

THE CORNCRIB OF EGYPT

NO ADMITTANCE TO GOD'S BOUNTY UNLESS CHRIST GO WITH YOU.

The Famine That Was So in All Lands—The Condition Imposed That Benjamin Should Go Into Egypt with His Brethren—Benjamin a Type of Christ.

BROOKLYN, Aug. 30.—The cables report of meager harvests in Europe and the memory of the vast crops of ripening grain which Dr. Talmage saw during his recent tour in the west, have combined to turn his thoughts back to that patriarchal time when all the world sent to Egypt to buy corn and to suggest a Gospel lesson. His text is Genesis xlii, 3. "Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you."

This summer having crossed eighteen of the United States—north, south, east and west—I have to report the mightiest harvests that this country or any other country ever reaped. If the grain gamblers do not somehow wreck these harvests we are about to enter upon the grandest season of prosperity that America has ever witnessed. But we are not so in our own country, on the other side of the Atlantic there are nations threatened with famine, and the most dismal cry that is ever heard will, I fear, be uttered—the cry for bread.

I pray God that the contrast between our prosperity and their want may not be as sharp as in the lands referred to by my text. There was nothing to eat. Plenty of corn in Egypt, but ghastly famine in Canaan. The cattle moaning in the stall, men, women and children awfully white with hunger. Not the failing of one crop for one summer, but the failing of all the crops for seven years. A nation dying for lack of that which is so common on your table and so little appreciated in the West.

The fact was there was a great corncrib in Egypt. The people of Egypt were being largely taxed in all ages, at the present time paying between 70 and 80 per cent. of their products to the government. No wonder in that time they had a large corncrib, and it was full. To that crib they came from the regions round about—those who were famished—some paying for corn in money, when the money was exhausted, paying for the corn in sheep and cattle and horses and camels, and when they were exhausted, then selling their own bodies and their families into slavery.

The morning for starting out on the crusade for bread has arrived. Jacob gets his family up very early. But before the elder sons start they say something that makes him tremble with emotion from head to foot and burst into tears. The fact was that these elder sons had once before been in Egypt to get corn, and they had been treated somewhat roughly, the lord of the corncrib supplying them with corn, but saying at the close of the interview, "Now, you need not come back here for any more corn unless you bring something better than money—even your younger brother Benjamin."

Why did you tell them you had a brother? said the old man, complaining and chiding them. What do you mean, they said, "he's not all about our family, and we had no idea he would make any such demand upon us as he has made." "No use of asking me," said the father, "I cannot, I will not, give up Benjamin." The fact was that the old man had lost children and when there has been bereavement in a household, and a child taken that makes the other children in the household more precious. So the day for departure was mournful and adjourned and adjourned. Still the horrors of the famine increased, and under moaned the cattle and wider open cracked the earth and more pallid became the cheeks, until Jacob, in despair, cried out to his sons, "Take Benjamin and go. He is the best of all the sons, and he is the best of all the sons."

Well, the bread party—the bread embassy—comes up in front of the corncrib of Egypt. These corncribs are filled with wheat and barley and corn in the husk, for those who have traveled in Canaan and Egypt know that there is corn there corresponding with our Indiana maize. Huzzah! the journey is made. The lord of the corncrib, who is also the prime minister, comes down to these arriving travelers, and says: "Dine with me today. How is your father? Is this Benjamin, the younger brother, whose presence I demand?" The travelers are instructed into the palace. They are worn and exhausted of the way, and servants come with a bowl of water in one hand and a towel in the other, and kneel down before these newly arrived travelers, washing their feet of the way. The butchers and purveyors and caterers of the prime minister prepare the repast.

The guests are seated in small groups, two or three at a table, the food on a tray; the luxuries from imperial gardens and orchards and vineyards and aviaries are brought in, and are filling choice and pleasant. Now is the time for this prime minister to show it. Will he kill him, now that he has him in his hands? Oh, no! The lord of the corncrib is seated at his own table, and he looks over to the table of his guests, and he sends a portion to each of them, but sends a larger portion to Benjamin, or, as the Bible quaintly puts it, "Benjamin's mess was five times larger than the mess of any other." They are worn and exhausted of the way, and servants come with a bowl of water in one hand and a towel in the other, and kneel down before these newly arrived travelers, washing their feet of the way. The butchers and purveyors and caterers of the prime minister prepare the repast.

My text also suggests the reason why so many people do not get any real comfort. You meet ten people; nine of them are in some kind of bondage. There is something in their health, or in their state, or in their domestic condition that demands sympathy. And yet the most of the world's sympathy amounts to absolute nothing. People go to the wrong crib, they go to the wrong way. When the plague was in Rome a great many years ago, there were eighty men who chanted themselves to death with the litanies of Gregory the Great—literally chanted themselves to death, and yet it did not stop the plague. And all the music of this world cannot halt the plague of the human heart. I come to some one whose ailments are chronic, and I say, "In heaven you will never be sick." That does not give you much comfort. What you want is a soothing power for your present distress. Lost children, have you? I come to you and tell you that in ten years perhaps you will meet those loved ones before the throne of God. But there is but little condolence and that. One day is a year without them, ten years is a small eternity. What you want is sympathy now—present help. I come to those of you who have lost dear friends, and say, "Try to forget them. Do not keep the departed always in your mind." How can you forget them when every picture and every room calls out their name.

He was applauded in England and applauded in the United States. He roused up nations into laughter. He had no equal. And yet, although many people supposed him entirely happy, and that this world was completely satisfying his soul, he sits down and writes: "I never in my life have had more than that it did not rain and ruin. I never in my life went out in a shabby coat because it was raining and thought all who had the choice would keep indoors that the sun did not shine. But in its strength and bring out with it the butterflies of fashion whom I knew and who knew me. I never consented to accept a part I hated, out of kindness to another, that I did not get myself by the public and out by the writer. I could not take leave for a few minutes with Terry without being overruled, and having my elbow bone broken, though my friend got off unharmed. I could not make a covenant with Arnold, which I thought would be a blessing to me, because making his time in an inexcusable space of time—I think thirteen months—I earned for him twenty thousand pounds and for myself one. I am persuaded that if I were to set up as a beggar, every one in my neighborhood would leave off eating bread." That was the lament of the world's comedian and joker. All unhappy. The world did everything for Lord Byron that it could do, and yet in his last moment he asked a friend to come and sit down by him and read, as most appropriate to his case, the story of "The Bleeding Heart." Torrigiano, the sculptor, executed, after months of care and carving, "Madonna and the Child," the royal family came in and admired it. Every body that looked at it was in ecstasy. But one day, after all that toil and all that admiration, because he did not get as much compensation for his work as he had expected, he took a mallet and dashed the exquisite sculpture into atoms. The world is poor compensation, poor satisfaction, poor solace. Famine, famine in all the earth; not for seven years, but for six months. O blessed God, there is a great corncrib, and it is in another land. It is a large place. An angel once measured it, and as far as I can calculate it in our phrase that corncrib is fifteen hundred miles long and fifteen hundred broad and fifteen hundred high, and it is full. Food for all nations. "Oh," say the people, "we will start right away and get this supply for our soul. But stop a moment, for from the keeper of the corncrib there comes this word, saying, 'You shall not see my face except your brother be with you.' In other words, there is no such thing as getting from heaven pardon and comfort and eternal life unless we bring with us our Divine Brother, the Lord Jesus Christ. Coming without him we shall fall before we reach the corncrib, and our bodies shall be a portion for the jackals of the wilderness; but coming with the Divine Jesus, all the granaries of heaven will swing open before us, and abundance shall be given us. We shall be invited to sit in the palace of the king and at the table; and while the Lord of heaven is appointing from his own table to other tables, he will not forget you. Oh, that the point at which so many are disappointed. There is no mercy from God except through Jesus Christ. Coming with him we are accepted. Coming without him, we are rejected."

I want to make three points. Every frank and common sense man will acknowledge himself to be a sinner. What are you going to do with your sins? Have them pardoned, you say. How? Through the mercy of God. What do you mean by the mercy of God? Is it the letting down of a bar for the admission of all, without regard to character? Be not deceived. I see a soul coming up to the gate of mercy and knocking at the door of heaven, and he has no voice from within saying, "Yes, you alone." The voice from within says, "All alone." The voice from within says, "You shall not see my face unless you bring with you your Divine Brother, the Lord Jesus, be with you." Oh, that the point at which so many are disappointed. There is no mercy from God except through Jesus Christ. Coming with him we are accepted. Coming without him, we are rejected.

MAN'S EXTREMITY, GOD'S TIME. And if we come up toward the door of heaven at last, though we come from all quarters and in all directions, and knock for admittance and it is found that Christ is not with us, the police of heaven will beat us back from the door, saying, "Depart, I never knew you." If Jacob's sons, coming toward Egypt, had lost everything on the way; if they had expended their last shekel; if they had come up utterly exhausted, and not a crumb of bread, and it had been found that Benjamin was with them, all the store houses would have swung open before them. And so, though by fatal casualty we may be ushered into the eternal world; though we may be weak and exhausted by protracted sickness; if, in that last moment, we can only just stagger and faint and fall into the gate of heaven—it seems that all the corncribs of heaven will open for our need and all the palaces will open for our reception, and the Lord of that place seated at his table, and all the angels of God seated at their table, and the martyrs seated at their table, and all our glorified kindred seated at our table, the king shall pass by our table and stand at the right hand, while we think of the fact that it was Jesus who started us on the road, and Jesus who started us on the way, and Jesus who at last gained admittance for our soul. We shall be glad if he has seen of the way; all of his soul and been satisfied with the settlement of the Franco-German question by a compromise, must also resign themselves to the pure and Christian atmosphere of peace. If Germany now agreed to resign the lost provinces, and to return to France in return for a pledge of everlasting peace, France would agree to such an arrangement with the greatest repugnance, and would avert her eyes forever from the mocking deliverer who at such a price had her sheather her sword. She has no other, however, to dread any such mortification, for Germany would fly to arms a hundred times sooner than lose her past victory, she, too, dreams of confirming it fresh. No, peace is not concluded between the two nations. No, the era of combats between them is not over, and the sword is what must again and again be drawn, until the time when a new morality shall govern the world, and when the God of peace shall be universally acknowledged.—From "Germany, France, and General European Politics," by Mr. de Blowitz, in Harper's Magazine for September.

THE ANSWER THAT TURNETH ON WRATH. "Can I read your paper?" asked the man in the rear seat. "I don't know whether you can or not," replied the man in front, "but you may try if you choose," and it took the brakeman, the news agent and the conductor to separate them.—Toledo Blade.

It may not be generally known that a recent addition to the Pratt Free Library at Baltimore, Md., is a photo-lithographic facsimile in book form of the original manuscript of the Book of Common Prayer. It has excited the interest of hundreds of literary men and the Episcopal clergy who have visited the library to look at it. The publication is a reproduction of the manuscript, Book of Common Prayer, which was attached as an appendix to the uniformity, and which for this reason is International Affairs.

Smart Youth (to hand-organ man)—Gard, how's business this morning? Don't you need a cashier? Hand-Organ Man (grinding away)—No, one monka'uff.

FRANCE AND GERMANY.

A CONFLICT BETWEEN THE TWO REGARDED AS INEVITABLE.

The Great Subject of Anxiety to European Statesmen—As Twenty Years Ago, So Now, France and Germany Only Can Occasion War—Why the Nations Hate Each Other.

To-day, as yesterday, as to-morrow, and as for a long time to come, the situation of France presents a most interesting and great subject of anxiety which is imposed upon the mediation of all European statesmen. At no other point is it foreseen that war can break out. Russia has great ambitions, and Italy has strong desires; but Russia is for years doomed merely to cherish ambitions, for she cannot realize them single-handed, and it does not depend upon her to provoke a general war, which would be one result of her combined action with France, while Germany, she will not if she ventures to give the signal of war, for if she did, she would be left to herself, and would bespedily crushed. It could be solely as the result of a general war that Italy could obtain her share, and mandum of her death, and her allies she could take that share only from France, so that a general war alone could procure it for her, inasmuch as, she were left single-handed, she would not be able to overcome France. Neither Austria nor England dreams of war. It is therefore still, as twenty years ago, France and Germany who could occasion war; because, whatever may be alleged, whatever may be proclaimed, or whatever may be concealed, these two nations desire war—first for its own sake, and then for the sake of its result, in order to have done with this everlasting Franco-German nightmare, Europe could now promise to let her arms, and afterwards to intervene merely as arbiter, war would break out between France and Germany, and for the fatality of war, it would override both nations. An end should be put once for all to the fiction which everybody affects to believe, but which is believed by nobody who is accustomed to great states, and aware that by keeping probing human depths; it is not true that the Alsace-Lorraine question is what places France and Germany face-to-face, with hatred in their eyes.

I have long been tormented by the desire of telling the simple, real, and undisguised truth on this subject. What makes the Germans and French implacably confront each other is the unexpected defeat of the former, and the crushing victory of the latter. Alsace and Lorraine are subjects of grief and pride chiefly because they are the signal and tangible testimony of the triumph of one party and the overthrow of the other. By this I do not mean that the French do not love Alsace and Lorraine. I only mean that they love them all the more because by recovering them they would at the same time restore their prestige. Nor do I mean that the Germans do not set great store on them, seeing that by keeping them they remain at the same time victors, holding the front rank. Thus Alsace and Lorraine, dear to the one, precious to the other, are for both, above all things, the symbol of defeat and the symbol of victory. The restoration of Alsace and Lorraine would not suffice those who have lost them. It would not efface the bitterness of the vanquished or the pride of the victor; it would leave untouched, despite protocols and treaties, the iron and leaden objects which separate the two nations; and this feeling is such, I venture to affirm that it is of an absurd hypothesis, the French would not be so ready to leave the Germans Alsace and Lorraine after openly defeating them, just as the Germans would suffer less from a surrender of these two provinces after winning a fresh victory over them. France is anxious to prove that it was the empire much more than herself which was vanquished, Germany, if the case arose, would like to demonstrate that a voice from within said she vanquished in overthrowing the empire. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that the question remains intact between France and Germany, that no compromise can settle it, and that when the time comes, the battle-field, the stock exchange, the press, her supremacy, the antagonism of centuries, which separates the Gaulish from the Germanic race.

The 1870 France led the supreme control of the world. No one could say she was unshaken in Europe without her consent. Napoleon III was the great arbiter. A crown from him darkened the horizon. The day after he expressed regret to Baron Lubner at not being in accord with Austria, the stock exchange, the press, her supremacy, the antagonism of centuries, which separates the Gaulish from the Germanic race.

My friends, you see it is either Christ or starvation. If there were two tables spread, and to one of them only you might go, you might stand and think for a good while as to which invitation you had better accept; but here it is feasting or starvation. If it were a choice between a banquet, you might say, "I prefer the 'Creation,' or 'I prefer the 'Messiah.' But here it is a choice between harmony and everlasting discord. Oh, will you live or die? Will you start for the Egyptian corncrib, or will you perish at the empty barns of the Canaanite famine? 'Ye shall not see my face except your brother be with you.'"

THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER. A recent addition to the Pratt Free Library at Baltimore, Md., is a photo-lithographic facsimile in book form of the original manuscript of the Book of Common Prayer. It has excited the interest of hundreds of literary men and the Episcopal clergy who have visited the library to look at it. The publication is a reproduction of the manuscript, Book of Common Prayer, which was attached as an appendix to the uniformity, and which for this reason is International Affairs.

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CROCODILE TEARS.

The expression "crocodile tears" is used to describe hypocritical sorrow, a pretense of grief that is in no way felt.

The expression "crocodile tears" is used to describe hypocritical sorrow, a pretense of grief that is in no way felt. The Inter-Ocean explains that it refers to the old story that the crocodile, in order to draw human beings within its reach, mourns and weeps, and weeping thus induced its victim to come near to it, fall upon his knees, and so forth. It is a fact that crocodiles do make loud and melancholy cries, much like the howling of a dog. Credulous travelers naturally associated tears with these cries, and the story naturally repeated, and came to be generally believed. In a "Book of Proverbs," printed in 1498, the expression is referred to and explained. That the belief is a very old one is shown by the fact that the phrase occurs both in the old Latin and the Greek writers, and the references to it in literature are numerous.

In the account of the voyages of Sir John Mandeville, issued in 1356, it is said that "in a certain country" long serpents called crocodiles slew men and ate them weeping. The same story is given in the account of the voyages of Sir John Hawkins during the sixteenth century. Spenser, in the first book of "Faerie Queene," speaks of— The cruel, crying crocodile, Which in false grief having his harmful guile, Doth weep full sore and sheddeth tender tears. And Shakespeare, in the second part of King Henry IV, act ii, scene i, says:— Gloster's show Beguiles him as the mournful crocodile With sorrow snares relenting passengers.

Correspondence of Marie Bashkirtseff. In the correspondence of Marie Bashkirtseff, just now attracting attention, are letters addressed to various persons, a great many of whom were not personally known to her; thus she wrote to Zola telling him that she admired his works about everything, and that her great ambition was to become his friend through the medium of correspondence; to Alexander Dumas to ask him to give her rendezvous, to which he responded with some excellent advice, which was not at all to her taste, and brought a very cutting reply; to Goncourt whose works she did not hesitate to criticize in addressing him; to Sully Prudhomme, whose poetry fills her with surprise and delight.

Francis Coppée describes Marie Bashkirtseff in a manner that would be satisfied even her appetite for praise. The poet, at the same time, confesses that he only saw her once for an hour, and is never likely to forget her. "At three-and-twenty," he says, "she looked much younger. She was rather short, but harmonious in her proportions; with a round face exquisitely modeled, straw colored hair, and dark eyes fired as it were with thought, eyes de-voured with the desire to see and to know, a firm mouth, good and thoughtful, nostrils that vibrated like those of a wild horse of the Ukrainian steppes, Marie Bashkirtseff gave you, on the first seeing her, the rare sensation of being joined to sweetness, energy combined with grace."

Pressed for Time. Waiter (at a restaurant)— "What is your order, sir?" Customer—"Several crackers and milk?" (Giving him a five-cent piece.) My train leaves in five minutes.

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