

A CHRISTMAS SERMON.

PREACHED BY DR. TALMAGE ON SUNDAY, DEC. 28.

An Intensely Interesting Discourse by the Brooklyn Divine—The Test Lake II. 15: "Let Us Now Go Even Unto Bethlehem"—The Sermon in Full.

BROOKLYN, Dec. 28.—Dr. Talmage's sermon today was appropriate to the season. Its subject was the Christmas Jubilee. A crowd which filled the Academy of Music in every part listened to it in the morning, and another enormous audience thronged the New York Academy of Music to hear it in the evening, when the doctor preached under the auspices of The Christian Herald. His text was Luke II. 15: "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem."

Amid a thousand mercies we give each other holiday congratulations. By long established custom we exhort each other to healthful merriment. By gift, by Christmas trees which blossom and fruit in one night, by early morning surprise, by clusters of lighted candles, by children's processions, by sound of instruments sometimes more blatant than musical, we wake up all night and prolong the day. I wish you all in the grandest, noblest and best sense a merry Christmas. The event commemorated is the gladdest of the centuries. Christ's cradle was as wonderful as his cross. Persuade me of the first and I am not surprised at the last. The door by which he entered was as tremendous as the door by which he went out.

WHERE JESUS WAS IN EGYPT. I was last winter in the house where Jesus lived while he was in Africa. It was in Cairo, Egypt, the terminus of that terrible journey which he took when Joseph and Mary fled with him from Bethlehem to Egypt to escape the massacre of Herod. All tradition, as well as all history, points out this house in Cairo as the one in which these three fugitives lived while in Africa. The room is nine steps down from the level of the street. I measured the room and found it 20 feet long and 7 1/2 feet high. There are three shelves, one of which I think was the cradle of our Lord. There is no window, and all the light must have come from lantern or candle. The three arrived here from Bethlehem, having crossed the awful desert.

On the Mediterranean steamer going from Athens to Alexandria I met the eminent scholar and theologian, Dr. Lansing, who for thirty-five years has been a resident of Cairo, and he told me that he had been all over the road that the three fugitives took from Bethlehem to Egypt. He says it is a desert way, and that the forced journey of the infant Christ must have been a terrible journey. Going up from Egypt Dr. Lansing met people from Bethlehem, their tongues swollen and hanging out from the inflammation of thirst, and although his party had but one goatskin of water left, and that was important for themselves, he was so moved with the spectacle of these poor pilgrims that, though it excited the indignation of his fellow travelers, he gave water to the strangers. Over this dreadful route Joseph and Mary started for this land of Egypt. No time to make much preparation. Herod was after them, and what were these peasants before an irate king?

Joseph, the husband and father, one night sprang up from his mattress in great alarm, the beads of sweat on his forehead and his whole frame quaking. He had dreamed of massacres of his wife and babe. They must be off, that night, right away. Mary put up a few things hastily, and Joseph brought to the door the beast of burden, and helped his wife and child to mount. Why, those loaves of bread are not enough, those bottles of water will not last for such a long way. But there is no time to get anything more. Out and on. Good-by to the dear home they expect never to see again, not when their hearts break. It does not need that the indication of that night watchman in the balcony of heaven! Astronomy surrendered that night to Christ. This planet for Christ. The solar system for Christ. Worlds ablaze and worlds burnt out—all worlds for Christ.

Intensest microscope cannot see the one side of that domain. Farthest reaching telescope cannot find the other side of that domain. But I will tell you the universe is bounded. It is bounded on the north and south and east and west, and above and beneath by God, and that God is Christ, and that Christ is God, and that God is ours. Oh, does it not enlarge your ideas of a Saviour's dominion when I tell you that all the worlds are only sparks struck from his anvil? that all the worlds are only the fleecy flocks following the one shepherd who feeds the islands of light in immensity are one great archipelago belonging to our king?

THEY WERE WISE MEN OF THE EAST. But this scene also impresses me with the fact that the wise men of the east came to Christ. They were not fools, they were not imbeciles. The record distinctly says that the wise men came to Christ. We say they were the magi, or they were the astrologers, or they were the astrologers, and we say it with depreciating accentuation. Why they were the most splendid and magnificent men of the century. They were the naturalists and the scientists. They knew all that was known. You must remember that astrology was the mother of astronomy, and that alchemy was the mother of chemistry, and because children are brighter than the mother you do not despise the mother.

THE WISE MEN OF THE WEST. So it has always been—the wisest men come to Christ, the brainiest men come to the manger. Who was the greatest metaphysician this country ever has produced? Jonathan Edwards, the Christian. Who was the greatest astronomer of the world? Herschel, the Christian. Who was the greatest poet ever produced? John Milton, the Christian. Who was the wisest writer on law? Blackstone, the Christian. Why is it that every college and university in

foretold many years ago by astronomers, and astronomers can tell what will be the conjunction of worlds a thousand years from now, so they can calculate backward, and even infidel astronomers have been compelled to testify that about the year 1 there was a very unusual appearance in the heavens. The Chinese record, of course entirely independent of the World of God, gives as a matter of history that about the year 1 there was a strange and unaccountable appearance in the heavens. But it may have been a meteor such as you and I have seen flash to the horizon. I saw a few years ago in the northern sky a star shoot and fall with such brilliancy and precision that if I had been on a hill as high as that of Bethlehem, on which the shepherds stood, I could have marked within a short distance the place of the alighting. The University of Iowa and the British museum have specimens of meteoric stones picked up in the fields, fragments flung off from other worlds, leaving a fiery trail on the sky. So that it is not to me at all improbable the stellar or meteoric appearance on that night of which we speak. I only care to know that it was bright, that it was silvery, that it flashed and swayed and swung and halted with joy celestial, as though Christ in haste to save our world had rushed down without his coronet, and the angels of God had hurled it after him!

CHRISTIANITY A STAR OF HOPE. Not a black cloud of threat, but a gleaming star of hope, is our glorious Christianity. One glimpse of that stellar appearance kindled up the soul of the sick and dying college student until the words flashed from his pale fingers and the star seemed to pour its light from his white lips as Kirke White wrote those immortal words:

When marshaled on the nightly plain The glittering hosts bosted the sky, One star alone of all the train Can fix the sinner's wandering eye. Hark, hark to God! the chorus breaks From every host, from every zone; But one alone, the Saviour, speaks— It is the Star of Bethlehem.

Once on the raging seas I rode. The storm was loud, the night was dark, And rudely blew the wind that tossed my foundering bark. Deep sorrow then my vitals froze, Death struck, I ceased the tide to stem, When suddenly a star arose— It was the Star of Bethlehem.

Notice also in this scene that other worlds seemed to honor our Lord and master. Bright star of the night, wheel on in thine orbit. "No," said the star, "I must come nearer, and I must bend and I must watch, and see what you do, with my Jesus. Another world that night joined our world in worship. That night made a bow of oblation. I sometimes hear the talk of Christ's dominion as though it were to be merely the few thousand miles of the world's circumference; but I believe the millions and the billions and the quadrillions of worlds are all inhabited—if not by such creatures as we are, still such creatures as God designed to make, and that all these worlds are a part of Christ's dominion. Isaac Newton and Kepler and Herschel only went on Columbus voyage to find these continents of our king's domain.

ALL IN HARMONY BUT EARTH. I think all worlds were loyal but this. The great organ of the universe, its pedals, and its pipes, and its keys all one great harmony save one injured pedal, save one broken stop—the vox humana of the human race, the disloyal world. Now you know that however grand the instrument may be, if there be one key out of order it spoils the harmony. And Christ, must mend this key. He must restore the broken stop. You know with what bleeding hand, and with what pined side, and with what crushed foot he did the work. But the world shall be attuned and all worlds will yet be accordant. Isle of Wight, larger in comparison with the British empire than our island of a world as compared with Christ's vast domain. If not, why that sentinel with blazing badge above the caravansary? If not, why that night watchman in the balcony of heaven! Astronomy surrendered that night to Christ. This planet for Christ. The solar system for Christ. Worlds ablaze and worlds burnt out—all worlds for Christ.

ALL THE WORLD IS HIS. But notice also in this account the three Christmas presents that are brought to the manger—gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gold to Christ—that means all the affluence of the world surrendered to him. For lack of money no more asylums limping on their way like the cripples whom they helped, feeling their slow way like the blind people whom they sheltered. Millions of dollars for Christ where there are now thousands of dollars. Railroads owned by Christian stockholders, and carried by Christian directors, and carrying passengers and freight at Christian prices. George Peabody and Abbott Lawrence and James Lenoxes no rarity. Bank of England, Bourse of France, United States treasury, all the moneyed institutions of the world for Christ. The gold for Christ. Gold not merely paid the way of Joseph and Mary and the divine fugitive into Egypt, but it was typical of the fact that Christ's way shall be paid all around the world. The gold for Christ, the silver for Christ, the jewels for Christ. Australia, Nevada and Golconda for Christ. The bright, round, beautiful jewel of a world set like a solitaire on the bosom of Christ.

But I notice that these wise men also shook out from the sacks the myrrh. The cattle came and they sniffed at it. They did not eat it because it was bitter. The pungent gum resin of Abyssinia called myrrh brought to the feet of Christ. That means bitterness. Bitter betrayal, bitter persecution, bitter days of suffering, bitter nights of woe. Myrrh. That is what they put into his cup when he was dying. Myrrh. That is what they put under his head in the wilderness. Myrrh. That is what they strewed his path with all the way from the manger to the manger to the manger. Myrrh. Yes, says the Psalmist, "All the garments smell of myrrh." That is what the wise men wrapped in the swaddling clothes of the babe. That is what the Marys twisted in the shroud of a crucified Christ. The myrrh, Oh, the height, the depth, the length, the breadth of the Saviour's sorrow! Well might the wise men shake out the myrrh.

THE WISE MEN'S WORSHIP. But I notice also from another sack they shake out the frankincense. Clear up to the rafters of the barn the air is filled with

the land has a chapel? They must have a place for the wise men to worship. Come now, let us understand in ounces and in inches this whole matter. In post-mortem examination the brain of distinguished men has been examined, and I will find the largest, the heaviest, the mightiest brain ever produced in America, and I will ask what that brain thought of Christ. Here it is, the brain weighing sixty three ounces, the largest brain ever produced in America. Now let me find what that brain thought of Christ. In the dying moment that man said: "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief. Whatever else I do, Almighty God, receive me to thyself for Christ's sake. This night I shall be in the light and joy and blessedness." So Daniel Webster came to the manger. The wise men of the east followed by the wise men of the west.

Know also in this scene that it was a winter month that God chose for his Son's nativity. Had it been the month of May—that is the season of blossoms. Had he been born in the month of June—that is the season of roses. Had he been born in the month of July—that is the season of great harvests. Had he been born in the month of September—that is the season of ripe orchards. Had he been born in the month of October—that is the season of upholstered forests. But he was born in a winter month.

CHRIST WILL HELP IN STORMY TIMES. It was in closing December that he was born to show that this is a Christ of people in sharp blast, for people under clouded sky, for people with frosted hopes, for people with thermometer below zero. That is the reason he is so often found among the destitute. You can find him on any night coming off the moors. You can see him any night coming through the dark lanes of the city. You can find him putting his hand under the fainting head in the pauper's cabin. He remembers how the wind whistled around the caravansary in Bethlehem that December night, and he is in sympathy with all those who in their poverty hear the shutters clatter on a cold night.

It was this December Christ that Washington and his army worshipped at Valley Forge, when without blankets they lay down in the December snow. It was this Christ that the Pilgrim Fathers appealed to when the Mayflower wharfed at Plymouth Rock, and in the years that went by the graves dug were more in number than the houses built. Oh, I tell you, we want a December Christ, not a Christ for fair weather, but a Christ for dark days clouded with sickness, and chilling with disappointment, and suffocating with bereavement, and with wide open graves. Not a springtime Christ, not a summer Christ, not an autumnal Christ, but a winter Christ. Oh, this suffering and struggling world needs to be hushed and soothed and rocked and lulled in the arms of sympathetic Omnipotence! No mother ever with more tenderness put her foot on the rocker of the cradle of a sick child than Christ comes down to us, to this invalid world, and he rocks it into placidity and quietness as he says, "My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth I give it unto you."

WHERE POLLY WENT. One summer eve Deacon Cole came into the town of Concord, N. H., and driving up to the dry goods store at which he always traded, in front of which there were half a dozen loungers, he inquired if any one had seen his wife Polly that day. No one had, and he went on to say that she had suddenly disappeared about 9 o'clock in the forenoon and he had not seen her since. "Do you figure that she has skipped out?" asked one of the crowd. "Hardly. Polly's 57, you know, and as homely as a toadstool." "But wimin is curus critters," observed another citizen. "She might have gone off to the nuybars' in a huff." "I've bin to all the nuybars," replied the deacon.

"Searched the house?" "Yes, 'Ain't in the garret?" "No." "Ain't down cellar?" "No." "Ain't in the barn?" "No." "Nor in the smoke house?" "No." "Well, that beats me. Bet you ten to one she's gone crazy and wandered off, or else she has got tired of you and skipped." "That's the fuss here?" asked a tin peddler as he drove up.

The facts were given him, and he turned on the deacon with: "Why, dang yer buttons, you don't know even a little bit! She fell into the well, in course, and you'd better hurry home and git her out!" The deacon drove away at a rattling pace, while the crowd laughed at his expense, but the next day when he appeared in town I asked him if he had any news of his wife and he replied: "Oh, yes, Polly was in the well all right enough, and had been standing in water up to her chin all day; rather blamed me for not hearing her holler, but she got it over it after being dried out."—New York Sun.

HOW ONE WAITER FORGOT. There is a pleasant little restaurant not many miles from Fulton street where the waiters add many per cent. to the flavor of dishes by calling the orders down a speaking tube addressed in the Frenchiest of tones and with an air of demanding for something extra from an imaginative chef. "Chef," is the cry, "a nice tenderloin steak and extra fried potatoes." "Chef, send you get plenty of gravy on that roast of lamb, and the mint sauce separate, if you please." "Oh, chef, will you kindly attend to that order yourself?" It is very appetizing to hear these cries. Visions of a white robed Abbatian in the snowiest of caps and aprons arise at the sound of these calls, and many a tip doubles in size for the thoughtful waiter who is looking out so carefully for your inner comfort and keeping so well in the good graces of the gentlemanly artist de cuisine.

But alas and alack! the cat is out of the bag. A new waiter has destroyed the fond illusion for one customer at least. "Chef," said the new waiter in the voice of Stentor, "chef, be so good as to send up some nice dry toast with that steak." Some question apparently came up the tube, to which the new waiter in a voice of thunder remarked, "Yes, ma-am." Where are the visions Abbatian now? Where is that white breeced artist and his immaculate cap and apron. "Yes, ma-am!" I gazed about that disenchanted house of entertainment, and it seemed as if horror had frozen every waiter and every customer. The edge of my appetite turned like a razor held hard down against a grindstone. A greenish mist came before my eyes, and I seemed to see a fat and greasy female with unwashed hands and unkempt hair wielding the spoon of office. I groaned aloud. I turned my face away and strove to think on other things, but it was no use, and sick at heart I seized my overcoat, paid my fare and silently crept away.—New York Herald.

perfume, and the hostlers and the camel drivers in the farthest part of the building inhale it, and it floats out upon the air until passersby wonder who in that rough place could have by accident dropped a box of alabaster. Frankincense. That is what they burned in the censer in the ancient temple. Frankincense. That means worship. Frankincense. That is to fill all the homes, and all the churches, and all the capitals, and all the nations from cellar of stanchest cave clear up to the silvery rafters of the starlit dome. Frankincense. That is what we shake out from our hearts today, so that the nostrils of Christ once crimsoned with the hemorrhage of the cross shall be flooded with the perfume of a world's adoration. Frankincense. Frankincense in song and sermon and offertory and handshaking and decoration.

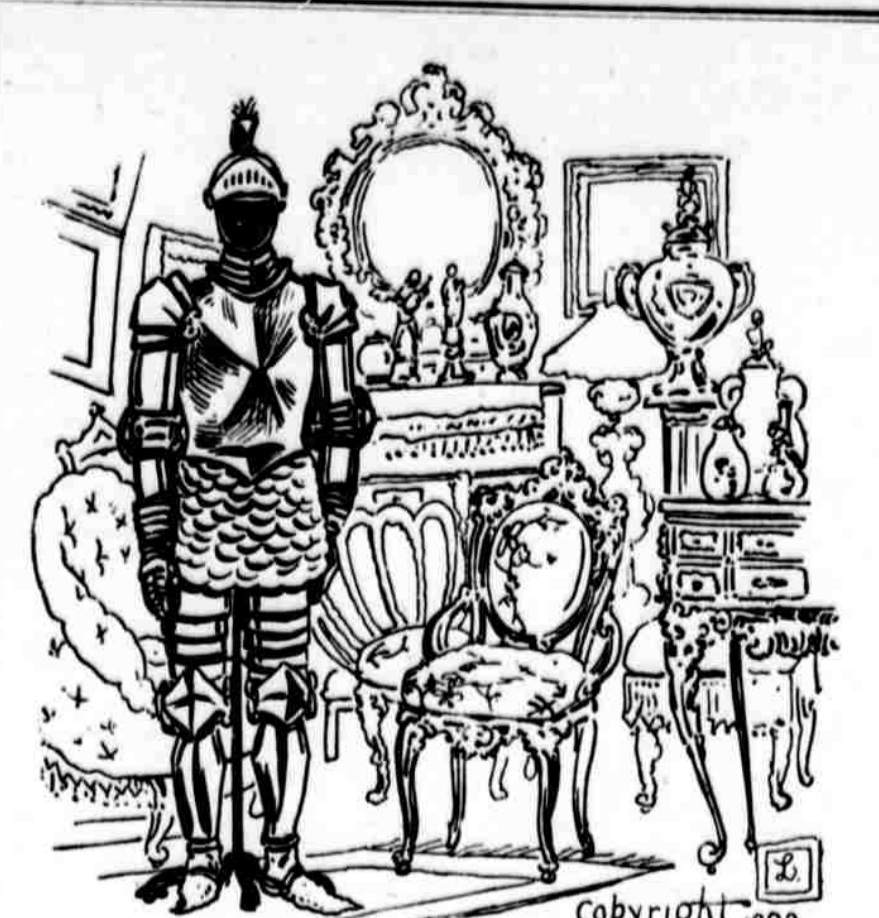
Praise him, mountains and hills, valleys and seas, and skies and earth and heaven—cyclopes with your trumpets, northern lights with your flaming ensign, morning with your castles of cloud, and evening with your billowing clouds of sunset. Do you know how they used to hold the censer in the olden time, and what it was made of? Here is a metal pan and the handle by which it was held. In the inside of this metal pan were put living coals, on the top of them a perforated cover. In a square box the frankincense was brought to the temples. This frankincense was taken out and sprinkled over the living coals, and then the perforated cover was put on, and when they were all ready for worship, then the cover was lifted from the censer and from all the other censers, and the perfumed smoke arose until it hung amid all the folds and dropped amid all the altars, and then rose in great columns of praise outside or above the temple, rising clear up toward the throne of God. So we have two censers today of Christmas frankincense. Here is the one censer of earthly frankincense.

On that we put our thanks for the mercies of the past year, the mercies of all our past lives, individual mercies, family mercies, social mercies, national mercies, and our hearts burning with gratitude send aloft the incense of praise toward the throne of Christ. Bring on more incense, and higher and higher let the columns of incense rise. Let them wreath all these pillars and hover amid all these arches, and then soar to the throne. But here is the other censer of heavenly frankincense and worship. Let them bring all their frankincense—the cherubim bring theirs, and the seraphim theirs, and the one hundred and forty-four thousand theirs, and all the eternities theirs, and let them smoke with perfume on this heavenly censer until the cloud canopies the throne of God. Then I take these two censers—the censer of earthly frankincense and the censer of heavenly frankincense—and I swing them before the throne, and then I clasp them together in one great hallelujah unto him to whom the wise men of the east brought the gold and the myrrh and the frankincense. Blessed be his glorious name forever!

THE WISE MAN SELECTETH THE "BURLINGTON ROUTE" and therefore starteth aright. He arrayeth himself in purple and fine linen, for lo, and behold, he is snugly ensconced in a "lower center" on the famous vestibuled flyer, where smoke and dust are never known. He provideth himself with a book from the generous library near at hand, adjusteth his traveling cap, and proceedeth to pass a day of unalloyed pleasure and contentment. And it came to pass, being hungry and athirst, he steppeth into the dining car, and by the beard of the prophet, 'twas a feast fit for the gods. Venison, Blue Points, Bergundy, frog legs, can-basbacks, Mum's extra dry, English plum pudding, fruits, nuts, ices, French coffee,—verily, the wise man waxeth fat, and while he lighteth a cigar, he taketh time to declare that the meal was "out of sight."

It occurred to the wise man that the country through which he journeyed was one of wondrous beauty, inasmuch that it was with deep regret he noted the nightly shadows fall. However, tenfold joy returned as he beheld the brilliantly lighted car, and the merry company it contained. Verily, it afforded a view of Elysium. The wise man retireth to rest. Deliciously unconcerned, he sleeps the sleep of the righteous and awakes much refreshed. His train is on time, his journey ended. He rejoiceth with exceeding great joy, as he holds a return ticket by the same route, the "Great Burlington."

THE FOOLISH MAN BUYETH A TICKET OF A scalper. In the morning, behold, he saveth fifty cents; and lo, at nightfall he is out \$9.27. He starteth wroth. With might and main he hurrieth to the depot, only to find his train four hours late. The peanut boy seizeth him up and selleteth him a paper of an uncertain date. As he journeyeth along, he formeth a new acquaintance, for whom he casheth a check. Five minutes for refreshments. While he rusheth to the lunch counter some one stealths his grip-sack. He changeth cars, lo these many times, and it striketh the foolish man that he "doesn't get through pretty fast," and he becometh his ill luck. He getteth a cinder in his eye, and verily he sweareth and cusseth full free. He exchangeeth three pieces of silver for a bunk in a sleeper, and awaketh just in time to catch an infernal nigger sneaking off with his boots; the Porter's excuse availeth nothing, and the foolish man straightway putteth his boots under his pillow, that no man may break in and steal. His train runneth into a washout, a hackman taketh him in to the tune of six shillings, and the foolish man lifteth up his voice in great lamentation, for lo and behold, the tavern is away but half a block. He reacheth home weary and heartsore; his trunk cometh next day minus the cover and one handle, he resolveth hereafter to travel only by the "Great Burlington."



A KNIGHT'S LODGING. A warrior bold Of days of old From place to place kept dodging: For peace of mind He could not find Without a good Knight's lodging. And he would still be wandering about in his coat of mail if some kind friend had not recommended him to call on A. T. Gruetter & Co., and furnish his room with a selection of their stock of Furniture. Do likewise and be happy. AUG. TH. GRUETTER & CO. 1118 N STREET.



Nebraska's Leading Hotel. THE MURRAY. Cor. 13th and Harney Sts., OMAHA, NEB. STRICTLY FIRST-CLASS. All Modern Improvements and Conveniences. B. SILLOWAY, Proprietor. IBA HIGBY, Principal Clerk.

A TWICE TOLD TALE! The wise man selecteth the "Burlington route" and therefore starteth aright. He arrayeth himself in purple and fine linen, for lo, and behold, he is snugly ensconced in a "lower center" on the famous vestibuled flyer, where smoke and dust are never known. He provideth himself with a book from the generous library near at hand, adjusteth his traveling cap, and proceedeth to pass a day of unalloyed pleasure and contentment. And it came to pass, being hungry and athirst, he steppeth into the dining car, and by the beard of the prophet, 'twas a feast fit for the gods. Venison, Blue Points, Bergundy, frog legs, can-basbacks, Mum's extra dry, English plum pudding, fruits, nuts, ices, French coffee,—verily, the wise man waxeth fat, and while he lighteth a cigar, he taketh time to declare that the meal was "out of sight."

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

100 ENGRAVED CALLING CARDS. And Copper Plate, for \$2.50. If you have a Plate, we will furnish 100 Cards from same, at \$1.50. WESSEL PRINTING COMPANY.