

"On all the story of a life or race, the blessing of a good man leaves its trace"—Boyle O Raily.

VOL. XXV.

ELIZABETH CITY, N. C., FRIDAY, MARCH 5, 1897.

NO 28.

Sweetness and Light.

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Steamers for Newberne leave at 6 p. m. Steamer Newton, leaves Elizabeth City for Creswell on Mondays and Tuesdays at 9:30 a. m. Returning will leave Elizabeth City following day at 2:30 p. m. Steamer Harbinger, will leave Elizabeth City for Norfolk Thursdays and Saturdays at 9:30 a. m.; Elizabeth City for Norfolk Thursdays and Mondays p. m.

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WINGS OF SERAPHIM.

DR. TALMAGE'S PRACTICAL SERMON UPON AN EXALTED THEME.

He Urges His Hearers to Aspire to Fly Upward—Dying, He Says, Is but the Waiting Season For the Soul—Living Near Christ.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 28.—In this discourse Dr. Talmage takes a most exalted theme and makes it practical and useful to the last degree. The subject is "Wings of Seraphim," and the text is Isaiah vi, 2, "With twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet."

In a hospital of leprosy good King Uzziah had died, and the whole land was shadowed with solemnity, and theological and prophetic Isaiah was thinking about religious things as one is apt to do in time of great national bereavement, and forgetting the presence of his wife and two sons, who made up his family, he has a dream not like the dreams of ordinary character, which generally come from indigestion, but a vision most instructive, and under the touch of the hand of the Almighty.

The place, the ancient temple—building grand, awful, majestic. Within that temple a throne higher than any other throne that occupied by an earl or sultan or emperor. On that throne, the eternal Christ. In lines surrounding that throne, the brightest celestials, not the cherubim, but higher than they, the most exquisite and radiant of the heavenly inhabitants—the seraphim. They are called burners because they look like fire—lips of fire, eyes of fire, feet of fire. In addition to the features and the limbs, which suggest a human being, there are pinions which suggest the highest, and the swiftest, of the most benignant and the most aspiring of all unintelligent creation—angels. Each seraph had six wings, each two of the wings for a different purpose. Isaiah's dream quivers and flashes with these pinions, now folded, now spread, now beaten in locomotion. "With twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly."

The probability is that these wings were not all used at once. The seraph standing there near the throne, overwhelmed by the insignificance of the paths his feet had trodden as compared with the paths trodden by the feet of God, and with the lameness of his locomotion amounting almost to decrepitude as compared with the divine velocity, with feathery veil of angelic modesty hides the feet. "With twain he did cover the feet."

Standing there, overpowered by the overwhelming splendor of God's glory, and unable longer with the eyes to look upon them and wishing those eyes shaded from the insufferable glory, the pinions gather over the countenance. "With twain he did cover the face." Then, as God tells this seraph to go to the farthest outpost of immensity on message of light and love and joy and glad back before the first anthem, it does not take the seraph a great while to spread himself upon the air with unimagined celerity, one stroke of the wing equal to 10,000 leagues of air. "With twain he did fly."

Humility and Imperfection. The most practical and useful lesson for you and me, when we see the seraph spreading his wings over the feet, is the lesson of humility at imperfection. The brightest angels of God are so far beneath God that he charges them with folly, the seraph so far beneath God and we so far beneath the seraph in service we ought to be plunged in humility and completed with the wings of the seraph. Our feet, how many mistakes they have taken! Our feet, in how many paths of worldliness and folly they have walked!

Neither God nor seraph intended to put any dishonor upon that which is one of the masterpieces of Almighty God—the human foot. Physiologist and anatomist are overwhelmed at the bridge-headers of its organization. The bridge-headers of its organization, written by Sir Charles Bell, on the wisdom and goodness of God as illustrated in the human hand, was a result of the \$40,000 bequeathed in the last will and testament of the Earl of Bridgewater for the encouragement of Christian literature. The world could afford to forgive his eccentricities, though he had two dogs scatted at his table and though he put six dogs alone in an equipage drawn by four horses and attended by two footmen.

With his largest bequest inducing Sir Charles Bell to write so valuable a book on the wisdom of God in the structure of the human hand, the world could afford to forgive his oddities. And the world could now afford to have another Earl of Bridgewater, however idiosyncratic, if he would induce some other writer to write a book on the wisdom and goodness of God in the construction of its bones, the lubrication of its joints, the gracefulness of its lines, the ingenuity of its cartilages, the delicacy of its veins, the rapidity of its muscular contraction, the sensitiveness of its nerves.

I sound the praises of the human foot. With that we halt or climb or march. It is the foundation of the physical fabric. It is the base of a God-pursed colic. With his feet, the warrior braces himself. With it, with it the orator plants himself for enlogium. With it the toiler reaches his work. With it the outraged stamps his indignation, its loss an irreparable disaster, its health an invaluable equipment. If you want to know its value, ask the man whose foot paralysis hath shriveled, or machinery hath crushed, or surgeon's knife hath amputated. The Bible honors it. Especially, "Let not that which is foot against a stone." "Thy feet shall thy foot to be moved." "Keep thy feet from being unclean." "Keep thy feet when thou goest to the house of God." "Especially, their feet shall slide in due time." Connected

with the world's dissolution, "He shall set one foot on the sea and the other on the earth."

Wings of Humility. Give me the history of your foot, and I will give you the history of your lifetime. Tell me up what steps it hath gone, down what declivities and on what roads and in what directions, and I will know more about you than I want to know. None of us could endure the scrutiny. Our feet not always in paths of God, sometimes in paths of worldliness. Our feet, a divine and glorious machinery for usefulness and work, so often making missteps, so often going in the wrong direction. God knowing every step, the patriarch saying, "Thou settest a print on the heels of my feet." Crimes of the eye, crimes of the tongue, crimes of the hand, crimes of the foot. Oh, we want the wings of humility to cover the feet! Ought we not to do in time of great national bereavement, all trying eye of God? The seraphs do. How much more we? "With twain he covered the feet."

All this talk about the dignity of human nature is bragadoocio and sin. Our nature stung at the hand of God, but it has been purged. There is a well in Belgium which once had very pure water, and it was stoutly masoned with stone and brick, but it well afterward became the center of the battle of Waterloo. On the opening of the battle the soldiers with their sabers compelled the gardener, William von Kyllson, to draw water out of the well for them, and it was very pure water. But the battle raged, and the well was filled with dead water, and the well for quick and easy burial, so that the well of refreshment became the well of death, and long after people looked down into the well and they saw the bleached skulls, but no water. So the human soul was a well of good, but the armies of sin have fought around it and fought across it and been slain, and it has become a well of skeletons. Dead hopes, dead resolutions, dead opportunities, dead ambitions. An abandoned well, unless Christ shall reopen and purify and fill it with the well of Belgium never was. Unclean, unclean.

Another seraphic posture in the text, "With twain he covered the face." That means reverence Godward. Never so much irreverence abroad in the world as today. You see it in the defaced statuary, in the cutting out of figures from fine paintings, in the chipping of the columns of a monument, in the fact that military guard stand at the feet of Lincoln and Garfield, and that old shade trees must be cut down for firewood, though 60 George P. Morrises beg the woodmen to spare the tree, and that calls a corpse a cadaver, and that speaks of death at going over to the majority, and substitutes for the reverent terms father and mother, "the old man" and "the old woman." He weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance. "Oh, what a God to run against! Oh, what a God to disobey! Oh, what a God to dishonor! Oh, what a God to defy! The brightest, the mightiest angel takes no familiarity with God. The wings of reverence are lifted. "With twain he covered the face."

Another seraphic posture in the text. The seraph must not always stand still. He must move, and it must be without clumsiness. There must be celerity and beauty in the movement. "With twain he did fly." Correction, exhilaration. Correction at our slow gait, for we only crawl in the service when we ought to fly at the divine bidding. Exhilaration, in the fact that the soul has wings as the seraphs have wings. What is a wing? An instrument of locomotion. They may not be like birds' wings, but the soul must be like birds' wing, but the soul must be like birds' wing, but the soul must be like birds' wing. We are made in the divine image, and God has wings. The Bible says so. "Healing in his wings." "Under whose wings hast thou come to trust." The soul with folded wing, wounded wing, broken wing, bleeding wing, caged wing. Are we not under? Caged in flesh, but one day to be free. I hear the rustle of pinions in Seagrave's poem which we sometimes sing:

Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings. I hear the rustle of pinions in Alexander Pope's stanza, which he says: I mount, I fly. O death, where is thy victory? On Wings to Eternity. A dying Christian not long ago cried out, "Wings, wings, wings!" The air is full of them, coming and going, coming and going. You have seen how the dull, sluggish chrysalis becomes the bright butterfly; the dull and the stupid and the lethargic turned into the alert and the beautiful. Well, my friends, in this world we are in the chrysalis state. Death will unfurl the wings. Oh, if we could only realize what a grand thing it will be to get rid of this old clod of the body and mount the heavens, neither seagull nor lark nor albatross nor falcon nor condor pitching from highest range of Andes so buoyant or so majestic of stroke.

See that eagle in the mountain nest. It looks so sick, so ragged, feathered, so worn out and so half asleep. Is that eagle rising? No. The ornithologist will tell you it is the molting season with that bird. Not dying, but molting. You see that Christian sick and weary and worn out and seeming about to expire on what is called his deathbed. The world says he is dying. I say it is the molting season for his soul—the body is dropping away, the celestial pinions coming on. Not dying, but molting. Molting out of darkness and sin and struggle into glory and into God. Why struggle to work night and day, he who do you not about? Why do you sit shivering at the thought of death and trying to hold back and wishing you could stay here forever, and speak of departure as though the subject were filled with skeletons and the varnish of coffins, and as

though you preferred lame foot to swift wing? Oh, people of God, let us stop playing the fool and prepare for rapturous flight. When your soul stands on the verge of this life, and there are vast precipices beneath and sapphire domes above, which way will you fly? Will you swoop, or will you soar? Will you fly downward, or will you fly upward? Everything on the wing this day bidding us aspire. Holy Spirit on the wing. Angel of the New Covenant on the wing. Time on the wing, flying away from us. Eternity on the wing, flying toward us. Wings, wings, wings!

Live so near to Christ that when you are dead people standing by your lifeless body will not soilloquize, saying: "What a disappointment life was to him! How averse he was to departure! What a pity it was he had to die! What an awful calamity!" Rather standing in these may they see a sign more vivid on your still face than the vestiges of pain, something that will indicate that it was a happy exit, the clearance from oppressive quarantine, the cast of chrysalis, the molting of the faded and the useless, and the ascent from malarial valleys to bright, shining mountain tops, and be led to say, as they stand there contemplating your humility and your reverence in life and your happiness in death. "With twain he covered the face, with twain he covered the face, with twain he did fly." Wings, wings, wings!

Fiery Lantern Clubs. Genius has given fashionable folks a new plaything with which to amuse themselves. It is in literal obedience to the Biblical injunction regarding a lamp unto the feet, for that is exactly what the new light is to be worn. It consists of a tiny lantern with sides of very stout glass, mounted upon a stirrup which straddles the foot of the user, a tongue resting on the toe of the foot and acting as a part of the support.

This queer idea has taken strong hold upon the minds of the smart set, and as a result has sprung into instant favor. It is particularly valuable to persons who are given to walking about in places where roads and sidewalks are made of a beam suspended in the middle, with two basins at the extremity of equal height. In that way that vast heft has been weighed! But what are all the balances of earthly manipulation compared with the balances that Isaiah saw suspended when he saw God putting into the scales the Alps and the Apennines and Mount Washington and the Sierra Nevada? You see the earth had too much weight in Europe, or too much weight in Asia, or too much weight in Africa or in America, so when God made the mountains he weighed them. The Bible distinctly says so. God knows the weight of the great ranges that cross the continents, the tons, the pounds, avoirdupois, the just how many they weighed then and just how much they weigh now. "He weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance." Oh, what a God to run against! Oh, what a God to disobey! Oh, what a God to dishonor! Oh, what a God to defy! The brightest, the mightiest angel takes no familiarity with God. The wings of reverence are lifted. "With twain he covered the face."

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though you preferred lame foot to swift wing? Oh, people of God, let us stop playing the fool and prepare for rapturous flight. When your soul stands on the verge of this life, and there are vast precipices beneath and sapphire domes above, which way will you fly? Will you swoop, or will you soar? Will you fly downward, or will you fly upward? Everything on the wing this day bidding us aspire. Holy Spirit on the wing. Angel of the New Covenant on the wing. Time on the wing, flying away from us. Eternity on the wing, flying toward us. Wings, wings, wings!

Live so near to Christ that when you are dead people standing by your lifeless body will not soilloquize, saying: "What a disappointment life was to him! How averse he was to departure! What a pity it was he had to die! What an awful calamity!" Rather standing in these may they see a sign more vivid on your still face than the vestiges of pain, something that will indicate that it was a happy exit, the clearance from oppressive quarantine, the cast of chrysalis, the molting of the faded and the useless, and the ascent from malarial valleys to bright, shining mountain tops, and be led to say, as they stand there contemplating your humility and your reverence in life and your happiness in death. "With twain he covered the face, with twain he covered the face, with twain he did fly." Wings, wings, wings!

Fiery Lantern Clubs. Genius has given fashionable folks a new plaything with which to amuse themselves. It is in literal obedience to the Biblical injunction regarding a lamp unto the feet, for that is exactly what the new light is to be worn. It consists of a tiny lantern with sides of very stout glass, mounted upon a stirrup which straddles the foot of the user, a tongue resting on the toe of the foot and acting as a part of the support.

This queer idea has taken strong hold upon the minds of the smart set, and as a result has sprung into instant favor. It is particularly valuable to persons who are given to walking about in places where roads and sidewalks are made of a beam suspended in the middle, with two basins at the extremity of equal height. In that way that vast heft has been weighed! But what are all the balances of earthly manipulation compared with the balances that Isaiah saw suspended when he saw God putting into the scales the Alps and the Apennines and Mount Washington and the Sierra Nevada? You see the earth had too much weight in Europe, or too much weight in Asia, or too much weight in Africa or in America, so when God made the mountains he weighed them. The Bible distinctly says so. God knows the weight of the great ranges that cross the continents, the tons, the pounds, avoirdupois, the just how many they weighed then and just how much they weigh now. "He weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance." Oh, what a God to run against! Oh, what a God to disobey! Oh, what a God to dishonor! Oh, what a God to defy! The brightest, the mightiest angel takes no familiarity with God. The wings of reverence are lifted. "With twain he covered the face."

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Another seraphic posture in the text. The seraph must not always stand still. He must move, and it must be without clumsiness. There must be celerity and beauty in the movement. "With twain he did fly." Correction, exhilaration. Correction at our slow gait, for we only crawl in the service when we ought to fly at the divine bidding. Exhilaration, in the fact that the soul has wings as the seraphs have wings. What is a wing? An instrument of locomotion. They may not be like birds' wings, but the