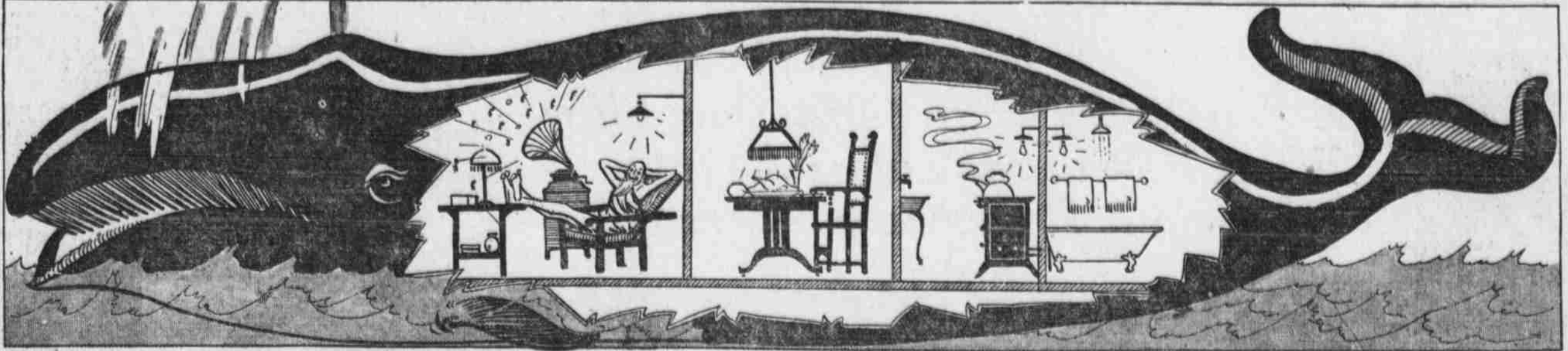
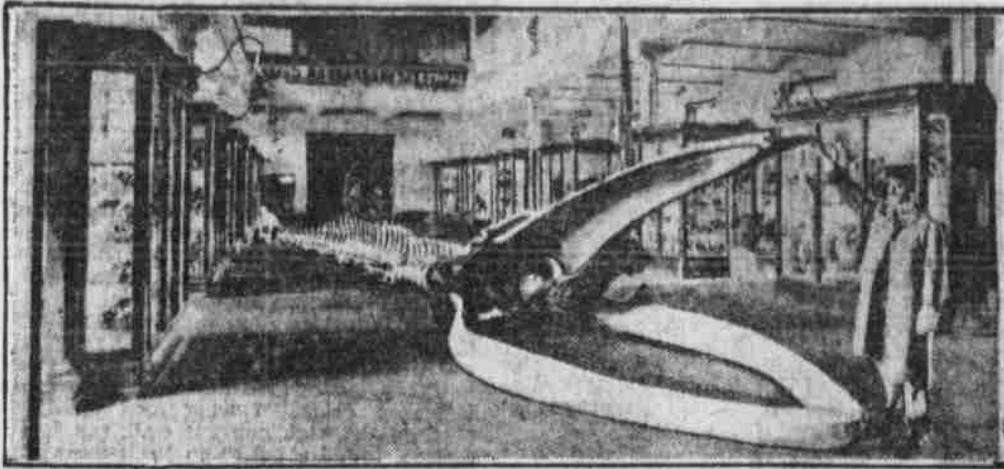


Why I Believe The Whale Swallowed Jonah.

Jonah Was Not Taken into the Food Stomach, But into the Air Chamber of the Whale, Which Was Large and Commodious Enough to Serve as a Refuge. Suggests the Rev. Dr. Townsend



This Entirely Fanciful Sketch Is Presented to Emphasize the Fact That There Are Whales Known to Science Whose Bulky Interior Would Not Only Accommodate Many Human Beings, But Would Take in a Small Three-Room and Bath Apartment.



The Skeleton of a Gigantic Finback Whale Mounted at the American Museum of Natural History, New York.

By LUTHER T. TOWNSEND, LL.D.

Condensed from His Article, "The Story of Jonah in the Light of the Higher Criticism," in "The Bible Champion."

THE story of Jonah is not only discredited, but is regarded by some critics as quite suitable for the amusement of children, and is labelled "The Plekwick" and "The Bigelow Papers" of the Bible. And one may think from the frequency and violence of the attacks upon the historical integrity of this story, and from the sport made of it, that it is the most vulnerable narrative in the Bible.

Not so very long since the story of Jonah was handed in such a way by an eminent clergyman, who is also a literary critic, the Rev. Dr. Lyman Abbott, as to excite "great merriment and outbursts of laughter" in the congregation, though such results, the doctor afterward said, were not intended. But if the story, as he assured his hearers, "is wholly fiction," why should not just such facetious and laughable results have been intended?

But if, on the other hand, this narrative is regarded by many intelligent and scholarly people as veritable history, then the case is different, and the story is such as may demand re-investigation.

Adopting this method, it is legitimate, first of all, to bring before the mind the more important facts, or what are said to be facts, and then ascertain what parts of the narrative are credible, and what, if any, are to be ruled against. The following matters are found in the record:

Jonah, the son of Amittai, was born at Gath-hepher, about eight hundred years before Christ. He was what is termed a Jehovah prophet, and, after prophesying concerning Israel, was sent to Nineveh, the metropolis of the Assyrian Empire, to preach repentance to that great and wicked city. Instead of obeying the command he took passage at Joppa for Tarshish, either the modern Tarsus in Cilicia, or else Tartessus in Spain; the latter place is the more probable. The narrative from this point on is so briefly and faultlessly stated that one need attempt no paraphrase, but may give the story, up to the point of Jonah's casting into the sea, precisely as it is in the record, ending:

"Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. (Chap. I, 4, 17.)"

This account is followed by what seems to be the most improbable statement of all—that Jonah retained his consciousness and offered a prayer while in that loathsome imprisonment. It is also said that

the Lord heard his prayer, and that on the third day Jonah was cast by the whale upon the land. It is still further recorded that Jonah then went to Nineveh and delivered his message; that the people repented.

Now, the radical skeptic, without giving the subject careful study, sums up the case in a single dogmatic assertion, which is this: I do not believe one word of this story. A dogmatic reply, in kind, or a clerical rebuke of some sort, will get nowhere and will leave the disputants looking at, or making faces at, each other.

A sane criticism would be, however, that the assertion of the critic is far too sweeping; for, unless one is prepared to deny the credibility of all history, some parts of this story of Jonah, on the ground of the highest criticism, are such that one cannot help believing them.

The first fact to be noted is that the age in which Jonah is alleged to have lived was not mythical, but historical and prophetic. Jonah was contemporaneous with Obadiah, Joel, Amos and Hosea, who belonged to the last grouping of the Old Testament prophets. He lived in the time of Jeroboam, with whom he had great influence. If, therefore, Jonah is assigned to the realm of the mythical, there is no reason why these other prophets, and this King, or, indeed, no reason why the Greek and Roman classical writers of the same period, and even those who flourished later, should not also be considered to be realms of myth. Indeed, one can present just as strong reasons in support of the statement that Virgil, Dante and Shakespeare were unhistorical as that Jonah, the son of Amittai, was such.

Early in the eighteenth century the assertion was made, not only that there never had been such a city as Nineveh, but even a tradition of its city was questioned. There were critics who did not therefore hesitate to affirm that Nineveh, as well as Jonah, was a myth.

But in 1841, under the accumulations of centuries, Nineveh was discovered and found to have had the extent and magnificence as ascribed to it in the book of Jonah. The excavations were by Botta, Layard, Rassam, Loftus, George Smith and Rawlinson traced the walls made by Sennacherib and repaired by Assurbanipal and discovered inscriptions which completely upset the views held by earlier critics.

The facts are these: Nineveh, supposed to have been founded by a great-

An Ingenious and Scientific Defense of the Famous Biblical Story by a Minister, on the Lines of "The Higher Criticism."

THE BIBLE NARRATIVE.

15. So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea; and the sea ceased from her raging.
16. Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows.
17. Now the Lord had prepared a great fish, to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.
—Book of Jonah, ch. I, verses 15-17.

grandson of Noah (Gen. x. 11) two thousand years before Christ, was, during the reign of Sennacherib, the capital of the Assyrian Empire. It appears to have been in its greatest glory when Jonah (800 B. C.) prophesied against it. It was standing several years later, when Nahum uttered his prediction concerning the downfall of the Assyrian Empire. Nineveh, its capital, was besieged for two years by the combined forces of the Medes and Babylonians, and by them was captured 606 B. C., which was two hundred years after the prophecy of Jonah.

Excavations show that it was then devastated by conflagrations, which destroyed everything except its stone and brick. Its walls were thrown down, and, according to prophecy, it was made uninhabitable (Nahum III, 1-7; Zeph. II, 13-15). Jonah was commanded to denounce the iniquity of Nineveh and make known to her people the God of Israel. Similar to this mission was that of Moses when sent to Pharaoh; of Elijah, when sent to Ahab; of Seraiah, when sent by Jeremiah to Babylon.

There were many reasons why Jonah hesitated to go to Nineveh. To him, as to other Israelites, the people of that heathenish and wicked city, though civilized, were repulsive. And quite likely, too, the prophet had forebodings that his mission might be attended with disappointment and even with personal injury. The highest criticism will not fail to note that the conduct of Jonah is quite characteristic of human nature. More than one servant of God has fled from unpleasant duties. And, as is well known, many a runaway since the days of Jonah has taken to the sea as a way of escape.

And the critic, if familiar with the nausea incident to a pitching and rolling ship, and if also disturbed by a troubled conscience, will see no difficulty unless determined to do so in the apparent willingness of Jonah to be thrown overboard. He was from the inland, among the hills of Gath-hepher, and was consequently unaccustomed to sea voyages.

Nor is there anything, incredible in what is said to have followed—that a great fish (dag gathol) was near the ship and seized Jonah the moment he struck the water. Every seafaring man knows that at sea sharks follow ships for days, sometimes for weeks, and if an unfortunate man falls overboard he is often quickly seized and devoured.

There are two or three other matters that the destructive critic is continually harping upon that may at this point be considered, one of which, rather coarsely put, is that God is not a being who "would go into the business of creating whales to swallow men."

In the first place the Hebrew words, translated in the Common Version, "prepared a great fish," do not mean that God created a fish for the specific purpose of swallowing Jonah, but rather that God allotted or appointed a great fish for that purpose; or, in the Christian speech, the meaning is that, by the providence of God, a great fish, already created, was brought to the side of the ship, or happened to be there, at the moment Jonah was thrown overboard, and, under the circumstances, did what was perfectly natural for such a fish to do, swallowed Jonah.

The unbelieving critic has also asserted that the story of Jonah is incredible—because the throat of a whale is not large enough to swallow a man. But the highest criticism in its zoological studies has put an end, some time since, to this objection that for centuries had been kept on parade.

The words "dag gathol," translated into both the Septuagint and the New Testament by the Greek word katos, and into the Latin of the Vulgate by the words piscem grandem, mean simply a great fish or sea-monster. The word whale, therefore, is the translator's word, while the words dag gathol and katos are those used by the Bible writers.

So far, therefore, as the Hebrew and Greek words are concerned, the highest criticism makes it perfectly clear that the fish that swallowed Jonah may have been a whale, a shark, a sea serpent, a sea lion or any other large monster of the deep. And even if the skeptic insists that in this discussion the word "whale" should be used, still one need not suffer embarrassment, for, while it is true that the right whale has a throat of small size, the sperm whale has a throat sufficiently large to swallow a man without the least difficulty.

There is not a shipmaster or a sailor who

has been on a whaling voyage who will question the following statement made by one of the crew of a New Bedford (Mass.) whale ship, that he, though a man of large build, weighing one hundred and seventy pounds, frequently had passed through the mouth and throat of a dead sperm whale. He says he did this after the head of the whale had been cut off from the body, and when the jaws and smallest part of the throat had been taken on deck.

Then he adds: "Although a sperm whale is large, a bow-headed whale is much larger, with a throat not only capable of swallowing a well-built man, but in my judgment a good-sized horse or cow."

M. P. Courbet, in the Cosmos (Paris, March 7, 1868, writing concerning the Monaco, after giving an account of a monster sperm whale captured near the Azores, says: "The discourses of the Prince of Monaco were such as to relieve us of all difficulty in believing the Bible story that a whale could swallow Jonah."

In an article contributed to the Academy of Sciences, M. Jouin states that "a sperm whale easily can swallow animals, taller and heavier than a man; . . . these animals, when swallowed, can keep alive for some time in the cetacean's stomach and be cast up by it at the moment of its death."

But it has been pointed out of late that the right whale need not be excluded from sea monsters that could swallow Jonah. Professor Ray Matthews, in a report of the Japanese Fisheries, expresses the opinion that it was neither a sperm nor a bow-headed whale that swallowed Jonah, each of which has a throat large enough to do it, but was a right whale and that Jonah was not taken into the food-stomach, but into the air chamber of the whale, which was large and commodious enough to serve as a refuge.

We quote the following from the editorial notes of The Bible Student and Teacher (October, February, 1911, '12): "A large whale may weigh as much as eight hundred men, and it requires as much fresh air as eight hundred men respire, and the equivalent of the respirations of eight hundred men for twenty minutes, that is, for four hundred respirations of the men, are drawn in at one breath, through the whale's capacious mouth into its large air chamber, its mouth can give place for ten men standing upright; and as it skims along the sea it scoops in its food of jelly fishes and small crustaceans and other surface animals; which quickly enter its stomach; but a larger object, Jonah's body, for instance, would pass into the air chamber."

"Here Jonah might be wide awake, able to meditate on the situation and to pray to God and to sleep over night. But though not very inconvenient for Jonah, the whale itself would feel discomfort and be likely to seek relief by coughing up the prophet on dry land."

Jaws of an Extinct Shark, Photographed with a Human Figure. This Monster Could Easily Have Swallowed Half a Dozen Jonahs. — Reproduced by Courtesy of the American Museum of Natural History, Where the Restored Jaws Are on Exhibition.



Jonah Thrown into the Sea—From a Painting by C. W. Kennedy.

Another adverse criticism on the Jonah narrative is that no large sea monsters frequent the waters of the Mediterranean. But, as a matter of fact, no less authority than Cuvier calls attention to the *Horqual mediterranea*, a large species of whale indigenous to the Mediterranean Sea.

And it is well known to those familiar with these subjects that the waters through which a vessel sailing from Joppa to any Spanish port would pass were frequented in early times by a species of shark called the sea dog, *canis carcharias*, whose normal length at maturity, according to modern works on zoology, is thirty feet.

The noted French naturalist, Lacepede, states that these Mediterranean sea dogs can swallow animals much larger than a man without mutilating them. In his "Histoire Des Poissons" is this statement: "Sea dogs have a lower jaw of nearly six feet in its semi-circular extent, which enables us to understand how they can swallow entire animals as large or larger than ourselves."

And it is a well-known fact that the voracity of sea dogs, and, indeed, that of many of the shark family, is such that they never chew their food, but swallow everything they can without chewing. . . . This, then, in brief, is the challenge of the skeptic: The retaining of one's consciousness for the length of time alleged,

and under such conditions as are alleged, is incredible and impossible, and there is no power or agency on earth that could have restored "a partly digested man" to consciousness.

In this opinion of the rationalistic skeptic let us say that we fully concur, and confess that we know of no agency on earth that could have saved the disobedient prophet from death in the FOOD-STOMACH of a whale, provided he were there three days and nights. . . .

This, then, is the evangelic confession of faith: We believe the Bible narratives and miracles because on scientific grounds they are possible; because they are supported by circumstantial, monumental and other indisputable proofs, and because there were purposes of sufficient magnitude to justify divine interposition.

We believe that the jaws of the sea monster opened and closed upon the disobedient prophet, but God interposed and delivered him in order that the more faithfully he might declare the divine message; that the people of Nineveh might listen more attentively and obediently to what he had to say; that Jonah's deliverance might be a prophetic sign of Christ's resurrection, and that his deliverance might also be a prophetic sign, extending through the ages, that God can keep his children in safety, though dead, until the morning of the resurrection.

The Eye IS Hurt by What It Doesn't See

THE old idea that what the eye doesn't see will never hurt it is completely overturned by experiments made by Sir William Crookes during the last four years upon the effects of invisible rays upon our organ of sight.

Sir William Crookes is the inventor of the Crookes tube, which made discovery of the X-ray possible. He finds that the light vibrations known as the ultra violet at the upper end of the spectrum and the vibrations known as the infra-red at the lower end of the spectrum are positively ruinous to the eye.

The ultra-violet rays are so rapid that the eye does not perceive them. The infra-red are so slow that the eye does not see them either.

Both make their presence felt, however, in the growth known as cataract. The cataract indeed seems to be directly caused by the irritation of the infra-red vibrations. It is really an effort to the eye to protect itself. Flattening of the cornea, astigmatism and degeneration of the cones of the retina and the fibre of the optic nerve result from the constant bombardment.

It would be better if everybody always wore glasses which would filter out these two forms of rays, says Sir William. It is imperative, if the eyes are to be normal, to wear such glasses under artificial light and under any circumstances of abnormal radiation—such as strong sunlight or water, on sand or on snow.

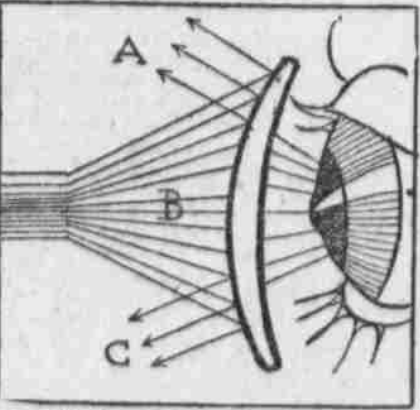
The difficulty is to find a glass which will at the same time keep out both infra-red and ultra-violet rays.

Thousands of various spectacles were made by adding various metallic oxides to the constituents of glass. Sometimes four and five metals were combined at a time in one piece of glass.

All the ultra-violet rays shorter than 3700 are harmful. Curiously enough, the resistance of the glass against the harmful light is less dependent upon its color than upon the metals used.

As an example, copper and uranium oxide give a strong yellow glass, but such a glass is far less impervious to the infra-red rays than a mixture of nickel and praseodymium which gives an almost colorless glass.

Other metals used are cerium, chromium, cobalt, iron and manganese.



How the Perfect Eyeglass Will Turn Off the Injurious Invisible Rays. A—The Ultra-Violet; B—The Harmless Visible Rays; C—The Infra-Red.