

THE SOUL IN BATTLE.

Rev. Dr. Talmage Says Christ Will Conquer at Last.

A despatch from Washington says:—Rev. Dr. Talmage chose for his text the following: "A troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last."—Genesis xlix 19.

My text speaks of a tribe who were often discomfited in battle, yet were at last victorious. But the words may be used as graphically descriptive of the defeat of Christ, to be followed by his successes.

When Christ's chin dropped upon his breast in death, the world shouted in triumph. Driven as he has been from the heart, from the social circle, from literature, from places of influence, the world gazes now upon what seems to be a vanquished Redeemer. But he shall yet rally his forces, and though now overcome by other troops, he shall overcome at the last.

When a city is about to be besieged, lines of circumvallation are run out in half circles the fortifications sweep around; the first line fifteen miles out; the second, ten miles; the next, five; the next, one mile out. The attacking host first takes the outworks; then a line nearer, coming nearer until the embankment nearest the city is captured.

Now, the human heart is defending itself against Christ, and it has run out four or five lines of circumvallation, and they must one by one be taken, so that Christ may overcome at the last and the heart surrender. You know how men fight when they contend in battle for their wives and children. There are lightnings in their eye, and every finger is a spear, and their shout is like the voice of a whirlwind.

But the fiercest battle ever fought is between the unregenerated heart and Christ. Before I get through with the sermon, I will illustrate my meaning.

Forward, ye troops of God, and take the line of fortification farthest out which is—prejudice against ministers and churches. There are men who, for various reasons, do not believe in these things, and from that outward intrenchment contend against Christ. My reply to this is, seek out a Church and a minister that you do like. That is the religious advantage that man has in towns that they have nowhere else; they may have their pick—high churches and low churches, rich churches and poor churches, aristocratic churches and democratic churches, pew-renting churches and free churches, Calvinistic churches and Arminian churches, ministers white and black, learned and ignorant, fantastic and plain, old and young; manuscript-reading and extemporaneous, some wearing fine gowns and others a very poor coat, ministers argumentative or figurative, ministers statistical or poetical.

Forward, ye troops of God, to the next intrenchment! It is a circumvallation of social influences. There are hundreds of people here to-night whose surroundings in the world are adverse to the Christian religion. The first step that yonder man makes towards heaven will call forth a volley of criticism and caricature. Many of their friends in the world would as soon be shot as be seen on their knees praying. The whole atmosphere is as ungenial to religion as a northern climate is to pine-apples and bananas. If that young man should become a Christian and go back to the store, they would accost him with, "John, how is your soul? come, now, give us a prayer. Suppose you will have nothing to do with such sinners as we. What is the news from heaven? What's getting red in the face? Not man's hope? Christians ought not to get mad. What a saint you are! I suppose you are almost ready for translation!"

The long, high, mighty breastwork of social influences—how shall grace ever take it? For which one of these ungodly friends will you send when you are dying? They could sit up with you, and pour out the medicines, and shake up your hot pillow, but could they administer any comfort for the soul? As the waves of Jordan begin to lick your feet, will they be able to say anything to strengthen? If, in some awful spasm of physical suffering you should ask them to pray, do you think they would know how to do it? Will they crowd the room, and keep out the last enemy? What single thing can they do for you when heart and flesh shall fail? When the trumpet sounds, do you want to rise with them in their resurrection? Do you think they will put on the coronations of heaven? If not, do not let them hinder you now. If they do nothing for you in death, judgment or eternity, it is high time you looked for help in some other direction.

Evil companionship has destroyed innumerable men. Through this high battlement no human force can break. But the Lord Jesus might storm it to-night. Give up your scoffing associates, or give up God and heaven. Forward, ye troops of God, to the third line of intrenchment, namely, the intellectual difficulties about religion. A hundred perplexities about the parables; a hundred questions about the ninth chapter of Romans; passage set against passage in seeming contradiction. You pile up a battlement of Colenso on the Pentateuch, and Tom Paine's Age of Reason, and Renan's Life of Christ; and some part of the wall are so high that it would be folly to attempt to take them. But there is a hole in the wall of fortification, and through that hole in the wall I put my right hand, and take your own, and say, "My brother, do you want to be saved?" And you say "Yes." Well; Jesus Christ came to seek and to save that which is lost. Will thou let him in—the bruised One of the Cross? He will take away all thy sins and all thy sorrows. In one half hour he will give thee more peace than thou hast had in all the twenty-years of thy questioning and doubting! Let the great guns of Colenso and Renan blaze away. Christ comes not to the gate of your head, but to the door of your heart, and tapping gently against it, he says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. Whosoever will open to me, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me."

Scepticism seems to do quite well in prosperity, but it fails in adversity. A celebrated infidel, on shipboard, in the sunshine, caricatured the Christian religion, and scoffed at its professors. But the sea arose, and the waves dashed across the hurricane-deck, and the man cried out, "O my God, what shall I do? what shall I do?" Scepticism does tolerably well to live by, but it is a poor thing to die by. The fortification of your soul this hour gives way, and the Christ, who seemed to have been overcome by argument, and by profound questions, and elaborate analysis, now, by the force of love overcomes at the last!

Forward, ye troops of light, to the next circumvallation of the heart, namely, pernicious habit. I do not believe that it is necessary to be a teetotaler in order to be a Christian, although I wish all were teetotalers, but I do say that a man who is excessive in the use of strong drink cannot love Christ. He will not dispute with you the supremacy of the bottle. The appetite is to-day the mightiest barrier against God. There are men who would rather brave eternity, unparadised, than give up their bondage. They have been throwing up this embankment of evil habit for five, ten, or twenty years, until it is very high and very great. Christ, the Son of God, alone can take the fortification. Whatever be the form of evil habit, Christ is able fully and finally to deliver that man. Though he be eaten up with dissipations; though he be sunk to the lowest depths of shame; though every physical, mental, and spiritual force be crippled, Christ will make him a whole man, and lift him to usefulness and respectability here, and to glory hereafter.

I have heard men spoken of as so far gone that they could not be rescued. I denounce the horrible infidelity. The Lord's arm is omnipotent, and the worst wretch that ever crawled into the ditch would no more puzzle or confound God than the case of the most elegant and polished sinner that ever came to Him.

Lay hold of that Almighty arm, oh ye dying captives! Notwithstanding all your past misdoings, there is no need that you miss heaven; there is grace enough to save every one of you, not merely letting you escape by the skin of your teeth but giving you an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Lord. The feet of God's hosts are already at the foot of the wall. They come on with the blood-stained flag on the cross. They mount the steep. Under their drawn sword they evil passions go down. Where sin abounded grace does much more abound. Victory over thy sin! Victory through the Lord Jesus Christ! Through many a long year thy appetites overcame him, but he has overcome at the last!

Forward, ye troops of light, to the last and the mightiest line of fortification—the pride and the rebellion of the natural heart. This intrenchment must be taken, or all the rest of the contest is lost. This is the crisis of the battle.

Sometimes the besieging army, finding the intrenchments high and strong, swing around in the rear, escape the fortifications, and flank the city, taking it with but little resistance. So God's grace, leaving all the long embankments of prejudice, and social influence, and intellectual perplexities, and bad habits, comes around and falls upon the heart first, and that captured by a flank movement, all the fortifications surrender.

The captain of our salvation calls up before your soul all his troops of mercy and grace. Hold out no longer against the forces that would take thee in the name of thy King. By thy hard-heartedness, and rebellion, and sin, thou hast ten thousand times overcome thy best Friend, but shall it not be told in heaven to-night that he has overcome at the last?

But the day of thy grace is almost past. The sun is dipping below the mountains. The fiery sky foretells the storm. The chill in the air prophesies a night of blackness and darkness. What you do you had better do quickly.

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MEDICINE AND SURGERY.

STRIKING PROGRESS SHOWN AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS.

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An interesting phase of the discussions of the second day's meeting of the Thirteenth International Medical Congress in Paris, concerned the question of the use of fat in larger quantities than is at present the custom. It was pointed out that nature supplies the infant with a diet containing a larger proportion of fat than the individual is liable to take for himself later in life.

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Scepticism seems to do quite well in prosperity, but it fails in adversity. A celebrated infidel, on shipboard, in the sunshine, caricatured the Christian religion, and scoffed at its professors. But the sea arose, and the waves dashed across the hurricane-deck, and the man cried out, "O my God, what shall I do? what shall I do?" Scepticism does tolerably well to live by, but it is a poor thing to die by. The fortification of your soul this hour gives way, and the Christ, who seemed to have been overcome by argument, and by profound questions, and elaborate analysis, now, by the force of love overcomes at the last!

MEDICINE AND SURGERY.

STRIKING PROGRESS SHOWN AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS.

It is little over a decade since surgical procedure involving the stomach was adopted—Cancer Now Considered Curable—Tuberculosis Now Looked Upon With More Confidence.

For eight days nearly seven thousand doctors, nearly five hundred of these from the United States, have been attending the sessions of the Thirteenth International Medical Congress here in Paris.

An interesting phase of the discussions of the second day's meeting of the Thirteenth International Medical Congress in Paris, concerned the question of the use of fat in larger quantities than is at present the custom. It was pointed out that nature supplies the infant with a diet containing a larger proportion of fat than the individual is liable to take for himself later in life.

The captain of our salvation calls up before your soul all his troops of mercy and grace. Hold out no longer against the forces that would take thee in the name of thy King. By thy hard-heartedness, and rebellion, and sin, thou hast ten thousand times overcome thy best Friend, but shall it not be told in heaven to-night that he has overcome at the last?

But the day of thy grace is almost past. The sun is dipping below the mountains. The fiery sky foretells the storm. The chill in the air prophesies a night of blackness and darkness. What you do you had better do quickly.

The tides of eternity are rising. Those only will be saved who get on to the Rock of Ages; yet men saunter along in their sin and play in the sand. Welcome out-and shout, "Hallelu! hallelu! the tide is rising." They laugh at our excitement, and say that there is no danger. After a while they resolve to return, but it is too late. The waters of eternal destruction gather about their feet; they try to climb, but get no farther than the foot of the rock, and with eyes rolling in horror, and hands flung up, and a shriek of despair that rolls among the mountains of death, with long-reverberating echo, they drop for ever.

Lord God, keep us from such a catastrophe! A surgeon, wounded at Gettysburg, told me that he lay helpless upon the heights, looking down upon the battle. He saw the fate of the nation wavering backward and forward—now one army seeming to conquer, now the other. The scene was grand and overwhelming.

I stand on the heights of Zion to-night, and I see your eternal destinies being decided in battle. Some of you have charged upon Christ with all the sins and prejudices of your lifetime. He is falling back, and falling back; you have wounded him in the brow; you have wounded him in the hands; you have wounded him in the feet; you have wounded him in the heart. He falls in his own blood, while your iniquities stamp upon him and cry, "We will not have this man to reign over us!" In the words of the text, you have overcome him. But now I see him rising up. In the strength of his almighty loves he comes at you, Armed by memories of Bethlehem and Golgotha, he passes on toward you. With weapons of sacrifice and invitations of glory he attacks thy soul, and it falls back and falls back until, able to retreat no longer, it throws out its arms to receive him, and all the spectators on the sky battements clap their hands and rejoice that Jesus, who was before overcome by a troop, has overcome at the last!

I have heard men spoken of as so far gone that they could not be rescued. I denounce the horrible infidelity. The Lord's arm is omnipotent, and the worst wretch that ever crawled into the ditch would no more puzzle or confound God than the case of the most elegant and polished sinner that ever came to Him.

Lay hold of that Almighty arm, oh ye dying captives! Notwithstanding all your past misdoings, there is no need that you miss heaven; there is grace enough to save every one of you, not merely letting you escape by the skin of your teeth but giving you an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Lord. The feet of God's hosts are already at the foot of the wall. They come on with the blood-stained flag on the cross. They mount the steep. Under their drawn sword they evil passions go down. Where sin abounded grace does much more abound. Victory over thy sin! Victory through the Lord Jesus Christ! Through many a long year thy appetites overcame him, but he has overcome at the last!

Forward, ye troops of light, to the last and the mightiest line of fortification—the pride and the rebellion of the natural heart. This intrenchment must be taken, or all the rest of the contest is lost. This is the crisis of the battle.

Sometimes the besieging army, finding the intrenchments high and strong, swing around in the rear, escape the fortifications, and flank the city, taking it with but little resistance. So God's grace, leaving all the long embankments of prejudice, and social influence, and intellectual perplexities, and bad habits, comes around and falls upon the heart first, and that captured by a flank movement, all the fortifications surrender.

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