THE WELL OF BETHLEHEM

DISCOURSE BY REV. DR. TALMAGE AT THE TABERNACLE.

The Gospel the Fountain of Perpetual Youth-Skeptics Measure Eternity with an Hour Glass and the Throne of God with a Yard Stick.

BROOKLYN, Nov. 27. -This morning at the Tabernacle, after explaining appropriate passages of Scripture, the Rev. T. De Witt Talmage, D.D., gave out the following hymn, that was sung by the congregation with great heartiness:

Buried in sorrow and in sin At hell's dark door we lay; But we arise by grace divine, To see a glorious day.

The subject of the sermon was "Thirst in a Cavern;" and the text: "Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!"-II Samuel xxiii, 15.

War, always distressing, is especially ruinous in harvest time. When the crops are all ready for the sickle, to have them trodden down by cavalry horses and heavy supply trains gullying the fields, is enough to make any man's heart sick. When the last great war broke out in Europe, and France and Germany were coming into horrid collision, I rode across their golden fields, and saw the tents pitched, and the trenches dug in the very midst of the ripe fields, the long scythe of battle sharpening to mow down harvests of men in great winrows of the dead. It was at this season of the harvest that the army of the Philistines came down upon Bethlehem. Hark to the clamor of their voices, the neighing of their chargers, the blare of their

trumpets, and the clash of their shields!

Let David and his men fall back! The Lord's host sometimes loses the day. But David knew where to hide. He had been brought up in that country. Boys are inquisitive and they know all about the region where they were born and brought up. If you should go back to the old homestead, you could, with your eyes shut, find your way to the meadow, or the orchard, or the hill back of the house, with which you were familiar thirty or forty years ago. So David knew the cave of Adullam. Perhaps, in his boyhood days, he had played "hide and seek" with his comrades all about the old cave; and though others might not have known it, David did. Travelers say there is only one way of getting into that cave, and that is by a very narrow path; but David was stout, and steady headed, and steady nerved, and so, with his three brave staff officers, he goes along that path, finds his way into the cave, sits down, looks around at the roof and the dark passages of the mountain, good water of Bethlehem was in the posfeels very weary with the forced march, and water he must have, or die. I do there, his mother drank there. He renot know but there may have been drops trickling down the side of the cavern, or was a boy, and came up there from play. that there may have been some water in the goatskin slung to his girdle; but that was not what he wanted. He wanted a deep, full, cold drink, such as a man gets only cut of an old well with more than the same of an old well with more than the same of an old well with the same thing in it that blessed the lips and refreshed the brow better only out of an old well with moss cov- than anything we have found since. As ered bucket. David remembered that we think of that dear old well, the memovery near that cave of Adullam there ries of the past flow into each other like was such a well as that, a well to which he used to go in boyhood—the well of more as we remember that the hands that Bethleherns and he almost imagines that | tised to lay hold the rope and the hearts he can hear the liquid plash of that well, and his parched tongue moves through now. We never get over these reminishis hot lips as he says; "Oh, that one would give me drink of the water of the song writer of this country, once said to well of Bethlehem, which is by the me that his song, "Woodman, Spare That It was no sooner said than done. The

three brave staff officers bound to their feet and start. Brave soldiers will take even a hint from their commander. But between them and the well lay the host of the Philistines; and what could three | please to tell me whether the woodman men do with a great army? Yet where there is a will there is a way, and, with get the tree under which we played. We their swords slashing this way and that, they make their path to the well. While the Philistines are amazed at the seeming foolhardiness of these three men, and cannot make up their minds exactly what it means, the three men have come to the well. They drop the bucket. They bring up the water. They pour it in the pail, and then start for the cave. "Stop them!" cry the Philistines. "Clip about it. And this is true of this them with your swords! Stab them with Gospel well. The Philistines have at them with your swords! Stab them with your spears! Stop those three men!" Too late! They have got around the hill. The hot rocks are splashed with the overflowing water from the vessel as it is | tion and sarcasm flash? Why, the skeptics carried up the cliffs. The three men | tell us that we cannot come to that foungo along the dangerous path, and with | tain! They say the water is not fit to cheeks flushed with the excitement, and drink anyhow. "If you are really thirsty ati out of breath in their haste, they fling their swords, red with the skirmish, is the well of art, there is the well of to the side of the cave, and cry out to science." They try to substitute, instead David. "There, captain of the host, is of our boyhood faith, a modern mixture. what you wanted, a drink of the well of They say a great many beautiful things Bethlehem, which is by the gate."

find Christ in it, and unless I can bring a | a mint julep of worldly stimulants, when gospel out of these words thet will arouse nothing will satisfy us but "a drink of and comfort and bless, I shall wish I had the water of the well of Bethlehem, which pover seen them; for your time would be is at the gate." They try to starve us on wasted, and against my soul the dark husks, when the Father's banquet is record would be made that this day I ready, and the best ring is taken from the stood before a great audience of sinning, suffering and dying men, and told them of no rescue. By the cross of the Son of ready lifted for the dance. They patronize God, by the throne of the eternal judg-ment, that shall not bet May the Lord use elernity with their hour glass, and Jesus help me to tell you the truth to- the throne of the great God with their

sometimes letters tied under the wing, pray God that there may be somewhere and they fly hundreds of miles-100 miles in an hour-carrying a message. So I have thought I would like to have it now. Oh, heavenly Dove! bring under thy wing today, to my soul and to the back again to that old well. I think the souls of this people, some message of tide is turning, and that the old Gospel is light, and love, and peace!

cradle at the well curb; the builder puts | not give any comfort; and that they drop down his trowel; the traveler puts down | an arctic midnight upon the death pillow. his pack. Then one draws the water for all the rest, himself taking the very last. They fail when there is a dead chill in the house; and when the soul comes The cup is passed around, and the fires to leap into the fathomless ocean of eter- gate." of thirst are put out; the traveler starts niny, they give to the man not so much on his journey, and the workman takes as a broken spar to cling to. Depend

up his burden. My friends, we come today around, the Gospel well. We put down our pack tured. If there be not three anointed of burdens and our implements of toil. One man must draw the water for those sceration to do the work, then the swords who have gathered around the well. I will leap from Jehovah's buckler, and the

Bethlehem, which is by the gate."

This Gospel well, like the well spoken of in the text, is a well of Bethlehem. David had known hundreds of wells of water, but he wanted to drink from that particular one, and he thought nothing could slake his thirst like that. And unless your soul and mine can get access to the fountain open for sin and uncleanness we must die. That fountain is the well of Bethlehem. It was dug in the night. It was dug by the light of a lantern-the star that hung down over the manger. It was dug, not at the gate of lasar's palaces, not in the park of a Jerusalem Kargain maker. It was dug in a barn. The camels lifted their weary heads to listen as the work went on. The shepherds, unable to sleep, because the heavens were filled with bands of music, came down to see the opening of the well. The angels of God, at the first gush of the living water, dipped their chalices of joy into it, and drank to the health of earth and heaven as they cried: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace." Sometimes in our modern barns the water is brought through the pipes of the city to the very nostrils of the horses or cattle; but this well in the Bethlehem barn was not so much for the beasts that perish as for our race, thirst smitten, desert traveled and simoon struck. Oh, my soul, weary with sin, stoop down and drink today out of that Bethlehem well!

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so my soul panteth after Thee, O God!" You would get a better understanding of his amidst the Adirondacks in summer time. Here comes a swift footed deer. The hounds are close on the track; it has leaped chasms and scaled cliffs; it is fagged out; its eyes are rolling in death; its tongue is lolling from its foaming mouth. Faster the deer, faster the dogs, until it plunges into Schroon lake, and the hounds can follow it no farther, and it puts down its head and mouth until the nostril is clean submerged in the cool wave, and I understand it: "As the hart panteth for the water brook, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God!" h, bring me water from that well! Little child, who has learned of Jesus in the Sabbath school, bring me some of that living water. Old man, who tifty years ago didst find the well, bring me some of that water. Stranger in a strange land, who used to hear sung amidst the Highands of Scotland, to the tune of "Bonnie them," "The Star, the Star of Bethle-hem," bring me some of that water. Whosoever drinketh of that water shall ever thirst. "Oh, that one would give Bethlehem, which is by the gate!"

Again, this Gospel well, like the one token of in the text, is a captured well. David remembered the time when that session of his nucestors. His father drank cences. George P. Morris, the great Tree." was sung in a great concert hall. and the memories of early life were so wrought upon the audience by that song that, after the singing was done, an aged man arose in the audience, overwhelmed with emotion, and said, "Sir, will you really spared that tree?" We never fornever forget the fountain at which we drank. Alas for the man who has no early memories!

David thought of that well, that boyhood well, and he wanted a drink of it, but he remembered that the Philistines had captured it. When those three men tried to come up to the well in behalf of David they saw swords gleaming around times captured it. When we come to take a full, old fashioned drink of pardon and comfort, do not their swords of indignanow, there is the well of philosophy, there about the soul, and they try to feed our A text is of no use to me unless I can | immortal hunger on rose leaves, and mix You know that carrier pigeons have old Gospel well is a captured well. I in the class host three ancinted men, with courage enough to go forth in the strength of the enumpotent Goa, with the to take its place again in the family, and It is not an unusual thing to see people gather around a well in summer time. The husbandman puts down his upon it, that well will come into our pos-

"If God spared not his own Son, but freely gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" "For I am persuaded that neither height, nor depth, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come," shall take from us into final captivity the Gospel of my blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

Again, the Gospel well, like the one gate. The traveler stops the camel today, and gets down and dips out of the valley of the east some very beautiful, clear, bright water, and that is out of the very well that David longed for. Do you know that that well was at the gate so that nobody could go into Bethlehem without going right past it? And so it is with this Gospel well-it is at the gate. It is, in the first place, at the gate of purification. We cannot wash away our sins unless with that water. I take the responsibility of saying that there is no man, woman or child in this house today that has escaped sinful defilement. Do you say it is outrageous and ungallant for me to make such a charge? Do you say, "I have never stolen—I have never blasphemed—I have never committed unchastity—I have never been guilty of murder?" I reply, you have committed a sin worse than blasphemy, worse than unchastity, worse than theft, worse than murder. We have all committed it. We have by our sin re-crucified the Lord, and that is deicide. And if there be any who dare to plead "not guilty" to the indictment, then the hosts of heaven will be impaneled as a jury to render a unanimous verdict against us; guilty one, guilty all. With what a slashing stroke that one passage cuts us | we will meet them. Travelers parting away from all our pretensions: "There is none that doeth good-no, not one.' "Oh," says some one, "all we want, all at Stockholm, or Vienna, or Jerusalem, the race wants, is development." Now I want to tell you that the race develops without the Gospel into a Sodom, a Five Points, a great Salt Lake City. It always develops downward, and never upward, except as the grace of God lays hold of it. What, then, is to become of our soul without Christ? Banishment. Disaster. But I bless my Lord Jesus Christ that there is a well at the gate of purification. For great sin, great pardon. For eighty years of transgression, an eternity of forgiveness. For crime deep as hell, an atonement high as heaven; that where sin abounded, so grace may much more abound; that as sin reigned unto death, even so may grace reign through rightcousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ we drink of the water of the well of | our Lord. Angel of the Conenant, dip thy wing in this living fountain today, and wave it over this solemn assemblage, that our souls may be washed in "the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate."

the Gospel is at the gate of comfort. Do love or intercession. you know where David was when he uttered the words of the text? He was in the cave of Adullam. That is where some of you are now. Has the world | you are. Let me take hold of your arm. dead lamb in the fold? Are you igno- and say I did not invite him. Oh, if you rant of the way to the cemetery? Have could only just look at my Lord once; if you ever heard the bell toll when it you could just see him full in the face; aye, seemed as if every stroke of the iron clapper beat your heart? Are the skies whom I read about at the beginning of the as bright when you look into them as they used to be when other eyes, now closed, used to look into them? Is there In northern New Jersey one winter, three some trunk or drawer in your house that little children wandered off from home you go to only on anniversary days, in a snow storm. Night came on, when there comes beating against your | Father and mother said, "Where are the soul the surf of a great ocean of agony? children?" They could not be found. It is the cave of Adullam. The cave of They started out in haste, and the news Adullami Is there some David here ran to the neighbors, and before mornhow hard it was for them to part! Why not have two seats in the Lord's charlot. so that both the old folks might have gone up at once? My aged mother, in her last moment, said to my father. "Father, wouldn't it be nice if we could both go together?" No, no, no. We must part. And there are wounded hearts here today. The world cannot comfort you. What can it bring you? Nothing. Nothing. The salve they try to put on your wounds will not stick. They cannot, with their bungling surgery, mend the broken bones.

Zoppar the Naamathite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Eliphaz the Temanite, come in and talk, and talk, and talk, but miserable comforters are they all. They cannot pour light into the cave of Adullam. They cannot bring a single draught of water from "the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate." But glory be to Jesus Christ, there is comfort at the gate! There is life in the well at the gate. If you give me time, I will draw up a promise for every man, woman and child in this house. Aye, I will do it in two minutes. I will lay hold the rope of the old well. What is your trouble? "Oh." you say, "I am so sick, so weary of life -ailments after ailments." I will draw up a promise: "The inhabitants shall never say, 'I am sick." What is your trouble? "Oh, it is loss of friends-bereavement," you say. I will draw you up a promise, fresh and cool, out of the well: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." What is your trouble? You say it is the infirmities of old age. I will draw you up a promise: "Down to old age I am with thee, to hoary hairs will I carry thee," What is your trouble? "Oh," you say, "I have a widowed soul, and my children cry for bread." I bring up this promise: "Leave thy fatherless children-I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in of your sorrows today, and bring to your parched lips "a drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the

Again, the Gospel well is at the gate of heaven. I have not heard yet one single intelligent account of the future to go to the skeptic's heaven, to the transcendentalist's heaven, to the worldly will try and draw the water today; and if, after I have poured out from this living fountain for your soul, I just taste of it myself, you will not begrudge me at the water of the well of back again to "the water of the well of the we

"drink from the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate." "L Their heaven has no Christ in it, and a Bethlehem, which is by the gate." God be for us, who can be against us?" heaven without Christ, though you could heaven without Christ, though you could sweep the whole universe into it, would be a hell! Oh, they tell us there are no songs there, there are no coronations in heaven-that is all imagination. They tell us we will do there about what we do here, only on a larger scale-geometrize with clearer intellect, and with alpenstock go clambering up over the icebergs in an eternal vacation. Rather than that, I turn to my Bible, and I find spoken of in my text, is a well at the John's picture of that good land, that heaven which was your lullaby in infancy, that heaven which our children in the Sabbath school will sing about this afternoon-that heaven which has a

"well at the gate." After you have been on a long journey, and you come in all bedusted and tired to your home, the first thing you want is refreshing ablution; and I am glad to know that after we get through the pilgrimage of this world-the hard, dusty pilgrimage-we will find a well at the gate. In that one wash away will go our sins and sorrows. I do not care whether cherub or seraph or my own departed friends in that blessed land place to my lips the cup; the touch of that cup will be life, will be heaven! I was reading of how the ancients sought for the fountain of perpetual youth. They thought if they could only find and drink out of that well the old would become young again, the sick would be cured, and everybody would have eternal juvenescence. Of course, they could not find it. Eureka! I have found it!-"the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate."

I think we had better make a grain with those who leave us, going out of this world from time to time, as to where appoint a place of meeting. They say: "We will meet at Rome, or we will meet or Bethlehem." Now, when we come to stand by the death pillow of those who are leaving us for the far land, do not let us weep as though we would never see them again, but let us, there standing, appoint a place where we will meet. Where shall it be? Shall it be on the banks of the river? No. The banks are too long. Shall it be in the temple? No. no. There is such a host there-ten thousand times ten thousand. Where shall we meet our loved ones? Let us make an appointment to meet at the well by the gate. Oh, heaven! Sweet heaven! Dear heaven! Heaven, where our good friends are! Heaven, where Jesus is! Heaven! Heaven!

But while I stand here there comes a revulsion of feeling when I look into your eyes and know there are souls here dying of thirst, notwithstanding the well at the gate. Between them and the well of heaven there is a great army of sin; and though Christ is ready to clear a way to Further, I remark that this well of that well for them, they will not have his

But I am glad to know that you may come yet. The well is here-the well of heaven. Come; I do not care how feeble services-just come up behind him and touch his feet-methinks you would live. he went and saw the three children. He examined their bodies. He found that the older boy had taken off his coat and wrapped it around the younger one, the baby, and then taken off his vest and put it around the other one; and there they all died, he probably the first, for he had no coat or vest. Oh, it was a touching scene when that was brought to light! I was on the ground a little while after, and it brought the whole scene to my mind; and I thought to myself of a more melting scene than that. It is that Jesus, our elder brother, took off the robe of royalty, and laid aside the last garment of earthly comfort, that he might wrap our poor souls from the blast. Oh, the height, and the depth, and the length and the breadth of the love of Christ!

Almost as Bad as a Fire.

In the Leipsic Stadt theatre there is an enormous cistern that overhangs the stage, from which an alarming quantity of water can be flooded down on the boards at the shortest warning. The knowledge of this provision has hitherto been a great source of comfort to the actors. They were not, however, prepared for an impromptu that occurred several weeks ago. Without a moment's warning, and in the presence of stalls, pit and curtain, nearly the whole comto make a very hasty retreat from the stage, to drop the curtain and to get their clothes dried before they could again "go on." The audience seemed immensely amused, and no "demoralizing panic" has to be recorded,-Chicago

Death of an Investigator.

The chemists of the world have been called upon to mourn the recent death of one of their most celebrated investigators. me." I break through the armed ranks I refer to Gustav Robert Kirchhoff. He was the discoverer of spectrum analysis, tion of the sun and other heavenly bodies. It is today the most delicate means of chemical analysis. Some idea of its precision can be formed when I tell you that world from anybody who does not be-lieve in the Bible. They throw such a fog about the subject that I do not want part of a grain of lithium salt. It has enabled chemists to discover several new elements and to prove that some sub-

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always gone smoothly with you? Has it never pursued you with slander? Is your health always good? Have your fortunes never perished? Are your chilfortunes never perished? Are your chilfortunes never perished? Are your chilfortunes never perished? Is there one of the world in the well curb. "Ho. every one that thirsteth, come." I would rather win one soul to Christ this morning than wear the crown of the world's dominion. Do not let any man go away Wall Paper and a Full Line of

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Adullam! Is there some David here whose faiherly heart wayward Absalom has broken? Is there some Abraham here who is lonely because Sarah is dead in three children, but found them not. the family plot of Machpelah? After thirty or forty years of companionship, a place that had not been looked at and thirty or forty years of companionship,

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