

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

"MEN AND WOMEN NEEDED." LAST SUNDAY'S SUBJECT.

"Who Knoweth Whether Thou Art Come to the Kingdom for Such a Time as This"—Esther, Chapter IV, Verse 14.



ESTHER the beautiful was the wife of Ahasuerus the abominable. The time had come for her to present a petition to her infamous husband in behalf of the Jewish nation, to which she had once belonged. She was afraid to undertake the work, lest she should lose her own life; but her cousin, Mordecai, who had brought her up, encouraged her with the suggestion that probably she had been raised up of God for that peculiar mission. "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Esther had her God-appointed work. You and I have ours. It is my business to tell you what style of men and women you ought to be in order that you meet the demand of the age in which God has cast your lot. So this discourse will not deal with the technicalities, but only with the practicalities. When two armies have rushed into battle, the officers of either army do not want a philosophical discussion about the chemical properties of human blood or the nature of gunpowder; they want some one to man the batteries and take out the guns. And now, when all the forces of light and darkness, of heaven and hell, have plunged into the fight, it is no time to give ourselves to the definitions and formulas and technicalities and conventionalities of religion. What we want is practical, earnest, concentrated, enthusiastic and triumphant help.

In the first place, in order to meet the special demand of this age, you need to be an unmistakable, aggressive Christian. Of half-and-half Christians we do not want any more. The church of Jesus Christ will be better without them. They are the chief obstacle to the church's advancement. I am speaking of another kind of Christian. All the appliances for your becoming an earnest Christian are at your hand, and there is a straight path for you into the broad daylight of God's forgiveness. You may this moment be the bondmen of the world, and the next moment you may be princes of the Lord God Almighty. You remember what excitement there was in this country, years ago, when the Prince of Wales came here—how the people rushed out by hundreds of thousands to see him. Why? Because they expected that some day he would sit upon the throne of England. But what was all that honor compared with the honor to which God calls you—to be sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty; yea, to be queens and kings unto God. "They shall reign with him forever and forever."

It was once amid the wonderful, bewitching cactus growths of North Carolina. I never was more bewildered with the beauty of flowers, and yet when I would take up one of these cactuses and pull the leaves apart the beauty was all gone. You could hardly tell that it had ever been a flower. And there are a great many Christian people in this day just pulling apart their Christian experiences to see what there is in them, and there is nothing left in them.

This style of self-examination is a damage instead of an advantage to their Christian character. I remember when I was a boy I used to have a small piece in the garden that I called my own, and I planted corn there, and every few days I would pull it up to see how fast it was growing. Now, there are a great many Christian people in this day whose self-examination merely amounts to the pulling up of that which they only yesterday or the day before planted. Oh, my friends, if you want to have a stalwart Christian character, plant it right out of doors in the great field of Christian usefulness, and though storms may come upon it, and though the hot sun of trial may try to consume it, it will thrive until it becomes a great tree, in which the fowls of heaven may have their habitation. I have no patience with these flower-pot Christians. They keep themselves under shelter, and all their Christian experience in a small, exclusive circle, when they ought to plant it in the great garden of the Lord, so that the whole atmosphere could be aromatic with their Christian usefulness. What we want in the church of God is more strength of piety. The century plant is wonderfully suggestive and wonderfully beautiful, but I never look at it without thinking of its parsimony. It lets whole generations go by before it puts forth one blossom; so I have really more admiration when I see the dewy tears in the blue eyes of the violets, for they come every spring. My Christian friends, time is going by so rapidly that we can not afford to be idle.

Again, if you want to be qualified to meet the duties which this age demands of you, you must, on one hand, avoid reckless iconoclasm, and, on the other hand, not stick too much to things because they are old. The air is full of new plans, new projects, new theories of government, new theories, and I am amazed to see how many Christians want only novelty in order to recommend a thing to their confidence; and so they vacillate and swing to and fro, and they are useless and they are unhappy. New plans—secular, ethical, philosophical, religious, etc.—Atlantic, trans-Atlantic—long enough to make a line stretching from the German universities to Great Salt

Lake City. Ah, my brother, do not take hold of a thing merely because it is new! Try it by the realities of the Judgment Day. But, on the other hand, do not adhere to anything merely because it is old. There is not a single enterprise of the church or the world but has sometime been scoffed at. There was a time when men derided even Bible societies, and when a few young men met in Massachusetts and organized the first missionary society ever organized in this country, there went laughter and ridicule all around the Christian church. They said the undertaking was preposterous. And so also the work of Jesus Christ was assailed. People cried out, "Who ever heard of such theories of ethics and government? Who ever noticed such a style of preaching as Jesus has?" Ezekiel had talked of mysterious wings and wheels. Here came a man from Capernaum and Genesaret and He drew His illustrations from the lakes, from the sand, from the mountains, from the lilies, from the corn-stalks. How the Pharisees scoffed! How Herod derided! And this Jesus they plucked by the beard and they spat in His face, and they called Him "this fellow!" All the great enterprises in and out of the church have at times been scoffed at, and there have been a great multitude who have thought that the chariot of God's truth would fall to pieces if it once got out of the old rut. And so there are those who have no patience with anything like improvement in church architecture, or with anything like good, hearty, earnest church singing, and they deride any form of religious discussion which goes down walking among everyday men, rather than that which makes an excursion of rhetorical stunts. Oh, that the church of God would wake up to an adaptability of work! We must admit the simple fact that the churches of Jesus Christ in this day do not reach the great masses. There are fifty thousand people in Edinburgh who never hear the Gospel. There are one million people in London who never hear the Gospel. The great majority of the inhabitants of this capital come not under the immediate ministrations of Christ's truth, and the Church of God in this day, instead of being a place full of living epistles, known and read of all men, is more like a dead-letter postoffice.

"But," say the people, "the world is going to be converted; you must be patient; the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of Christ." Never, unless the church of Jesus Christ puts on more speed and energy. Instead of the church converting the world, the world is converting the church. Here is a great fortress. How shall it be taken? An army comes and sits around about it, cuts off the supplies, and says: "Now we will just wait until from exhaustion and starvation they will have to give up." Weeks and months, and perhaps a year pass along, and finally the fortress surrenders through that starvation and exhaustion. But, my friends, the fortresses of sin are never to be taken in that way. If they are taken for God it will be by storm; you will have to bring up the great siege guns of the Gospel to the very wall and wheel the flying artillery into line, and when the armed infantry of heaven shall confront the battlements you will have to give the quick command: "Forward! Charge!"

Ah, my friends, there is work for you to do and for me to do in order to this grand accomplishment. I have a pulpit. I preach in it. Your pulpit is the bank. Your pulpit is the store. Your pulpit is the editorial chair. Your pulpit is the anvil. Your pulpit is the house of scaffolding. Your pulpit is the mechanic's shop. I may stand in my place and, through cowardice or through self-seeking, may keep back the word I ought to utter; while you, with sleeve rolled up and brow be-sweated with toil, may utter the word that will jar the foundations of heaven with the shout of a great victory. Oh, that we might all feel that the Lord Almighty is putting upon us the hands of ordination! I tell you, every one, go forth and preach this Gospel. You have as much right to preach as I have or any man living.

Hedley Vicars was a wicked man in the English army. The grace of God came to him. He became an earnest and eminent Christian. They scoffed at him and said: "You are a hypocrite, you are as bad as ever you were." Still he kept his faith in Christ, and after a while, finding that they could not turn him aside by calling him a hypocrite, they said to him: "Oh, you are nothing but a Methodist!" This did not disturb him. He went on performing his Christian duty until he had formed all his troops into a Bible class, and the whole encampment was shaken with the presence of God. So Havelock went into the heathen temple in India while the English army was there and put a candle into the hand of each of the heathen gods that stood around in the heathen temple, and by the light of those candles held up by the idols Gen. Havelock preached righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. And who will say on earth or in heaven that Havelock had not the right to preach? In the minister's house where I prepared for college there worked a man by the name of Peter Croy. He could neither read nor write, but he was a man of God. Often theologians would stop in the house—grave theologians—and at family prayer Peter Croy would be called upon to lead; and all those wise men sat around, wonder-struck at his religious efficiency. When he prayed he reached up and seemed to take hold of the very throne of the Almighty, and he talked with God until the very heavens were bowed down into the sitting-room. Oh, if I were dying I would rather have plain Peter Croy kneel by my bedside and commend my immortal spirit to God than the greatest archbishop arrayed in costly canon-

icals. Go preach this Gospel. You say you are not licensed. In the name of the Lord Almighty, I license you. Go preach this Gospel, preach it in the Sabbath schools, in the prayer-meetings, in the highways, in the hedges. Woe be unto you if you preach it not! I prepare this sermon because I want to encourage all Christian workers in every possible department. Hosts of the living God, march on! march on! His spirit will bless you. His shield will defend you. His sword will strike for you. March on! march on! The despots will fall, and paganism will burn its idols, and Mahometanism will give up its false prophet, and the great walls of superstition will come down in thunder and wreck at the long loud blast of the Gospel trumpet. March on! march on! The besiegement will soon be ended. Only a few more steps on the long way; only a few more sturdy blows; only a few more battle cries, then God will put the laurels upon your brow, and from the living foundation of heaven will bathe off the sweat and the heat and the dust of the conflict. March on! march on! For you the time for work will soon be passed, and amid the outflashes of the judgment throne and the trumpeting of resurrection angels and the upheaving of a world of graves, and the hosanna and the groaning of the saved and the lost, we shall be rewarded for our faithfulness or punished for our stupidity. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and amen.

FEW SHUT DOORS.

Why the People in Canada Leave Them Open.

Canadians are known in Britain as the people who never shut doors, says the Montreal Witness. Where rooms are heated, as they are there, by grate fires, the opening of a door sets up an immediate draught, and if the person who opens it does not close it again he quickly realizes his mistake, if not in his own sensations, then in the reproachful glances of others. The first lesson in manners taught to children is to shut the door, and that quietly. The door handle, the child is taught, is not only for the purpose of opening a door, but of shutting it. The reason why Canadians do not learn to shut doors is that their doors, for the most part, stand open. The houses are heated with a general heat, and before the days of furnaces, unless the doors of the room stood open, the rooms would, for the most part, get cold. Thus has grown the habit of leaving doors open. When a Canadian comes to shut a door, he is prone to think that something very private is going on within which he must not disturb, and his first impulse is to retire from it. Where we in Canada have a door which we want kept shut we put a spring on it, and so where there are many offices there is usually a general and constant slamming of doors. To one not accustomed to the jarring this occasioned the result is torture. In time kindly nature steps in and mitigates the evil by making the auditory nerve less and less susceptible to an accustomed sound. Ask a person who lives in a cathedral close, or under the shadow of one of our great churches, whether the bells do not disturb him; his reply is: "Bells? I never hear them."

COOLNESS IN THE PULPIT.

Probably Saved a Congregation from Panic and Disaster.

Already vastly popular with his congregation, Rev. Arthur Wellwood of Brooklyn, raised himself still higher in general estimation on a recent Sunday, when his coolness in the presence of danger probably averted a wild stampede from the Church of the Incarnation. Although there were indications of impending disaster, the people, acting upon his advice, fled out of the church in an orderly manner to find a fire engine pouring water into the cellar through a front window. Shortly after 11 o'clock smoke began to pour up through the registers. The assistant pastor, Rev. Arthur Wellwood, went down to the cellar to see if the furnace was smoking. He was alarmed to find the cellar full of smoke, so dense that he could not go inside. He ran out and turned in an alarm. Then he walked rapidly up the aisle, and after whispering to the officiating clergyman, said aloud: "The furnace seems to be smoking worse than usual. I think the congregation had better retire to allow us to open the windows." The people, assured by his calmness, retired in good order, but became somewhat alarmed when they saw the engines and firemen in the street.

It Applied to Both.

Mr. Justice Maule once went on circuit with Judge Coleridge in a part of the country where the high sheriff was a shy and modest man and very much alarmed at having to entertain his cynical lordship. Coming home in his coach with the two judges, he thought it his duty to make conversation for them. He observed that he hoped there would be better weather, as the moon had changed. "And are you such a fool, Mr. Jones, as to imagine that the moon has any effect on the weather?" said Maule. "Really, Brother Maule," said Coleridge, who was politeness itself, "you are very hard upon our friend. For my part, I think the moon has a considerable effect upon it." "Then," said Maule, "you are as great a fool as Jones is." After which conversation in the sheriff's carriage languished—Rochester Democrat and Recorder.

It rains on an average 208 days in the year in Ireland, about 138 in England, at Kazan about ninety days, and in Siberia only sixty days.

IT TRAVELS ON LAND.

A QUEER STEAMER TO BE FOUND IN DENMARK.

It Runs on Two Lakes and the Isthmus Between—Passengers Do Not Descend—Principle of the Boat—Two Illustrations.

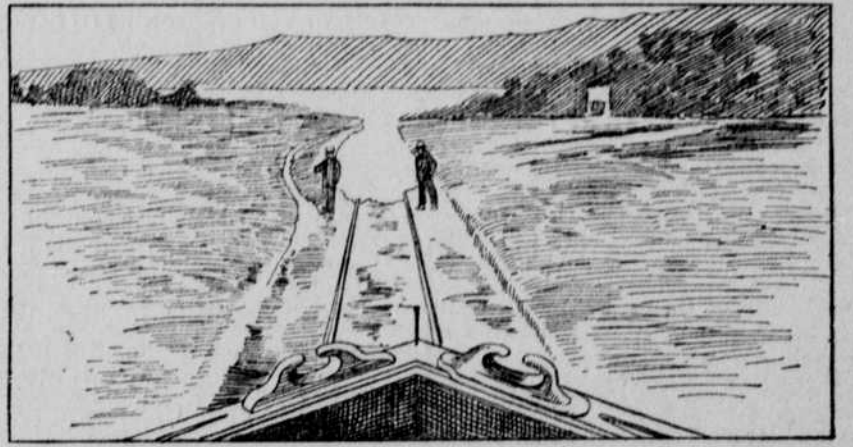
In Denmark they have a boat which travels both on land and water. J. W. Smith writes of this curiosity in the Strand Magazine: This might be called the crocodile of boats, for she seems as much at home on land as in water. She comes up out of the water, as shown in the first illustration, crosses a narrow strip of land on a little railway, and descends into the water again with utmost grace of motion. During her short career of three summers, she has safely carried over forty thousand people, most of whom have been intensely attracted by the novelty of the thing. For the Swan is, I believe, the only boat of her kind in the world.

To see her, you must go to Denmark. A half-hour by rail northward from Copenhagen will bring you to a little village named Lyngby, which lies on the edge of one of three beautiful lakes. These are greatly beloved by the Copenhagenites, who use them for recreation. The likeness is even more evident after you have boarded one of the little steam launches which ply from Lyngby to Frederiksdaal across Lake Lyngby for this launch, sometimes with two or three crowded and stocky barges in tow, soon enters a pretty little creek, which winds and twists like the upper reaches of the Thames. The trip to Frederiksdaal takes about half an hour, and costs half a kroner—slightly more than sixpence. As the amphibious boat lies by the landing-stage at Frederiksdaal ready to take her passengers on board, she looks much the same as other boats. If, for a moment, we may call attention to the Swan discharging her passengers at Frederiksdaal, we may note this similarity, except that the Swan is slightly broader, with her lines full fore and aft, in order to allow a framework for the wheels. Wheels? Yes, most certainly, for how else could she go over the rails on the Fiskebaek, out of the water and in again? It is in regard to the double use of wheels and propeller that the Swan is unique, and if a little technical language is pardoned, the construction may be easily explained. There is plenty of time to do it, for the boat is now on her way across Lake Fure—or, as the Danish call it, the Fure So—and it will be over an hour before she rides on the railway at Fiskebaek. The boat, then, is 46 feet long, 9 feet 6 inches beam, and draws 3 feet to 3½ feet of water, according to the load. Seventy passengers can be comfortably carried, and, at a pinch, she will take eighty-four. With a full load she weighs 15 tons, and when empty 11½ tons. Parallel with the propeller shaft is another shaft, one end of which runs to within 10 feet of the bow, and these two shafts are connected with each other by chain gearing, like the two wheels of a bicycle. The end of the second shaft is connected near the bow by bevel gears, to a little shaft at right angles, and on this shaft are keyed the two little wheels which carry the boat across the rails. Another pair of wheels is to be found at a like distance from the stern, but these are not driven. These are used to keep the boat on the rails, and, with the help of a brake, from going into the water too quickly. The wheels are about 18 inches in diameter, and carry two flanges, the bearing surface being a little wider than the rails upon which they run. So much for the heavy description. It is, however, always necessary, although I daresay that two-thirds of the 40,000 people who have sailed in the Swan have thought of little else except the mere fact that they were sailing in a boat on wheels. The interest of the passengers in this "mere fact" is always shown as the Swan approaches the end of her trip across the Fure So. They crowd to the bow, expecting every moment to see the bow rising out of the water, as if it were a whale that had suddenly decided to come to the surface. But the trick is not done with sky-rocket quickness; instead, the boat gradually nears the shore, where a little dock has been constructed of piles rammed down into the mud. It is a V-shaped arrangement tapered down until it is only two inches wider than the boat at its widest part. That is to say, there remains but one inch on each side of the parallel cleats or fillets which run along the side of the boat. As the boat fits tightly, there is no chance for it to wobble, and passengers are much safer on it than they would be on a bus or an electric car. When the narrowest part of this V-shaped dock is reached, the Swan enters a small parallel dock of equal width, and moves onward slowly until the front wheels on the keel touch the rails, which, for this purpose, have been

extended some distance at a gradient of 1 in 30 below the water. All this time, of course, the propeller has been at work shoving the boat onward, and it keeps throwing out a circular column of beautiful spray until the boat is completely out of the water, and has begun its trip across the Fiskebaek. To see the screw whirling around in the air like a Holland windmill always tickles the crowd on board, who, at the risk of losing their precious noses, put their heads over the stern of the boat to see the circus underneath. The rear wheels find their way naturally to the rails, and the Swan rests as steadily and prettily on the land as a real swan rests on water.

The illustration shows the Swan resting gracefully on the rails. Most readers will be surprised, as I was, to see such small wheels; but it is the principle of the thing, and not the size of the wheels which makes the boat interesting. When the boat stops to be photographed, or through any other cause, the curiously-minded turn to this part of the hull with unerring energy, and closely examine it. The wheels are supported, as it were, by a steel frame-work, riveted to the hull, and resembling a patch on the side of a shoe.

The idea of taking a boat across land on wheels is not new, although the Scandinavians are the first to put the idea into practice. Several years ago, Captain J. B. Eads, one of the best



"THE SWAN" ABOUT TO ENTER THE WATER.

known American engineers, proposed a plan for a ship railway across Tehuantepec, in Central America, but the plan was never realized. Perhaps these seeming difficulties in the way discouraged other inventors. At all events, when the amphibious boat was first talked about old sea-dogs shook their heads, refusing to believe in the possibility of the enterprise, and describing it as imaginary and of no practical utility. The world, however, moves.

Key Concealed in a Ring.

A Cincinnati but lately returned from England tells of a rather novel innovation in the way of locks and keys, or to speak more correctly, key. At a country place he visited he was surprised to see his host unlock the gateway of the place with a small key that in some mysterious way was produced from a large seal ring he wore. Yet the ring was not large enough to be conspicuous by reason of its size or style. As he expressed some surprise in the matter, his host said: "This is a master key. You see, it slides under the set in the ring, and occupies no space whatever. It will unlock every lock about the place, even my dressing bag, my trunk, my bond box and wine cellar." He was asked as to the arrangement in general; whether one key, say of the butler, would unlock the front door. "Not at all," he replied. "The locks are all arranged in suites. The butler can unlock all the doors that are in his department, and the house-keeper can unlock the linen closets and other doors under her supervision, but she cannot get into the butler's domain. And in every other department about the place from end to end every one has his or her key, but I have only the master key. All of the doors open to me. My valet can open my dressing case and closets, but he cannot get a bottle of wine. Of course, the arrangement in a seal ring is novel, but it is very handy for me. In the first place, I cannot lose it, and in the second place, everything opens to me without asking a question.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

She Wanted Proof.

Tramp—"Madam, have pity on a poor man out of employment; I have not tasted food for two days." Lady—"What is your occupation?" Tramp—"I was formerly a teacher of stage dancing." Lady—"Well, take this ax and go around to the wood pile and see if you have forgotten how to do the split."

An Oklahoma lawyer named Crank has petitioned the court to change his name.



"THE SWAN" CROSSING THE LAND.

DISCOVERIES IN SCOTLAND.

Specimens of Cephalaspis Found in a Cliff at Gallanach. (Scottish Letter.)

The district in and around Oban has in recent years yielded antiquarian and geological discoveries of peculiar scientific value and importance. In the course of excavation for building purposes about two years ago a large prehistoric cave, containing a collection of animal and human remains and several specimens of beautifully shaped implements of stone and bone, was disclosed in a central part of the town of Oban, and more recently a find of considerable interest, if of lesser importance, was made at Gallanach, the adjoining estate of Patten Macdougall.

It was only the other day that a number of urns of baked clay were unearthed on the borders of the burgial boundary, and that has now been followed by a fresh discovery, and one which is believed to be most significant of all, in a rocky cliff on the hill behind the town. In the month of June last a slight subsidence occurred in the cliff, and the fallen rocks having come under the notice of an officer of the geological survey, who is at present mapping the district, and who came to the conclusion that they contained fossiliferous remains, they were subjected to investigation by a specialist. The surfaces of the rocks bore well defined ripple marks, and rain

pits, while worm pipes were as discernible as they are in the sand on the seashore at the present day. No definite fossil forms were brought to light with the exception that a gray layer of shale at the base of the cliff yielded a few fragmentary specimens of cephalaspis.

A further examination of the rocks, however, has now been begun, and the results are already of the most satisfactory character. A large number of more perfect specimens of cephalaspis have been produced, and though none of them are complete, they conclusively mark the geological age of the rocks in which they were imbedded. Sir Archibald Geikie has always believed that the purple shaft and conglomerate strata of Western Argyleshire belong to the lower old red sandstone age, and while he regarded the somewhat indefinite forms discovered in June as confirming this opinion, the more recent specimens place it beyond doubt. So far the specimens embrace only the heads of cephalaspis, but several of them are particularly well defined. In one case the outlines of the head are almost perfectly preserved, and the eyes are distinct and prominent enough to look uncanny. Cephalaspis is classified as one of a peculiar and extremely ancient breed of palaeozoic fishes, limited to upper Silurian and lower old red sandstone; it belongs to a group of fossil fishes which are among the very earliest to appear in the geological record. Though confined to the lower old red in Britain, cephalaspis survived up into upper old red sandstone times in Canada. The present discovery is not only of outstanding importance geologically, as fixing the age of the old red outlier of Oban, but it enables it to be correlated with the same formation in other parts of Scotland. With the exception of some worm trails and pipes in quartzite discovered and described some years ago by the duke of Argyll, these older metamorphic rocks on which the old red sandstone rests have never to now yielded any fossils, and in the absence of these invaluable aids the geologist is largely left in darkness. Hugh Miller has described the Highlands as a picture set in a frame of old red sandstone. At Oban the frame and picture can be seen in contact.

Wool From Persia. Persian wool is going to Russia, France and the United States. Our import of that commodity is made via Marseilles. A small portion only of that clipped from the millions of sheep in the country is used there, and that goes for the manufacture of carpets. The chief centers of carpet manufactories are Sutanabad, Korassan, Chiraz and Kuidatan, one house in Sutanabad employing more than 10,000 workmen.

Nearing the End. The Cigar—"Well, old chap, how are you feeling this morning?" The Pipe—"Oh, first-class. Getting stronger every day. How are you?" The Cigar—"Dead to the world. I'm to be cremated this morning."

Caught. First Pickpocket—"Did yer find anything in the cow's pocket, Bill?" Second Ditto (suddenly sucking his finger)—"Honly a fishhook—ang 'n!"—London Fun.

Yankees Going to Klondike. In every New England town there are persons who are planning to go to the Klondike region next spring.