



My son, what are you thinking about?
That you are the biggest fool in town, papa.
Why, my son?
Because you spent so much for this suit of mine. I could have got one just as good at Ben Forstner & Co.'s and had enough money left to buy a whole toy shop besides.
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SAILING UP THE NILE.

SECOND SERMON IN DR. TALMAGE'S SERIES ON HIS TRAVELS.

The Text from Ezekiel xxix, 9. "The River is Mine, and I have Made It." A Sermon That May Be Read and Pondered to Edification.

BROOKLYN, Oct. 25.—The rendering of the First Sonata in D Minor, by Beethoven, on the great organ of the Brooklyn Tabernacle this morning, by Professor Henry Eyre Browne, the organist, held the vast congregation spellbound with profound emotion. Dr. Talmage preached on "Sailing up the Nile," the second sermon of the series, entitled "From the Pyramids to the Acropolis, or What I Saw in Egypt and Greece—Confirmatory of the Scriptures." His text was Ezekiel xxix, 9. "The river is mine and I have made it." Ah! This is the River Nile. A brown or yellow or silver cord on which are hung more jewels of thrilling interest than on any river that was ever twisted in the sunshine. It ripples through the book of Ezekiel, and flashes in the books of Deuteronomy and Isaiah and Zechariah and Nahum, and on its banks stood the mightiest of many ages. It was the crystal cradle of Moses, and on its banks Mary, the refugee, carried the infant Jesus. To find the birthplace of this river was the fascination and defeat of expeditions without number.

Not many years ago Bayard Taylor, our great American traveler, wrote, "Since Columbus first looked upon San Salvador the earth has but one emotion of triumph left for her bestowal, and that she reserves for him who shall first drink from the fountains of the White Nile under the snow fields of Kilima-Njaro." But the discovery of the sources of the Nile by most people was considered an impossibility. The malarial, the wild beasts, the savages, the unclimbable steep, the vast distances, stopped all the expeditions for ages.

An intelligent native said to Sir Samuel W. Baker and wife as they were on their way to accomplish that in which others had failed: "Give up the mad scheme of the Nile source. How would it be possible for a lady young and delicate to endure what would kill the strongest man? Give it up." But the work went on until Speke and Grant and Baker found the two lakes which are the source of what was called the White Nile, and baptized these two lakes with the names of Victoria and Albert.

These two lakes, filled by great rain-falls and by accumulated snows from the mountains, pour their waters, laden with agricultural wealth such as blesses no other river, on down over the cataracts, on between frowning mountains, on between cities living and cities dead, on for four thousand miles and through a continent. But the White Nile would do little for Egypt if this were all. It would keep its banks and Egypt would remain a desert.

But from Abyssinia there comes what is called the Blue Nile, which, though dry or nearly dry half the year, under tremendous rains about the middle of June rises to great momentum, and this Blue Nile dashes with sudden influx into the White Nile, which in consequence rises thirty feet, and their combined waters inundate Egypt with a rich soil which drops on all the fields and gardens as it is conducted by ditches and sluices and canals every whither.

The greatest damage that ever came to Egypt came by the drying up of the River Nile and the greatest blessing by its healthful and abundant flow. The famine in Joseph's time came from the lack of sufficient inundation from the Nile. Not enough Nile is drouth, too much Nile is freshet and plague. The rivers of the earth are the mothers of its prosperity. If by some convulsion of nature the Mississippi should be taken from North America, or the Amazon from South America, or the Danube from Europe, or the Yenisei from Asia—what hemispheric calamity! Still there are other rivers that could fertilize and save these countries.

shall understand why the Bible gives such prominence to this river, which is the largest river of all the earth with one exception.

But before we board the train we must take a look at Alexandria. It was founded by Alexander the Great, and was once the New York, the Paris, the London of the world. Temples, palaces, fountains, gardens, pillared and efflorescent with all architectural and Edenic grandeur and sweetness. Apollon, the eloquent, whom in New Testament times some people tried to make a rival to Paul, lived here. Here Mark, the author of the second book of the New Testament, expired under Nero's anathema. From here the ship sailed that left Paul and the crew struggling in the breakers of Melita.

Pompey's pillar is here, about one hundred feet high, its base surrounded by so much flint and squalor I was glad to escape into an air that was breathable. This tower was built in honor of Diocletian for sparing the rebellious cities. After having declared that he would make the blood run to his horse's knees, and his horse fell with him into the blood and his knees reddened, the tyrant took it for granted that was a sign he should stop the massacre, and hence this commemorative pillar to his mercy.

This is the city to which Omar came after building fourteen hundred mosques and destroying four thousand temples and thirty-five thousand villages and castles, yet riding in on a camel with a sack of corn, a sack of figs and a wooden plate, all that he had kept for himself, and the diet to which he had limited himself for most of this time was bread and water. Was there ever in any other man a commingling of elements so strange, so weird, so generous, so cruel, so mighty, so weak, so religious, so fanatical?

In this city was the greatest female lecturer the world ever saw—Hypatia. But the lesson of virtue that she taught was obnoxious, and so they dragged her through the streets and scraped her flesh from her bones with sharp oyster shells and then burned the fragments of the massacred body. And here dwelt Cleopatra, pronounced to be the beauty of all time—although if her pictures are correct I have seen a thousand women in Brooklyn more attractive—and she was as bad as she was said to be handsome. Queen, conqueror, and spoke seven languages, although it would have been better for the world if she had not been able to speak any. Julius Caesar conquered the world, yet she conquered Julius Caesar.

CONQUEROR OF BOOKS. But Alexandria, fascinating for this or that thing, according to the taste of the visitor, was to me most entertaining because it had been the site of the greatest library that the world ever saw, considering the fact that the art of printing had not been invented. Seven hundred thousand volumes, and all the work of a slow pen. But down it all went under the torch of besieger. Built again and destroyed again. Built again, but the Arabs came along for their final demolition, and the four thousand baths of the city were heated with those volumes, the fuel lasting six months, and were ever fires kindled at such fearful cost? What holocausts of the world's literature! What martyrdoms of books! How many of them have gone down under the rage of nations.

Only one book has been able to withstand the bombardment, and that has gone through without smell of fire on its lids. No sword or spear or musket for its defense. An unarméd New Testament. An unarméd Old Testament. Yet invulnerable and triumphant. There must be something supernatural about it. Conqueror of books! Monarch of books! All the books of the ages in all the libraries outside of this one book which you and I can carry to church in a pocket. So thoughtful amid the ashes of Alexandrian libraries.

But all aboard the Egyptian rail train going up the banks of the Nile! Look out of the window and see those canals kneeling for the imposition of their load. And I think we might take from them a lesson, and instead of trying to stand upright in our own strength, become conscious of our weakness and need of divine help before we take upon us the heavy duties of the year or the week or the day, and so kneel for the burden. We meet processions of men and beasts on the way from their day's work, but alas for the houses to which the poor inhabitants are going, for the most part hovels of mud. But there is something in the scene that thoroughly enlightens us. It is the novelty of wretchedness and a scene of picturesque rags. For thousands of years this land has been under a very damnation of taxes. Nothing but Christian civilization will roll back the influences which are "spoiling the Egyptians." There are gardens and palaces, but they belong to the rulers.

frantry, I would have reckoned myself master of the world."
A SOLEMN AND IMPRESSIVE RIDE. This ride along the Nile is one of the most solemn and impressive rides of all my lifetime, and our emotions deepen as the curtains of the night fall upon all surroundings. But we shall not be satisfied until we can take a ship and pass right out upon these wondrous waters and between the banks crowded with the story of empires.

According to the lead pencil mark in my Bible it was Thanksgiving day morning, Nov. 28, 1889, that with my family and friends we stepped aboard the steamer on the Nile. The Mohammedan call to prayers had been sounded by the priests of that religion, the Muezzins, from the four hundred mosques of Cairo as the cry went out: "God is great. I bear witness that there is no God but God. I bear witness that Mohammed is the apostle of God. Come to prayers. Come to salvation. God is great. There is no other but God. Prayers are better than sleep."

The sky and the palm groves and river shipping were bathed in the light. It was not much of a craft that we boarded. It would not be hailed on any of our rivers with any rapture of admiration. It fortunately had but little speed, for twice we ran aground and the sailors jumped into the water and on their shoulders pushed her out. But what yacht of gayest sportsman, what deck of swiftest ocean queen could give such thrill of rapture as a sail on the Nile? The pyramids in sight, the remains of cities that are now only a name, the villages thronged with population. Both banks crowded with historical deeds of forty or sixty centuries. Oh, what a book the Bible is when read on the Nile!

As we slowly move up the majestic river I see on each bank the wheels, the pumps, the buckets for irrigation, and see a man with his foot on the treadle of a wheel that fetches up the water for a garden, and then for the first time I understand that passage in Deuteronomy which says of the Israelites after they had got back from Egypt, "The land whither thou goest in to possess it is not as the land of Egypt from whence ye came out, where thou sowest thy seed and watered it with thy foot."

Then I understood how the land could be watered with the foot. How do you suppose I felt when on the deck of that steamer on the Nile I looked off upon the canals and ditches and sluices through which the fields are irrigated by that river, and then read in Isaiah, "The burden of Egypt; the river shall be wasted and dried up and they shall turn the rivers far away and the brooks of defense shall be emptied and dried up; and they shall be broken in the purposes thereof, all that make sluices and ponds for fish." That Thanksgiving morning on the Nile I found my text of today.

Pharaoh in this chapter is compared to the dragon or hippopotamus suggested by the crocodiles that used to line the banks of this river: "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I am against thee, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said: My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself. But I will put hooks in thy jaws and I will cause the fish of thy rivers to stick unto thy scales, and I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy rivers, and all the fish of thy rivers shall stick unto thy scales, and the land of Egypt shall be desolate and waste; and they shall know that I am the Lord, because he hath said the river is mine and I have made it."

AS IN BIBLE TIMES. While sailing on this river or stopping at one of the villages, we see people on the banks who verify the Bible description, for they are now as they were in Bible times. Shoes are now taken off in reverence to sacred places. Children carried astride the mother's shoulder as in Hagar's time. Women with profusion of jewelry as when Rebecca was affianced. Lentils shelled into the pottage, as when Esau sold his birthright to get such a dish. The same habits of salutation as when Joseph and his brethren fell on each other's necks. Courts of law held under big trees as in olden times. People making bricks without straw, compelled by circumstances to use stubble instead of straw.

Flying over or standing on the banks, as in Scripture days, are flamingoes, ospreys, eagles, pelicans, herons, cuckoos and bullfinches. On all sides of this river sepulchers. Villages of sepulchers. Cities of sepulchers. Nations of sepulchers. And one is tempted to call it an empire of tombs. I never saw such a place as Egypt is for graves. And now we understand the complaining sarcasm of the Israelites when they were on the way from Egypt to Canaan, "Because there are no graves in Egypt hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?" Down the river bank come the buffalo and the cattle or kine to drink, and it was the ancestors of these cattle that inspired Pharaoh's dream of the lean kine and the fat kine.

Here we disembark a little while for Memphis, off from the Nile to the right. Memphis founded by the first king of the Egypt and for a long while the capital. A city of marble and gold. Home of the Pharaohs. City nineteen miles in circumference. Vast colonnades through which imposing processions marched. Here stood the Temple of the Sun, itself in brilliancy a sun shone on by another sun. Thebes in power over a thousand one hundred years, or nearly ten times as long as the United States have existed. Here is a recumbent statue seventy-five feet long. Bronzed gateways. A necropolis called "the

haven of the blest." Here Joseph was prime minister. Here Pharaoh received Jacob. All possible splendors were built up into this royal city. Hoses, Ezekiel, Jeremiah and Isaiah speak of it as something wonderful.

Never did I visit a city with such exalted anticipations and never did my anticipations drop so flat. Not a pillar stands. Not a wall is unbroken. Not a fountain tosses in the sun. Even the ruins have been ruined, and all that remains are chips of marble, small pieces of fractured sculpture and splintered human bones. Here and there a letter of some elaborate inscription, a toe or ear of a statue that once stood in niche of palace wall. Ezekiel prophesied its blotting out, and the prophecy has been fulfilled.

"Ride on," I said to our party, "and don't wait for me." And as I stood there alone the city of Memphis in the glory of past centuries returned. And I heard the rush of her chariots, and the dash of her fountains, and the conviviality of her palaces, and saw the drunken nobles roll on the floors of mosaic, while in startling contrast amid all the regalities of the place I saw Pharaoh look up into the face of aged, rustle Jacob, the shepherd, saying, "How old art thou?"

THE CITY OF NO. But back to the Nile and on and up till you reach Thebes, in Scripture called the City of No. Hundred gates Thebes. A quadrangular city four miles from limit to limit. Four great temples, two of them Karnae and Luxor, once mountains of exquisite sculpture and gorgeous drams solidified in stone. Statue of Ramesses II, eight hundred and eighty-seven tons in weight and seventy-five feet high but now fallen and scattered. Walls abloom with the battlefields of centuries.

The surrounding hills of rock hollowed into sepulchers on the wall of which are etched in picture and hieroglyphs the confirmation of Bible story in regard to the treatment of the Israelites in Egypt, so that as explorations go on with the work the walls of the sepulchers become commentaries of the Bible, the Scriptures originally written upon parchment here cut into everlasting stone. Thebes mighty and dominant five hundred years. Then she went down in fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy concerning the City of No, which was another name for Thebes: "I will execute judgment in No. I will cut off the multitudes of No." Jeremiah also prophesied, "Thus saith the Lord, I will punish the multitudes of No."

This city of Thebes and all the other dead cities of Egypt iterate and reiterate the veracity of the Scriptures, telling the same story which Moses and the prophets told. Have you noticed how God kept back these archaeological confirmations of the Bible until our time, when the air is full of unbelief about the truthfulness of the dear old book? He waited until the printing press had been set up in its perfected shape, and the submarine cable was laid, and the world was intelligent enough to appreciate the testimony, and then he resurrected the dead cities of the earth and commands them, saying: "Open your long sealed lips and speak! Memphis and Thebes, is the Bible true?" "True!" respond Memphis and Thebes. "Babylon, is the book of Daniel true?" "True!" responds Babylon. "Ruins of Palestine and Syria, is the New Testament true?" "True!" respond the ruins all the way from Joppa to the Dead sea, and from Jerusalem to Damascus.

What a mercy that this testimony of the dead cities should come at a time when the Bible is especially assailed. And this work will go on until the veracity and divinity of the Scriptures will be as certain to all sensible men and women as that two and two make four, as that an isosceles triangle is one which has two of its sides equal, as that the diameter of a circle is a line drawn through the center and terminated by the circumference as certain as any mathematical demonstration.

Never did I feel more encouraged than when after preaching a sermon on evidences of the truth of the Bible drawn from oriental lands. A distinguished senator of the United States, known and honored everywhere, but now deceased, came up to the platform and said, "I was brought up in the faith of Christianity, but I got speculating on all these subjects and had given up my faith in the Bible, but those facts and arguments archaeological take me back to my old faith in the Bible, which my father and mother taught me." The tears rolling down his cheeks evinced the depth of his emotion. When I read of the senator's death I was comforted to think that perhaps I may have helped him a little in the struggle of his life, and perhaps given him an easier pillow on which to die.

A VALUABLE BOOK. Two great nations, Egypt and Greece, diplomatized and almost came to battle for one book, a copy of "Æschylus." Ptolemy, the Egyptian king, discovered that in the great library at Alexandria there was no copy of "Æschylus." The Egyptian king sent up to Athens, Greece, to borrow the book and make a copy of it. Athens demanded a deposit of seventeen thousand seven hundred dollars as security. The Egyptian king received the book, but refused to return that which he had borrowed, and so forfeited the seventeen thousand seven hundred dollars.

But the dead cities strung along the Nile not only demolish infidelity, but thunder down the absurdity of the modern doctrine of evolution which says the world started with nothing and then rose, and human nature began with nothing but evolved into splendid manhood and womanhood of itself. Nay; the sculpture of the world was more wonderful in the days of Memphis and Thebes and Carthage than in the days of Boston and New York.

These blocks of stone, weighing three hundred tons, high up in the wall at Karnae, imply machinery equal to if not surpassing the machinery of the Nineteenth century. How was that statue of Ramesses, weighing eight hundred and eighty-seven tons, transported from the quarries, two hundred miles away, and how was it lifted? Tell us, modern machinists. How were those galleries of rock, still standing at Thebes, filled with paintings surpassed by no artist's pencil of the present day? Tell us, artists of the Nineteenth century. The dead cities of Egypt, so far as they have left enough pillars or statues or sepulchers or temple ruins to tell the story—Memphis, Migdol, Hieropolis, Zoan, Thebes, Goshen, Carthage—all of them developing downward instead of upward. They have evolved from magnificence into destruction.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the only elevator of individual and social character. Let all the living cities know that pomp and opulence and temporal prosperity are no security. Those ancient cities lacked nothing but good morals. Dissipation and sin slew them, and unless dissipation and sin are halted they will some day slay our modern cities, and leave our palaces of merchandise, and our galleries of art, and our city halls as flat in the dust as we found Memphis on the afternoon of that Thanksgiving day. And if the cities go down the nation will go down. "Oh," you say, "that is impossible; we have stood so long—yes, over a hundred years as a nation." Why, what of that? Thebes stood five hundred years; Memphis stood a thousand years; God does not forget. One day with the Lord is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day.

Rum and debauchery and bad politics are more rapidly working the destruction of our American cities than sin of any kind and all kinds worked for the destruction of the cities of Africa, once so mighty and now so prostrate. But their gods were idols, and could do nothing except for debasement. Our God made the heavens and sent his Son to redeem the nations. And our cities will not go down, and our nation will not perish, because the Gospel is going to triumph. Forward! all schools and colleges and churches! Forward! all reformatory and missionary organizations. Forward! all the influences marshaled to bless the world. Let our modern European and American cities listen to the voice of those ancient cities resurrected, and by hammer and chisel and crowbar be compelled to speak.

VOICES FROM THE PAST. I notice the voice of those ancient cities is hoarse from the exposure of forty centuries, and they accentuate slowly with lips that were palsied for ages, but all together those cities along the Nile intone these words: "Hear us for we are very old, and it is hard for us to speak. We were wise long before Athens learned her first lesson. We sailed our ships while yet navigation was unborn. These obelisks, these pyramids, these fallen pillars, these wrecked temples, these colossal black granite, these wrecked sarcophagi under the brow of the hills, tell you of what I was in grandeur and of what I am coming down to be. We sinned and we fell. Our learning could not save us. See those half obliterated hieroglyphs on yonder wall. Our architecture could not save us: See the painted columns of Philae and the shattered temple of Esneh. Our heroes could not save us: Witness Memos, Diodorus, Ramesses and Ptolemy. Our gods, Ammon and Osiris, could not save us. See their fallen temples all along the four thousand miles of Nile. Oh, ye modern cities, get some other God—a God who can help, a God who can pardon, a God who can save. Called up as we are for a little while to give testimony, again the sands of the desert will bury us. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust!" And as these voices of porphyry and granite



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