

THE TALMAGE SERMON

HEROES AND HEROISM OF THE BIBLE'S TIME.

The Story of Benajah and the Lions— "He Went Down and Slew a Lion in a Pit on a Snowy Day"—Chronicle II: 12.

NEW YORK, FEB. 24, 1895.—Dr. Talmage took for his subject to-day, "A Snowy Day," the text selected being I. Chronicles II: 22: "He went down and slew a lion in a pit in a snowy day."

Have you ever heard of him? His name was Benajah. He was a man of stout muscle and of great avoirdupois. He was a hero, and he inherited prowess. He was athletic and there was iron in his blood, and the strongest bone in his body was back bone. He is known for other wonders besides that of the text. An Egyptian five cubits in stature, or about seven feet nine inches high, was moving around in braggadocio and flourishing a great spear, careless as to whom he killed, and Benajah of my text, with nothing but a walking stick came upon him, snatched the spear from the Egyptian and with one thrust of his sharp edge, put an end to the blatant bully, which makes us think of the story in our Greek lesson too hard for us if the smart boy on the same bench had not helped us out with it. In which Heracles the Macedonian, and Diocippus the Athenian, fought in the presence of Alexander; the Macedonian armed with shield and sword and javelin, and the Athenian with nothing but a club. The Macedonian hurled the javelin, but the Athenian successfully dodged it, and the Macedonian lifted the spear, but the Athenian with the club broke it, and the Macedonian drew the sword, but the Athenian tripped him up before he could strike with it, and then the Athenian with his club would have beaten the life out of the Macedonian, fallen among his useless weapons, if Alexander had not commanded, "Stop! Stop!"

But Benajah of the text is about to do something that will eclipse even that. There is trouble in all the neighborhood. Lambs are carried off in the night, and children venturing only a little way from their father's house are found mangled and dead. The fact is, the land was infested with lions, and few people dared meet one of these grizzly beasts, much less corner or attack it, one morning a footstep of a lion was tracked in the snow. It had been out on its devouring errand through the darkness, but at last it is found by the impression of four paws on the white surface of the ground, which way the wild came, and which way it had gone. Perilous undertaking, but Benajah, the hero of the text, armed himself with such weapons as these early days afforded, gunpowder having been invented in a far subsequent century by the German monk, Richechius Schwartz. Therefore, without gun or any kind of firearm, Benajah of the text no doubt depended on the sharp steel edge for his own defense and the slaughter of the lion as he followed the track through the snow. It may have been a javelin, it may have been only a knife, but what Benajah lacks in weapon he will make up in strength of arm and skill of stroke. But where is the lion? We must not get off his track in the snow. The land has many cisterns, or pits, for catching rain, the rainfall being very scarce at certain seasons, and hence these cisterns, or reservoirs are dug here, and there, and yonder. Lions have an instinct which seems to tell them when they are pursued, and this dread monster of which I speak, retreats into one of these cisterns which happened to be free of water, and is there panting from the lone run, and licking its jaws after a repast of human flesh, and after quaffing the red vintage of human blood.

Benajah is all alert, and comes cautiously on toward the hiding place of this terror of the fields. Coming to the verge of the pit, he looks down at the lion, and the lion looks up at him. What a moment it was when their eyes clashed! But while a modern Du Châtelier, Gordon Cumming or Sir Samuel Baker, or David Livingstone would have just brought the gun to the shoulder, and held the eye against the barrel, and blazed away into the depths, and finished the beast, Benajah, with only the old time weapon, can do nothing until he gets on a level with the beast, and so he jumps into the pit, and the lion with shining teeth of rage, and claws lifted to tear to shreds the last vestige of human life, springs for the man, while Benajah springs for the beast. But the quick stroke of the sword flashed again, and again, and again, until the snow was no longer white, and the right foot of triumphant Benajah is half covered with the tawny mane of the slain horror of Palestine.

Now you see how emphatic, and tragic, and tremendous are the words of my text: "He went down and slew a lion in a pit in a snowy day." Why put it twice in the Bible, once in the book of Samuel, and here in the book of Chronicles? Oh the practical lessons are so many for you and for me. What a cheer in this subject for all those of you who are in conjunction of hostile circumstances. Three things were against Benajah of my text in the moment of combat, the snow that impeded his movements, the pit that environed him in a small space, and the lion with open jaws and uplifted paw. And yet I hear the shout of Benajah's victory. Oh, men and women of three troubles. You say, "I could stand one, and I think I could stand two; but three are at least one too many."

There is a man in business perplexity, and who has sickness in his family, and old age is coming on. Three troubles: a lion, a pit and snowy day. There is a good woman with failing health, and a dissipated husband, and a wayward boy—three troubles: There is a young man, salary cut down, bad cough, frowning future—three troubles: There is a maiden with difficult school lessons she can not get, a face that is not as attractive as some of her schoolmates, a prospect that through hard times she must quit school before she graduates—three troubles: There is an author, his manuscript rejected, his power of origination in decadence, a numbness in forefinger and thumb, which threatens paralysis

—three troubles: There is a reporter of fine taste sent to report a pugilism incident of an oratorio, the copy he hands in is rejected because the paper is full a mother to support on small incomes—three troubles: I could march right off the seats, and across this platform, if they would come at my call, five hundred people with three troubles. This is the opportunity to play the hero or the heroine, not on a small stage with a few hundred people to clap their approval, but with all the galleries of heaven filled with sympathetic and applauding spectators, for we are "surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses." My brother, my sister, my father, my mother, what a chance you have! While you are in the struggle, if you only have the grace of Christ to listen, a voice parts the heavens, saying, "My grace is sufficient for thee;" "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth;" "You shall be more than conquerors." And that reminds me of a letter on my table written by some one whom I suppose to be at this moment present, saying: "My dear, dear Doctor: You will please pardon the writer for asking that at some time when you feel like it, you kindly preach from the 30th psalm, 5th verse: 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning;' and much oblige a down town business man." So to all down town business men, and to all up town business men, I say, if you have on hand goods that you can not sell, and debtors who will not, or can not, pay, and you are also suffering from uncertainty as to what the hubbelle American congress will do about the tariff, you have three troubles, and enough to bring you within the range of the consolation of my text, where you find the triumph of Benajah over a lion, and a pit, and a snowy day. If you have only one trouble, I can not spend any time with you to-day. You must have at least three, and then remember how many have triumphed over such a trial of misfortune. Paul had three troubles: Sanhedrin denouncing him—that was one great trouble; physical infirmity, which he called "a thorn in the flesh," and although we know not what the thorn was, we do know from the figure he used that it must have been something that stuck him—that was the second trouble; approaching martyrdom—that made the three troubles. Yet, hear what he says: "If I had only one misfortune, I could stand that; but there are two too many." No; I misinterpret. He says, "Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, yet possessing all things." Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

David had three troubles; a bad boy, a temptation to dissoluteness, and a desertion. What does he say? "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble." Therefore, will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea." John Wesley had three troubles: Defamation by men; domestic infidelity; fatigue from more sermons preached and more miles traveled than almost any man of his time. What does he say? "The best of all is, God is with us." And when his poor brother, Charles Wesley, said to him, "Brother John, if the Lord were to give me wings, I'd fly." John's reply was, "Brother Charles, if the Lord told me to fly, I'd do it, and leave him to find the wings."

George Whitefield had three troubles: Rejection from the pulpits of England because he was too dramatic—that was one trouble; strabismus, or the crossing of his eyes that subjected him to the caricatures of all the small wits of the day; vermin and dental ailments thrown at him while he preached on the commons—that made three troubles. Nevertheless his sermons were so buoyant that a little child dying soon after hearing him preach said in the intervals of pain, "Let me go to Mr. Whitefield's school." Oh, I am so glad that Benajah of my text was not the only one who triumphed over a lion in a pit on a snowy day.

Notice in my text a victory over bad weather. It was a snowy day, when one's vitality is at a low ebb, and the spirits are naturally depressed, and one does not feel like undertaking a great enterprise, when Benajah rules his hands together to warm them by extra friction, or thrashes his arms around him to revive circulation of the blood, and then goes at the lion, which was all the more fierce and ravenous because of the sharp weather. Inspiration here admits atmospheric hindrance. The snowy day at Valley Forge well nigh put an end to the struggle for American independence. The snowy day demolished Napoleon's army on the way from Moscow. The inclemency of January and February weather has some years bankrupted thousands of merchants. Long succession of stormy Sabbaths has crippled innumerable churches. Lighthouse vailed by the snow on many a coast have failed to warn off from the rocks the doomed frigate. Tens of thousands of Christians of nervous temperament by the depression of a snowy day almost despair of reaching heaven. Yet in that style of weather Benajah of the text achieved his most celebrated victory; and let us by the grace of God become victor over influences atmospheric. If we are happy only when the wind blows from the clear northwest, and the thermometer is above freezing point and the sky is an inverted blue cup of sunshine poured all over us, it is a religion 50 per cent off. Thank God there are Christians, who, though their whole life through sickness has been a snowy day, have killed every lion of despondency that dared to put its cruel paw against their suffering pillow. It was a snowy day when the pilgrim fathers set foot, not on a bank of flowers, but on the cold New England rock, and from a ship that might have been more appropriately called after a December hurricane than after a "Mayflower," they took possession of this continent. And amid more chilly worldly circumstances many a good man or a good woman has taken possession of a whole continent of spiritual satisfaction, valleys of peace, and rivers of gladness, and mountains of joy. Christ landed in our world not in the month of May, but in the stormy month of December, to show us that we might have Christ in winter weather, and on a snowy day.

Notice everything down in the pit that snowy day depended upon Benajah's weapon. There was as much strength in one muscle of that lion as in all the muscles of both arms of Benajah. It is the strongest of beasts, and has been known to carry off an ox. Its tongue is so rough that it acts as a rasp on the flesh it licks. The two great canines at each side of the mouth make escape impossible for anything it has once seized. Yet Benajah puts his heel on the neck of this "king

of beasts." Was it a dagger? Was it a javelin? Was it a knife? I can not tell, but everything depended upon it. But for that, Benajah's body under one crush of the monster would have been left limp and tumbled in the snow. And when you and I go into the fight with temptation, if we have not the right kind of weapon, instead of our slaying the lion, the lion will slay us. The sword of the Spirit! Nothing in earth or hell can stand before that. Victory with that, or no victory at all. By that I mean prayer to God, confidence in his rescuing power, saving grace, Almighty deliverance. I do not care what you call it; I call it "Sword of the Spirit." And if the lions of all the jungles of perdition should at once spring upon your soul, by that weapon of heavenly metal you can thrust them back, and cut them down, and stab them through, and leave them powerless at your feet. Your good resolution welded against the powers which assault you is a toy pistol against an Armstrong gun; is a pen knife held out against the brandished sabres of a Heintzelman's cavalry charge. Go in to the fight against sin on your own strength, and the result will be the hot breath of the lion in your blanched face, and his front paws, one on each lung. Alas! for the man not fully armed, down in the pit, on a snowy day, and before him a lion.

All my hearers and readers have a big fight of some sort on hand, but the biggest and the writhiest lion which you have to fight is what the Bible calls the roaring lion, who stalketh about, you have seen him in India or Africa, just after capture. Long caging breaks his spirit, and the constant presence of human beings tames him. But you ought to see him spring against the iron bars in the zoological gardens of Calcutta, and hear him roar for the prey. It makes one's blood curdle, and you shrink back, although you know there is no peril. Plenty of lions in olden time. Six hundred of them were slaughtered on one occasion in the presence of Pompey in the Roman amphitheater. Lions came out and destroyed the camels which carried the baggage of Xerxes' army. In Bible times there were so many lions that they are frequently alluded to in the scriptures. Joel, the prophet, describes the "chuck teeth" of a great lion; and Isaiah mentions among the attractions of heaven that "no lion shall be there;" and Amos speaks of a shepherd taking a lamb's ear out of the mouth of a lion; and Solomon describes the righteous as "bold as a lion;" and Daniel was a great lion tamer; and David, and Jeremiah, and St. John often speak of this creature.

Well, it will be better than that when some of you are seen entering the harbor of heaven. You have had a rough voyage—no mistake about that. Snowy day after snowy day. Again and again the machinery of health and courage broke down, and the waves of temptation have swept clear over the hurricane deck, so that you were often compelled to say, "All thy waves and thy billows have gone over me," and you were down in the trough of that sea, and down in the trough of the other sea, and many despaired of your safe arrival. But the great Pilot, not one who must come off from some other craft, but the one who walked storm-swept Galilee, and now walks the wintry Atlantic, comes on board, and heads you for the haven, when no sooner have you passed the narrow of death than you find all the banks lined with immortals celebrating your arrival; and while some break off palm branches from the banks and wave them, those standing on one side will chant, "There shall be no more sea," and those standing on the other side will chant, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb." Off of the stormy sea into the smooth harbor. Out of the ionic struggle in the pit, to guidance by the lamb, who shall lead you to living fountains of water. Out of the snowy day of earthly severities into the gardens of everlasting flora, and into orchards of eternal fruitage, the fall of their white blossoms the only snow in heaven.

The Pathos of a Single Life.
One of these single women, after living alone in her little hut on Cape Cod, until old age, a reticent, miserly creature, became at sixty suddenly and violently insane. Her physician, wiser than his kind, prescribed no medicine, but procured a huge doll and the clothes of a baby, and gave them to her. She was at once quieted. She treated the doll as if it were alive, fed it, slept with it in her arms, worried over its diseases, ran to the neighbors to tell of its sayings and pretty ways. It was her child; God had given it to her at last. While she lived it kept her occupied and happy.

Missionaries and Rum.
Ambiguous language often gets the public speaker as well as writer into trouble. This fact was illustrated at one of the Cohoes churches Sunday morning. The preacher was discoursing on missionary work in Africa and was reviewing some of the difficulties which confront the missionary to the dark continent. In this connection he took occasion to inveigh loudly against the rum traffic among the natives, asserting it did more harm than the missionary could do good. "Why," said the preacher, "forty barrels of rum are sent to Africa to every missionary." Of course the real meaning of the good man was obvious, but nevertheless a smile went around the church.

Some Congregational Statistics.
English Congregationalists owned 4,392 places of worship in England and Wales in 1894, with accommodation for 1,613,722 persons, but with only 2,914 ministers. In Scotland they had 99 churches, with 112 ministers, and in Ireland only 27 churches, but a minister for every church. In London alone there are 555 Congregational churches, seating 229,969 people. Wesleyan Methodists number 2,237 ministers and 493,594 members in Great Britain and Ireland. Including colonies and heathen lands, the number subject to the British conference is 792,599. The Primitive Methodists have 1,115 ministers and 135,759 members, and the smaller sects of the church 1,382 ministers and 174,295 members.

The army of Bolivia costs the people of that impoverished country \$1,900,000 a year.

Italy spends every year 11,000,000 lire on her army and navy. Twenty five lire equal \$1.

IN FASHION'S GLASS.

NOVELTIES OF THE SEASON FOR WOMAN'S WEAR.

The Plumed Hat May Go—The Bon of the Hour—The Newest Collars—The Conqueror's Gown—Notes for Women Only.

CRUSADE IS staffing in behalf of the curling plumes that are now so fashionable its devotees insist that feathers are not good taste for street wear, but their number is not yet very great. As a substitute they suggest enormous hats of dull black felt trimmed most simply with black ribbon and practically rain-proof. A favorite fashion rolls the brim straight back in front, and sets a great bow a little at one side of the roll as the only trimming; indeed, it is made conspicuously lonesome in this class of hat, so that the choicest effects may be associated with severe simplicity. But those very plumes are an obstacle for the would-be saviors of them, because their beauty makes their possessors long to display them at every opportunity. So the befettered hat is favored by the great majority, even for outdoor wear. One of the handsome types of those hats that set women in a rush for shelter at the first fall of rain or snow is pictured here. It is round, of black velvet, and garnished richly with black ostrich plumes, bows



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and rosettes of black satin ribbon set off with and seemingly fastened by rhinestone buttons. Ten plumes are employed in all, and, as indicated, little height is added thereby.

Dutch bonnets are in high favor for dress occasions. They are being made so wide at the sides, however, that the girls at the theater not only crush against each other, sleeves, but touch hats also when they move a little from an upright position. Side combs are another fancy of the hour and are being made so rich with jewels that the more expensive ones come attached to each other by a chain that passes about the head at the back and is made secure by a bent gold hairpin. An elaboration of this idea is shown that jewels the chain and makes it part of the ornamenting of the coiffure. It is secured to the central prong of the back comb, this comb and the side ones constituting a set—Florette, in Chicago Inter Ocean.

These Are the New Collars.
A few young women have been seen in town wearing the very latest thing



BECOMING TO FRESH FACES

height of a very high stand-up collar. One half is bent over and ironed close against the other. The two ends meet together in front. This is quite a recent invention in British neck wear, although it has naturally been worn longer in London than here. Collars of this kind helped to make Mr. Ananias and Lord Reggie of "The Green Carnation" things of beauty. It is still sufficiently uncommon here to make the wearing of it a mark of the very latest fashion. Women who try to imitate various men's features usually fail to get an exact copy of the real thing. The few young persons who have these new collars are to be congratulated.

A Fad in Newspaperdom.

The latest fad in newspaperdom is to get a woman's edition. I don't mean an edition devoted to that all-pervading creature, woman, but by women for the world at large. Now it is the Cleveland Plain Dealer, whose issue of Jan. 24 is gotten out entirely by women. As is generally the case whenever a woman or a lot of women start out to prove that they are as good as men, somebody (chivalric man, of course) gave them a good encouraging pat on the back by bidding \$1,000 for the first copy of the paper. We, womankind understand, are clamorous for the wiping out of all distinction between the sexes when it comes to judging of their work. "A free field and no favor," is our battle cry. But when the favor comes in the shape of \$1,000 compliments and lots of pretty things said to show that we have broken masculine records, our discrimination blinks and purrs contentedly. This special issue of the Plain Dealer is as readable as usual. Quite as good as if the men had not all been streaking it down the front steps and the women up them, as the frontpieces shows them to be doing. Newspaper work has for



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and such a long time now been legitimately woman's work and she has had so many years' training in its needs that there is no need for especial marveling at her fitness for it. Among the reforms the lady editors would like to see are many most excellent ones, to wit: "Light turned into the dark places, literally and metaphorically." "The end of the aerial free coal delivery." "Esthetic lamp posts." "The woman's organ that will not hint that man is an inferior being." "Street cleaning that cleans." "Profitable work for all that need it." "Agora religion and less theology." In short, these dear, ambitious women are calling for the millennium. Whether it will come on demand is the doubtful point. All of their improvements are such as would hasten it, however, in that city or any other. And I can't help hoping it will get as far as the "esthetic lamp posts" in my day, for I should die happier for knowing what sort of a lamp post is an "esthetic one."—Chicago Times.

Rice Waffles.

Two cups of flour, one half teaspoonful of salt, one teaspoonful of baking powder, one egg beaten separately, one tablespoonful of butter, one cup of milk, one cup of boiled rice (cold), one half cup of rice water. Stir the dry ingredients together into a bowl. Make a hole in the center into which put the rice and the water in which the rice was boiled. Add the well beaten yolk of the egg, the milk and melted butter. Stir until thoroughly mixed. Beat well, and add gently the white of the egg, which has been beaten to a stiff froth. Fry in a well greased waffle iron.

Egg Sauce.

Put two eggs over the fire to boil hard. Put in a saucepan over the fire a teaspoonful each of butter and flour, and stir them until they are smoothly blended, then gradually stir in a pint of boiling water, season with salt and pepper. Let the sauce boil and place where it will keep hot; when the eggs are hard, shell them, cut into small dice and put them into the sauce.

Boiled Feins.

Boil one cup of granulated sugar with four tablespoonfuls of water until it drops from spoon in threads. Have ready the beaten white of one egg, and pour the sirup slowly into it, beating all the time. Fluff and spread on cake while warm.

A REMARKABLE CILITY.

Surrounded by a Dirt Wall Forty Feet High.

The richest and most populous parts of Shansi are its upland plains, of which the most considerable—3,000 feet above the level of the sea—is that upon which the provincial capital, Talyuanfu, stands, says the North China Daily News. The configuration of the ground enclosed by Talyuanfu city is that of a "three-times-to-stretch recumbent cow." The site was chosen and described by Li Chunfeng, a celebrated professor of geomancy in the days of the Tangs, who lived during the reign of the emperor Tai Tsung of that ilk. The city having been then founded, its history reaches back to that date. Since that time the cow has stretched twice and just opposite the premises of the English Baptist mission is a shrine to the memory of the renowned Gen. Kuan Fu-tze, which is said to have been originally built within the bastion of the east gate, but because of this stretching of the cow now occupies a nearly central position within the city itself.

This is firmly believed and not a mere story. The natives have what is to them indisputable proof of the truth of it all. The outer wall of the bastion about the southeast gate when struck with a stone gives back an answering sound not unlike the call of a cow. Travelers leaving the city or returning to it pick up stones and beat upon them to establish themselves in their faith and with a hope that this constant disturbing of the cow may incline her the more quickly to take her third stretch. The inhabitants long for her to fulfill her mission, for they anticipate that the city would then be not only of magnificent proportions but more prosperous. The facing of the wall at this place has been so much damaged by the practice that official proclamations have been posted up forbidding it.

A SAD STORY.

A Poor Old Woman Visits Her Son's Grave Every Day.

Her pinched face was pressed close against the window of the street car and she kept up a continual murmuring of "He is not here." It was truly a pitiful sight, says the Louisville Commercial. A poor old woman had just boarded the street car at the head of Broadway and was on her way down town. Every one could see that some great trouble was weighing on her mind and one of the ladies in the car told me what she knew of the poor woman's story. She was a widow, who had one son. It was her only support and they had lived together for years. They thought the world and all of each other and lived only for each other. There never was a time when the son went to work but he leaned over and kissed the old mother goodby and she welcomed him with outstretched arms when he reached home in the evening. Everybody remarked about it and there were few young men who stood higher in the neighborhood on this account. He was a model young man. At the approach of this winter he was taken suddenly ill of pneumonia and after a short illness he died. The remains were interred at the St. Louis cemetery and when she heard the clods falling on the casket the mother's mind began to fail. She had to be taken away by some of the neighbors who had attended the funeral. Every day since, rain or shine, in sleet and snow, she has visited the cemetery and wept over the grave. Yesterday she had been to the graveyard and was on her way home. It is only a question of a short time that she will be separated from him, for she is old and trembling from many infirmities. There is a bright look in her faded eyes occasionally that tells of the slow departure of reason. The end is not far distant.

A Departure in Photography.

There are, it is said, new devices for attaching cameras by means of which the photographer may develop the exposed plate at once and without a dark room. While this may be, the question naturally arises: How can the negative be washed and manipulated on any field and while one is travelling, unless a quantity of water is taken along for this purpose? There is need of thorough and careful washing if one would secure good negatives, and this is hardly possible under the circumstances.

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