The general condition of the patient was considerably ameliorated, and the results of the experiment were in every way encouraging.—New Orleans Picayune.

The Skeleton in the Trenches. Among Mr. Carter's war relics is a little pen and ink bucket, ghastly in the story told by its lurid work. In the trenches, clad in "hugged regimentals," with knees drawn up and cramped in the narrow covert, with army rifle still pressed against the shoulder, the muzzles pointing over the edge of the trench, the left hand supporting the barrel, the right forefinger touching the trigger, is seated the skeleton of a Confederate soldier! That is all. The field is bare. The figure is solitary. Armies had fought over that plain, but they had passed on to other battle grounds. The dead soldier in the trench had sat there in the awful attitude of deadly conflict until the flesh shriveled away, the worn uniform fluttered about a skeleton, empty eye sockets glared along the leveled gun barrel, and a grinning skull took the place of the resolute face that had fronted the charge of a brigade!

Underneath this pen and ink horror is written: "Three months after the battle of Spotsylvania Court House." The skeleton in the trench had been found by a young officer of the Confederate engineer corps, sent to take survey notes on the field. Almost the entire top of the dead soldier's head had been taken off by a shell fragment. He had evidently died without the quiver of a muscle. The officer who sketched the figure of this dread sentinel of Spotsylvania drew a dramatic picture of severity less intensely than that of the Roman sentry found at the gates of Pompeii.—St. Louis Republic.

Results of Cutting the Sermon Short. The Rev. Dr. Smyth's sermon at Center church Sunday morning was unusually short, and as a result confusion was caused. The man who is employed to pump the organ had apparently gone out for a stroll, believing, on the strength of previous experience, that his services would not in any event be required before 11:45; and when the pastor announced the closing hymn about twenty minutes earlier than usual the organist found that his humble coadjutor was missing. There was a delay of a few moments, and then one of the male members of the choir was seen to hurriedly disappear in the direction of the pumping room. A few seconds more and the organ began to sound.

Few of those of the church attendants who are accustomed to ride to and from church found their carriages awaiting them when they were ready to return home, the coachmen as well as the organ pumper having miscalculated the length of the sermon.—New Haven Palladium.

At last between two trees I got a glimpse of a river and said, "What is that?" "The Jordan," was the quick reply. And all along the line which had been lengthened by other pilgrims, some from America, and some from Europe, and some from Asia, the cry was sounded "The Jordan! The Jordan!" Hundreds of thousands of pilgrims have chanted on its banks and bathed in its waters. Many of them dip a wet gown in the wave and wring it out and carry it home for their own shroud. It is an impetuous stream, and rushes on to the sea. Many a captain has it whelmed and many a boat has it wrecked. Lieut. Molleux had copper bottomed craft split upon its shelves. Only one boat, that of Lieut. Lynch, ever lived to sail the whole length of it. At the season when the snows on Lebanon melt the rage of this stream is like the Conemaugh when Johnstown perished, and the wild beasts that may be near run for the hills, explaining what Jeremiah says, "Behold he shall go up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan." No river so fierce as its mind, for it turns and twists, traveling two hundred miles to do that which in a straight line might be done in sixty miles. Among banks now low, now high, now of rocks, now of mud and now of sand, laying the feet of the terebinths and oleanders and acacias and reeds and pistachios and silver poplars. This river carries the Dead sea to Lake Galilee, and did ever so rough a groom take the hand of so fair a bride?

MIRACLES AT THE JORDAN. This little river which parted to let an army of two million Israelites across. Here the skilled major general of the Assyrian host at the seventh plunge dropped his leprous not only by miraculous cure, but suggesting to all ages that water, and plenty of it, has much to do with the salutary improvement of the world. Here is where some theological students of Elisha's time were cutting trees with which to build a theological seminary, and an ax head, not sufficiently wedged to the handle, flew off into the river and sank, and the young man departed not so much for the loss of the ax head as the fact that it was not his own, and cried, "Alas! it was borrowed," and the prophet threw a stick into the river, and in defiance of the law of gravitation the iron ax head came to the surface and floated like a cork upon the water, and kept floating until the young man caught it. A miracle performed to give one an opportunity to return that which was borrowed, and a rebuke in all ages for those who borrow and never return, their bad habit in this respect so established as to be a miracle if they did not return it. Yes, from the bank of this river Elisha took a team of fire, showing that the most raging element is servant of the good, and that there is no need that a child of God fear anything, for if the most destructive of all elements was that day fashioned into a vehicle for a departing saint, nothing can ever hurt you who love and trust the Lord.

I am so glad that that chariot of Elijah was not made out of wood or crystal or anything ordinarily pleasant, but out of fire, and yet he beat up with wings so much as to fan himself. When, stepping from amid the foliage of these oleanders and tamarisks on the banks of the Jordan, he put his foot on the red step of the red equipage, and took the red reins of vapor in his hands, and spurred the galloping steeds toward the wide open gate of heaven, it was a scene forever memorable. So the hottest afflictions of your life may roll you heavenward. So the most burning persecutions, the most fiery troubles, may become uplifting. Only be sure that when you pull on the bits of fire, you drive up toward God, and not down toward the Dead sea. When Latimer and Ridley died at the stake they went up in a chariot of fire. When my friend P. P. Bliss, the gospel singer, was consumed with the rail train that broke through Ashtabula bridge and then took flame, I said, "Another Elijah gone up in a chariot of fire!"

BAPTIZING IN THE JORDAN. But this river is a river of baptisms. Christ was here baptized, and John baptized many thousands. Whether on the occasions the candidate for baptism and the officer of religion went into this river, and then while both were standing the water was dipped in the hand of one and sprinkled upon the forehead of the other, or whether the entire form of the one baptized disappeared for a moment beneath the surface of the flood, I do not now declare. While I cannot think without deep emotion of the fact that my parents held me in infancy to the baptismal font in the old meeting house at Somerville and assumed vows on my behalf, I must tell you now of another mode of baptism observed in the river Jordan on that afternoon in last December, the particulars of which I now for the first time relate.

It was a scene of unimaginable solemnity. A comrade in our Holy Land journey rode up by my side that day and told me that a young man who is now studying for the gospel ministry would like to be baptized by me in the river Jordan, and got all the facts I could concerning his earnestness, and faith, and through personal

A National Need. The people of this nation need just now to pay much more attention to improving their bodies; we have a reputation for brain force, but it must needs be supported by healthy and vigorous bodies, or we shall never be able to maintain our position among the nations of the earth for superiority. Every consideration of personal happiness and national welfare and greatness urges us to think seriously upon this question of physical development, to seek for truth, and having found it to profit individually by its teachings.—J. F. Walker, M. D., in Jenness-Miller Magazine.

examination made myself confident he was a worthy candidate. There were among our Arab attendants two robes not unlike those used for American baptistries, and these we obtained. As we were to have a large group of different nationalities present I dictated to my daughter a few verses and had copies enough made to allow all to sing. Our dragonman had a man familiar with the river wade through and across to show the depth and the swiftness of the stream and the most appropriate place for the ceremony. Then I read from the Bible the accounts of baptisms in that sacred stream, and implored the presence of the Christ on whose head the dove descended at the Jordan. Then as the candidate and myself stepped into the waters the people on the banks sang in full and resounding voice:

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MORAL: Travel by the Burlington Route J. FRANCIS, Gen. Pass. and Ticket Agent, Omaha. A. C. ZIEMER, City Pass. and Ticket Agent, Lincoln.

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