

JOHN ALEXANDER DOWIE, PROPHET AND FINANCIER; CONSUMMATION OF THE HOPES OF A DREAMER OF DREAMS



Administration Building, Zion City.

"I SHALL return, and with ruthless hand exterminate the vipers and the dogs of hell that now hold the high places in the city of Zion. They dreamed, and in the grossness of their dreams they thought they had prevailed over the first apostle. And now, priests and elders of Zion, I shall return to strike you down. I shall return in another form, brighter and more beautiful and more terrible, to cut ye off in the midst of your sins, and to win back Zion for the truth and for them that held to the word and did no evils." With this final jeremiad the prophet Elijah III, John Alexander Dowie, announces his temporary death to the recusant of the city of Zion. And that as with a Hindu god there is potent belief in his power to make further descents upon earth—avatars, as the high places in the city of Zion were for curing and cursing, is demonstrated not only by the expectation of vengeance upon the prophet's rival, Voliva, by the loyal, but in the attitude of the elders of the church such as Carl Edsburn of New York, who in the west when the heathen hordes way to attend the prophet's funeral ceremonies said:

"Master Dowie has only passed into a deep slumber, from which he will awake in the near future in another part of the world."

"It is most ridiculous to say he has died. He is immune from death, and this he will demonstrate by appearing on this earth, gifted with more power than he has heretofore possessed."

In this open-eyed, critical, scientific twentieth century an ancient or medieval incident being enacted with an earnestness and completeness of detail that should do much to interpret the myths of the heroic. Like Arthur of Britain, after the last grim battle in the west when the heathen hordes swarming over seas had overcome the champion of Christendom, wounded and apparently dead, Dowie is being carried away by a Lady of the Lake to rest him in a happy Avalon from whence he will return to vanquish his assailants. In realms of "civic fancy" in the twentieth century, the miracles of Dowie, his demonstrated cures, his magnetic healing, his power of organization, the bardic eloquence and tumultuous energy of his sermons, the way he reclaimed and the back-falling, his practical genius, would have found no skeptics, no opponents, no deriders.

Like Arthur, again he might with impunity deny that he was the son of his accredited father and claim mystical, and miraculous origin, and all the faithful, with the evidence of his mighty deeds before them, would lend the ear of faith.

Dowie, in another light, may be looked on as Barbarossa, the great chieftain of the Germans, who could make an emperre. Dowie has built up a commercial and religious community, begun with \$2.00 in 1860, and estimated to be worth \$30,000,000 in little more than ten years. Barbarossa is sleeping in the mountains, to return when his people need his aid. Already those who failed Dowie in his last moments are awed by his unflinching power, and a panic was narrowly averted at his funeral ceremonies because of the announcement that another of Voliva's followers was dying. In the last week three of his lieutenants, who held similar positions under Dowie, have died suddenly, and when it was stated that a fourth was likely to die before morning, several of the mourners ran from the tabernacle, shouting that Zion was accused by God.

This excited the rest of the three thousand mourners, and before the cooler-headed leaders could get among the people to counsel quietness fully 500 had left the building.

Not just a charlatan, surely, this short, stout prophet of Chicago. A forceful personality, an ecclesiastic, an autocrat, a financier and an anti-medicine faith-healer, Adored as he has been by his followers, holding them with tyrannical sway in absolute subjection, derided by the public as



Dowie's Barn.

a calculating hypocrite, there can be little doubt that Dowie had complete confidence and belief in himself. Rejoice as the prophet's appearance as much as variance as theories of his spiritual nature. Says one: "His personal appearance is striking; his figure, though of medium stature, is imposing; his eye is penetrating and his countenance, naturally stern, frequently lights up with smiles; in hearing in private he is a gentleman, and his official aspect is that of a man born to command and incapable of following. With his majestic brow, certain venerable white beard, he seems like some biblical patriarch."

On the other hand writing of Elijah III, who made his invasion of New York with a cost of \$500,000 and was laughed at for his pains, one of the unredeemed says: "At the close of the hymn Dowie ascended the pulpit and began to read from a massive Bible. The people saw a short, squat, podgy old man, whose pink face was framed in long white hair and beard. His age had been advertised as fifty-seven and his six years' pastorate to good purpose. His sharp little eyes gleamed with cunning from beneath shaggy black brows slightly tinged with gray. The voice of Dowie was a shock, harsh, shrill, metallic, grating, the expression of a bullying spirit that will not tolerate a suggestion of opposition. It suggested scolding."

But however these things may be, and Dowie himself kept an official photographer, for whom he was constantly posing, and his pictures with his "leaves of healing" were sent everywhere all over the world for edification of his converts. It must be true that he had for certain classes at least exceptional personal magnetism. It has been said "Cagliostro had no surer grasp on the faith of his dupes and Napoleon was not followed half so blindly by his soldiers."

John Alexander Dowie was a genius. The story of his rapid but gradual development into the general overseer of the Christian Catholic Church of Zion is a wonderful financial if not the more unusual kind of a miracle.

He was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, May 28, 1847. Only after trouble in Chicago in the last few years did he announce that Judge Dowie is not his father. He was said to be proud of the fact that a nameless Scottish duke made a morganatic marriage with his mother, and, dying suddenly, left the mother of his son to marry again in order to escape comment but two months before the child's birth.

There was nothing in the man's early upbringing to give hint of what his life was to be. He was thirteen years old when his father took the family to Australia, and John Alexander was soon engaged in "commercial pursuits," as he expressed it, in Adelaide. In reality he was a clerk in a shop. He was wont to tell how, by the time he was twenty, he had laid by enough

Spanish omelet into the pocket of her pink frock.

"Why, you little pig," exclaimed her mother, "what on earth are you about? Put that back on your plate at once. Why, I never heard of such a thing. What on earth do you mean by it?"

"It is so good, mummy," the child explained, "I just thought I'd take a piece home to our cook for a pattern."

Neatly Put.
Miss Ellen Terry, at a reception in New York, talked about the innumerable women who ask her to help them get on the stage.

"The fact is," she said, "every woman under thirty believes she is an actress. 'And every actress,' she added, 'believes she is under thirty.'"

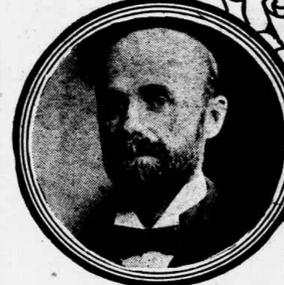
Among the Cobwebs.
A lawyer was talking about the late Samuel C. T. Dodd, the Standard Oil lawyer, whose salary from the great corporation was \$200,000 a year.

"He was interested," he admitted the truth of many of our arguments; but in the matter of supporting us he would go so far as we wanted him to go.

"One of the ladies got, I am afraid, a little over-excited. In her address to the general she attempted to woman more virtues than any merely human creature could possess. At the height of her eloquence Gen. Alger, chuckling, interrupted her.

"He said he had once attended a woman suffrage meeting where the lady lecturer on the platform had boasted about woman just as this lady was doing. The lecturer,

Dowie and the Chinese Prime Minister. From the Zion City Leaves of Healing.



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W. S. Peckham, Cashier Zion City Bank.

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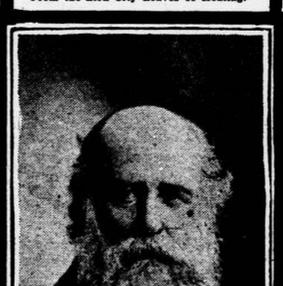
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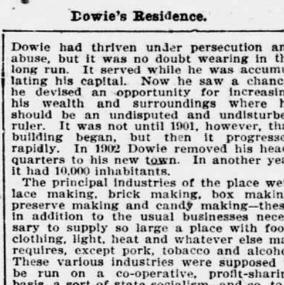
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Zion City College.

the final manifestations of his egomania as due to illness. Zion City went into the hands of a receiver and shrank from a population of 12,000 or 15,000 to less than 4,000. But it appears that even with the few that remained all is not harmony. Voliva, whom Dowie brought from Australia to manage affairs in Zion, is said not to be popular.

"The present head of the church," said one who conversed recently, "is tyrannous and cruel, carried away by the desire to rule."

When Voliva a year ago came to Zion fully trusting in Dowie he found the outlook disheartening. The bank was drained, credit was gone. People were unpaid and hungry and there was nothing to do but compel them to pay more to support Zion, and now and then Dowie drew on them for funds.

An illustration of the condition is shown in the faith of one of the converts. He was lost man on the streets of Chicago, penniless, diseased, a helpless slave to drink and his passions. He went to Zion after his conversion and dug in the ditches; then he worked in the lace factory. Then he rose to the head of a department in the evening work of the leaves of Healing," the Zion paper. When asked recently by one of his associates, "Has he not robbed you?" the man answered that even with the payments of 50 cents to buy bread for your family, while he owes you a hundred dollars and is spending it in luxury for himself," the man answered that even with the payments of 50 cents to buy bread for your family, while he owes you a hundred dollars and is spending it in luxury for himself,"

Voliva supposed himself the discoverer of this condition; but he found all his associates knew it and had been powerless; but he held a power of attorney. By a brilliant coup he transferred all Dowie's interest to a deposed overseer, Granger, who was given it in trust for the people. At a conference which followed 200 officers voted to stand by Voliva and fight it out. The fight leaves Voliva still in command and Dowie resting in the Zion cemetery.

"The value of Dowie's work and the future of Zion are now dominant questions. The latter question is answered by many who, believing that Dowieism was centered in its founder and leader, consider it desirable to be added to the long list of religious sects that have arisen but outlived their founders. The members of the community just at present seem bent upon getting back the worldly goods which they put into the experiment.

As for the first question, the tastes of the rarely organized prophet were not to the west, the smell of liquor and tobacco, the taste of pork were abhorrent to him; and doubtless had much to do with his religious pronouncements against their use in any shape or form. So far as anybody knows, his private life had been in accordance with the strictest and most conventional moral laws, and his followers had been rescued from evil lives and made industrious citizens. He cut off in his city of Zion an Arab and a Jew, and an American and a Canadian, and encouraged outdoor games and recreations. He demanded that his people adhere to the strictest ritual of clean living. He prohibited doctors and drug bills, including patent medicines, and convincing the ailing that they were well, sent them off to their tasks. Naturally all Zion felt a spiritual and physical regeneration, and became a clean, eager and industrious people. Thus the dreams, intangible and optimistic, which a skeptical and hostile world jeered at, he lived to see become a reality, and thousands of men, notwithstanding reverses and failures and death, still cling with faith to the mystery of his dominant personality. They had taken the oath and kept it.

"I vow in the name of God my Father and Jesus Christ, His Son and my Savior, and the Holy Ghost, that I recognize John Alexander Dowie, general overseer in his threefold prophetic office, as a messenger of the covenant, the restorer, and I promise to obey all faithful orders issued by him, and that all family ties and obligations, and all civil and human governments shall be his and mine to this day. This I make in the presence of God."

variously are much too large. What is his business, anyway?"

"He's a waiter, sir," said the boy."

Classed Low.
Dr. W. C. Farabee, the Harvard ethnologist, complained quaintly one day before he set out on his ethnological investigations among the Indians at the head waters of the Amazon about the slighting way in which the world still looks on science.

"Only in Germany," said Dr. Farabee, and the Holy Ghost, that I recognize John Alexander Dowie, general overseer in his threefold prophetic office, as a messenger of the covenant, the restorer, and I promise to obey all faithful orders issued by him, and that all family ties and obligations, and all civil and human governments shall be his and mine to this day. This I make in the presence of God."

Inexcusable.
James Hazen Hyde, who has traveled a good deal in the east, was talking about the way the Mohammedans treat their wives.

"They certainly can't trust their wives," he said. "No wife can appear on the street save swathed from top to toe in loose draperies that give her the look of a walking feather bed."

Mr. Hyde laughed. "An Arab of prominence in Baghdad, on his harem's return from the daily constitutional, said to his chief eunuch: 'All went well, sire,' the eunuch gravely answered, 'but for Fatimah, your recent bride—who you remember her—a fat little Moslem.'"

"Down her at once," roared the husband, and he added bitterly, "These married birds make me tired."

Anecdotes Concerning Well-Known People.

Doing Business.
J. G. Phelps-Stokes, the rich young social reformer, said about business at a St. Patrick's dinner of a past season:

"The more I see of business, the more I come to agree with the old Japanese idea of it—namely, that it is too much a game of cheating; that it is a pursuit which brags, honorable, generous persons—people like the Irish, for instance—cannot hope to succeed.

"So," said the Irishman, "they've printed the funeral notice as a man that ain't dead yet, boy? Faith, an' it's a nice piece of business in now if he was o' them peo-

A Fix Indeed.
W. Bourke Cockran, at a St. Patrick's day dinner, told a newspaper story.

"An Irishman," he said, "was talking about the case of King Gould, whose obituary, you will remember, was recently printed by mistake. Mr. Gould still being happily with us."

"So," said the Irishman, "they've printed the funeral notice as a man that ain't dead yet, boy? Faith, an' it's a nice piece of business in now if he was o' them peo-

he said, ended a striking climax with the question:

"Where would man be if it had not been for woman?"

"She looked around the crowded hall, the silence was intense. She raised her hand and cried again, impressively:

"I repeat, where would man be if it had not been for woman?"

"Then a coarse voice from the rear replied:

"In Paradise, ma'am."

Hard to Dodge.
Senator Hale, in an address at Ellsworth, said of the national prosperity:

"Two tramps were conversing over a pall of hot air.

"These is terrible times," said the first, as he set down the smoking pail and wiped his mustache.

"They certainly is," the other answered. "A feller can't ask for 'oik nowadays 'bout hot air' offered it."

Among the Cobwebs.
A lawyer was talking about the late Samuel C. T. Dodd, the Standard Oil lawyer, whose salary from the great corporation was \$200,000 a year.

"He was interested," he admitted the truth of many of our arguments; but in the matter of supporting us he would go so far as we wanted him to go.

"One of the ladies got, I am afraid, a little over-excited. In her address to the general she attempted to woman more virtues than any merely human creature could possess. At the height of her eloquence Gen. Alger, chuckling, interrupted her.

"He said he had once attended a woman suffrage meeting where the lady lecturer on the platform had boasted about woman just as this lady was doing. The lecturer,