

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

"FIVE PICTURES" THE SUBJECT OF A THRILLING DISCOURSE.

"Behold I see the Heavens Opened"—Acts vii: 56-60—Delivered at Academy of Music, New York, Sunday, Sept. 16, 1895.



STEPHEN HAD been preaching a rousing sermon, and the people could not stand it. They resolved to do as men sometimes would like to do in this day, if they dared, with some plain preacher of righteousness—kill him. The only way to silence this man was to knock the breath out of him. So they rushed Stephen out of the gates of the city, and with curse, and whoop, and bellow, they brought him to the cliff, as was the custom when they wanted to take away life by stoning. Having brought him to the edge of the cliff, they pushed him off. After he had fallen they came and looked down, and seeing that he was not yet dead, they began to drop stones upon him, stone after stone. Amid this horrible rain of missiles, Stephen clambers up on his knees and folds his hands, while the blood drips from his temples; and then, looking up, he makes two prayers—one for himself and one for his murderers. "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;" that was for himself. "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge;" that was for his murderers. Then, from pain and loss of blood, he swooned away and fell asleep.

I want to show you to-day five pictures. Stephen gazing into heaven. Stephen looking at Christ. Stephen stoned. Stephen in his dying prayer. Stephen asleep.

First, look at Stephen gazing into heaven. Before you take a leap you want to know where you are going to land. Before you climb a ladder you want to know to what point the ladder reaches. And it was right that Stephen, within a few moments of heaven, should be gazing into it. We would all do well to be found in the same posture. There is enough in heaven to keep us gazing. A man of large wealth may have stately in the hall, and paintings in the sitting-room, and works of art in all parts of the house, but he has the chief pictures in the art gallery, and there hour after hour you walk with catalogue and glass and ever-increasing admiration. Well, heaven is the gallery where God has gathered the chief treasures of his realm. The whole universe is his palace. In this lower room where we stop there are many adornments; tessellated floor of amethyst, and on the winding cloud-stairs are stretched out canvases on which commingle azure, and purple, and saffron, and gold. But heaven is the gallery in which the chief pictures are gathered. There are the brightest robes. There are the richest crowns. There are the highest exhilarations. St. John says of it: "The kings of the earth shall bring their honor and glory into it." And I see the procession forming, and the stars spring up into an arch for the hosts to march under. They keep step to the sound of earthquake and the pitch of the avalanche from the mountains, and the flag they bear is the flame of a consuming world, and all heaven turns out with harps and trumpets and myriad-voiced acclamation of angelic dominions to welcome them in, and so the kings of the earth bring their honor and glory into it. Do you wonder that good people often stand, like Stephen, looking into heaven? We have many friends there.

There is not a man here so isolated in life but there is some one in heaven with whom he once shook hands. As a man gets older, the number of his celestial acquaintances very rapidly multiplies. We have not had one glimpse of them since the night we kissed them good-bye, and they went away; but still we stand gazing at heaven. As when some of our friends go across the sea, we stand on the dock, or on the steam-tug, and watch them, and after awhile the bulk of the vessel disappears, and then there is only a patch of sail on the sky, and soon that is gone, and they are all out of sight, and yet we stand looking in the same direction; so when our friends go away from us into the future world we keep looking down through the Narrows, and seeing and gazing as though we expected that they would come out and stand on some cloud, and give us one glimpse of their blissful and transfigured faces.

While you long to join their companionship, and the years and the days go with such tedium that they break your heart, and the vapors of pain, and sorrow, and bereavement keep gnawing at your vitals, you will stand, like Stephen, gazing into heaven. You wonder if they have changed since you saw them last. You wonder if they would recognize your face now, so changed has it been with trouble. You wonder if, amid the myriad delights they have, they care as much for you as they used to when they gave you a helping hand and put their shoulder under your burdens. You wonder if they look any older; and sometimes in the evening-tide, when the house is all quiet, you wonder if you should call them by their first name if they would not answer; and perhaps sometimes you do make the experiment, and when no one but God and yourself are there you distinctly call their names, and listen, and sit gazing into heaven.

Pass on now, and see Stephen looking upon Christ. My text says he saw the Son of Man at the right hand of God. Just how Christ looked in this

world, just how he looks in heaven, we cannot say. The painters of the different ages have tried to imagine the features of Christ, and put them upon canvases; but we will have to wait until with our own eyes we see him and with our own ears we can hear him. And yet there is a way of seeing him and hearing him now. I have to tell you that unless you see and hear Christ on earth, you will never see and hear him in heaven.

Look! There he is! Behold the Lamb of God! Can you not see him? Then pray to God to take the scales off your eyes. Look that way—try to look that way. His voice comes down to you this day—comes down to the blindest, to the deafest soul, saying, "Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved, for I am God, and there is none else." Proclamation of universal emancipation for all slaves. Tell me, ye who know most of the world's history, what other king ever asked the abandoned, and the forlorn, and the wretched, and the outcast to come and sit beside him? Oh, wonderful invitation! You can take it to-day, and stand at the head of the darkest alley in all this city, and say, "Come! Clothes for your rags, salve for your sores, a throne for your eternal reigning." A Christ that talks like that and acts like that, and pardons like that—do you wonder that Stephen stood looking at him? I hope to spend eternity doing the same thing. I face see him; I must look upon that face once clouded with my sin, but now radiant with my pardon. I want to touch that hand that knocked off my shackles. I want to hear the voice that pronounced my deliverance. Behold him, little children; for if you live to three-score years and ten, you will see none so fair. Behold him, ye aged ones; for he only can shine through the dimness of your failing eyesight. Behold him, earth. Behold him, heaven. What a moment when all the nations of the saved shall gather around Christ! All faces that way. All thrones that way, gazing on Jesus. His worth if all the nations knew. Sure the whole earth would love him, too.

I pass on now, and look at Stephen stoned. The world has always wanted to get rid of good men. Their very life is an assault upon wickedness. Out with Stephen through the gates of the city. Down with him over the precipices. Let every man come up and drop a stone upon his head. But these men did not so much kill Stephen as they killed themselves. Every stone rebounded upon them. While these murderers were transfixed by the scorn of all good men, Stephen lives in the admiration of all Christendom. Stephen stoned, but Stephen alive. So all good men must be pelted. "All who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution." It is no eulogy of a man to say that everybody likes him. Show me any one who is doing all his duty to state or church, and I will show you scores of men who utterly abhor him.

If all men speak well of you, it is because you are either a laggard or a dolt. If a steamer makes rapid progress through the waves, the water will boil and foam all around it. Brave soldiers of Jesus Christ will hear the carbines click. When I see a man with voice, and money, and influence all on the right side, and some caricature him, and some sneer at him, and some denounce him, because, though he does good, he does not do it in their way, I say, "Stephen stoned." But you notice, my friends, that while they assaulted Stephen they did not succeed really in killing him. You may assault a good man but you can not kill him. On the day of his death, Stephen spoke before a few people in the Sanhedrin; this Sabbath morning he addresses all Christendom. Paul the Apostle stood on Mars' hill addressing a handful of philosophers who knew not so much about science as a modern schoolgirl. To-day he talks to all the millions of Christendom about the wonders of justification and the glories of resurrection. John Wesley was howled down by the mob to whom he preached, and they threw bricks at him, and they denounced him, and they jostled him, and they spat upon him, and yet to-day, in all lands, he is admitted to be the great father of Methodism. Booth's bullet vacated the presidential chair; but from that spot of coagulated blood on the floor in the box of Ford's theater there sprang up the new life of a nation. Stephen stoned, but Stephen alive.

Pass on now, and see Stephen in his dying prayer. His first thought was not how the stones hurt his head, nor what would become of his body. His first thought was about his spirit. "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." The murderer standing on the trap-door, the black cap being drawn over his head before execution, may grimace about the future; but you and I have no shame in confessing some anxiety about where we are going to come out. You are not all body. There is within you a soul. I see it steam from your eyes to-day, and I see it irradiating your countenance. Sometimes I am abashed before an audience, not because I come under your physical eye-sight, but because I realize the truth that I stand before so many immortal spirits. The probability is that your body will at least find a sepulchre in some of the cemeteries that surround this city. There is no doubt but that your obsequies will be decent and respectful, and you will be able to pillow your head

under the maple, or the Norway spruce, or the cypress, or the blossoming fir; but this spirit about which Stephen prayed, what direction will that take? What guide will escort it? What gate will open to receive it? What cloud will be cleft for its pathway? After it has got beyond the light of our sun, will there be torches lighted for it the rest of the way? Will the soul have to travel through long deserts before it reaches the good land? If we should lose our pathway, will there be a castle at whose gates we may ask the way to the city? Oh, this mysterious spirit within us! It has two wings, but it is in a cage now. It is locked fast to keep it; but let the door of this cage open the least, and that soul is off. Eagle's wing could not catch it. The lightnings are not swift enough to come up with it. When the soul leaves the body it takes fifty worlds at a bound. And have I no anxiety about it? Have you no anxiety about it?

I do not care what you do with my body when my soul is gone, or whether you believe in cremation or inhumation. I shall sleep just as well in a wrapping of sackcloth as in satin lined with eagle's down. But my soul—before I close this discourse I will find out where it will land. Thank God for the intuition of my text, that when we die Jesus takes us. That answers all questions for me. What though they were massive bars between here and the city of light, Jesus could remove them. What though there were great Saharas of darkness, Jesus could illumine them. What though I get weary on the way, Christ could lift me on his omnipotent shoulder. What though there were chasms to cross, his hand could transport me. Then let Stephen's prayer be my dying hymn: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." It may be in that hour we will be too feeble to say a long prayer. It may be in that hour we will not be able to say the "Lord's Prayer," for it has seven petitions. Perhaps we may be too feeble even to say the infant prayer our mothers taught us, which John Quincy Adams, 70 years of age, said every night when he put his head upon his pillow:

Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.

We may be too feeble to employ either of these familiar forms; but this prayer of Stephen is so short, is so concise, is so earnest, is so comprehensive, we surely will be able to say that: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Oh, if that prayer is answered, how sweet it will be to die! This world is clever enough to us. Perhaps it has treated us a great deal better than we deserve to be treated; but if on the dying pillow there shall break the light of that better world, we shall have not more regret than about leaving a small, dark, damp house for one large, beautiful, and spacious. That dying minister in Philadelphia, some years ago, beautifully depicted it when, in the last moment, he threw up his hands and cried out: "I move into the light!"

Pass on now, and I will show you one more picture, and that is Stephen asleep. With a pathos and simplicity peculiar to the Scriptures, the text says of Stephen: "He fell asleep." "Oh," you say, "what a place that was to sleep! A hard rock under him, stones falling down upon him, the blood streaming, the mob howling. What a place it was to sleep!" And yet my text takes that symbol of slumber to describe his departure, so sweet was it, so contented was it, so peaceful was it. Stephen had lived a very laborious life. His chief work had been to care for the poor. How many loaves of bread he had distributed, how many bare feet he had sandalled, how many coats of sickness and distress he had blessed with ministries of kindness and love. I do not know; yet from the way he lived, and the way he preached, and the way he died, I know he was a laborious Christian. But that is all over now. He has pressed the cup to the last fainting lip. He has taken the last insult from his enemies. The last stone to whose crushing weight he is susceptible has been hurled. Stephen is dead! The disciples come! They take him up! They wash away the blood from the wounds. They straighten out the bruised limbs. They brush back the tangled hair from the brow, and then they pass around to look upon the calm countenance of him who had lived for the poor and died for the truth. Stephen asleep!

I have seen the sea driven with the hurricane until the tangled foam caught in the rigging, and waves rising above wave seemed as if about to storm the heavens, and then I have seen the tempest drop, and the waves crouch, and everything become smooth and burnished as though a camping place for the glories of heaven. So I have seen a man, whose life has been tossed and driven, coming down at last to an infinite calm, in which there was a hush of heaven's lullaby. Stephen asleep!

I saw such an one. He fought all his days against poverty and against abuse. They traduced his name. They rattled at the door-knob while he was dying with duns for debts he could not pay; yet the peace of God brooded over his pillow, and while the world faded, heaven dawned, and the deepening twilight of earth's night was only the opening twilight of heaven's morn. Not a sigh. Not a tear. Not a struggle. Hush! Stephen asleep.

SHARP POINTS.
So many people are actuated by part cussedness.
What we learn with pleasure we never forget.
Some people do nothing but talk encouragingly.
Patience is the road to advancement in all lines of life.

FARM AND GARDEN.

MATTERS OF INTEREST TO AGRICULTURISTS.

Some Up-to-Date Hints About Cultivation of the Soil and Yields Thereof—Horticulture, Viticulture and Floriculture.



OME YEARS AGO Prof. L. H. Bailey, addressing a farmers' meeting in Michigan, said: "We must foster every advantage which shall increase the farmer's influence. We must make the farm pay in two ways rather than in one. It is not enough that we demand influence. The first necessity in the demand is the desire to demand. We do not want preference until we want it. The desire must be individual, sincere. We often clamor because our neighbors clamor. We want a mouse-colored mare because Smith has one. We want more farmers in congress because it is the fashion to want them. The farm is not so isolated from the heart of fashion that it receives none of its impulse. Desire once alive, we must measure its consequences as if its fulfillment were in our own hands. Many of us would be miserable if all our prayers were answered. Our desire once trimmed and tempered, we must make ourselves worthy of it. As a rule, all men find their true level as do the waters of the sea. The ebb and the flow of influence and position are not haphazard. Our station is for the most part, if not entirely, just where it deserves to be. 'The world owes me a living,' says one, and he folds his hands. 'But you must dun her for it,' says the other as he clutches his spade. The farmer is coming to the front. It is because he deserves it. It is because

style in farming. Herein lies the greatest need of our agriculture.

I rode over the Green mountains. There were farm houses deserted and great farms returning to nature. The bleak homesteads stared at me. "Happy were the young men and women who escaped this desolation for the city," I thought. "Surely the decimation of these farms is not due to poor soil or commercial conditions, but to unattractive homes." A decrepit school house yawned on a bare and dusty roadside. The place itself told me why the seats were whittled and why the scholars never got beyond the "rule o' three." I did not blame them for preferring to trap woodchucks in the ledges. If I found a home adorned within and without, I usually found young people anxious to settle near the homestead; I found kindly sentiment and courteous manners.

I visited the fruit markets of a great city. Fruit at the same quality sold for far different prices, but that which sold the best bore a neat label with a picture of an attractive residence. When afterward I visited the little village near which this farm lay, I found both the farm and its proprietor to be the most popular in the neighborhood. If I asked why, I was told that "Mr. Lee has a beautiful farm and a nice family." When I visited his farm I found that his success was no mystery. The goddess of position and influence sat in his front yard. I knew the man by his premises. He advertised. A farm near an eastern city is popular and prosperous because it is attractive. A half acre of embellished lawn is more profitable to its proprietor than a dozen cows.

Our sons leave the farm and we blame the college or the school. We should as often blame the home surroundings. The man never lived who was educated too much for the farm. America ought to become the rural queen of the world, and the coming farmer must recognize this fact or go to the wall. It is one of the signs of the times.

CURSED CROWFOOT.



The illustration on this page shows the leaves, stem, flower and fruit of Cursed Crowfoot (Ranunculus sceleratus). It is a low herbaceous plant of the Buttercup family, with a smooth, thickish, spongy stem, much branched above. The lower leaves are one-half inch in diameter, deeply three-lobed, with lobes coarsely and obtusely toothed; the upper leaves become narrower and less divided, or almost linear and undivided. The flowers are very numerous and small, on pedicels half an inch to an inch in length. The light yellow petals are less than one-fourth inch in length. The heads of capsules or fruit are, when mature, about half

an inch long, densely crowded with the minute seeds. The plant attains a height of a foot or two. It is a native of Europe, but has been widely distributed over the world. It is found mainly in ditches and other wet places. The name was not given by reason of any extreme troublesomeness as a weed, but on account of the acid and biting character of the juice. This is so irritating that if applied to the skin it will readily produce blisters. Notwithstanding this fact, if the plant be boiled and the water thrown off, it is not unwholesome, and is sometimes eaten by the peasants in Germany as a vegetable.—Farmers' Review.

Wheat vs. Corn for Hogs.

The Ohio Experiment Station has been experimenting somewhat to determine the relative value of wheat and corn as food for hogs. It is not claimed that absolute and complete results are had as yet, but every carefully conducted experiment contributes something to the solution of the question, which may continue to be of considerable practical importance. In this Ohio experiment there were used nine high grade Poland China hogs—six barrows and three sows—with an average weight of 135 lbs., who were fed during a preliminary week on corn and wheat, half and half by weight. At the end of the week they were divided into three lots with two barrows and one sow in each lot. One lot was then fed corn, another fed wheat, and the third fed wheat and corn, half and half by weight. All that either lot was given in addition was water, coal ashes, sulphur and salt. Two days before the experiment began, the day of the beginning, and two days after it began, the hogs were weighed, and the average taken as the initial weight. In the same way the final weights were had at the end of the ten weeks of the experiment. At the end of the ten weeks the gains were—lot fed wheat, 291 lbs.; lot fed wheat and corn, 292 lbs.; lot fed corn, 271 lbs. It will be seen that the best results were obtained, for the number of pounds eaten, where corn and wheat were fed half and half by weight; the next best result where wheat was fed alone, and when corn was fed alone the least increase was made for the number of pounds of food eaten. To make 100 lbs. of increase took 423 lbs. of wheat or 453 lbs. of corn. That is, a bushel of wheat made 13.7 lbs. of pork, while a bushel of corn made 12.3 lbs. The hogs fed on \$5.15 per hundredweight. Not counting labor a bushel of wheat converted into pork, sold for 79.5 cents, and the bushel of corn 63.3. While this is not conclusive in all respects, it indicates that under ordinary conditions, at least the less marketable grades of wheat can be used as hog feed very profitably. It looks very much as if wheat was to be a constant factor in pork making, particularly in this portion of the country, where wheat is grown cheaply and corn has not gained a very extensive foothold. If in Minnesota and the Dakotas low grade or frosted wheats can be sold to the hogs at near 70 cents, the porcine element has great inducement to multiply, and the wheat producer can grow still more cheerful.

The Sleep of Leaves.
This can in no way be compared to the sleep of animals, but refers to the fact that the leaves of clover take different positions at night from those assumed during the day time. This difference in position is caused by turgescence in the "pulvinus," which is the name applied to a mass of small cells of a pale color found in a certain portion of the leaf stalk. Experiments show that leaves kept open or spread apart contain more dew in the morning and hence become cooler than those which approach each other. The leaves crowd together or "sleep" for the same purpose that pigs crowd together on a cold night, viz.: to keep warm. It has been found that the leaves which sleep do not remain quiet during the night, but continue, without exception, to move during the whole twenty-four hours. All non-sleeping leaves are also in incessant motion, circumnating. The sleep of plants is a mere modified form of this universal circumnating. During a warm, dry day, leaves also assume the sleeping position, which aids in checking evaporation. There are more "sleeping" plants among the Leguminosae than are found in all other families put together.—Prof. W. J. Beal.

Found in a Bull's Stomach.—The other day a Lockerbie butcher killed a fat bullock, and while engaged removing the stomach from the carcass, much to his surprise his knife came upon some hard substance. On closer examination he found that the hard substance was a long steel pin with an acorn head, such as are used by ladies for putting into their hats. The bull was very fat, and did not seem at all inconvenienced by the pin, which, it is conjectured, had been swallowed along with fodder.—London Meat Trades' Journal.

Lessened Exports of Pork.—The total exports of provisions, including live cattle and hogs, show a falling away of about 8 per cent in the twelve months ending June 30, over the same period in the preceding year. The exports of pork were—1895, \$4,130,746 and \$3,118,624 in 1894; bacon shows a less falling off, the totals being \$37,662,100 and \$38,285,649. Hams show a slight increase for the same period, \$9,789,406 to \$10,868,218. Live hogs show an increase from 1,104 to 2,542, but that is not a popular way of seeding the hog abroad.

Save the Corn Stalks This Fall.—The short hay crop suggests ample preparation for saving the corn fodder, both by silo and dry storage. It has been found that dry forage along with silage makes better feed for all kinds of stock. Generally there is enough corn fodder wasted and lost to make up the present shortage of hay, if it was saved properly. Now is a good time to consider these matters and prepare to meet present conditions.—Rx.

This Year's Cider Apples.—Should the quality of this year's apples prove not good enough for shipping, the major part of the crop will then find its way to the cider mill and evaporators. If the reverse occurs, the price for cider apples will be high, the fruit growers will be happy, and the evaporator will not be running overtime to keep down stock. It is, indeed, an ill wind that blows no one good.—Rx.

Leather tires for bicycles have just come into use in Rheims, France. They are far more durable than rubber.