

REV. DR. TALMAGE.

THE BROOKLYN DIVINE'S SUNDAY SERMON.

Subject: "Narrow Escapes."

Text: "I am escaped with the skin of my teeth."—Job 1: 20.

Job had it hard. Wrist with boils and bereavement and bankruptcy, and a fool of a wife, he wished he was dead, and I do not blame him. His flesh was gone, and his bones were dry. His teeth wasted away until nothing but the enamel remained left. He cries out: "I am escaped with the skin of my teeth." There has been some difference of opinion about this passage. St. Jerome and Scholasticus and Drs. Good and Poole and Barnes have all tried their forceps on Job's teeth. You deny my interpretation and say: "What did Job know about the enamel of the teeth?" He knew everything about it. Dental surgery is almost as old as the earth. The mummies of Egypt, thousands of years old, are found to-day with gold fillings in their teeth. Ovid and Horace and Solomon and Moses wrote about these important factors of the life. To other provoking complaints, Job, I think, has added an exasperating tooth-ache, and putting his hand against his inflamed face, he says, "I am escaped with the skin of my teeth."

A very narrow escape, you say, for Job's body and soul, but there are thousands of men who make just as narrow escapes for their soul. There was a time when the partition between them and ruin was no thicker than a tooth's enamel, but as Job says, "I am escaped, so have they. Thank God! thank God!" Paul expresses the same idea by a different figure when he says that some people are "saved as by fire." A vessel at sea is in flames. You go to the stern of the vessel. The boats have moved off. The flames advance; you can endure the heat no longer on your face. You slide down on the side of the vessel, and hold on with your fingers, until the forked tongue of the fire begins to lick the back of your hand, and you feel that you must fall, when one of the life-boats comes back, and the passengers say they think they have room for one more. The boat swings under you—you drop into it—you are saved. So some men, pursued by temptation until they are partially consumed, but, after all, get off—"saved as by fire." But I like the figure of Job a little better than that of Paul, because Paul's escape is a narrow one; and I want to show you, if God will help, that some men make narrow escapes for their souls, and are saved as "with the skin of their teeth."

There is a large class of persons in middle life who have still in their appetites that were aroused in early manhood. At a time when they prided themselves on being a "dull fellow," "high liver," "free and easy," "little fellows" will eat. They are now paying in compound interest for proverbs they collected twenty years ago. Some of you are trying to escape, and you will—yet very narrowly, "as with the skin of your teeth." God and your own soul only know what the struggle is. On a rainy day, he has pulled out many a soul that was deeper in the mire than you are. They line the beach of heaven—the multitudes whom God has rescued from the tarball of our world. The wrong and start awakes. God will help you. Oh, the weakness of human help! Men will sympathize for you, and they will help you. If you ask for their pardon, they will give it, and say they will try you again; but, falling away again under the power of temptation, they cast you off for ever. But God gives seventy times seven; yea, seven hundred times; yea, though this be the thousandth time, He is more earnest, more sympathetic, and more merciful, the last time than when you took your first misstep.

If, with all the influences favorable for a right life, men make so many mistakes, how much harder it is to escape, for instance, when appetite thrusts its iron grapple into the roots of the tongue, and pulls a man down with hands of destruction! If, under such circumstances, he break away, there will be no sport in the undertaking; he will be a man who has a struggle in which the wretches move from side to side, and bend and twist, and watch for an opportunity to get in a heavier snare, until with one final effort, the wretched habit falls under the knees of the victor—escaped at last "with the skin of his teeth."

The ship Emma, bound from Gottengen to Harwich, was sailing on, when the man on board said something that he pronounced something on it that looked like a sea-gull, but was afterward found to be a waving handkerchief. In the small boat the crew stepped out to the wreck, and found that it was a capsized vessel, and that there had been digging their way out through the bottom of the ship. When the vessel capsized, they had no means of escape. The captain took his penknife and dug through the planks until his knife broke. Then an old nail was found, with which they attempted to scrape their way out of the darkness, each one working until his hand was well nigh paralyzed and he sank back faint and sick. After long and tedious work the light broke through the bottom of the ship. A handkerchief was hoisted, and they were taken on board the vessel and saved. Did ever men come so near a watery grave without dropping into it? How narrowly they escaped—escaped only "with the skin of their teeth."

There are men who have been captives of evil passions, and captives mid-ocean, and are a thousand miles away from any shore of help. They have for years been digging to dig their way out. They have been digging away and digging away, but they can never be delivered unless they will bring some signal of distress. However weak and feeble it may be, Christ will see it, and bear down the helpless craft, and take them on board, and it will be known in earth and in heaven how narrowly they escaped—escaped "as with the skin of their teeth."

There are others who in attempting to come to God must run between a great many business perplexities. If a man goes over to business at 10 o'clock in the morning, and comes away at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, he has some time for religion; but how shall you find time for religion when temptation when you are driven from sunrise to sunset, and have been for five years going behind in business, and are frequently dunned by creditors whom you cannot pay, and when, from Monday morning until Saturday night, you are dodging bills that you cannot meet? You walk away by day in uncertainty, and have kept your feet on fire for the past three years. Some with less business troubles than you have gone crazy. The clerk has heard a noise in the back parlor, and gone in, and found the chief man of the firm a raving maniac; or the wife has heard the bang of a pistol in the back parlor, and gone in, stumbling over the dead body of her husband—suicide. There are in this world to-day three hundred men pursued, harassed, trodden down, and scalped of business perplexities, and which way they turn they are in uncertainty. Now God will be heard on you. He knows what obstacles are in the way of your being a Christian, and your first effort in the right direction will be crowned with success. Do not let Satan, with cotton bales and kegs, and hogsheads and counters and stocks of unsalable goods, block up your way to heaven. Gather up all your energies. Tighten the girdle about your loins. Take an agonizing look into the face of God, and then say: "Here goes one grand effort for life eternal!" and "with the skin of your teeth."

In the last day it will be found that Hugh Latimer and John Knox and Hose and Ruffin were not the greatest martyrs, but Christian men who went up incorrupt from the contaminations and perplexities of Wall street. Water street, Pearl street, Broad street, State street and Third street. On earth they were called brokers, or stock jobbers, or retailers, or importers; but in heaven, Christian heroes. No fagots were heaped about their feet; no inquisition demanded a pike at their heart; no soldier aimed a pike at their breast; no man would touch a hair of their heads, or breathe a word of reproach as the breath of a spring morning.

I find in the community a large class of men who have been so educated that they have lost their faith in everything. In a world where everything seems so topsy turvy they do not see how to get on. They are not only disappointed and frustrated and misanthropic. Elaborate arguments to prove to them the truth of Christianity, or the truth of anything else, is of no use. Hear and read such men. I preach to you no rounded periods, no ornamental discourse; but put my hand on your shoulder and invite you into the peace of the gospel. But is not such a man who you may stand firm, though the waves dash against it harder than the Atlantic pitching its surf clear above Ely's tower above the mountains of the world? As long as the world stuck to God, God stuck to the world; but the earth soiled from his government, and hence all these outrages and catastrophes. God is good. For many hundreds of years He has been coaxing the world to come back to Him; but the more He has coaxed the more violent have men become. He has coaxed, and they have stepped back and stepped back until they have dropped into ruin.

Try this God, ye who have had the blood-lands after you, and who have taught that God had forgotten you. Try Him, and see if He will not help. Try Him, and see if He will not pardon. Try Him, and see if He will not bless. The flowers of spring have no bloom so sweet as the flowering of Christ's affections. The sun hath no warmth compared with the glow of His heart after a Christian life, and His heart like the fountain that will shake the third of thy soul. At the moment the reader stands with his lips and nostril thrust in the cold wind blowing through the thicket. Without cracking a stick under his foot, he comes close by the stag, aims his gun, draws the trigger and the poor thing is dead. He is a man who has a heart as cold as the antlers crashing on the rocks; but the parting hart that drinks from the water brook of God's promise shall never be fatally wounded.

This world is a poor portion for your soul, oh business man! An eastern King had given on his tomb two flags, representing a sun and a star, and under them was written the motto: "All is not what it seems." Apicius Calius handed himself over to his steward informant that he had only eighty dollars left, and that he had a small inheritance for a soul. Robespierre attempted to win the applause of the world; but when he was dying, a woman named Marat was experienced, and said to him: "Marders of my kindred, desecral to him, covered with the curses of every mother in France." Many who have expected the plaudits of the world have experienced the same fate. "Oh, find your peace in God. Make one strong pull for heaven. No half way work will do it. There sometimes comes a limon on the sea, and the passengers are obliged to save the passengers. The cargo is nothing, the rigging nothing. The captain puts the trumpet to his lips and shouts, 'Cut away! Cut away!' and the vessel is torn and driven, and you have in your efforts to keep the world, well-nigh lost your soul. Until you have decided this matter, let everything else go. The world is a phantasmagoria of things that will pass away. Drop the sails of your pride and cut away the mast! With one earnest cry for help, you will be saved. The world is a phantasmagoria of things that will pass away. Drop the sails of your pride and cut away the mast! With one earnest cry for help, you will be saved. The world is a phantasmagoria of things that will pass away. Drop the sails of your pride and cut away the mast! With one earnest cry for help, you will be saved.

I shall go home to-day feeling that some of you, who have considered your case as hopeless, will take heart again, and that, with a blood red earnestness, you will start for the good land of the Gospel—at last to look back saying: "What a great risk I ran! Almost lost, but saved at last—escaped with the skin of my teeth."

Warmth and Cleanliness for the Aged.

Warmth is very important for the aged; exposure to the chills should be scrupulously avoided. Bronchitis is the malady most to be feared, and its attacks are very easily provoked. Many old people suffer from more or less cough, and this symptom may recur year after year and be almost unheeded. At last perhaps a few minutes exposure to a cold wind increases the irritation in the lungs, the cough becomes worse and the difficulty of breathing increases until suffocation terminates in death. To obviate such risk the skin should be carefully protected by warm flannel clothes, the outdoor thermometer should always be at hand. In cold weather the lungs should be protected by breathing through the nose as much as possible, and by wearing a light woollen or silk muffler over the mouth. The temperature of the sitting and bed-rooms is another point which requires attention. Some old people pride themselves on never requiring a fire in their bedrooms. It is, however, a risky practice to exchange a temperature of 65 degrees or 70 degrees for one 15 or 20 degrees lower. As a general rule, for persons 65 years of age and upward, the temperature of the bed-room should be below 60 degrees, and when there are symptoms of bronchitis, it should be raised five to ten degrees higher. Careful cleansing of the skin is the last point which needs to be mentioned in an article like the present. Attention to cleanliness is decidedly conducive to longevity, and we may congratulate ourselves on the general improvement in our habits in this respect. Frequent washing with warm water is very advantageous for old people, in whom the skin is only too apt to become hard and dry; and the benefit will be increased if the ablutions be succeeded by friction with coarse flannel or linen gloves, or with a flesh-brush. Every part of the skin should thus be washed and rubbed daily. The friction removes worn-out particles of the skin, and the exercise promotes warmth and excites perspiration. Too much attention can hardly be paid to the state of the skin, and the comfort of the aged is greatly dependent upon the proper discharge of its functions.—Selected.

If a child chokes in trying to swallow a button, a penny, or any article of the kind, turn him head downwards, holding him by the neck and heels. If the offending article does not roll out of his mouth, administer a dose of castor oil to aid its passage through the stomach and intestines.

A simple remedy for round shoulders is to stand facing a corner of the room, and with hands extended on the wall in either direction, and the feet firmly placed, to move the body slowly toward the corner. This exercise, faithfully repeated every morning, will make the form beautifully erect.

Patient waiting is often the highest way of doing God's will.

On Buying Trash.

By ALICE RATHBONE.

No one would deliberately set out for the purpose of buying trash, yet few escape the folly of bringing home from a shopping expedition things which have tempted away our money, without satisfying any real or aesthetic need. We voluntarily surround ourselves with trashy knick-knacks from the shops, which, after the excitement of the purchase is over, seem anything but desirable. Such investments are only too familiar; the vase, fine neither in form nor color, but only thirty-five cents; Japanese fans so cheap that we indulge in several, since each costs so little; the tiny teapot of some choice ware, marked down because of a broken handle, for which our purse is the dollar lighter; the ribbon bow to conceal the defect in the teapot handle, for which we part with another little sum in order to place a most inappropriate decoration on china; do we bring home joys forever in such purchases as these?

If only we might have realized before parting with our money, that the ribbon-bedecked, broken piece of china could not satisfy the real desire of our heart for a pretty teapot! and that, with the amount expended on the tasteless vase, superfluous fans, handleless teapot and the misplaced ribbon, we might have possessed a little teapot of real value instead of trash!

The true pleasures of buying can not be realized by those who indulge in trash, they lose the happy choosing of that which is to gratify some long-felt want; of that which is to be the tangible result of thoughtful deliberation and abstinence from anything in the nature of trash. Such pleasure Elia describes as shared by "Cousin Bridget" of the essays and himself in the purchase of rare books and "the old print after Leonardo," in the days when a purchase "used to be a triumph" for them.

With people of limited means the frittering away of dimes, quarters and half dollars on this, that, and the other thing, that we should often be better off without is a serious matter, and until taught by long experience to value money properly, many women are sad wastrels in this direction. Seemingly longed for with a reasonable longing, are not to be thought of seriously until their phantom "ship comes in," while little packages return from a day's shopping containing cheap gloves, fussy fancy-work, or materials purchased in the name of Art by one who has not learned to draw.

In the home of the wise shopper we shall find no trash; in its place, are well chosen objects, few in number, but each good of its kind. New books of worth we shall find there, and artistic needlework; bright bits of pottery or delicate porcelain, and photographs of some of the treasures of the old-world galleries, all gathered together slowly and fondly with the saved-up small change that by the thoughtless buyer might have been exchanged for trash.

Things of worth and beauty are not alone for those to whom "a purchase is not a purchase," since they "have money enough and to spare." A share of the beautiful may come to each of us who wisely find there, and wait for it instead of snatching up trash. A good-sized photograph of some favorite picture of a Madonna, perhaps, with sweet uplifting face, may be had for one dollar and a half, and the same amount will glaze and frame the picture. The patient workers of Japan send us many curious things of value, quite within the reach of those who will not squander on trash.

A simple bamboo frame for a cabinet photograph, of neatest construction, and pretty wisely, was lately found in a Japanese store for one of those dimes that so easily slip from our grasp at the ten cent counter. Knowing the better things, our prudent holder of the slender purse can pass, untempted, the crowded counters loaded with crude wares of various kinds. For, looking at those wares as the result of poor workmanship, and poorer taste she sees them in their true light, and finds them only trash.—Good House-keeping.

A Doctor's Opinion of Candy.

By E. REYNOLDS, M. D.

The candy-eating habit is quite prevalent among children, and to a considerable extent among older persons. It is not a harmless indulgence, as many seem to think. It is a cause of much ill health among children, and the predisposing cause of many acute attacks of disease of various kinds. Much dyspepsia, indigestion, and many bilious attacks are directly or indirectly due to candy eating. Candy produces a condition of the stomach which is very unfavorable to the patient when attacked by severe disease. Most of the candy sold nowadays contains a considerable proportion of glucose, a kind of sugar made from starch, and which more easily ferments, or sours in the stomach, than does cane-sugar. An excess of sugar of any kind in the stomach tends to ferment, becomes sour, sometimes intensely so, so as to produce great irritation of the stomach, resulting in a catarrhal condition, bilious attacks, and other derangements of the digestive organs. It is a common practice among children to run to the candy-store with all the pennies they can get, and spend them more injuriously, as the nuts are hard to digest. Peanut and coconut candy is especially a harmful compound, and all prudent parents should forbid their children eating it. Some of the candy is colored with substances which are injurious and adulterated with a kind of white clay, rendering it still more objectionable. A child who is in the habit of eating much candy, and has thus brought its stomach into an irritable condition, takes cold from a very slight exposure, and is easily made sick by a slight indiscretion in its diet, resulting in a severe attack of vomiting, diarrhoea, or febrile disturbance. Much of the sickness among children may be traced to this cause.—Selected.

To forgive the fault in another, is more sublime than to be faultless to one's self.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

SUNDAY, MAY 13, 1895.

The Transfiguration.

LESSON TEXT. (Luke 9: 28, 35. Memory verses, 33-35.)

LESSON PLAN.

TOPIC OF THE QUARTER: Jesus the Saviour of Men.

GOLDEN TEXT FOR THE QUARTER: This is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.—John 4: 42.

LESSON TOPIC: Displaying His Glory.

LESSON OUTLINE: 1. The Transfigured Lord, vs. 28-32. 2. The Attendant Saints, vs. 33-35. 3. The Approving Father, vs. 36-38.

GOLDEN TEXT: And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son; hear him.—Luke 9: 35.

DAILY HOME READINGS: M.—Luke 9: 28-36. Displaying glory. T.—Matt. 17: 1-9. Matthew's parallel narrative. W.—Mark 9: 2-10. Mark's parallel narrative. T.—Deut. 34: 1-12. The death of Moses. F.—2 Kings 2: 1-15. Translation of Elijah. S.—Matt. 3: 13-17. The attesting Father. S.—2 Peter 1: 12-21. The holy mount remembered.

LESSON ANALYSIS.

I. THE TRANSGURED LORD.

1. His Companions: He took with him Peter and John and James (28).

2. He went up into the mountain to pray (29).

3. He was transfigured before them (Matt. 17: 2).

4. His garments became glistening, exceeding white (Mark 9: 3).

5. The body of his glory (Phil. 3: 21).

6. He took with him Peter and John and James (1).

7. The favorable opportunity (2).

8. The favored disciples (3).

9. He went up into the mountain to pray (1).

10. Privacy sought (2).

11. Prayer enjoyed (1).

12. The sacred mount (2).

13. The Lordly visitant (3).

14. The earnest supplication (3).

15. The fashion of his countenance was altered (1).

16. In its manifestations (2).

II. THE ATTENDANT SAINTS.

1. The Sainly Guests: Behold, there talked with him... Moses and Elijah (36).

2. So Moses died there in the land of Moab (Deut. 34: 5).

3. Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven (2 Kings 11: 1).

4. Behold... Moses and Elijah talking with him (Matt. 17: 3).

5. There appeared unto them Elijah with Moses (Mark 9: 4).

6. The Solemn Converse: Who... spake of his decease... at Jerusalem (31).

7. He must go unto Jerusalem... and be killed (Matt. 16: 21).

8. They were talking with Jesus (Mark 9: 4).

9. The Son of man must suffer many things... and be killed (Luke 9: 22).

10. Him... ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify (Acts 2: 23).

11. The Sacred Influence: Master, it is good for us to be here (33).

12. If thou wilt, I will make here three tabernacles (Matt. 17: 4).

13. Rabbi, it is good for us to be here (Mark 9: 5).

14. We were eyewitnesses of his majesty (2 Pet. 1: 16).

15. We were with him in the holy mount (2 Pet. 1: 18).

16. "There talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elijah.—(1) Jesus; (2) Moses; (3) Elijah.—(1) The characters; (2) The combination; (3) The conversation.

17. "Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease."—Christ's death the prime topic of the glorified; (1) It glorified them; (2) They glorify it.

18. "It is good for us to be here." Here, (1) Apart from the world; (2) Present with the Lord; (3) Associated with the sainted; (4) Instructed in the atonement.

III. THE APPROVING FATHER.

1. Overshadowed by the Cloud: There came a cloud, and overshadowed them (34).

2. The glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud (Exod. 16: 10).

3. Clouds and darkness are round about him (Psa. 97: 2).

4. Who maketh the clouds his chariot (Psa. 104: 3).

5. A cloud received him out of their sight (Acts 1: 9).

6. Approved by the Father: And a voice... saying, This is my Son, my chosen (35).

7. Le, a voice... saying, This is my beloved Son (Matt. 3: 17).

8. Behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying... Hear ye him (Matt. 17: 5).

9. This is my beloved Son; hear ye him (Mark 9: 7).

10. There came such a voice... from the excellent glory (2 Pet. 1: 17).

III. Alone with the Lord:

Jesus was found alone (36).

They saw no one, save Jesus only (Matt. 17: 8).

Jesus only with themselves (Mark 9: 8).

The same came unto him by night (John 3: 2).

Jesus... thus by the well... There cometh a woman (John 4: 6, 7).

1. "A voice came out of the cloud." (1) The cloud; (2) The voice; (3) The announcement.—The voice: (1) From whom; (2) To whom; (3) Concerning whom.

2. "This is my Son, my chosen; hear ye him." (1) God's chosen Son; (2) Man's authorized teacher.

3. "Jesus was found alone." (1) The guests departed; (2) The Father withdrew; (3) The disciples observed; (4) The Lord present.

LESSON BIBLE READING.

SPECIAL VIEWS OF JESUS.

As a babe (Matt. 2: 9-11).

As a boy (Luke 2: 41-52).

In his baptism (Matt. 3: 13-17).

In his triumph over Satan (Matt. 4: 11).

In the garden (Luke 22: 39-44).

On the cross (Luke 23: 44-46).

In resurrected body (John 20: 26-29).

To the dying St. Paul (Acts 7: 54-56).

To Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9: 3-6).

To John on Patmos (Rev. 1: 12-18).

LESSON SURROUNDINGS.

INTERVENING EVENTS.—Luke's narrative omits a number of events recorded by Matthew and Mark for the first time agree closely in order, Luke begins to deviate from both, thought hitherto Mark and Luke corresponded most closely.) After the five thousand were fed, our Lord walks on the water of the Sea of Galilee, to join the disciples, who were there in a storm. A remarkable discourse at Capernaum followed (John 6: 22-71), which led many to cease from following Jesus. The tide of popularity in Galilee turned. Henceforward the journeys were largely the result of hostility. Our Lord was attacked because his disciples ate with unwashed hands (Matt. 15: 1-20; Mark 7: 1-23). This led to a withdrawal to the regions of Tyre and Sidon, where the daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman was healed (Matt. 15: 21-28; Mark 7: 24-30). On the return, by a circuitous route, through Decapolis, a deaf and dumb man was healed (Mark 7: 31-37), and the four thousand fed (Matt. 15: 29-38; Mark 8: 1-9). Near Magadan, on the west side of the lake, the Pharisees and others asked for a sign (Matt. 16: 1-4; Mark 8: 10-12). The little party recrossed the lake, and the disciples were warned against the leaven of the Pharisees (Matt. 16: 4-12; Mark 8: 13-21). Near Bethsaida Julia, a blind man was healed (Mark 8: 22-26). Then came the long journey to the region of Caesarea Philippi, where the disciples confessed their faith in Jesus as the Messiah. Peter was specially commended by our Lord, but afterwards rebuked, he objects to the predicted death of his Master (Matt. 16: 13-28; Mark 8: 27-9: 1; Luke 9: 18, 21). A week afterward the transfiguration occurs.

PLACES.—Most probably Mount Hermon, the highest peak of the range called Anti-Libanus. It lies east of north from Caesarea Philippi. In favor of this locality may be urged: The height of the mountain, its proximity to Caesarea Philippi, the reference to "snow" (Mark; omitted in Rev. Ver.), its uninhabited condition, the subsequent notice of a journey through Galilee. The presence of scribes at the foot of the mountain is, however, an objection, since Hermon was remote from an exclusively Jewish population. The traditional site is Tabor; but this was uninhabited, and very remote from the scene of the preceding incidents. The tradition was current in the days of Jerome.

TIME.—An interval of some length must be intended between the Passover (the feeding of the five thousand) and the transfiguration. On the other hand, the Feast of Tabernacles (in October) occurred some little time after the transfiguration. The date is therefore in the summer of A. D. 28; that is, A. D. 28. The transfiguration probably occurred at night.

PERSONS.—Our Lord, Peter and John and James, the two men "which were Moses and Elijah;" God the Father speaking out of the cloud.

INCIDENTS.—The ascent of the mountain; Jesus, while praying, is transfigured; the two men appear in glory; the three disciples are aroused from their drowsiness; Peter proposes to build three tabernacles; a cloud overshadows the principal persons; an attesting voice comes from the cloud; after this silence concerning the transfiguration, as the Lord commanded them to be (Matthew, Mark).

PARALLEL PASSAGES.—Matthew 17: 1-9; Mark 9: 2-10.

The Great African Forest.

In Stanley's report to the British Government in regard to his expedition for the relief of Emin Pasha, he speaks as follows of the discovery of an immense forest: "We can prove that east, north and northeast of the Congo there exists an immense area of about 250,000 square miles which is covered by one unbroken, compact and fertile forest. * * * Through the core of this forest we traveled for thirteen months, and in its gloomy shades many scores of our dark followers perished. Our progress through the dense undergrowth of bush and ambitious young trees which grew beneath the impervious shades of the forest giants, and which was matted by arums, phrynix and amoma, meshed by endless lines of calamus, and complicated by great cable-like convolvul, was often only at the rate of 400 yards an hour. Through such obstructions as these we had to tunnel a way for the column to pass. The Amazon valley can not boast a more impervious or a more unbragous forest, nor one which has more truly a tropical character than this vast Upper Congo forest, nourished as it is by eleven months of tropical showers."