

REV. DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON

The Brooklyn Divin's Sunday Sermon.

Subject: "The Plague of Bad Books."

TEXT: "And the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. And the Egyptians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt."

There is almost a universal aversion to frogs, and yet with the Egyptian they were honored, they were sacred, and they were objects of worship while alive, and after death they were embalmed, and to-day their remains may be found among the seneschals of Thebes.

Frogs high and low and everywhere; both some frogs, slimy frogs, besetting frogs, innumerable frogs, great plagues of frogs.

What made the matter worse the magicians said there was no magic in this, and they could by slight of hand produce the same thing, and they seemed to succeed.

Frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt, and the magicians did so with their enchantment, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt.

Now that plague of frogs has come back upon the earth, it is abundant to-day. It is smiting this nation. It comes in the shape of corrupt literature.

The London plague was nothing to it. That counted its victims by thousands, but this modern plague has already shrouded its millions into the clouds of a nation.

I begin with the lowest of all the literature, that which does not even pretend to be respectable.

In the possession of these dealers in bad literature were found nine hundred thousand names and postoffice addresses.

In the year 1868 the evil had become so great in this country that the Congress of the United States passed a law for the suppression of the transmission of bad literature through the United States mails.

Another way in which we shall fight back this corrupt literature and kill the frogs of Egypt is by rolling over them the Christian printing press.

There are thousands of men and women in this country, some for personal gain, some through innate depravity, some through spirit of revenge, who wish to use this great avenue of convenience and intelligence for purposes of revenge, malicious and diabolic.

I am not talking about what cannot be seen. I am talking about what is being seen. A great many of the printing presses

what gave themselves entirely to the publication of vile literature have been stopped. What has thrown off, what has kept off the rail trains of the country for some time back, nearly all the horrid periodicals.

Many of the cities have successfully prohibited the most of that literature even from going on the news stands.

Another way in which we are to drive back the plague of Egyptian frogs is by filling the minds of our young people with a beautiful literature.

Why are fifty per cent. of the criminals in the jails and penitentiaries of the United States to-day under twenty-one years of age?

There is a vast number of books and newspapers printed and published which ought never to see the light.

The clergyman had in his sacred copy of Doddridge's "Rise and Progress," and he made her a present of it.

John Angel James, then whom England never had a bolder minister, stood in his pulpit at Birmingham and said: "Twenty-five years ago I had loaned to me an infamous book."

A novel application of electricity has recently been made in elephant catching.

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THE LESSON OF THE ROSES.

They blossomed on every side. Great trails of "Gloire de Dijon" flung themselves over the cottage walls, laden with pink buds and gleaming buds.

Petals of those which had fluted their day, waited slowly down, hardly distinguishable from the new-born white butterflies that spread their yet soft wings to dry in the sun.

How lovely they are upon childhood's cheeks, in maiden's bloom, on the withered cheek of honored age.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

SUNDAY, MARCH 22. 1881.

ELISHA'S DEFENDERS.

LESSON TEXT. 2 Kings 6: 8-18. Memory verses (15-17).

LESSON PLAN.

TOPIC OF THE QUARTER: Sins of and Servants. GOLDEN TEXT FOR THE QUARTER: Godliness is profitable unto all things.

LESSON OUTLINE. I. Human Wisdom Baffled, vs. 8-12. II. Worldly Power Exerted, vs. 13-15. III. Divine Defense Illustrated, vs. 16-18.

GOLDEN TEXT: Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.—2 Kings 6: 16.

DAILY HOME READINGS: M.—2 Kings 6: 8-18. Elisha's defenders. T.—2 Kings 2: 1-12. The chariot of Ahab.

LESSON ANALYSIS.

I. HUMAN WISDOM BAFFLED. I. The King's Plans: In such and such a place shall be my camp (8).

II. WORLDLY POWER EXERTED. I. King's Orders: Go and see where he is, that I send and fetch him (14).

III. MIGHTY HOSTS: An host with horses and chariots was round about (15).

IV. DIVINE DEFENSE ILLUSTRATED. I. Defense Assured: Fear not: for they that be with us are more (16).

II. Defense Displayed: He saw and, behold, the mountain was full (17).

III. Defense Realized: Smite this people, I pray thee... And he smote them (18).

DEFENSE DISPLAYED.

He saw and, behold, the mountain was full (17).

It came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel (Exod. 14: 20).

The Lord had made the... Syrians to hear a noise (2 Kings 7: 6).

All the doors were opened; and every one's hands were loosed (Acts 16: 26).

God is my high tower, the God of my mercy (Psa. 59: 17).

My God... bath shot the lions' mouth (Dan. 6: 22).

Thou... didst purchase unto God with thy blood (Rev. 5: 9).

1. "They that be with us are more than they that be with them." (1) Visible host; against us; (2) Invisible hosts for us; (3) Great hosts against us; (4) Greater hosts for us.

2. "Open his eyes, that he may see." (1) Spiritual vision absent; (2) Spiritual vision sought; (3) Spiritual vision gained.

3. "The mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." (1) A central evangelist; (2) An encircling throng.—(1) Defenseless men; (2) Invincible hosts.

LESSON BIBLE READING.

ANGELIC DEFENDERS. Competent defenders (Psa. 103: 20). Encamp about the saints (Psa.: 34: 7). Represent them before God (Matt. 18: 10).

Minister to them (Heb.: 14). Exterminate the wicked (Matt. 13: 41-43). Assisted Hagar (Gen. 16: 7-9; 21: 14-16).

Led from Egypt (Num. 20: 16). Defended from fire (Dan. 3: 26-28). Shut the lions' mouths (Dan. 6: 21-22).

Liberated Peter (Acts 12: 5-11). Protecting Jesus (Matt. 2: 13, 19; 4: 11; 26: 53). Gather saints to glory (Luke 16: 22).

INTERESTING EVENTS.

The only event recorded in the narrative is the miracle of the recovered ax-head, when the sons of the prophets were hewing wood on the bank of the Jordan.

This took place, is uncertain. As intimated already, this lesson probably refers to a period before the healing of Naaman, possibly before the raising of the Shunammite's son.

PLACES.—Among the places attacked in the predatory campaigns of the king of Syria, Dothan ("Two Wells") alone is named. It was a small town ten or twelve miles north of Samaria, on a little hill south of the plain of Esdraelon.

THE NAME still remains. Compare Genes. 37: 17, and the apocryphal Book of Judith, 4: 6.

TEXT.—In B. C. 821 or 822, possibly earlier in reign of Jehoram, Professor Davis accepts B. C. 852-850 as the date of these predatory war. As already intimated, the usual dates in the margin of our reference Bibles are unsatisfactory.

PERSONS.—Ben-hadad (II), king of Syria; his officers, one of his servants in particular; Joram (or Jehoram), king of Israel; Elisha; and his servant (probably not Gehazi).

INCIDENTS.—The king of Syria wages war against Israel, but Elisha's several times warns the king of the designs of the Syrians. The Syrian king suspects treachery among his servants, but one of them tells him that Elisha reveals his plans. Finding that the prophet is at Dothan, the Syrian king sends an army thither. Early in the morning, the servant of Elisha discovers the host of enemies. Elisha, when the servant utters his fears, tells him that their defenders are yet more numerous; he asks the Lord to open the eyes of the young man, who then sees the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire. Elisha prays that the Syrians be smitten with blindness, which accordingly takes place.

THE OTTAWA Orange. Orange blossoms are among the most expensive, the most beautiful, fragrant and desirable of all flowers. It is possible for one to possess, they have a delicate beauty and fragrance which commend them to every one.

Among the new varieties of oranges that have been recently introduced from Japan and other countries, there is one dwarf free-flowering variety which is suitable for pot culture, and which will with any one, prove one of the most desirable pot plants it is possible to possess.

We refer to the Japanese Ottaheite. While it will grow three or four feet high and branch freely, it is not an uncommon thing to see little cutting plants five or six inches in height full of bloom and even bearing one or two medium size oranges. The fruit at their best are not more than half the size of an ordinary orange, but are very bright and beautiful in color and delicious in quality, but it is for its flowers more than its fruit which commends it to general cultivation.

When it blooms it is so full that it seems to be all flowers. The pure, waxy-white blossoms, emitting a delicate, yet powerful fragrance, which is surpassed by no other flower.

The plant is of the easiest culture, says the *Mayflower*, and will always thrive well in any decent situation if given an ordinary size pot of good soil. It is not liable to be attacked by insects, except by the scale, which is a very rare pest among house plants, and one of the easiest to get rid of, as a slight sprinkling of soap and water, or a little brushing with an old toothbrush, will free the plant of them. One of the best evidences of the value of the Ottaheite Orange is the great demand for it. It has been sold as a pot plant only a very few years, and now it is difficult to grow plants enough to supply the demand.

In our schools at the present, day we use "Euclid's Elements of Geometry," written by Euclid 2200 years ago, Euclid wrote on music and optics, anticipating much which we think we discovered