

TALMAGE'S SERMON

"PEOPLE WHO HAVE LOST THEIR WAY," THE SUBJECT.

From Gen. XXI. 19, as follows: "And God Opened Her Eyes and She Saw a Well of Water and She Went and Filled the Bottle and Gave the Lad a Drink."

Morning breaks upon Beersheba. There is an early stir in the house of old Abraham. There has been trouble among the domestics. Hagar, an assistant in the household, and her son, a brick lad of sixteen years, have become impudent and insolent, and Sarah, the mistress of the household, puts her foot down very hard and says that they will have to leave the premises. They are packing up now. Abraham, knowing that the journey before his servant and her son will be very long and across desolate places, in the kindness of his heart sets about putting up some bread and a bottle with water in it. It is a very plain lunch that Abraham provides, but I warrant you there would have been enough of it had they not lost their way. "God be with you!" said old Abraham as he gave the lunch to Hagar and a good many charges as to how she should conduct the journey. Ishmael, the boy, I suppose, bounded away in the morning light. Boys always like a change. Poor Ishmael! He has no idea of the disasters that are ahead of him. Hagar gives one long, lingering look on the familiar place where she had spent so many happy days, each scene associated with the pride and joy of her heart, young Ishmael.

The scorching noon comes on. The air is stifling and moves across the desert with insufferable suffocation. Ishmael, the boy, begins to complain and lies down, but Hagar rouses him up, saying nothing about her own weariness or the sweltering heat; for mothers can endure anything. Trudge, trudge, trudge. Crossing the dead level of the desert, how wearily and slowly the miles slip by! A tamarind that seemed hours ago to stand only just a little ahead, inviting the travelers to come under its shadow, now is as far off as ever, or seemingly so. Night drops upon the desert, and the travelers are pillowless. Ishmael, very weary, I suppose, instantly fell asleep. Hagar, as the shadows of the night begin to lap over each other—Hagar hugs her weary boy to her bosom and thinks of the fact that it is her fault that they are in the desert. A star looks out, and every falling tear it kisses with a sparkle. A wing of wind comes over the hot earth and lifts the locks from the fevered brow of the boy. Hagar sleeps fitfully, and in her dreams travels over the weary day, and half awakes her son by crying out in her sleep, "Ishmael! Ishmael!"

And so they go on day after day and night after night, for they have lost their way. No path in the shifting sands; no signs in the burning sky. The sack empty of the flour; the water gone from the bottle. What shall she do? As she puts her fainting Ishmael under a stunted shrub of the arid plain, she sees the blood-shot eye, and feels the hot hand, and watches the blood hursting from the cracked tongue, and there is a shriek in the desert of Beersheba, "We shall die! We shall die!" Now, no mother was ever made strong enough to bear her son cry in vain for a drink. Heretofore she had cheered her boy by promising a speedy end of the journey, and even smiled upon him when she felt desperately enough. Now there is nothing to do but place him under a shrub and let him die. She had thought that she would sit there and watch until the spirit of her boy would go away forever, and then she would breathe out her own life on his silent heart; but as the boy begins to claw his tongue in agony of thirst and struggle in distortion, and begs his mother to slay him, she cannot endure the spectacle. She puts him under a shrub and goes off a bow-shot, and begins to weep until all the desert seems sobbing, and her cry strikes clear through the heavens; and an angel of God comes out on a cloud, and looks down upon the appalling grief and cries: "Hagar, what aileth thee?" She looks up and she sees the angel pointing to a well of water, where she fills the bottle for the lad. Thank God! Thank God!

I learn from this Oriental scene, in the first place, what a sad thing it is when people do not know their place, and get too proud for their business! Hagar was an assistant in that household, but she wanted to rule there. She ridiculed and jeered until her son, Ishmael, got the same tricks. She dashed out her own happiness, and threw Sarah into a great fret; and if she had stayed much longer in that household she would have upset calm Abraham's equilibrium. My friends, one-half of the trouble in the world today comes from the fact that people do not know their place, or, finding their place, will not stay in it. When we come into the world there is always a place ready for us. A place for Abraham, a place for Sarah, a place for Hagar, a place for Ishmael, a place for you and a place for me.

Our first duty is to find our sphere; our second is, to keep it. We may be born in a sphere far off from the one for which God finally intends us. Sixtus V. was born on the low ground, and was a swineherd; God called him up to wave a scepter. Ferguson spent his early days in looking after sheep; God called him up to look after stars, and be a shepherd watching the flocks of light on the hillside of heaven. Hagar began by making water pots,

God raised him to stand in the enchanted realm of a painter. The shoemaker's bench held Bloomfield for the while; but God raised him to sit in the chair of a philosopher and a Christian scholar. The soap-beller of London could not keep his son in that business, for God had decided that Hawley was to be one of the greatest astronomers of England.

On the other hand we may be born in a sphere a little higher than that for which God intends us. We may be born in a castle, and play in a costly conservatory, and feed high-bred pointers, and angle for gold-fish in artificial ponds, and be familiar with princes; yet God may better have fitted us for a carpenter's shop, or dentist's forceps, or a weaver's shuttle, or a blacksmith's forge. The great thing is to find just the sphere for which God intended us, and then to occupy that sphere, and occupy it forever. Here is a man God fashioned to make a plow. There is a man God fashioned to make a constitution. The man who makes the plow is just as honorable as the man who makes the constitution. There is a woman who was made to fashion a robe, and yonder is one intended to be a queen and wear it. It seems to me that in the one case as in the other, God appoints the sphere, and the needle is just as respectable in his sight as the sceptre. I do not know but that the world would long ago have been saved if some of the men out of the ministry were in it, and some of those who are in it were out of it. I really think that one-half the world may be divided into two quarters—those who have not found their sphere, and those who, having found it, are not willing to stay there. How many are struggling for a position a little higher than that which God intended for them. The bonds-woman wants to be mistress. Hagar keeps crowding Sarah. The small wheel of a watch which beautifully went treading its golden pathway wants to be the balance-wheel, and the sparrow with chagrin drops into the brook because it cannot, like the eagle, cut a circle under the sun.

In the Lord's army we all want to be brigadier-generals! The sloop says: "More mast, more tonnage, more canvas. Oh, that I were a topsail schooner, or a full-rigged brig, or a Cunard steamer!" And so the world is filled with cries of discontent, because we are not willing to stay in the place where God put us and intended us to be. My friends, be not too proud to do anything God tells you to do; for the lack of a right disposition in this respect the world is strewn with wandering Hagar and Ishmaels. God has given each one of us a work to do. You carry a scuttle of coal up that dark alley. You distribute that Christian tract. You give \$10,000 to the missionary cause. You for fifteen years sit with chronic rheumatism, displaying the beauty of Christian submission. Whatever God calls you to, whether it win hissing or huzzas; whether to walk under triumphal arch or lift the sot out of the ditch; whether it be to preach on a Pentecost or tell some wanderer of the street of the mercy of the Christ of Mary Magdalene; whether it be to weave a garland for a laughing child on a spring morning and call her a May Queen, or to comb out the tangled locks of a wail of the street, and cut up one of your old dresses to fit her out for the sanitarium—do it, and do it right away. Whether it be a crown or yoke, do not fidget. Everlasting honors upon those who do their work, and do their whole work, and are contented in the sphere in which God has put them; while there is wandering, and exile, and desolation, and wilderness for discontented Hagar and Ishmael.

Who is that boy at Sutton Pool, Plymouth, England, barefooted, wading down into the slush and slime, until his bare foot comes upon a piece of glass and he lifts it, bleeding and pain-struck? That wound in the foot decides that he be sedentary in his life, decides that he be a student. That wound by the glass in the foot decides that he shall be John Kitto, who shall provide the best religious encyclopedia the world has ever had provided, and with his other writings as well, throwing a light upon the Word of God such as has come from no other man in this century. O mother, mother, that little hand that wanders over your face may yet be lifted to hurl thunder-bolts of war or drop benedictions! That little voice may blaspheme God in the groshop or cry "Forward!" to the Lord's hosts as they go out for their last victory. My mind this morning leaps thirty years ahead, and I see a merchant prince of New York. One stroke of his pen brings a ship out of Canton. Another stroke of his pen brings a ship into Madras. He is mighty in all the money markets of the world. Who is he? He sits on Sabbaths beside you in church. My mind leaps thirty years forward from this time and I find myself in a relief association. A great multitude of Christian women have met together for a generous purpose. There is one woman in that crowd who seems to have the confidence of all the others, and they all look up to her for her counsel and for her prayers. Who is she? This afternoon you will find her in the Sabbath school, while the teacher tells her of that Christ who elished the naked and fed the hungry, and healed the sick. My mind leaps forward thirty years from now, and I find myself in an African jungle; and there is a missionary of the cross addressing the natives, and their dusky countenances are irradiated with the glad tidings of great joy and salvation. Who is he? Did you not hear his voice today in the opening song of your church service?

I learn one more lesson from this

Oriental scene, and that is, that every wilderness has a well in it. Hagar and Ishmael gave up to die. Hagar's heart sank within her as she heard her child crying: "Water! water! water!" "Ah!" she says, "my darling, there is no water. This is a desert." And then God's angel said from the cloud: "What aileth thee, Hagar? And she looked up and saw him pointing to a well of water, where she filled the bottle for the lad. Blessed be God, that there is in every wilderness a well, if you only know how to find it—fountains for all these thirsty souls. On that last day, on that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried: "If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink." All these other fountains you find are mere mirages of the desert. Paracelsus, you know, spent his time in trying to find out the elixir of life—a liquid, which, if taken, would keep one perpetually young in this world, and would change the aged back again to youth. Of course he was disappointed; he found not the elixir. But here I tell you of the elixir of everlasting life bursting from the "Rock of Ages," and that drinking that water you shall never get old, and you will never be sick, and you will never die. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." Ah! here is a man who says: "I have been looking for that fountain a great while, but can't find it." And here is some one else who says: "I believe all you say, but I have been trudging along in the wilderness and can't find the fountain." Do you know the reason? I will tell you. You never looked in the right direction. "Oh," you say, "I have looked everywhere. I have looked north, south, east and west, and I haven't found the fountain." Why, you are not looking in the right direction at all. Look up, where Hagar looked. She never would have found the fountain at all, but when she heard the voice of the angel she looked up, and she saw the finger pointing to the supply. And, O soul, if today with one earnest, intense prayer you would only look up to Christ, he would point you down to the supply in the wilderness. "Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved; for I am God, and there is none else!" Look! Look, as Hagar looked!

Yes, there is a well for every desert of bereavement. Looking over any audience I notice signs of mourning and woe. Have you found consolation? Oh, man bereft, oh, woman bereft, have you found consolation? Hearse after hearse. We step from one grave hillock to another grave hillock. We follow corpses, ourselves soon to be like them. The world is in mourning for its dead. Every heart has become the sepulchre of some buried joy. But sing ye to God; every wilderness has a well in it; and I come to that well today, and I begin to draw water for you from that well.

If you have lived in the country you have sometimes taken hold of the rope of the old well-sweep, and you know how the bucket came up, dripping with bright, cool water. And I lay hold of the rope of God's mercy and I begin to draw on that Gospel well-sweep, and I see the buckets coming up. Thirsty soul! Here is one bucket of life! Come and drink of it. "Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely." I pull away again at the rope, and another bucket comes up. It is this promise: "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." I lay hold of the rope again, and I pull away with all my strength, and the bucket comes up, bright, and beautiful, and cool. Here is the promise: "Come unto me, all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

LINK FOUND TOO LATE.

Time of Grace Allowed the Heirs Had Elapsed.

It was one of those big English estates which was to make a great many people rich if all the links in the long chain of ancestry could be found, says the New York Times. The legatees in this country had twenty-one years in which to prove their claim before the property would revert to the crown. Everything possible had been done and one link was still missing. This was an old family Bible containing certain necessary records. It was supposed to have been burned at the time of the Deerfield massacre, but, notwithstanding, every effort had been made to find it if by any possibility it was in existence; but without success and the time expired. Two years later one of the legatees, a New York woman, chanced to see in a paper the advertisement of a woman who wanted work. The advertiser had signed her name and it was a family name of the woman who was one of the claimants for the English estate. It was perhaps the persistent fascination which the earnest searcher into genealogical records never loses, and the force of habit formed in many years' search for precious documents, which interested her at once. She answered the advertisement in person, found that the woman had been the wife of a member of her family, who had died, leaving her in financial straits which had forced her to advertise for something to do to support herself. But the strange and romantic part of the story was that among old books and papers which had been cherished as having belonged to her husband, the woman had the old Bible, with its register of births and deaths, the only link that had been needed to obtain the big estate, and now that it was too late it was found where it had been treasured simply as a souvenir.

Christians may overcome great sin and be made miserable by little ones.

LACK OF DESTROYERS.

NAVY IN NEED OF TORPEDO BOAT WRECKERS.

Spain Well Supplied—Purchase of Tupy from Brazil Is About Assured—Reported Sale of the Varese to Italy to the Dons Is Denied.

The purchase of the torpedo boat destroyer Tupy from the Brazilian government is now practically assured. The Tupy, with two sister craft, is being built at the Armstrong works at Elswick, England, where the Amazonas and her counterpart were constructed, and not at Kiel, Germany, as previously stated. Much gratification is felt by the naval administration over the prospect of securing the Tupy and others of her class, for torpedo boat destroyers are needed badly. A number of torpedo boats have been added to the effective force of the navy, but not one destroyer has been built or contracted for.

Spain's Has Torpedo Destroyers.

Spain is fairly well supplied with these terrible water witches, which are dangerous alike to the big battleship and the little torpedo-boat. They have attained a speed of more than thirty knots. The Spanish flotilla now held at the Canaries, pending the adjustment of the diplomatic question relating to its assignment to waters adjacent to the United States, includes some of these destroyers. They are more feared by naval officers than battleships and armored cruisers, and every energy is being shown to get some of them ready-made abroad to offset the Spanish contingent.

Need of Armored Cruisers.

It was pointed out the other day that the naval administration wanted more battleships, armored cruisers, torpedo-boat destroyers and torpedo boats. This was the conclusion reached by the war board, of which Assistant Secretary Roosevelt is chairman. As no more armor-clads except the Carlo Alberto, owned by Italy, appear to be

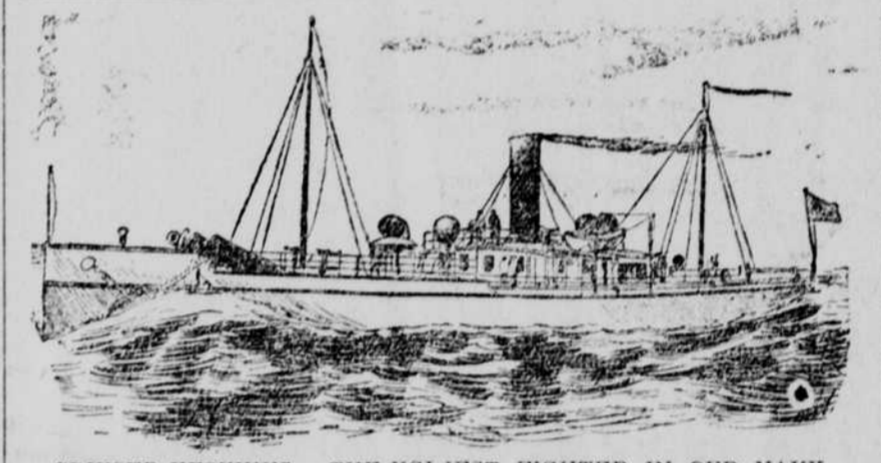
of the unprotected ships now with Admiral Sicard. It has been determined to armor the larger of these vessels with a band of steel extending around the sides and near the water line, for the protection of the vitals, machinery and magazines to be improvised. This armor will consist of two inches of nickel steel, and will be four inches less in thickness than on the armored cruisers New York and Brooklyn. It is equal to the protection afforded the machinery by protective decks on some cruisers, and would render the vessels fairly safe from six pounders and light-fire guns.

Engineers Urged to Hurry.

Orders have been issued to many of the army engineers in charge of coast fortifications to hurry the work now in progress. Preparations are already under way for placing in position the new coast defense guns purchased in England. It is expected that they will be delivered at New York within ten days. The guns are thirty-two in number, and are of the latest rapid-fire pattern. The new pieces are fully mounted, and are provided with about 300 rounds of ammunition. They are of comparatively short range, and will be used in harbors and channels, on the northern coast principally. Contracts were made by the war department Saturday for the delivery of a large quantity of armor piercing and deck piercing steel projectiles of large caliber.

Ships for Auxiliary Fleet.

By order of the secretary of the navy Lieutenant Commander Reeder, commander of the school ship St. Mary's, and Passed Assistant Engineer Danforth, assigned to duty at the Brooklyn navy yard, sat the other day as members of the board of auxiliary cruisers. These additions were made to the board because it had been reported to Secretary Long that the board was not large enough to do the work expected of them speedily enough. The steamships Oriaba, Seneca, Saratoga and Yumuri, of the Ward line, were carefully inspected. Unofficial information was to the effect that all four of these vessels would be recommended for lease as auxiliary cruisers, should an



CRUISER VESUVIUS. THE UGLIEST FIGHTER IN OUR NAVY.

definitely in the market, the war board is doing all that can be done to secure torpedo-boat destroyers. Its members believe that this class of vessel will augment the vessels now under Admiral Sicard to such an extent that no force Spain can gather would be effective against the American fleet. A denial is made here of the statement that Spain has bought the Italian armor-clad Varese.

Fleet at Hampton Roads.

The announcement that the Massachusetts and the Texas had been withdrawn from the squadron at Key West and sent to Hampton Roads was the subject of an inquiry at the cabinet meeting, and the most positive assurances were given by Secretary Long that the orders to these ships were not due to any suggestion from Spain. There was no intention, it was explained, to detach the North Atlantic squadron from Florida waters to satisfy Spain's qualms in the pending emergency. The establishment of a second division of the North Atlantic squadron, Secretary Long said, was a strategic move, and the Massachusetts and the Texas have been detached to form part of the force to be assembled at Hampton Roads. Captain Philip of the Massachusetts will command the second division for the

emergency require the acquisition of commerce destroyers. Two schooners and several yachts, offered by their owners, were inspected today. Among them were the Conqueror, owned by F. W. Vanderbilt; the Atalanta, by George Gould, and the Corsair, by Pierpont Morgan.

Contract for 2,000 Horses.

The Black Hills ranges are being scoured by the United States agents for horses suitable for the cavalry. A contract has been made with one large horse company near Fort Meade to furnish 2,000 horses as soon as they can be brought in from the range. Negotiations are also being made by the government agent there for several hundred more horses from other ranches. The army officers think these horses are to be shipped south, and from the hurried orders, and the fact that the animals are not up to the army standard, that it means war.

Universal Vessel Destroyer.

M. M. Ormsby of Maple Park, Kane county, Ill., claims to have perfected an invention by which everything afloat in every port could be destroyed without the loss of a man, and at a cost of only \$5,000,000. The navy department has written him for details.

WEST IN CONTROL.

Congress Can Be Depended Upon. One of the curious developments in congress is the way in which the control of affairs relating to war seems to be gradually drifting into the hands of western men who represent a sentiment distinctly different from that in New England. Of late days money bills in congress are made the medium of a vast amount of important legislation, and besides that the voting of supplies is an essential to the conduct of war. It is worthy of notice therefore that the two great appropriations committees are headed by Senator Allison of Iowa and Representative Cannon of Illinois. The direct work of equipping the army falls upon the military committee of the house, at the head of which is General Hull of Iowa, while the militia committee in the same body, which in the case of war would be almost equally important, is managed by Colonel Marsh of Illinois.

Eastern Influences Set Upon.

The naval committees of the house and senate were exceptions to the general rule, both being in control of old members from the state of Maine. Chairman Boutelle on the house side at his face with curious persistence against any preparations for war, and the result was that the committee ran away from him, and inserted in the appropriations bill a proposition to build three new battleships and twelve torpedo boats. On the senate side the naval committee has been practically reorganized owing to the absence of Mr. Hale, whose policy has been ident-

ical with that of Boutelle, and the result is that Senator Perkins of California, a practical ship owner and sailor, has been placed in charge.

Hawley Is Patriotic.

The only eastern man at the present time actively at the head of a committee which has directly to do with war matters is Senator Hawley of Connecticut, who, fortunately for the country, is progressive and patriotic, having been the first one to take a step to strengthen the army by providing for two new artillery regiments. To cap the climax of western influence in the present crisis, it is worth noting that the two committees on foreign affairs which supervise the diplomatic negotiations leading up to hostilities and which would have direct control of a proposition to declare war are under the leadership of Senator Cushman K. Davis of Minnesota and Representative Hitt of Illinois.

Took General Lee's Advice.

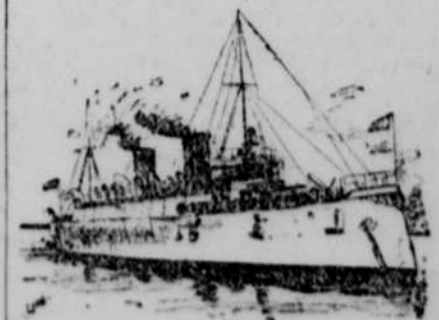
The return of the cruiser Montgomery to Key West has caused much speculation, which the authorities have declined to end by giving reasons. The real reasons are interesting, and show how grave the situation is. The accuracy of this statement cannot be questioned. The Montgomery was ordered to return from Havana harbor at the suggestion of Consul General Lee. He pointed out to the authorities that the retention of the cruiser in Havana harbor was the source of circulation of rumors, and a menace rather than a protection in case of an outbreak. She could not land sufficient force to be much, if any protection to American interests, while she was not sufficiently powerful to cope with the guns of the forts and the Spanish warships. In case of a sudden declaration of hostilities, in view of these circumstances General Lee recommended the withdrawal of the Montgomery and the substitution of the Fern, or some other vessel of the same character. The Fern can perform equally good services as the Montgomery in the event that General Lee or other Americans have to leave Havana in a hurry, and the Fern stands in less danger of being fired on than would a vessel of war.

Why the Iowa Was Held Back.

General Lee recommended the sending of the Iowa to Havana to bring back the court of inquiry. It will be remembered that a rumor was printed that the administration had decided to send the Iowa to Havana to impress the Spaniards with the power of our navy. This was at General Lee's suggestion. He told the government that the Spaniards could not be made to believe that we had a formidable navy unless they had an ocular demonstration of the fact. The Spaniards, he reported, believed the Maine was the finest ship in the American navy and that her destruction made it impossible for the United States to think about fighting Spain. To correct this impression General Lee suggested that the Iowa should go to Havana harbor, take the court of inquiry on board, and speed out again, an operation which would give the Spaniards some material for sober reflection. When the fact of this recommendation came to the knowledge of a very high naval officer, who is familiar with every word of evidence brought out by the court of inquiry, he made a vigorous protest, and objected most strenuously to the government's taking any risks in sending the finest battleship of the navy into Havana harbor. He gave reasons for making this protest, and pointed out the dangers that might be incurred. The details would not be proper. It is only necessary to add that the arguments advanced by this distinguished naval officer were so urgent that the Iowa was not sent to Havana.

Hilarity at the Banquet.

The brilliantly lighted banquet-room was a scene of wild tumult in an instant. The joyous cheers of the emotional Spanish officers could be heard far beyond the guard lines, which held the approaches to the palace against uninvited guests for a block on each side. There were cries: "To the memory of Maximilian! Neither Austria nor Spain can forget his fate, and will stand together against those



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whose unjustified threats of intervention brought about his cruel and untimely end."

The Austrian "Jackies" are getting joyously drunk in the water front cafes at the expense of the Spanish fleet. It is a case of the Russian reception in the Havre and Calais again on a small scale. The only people who have no part in the general joy are the editors of the Havana papers and the correspondents of the journals of Madrid. They were not invited to the feast, and every effort has been made to keep secret the event of the banquet. Only young Blanco, correspondent of El Imparcial of Madrid, was present. As a member of the governor's family he was there as a matter of courtesy. The other editors held an indignation meeting and not one of the papers mentioned the banquet in any way in their news columns. Inspired leaders in the Spanish morning papers insist that Austria, Germany and France will stand with Spain in the event of war or the seizure and annexation of Cuba.