

LESSON OF THE PYRAMID

WHAT I SAW CONFIRMATORY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

Dr. Talmage Begins a Series of Sermons on His Observations in the Eastern Lands—The Wonderful Pyramid of Gizeh and the Lessons It Teaches.

BROOKLYN, Oct. 18.—The vast congregation at the Brooklyn Tabernacle this morning was delighted by an exquisite rendering by Professor Henry Eyring Browne, on the new organ, of Denier's second sonata by G. Dr. Talmage's sermon was the first of a series he intends preaching on his eastern tour, entitled, "From the Pyramids to the Acropolis, or What I Saw in Egypt and Greece Confirmatory of the Scriptures." His text was Isaiah xix, 19, 20: "In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord. And it shall be for a sign and for a witness."

Isaiah no doubt here refers to the great pyramid at Gizeh, the chief pyramid of Egypt. The text speaks of a pillar in Egypt, and this is the greatest pillar ever lifted; and the text says it is to be at the border of the land, and this pyramid is at the border of the land; and the text says it shall be for a witness, and the object of this sermon is to tell what this pyramid witness. This sermon is the first of a series of sermons entitled, "From the Pyramids to the Acropolis, or What I Saw in Egypt and Greece Confirmatory of the Scriptures."

We had, on a morning of December, 1889, landed in Africa. Amid the howling boatmen at Alexandria we had come ashore and taken the rail train for Cairo, Egypt, along the banks of the most thoroughly harnessed river of all the world—the Nile. We had at eventide entered the city of Cairo, the city where Christ dwelt while staying in Egypt during the Herodite persecution. It was our first night in Egypt. No destroying angel sweeping through as once, but all the stars were out, and the skies were filled with angels of beauty and angels of light, and the air was balmy as an American June. The next morning we were early awake and at the window, looking upon palm trees in full glory of leafage, and upon gardens of fruits and flowers at the very season when our homes far away are enshrouded by bleak skies and the last leaf of the forest has gone down in the equinoxials.

But how can I describe the thrill of expectation, for today we are to see what all the world has seen or wants to see—the pyramids. We are mounted for an hour and a half's ride. We pass on amid bazaars stuffed with rugs and carpets, and curious fabrics of all sorts from Smyrna, from Algiers, from Persia, from Turkey, and through streets where we meet people of all colors and all garbs, carts loaded with garden productions, priests in gowns, women in black veils, Bedouins in long and seemingly superfluous apparel, Janisaries in jacket of embroidered gold—out and toward the great pyramid, for though there are sixty-nine pyramids still standing, the pyramid at Gizeh is the monarch of pyramids. We meet camels grunting under their loads, and see buffaloes on either side browsing in pasture fields.

The road we travel is for part of the way under clumps of acacia, and by long rows of acacia and tamarisk, but after awhile it is a path of rock and sand, and we find we have reached the margin of the desert, the great Sahara desert, and we cry out to the dragoman as we see a huge pile of rock looming in sight, "Dragoman, what is that?" His answer is, "The pyramid," and then it seemed as if we were living a century every minute. Our thoughts and emotions were too rapid and intense for utterance, and we rise on in silence until we come to the foot of the pyramid spoken of in the text, the oldest structure in all the earth, four thousand years old at least. Here it is. We stand under the shadow of a structure that shuts out all the earth and all the sky, and we look up and strain our vision to appreciate the distant top, and are overwhelmed while we cry, "The pyramid! The pyramid!"

I had started that morning with the determination of ascending the pyramid. One of my chief objects in going to Egypt was not only to see the base of that gigantic wonder, but to stand on the top of it. Yet the nearer I came to this eternity in stone the more my determination was shaken. Its altitude to me was simply appalling. A great height has always been to me a most disagreeable sensation. As we dismounted at the base of the pyramid, I said: "Others may go up it, but not I. I will satisfy myself with a view from the base. The ascent of it would be to me a foolhardy undertaking." But after I had given up all idea of ascending, I found my daughter was determined to go, and I could not let her go with strangers, and I changed my mind and we started with guides. It cannot be done without these helpers. Two or three times foolhardy men have attempted it alone, but their bodies came tumbling down, unrecognizable and lifeless.

Each person in our party had two or three guides or helpers. One of them unrolled his turban and tied it around my waist and he held the other end of the turban as a matter of safety. Many of the blocks of stone are four or five feet high and beyond any ordinary human stride unless assisted. But, two Arabs to pull and two Arabs to push, I found myself rapidly ascending from height to height, and on to altitudes terrific, and at last at the top we found ourselves on a level space of about thirty feet square. Through clearest atmosphere we looked off upon the desert, and off upon the winding Nile, and off upon the Sphinx, with its features of everlasting stone, and yonder upon the minarets of Cairo glittering in the sun, and yonder upon Memphis in ruins, and off upon the wreck of empires and the battlefields of ages, a radius of view enough to fill the mind and shock the nerves and overwhelm one's entire being.

A STARTLING ARRAY OF FIGURES. After looking around for awhile, and a kodak had pictured the group, we descended. The descent was more trying than the ascent, for climbing you need not see the depths beneath, but coming down it was impossible not to see the abysses below. But two Arabs ahead to help us down, and two Arabs to hold us back, we were lowered, hand below hand, until the ground was invitingly near, and amid the jargon of the Arabs we were safely landed. Then came one of the most wonderful feats of daring and agility. One of the Arabs solicited a dollar, saying he would run up and down the pyramid in seven minutes. We would rather have given him a dollar not to go, but this seemed a descent in seven minutes he was determined on, and by the watch in seven minutes he went to the top and was back again at the base. It was a bloodcurdling spectacle. I said the dominant color of the pyramid was gray, but in certain lights it seems to

shake off the gray of centuries and become a blond, and the silver turns to the golden. It covers thirteen acres of ground. What an antiquity! It was at least two thousand years old when the baby Christ was carried within sight of it by his fugitive parents, Joseph and Mary. The storms of forty centuries have drenched it, bombarded it, shadowed it, flashed upon it, but there it stands, ready to take another forty centuries of atmospheric attack if the world should continue to exist. The oldest buildings of the earth are juniors to this great senior of the centuries.

Herodotus says that for ten years preparations were being made for the building of this pyramid. It has eighty-two million one hundred and eleven thousand cubic feet of masonry. One hundred thousand workmen at one time toiled in its erection. To bring the stone from the quarries a causeway sixty feet wide was built. The top stones were lifted by machinery such as the world knows nothing of today. It is seven hundred and forty-six feet each side of the square base. The structure is four hundred and fifty feet high; higher than the cathedrals of Cologne, Strasburg, Rouen, St. Peter's and St. Paul's. No surprise to me that it was put at the head of the seven wonders of the world. It has a subterranean room of red granite called the "king's chamber," and another room called the "queen's chamber," and the probability is that there are other rooms yet unexplored.

The evident design of the architect was to make these rooms as inaccessible as possible. After all the work of exploration and all the digging and blasting, if you would enter these subterranean rooms, you must go through a passage of three feet eleven inches high and less than a foot wide. A sarcophagus of red granite stands down under this mountain of masonry. The sarcophagus could not have been carried in after the pyramid was built. It must have been put there before the structure was reared. Probably in that sarcophagus once lay a wooden coffin containing a dead king, but time has destroyed the coffin and destroyed the last vestige of human remains.

For three thousand years this sepulchral room was unopened, and would have been until today probably unopened had not a superstitious impression got abroad that the heart of the pyramid was filled with silver and gold and diamonds, and under Al Mamoun an excavating party went to work, and having bored and blasted through a hundred feet of rock, they found no opening ahead, and were about to give up the attempt when the workmen heard a stone roll down into a seemingly hollow place, and encouraged by that they resumed their work and came into the underground rooms.

The disappointment of the workmen in finding the sarcophagus empty of all silver and gold and precious stones was so great that they would have assassinated Al Mamoun, who employed them, had he not hid in another part of the pyramid as much silver and gold as would pay them for their work at ordinary rates of wages and included them there to die with them to their surprise came upon adequate compensation.

WAS THE DESIGN GOD'S OWN? I wonder not that this mountain of limestone and red granite has been the fascination of scholars, of scientists, of intelligent Christians in all ages. Sir John Herschel, the astronomer, said he thought it had astronomical significance. The wise men who accompanied Napoleon's army into Egypt went into profound study of the pyramid. In 1865 Professor Smyth and his wife lived in the empty tomb near by the pyramid that they might be as continuously as possible close to the pyramid which they were investigating. The pyramid, built more than four thousand years ago, being a complete geometrical figure, wise men have concluded it must have been divinely constructed. Man came through thousands of years to fine architecture, to music, to painting, but this was perfect at the world's start, and God must have directed it.

All astronomers and geometricians and scientists say that it was scientifically and mathematically constructed before science and mathematics were born. From the inscriptions on the pyramid, from its proportions, from the points of the compass recognized in its structure, from the direction in which its tunnels run, from the relative position of the blocks that compose it, scientists, Christians and infidels have demonstrated that the work was planned this pyramid must have known the world's sphericity, and that its motion was rotary, and how many miles it was in diameter and circumference, and how many tons the world weighs, and knew at what point in the heavens certain stars would appear at certain periods of time.

Not in the four thousand years since the putting up of that pyramid has a single fact in astronomy or mathematics been found to contradict the wisdom of that structure. Yet they had not at the age when the pyramid was started an astronomer or an architect or a mathematician worth mentioning. Who then planned the pyramid? Who superintended its erection? Who from its first foundation stone to its capstone erected everything? It must have been God. Isaiah was right when he said in my text, "A pillar shall be at the border of the land of Egypt and it shall be for a sign and a witness." The pyramid is God's first Bible. Hundreds of thousands of years before the first line of the Book of Genesis was written, the lesson of the pyramid was written.

Well, of what is this Cyclopean masonry a sign and a witness? Among other things—of the prolongation of human work compared with the brevity of human life. In all the four thousand years this pyramid has only lost eighteen feet in width; one side of its square at the base changed only from seven hundred and sixty-four feet to seven hundred and forty-six feet, and the most of that eighteen feet taken off by architects to furnish stone for building in the city of Cairo. The men who constructed the pyramid worked at it only a few years, and then put down the trowel, and the compass, and the square, and lowered the derrick which had lifted the ponderous weights; but forty centuries has their work stood, and it will be good for forty centuries more.

All Egypt has been shaken by terrible earthquakes and cities have been prostrated or swallowed, but that pyramid has defied all volcanic paroxysms. It has looked upon some of the greatest battles ever fought since the world stood. Where are the men who constructed it? Their bodies gone to dust and even the dust scattered. Even the sarcophagus in which the king's mummy may have slept is empty. MEN'S WORK SURVIVES THEM. So men die but their work lives on. We are all building pyramids not to last four thousand years, but forty thousand, forty million, forty trillion, forty quadrillion, forty quintillion. For a while we wield the trowel, or pound with the hammer, or measure with the yard stick, or write with the pen, or experiment with the scientific battery, or plan with the brain, and for a while the feet walk, and the eye sees, and the ear hears, and the tongue speaks. All

the good words or bad words we speak are spread out into one layer for a pyramid. All the kind deeds or malevolent deeds we do are spread out into another layer. All the Christian or un-Christian example we set is spread out into another layer. All the indirect influences of our lives are spread out into another layer. Then the time soon comes when we put down the implement of toil and pass away, but the pyramid stands.

The Twentieth century will not rock it down, nor the Thirtieth century, nor the One Hundredth century. The earthquake that rocks this world to pieces will not stop our influence for good or evil. You modestly say, "It is true in regard to the great workers for good or evil, and of gigantic geniuses, Miltonian or Talleyrandian, but not of me, for I live and work on a small scale." My hearer, remember that those who built the pyramids were common workmen. Not one of them could lift one of those great stones. It took a dozen of them to lift one stone, and others just wielded a trowel, clicking it on the hard edge or smoothing the mortar between the layers. One hundred thousand men toiled on those sublime elevations.

If one of those granite blocks that I just touch with my feet on this December morning in 1889 as the two Arabs pull me and the two other Arabs push me, could speak out and tell its history it would say: "The place of my nativity was down in the great stone quarry of Mokattam or Asswan. Then they began to bore at my sides, and then to drive down great iron needles, crushing against me till the whole quarry quaked and thundered. Then I was piled out with crowbars and levers, scores of men putting their weight on the leverage. Then chains were put around me and I was hoisted with wheels that groaned under the weight, and many workmen had their hands on the cranks and turned until the muscles on their arms stood out in ridges, and the sweat rolled from their dusky foreheads.

Then they were drawn by long teams of oxen, yoked after yoke, yoke after yoke. Then I was put on an inclined plane and hauled upward and how many iron tools, and how many human arms, and how many beasts of burden were employed to get me to this place no one can tell. Then I had to be measured and squared and compassed and fitted in before I was left here to do my silent work of thousands of years. God only knows how many hands were busied in getting me from my geological cradle in the quarry to this entombment of innumerable ages." My hearer, that is the autobiography of one block of the pyramid. Cheops didn't build the pyramid. Some boss mason in the world's twilight didn't build the pyramid. One hundred thousand men built it and perhaps from first to last two hundred thousand men.

So with the pyramids now rising—pyramids of evil or pyramids of good. The pyramid of drunkenness, rising ever since the time when Noah got drunk on wine, although there was at his time such a superabundance of water. All the schoolmasters of the ages adding their layers of ale casks and wine pitchers and rum jugs until the pyramid overshadows the Great Sahara desert of desolated homes and broken hearts and destroyed livers. And as the pyramid still rises, layers of human skulls piled on top of human skulls and other mountains of human bones to whiten the peaks reaching unto the heavens, hundreds of thousands of people are building that pyramid.

So with the pyramid of righteousness. Multitudes of hands are toiling on the steep, hands infantile, hands octogenarian, masculine hands, female hands, strong hands, weak hands. Some clanging a trowel, some pulling a rope, some measuring the sides. Layers of psalm books on top of layers of holy sacrifice. And hundreds of thousands coming down to sleep their last sleep, but other hundreds of thousands going up to take their places, and the pyramids will continue to rise until the millennial morning glids the completed work, and the toilers on these heights shall take off their aprons and throw down their trowels, crying, "It is finished!"

BUILDING FOR ETERNITY. Your business and mine is not to build a pyramid but to be one of the hundreds of thousands who shall ring a trowel or pull a rope or turn the crank of a derrick, or hook to a derrick, while lifting another block to a elevation. Those who do seemingly a small work and a brief work, it is a work that shall last forever. In the last day many a man and woman whose work has never been recognized on earth will come to a special honor. The Ecumenical council, now in session at Washington, its delegates the honored representatives of fifty million Methodists in all parts of the earth, will at every session do honor to the memory of John Wesley, but I wonder if any of them will wonder of what I did for the memory of humble Peter of their, the Moravian, who brought John Wesley into the kingdom of God.

I rejoice that all the thousands who have been toiling on the pyramid of righteousness will at last be recognized and rewarded—the mother who brought her children to Christ, the Sabbath teacher who brought her class to the knowledge of the truth, the unpretending man who saved a soul, the great warrior who will be more honored than the scepter. As great as the work was going on the soldiers were ordered to the front and a sick man jumped out of an ambulance in which he was being carried to the hospital. The surgeon asked him what he meant by getting out of the ambulance when he was sick and almost ready to die. The soldier answered: "Doctor, I am going to the front. I had rather die on the field than die in an ambulance." Thank God, if we cannot do much we can do a little.

Further, carrying out the idea of my text, the pyramid is a sign and a witness that big tombstones are not the best way of keeping one's self affectionately remembered. This pyramid and the sixty-nine other pyramids still standing were built for sepulchers, all this great pile of granite and limestone by which we stand today, to cover the memory of a dead king. It was the great West Indian abbey of the ancients. Some say that Cheops was the king who built this pyramid, but it is uncertain. Who was Cheops anyhow? All that the world knows about him could be told in a few sentences. The only thing certain is that he was bad, and that he shut up the temples of worship, and that he was hated so that the Egyptians were glad when he was dead.

This pyramid of rock seven hundred and forty feet each side of the square base and four hundred and fifty feet high wins for him no respect. If a bone of his arm or foot had been found in the sarcophagus beneath the pyramid, it would have excited no more veneration than the skeleton of a camel bleaching in the Libyan desert; yes, less veneration, for when I saw the carcass of a camel by the roadside on the way to Memphis, I said to myself, "I wonder of what I did." We say nothing against the marble or the bronze of the acropolis. Let all that sculpture and florescence and arborescence

so for the places of the dead be done, if means will allow it. But if after one is dead there is nothing left to remind the world of him but some pieces of stone, there is but little left.

Some of the finest monuments are over people who amounted to nothing while they lived, while some of the worthiest men and women have not had above them a stone big enough to tell their name. Joshua, the greatest warrior the world ever saw, no monument; Moses, the greatest lawyer that ever lived, no monument; Paul, the greatest preacher that ever lived, no monument; Christ, the Saviour of the world and the rapture of heaven, no monument. A pyramid over scoundrelly Cheops, but only a shingle with a lead pencil epitaph over many a good man's grave. Some of the finest obelisks have been erected about the worst rascals. Today at Brussels there is a pyramid of flowers on the grave of Boulanger, the notorious libertine. Yet it is natural to want to be remembered. MONUMENTS MORE ENDURING THAN MARBLE.

While there seems to be no practical use for post mortem consideration later than the time of one's great-grandchildren, yet no one wants to be forgotten as soon as the mosquitoes are over. This pyramid, which Isaiah says is a sign and a witness, demonstrates that neither limestone nor red granite are competent to keep one affectionately remembered; neither can bronze; neither can Parian marble; neither can Aberdeen granite do the work. But there is something out of which to build an everlasting monument and that will keep one freshly remembered four thousand years—yes, forever and ever. It does not stand in marble yards, it is not to be purchased at morning stores. Yet it is in the corner of every neighborhood, plenty of it, inexhaustible quantities of it. It is the greatest stuff in the universe to build monuments out of. I refer to the memories of those to whom we can do a kindness, the memories of those whose struggles we may alleviate, the memories of those whose souls we may save.

All around Cairo and Memphis there are the remains of pyramids that have gone down under the wearing away of time, and this great pyramid of which Isaiah in my text speaks will vanish if the world lasts long enough; and if the world does not last, then with the earth's dissolution the pyramid will also dissolve. But the memories of those with whom we associate are indestructible. They will be more vivid the other side of the grave than this side. It is possible for me to do you a good and for you to do me a good that will be vivid in memory as long as the world is. The world is burned up as all the sands of the seashore, and all the leaves of the forest, and all the grass blades of the field, and all the stars of heaven added together, and that aggregate multiplied by all the figures that all the bookkeepers of all time ever wrote.

That desire to be remembered after we are gone is a divinely implanted desire and not to be crushed out, but I implore you, seek something better than the immortalization of rock or bronze or book. Put yourself into the eternity of the one whom you help for both worlds, this and the next. Comfort a hundred souls and there will be through all the cycles of eternity at least a hundred souls that will be your monuments. A prominent member of this church was brought to God by some one saying to her at the church door at the close of service, "Come again!" Will it be possible for that one so invited to forget the invited?

A minister passing along the street every day looked up and smiled to a baby in the window. The father and mother wondered who it was that thus pleasantly greeted their child. They found out that he was the pastor of a church. They said, "We must go and hear him preach." They went and heard him and both were converted to God. Will there be any power in fifty million years to erase from the souls of those parents the memory of that man who by his friendliness brought them to God? Matthew Cranswick, an evangelist, said that he had the names of two hundred souls saved through his singing the hymn, "Arise, my soul, arise!" Will any of those two hundred souls in all eternity forget Matthew Cranswick? Will any of the four hundred and seventy-nine women and children imprisoned at Lucknow, India, waiting for massacre by the Sepoys, forget Havelock and Outram and Sir David Baird, who broke in and effected their rescue?

To some of you who have loved and served the Lord heaven will be a great picture gallery of remembrance. Hosts of the glorified will never forget you. Ah, that is the way of building monuments that shall never feel the touch of decay. I do not ask you to suppress this natural desire of being remembered after you are gone, but I only want you to put your memories into a shape that shall never weaken or fade. During the course of my ministry I have been intimately associated in Christian work with hundreds of good men and women.

My memory is hung with their portraits, more accurate and vivid than anything that Rembrandt ever put on canvas: Father Grice, De Witt C. Moore, Father Voorhees, E. P. Hopkins, William Stephens, John Van Rensselaer, Gasherie De Witt, Dr. Ward and hundreds of others, all of them gone out of this life, but I hold the memory of them and will hold them forever. They cannot escape from me. I will remember them just as they looked on earth, and I will remember many of you after the earth has been an extinct planet for ages infinite. Oh, what stuff the memory is for monument building!

An Etching in Fun. "Why do you work for a living?" It was Clara de Macgillivuddy who spoke these fateful words.

And Clara was rich. Rich beyond the most resplendent dreams of the dozens and dozens who sought her hand. But she loved a man who was poor. And he was respectable. Respectable beyond the limit of reason. Because he would not avail himself of his opportunities and organize a matrimonial combine with Clara, permitting her to put up the capital. He was a rank outsider, he was. And he apparently wanted to stay there. He was in love with his work. That was another evidence that he had mental aberration in half a dozen places. "Algernon," she cried, in passionate, pleading tones, "tell me, why do you work for a living?"

He had not answered her when she had asked this the first time, but he could not refrain longer. "Clara," he said, and there was that in his voice which makes the heart grow sick and echoes through the interminable corridors of despair, "listen to me: I work for a living because the darn thing won't work for me." Clara uttered a piercing scream and flung herself into his arms. Algernon was a funny man on the local newspaper. And she was on to him at last.—Detroit

OIL HEATERS Hot Air Furnaces.



RUDGE & MORRIS, 1122 N STREET.

"NOT WORTH \$5.00"

THE SHOES We offered last week for \$5.00 were worth more money, but we couldn't get over \$5.00 for them, because DASHITES will not wear \$6.00 shoes. THE SHOES we offer this week are not worth \$5.00 so we ask \$3.00 for them. 1015 O STREET. S. B. NISBET.



Dangler Gas Heating and Cooking *STOVES* W. B. WOLCOTT, Telephone 273. 230 South Eleventh St.

G. A. RAYMER & CO. COAL

CANON, ROCK SPRINGS, PERFECTION. DUQUOIN, JACKSON, HICKORY BLOCK, IOWA, COLORADO, NEWCASTLE. BEST GRADE OF HARD COAL. Telephone 390. Office 1134 O Street.

THE OLD RELIABLE CARPET HOUSE

Is now ready to show the Latest Fall Styles in CARPETINGS From the Best Manufacturers' Standard Makes and Fine Work Guaranteed. A. M. DAVIS & SON. Phone 219. 1112 O Street.