

HAGAR AND ISHMAEL.

Dr. Talmage Draws Some Useful Lessons from their Story.

When the Future Looks Dark an Angel of Light Casts Rays on the Eye of Faith—Comfort for the Despondent.

In the following sermon the popular Washington divine urges his hearers to first find the sphere that God intended them for and then stay in it. His text is Genesis 21:19: "And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went and filled the bottle with water and gave the lad drink."

Morning breaks upon Beersheba. There is an early stir in the house of old Abraham. There has been trouble among the domestics. Hagar, an assistant in the household, and her son, a brisk lad of 16 years, have become impudent and insolent, and Sarah, the mistress of the household, puts her foot down very hard and says that they will have to leave the premises.

The scorching noon comes on. The air is stifling and moves across the desert with insufferable suffocation. Ishmael, the boy, begins to complain and lies down, but Hagar rouses him up, saying nothing about her own weariness or the sweltering heat, for mothers can endure anything.

And so they go on day after day and night after night, for they have lost their way. No path in the shifting sands; no sign in the burning sky. The sack empty of the flour; the water gone from the bottle. What shall she do? As she puts her fainting Ishmael under a stunted shrub of the arid plain, she sees the blood-shot eye, and feels the hot hand, and watches the blood bursting from the cracked tongue, and there is a shriek in the desert of Beersheba: "We shall die! We shall die!"

business, for God had decreed that Hawley was to be one of the greatest astronomers of England. On the other hand, we may be born in a sphere a little higher than that for which God intends us. We may be born in a castle, and play in a costly conservatory, and feed high-bred pointers, and angle for goldfish in artificial ponds, and be familiar with princes; yet God may better have fitted us for a carpenter's shop, or dentist's forceps, or weaver's shuttle, or a blacksmith's forge.

In the Lord's army we all want to be brigadier generals! The sloop says: "More mast, more tonnage, more canvas! Oh, that I were a topsail schooner, or a full-rigged brig, or a Cunard steamer!" And so the world is filled with cries of discontent, because we are not willing to stay in the place where God put us and intended us to be.

Again, I find in this oriental scene a lesson of sympathy with woman when she goes forth trudging in the desert. What a great change it was for this Hagar! There was the tent, and all the surroundings of Abraham's house, beautiful and luxurious, no doubt. Now she is going out into the hot sands of the desert. Oh, what a change it was!

Here is a beautiful home. You cannot think of anything that can be added to it. For years there has not been the suggestion of a single trouble. Bright and happy children fill the house with laughter and song. Books to read. Pictures to look at. Lounges to rest on. Cup of domestic joy full and running over.

You say: "That isn't an unusual scene, a mother leading her child by the hand." Who is it that she is leading? Ishmael, you say. Who is Ishmael? A great nation is to be founded—a nation so strong that it is to stand for thousands of years against all the armies of the world. Egypt and Assyria thunder against it, but in vain. Gaius brings up his army, and his army is smitten. Alexander decides upon a campaign, brings up his hosts, and dies.

and he lifts it bleeding and pain-struck? That wound in the foot decides that he be a student. That wound by the glass in the foot decides that he shall be John Kitto, who shall provide the best religious encyclopaedia the world has ever had provided, and with his other writings, as well, throwing a light upon the Word of God such as has come from no other man in this century.

My mind leaps 30 years forward from this time and I find myself in a relief association. A great multitude of Christian women have met together for a generous purpose. There is one woman in that crowd who seems to have the confidence of all the others, and they all look up to her for her counsel and for her prayers.

I learn one more lesson from this oriental scene, and that is, that every wilderness has a well in it. Hagar and Ishmael gave up to die. Hagar's heart sank within her as she heard her child crying: "Water! Water! Water!" "Ah!" she says, "my darling, there is no water. This is a desert." And then God's angel said from the cloud: "What aileth thee, Hagar?"

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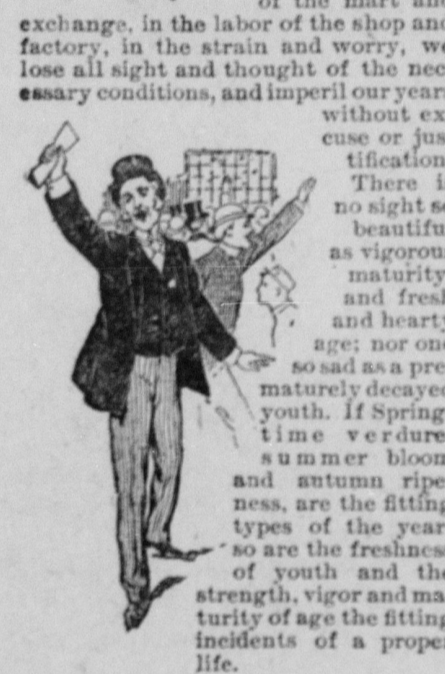
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How often we say of one past the meridian of life, even of those in its twilight glow, "How young he looks!" And on the other hand, how many who ought to be in their prime, bear evidences in looks and feelings of old age!

It ought never so to be, where healthful conditions have prevailed. Strength and vigor in youth and maturity depend on the care and attention our natural qualifications receive. In the mad rush of business, in the fierce struggle of the mart and factory, in the strain and worry, we lose all sight and thought of the necessary conditions, and imperil our years without excuse or justification.

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PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD AND BRANCHES. In effect on and after May 17, 1897.

VIA TYRONE—WESTWARD. Leave Bellefonte 9:55 a.m. arrive at Tyrone 11:10 a.m.; at Altoona, 1:00 p.m.; at Pittsburg 5:10 p.m.

VIA TYRONE—EASTWARD. Leave Bellefonte 9:55 a.m. arrive at Tyrone 11:10 a.m.; at Altoona at 7:40; at Pittsburg at 11:30.

VIA LOCK HAVEN—NORTHWARD. Leave Bellefonte 9:22 a.m. arrive at Lock Haven 10:30 a.m.

Table with columns for WESTWARD, STATIONS, and EASTWARD. Lists stations like Montandon, Lewisburg, Vicksburg, Millport, etc.

Table with columns for WESTWARD, STATIONS, and EASTWARD. Lists stations like Tyrone, E. Tyrone, Vail, Bald Eagle, etc.

BELLEFONTE & SNOW SHOES BRANCH. Time Table for cars, m. and after May 17, 1897.

THE CENTRAL RAILROAD OF PENNA.

Time Table effective Nov. 16, 1896.

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