IN THE CHINA SEA

A NARRATIVE OF ADVENTURE.

By SEWARD W. HOPKINS.

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CHAPTER X.

[CONTINUED.]

"Very well. To begin, then, we must go back thirty years, boy—probably more than you have lived. Well, thirty years ago I left dear old England—ah, Miss Arnold, it was not so simple a thing to leave England then. Thirty years ago, I left old England with my wife, to come here and teach the Gospel of Christ to these poor people. then quick to learn and anxious to become one of the nations of learning in the world. I was a preacher, having taken orders in the Church of England. I was an enthusiast in my work, as was my poor wife. Pardon me if I falter. These poor old eyes seem full ready to weep. But I am old—I am old. And my heart is seared with sorrow, as you will see. We came here, then, thirty years ago, and found Talmooch a flourishing place, a promising place, a magnificent place. Let me describe it fully, that you may more ably appreciate the contrast later on. Here, all around us, where you see the spreading palms, the fragrant and beautiful flowers, here was the temple of the people of Talmooch, and here they worshiped their god. Nay, you need look for no falling walls, no crumbling ruins. Not a stone was in their temple. Their god was the God of Nature, and in this vast and magnificent cathedral of His handiwork they came to worship Him. Beyond that wall, the island stretches southward about twenty miles. It was at that time a veritable paradise. The mountains were loaded with mineral wealth. The streams were alive with fish. The people were innocent and happy. Warlike, it is true, were the men, but only that they might defend their homes against invasion. The population of the island was about one hundred thousand. The form of government was a monarchy. Indeed, the people had never been far enough advanced to take any other form. They are not, perhaps, equal to governing themselves. There was a king who was chosen by the people. He had no life tenure. The throne was not hereditary. The ruler was he whom the people declared the best fitted for the responsible honor. The people were divided into two tribes. The Jumars, perhaps the superior in point of intelligence, had a town called Galneor. It then contained about twenty thousand souls. You would be utterly surprised to see this town in those days of peace and prosperity. The streets were wide and clean. The houses were small, but models of neatness and cleanliness. Some of the more pretentious were really beautiful in their architecture. The men worked in the mines or in the manufacturing establishments. Everything was done on something like a co-operative plan, subject, of course, to the crown. There was no great individual wealth, but on the other hand there was no poverty. Every family had plenty. A margon, or, in English, a mayor, was the representative of the king in Galneor. He was chosen for his wisdom. His rule was wondrously wise, and the people prospered. The country round about was rich in farming lands, and thousands of people had their little holdings, subject to a slight taxation to provide for the expenses of state. There was trade with other nations, and the manufactures of Talmooch and of the Jumars were famous in many lands.

"Talmooch is perhaps the most northerly of the Philippine group. It is so far north that it might almost be said to lie off the Chinese coast. It is just south of Formosa.

"Beside the Jumars, there were the Kaleks, not so far advanced in intelligence, but more warlike. Their city was called Bromporrah, and held fifty thousand inhabitants. It was much like Galneor in every respect. The two people were practically one. The seat of government was at Quiental, a fortified town at the other end of the island. But I tire you, do I not?"

"No, you do not," I protested; "on the contrary, I am greatly interested. It would be unwise for us to make any attempt to push farther on our way without a full understanding of what is before us. I hope you will proceed."

"Yes, do, Mr. Avery," said Miss Arnold. "I am eager to hear all."

"Very well," he said, smiling wearily. "But we might, I suppose, with good judgment, retire farther into the forest to escape unfriendly eyes. Yes, I think it best. Let us go back here a space."

We gathered up our goods and retreated some distance where we were sheltered by the thick brush and trees from observation should the enemy feared by Mr. Avery appear. Having arranged ourselves comfortably, the missionary continued:

"I have told you all I need to tell of the condition of affairs in Talmooch when I came here with my dear wife, thirty years ago. To give you, however, a still better idea of the prevailing happiness and prosperity of the people, I will say just a word more. In whatever intercourse the Jumars and Kaleks—once two distinct and separate peoples, but at the time of which I speak united into one happy nation—had with outside people, such as traders from the coast or the inhabitants of neighboring islands who had advanced as far as ship-building, there never was the slightest show of dishonesty or cupidity. These people, with all their intelligence and skill, are wonderfully simple. They are like children. They are very moral. It can readily be understood then, that we found here a fruitful field. We found a people eager to grasp the truths that have become the light of greater nations. I taught them English; they taught me their language. My wife established schools for them and their children. It was a happy life. But I cannot dwell upon it farther.

"For ten years this continued. In that time we made rapid strides. The ruling houses took a great interest in the progress of the nation in learning. A certain sort of simple literature was produced, some even now in existence showing the quaint simplicity of the people. Commerce had become established. We hoped that Talmooch would make a name for itself among the smaller nations. But there was an evil day in store for us.

"The greedy and covetous eye of the Chinese fell upon the beauties of Talmooch. You may—or you may not—understand the governmental system of China. To be brief, the Empire is now under the rule of the Mantchoos—a province of northern China. The Emperor has been called—or was, when I was of the world—a progressive man, but my experience here has led me to believe that greed and cruelty are about all there is to the Chinese religion. A cousin of the then ruling family was governor of one of the eastern provinces. This man's name was Hen-Ko-Hi. It was said that he fell in disgrace with the Emperor, and to restore himself to favor, he set out to conquer some new land and thus enrich his royal cousin's exchequer. At any rate, twenty years ago, this monster Hen-Ko-Hi swooped down upon our little island and brought death and desolation with him.

"I cannot begin to tell you of the monstrous cruelties and awful barbarities practiced by Hen-Ko-Hi and his followers. The ruling family at Quiental, who were Kaleks, were all put to death. The men of Talmooch were ruthlessly murdered. The women were treated in the most brutal manner. Some of the women of the Jumars were very beautiful. These were taken away. A government was established which was similar to that of a tributary province of China—independent, save that it contributed largely to the maintenance of state at Pekin. Hen-Ko-Hi proclaimed himself governor. He set up his court at Quiental. He appropriated the palace of the former king. He prevented any intercourse between the people of Talmooch and other lands. He levied taxes that were excessive. He practiced all sorts of outrage.

"My own dear wife was taken by this hated monster. Ah, American, you can appreciate my sorrow—my grief—my hate. Pardon these faltering words—these tears of an aged mourner. Yes, the blasphemous hands of the scoundrel fell even upon my wife, and she was taken to Quiental. I heard afterward that she put herself to death rather than submit to the indignities heaped upon her."

The old man was weeping. Miss Arnold had buried her face in her hands and was sobbing. The blood boiled through my veins. I felt that I would like to take a shot at Governor Hen-Ko-Hi.

The sad memories he had aroused seemed likely to put an end to the missionary's story. I waited a short time, and as he did not proceed I spoke to him.

"But why do you remain here now, Mr. Avery?" I asked. "Are there not happiness and forgetfulness for you in England?"

A bitter smile played around his mouth.

"Crickmore," he replied, "when you have felt the sorrow I have felt, you will also feel a morbid pleasure in remembrance. But be that as it may, I could not leave, even if I would. For twenty years there has been no opportunity to escape. So severe is the penalty here for any apparent effort to defeat the objects of the government, and so complete is the system of espionage established by Hen-Ko-Hi, that not one soul of us has ever been able to escape. We can die; that is all. And my time will soon come. I am far on the pathway now. What matters it?"

"But of your arm. Is that, too, a testimony of Hen-Ko-Hi's cruelty?"

"Aye, even this poor old frame has many times felt the might of his royal wrath. Crickmore, I have died a thousand deaths. I have stood with this arm in fire, praying to God that my soul be released from the tortured body. But it is His will that I should endure yet a little longer. When He pleases, I am ready."

"What was your punishment for?" I asked.

"Nothing. Hen-Ko-Hi is a hater of all Christians. He tortures them and kills them. No European could escape death or torture at his hands. I have known him, when I was suffering the awful torment he put upon me, to call his officers, that they, too, might enjoy the inspiring scene of an old man's tears. Ah!"

"The fiend! He is a devil, not a man!" I said fiercely.

Miss Arnold was now weeping as if her heart would break.

"Oh, what will become of us? What can we do?" she cried.

There was no answer. Mr. Avery sat with his chin buried in his uninjured hand, his thin lips working convulsively, his eyes bent on the ground. I mused sadly upon what he had told us. In truth, our troubles seemed only to have begun.

At length the old man rose to his feet, and placing his hand on the fair head of my sweet companion, said:

"Crickmore, listen to me. I am an aged man. I have suffered much. My spirit is broken. Yet can I think of the only course for you to pursue. You would not place this fair young girl at the mercy of that bloodthirsty tyrant in the palace of Quiental. I say to you, in the words of truth, I know it well—bitterly well. Once the eye of a Mantchoo falls on her, her doom is sealed. As for you, you are no safer at his hands. He would torture you for mere amusement. It is plain, then, that for the present you must remain secluded. You must be patient, as I have been for twenty years. You shall have shelter, and if you are discreet, you shall remain undiscovered. That is the only thing for you to do. What say you?"

Miss Arnold caught the old man's hand in hers and kissed it.

"It shall be as you say," I replied. "But while I stay I shall plot to get away. I cannot remain here patiently."

"Ah! Plot if you will, but be cautious. Plot if you will, and if your plotting can bring you out of here in safety, well and good. Plot if you will, and if by your plotting you can free this noble people from the tyrant's rule, may the blessing of God rest upon you!"

"Tell me this: What was the gathering of women that I saw over the wall to-day, and why is this portion of the island free from the cruel hand of Hen-Ko-Hi?"

"For twenty years, Crickmore," he said in reply, "have the people of Talmooch prayed in that way for deliverance. In former times they came into this forest to pray to the god of nature. I have taught them to pray to our living God, and yet they look to the sacred forest. Hen-Ko-Hi, to prevent their simple worship, built that wall, and the people are forbidden to cross it, and the penalty of transgression is death."

"But how comes it, then, that you you are here and that the soldiers of the governor do not come on this side of the wall?"

"Hen-Ko-Hi made of this forest a hunting-ground. For some years he came here to hunt, but of late the pleasures of his court have occupied his time. As to my being here, come with me. As you are to be my guest, you may at once enter my guest-chamber."

He led the way through the forest, and hand in hand with Miss Arnold I followed him. After a short walk over the flowers and ferns, he stopped before a large tree. It was a dead tree and the trunk was hollow.

"It was by accident that I discovered this," he said, "and with a little work it was finished to suit me. I did not know it would ever serve so noble a purpose as it will to-day. Enter after me."

He bowed his head and went into the hollow trunk. Immediately after he disappeared. I hesitated, not knowing what had become of him.

"Follow me."

The voice sounded as if it came from the bowels of the earth. I put my head in the aperture through which he had gone, and there, several feet below me, in a slanting direction, I saw him standing, with a lamp in his hand, waiting for me.

"Ah, I see you now," I said. "I did not at first know what had taken you away so suddenly." I followed him into the hollow and told Miss Arnold to come without fear. From the roots of the tree an underground passage led away toward the wall.

"This passage was dug for me by the Jumars, among whom I live," said Mr. Avery, when he had joined him. "You will have to bend yourselves a little for a short distance here. It leads, as you see, to a large cavern."

The light of the lamp he carried showed us that we were in a large, roomy cave, hollowed into a soft stone much like pumice in its porousness.

Strangely, the air was fresh and wholesome. This was due, so the missionary told us, to the porousness of the rock. The cave was always dry, except in the time of great rainfall, which the island of Talmooch seldom had.

He set the lamp down on a flat ledge of stone and turned to us.

"This, my dear young friends, must be your abode, until it becomes the will of God that you escape from this unhappy place. Bare and comfortless as it is, it is far superior to the gorgeous cruelty of the palace of Quiental, where the fate of all is death. A few comforts can be furnished you. You may depend upon the Jumars—some of them will come here. The women who saw you, doctor, in the tree, came to me in great excitement and told me their prayers were answered and that a new king was calling to them from the sacred forest. They described you as a man of gigantic build. Well, you are, compared with my poor frame. But they did not understand the Chinese uniform, which they knew so well and have learned with so much reason to fear. As to their superstition that you have been sent to deliver them, it may be as well—for a time, at least—to foster that idea. I have an ill-defined purpose already in my mind—so great is the exhilaration resulting from meeting a man of your spirit. But I will leave you now for a moment. There are some things needed here."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A Woman Bicycle Mender.

While some members of a bicycle organization in New York City were discussing incidents of the past season, a member noted for his interest in touring said that while on a trip through the Berkshires during the summer he had the misfortune to pull out several spokes from his wheel and suffer a bad puncture to the front tire. The nearest point where he could secure the aid of a repairer was over a mile distant. He found there a small store where notions of a general character were sold and a sign reading "Bicycles Repaired." To his amazement the place was in charge of a young woman, who listened to his story of distress. In a business-like manner she ventured the advice that the breakdown could readily be repaired. After looking the wheel over she took it into the store, put on an apron, and brought forth some tools. The rider said that at first he demurred, but his objections were received very independently. He was assured that if he was reluctant to trust the repairs to her he might go elsewhere. To the man's surprise the bicycle was turned over to him in first-class condition after half an hour's labor. The charge, he declares, was decidedly moderate. Plucking up courage he questioned the young storekeeper how she came to follow the bicycle repair line. The woman said it was a question of necessity rather than choice, as her brother was in reality the owner of the place, but being forced to absent himself for several months she felt able to fill the place. She attributed her success to her knowledge of cycle construction gained by riding and mending her own wheel.—New York Sun.

DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON.

SUNDAY'S DISCOURSE BY THE NOTED DIVINE.

Subject: An Ancient Epigram—An Old Saying Used to Illustrate the Ludicrous Behavior of Those Who Magnify Small Sins and Ignore Great Ones.

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WASHINGTON, D. C.—In this discourse, founded on an ancient epigram repeated by Christ, Dr. Talmage illustrates the folly of being very particular about insignificant things, while neglectful of vast concerns. The text is Matthew xxiii., 24: "Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel."

A proverb is compact wisdom, knowledge in chunks, a library in a sentence, the electricity of many clouds discharged in one bolt, a river put through a mill race. When Christ quotes the proverb of the text, He means to set forth the ludicrous behavior of those who make a great bluster about small sins and have no appreciation of great ones. In my text a small insect and a large quadruped are brought into comparison—a gnat and a camel. You have in museum or on the desert seen the latter, a great awkward, sprawling creature, with back two stories high and stomach having a collection of reservoirs for desert travel, an animal forbidden to the Jews as food and in many literatures entitled "the ship of the desert." The gnat spoken of in the text is in the grub form. It is born in pool or pond, after a few weeks becomes a chrysalis and then after a few days becomes the gnat as we recognize it. But the insect spoken of in the text is in its very smallest shape, and it yet inhabits the water, for my text is a misprint and ought to read "strain out a gnat."

My text shows you the prince of inconsistencies. A man after long observation has formed the suspicion that in a cup of water he is about to drink there is a grub or the grandparent of a gnat. He goes and gets a sieve or strainer. He takes the water and pours it through the sieve in the broad light. He says, "I would rather do anything almost than drink this water until this larva be extirpated." This water is brought under inquisition. The experiment is successful. The water rushes through the sieve and leaves against the side of the sieve the grub or gnat. Then the man carefully removes the insect and drinks the water in placidity. But going out one day and hungry, he devours a "ship of the desert," the camel, which the Jews were forbidden to eat. The gastronomer has no compunctions of conscience. He suffers from no indigestion. He puts the lower jaw under the camel's forefoot and his upper jaw over the hump of the camel's back and gives one swallow, and dromedary disappears forever. He strained out a gnat; he swallowed a camel.

While Christ's audience was yet smiling at the oppositeness and wit of His illustration—for smile they did, unless they were too stupid to understand the hyperbole—Christ practicall said to them, "That is you." Punctilious about small things; reckless about affairs of great magnitude. No subject ever winced under a surgeon's knife more bitterly than did the Pharisees under Christ's scalpel of truth. As an anatomist will take a human body to pieces and put the pieces under a microscope for examination, so Christ finds His way to the heart of the dead Pharisee and cuts it out and puts it under the glass of inspection for all generations to examine. Those Pharisees thought that Christ would flatter them and compliment them, and how they must have writhed under the redhot words as He said, "Ye fools, ye whited sepulchers, ye blind guides, which strain out a gnat and swallow a camel."

There are in our day a great many gnats strained out and a great many camels swallowed, and it is the object of this sermon to sketch a few persons who are extensively engaged in that business.

First, I remark, that all those ministers of the gospel who are very scrupulous about the conventionalities of religion, but put no particular stress upon matters of vast importance, are photographed in the text. Church services ought to be grave and solemn. There is no room for frivolity in religious convocation. But there are illustrations, and there are hyperboles like that of Christ in the text, that will irradiate with smiles any intelligent audience. There are men like those blind guides of the text who advocate only those things in religious service which draw the corners of the mouth down and denounce all those things which have a tendency to draw the corners of the mouth up, and these men will go to installations and to presbyteries and to conferences and to associations, their pockets full of fine sieves to strain out the gnats, while in their own churches at home every Sunday there are fifty people sound asleep. They make their churches a great dormitory, and their somniferous sermons are a cradle and the drawled out hymns a lullaby, while some wakeful soul in a pew with her fan keeps the flies off unconscious persons approximate. Now, I say it is worse to sleep in church than to smile in church, for the latter implies at least attention, while the former implies the indifference of the hearers and the stupidity of the speaker.

In old age or from physical infirmity or from long watching with the sick drowsiness will sometimes overpower one, but when a minister of the gospel looks off upon an audience and finds healthy and intelligent people struggling with drowsiness it is time for him to give out the doxology or pronounce the benediction. The great fault of church services to-day is not too much vivacity, but too much somnolence. The one is an irritating gnat that may be easily strained out; the other is a great, sprawling and sleepy-eyed camel of the dry desert.

I take down from my library the biographies of ministers and writers of the past ages, inspired and uninspired, who have done the most to bring souls to Jesus Christ, and I find that without a single exception they consecrated their wit and their humor to Christ. Elijah used it when he advised the Baalites, as they could not make their god respond, to call louder, as their god might be sound asleep or gone a-hunting. Job used it when he said to his self-conceited comforters, "Wisdom will die with you." Christ not only used it in the text, but when He ironically complimented the corrupt Pharisees, saying, "The whole need not a physician," and when by one word He described the cunning of Herod, saying, "Go ye and tell that fox." Matthew Henry's commenteries from the first page to the last corruscated with humor, as summer clouds with heat lightning.

Again, my subject photographs all those who are abhorrent of small sins, while they are reckless in regard to magnificent thefts. You will find many a merchant who, while he is so careful that he would not take a yard of cloth or a spool of cotton from the counter without paying for it, and who, if a bank cashier should make a mistake and send in a roll of bills $5 too much, would dispatch a messenger in hot haste to return the surplus, yet who will go into a stock company, in which after awhile he gets control of the stock and then waters the stock and makes $100,000 appear like $200,000. He only stole $100,000 by the operation. Many of the men of fortune made their wealth in that way.

One of these men engaged in such unrighteous acts that evening, the evening of the very day when he watered the stock, will find a wharf rat stealing a daily paper from the basement doorway and will go out and catch the urchin by the collar and twist the collar so tightly the poor fellow has no power to say that it was thirst for knowledge that led him to the dishonest act, but grip the collar tighter and tighter, saying: "I have been looking for you a long while. You stole my paper four or five times, haven't you, you miserable wretch?" And then the old stock gambler, with a voice they can hear three blocks, will cry out, "Police, police!" That same man the evening of the day in which he watered the stock will kneel with his family in prayers and thank God for the prosperity of the day, then kiss his children good night with an air which seems to say, "I hope you will all grow up to be as good as your father!" Prisons for sins insectile in size, but palaces for crimes dromedarian. No mercy for sins animalcule in proportion, but great leniency for mastodon iniquity. A poor boy slyly takes from the basket of a market woman a choke pear, saving some one else from the cholera, and you smother him in the horrible atmosphere of Raymond Street Jail or New York Tombs, while his cousin, who has been skillful enough to steal $50,000 from the city, you make a candidate for the State Legislature.

There is a good deal of uneasiness and nervousness now among some people in our time who have got unrighteous fortunes, a great deal of uneasiness about dynamite. I tell them that God will put under their unrighteous fortunes something more explosive than dynamite, the earthquake of His omnipotent indignation. It is time that we learn in America that sin is not excusable in proportion as it declares large dividends and has outriders in equipage. Many a man is riding to perdition postilion ahead and lackey behind. To steal one copy of a newspaper is a gnat; to steal many thousands of dollars is a camel. There is many a fruit dealer who would not consent to steal a basket of peaches from a neighbor's stall, but who would not scruple to depress the fruit market, and as long as I can remember we have heard every summer the peach crop of Maryland is a failure, and by the time the crop comes in the misrepresentation makes a difference of millions of dollars. A man who would not steal one basket of peaches steals 50,000 baskets of peaches.

Go down into the public library, in the reading room, and see the newspaper reports of the crops from all parts of the country, and their phraseology is very much the same, and the same men wrote them, methodically and infamously carrying out the huge lying about the grain crop from year to year and for a score of years. After awhile there will be a "corner" in the wheat market, and men who had a contempt for petty theft will burglarize the wheat bin of a nation and commit larceny upon the American corn crib, and some of the men will sit in churches and in reformatory institutions trying to strain out the small gnats of scoundrelism, while in their grain elevators and in their storehouses they are fattening huge camels which they expect after awhile to swallow. Society has to be entirely reconstructed on this subject. We are to find that a sin is inexcusable in proportion as it is great. I know in our time the tendency is to charge religious frauds upon good men. They say, "Oh what a host of frauds you have in the Church of God in this day!" And when an elder of a church, or a deacon, or a minister of the gospel, or a superintendent of a Sabbath-school turns out a defaulter, what display heads there are in many of the newspapers. Great primer type. Five line pica. "Another Saint Absconded," "Clerical Scoundrelism," "Religion at a Discount," "Shame on the Churches," while there are a thousand scoundrels outside the church to one inside the church, and the misbehavior of those who never see the inside of a church is so great that it is enough to tempt a man to become a Christian to get out of their company. But in all circles, religious and irreligious, the tendency is to excuse sin in proportion as it is mammoth. Even John Milton in his "Paradise Lost," while he condemns satan, gives such a grand description of him you have hard work to withhold your admiration. Oh, this straining out of small sins like gnats and this gulping down great iniquities like camels.

The subject does not give the picture of one or two persons, but is a gallery in which thousands of people may see their likenesses. For instance, all those people who, while they would not rob their neighbors of a farthing, appropriate the money and the treasure of the public. A man has a house to sell, and he tells his customer it is worth $20,000. Next day the assessor comes around, and the owner says it is worth $15,000. The Government of the United States took off the tax from personal income, among other reasons because so few people would tell the truth, and many a man with an income of hundreds of dollars a day made statements which seemed to imply he was about to be handed over to the overseer of the poor. Careful to pay their passage from Liverpool to New York, yet smuggling in their Saratoga trunk ten silk dresses from Paris and a half dozen watches from Geneva, telling the custom house officer on the wharf, "There is nothing in that trunk but wearing apparel," and putting a $5 gold piece in his hand to punctuate the statement.

Such persons are also described in the text who are very much alarmed about the small faults of others and have no alarm about their own great transgressions. There are in every community and in every church watch-dogs who feel called upon to keep their eyes on others and growl. They are full of suspicions. They wonder if this man is not dishonest, if that man is not unclean, if there is not something wrong about the other man. They are always the first to hear of anything wrong. Vultures are always the first to smell carrion. They are self-appointed detectives. I lay this down as a rule without any exception that those people who have the most faults themselves are most merciless in their watching of others. From scalp of head to sole of foot they are full of jealousies and hypercriticisms.

But lest too many might think they escape the scrutiny of the text I have to tell you that we all come under the divine satire when we make the questions of time more prominent than the questions of eternity. Come, now, let us all go into the confessional. Are not all tempted to make the question, Where shall I live now? greater than the question, Where shall I live forever? How shall I get more dollars here? greater than the question, How shall I lay up treasures in heaven? the question, How shall I pay my debts to man? greater than the question, How shall I meet obligations to God? the question, How shall I gain the world? greater than the question, What if I lose my soul? the question, Why did God let sin come into the world? greater than the question, How shall I get it extirpated from my nature? the question, What shall I do with the twenty or forty or seventy years of my sublunar existence? greater than the question, What shall I do with the millions of cycles of my post terrestrial existence? Time, how small it is! Eternity, how vast it is? The former more insignificant in comparison with the latter than a gnat is insignificant when compared with a camel. We dodged the text. We said, "That does not mean me, and that does not mean me," and with a ruinous benevolence we are giving the whole sermon away.

But let us all surrender to the charge. What an ado about things here. What poor preparation for a great eternity. As though a minnow were larger than a behemoth, as though a swallow took wider circuit than an albatross, as though a nettle were taller than a Lebanon cedar, as though a gnat were greater than a camel, as though a minute were longer than a century, as though time were higher, deeper, broader than eternity. So the text which flashed with lightning of wit as Christ uttered it is followed by the crashing thunders of awful catastrophe to those who make the questions of time greater than the questions of the future, the oncoming, overshadowing future. Oh, eternity, eternity, eternity!

MARRIED BY MGR. MARTINELLI.

Apostolic Delegate Performs His First Marriage Ceremony in This Country.

Archbishop Martinelli, the Apostolic Delegate to America, officiated a few days ago at Washington, D. C., at the first marriage ceremony the distinguished prelate has performed in the United States since he has been licensed by the District of Columbia to perform marriages.

The bride was Miss Eleanor Bargagni, daughter of the cook of the legation, a fascinating Italian girl of twenty-two, and the bridegroom Joseph Finelli, a citizen of Washington. The ceremony was performed in the private chapel of the legation at 8 o'clock in the morning. The Archbishop wore his ecclesiastical robes and mitre, and after the ceremony the Archbishop and his auditors celebrated nuptial mass. At the conclusion the happy pair drove away for a honeymoon trip. The ceremony was witnessed by a few relatives and friends.

BIG SUM FOR MRS. TALMAGE.

Well-Known Clergyman's Wife Gets a $180,000 Check.

After a year of wedded bliss the Rev. Dr. De Witt C. Talmage finds himself possessed of a wife with $180,000 more cash than when he married her. Mrs. Talmage has received a check for that amount from her brothers, her partners in the Lindsay McCutcheon cotton tie mill, for her interest in that concern.

Several weeks ago Thomas G. and James H. McCutcheon were approached by the new hoop trust, which offered them $650,000 for their mill. They accepted the offer, and turned over $180,000 to Mrs. Talmage for her share of the property. She was the only daughter, and one of the three heirs of the late Jas. H. McCutcheon, who established the business many years ago and died a millionaire.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON COMMENTS FOR AUGUST 6.

Subject: The New Heart, Ezek. xxxvi., 25-36—Golden Text: "A New Heart Also Will I Give You," Ezek. xxxvi. 26—Commentary on the Lesson.

INTRODUCTION.—We go back in history between forty and fifty years from our last lesson, when Nebuchadnezzar was king in Babylon and the Jews were held captive by him. This prophecy was written soon after the destruction of Jerusalem. Ezekiel, the author of this prophecy, was born in Jerusalem about B. C. 623, in the reign of Josiah, at the finding of the book of the law. He was carried captive to Babylon with King Jehoiachin, B. C. 598, eight years after Daniel's captivity. He began to prophesy B. C. 593, when he was thirty years old, and continued to prophesy twenty-two years. How long he lived after that is not known.

CONNECTING LINKS. It was not until the third siege upon Jerusalem that Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city. Daniel was carried into captivity after the first siege of Jerusalem, B. C. 606. Ezekiel was taken captive in the second siege, B. C. 598. The final siege, when Jerusalem was destroyed, was B. C. 586. Daniel had then been in Babylon twenty years, Ezekiel twelve years. The prophecy of which this lesson forms a part was a sermon to the Jews in Babylonia as captives, to show them what was necessary for them in order to return and again become the people of God in their own land. Here are words of hope and promise and comfort. Visions of glory and blessing are given to the prophet Ezekiel, through which he shows the people their way back to God and their own country. Our lesson teaches that they were first to be restored to inward holiness, then to outward prosperity. That part of Israel which had been taken by Nebuchadnezzar was called Judah. The ten tribes went into captivity more than a century before. The return is of the twelve tribes.

25. "Then." When God restores Israel to their own land. V. 24. Peloubet. "Will I sprinkle clean water upon you." Language taken from the law, viz., the water mixed with the ashes of a heifer sprinkled with a hyssop on the unclean. Numbers 19:9-18. The truly cleansing water; the influence of the Holy Spirit, typified by water, whose property it is to cleanse, whiten, purify, refresh, render healthy and fruitful. "From all your filthiness." Sin is to the soul what filth is to the body—defiling, unhealthful, uncomely, repulsive. From every sort of external and internal abomination and pollution.

26. "A new heart also." The heart is the centre of life to the body; it sends the life-blood to every part; if it is weak or imperfect the whole body is weak and sickly. So the character, the supreme love, the will, are to the soul and the life.—Peloubet. "A new spirit." I will renew your minds, enlighten your understanding, correct your judgment and refine your will, so that you will have a new spirit to actuate your new heart. "Stony heart." Cold, hard, dead. Cold to God's love and goodness, not warming with gratitude, holy emotions and heavenly desires. Hard, not easily impressed or moved by the divinest motives; it is selfish and not stirred with the needs of others. Dead—no spiritual life in it, no source of good works and beautiful living—dead to God's goodness, holy influences and dead to heaven.

27. "My spirit within." The great principle of life, light and love. "Walk in My statutes." Thoroughly furnish them with wisdom and will and active powers for every good work. Not by force, or by external violence, but by internal principle. "Keep My judgments." God's promises must drive us to His precepts as our rule, and then His precepts send us back to His promises for strength.

28. "Dwell in the land." Go there to abide. "Be My people." Wholly given up to Me in body, soul and spirit.—Clarke. "Your God." What the spring sun is to the earth, that would God be to them after the cold hard winter of their exile. All life, power, beauty, comfort, warmth and fruits come through the sun.

29. "Uncleannesses." From falling into them. "Corn." Type of both material and spiritual prosperity and increase. Material prosperity was part of the divine pledge given in the Mosaic covenant.

30. "No reproach of famine." The heathen reproached the Israelites with having a God who would allow them to suffer hunger. They did not understand the reason. This promise was in a large measure fulfilled in the return after the seventy years of exile. There will be a more complete fulfilment if the Jews now in exile in all lands for rejecting Christ shall return to their own land; but they must first receive the new heart from Christ and be filled with His Spirit.

31. "Your own evil ways....loathe yourselves." Here we see what is the most powerful inducement to an evangelical repentance, namely, a just sense of the mercy and grace of God toward us. The more we see of His readiness to receive us into favor upon our repentance the more ashamed will we be of ourselves that we should ever sin against so much love.

32. "Not for your sakes." Not on the ground of any good deservings of yours. A check on all vain presumption in the Jews and confidence of their own merit; a fault to which they have been very prone in every age.

33. "Wastes shall be builded." The land of Canaan was the promised land of Israel. During the years of their captivity there was much destruction throughout their land. When Israel truly repented of sin they would be ready to build again their cities, as God would be pleased to have them.

35. "This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden." Satan's blast is removed; God's blessing has taken place. The heathen who once made the desolation of the land a ground of reproach against Jehovah Himself are constrained to acknowledge Israel's more than renewed blessedness to be God's own work and a ground for glorifying His name.

36. "The heathen shall know." Repeatedly they had mocked the God of the Jews, but the prosperity that should follow upon the return of Israel to Canaan would put to silence all vain expressions against the power and love of God. When God opens His hand we are filled. There will be such evidences of His power that all may see and learn that He is the living God. Nothing but sin humiliates. God's blessing always lifts up. His grace is like the walls of protection built around the cities. The heathen cannot rob the true child of God of his possessions. He may enter upon the same by repentance, obedience and faith, "I the Lord." All glory is due to God. His works attract to Himself.

FOR A GREAT NATIONAL PARK.

7,000,000 Acres of Land to Be Under Governmental Charge.

A national park or forestry reserve association for the Governmental preservation of over 7,000,000 acres of land in Northern Minnesota has been formed in Chicago.

The organization starts with the cordial indorsement of Governor Theodore Roosevelt, of New York; President Hill, of the Great Northern Railway; Colonel John S. Cooper, of Chicago, and prominent Congressmen and Government officials interested in the immediate creation of great national reserves for the preservation of native forests and streams, and the perpetuation of the game of the land.

The project is made doubly important through the fact that the friends and promoters of the reserve also have in view the placing under Governmental charge all the land surrounding the head waters of the Mississippi River. The tract includes the Leech Lake district, and embraces the counties of Crow Wing, Aitken, Wadena, Hubbard, Beltrama and Itasca, containing over a thousand lakes.

Champion Eater Dead.

John F. Sherlock, well known throughout Connecticut as a gormandizer and pedestrian, died in the insane ward at the State prison at Wethersfield of starvation. He received a five years' sentence in September, 1897, for felonious assault. Sherlock claimed the pedestrian championship of the State. He was a great eater and would eat for hours on a wager, often giving exhibitions in restaurant windows. At one sitting he ate enough for a family of twelve.

Caught a 125-Pound Sturgeon.

Harold Blackman and Roy Dowling caught a sturgeon at Muskegon, Mich., a few days ago, weighing 125 pounds. Blackman jumped into the river and caught the fish by the gills and Dowling killed it with an axe.

GOD'S MESSAGE TO MAN.

PREGNANT THOUGHTS FROM THE WORLD'S GREATEST PROPHETS.

My Slow Ascent—The Emblem of Love—The Significance of the Cross—Comfort as God Comforts—Why God Builds Foundations—As Sacred as Prayer.

Fain would my thoughts fly up to Thee
Thy peace, sweet Lord, to find;
But when I offer still the world
Lays clogs upon my mind.

Sometimes I climb a little way
And thence look down below;
How nothing, there, do all things seem,
That here make such a show!

Then round about I turn my eyes
To feast my hungry sight;
I meet with heaven in everything.
In everything delight.

When I have thus triumph'd awhile,
And think to build my nest,
Some cross conceits come fluttering by
And interrupt my rest.

Then to the earth again I fall,
And from my low dust cry,
'Twas not in my wing, Lord, but Thine,
That I got up so high.

And now, my God, whether I rise,
Or still lie down in dust,
Both I submit to Thy blest will;
In both, on Thee I trust.

Guide Thou my way, who art Thyself
My everlasting End,
That every step, or swift or slow,
Still to Thyself may tend.

—By John Austin.

The Emblem of Love.

Christ could not fail to understand how the cross would stand out in human history, forever and unshadowed, a clear and luminous illustration of the loftiest conceivable self-abnegation. It was the supreme illustration of absolute effacement of self-interest, of all merely personal desire and ambition, for the sake of others and of God. No shiftings of religious unbelief, no political convulsions, no lapse of time, no changes or happenings of any sort can ever dim the distinctness of the cross with the Redeemer hanging upon it as the emblem of self-sacrificing love. Throughout the ages humanity will look back to it, not only as the crowning fact in our Lord's history, but as the supreme illustration of the character of His life. The cross, and Jesus knew it, appeals to the deepest elements of human nature. It was on the cross that Jesus in a special and unique sense assumed the sin and sorrow of our lives. It is with the cross, therefore, that redemption, forgiveness and peace always must be associated. It was the crowning fact in the life of Christ because it meant that which was the most solemn, most far-reaching, most spiritually valuable influence and power of his whole career on earth.

The Significance of the Cross.

We may be sure that Christ looked upon the cross as the consummation of His work of salvation. The resurrrecton was to complete that work, but not in the same vitally essential sense. It is the cross which was typical of the sacrificial feature of His work, which by a most solemn and memorable object lesson was to teach the ages that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, and that the sinless one—the only stainless soul who ever lived—could not enter into the fruition of His holy and saving career but through the gateway of anguish inconceivable to us. In the mere fact that our Lord died on the cross there was nothing exceptional. Hundreds of other men had been, and afterwards were, crucified. It is in the significance of the cross to Him, its peculiar meaning to one who sustained only His relation to man and God, that its full meaning is to be found, and throughout the days of forecasting, as the certainty grew within His mind what His death must be, we may be sure that there was at least this consoling thought, that the cross meant the consummation and completion of His redeeming work.

Comfort as God Comforts.

There is no anodyne for heart-sorrow like ministry to others. If your life is woven with the dark shadows of sorrow, do not sit down to deplore your hapless lot, but arise to seek out those who are more miserable than you are, bearing them balm for their wounds and love for their heart-breaks. And if you are unable to give much practical help, you may largely help the children of bitterness by listening to their tales of woe or to their dreams of foreboding. The burdened heart longs to pour out its tale in a sympathetic ear. There is immense relief in the telling out of pain. But it cannot be hurried; it needs plenty of time. If you can do nothing else, listen well, and comfort others with the comfort wherewith you yourself have been comforted by God. And as you listen, and comfort, and wipe the falling tear, you will discover that your own load is lighter, and that a branch or twig of the true tree—the tree of the cross—has fallen into the bitter wasts of your own life, making the Marah, Naomi, and the marshes of salt tears will have been healed.—Rev. F. B. Meyer.

Why God Builds Foundations.

A stone is imperishable, but man dies at seventy years. A tree that man shapes into tools, hews into frigates, carves into idols, shapes into beauty, survives the centuries, but man dies at thirty years. Having the powers of a God, man has the arena of an insect. When God made planets, He made orbits fit for them, and man's endowment presupposes a proper field of work. The gourd is frail because it is ephemeral, but the oak of the centuries has fibres of steel. The palace which rises high has deep foundations, and when we see the wondrous mind of man which comprehends the universe, the heart which conquers the realm of love, the spirit reaching into the mysteries of hidden kingdoms, working with unabated force though body weakens and flesh fails, we know that God never made such foundations for the tent of a day's march, so that reason confirms faith when it says, "I know that if this earthly tabernacle be dissolved I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."—Almon Gunnison, D. D.

Work as Sacred as Prayer.

The man who is so taken up in the things of heaven that he forgets his duty down here on earth is a hindrance to the coming of God's kingdom. He