



WASHINGTON, Jan. 5.—In this Dr. Talmage's first discourse for the new year he speaks words of encouragement to all the timid and doubting. The text is Exodus xii, 2. "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you."

The last month of the old year has passed out of sight, and the first month of the new year has arrived. The midnight gate last Wednesday opened, and January entered. She deserves a better name for she is called after Janus, the bearded deity who, they supposed, presided over doors and so might be expected to preside at the opening of the year. This month was of old called the wolf month because, through the severity of its weather, the hungry wolves came down seeking food and devouring human life. In the missals of the middle ages January was represented as attired in white, suggestive of the snow, and blowing the fingers, as though suffering from the cold, and having a bundle of wood under the arm, suggestive of the warmth that must be kindled.

Yes, January is the open door of the year, and through that door will come what long processions, some of them bearing palm leaves and some myrtle, others with garlands of wheat and others with cypress and mistletoe. They are coming, and nothing can keep them back—the events of a twelvemonth. It will, I think, be one of the greatest years of all time. It will abound with blessing and disaster. National and international controversies of momentous import will be settled. Year of coronation and dethronement, year that will settle Cuban and Porto Rican and Philippine and South African and Chinese destinies. The timest year for many a decade past has dug its millions of graves and reared its millions of marriage altars.

We can expect greater events in this year than ever before, for the world's population has so vastly increased there are so many more than in any other year to laugh and weep and triumph and perish. The mightier wheels of mechanism have such wider sweep. The fires are kindled in furnaces not seven times but seventy times heated. The velocities whirling through the air and sailing the seas and tunneling the mountains will make unprecedented demonstration. Would to God that before the new opening year has closed the earth might cease to tremble with the last cannonade and the heavens cease to be lighted up with any more conflagration of homesteads and the foundries that make swords be turned into blacksmith shops for making plowshares.

Grasp Present Opportunities.
The front door of a stupendous year has opened. Before many of you there will be twelve months of opportunity for making the world better or worse, happier or more miserable. Let us pray that it may be a year that will indicate the speedy redemption of the hemisphere. Would to God that this might be the year in which the three great instruments now chiefly used for secular purposes might be put to their mightiest use in the world's evangelization—the telegraph, the telephone, the phonograph! Electricity has such potent tongue, such strong arm, such swift wing, such lightning foot, that it occurs to me that it may be the angel that St. John saw and heard in apocalyptic vision when he started back and cried out, "I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth and to every nation and kindred and tongue and people." They were tongues of fire that sat on the heads of the disciples at the Pentecost, and why not the world called to God by tongue of electric fire? Prepare your batteries and make ready to put upon the wires the world wide message of "whosoever will."

Furthermore, this month of January has the greatest height and depth of cold. The rivers are bound in crystal chains. The fountains that made highest leap in the summer parks now toss not one jet, for every drop would be a frozen tear. The sleds crunch through the hard snow. Warmest attire the wardrobe can afford is put on that we may defend ourselves against the fury of the elements. Hardest of all the months for the poor, let it be the season of greatest generosity on the part of the prosperous. How much a sentle of coal or a pair of shoes or a coat or a shawl may do in assuagement of suffering between the 1st of January and the 1st of February God only knows. Seated by our warm registers or wrapped in furs which make us independent of the cutting January blast, let us not forget the fireless hearth and the thin garments and the hocking cough and the rheumatic twinge of those who through destitution find life in winter an agony. Suppose each one of us take under charge one poverty stricken household or one disabled man or one invalid woman. On our way home from such a charity, though the wind may be howling and the night tempestuous, I should not wonder if we could hear a voice that was heard on Galilee and at the gates of Nain and by the pool of Bethesda saying, "Inasmuch as ye did this to them, ye did it to me."

Victories of the Frost.
Oh, the might of the cold! The Arctic and Antarctic invading the temperate zone! The victories of the frost—as when the Thames in 1205 became firm as any bridge and the inhabitants crossed and recrossed on the ice and booths and places of temporary amusement were built on the hardened surface; as when many years ago New York harbor was paved with ice so that the people passed on foot to the adjoining islands. But the full story of the cold will never be known. The lips which would have told it were frozen and the fingers that would have written it were benumbed. Only here and there a fact appears. In 1691 the cold was so terrific that the wolves entered Vienna. In 1468 it was so cold that wine was cut with hatchets and distributed among the soldiers. In 1234 a whole forest was killed by the cold at Ravenna. In 763 the Black sea was frozen over. As we go further back the frosts are mightier, but as we come further down the frost lessens. The worst severities have been halted, and the snows have lost their depths, and the thermometers announce less terrific falls of temperature, and the time will come when the year will be one long summer of foliage and bloom. While the world's moral condition will be reformed, the worst climates will be corrected. You could not have a millennium with a January blast possible.

Behold, also, as it is possible in no other month of the year, the wondrous anatomy of the trees in January, the leaves of the last year all gone and not so much as a bud of a new botanical wardrobe appearing, the trees standing with arms stretched toward heaven, one of the greatest evidences of the wisdom and the power of the Creator. The leaves appear only once and then die, but these great arms are stretched up toward heaven in silent prayer for scores of years, now mailed with ice, now robed in snow or bowing to the God of the tempests as he passes in the midnight hurricane. In July the trees stand glorifying the earth; in January they stand defying the winter. Under the same tree the child plays with his toy and, growing up to manhood, sits under it in sentimental or philosophic mood and, having passed on to old age, rests himself under its shade. In these January days the trees seem to say: "The leaves that rustled their music in the last summer are dead and gone, but the leaves that will adorn this uncovered brow and these bare arms shall have as much beauty and glory as their predecessors. Only wait. There are beautiful and lovely things to come in my tree life, as there are beautiful and lovely things to come in your life, O human spectator." Oh, the tree! Only the Almighty and the Infinite could have made one. Gothic architecture was suggested by it. But for the arch of its bough and the pointing of its branches the St. Chapelle of Paris and other specimens of Gothic arch would never have been lifted. No wonder the world has taken from it many styles of suggestiveness—the laurel for the victor, the willow for the sorrowing, the aspen for the trembling, the cypress for the burial! But, unlike ourselves, they cannot change their place and so stand watching all that passes. Some of them are solemn monuments of the centuries. Thank God for trees, their beauty, their shelter, their interlacing branches—not only for the trees in June time coronation, but in January privation of everything but graceful structure! Let the iconoclast ax not be lifted against them. "Woodman, spare that tree."

The Increasing Daylight.
Behold also in this January month the increasing daylight. Last month the sun went down at 4:30, but in this month the days are getting longer. The sunrise and the sunset are farther apart. Sunlight instead of artificial light, and there is for our dear old battered earth growing light. "The day-spring from on high hath visited us." We shall have more light for the home, more light for the church, more light for the nation, more light for the world—light of intelligence, light of comfort, light of rescue, light of evangelization, light from the face of God, light from the throne. But, you say, the light increases so slowly, each day of this January only one minute longer than its predecessor, the sun setting the 1st day of January at 4 o'clock and 43 minutes, the sun setting the 2d day of January at 4 o'clock and 44 minutes, the 3d day of this month the sun setting at 4 o'clock and 45 minutes, the 4th day of January the sun setting at 4 o'clock and 46 minutes. This evening it will set at 4 o'clock and 47 minutes. The day enlarges very little, and the reign of sunlight is not much increased, but do not despise the minute of increasing light each day of this January, and do not despise the fact that more light is coming for the church and the world, though it come slowly. As we are now in this season gradually going toward the longest day of next summer, so our world is moving forward toward the longest day of emancipation and Christly dominion. It may now in the state and the church and the world be January cold, but we are on the way, to July harvests and September orchards.

Do not read your almanac backward. Do not go out and ask the trees hung with icicles by January storm whether they will ever again blossom in May and leaf in June. We are moving toward the world's redemption. The frozen tears will melt, the river of gladness will resume its flow, the crocus will come up at the edge of the snowbank, the morning star will open the door for the day, and the armies of the world will "ground arms" all around the world. The January of frost will be abolished, and the balm and radiance of a divine atmosphere will fill the nations. If you do not see it and hear it for yourself, I think at the utmost your grandchildren will see and hear it. The heavens will take part in the conflict between righteousness and sin, and that will settle it.

and settle it aright, and settle it forever.

In this very month of January, 1643, two months after a great battle had been fought between the army of the king and the army of parliament, shepherds and travelers between 12 and 1 o'clock at night heard the battle repeated in the skies—the sound of drums, the clash of arms, the groans of dying men and then the withdrawal of the scene into complete silence. These shepherds and travelers repeated in the neighboring towns what they heard, and large numbers of people, expecting that all was a deception, went out on the following night, and they heard the same uproar and tumult in the heavens—the two armies in battle. The king, hearing of this seeming combat in the heavens, sent ambassadors to inquire into the mystery. In the night they also heard the conflict and came back to the king and took solemn oath as to this mysterious occurrence.

Whether those shepherds and travelers and ambassadors of the king were in delusion I cannot say, but this I know—that the forces of God and the forces of Satan are now in combat, the heavens as well as the earth in struggle as to who shall win this world for blessedness or woe, and as the armies of God are mightier than the armies of Satan, we know who will triumph, and we have a right to shout the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. The King of Kings, the Lord of Hosts, the God of Joshua and Havelock, leads in the conflict. I have no fear about the tremendous issue. My only fear is that we will not be found in the ranks and fully armed to do our part in this campaign of the eternities.

Again, I remark that the month of January has seen many of the most stupendous events in the world's history and a rocking of cradles and the digging of graves that have affected nations. In this month American independence was declared, followed by Lexington and Bunker Hill and Monmouth and Valley Forge and Yorktown. January saw the proclamation that abolished American slavery. Though at the time there were two mighty opinions and they were exactly opposed—those who liked the document and those who disliked it—there is but one opinion now, and if it were put to vote in all the states of the south, "Shall slavery be reinstated?" there would be an overwhelming vote of "No!" The pen with which the document was signed and the inkstand that contained the ink are relics as sacred and valuable as the original Declaration of Independence, with all its emblems and interlineations. The institution which for seventy or eighty years kept the nation in angry controversy has disappeared, and nothing is left to fight about. The north and the south today are in as complete accord as ever were flute and cornet in the same orchestra. The north has built its factories on the banks of the Chattahoochee and the Roanoke, and the south has sent many of its ablest attorneys into our northern courthouses, its most skillful physicians into our sickrooms, its wisest bankers into our exchanges, its most consecrated ministers into our pulpits—all this, the result of the proclamation of Jan. 1, 1863.

Birthdays of Great Men.
Furthermore, I notice that January has been honored with the nativity of some of the greatest among the nations. Edmund Burke was born this month, the marvel and glory of the legal world; Fenelon of the religious world, Benjamin Franklin of the philosophic world, William H. Prescott of the historic world, Sir John Moore of the military world, Robert Burns of the poetic world, Polycarp of the martyr world, Peter the Great of the kingly world, Chrysostom of the sacred rhetoric world, Daniel Webster of the statesman world.

In this month, at Hampton court, 1604, a new translation of the Holy Bible was ordered. There were Bibles of all kinds abroad, some of them translations from Hebrew and Greek by incompetent men, and the church and the world cried out for a Bible translated by a group of the good and the learned. King James disliked the Bibles abroad and appointed a commission of fifty-four men, afterward reduced to forty-seven. Those men presented the world with a Bible that held mighty sway among the nations for more than 250 years, the revision of the Bible thirty years ago being founded on that revision, which began under King James of 1604. The old translation, made more than two and a half centuries ago, sustained the martyrs in the fire, illumined the homesteads of many generations, was the book that was read aloud at the embarkation of the forefathers from Delft Haven, cheered the weary voyagers on the Mayflower, comforted them in the wilds of America, was the book on which the first American congress, as well as the last, took the oath and with which all the presidents of the United States have solemnized their entrance into office, is the book that has advanced the world's civilization as no other influence ever could and which now lies on the table of more homes than any book that was ever printed since Johann Gutenberg borrowed money of Martin Brether and John Faust to complete the art of printing. What a January in the world's history—the January that gave the ages a book like that!

Time of Sadness.
But January, like all the other months of the year, has had its sadnesses and its disasters. During this month died Linnaeus, the botanist of Sweden and the world, who called the roll of the flowers and shrubs and trees, putting them into companies, and calling them by their names, his beautiful statue standing in a park of Stockholm, a rose in bronze held in his right hand. During this month expired Francis Bacon, and Garrick, and Galilee, and Louis

VI, and William Pitt, and Francis Jeffrey of the immortal pen, and Disraeli the first, and Edward Everett, and Bruce, and Catiline. In this month died Peter the Great, the man of whom it was written: "He gave a polish to his people and was himself a savage. He taught them the art of warfare, of which he himself was ignorant. From the sight of a small boat on the river Moskwa he erected a powerful fleet, making himself an expert and active shipwright, sailor, pilot and commander. He changed the manners, customs and laws of the Russians and lives in their memory as the father of his country."

But I cannot read the epitaphs of one out of a hundred illustrious graves in this first month of the year. Many of those well known gained half their renown and did half their work through the help of those of whom we know little or nothing. Lord Herschel is known all the world over and will be known through all time, but little is said of her who was born this first month of the year and without whose help he never could have been what he was—his sister, Caroline Lucretia Augusta. She helped him hunt the worlds. She repaired and adjusted his telescopes. She ciphered out his astronomical problems. She was his amanuensis. She planned for him his work. She discovered seven comets and made "A Catalogue of Nebulae and Star Clusters." The month of January introduced her to the observatories, but she has never been properly introduced to the world.

Preparing for the Future.
According to my text, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you." Through it make preparation for the other eleven months. What you are in January you will probably be in all the other months of the year. Prepare for them neither by apprehension nor too sanguine anticipation. Apprehension of misfortune will only deplete your body and gloom your soul and unit you for any trouble that may come. On the other hand, if you expect too much, disappointment will be yours. Cultivate faith in God and the feeling that he will do for you that which is best, and you will be ready for either sunshine or shadow. The other eleven months of the year 1902 will not all be made up of gladness or of grief. The cup that is all made up of sweetness is insipid.

Between these just opened gates of the year and the closing of those gates there will be many times when you will want God. You will have questions to decide which will need supernatural impulse. There may be illnesses of the body or perplexities of mind or spiritual exhaustions to be healed and comforted and strengthened. During the remaining twenty-six days of this month lay in a supply of faith and hope and courage for all the days of the eleven months. Start right, and you will be apt to keep right. Before the ship captain gets out of the New York Narrows he makes up his mind what sea route he will take. While you are in the Narrows of this month make up your mind which way you will sail and unroll your chart and set your compass and have the lifeboats well placed on the davits and be ready for smooth voyage all the way across or the swoop of a Caribbean whirlwind.

The Monster Abomination.
Rev. Solomon Spaulding was for some time in poor health, and to while away the time he wrote a preposterous religious romance. One Joseph Smith somehow got hold of that book before it was printed and published it as a revelation of heaven, calling it the "Book of Mormon," and from that publication came Mormonism, the monster abomination of the earth. Rev. Solomon Spaulding might have been better engaged than writing that book of falsehoods. "However much time we have, we never have time to do wrong. Harness January for usefulness, and it will take the following months in its train. Oh, how much you may do for God between now and the 31st of next December! The beautiful "weeping willow" tree was introduced by Alexander Pope into England from a twig which the poet found in a Turkish basket of figs. He planted that twig, and from it came all the weeping willows of England and America; and your smallest planting of good may under God become an influence continental and international.

Now that the train of months has started, let it pass, January followed by February, with longer days, and March, with its fierce winds; and April, with its sudden showers; and May, with its blossoming orchards; and June, with its carnival of flowers; and July, with its harvests; and August, with its sweltering heats; and September, with its drifting leaves; and October, with its frosts; and November, with its Thanksgiving scenes; and December, with its Christmas hilarities. March on. O battalion of the months, in the regiments of the years and the brigades of the centuries! March on and join the months and years and centuries already passed until all the rivers of time have emptied into the ocean of eternity, but none of all the host ought to render higher thanks to God or take larger comfort or make more magnificent resolve than this the first month of the new year.

But what fleet foot hath the months and years! People lightly talk about how they kill time. Alas, it dies soon enough without killing. And the longer we live the swifter it goes. William C. Bryant said an old friend of his declared that the going of time is like the drumming of the partridge or muffled grouse in the woods, falling slow and distinct at first and then following each other more and more rapidly till they end at last in a whirling sound. But Dr. Young, speaking of the value of time, startlingly exclaimed, "Ask deathbeds!"

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Hot Waves Explained

Raleigh, December 31.
The idea that man may alter the operations of nature by the significant changes which he is able to bring about on the earth's surface seems to have a special fascination for many people, and is advanced again and again in explanation of unusual phenomena. In spite of all proofs to the contrary, many men of scientific attainments, thus the removal of forests and the cultivation of land was long supposed to affect the climate of a region, though the unchangeableness of climate is now no longer questioned by intelligent persons. On a smaller scale were the futile attempts to make rain by explosions in the upper air, which were condemned by a scientific authorities. In Austria they still bombard the clouds to prevent hail. The occurrence of the recent severe hot wave in the west, although such heated terms are by no means uncommon, and have been noted at irregular intervals since the establishment of the Weather Bureau in 1870, has called forth from the fertile mind of Mr. E. B. Dunn of New York, an explanation of the cause of hot waves, which I must take the liberty of characterizing as "unique in its absurdity," and which would hardly be worthy a serious reply were it not for the injury it may do to the cause of irrigation in the semi-arid regions of the west.

In brief this remarkable explanation of hot waves attributes them to the moisture from irrigation ditches in the west; these ditches are supposed to give enough water vapor to the air to form areas of low barometer, which are stationary for weeks at a time because the amount of moisture is not sufficient to cause their forward movement, and thus hot air is drawn into them from the surrounding country for hundreds of miles, intensifying the hot wave.

This theory is not only entirely contrary to our knowledge of the science of meteorology, especially the law of storms, but it lacks even the merit of plausibility. In the first place it does not explain the accumulation of heat, and attributes to the comparatively small operations of irrigation an influence on climate out of all proportion to the cause assigned. Mr. Dunn's theory waves are felt over thousands of square miles, even over half of the United States at the same time. And, in the second place, areas of low barometer are not originally formed by moisture at all, but by a portion of the air becoming heated above the temperature of the surrounding atmosphere; thus an ascensional current of air is produced at the center and the warm air flows in from all sides, and moisture plays an important role only after the ascending currents have been started. Therefore the vapor of water has nothing to do with the origin of areas of low barometer, for if it did storms would form continually over every ocean, over every lake, and over every well-watered country like the southern states, which is not the case, while they do originate most frequently in the arid regions and on the Rocky Mountain slopes. Again, hot waves in the east are generally coincident with areas of high barometer, and on the South Atlantic Coast, and not a "low."

It may be worth while to enter a little more fully into the question of the cause of hot waves, which are so often extremely destructive to agricultural interests, treating the subject from a scientific standpoint. Heat waves are chiefly due to a sluggish circulation of the atmosphere, and come from two sources. In the first place the air near the equator, heated by the tropical sun, rises and flows northward to about the latitude of 30 degrees north, where it forms a permanent subtropical area of high barometer. In which the warm air slowly descends to the earth's surface, and the slow movement of the sure area covers the southwestern United States for long periods of time. As the air slowly falls towards the surface, not only does it retain much of its original heat gained in the tropics, but it is also warmed dynamically, that is, by the compression it undergoes at lower levels. The warm air settles over the Gulf and Atlantic states and keeps the temperature at a very high point until the stagnation of the air is destroyed by the movements of some storm. The most remarkable recent hot wave of this character was that of August 5th to September 10th, 1900. Here, then, we have hot waves in a region of abundant moisture, where, according to Mr. Dunn's theory, they ought not to occur.

The other cause which is chiefly effective in the west is the superheating of the air over the Rocky Mountain plains, and the slow movement of some low barometer areas thus formed. In this case also the duration of the heat term is due to the stagnation of the atmosphere. As warm air is drawn from the low area from the south and east over thousands of miles, coming in part from the Gulf of Mexico, in part from the lake region, it certainly contains originally plenty of water-vapor, but this is not condensed into cloud and rain because of the high temperature and slow ascent of the air in the Indian low, and because the air in the low has become warmed to a great height so that the ascending current cannot reach the degree of cold necessary for condensation; the conditions are unfavorable for dynamic cooling, and the vapor collecting in the upper air acts as a screen to prevent radiation and cooling at night from the heated ground. Thus the accumulation of heat continues until the normal circulation of the atmosphere is restored. In the whole process, covering thousands of square miles, how insignificant must be the part played by the moisture from a few miles of irrigation ditches, which are supplied from the natural water ways of the region, and therefore do not absolutely increase the amount of moisture available, but merely conserve it, and treat it to purposes useful to man. The unprecedented warm wave of 1901 prevailed for forty days from June 20th to July 29th, and was most severely felt in the region of the central Mississippi valley and northwest. The long duration of the hot waves was due to the continual reformation of sluggish areas of low barometer, one time over Utah, then over Wyoming or Montana, and again in Canada, all probably portions of the great circumpolar low pressure.

The theory that hot waves are caused by irrigation in the west is condemned by the entire scientific staff of the weather bureau. The subject of irrigation is of vital importance to agricultural and all other interests affecting civilized life in nearly one-third the area of the United States, and the whole noble work of reclaiming this vast region and rendering it fit for the habitation of man, as well as an abundant source of wealth, should not be checked by the promulgation of a theory manifestly so unsound.

C. F. VON HERRMANN, Section Director.

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Intelligence of Insanity.

Insane people frequently make statements which give evidence of keen intelligence. An instance of this kind occurred a day or two ago in Judge Bonham's court. A Scandinavian woman from one of the range towns was undergoing examination as to her mental condition. Her husband, a Swede, a superior looking fellow, had told the story of his wife's condition, and she took in every word he said.

She was then interrogated and answered all the questions about herself and her children in a vague, rambling manner. Finally she was asked that there was nothing the matter with her.

"Do you think that your husband is out of his mind?" asked the doctor.

"Ay don't tank so. Ay tank he never hav mind to ben out of," replied the woman. Despite the fact that she was this point she was committed.—Duluth News-Tribune.