TO MAKE MEN THINK.

REV. DR. TALMAGE PREACHES A SERMON UNIQUE IN PRACTICALITY.

The Text Supplied by a Country Farmer That Made Hosts Tremble—A Rustic's Astronomical Advice That Is Worth Heeding.

Rev. Dr. Talmage preached a wonderful sermon from the text, Amos v. 8, "Seek Him that maketh the seven stars and Orion."

A country farmer wrote this text, Amos of Tekoa. He plowed the earth and thrashed the grain by a new thrashing machine just invented, as formerly the cattle trod out the grain. He gathered the fruit of the sycamore tree and scarified it with an iron comb just before it was getting ripe, as it was necessary and customary in that way to take from it the bitterness. He was the son of a poor shepherd and stuttered, but just before the stammering rustic the Philistines and Syrians and Phoenicans and Moabites and Ammonites and Edmonites and Israelites trembled.

Moses was a law giver, Daniel was a prince, Isaiah a courtier, and David a king, but Amos, the author of my text, was a peasant, and, as might be supposed, nearly all his parallelisms are pastoral, his prophecy full of the odor of new-mown hay, and the rattle of locusts, and the rumble of carts with sheaves, and the roar of wild beasts devouring the flock while the shepherd came out in their defense. He watched the herds by day and by night, inhabited a booth made out of bushes, so that through these branches he could see the stars all night long, and was more familiar with them than we who have tight roofs to our houses and hardly ever see the stars except among our tall brick chimneys of the great towns. But at seasons of the year when the herds were in special danger, he would stay out in the open field all through the darkness, his only shelter the curtain of the night heaven, with the stellar embroideries and silvered tassels of lunar light.

What a life of solitude, all alone with his herds! Poor Amos! and at 12 o'clock at night, hark to the wolf's bark, and the lion's roar, and the bear's growl and the owl's te-whit, te-who, and the serpent's hiss as he unwittingly steps too near while moving through the thickets! So Amos, like the other herdsmen, got the habit of studying the map of the heavens because it was so much of the time spread out before him. He noticed some stars advancing and others receding. He associated their dawn with certain seasons of the year. He had a poetic nature, and he read night by night, and month by month, and year by year, the poem of the constellations divinely rhythmic. But two rosettes of stars especially attracted his attention while seated on the ground or lying on his back under the open scroll of the midnight heavens—the Pleiades, or seven stars, and Orion. The former group this rustic prophet associated with spring, as it rises about the 1st of May. The latter he associated with the winter, as it comes to the meridian in January. The Pleiades, or seven stars, connected with all sweetness and joy; Orion, the herald of the tempest. The ancients were the more apt to study the physiognomy and juxtaposition of the heavenly bodies because they thought they had a special influence upon the earth, and perhaps they were right. If the moon every few hours lifts and lets down the tides of the Atlantic ocean and the electric storms in the sum, by all scientific admission, affect the earth, why not the stars have proportionate effect?

And there are some things which make me think that it may have been all superstition which connected the movements and appearance of the heavenly bodies with great moral events on earth. Did not a meteor run on evangelistic errand on the first Christmas night and designate the rough cradle of our Lord? Did not the stars in their course fight against Sisera? Was it merely coincidental that before the destruction of Jerusalem the moon was hidden for 12 consecutive nights? Did it merely happen so that a new star appeared in constellation Cassiopeia, and then disappeared just before Charles IX. of France, who was responsible for the St. Bartholomew massacre, died? Was it without significance that in the days of the Roman Emperor Justinian war and famine were preceded by the dimness of the sun, which for nearly a year gave no more light than the moon, although there were no clouds to obscure it?

Astrology, after all, may have been something more than a brilliant heathenism. No wonder that Amos of the text, having heard these two anthems of the stars, put down the stout, rough staff of the herdsman and took into his brown hand and cut and knotted fingers the pen of a prophet and advised the recreant people of his time to return to God, saying, "Seek Him that maketh the seven stars and Orion." This command, which Amos gave 785 years B.C., is just as appropriate for us, 1897, A.D.

In the first place, Amos saw, as we must see, that the God who made the Pleiades and Orion must be the God of order. It was not so much a star here and a star there that impressed the inspired herdsman, but seven in one group and seven in the other group. He saw that night after night, and season after season and decade after decade that they had kept step of light, each one in his own place, a sisterhood never clashing and never quarreling precedence. From the time Hesiod called the Pleiades the "seven daughters of Atlas" and Virgil wrote in his "Aeneid" of "stormy Orion" until now, they have observed the order established for their coming and going; order written not in manuscript that may be pigeonholed, but with the hand of the Almighty on the dome of the sky, so that all nations may read it—order, persistent order, sublime order, omnipotent order.

What a sedative to you and me, to whom communities and nations sometimes seem going pellmell, and the world ruled by some fiend haphazard, and in all directions maladministration! The God who keeps seven worlds in right circuit for 6000 years can certainly keep all the affairs of individuals and nations and continents in adjustment. We had not better fret much, for the peasant's argument of the text was right. If God can take care of the seven worlds of the Pleiades and the four chief worlds of Orion, he can probably take care of the one world we inhabit.

So if I feel very much as my father felt one day when we were going to the country mill to get a grist ground, and I, a boy of seven years, sat in the back part of the wagon, and our yoke of oxen ran away with us, and along a labyrinthine road through the woods, so that I thought every moment we would be dashed to pieces, and I made a terrible outcry of fright, and my father turned to me with a face perfectly calm, and said: "De Witt, what are you crying about? I guess we can ride as fast as the oxen can run." And, my hearers, why should we be affrighted and lose our equilibrium in the swift movements of worldly events, especially assured that it is not a herd of unbroken steers that are drawing us on, but that order and wise government are in the yoke?

In your occupation, your mission, your sphere, do the best you can and then trust to God, and if things are all mixed and disquieting and your brain is hot and your heart sick get some one to go out with you into the starlight and point out to you the Pleiades, or, better than that, get into some observatory, and through the telescope see farther than Amos with the naked eye could—namely, 200 stars in the Pleiades, and that in what is called the sword of Orion there is a nebula computed to be two trillion two hundred thousand billion of times larger than the sun. Oh, be at peace with the God who made that and controls all that, the wheel of the constellations turning in the wheel of galaxies for thousands of years without the breaking of a cog, or the slipping of a band, or the span of an axle. For your placidity and comfort through the Lord Jesus Christ I charge you, "Seek Him that maketh the seven stars and Orion."

Again, Amos saw, as we must see, that the God who made these two groups of the text was the God of light. Amos saw that God was not satisfied with making one star or two or three stars, but He makes seven, and, having finished that group of worlds, makes another group—group after group. To the Pleades He adds Orion. It seems that God likes light so well that He keeps making it. Only one being in the universe knows the dynamics of solar, lunar, stellar, meteoric creations, and that is the Creator himself. And they have all been lovingly christened, each one a name as distinct as the names of your children. "He telleth the number of the stars. He calleth them all by their names." The seven Pleiades had names given to them, and they are Alcyone, Merope, Celaeno, Electra, Sterope, Taygete and Maia.

But think of the billions and trillions of daughters of starry light that God calls by name as they sweep by Him with beaming brow and lustrous robe! So fond is God of light—natural light, moral light, spiritual light! Again and again is light harnessed for symbolization—Christ, the bright and morning star; evangelization, the daybreak; the redemption of nations, sun of righteousness rising with healing in His wings. Oh, men and women, with so many sorrows and sins and perplexities, if you want light and comfort, light of pardon, light of goodness, in earnest prayer through Christ, "Seek Him that maketh the seven stars and Orion."

Again, Amos saw, as we must see, that the God who made these two archipelagoes of stars must be an unchanging God. There had been no change in the stellar appearance in this herdsman's lifetime, and his father, a shepherd, reported to him that there had been no change in his lifetime. And these two clusters hang over the celestial arbor now just as they were the first night that they shone on the Edenic bowers; the same as when the Egyptians built the pyramids from the top of which to watch them; the same as when the Chaldeans calculated the eclipses; the same as when Elihu, according to the Book of Job, went out to study the aurora borealis, the same under Ptolemaic system and Capernican system; the same from Calisthenes to Pythagoras and from Pythagoras to Herschel. Surely a changeless God must have fashioned the Pleiades and Orion! Oh, what an anodyne amid the ups and downs of life and the flux and reflux of the tides of prosperity to know that we have a changeless God, "the same yesterday, to-day and forever!"

Xerxes garlanded and knighted the steersman of his boat in the morning and hanged him in the evening of the same day. Fifty thousand people stood around the columns of the national capitol shouting themselves hoarse at the presidential inaugural, and in four months so great were the antipathies that a ruffian's pistol in a Washington depot expressed the sentiment of many a disappointed office seeker. The world sits in its chariot and drives tandem, and the horse ahead is Huzza, and the horse behind is Anathema. Lord Cobham, in King James' time, was applauded and had $35,000 a year, but was afterward execrated and lived on scraps stolen from the royal kitchen. Alexander the Great after death remained unburied for 30 days because no one would do the honor of shoveling him under. The Duke of Wellington refused to have his iron fence mended because it had been broken by an infuriated populace in some hour of political excitement, and he left it in ruins that men might learn what a fickle thing is human favor. "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting to them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto the children's children of such as keep His covenant, and to those who remember His commandments to do them." This moment "seek Him that maketh the seven stars and Orion."

Again, Amos saw, as we must see, that the God who made these two beacons of the oriental night sky must be a God of love and kindly warning. The Pleiades rising in midsky said to all the herdsmen and shepherds and husbandmen, "Come out and enjoy the mild weather and cultivate your gardens and fields." Orion, coming in winter, warned them to prepare for tempest. All navigation was regulated by these two constellations. The one said to shipmaster and crew, "Hoist sail for the sea and gather merchandise from other lands." But Orion was the storm signal and said, "Reef sail, make things snug or put into harbor for the hurricanes are getting their wings out." As the Pleiades were the sweet evangels of the spring, Orion was the warning prophet of the winter.

Oh, now I get the best view of God I ever had! There are two sermons I never want to preach—the one that presents God so kind, so indulgent, so lenient, so imbecile that men may do what they will against Him, and fracture His every law, and put the pry of their impertinence and rebellion under His throne, and while they are spitting in His face and stabbing at His heart He takes them up in His arms and kisses their infuriated brow and cheek, saying, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." The other kind of sermon I never want to preach is the one that represents God as all afire and torture and thunder-cloud, and with redhot pitchfork tossing the human race into paroxysms of infinite agony. The sermon that I am now preaching believes in a God of loving, kindly warning, the God of spring and winter, the God of the Pleiades and Orion.

You must remember that the winter is just as important as the spring. Let one winter pass without frost to kill vegetation and ice to bind the rivers and snow to enrich our fields, and then you will have to enlarge your hospitals and your cemeteries. "A green Christmas makes a fat graveyard," was the old proverb. Storms to purify the air. Thermometer at 3 degrees below zero to tone up the system. December and January just as important as May and June. I tell you we need the storms of life as much as we do the sunshine. There are more men ruined by prosperity than by adversity. If we had our own way in life, before this we would have been impersonations of selfishness and worldiness and disgusting sin and puffed up until we would have been like Julius Caesar, who was made by sycophants to believe that he was divine, and the freckles on his face were said to be as the stars of the firmament.

One of the swiftest transatlantic voyages made one summer by the Etruria was because she had a stormy wind abaft, chasing her from New York to Liverpool. But to those going in the opposite direction the storm was a buffeting and a hindrance. It is a bad thing to have a storm ahead, pushing us back, but if we be God's children and aiming towards heaven the storms of life will only chase us the sooner into the harbor. I am so glad to believe that the monsoons, typhoons and mistrals and siroccos of the land and sea are not unchained maniacs let loose upon the earth, but are under divine supervision! I am so glad that the God of the seven stars is also the God of Orion. It was out of Dante's sufferings came the sublime "Divina Commedia," and out of John Milton's blindness came "Paradise Lost," and out of miserable infidel attack came the "Bridgewater Treatise" in favor of Christianity, and out of David's exile came the songs of consolation, and out of the sufferings of Christ came the possibility of the world's redemption, and out of your bereavement, your persecution, your poverties, your misfortunes, may yet come an eternal heaven.

Oh, what a mercy it is that in the text and all up and down the Bible God induces us to look out toward other worlds! Bible astronomy in Genesis, in Joshua, in Job, in the Psalms, in the prophets, major and minor; in St. John's Apocalypse, practically saying: "Worlds! Worlds! Worlds! Get ready for them!" We have a nice little world here that we stick to, as though losing that we lose all. We are afraid of falling off this little raft of a world. We are afraid that some meteoric iconoclast will some night smash it, and we want everything to revolve around it and are disappointed when we find that it revolves around the sun instead of the sun revolving around it. What a fuss we make about this little bit of a world, its existence only a short time between two spasms, the paroxysm by which it was hurled from chaos into order and the paroxysm of its demolition.

And I am glad that so many texts call us to look off to other worlds, many of them larger and grander and more resplendent. "Look there," says Job, "at Mazaroth and Arcturus and his sons!" "Look there," says St. John, "at the moon under Christ's feet!" "Look there," says Joshua, "at the sun standing still above Gibeon!" "Look there," says Moses, "at the sparkling firmament!" "Look there," says Amos the herdsman, "at the seven stars and Orion!" Do not let us be so sad about those who shove off from this world under Christly pilotage. Do not let us be so agitated about our own going off this little barge or sloop or canal boat of a world to get on some Great Eastern of the heavens. Do not let us persist in wanting to stay in this barn, this shed, this outhouse of a world, when all the King's palaces, already occupied by many of our best friends, are swinging wide open their gates to let us in.

When I read: "In My Father's House are many mansions," I do not know but that each world is a room, and as many rooms as there are worlds, stellar stairs, stellar galleries, stellar hallways, stellar windows, stellar domes. How our departed friends must pity us shut up in these cramped apartments, tired if we walk 15 miles, when they, some morning, by one stroke of wing, can make circuit of the whole stellar system and be back in time for matins! Perhaps yonder twinkling constellation is the residence of martyrs; that group of 12 luminaries may be the celestial home of the apostles. Perhaps that steep of light is the dwelling place of angels cherubic, seraphic, archangelic. A mansion with as many rooms as worlds, and all their windows illuminated for festivity!

Oh, how this widens, and lifts and stimulates our expectation! How little it makes the present, and how stupendous it makes the future! How it consoles us about our pious dead, that, instead of being boxed up and under the ground, have the range of as many rooms as there are worlds and welcome everywhere, for in it the Father's house, in which there are many mansions! O Lord God of the seven stars and Orion, how can I endure the transport, the ecstacy, of such a vision? I will seek Him. I seek Him now, for I call to mind that it is not the material universe that is most valuable, but the spiritual, and that each of us has a soul worth more than all the worlds which the inspired herdsman saw from his booth on the hills of Tekoa.

I had studied it before, but the cathedral of Cologne, Germany, never impressed me as it did one summer. It is admittedly the grandest Gothic structure in the world, its foundation laid in 1248, only a few years ago completed. More than 600 years in building! All Europe taxed for its construction. Its chapel of the Magi, with precious stones enough to purchase a kingdom. Its chapel of St. Agnes, with masterpieces of painting. Its spire, springing 511 feet into the heavens. Its stained glass the chorus of all rich colors. Statues encircling the pillars and encircling all. Statues above statues until sculpture can do no more, but faints and falls back against carved stalls and down on pavements over which the kings and queens of the earth have walked to confessional. Nave and aisles and transcept and portals combining the splendors of sunrise and sunset. Interlaced, interfoliated, intercolumned grandeur. As I stood outside, looking at the double range of buttresses and the forest of pinnacles, higher and higher and higher, until I almost reeled from dizziness, I exclaimed: "Great doxology in stone! Frozen prayer of many nations!"

But while standing there I saw a poor man enter and put down his pack and kneel beside his burden on the hard floor of that cathedral. And tears of deep emotion came into my eyes, as I said to myself, "There is a soul worth all the material surroundings. That man will live after the last pinnacle has fallen, and not one stone of all that cathedral glory shall remain uncrumbled. He is now a Lazarus in rags and poverty and weariness, but immortal, and a son of the Lord God Almighty. And the prayer he now offers, though amid many superstitions, I believe God will hear, and among the apostles whose sculptured forms stand in the surrounding niches he will at last be lifted and into the presence of that Christ whose sufferings are represented by the crucifix before which he bows, and be raised in due time out of all his poverties into the glorious home built for him and built for us by 'Him who maketh the seven stars and Orion.'"

Why She Was Sorry.

"The days are getting longer," remarked Mr. Vivvles, whose habits have developed a vein of sarcasm in his wife.

"Yes. The sun rises much earlier. And I'm really sorry, for your sake."

"I don't see why?"

"It compels you to hurry so to get home before daylight."

WORDS.

When violets were springing,
And sunshine filled the day,
And happy birds were singing
The praises of the May,
A word came to me, blighting
The beauty of the scene,
And in my heart was winter,
Though all the trees were green.

Now down the blast go sailing
The dead leaves, brown and sere;
The forests are bewailing
The dying of the year;
A word comes to me, lighting
With rapture all the air,
And in my heart is summer,
Though all the trees are bare.

Thackeray.

Prof. Max Muller Relates Some Interesting Reminiscences.

One of my earliest dinners I remember at Oxford was to meet Thackeray. Thackeray was then writing "Esmond," and a Mr. Stoddart, a fellow of St. John's College, asked me to meet him at dinner. We were only four, and we were all very much awed by Thackeray's presence, particularly I, not being able as yet to express myself freely in English. We sat silent for some time, no one ventured to make the first remark; the soup was over, and there was a fine John Dore on the table waiting to be played. We were hoping for some brilliant sally from Thackeray, but nothing came. At last Thackeray turned his large spectacled eyes on me and said, "Are you going to eat your own ancestor?" I stared, everybody else stared. At last we gave it up, and Thackeray, looking very grave and learned, said: "Surely you are the son of Dorian Muller—the Muller who wrote that awfully learned book on the Dorians; and was not John Dore the ancestor of all the Dorians?" There was a general "Oh oh!" but the ice was broken, and no one after this horrible pun was afraid to say anything. All I could tell Thackeray was that I was not the son of Otfried Muller, who wrote on the Dorians, but of Wilhelm Muller, the poet, who wrote "Die Homerische Vorschule," and as to ohn Dore being our ancestor, how could that be? The original John Dore, so I had been told, was il Janitore, that is, St. Peter, and had no wife—or at least he never acknowledged her in public. Though all this did not promise well, yet the rest of our little dinner party was more successful; it became noisy and even brilliant.

Thackeray from his treasures of wit and sarcasm poured out anecdote after anecdote; he used plenty of vinegar and cayenne pepper, but there was always a flavor of kindliness and good nature, even in his most cutting remarks. I saw more of him when he came to Oxford to lecture on the "Four Georges," and when he stood for Parliament and was defeated by Cardwell and Charles Neate. After one of his lectures, when I expressed my delight with his brilliant success, "Wait, wait," he said, "the time will come when you will lecture at Oxford." At that time my English was still very fragmentary, and there was no idea of my ever staying in England, still less of my ever becoming a professor at Oxford.—From Cosmopolis.

The Lost Lake Agassiz.

Lake Agassiz was a very large body of water in Manitoba, adjoining parts of North Dakota and Minnesota. It had a north and south diameter of 700 miles—very much larger than any of the five great lakes of the present time. Lake Agassiz was formed in this way: The great ice sheet which came down from the north was a series of great glaciers. For these there were three principal areas of distribution. The first was in Labrador, the second in the highlands west of the St. Lawrence River and south of Hudson's Bay, the third the mountain ranges of British Columbia. These three great floes of ice reached their maximum extent at different times. The Kiwatti glacier swept down over Manitoba into the upper Mississippi valley into Minnesota, and probably down as far as Iowa; then it commenced to retreat, and while it was retreating, the great Laurentian glacier from Labrador was coming in from the east. There came a time when the Kiwatti glacier formed a northern dam and the Laurentian glacier an eastern dam, the two standing nearly at right angles; and in this great dammed-up space was formed Lake Agassiz. It rose until it could overflow the barrier to the south, and thus discharge into the Mississippi River by means of a river which has now entirely disappeared, and was known as the River Warren, after the late Gen. George K. Warren, who first discovered it. This lake continued until the glaciers up there, retreating, one to the northward and the other to the eastward, separated and left a space between them. Then the drainage way to Hudson's Bay was opened again, and the lake was very rapidly drawn in that direction. We can find perfectly well the old beach line and the old drainage outlets by which this drainage of Lake Agassiz was completed. The old terraces and beaches are there to-day, and the level bottom of the lake is clearly shown. The whole history of the lake has been made out with perfect clearness and definiteness.

Supported a Family on Five Cents.

The Pantagraph has just heard of one man who puts in his valuable time by making a living for himself and family, allowing the politicians to do the rest. He resides at Ford, and if we knew his name we would gladly give it. This man purchased five cents' worth of apples in the early winter while fruit was yet very cheap. After pleasantly watching his household of little tots devour the apples, he baited rabbit traps with the cores. First and last he caught three dozen of the timid creatures, which, after beheading, were exchanged at the stores for his children's winter clothing. Using the heads he baited traps for more profitable game. While these were serving him in an humble way he was earning $2.50 and meals each day working on the booms. Going to his traps at an opportune time he got 18 "short forks" (polecats), 17 "long forks" and 27 black cats, besides several fur-bearing varmints of less worth. The proceeds of this catch brought his numerous family winter's footgear, paid his rent, laid in a good supply of that sparkling "oil of gladness," and left a balance for provisions and other luxuries.—Richmond Pantagraph.

How Should She Know.

Mr. M., a Boston gentleman, has a telephone in his new house, and he instructed a newly engaged Irish maid servant how to reply in case there should come a call over the wire during the absence of Mr. M. and his wife. One day there came such a call, and Norah went to the telephone.

"Well, sor?" said Norah, with her mouth to the speaking tube.

"Who's that?" came over the wire in a masculine voice.

"It's me, sor."

"And who is me?"

"How the divil should I know who yeez are?" retorted Norah.—Harper's Bazar.

Novelties to Be Avoided.

Shirt tailors are showing one or two novelties in linen collars for women. One of the most pronounced consists of a high band to be placed inside the stock, and this is surounded with a narrow linen collar standing out all around the throat at right angles, as though the wearer's head were resting upon a small white plate.

Novelties of this sort are best let alone, in gentle reproof to the bad taste of the maker. The collar which turns down all around from a high band, notwithstanding prediction to the contrary, remains one of the favorites; in fact, it equally divides popularity with the collar that stands straight up, except for a gracious bending of the corners just underneath the chin.

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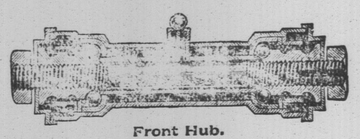

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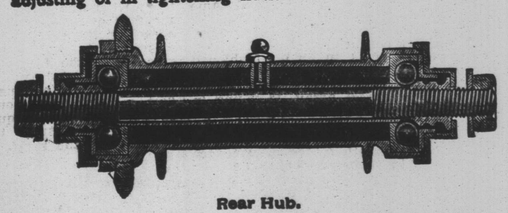
Red Birds are fitted with patent ball oilers that are convenient, simple and effective. In oiling it is merely necessary to push ball to one side with the point of the oil can, inject oil, and when the can is removed the coil spring underneath brings the ball back into its original position. The oil goes straight through the hub by way of the direct conveying oil tube, to the bearings. The oil is thus prevented from going all around the hub before reaching the balls, as it does with most wheels. Many wheels run hard and are taken to the repair shop to be doctored just because the bearings do not get properly oiled.

In case it is desired to remove front wheel from forks, two wrenches are not necessary, as with other bicycles, for the cone pin is prevented from turning by a dowel in front fork that is fitted in a slot in front pin. Without this the cone pin turns in adjusting or in tightening nuts.



Rear Hub.

The eleven 3/16 balls used in front hub form a perfect circle, and when properly adjusted run so easily as scarcely to be heard.

The rear wheel is similar to the front wheel in being absolutely dust proof and very easily adjusted. More spokes and larger balls are used, however, as the greater strain comes on the rear wheel.

Throughout every part of the Red Bird, modern mechanical skill and great care in construction is evident. The most modern of bottom brackets, the strongest pedals, the stiffest frames, all go to make the perfect Red Bird. A post card will bring our handsome '97 Catalogue.

The Goold Bicycle Co., Ltd.

BRANTFORD, ONT.

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