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THE METROPOLITAN PULPIT



A LISTENING GOD.

A Sermon by Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, D.D., on the Text: Psalms 94: 9, He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?

ARCHITECTURE is one of the most fascinating arts, and the study of Egyptian, Grecian, Etruscan, Roman, Byzantine, Moorish, Renaissance styles of building, has been to many a man a sublime life-work. Lincoln and York cathedrals, St. Paul's and St. Peter's, and Arch of Titus, and Theban Temple and Alhambra and Parthenon are the monuments to the genius of those who built them. But more wonderful than any arch they ever lifted, or any transept window they ever illumined, or any Corinthian column they ever crowned, or any Gothic cloister they ever elaborated, is the human ear.

Among the most skilful and assiduous physiologists of our time have been those who have given their time to the examination of the ear and the study of its arches, its walls, its floor, its canals, its aqueducts, its galleries, its intricacies, its convolutions, its divine machinery, and yet, it will take another thousand years before the world comes to any adequate appreciation of what God did when he planned and executed the infinite and overmastering architecture of the human ear. The most of it is invisible and the microscope breaks down in the attempt at exploration. The cartilage which we call the ear is only the storm door of the great temple clear down out of sight, next door to the immortal soul.

Such scientists as Helmholtz and Conte and De Blainville and Rank and Buck have attempted to walk the Appian Way of the human ear, but the mysterious pathway has never been fully trodden but by two feet—the foot of sound and the foot of God. Three ears on each side the head—the external ear, the middle ear, the internal ear, but all connected by most wonderful telegraph.

The external ear in all ages adorned by precious stones or precious metals. The Temple of Jerusalem partly built by the contribution of earrings, and Homer in the Iliad speaks of Hera, "the three bright drops, her glittering gems suspended from the ear;" and many of the adornments of modern times were only copies of her ear jewels found in Pompeian museum and Etruscan vase. But while the outer ear may be adorned by human art, the middle and the internal ear are adorned and garnished only by the hand of the Lord Almighty. The stroke of a key of yonder organ sets the air vibrating, and the external ear catches the undulating sound and passes it on through the bonelets of the middle ear to the internal ear, and the three thousand fibres of the human brain take up the vibration and roll the sound on into the soul. The hidden machinery of the ear by physiologists called by the names of things familiar to us, like the hammer, something to strike—like the anvil, something to be smitten—like the stirrup of the saddle with which we mount the steel—like the drum beaten in the march—like the harp-strings, to be swept with music. Coiled like a "snail shell," by which one of the innermost passages of the ear is actually called—like a stairway, the sound to ascend—like a vent tube of a heating apparatus, that that which enters round and round like a labyrinth with wonderful passages, into which the thought enters only to be lost in bewilderment. A muscle contracting when the noise is too loud, just at the tip of the eye contracts when the light is too strong. The external ear is defended by wax which with its bitter-reeds discourages insect invasion. The internal ear is cooled by what is far the hardest bone of the human system a very rock of strength and density.

The ear to straggle a contrivance that by the estimate of one second it can catch the sound of 377 vibrations in a second. The outer ear taking in all kinds of sound, whether the crash of an avalanche, or the hum of a bee. The sound passing to the inner door of the outside

ear halts until another mechanism, divine mechanism, passes it on by the bonelets of the middle ear, and coming to the inner door of that second ear, the sound has no power to come further until another divine mechanism passes it on through into the inner ear, and then the sound comes to the rail track of the brain branchlet, and rolls on and on until it comes to sensation, and there the curtain drops, and a hundred gates shut, and the voice of God seems to say to all human inspection: "Thus far and no farther."

In this vestibule of the palace of the soul, how many kings of thought, of medicine, of physiology, have done penance of lifelong study and got no further than the vestibule. Mysterious home of reverberation and echo. Grand Central Depot of sound. Headquarters to which there come quick dispatches, part the way by cartilages, part the way by air, part the way by bone, part the way by nerve—the slowest dispatch plunging into the ear at the speed of 1,000 feet a second. Small instrument of music on which is played all the music you ever heard, from the grandest of an August thunderstorm to the softest breathings of a flute. Small instrument of music, only a quarter of an inch of surface and the thinness of one two hundred and fiftieth part of an inch, and that thinness divided into three layers. In that ear musical staff, lines, spaces, bar and rest. A bridge leading from the outside natural world to the inside spiritual world; we seeing the abutment at this end the bridge, but the fog of an unlifted mystery hiding the abutment on the other end the bridge. Whispering gallery of the soul. The human voice is God's eulogy of the ear. That voice capable of producing seventeen trillion, five hundred and ninety-two billion, one hundred and eighty-six million, forty-four thousand, four hundred and fifteen sounds, and all that variety made, not for the regalement of beast or bird, but for the human ear.

About fifteen years ago, in Venice, lay down in death one whom many considered the greatest musical composer of the century. Struggling on up from six years of age when he was left fatherless, Wagner rose through the obloquy of the world, and oftentimes all nations seemingly against him, until he gained the favor of a king, and won the enthusiasm of the opera houses of Europe and America. Struggling all the way on to seventy years of age, to conquer the world's ear. In that same attempt to master the human ear and gain supremacy over this gate of the immortal soul, great battles were fought by Mozart, Gluck and Weber, and by Beethoven and Meyerbeer, by Rossini and by all the roll of German and Italian and French composers, some of them in the battle leaving their blood on the keynotes and the musical scores. Great battle fought for the ear—fought with baton, with organ-pipe, with trumpet, with cornet-a-piston, with all ivory and brazen and silver and golden weapons of the orchestra; royal theatre and cathedral and academy of music the fortresses for the contest for the ear. England and Egypt fought for the supremacy of the Suez Canal, and the Spartans and the Persians fought for the defile at Thermopylae, but the musicians of all ages have fought for the mastery of the auditory canal and the defile of the immortal soul and the Thermopylae of struggling cadences.

For the conquest of the ear Hadyn struggled on up from the garret where he had neither fire nor food, on and on until under the too great nervous strain of hearing his own oratorio of the "Creation" perished, he was carried out to die, but leaving as his legacy to the world 118 symphonies, 163 pieces for the baritone, 15 masses, 5 oratorios, 42 German and Italian songs, 31 canons, 365 English and Scotch songs with accompaniment, and 1,536 pages of libretti. All that to capture the gate of the body that swings in from the tympanum to the "snail shell" lying

on the beach of the ocean of the immortal soul.

To conquer the ear, Handel struggled on from the time when his father would not let him go to school lest he learn the gamut and become a musician, and from the time when he was allowed in the organ loft just to play after the audience had left, to the time when he left to all nations his unparalleled oratorios of "Esther," "Deborah," "Sampson," "Jephthah," "Judas Maccabeus," "Israel in Egypt," and the "Messiah," the soul of the great German composer still weeping in the Dead March of our great obsequies and triumphing in the raptures of every Easter morn.

To conquer the ear and take this gate of the immortal soul, Schubert composed his great "Serenade," writing the staves of the music on the bill of fare in a restaurant, and went on until he could leave as a legacy to the world over a thousand magnificent compositions in music. To conquer the ear and take this gate of the soul's castle Mozart struggled on through poverty until he came to a pauper's grave, and one chilly, wet afternoon the body of him who gave to the world the "Requiem" and the "G-minor Symphony" was crunched in on the top of two other paupers into a grave which to this day is epitaphless.

For the ear everything mellifluous, from the birth hour when our earth was wrapped in swaddling clothes of light and serenaded by other worlds, from the time when Jubal thrummed the first harp and pressed a key of the first organ down to the music of this Sabbath day. Yea, for the ear the coming overtures of heaven, for whatever other part of the body may be left in the dust, the ear, we know, is to come to celestial life: otherwise, why the "harpers harping with their harps?" For the ear, carol of lark and whistle of quail, and chirp of cricket, and dash of cascade, and roar of tides oceanic, and odology of worshipful assembly and minstrelsy, cherubic, seraphic, and archangelic. For the ear all Pandean pipes, all flutes, all clarionets, all hautboys, all bassoons, all bells, and all organs—Luzerne and Westminster Abbey, and Freyburg, and Berlin, and all the organ pipes set across Christendom, the great Giant's Causeway for the monarchs of music to pass over. For the ear, all chimes, all tickings of chronometers, all anthems, all dirges, all glees, all choruses, all lullabies, all orchestration. Oh, the ear, the God honored ear, grooved with divine sculpture and poised with divine gracefulness and upholstered with curtains of divine embroidery, and corroded by divine carpentry, and pillared with divine architecture, and chiselled in bone of divine masonry, and conquered by processions of divine marshalling. The ear! A perpetual point of interrogation, asking How? a perpetual point of apostrophe appealing to God. None but God could plan it. None but God could build it. None but God could work it. None but God could keep it. None but God could understand it. None but God could explain it. Oh, the wonders of the human ear.

How surpassingly sacred the human ear. You had better be careful how you let the sound of blasphemy or uncleanness step into that holy of holies. The Bible says that in the ancient temple the priest was set apart by the putting of the blood of a ram on the tip of the ear, the right ear of the priest. But, my friends, we need all of us to have the sacred touch of ordination on the hanging lobe of both ears, and on the arches of the ears, on the Eustachian tube of the ear, on the mastoid cells of the ear, on the tympanic cavity of the ear, and on everything from the outside rim of the outside ear clear in to the point where sound steps off the auditory nerve and rolls on down into the unfathomable depths of the immortal soul. The Bible speaks of "dull ears," and of "uncircumcised ears," and of "itching ears," and of "rebellious ears," and of "open ears," and of those who have all the organs of hearing and yet who seem to be deaf, for it cries to them: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

To show how much Christ thought of the human ear, he one day met a man who was deaf, came up to him, and put a finger of the right hand into the orifice of the left ear of the patient, and put a finger of the left hand into the orifice of the right ear of the patient, and agitated the tympanum, and startled the bonelets, and with a voice that rang clear through into

the man's soul, cried: "Ephphatha!" at the polyphoid growths gave way, and the inflamed auricle cooled off, and that man who had not heard a sound for many years, that night heard the wash of the waves of Galilee against the limestone shelving. To show how much Christ thought of the human ear, when the apostle Peter got mad and with one slash his sword dropped the ear of Malchus into the dust, Christ created a new external ear for Malchus corresponding with the middle ear and the internal ear that sword could clip away.

And to show what God thinks of the ear we are informed of the fact that in a millennial June which shall reseat all the earth, the ears of the deaf will be stopped, all the vascular growths gone, all deformation of the listening organ cured, corrected, changed. Every ear on earth will have a hearing apparatus perfect as God knows how to make and all the ears will be ready for the great symphony in which all the musical instruments of the earth shall play the accompaniment, nations of earth and empires of heaven mingling their voices together with the deep bass of the tenor and the alto of the woods, and the tenor of winds, and the baritone of the thund "Alleluiah!" surging up meeting the "Alleluiah!" descending.

Oh, yes, my friends, we have been looking for God too far away instead of looking for him close by and in our organism. We go up into the observatory and look through the telescope to see God in Jupiter, and God in Saturn and God in Mars; but we could see him through the microscope of the aurist. No king is satisfied with only residence, and in France it has been Cloud and Versailles and the Tuilleries, and in Great Britain it has been Windsor and Balmoral and Osborne. A ruler does not always prefer the larger. The King of earth and heaven may have larger castles and greater palaces, but I do not think there is any one more curious wrought than the human ear. The heavens cannot contain him, and yet he says he finds room to dwell in a corner heart, and I think, in a Christian ear.

We have been looking for God in the infinite—let us look for him in the immanent. God walking the corridor of the ear, God sitting in the gallery of the human ear, God speaking along the auditory nerve of the ear, God dwelling in the ear to hear that which comes from outside, and so near the brain and the soul he can hear all that transpires there. The Lord of hosts encamping under the curtains of membrane. Palace of the Almighty in the human ear. The Lord on the white horse of the Apocalypse thrusting his foot into the loop of the ear which the physiologist has been pleased to call the stirrup of the ear.

Are you ready now for the question of my text? Have you the endurance to bear its overwhelming suggestiveness? Will you take hold of some pillar and balance yourself under the semi-circular potent stroke? "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?" Shall the God who gives us the apparatus with which to hear the sounds of the world, himself not be able to catch up song and groan and blasphemy and worship? Does he give us a faculty which he has not himself? Drs. Wild and Gruber and Toyne invented the acoumeter and other instruments by which to measure and examine the ear, and do these instruments know more than the doctors who made them? "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?" Jupiter of Crede was always represented in statuary and painting without ears, suggesting the idea that he did not want to be bothered with the affairs of the world. But our God has ears. His ears are open to their prayers. The Bible intimates that two workmen on Saturday night do not get their waxes. Their complaint instantly strikes the ear of God: "The cry of those that have bath entered the ears of the Lord of hosts." Did God hear that poor girl on Saturday night as she threw herself on the floor in the city dungeon and cried in the midnight: "God have mercy?" Do you really think God could hear her? Yes, just as easily as when fifteen years ago she was sick with scarlet fever, her mother heard her when at midnight she asked for a drink of water. "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?"

When a soul prays, God does not sit

be upright until the prayer travels intensity and climbs to his ear. The Bible sa he bends clear over. In more than one place Isaiah said he bowed down his ear. In more than one place the Psalmist sa he inclined his ear, by which I come to believe that God puts his ear so closely down to your lips that he can hear your faintest whisper. It is not God away off uponder; it is God away down here, cle up, so close up that when you pray to him, it is not more a whisper than a ki. Ah! yes, he hears the captive's sish, the plash of the orphan's tear, and th infant's, "Now I lay me down to slo," as distinctly as he hears the fortissio of brazen bands in the Dusseldorf fe val, as easily as he hears the salvo of artry when the thirteen squares of Elish troops open all their batteries at one at Waterloo. He that planted the ear can hear.

Just as sometimes an entrancing strain of music will linger in your ears for days aft you have heard it, and just as a sharp crof pain I once heard while passing thugh Bellevue Hospital clung to my eefor weeks, and just as a horrid blasphny in the street sometimes haunts or's ears for days, so God not only hears, bt holds the songs, the prayers, the gnns, the worship, the blasphemy. How w have all wondered at the phonograph, wth holds not only the words you utter, bt the very tones of your voice, so that a undred years from now, that instrumt turned, the very words you now ur and the very tone of your voice will b reproduced. Amazing phonograph! B more wonderful is God's power to hel, to retain. Ah! what delightful enccagement for our prayers. What an aul fright for our hard speeches. What assurance of warm-hearted sympathy for al our griefs. "He that planted the ear, sl l he not hear?"

Better put that organ away from all si. Better put it under the best sound. Bter take it away from all gossip, from alslander, from all innuendo, from all b. influence of evil association. Better p it to school, to church, to philharmonic. Better put that ear under the bsted touch of Christian hymnology. Bter consecrate it for time and etern to him who planted the ear. Rousso, the infidel, fell asleep amid his sotical manuscripts lying all around the ron, and in his dream he entered heaven a heard the song of the worshippers, a it was so sweet he asked an angel w it meant. The angel said: "This is tl Paradise of God, and the song you hr is the anthem of the redeemed." Uder another roll of the celestial music Kisseau wakened and got up in the midnit and, as well as he could, wrote dn the strains of the music that he had hrd in the wonderful tune called "The Sigs of the Redeemed." God grant that it may not be to you and to me an infidel dam but a glorious reality. When we cie to the night of death and we lie down t our last sleep, may our ears really be wened by the canticles of the heavenly tiple, and the songs and the anthems a the carols and the doxologies tht sl climb the musical ladder of that hvenly gamut.

The Sermon of a Strange Silence.

Can you imagine a silence that is startling? Sh a silence fell upon Niagara, March 31, 1854. People living within sound of the catart woked that morning with a strange feeling af something was wrong. The voice of the fs was silent, the river-bed and precipice vebare. People walked back and forth to Ct Island, from Canada to America, from America to Canada, hardly wetting their feet, a in spite of their alarm and apprehension ato to the meaning of this incredible phenonia, they could not refrain, the historian ss, from swarming over the dry bed of the rrr and about the great bared precipice it ss, exploring caves and dark recesses. One rrra drove a horse and wagon across nearly t Boat Island, another his buggy close to the pppices, and sticks of timber near the head c of Horseshoe Falls were cut, hewn, and hauled ay with four horses. On the morning of ril 1 people were glad to hear the familiar tnder of Niagara rushing on its old way. B explanation of this singular phenomenon l in the fact that strong winds on Lake Erie l driven innumerable small icebergs, wch the lake was packed to the head of Niagara River, where they had formed a temporarily impregnable dam. Perhaps if the bibles and trials of life were to cease we slud miss them as these people missed the tnder of their river, and long for the calm, tbe broken by the turmoil of endeavor.

The Veteran Laid to Rest.

An Impressive Scene at the Obsequies of the Late George Muller, Who Established the Orphanages at Bristol, England.

By Rev. W. E. Geil.

I WAS in Edinburgh, Scotland, when I learned of the death of George Muller, and determined to attend the funeral. After riding all day I left the train at Bristol about ten o'clock on Saturday evening, March 12. On Sunday afternoon it was my privilege to stand in that East room in Orphan-house No. 3 and look into the dead face of that wonderful man of prayer, faith, and sacrifice. There he lay. His face had an expression of perfect peace. The Bibles were open as he left them. The hymn book was open where he left it, only a few hours before he died. On the open pages was hymn No. 208 in the Bristol collection:

We'll sing of the Shepherd that died—
That died for the sake of the flock;
His love to the utmost was tried,
And immovable stood as a rock.
Our song then forever shall be
Of the Shepherd who gave himself thus;
No subject so glorious as he,
And none so affecting to us.
We'll sing of such subjects alone,
None other our tongues shall employ;
But better his love will be known
In yonder bright regions of joy.

His body, when I saw it, was in a casket (a plain wooden one, made of elm), it was resting right over the place where he was found dead early on the morning of March 10. On the lid was this inscription:

GEORGE MULLER.
FELL ASLEEP IN JESUS
MARCH 10, 1898,
IN HIS 93d YEAR.

The chapter he read the night before he died was Isaiah 6, and his last sermon



FRONT OF BETHESDA CHAPEL, BRISTOL, WHERE THE FUNERAL TOOK PLACE.

was preached on the text, II. Cor. 5:1: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." It was noteworthy that the last of all the thousands of sermons that George Muller preached should have been on the resurrection. Muller, after the age of seventy, preached the Gospel in forty-two countries, and traveled at that age a distance equal to nine times around this planet. He spoke fluently seven languages. This man, who was exact in all his accounts to a cent, handled, in answer to prayer, \$7,123,080, taught in his schools 121,683 children, distributed 281,652 entire Bibles, 1,448,662 New Testaments, 21,343 copies of the Psalms, and 222,196 other portions of the Bible in many different languages, and when he died had 2,000 orphans in the houses, requiring \$100,000 a year for their support.

Although Mr. Muller never once made an appeal to the public for help, he was more than once in great straits. Sometimes at night he had no food in the

house to feed the children on the following day, but he would hold a prayer-meeting, and the funds always came. The buildings alone cost Mr. Muller \$575,000, which was all sent to him unsolicited, by people who knew the work he was doing. He used to say that his object was to demonstrate to the world in the nineteenth century the efficacy of faith and prayer.

The conditions of admission to his orphanages have been the broadest. Children are taken from any part of Great Britain without fee or recommendation, the sole proviso being that they have lost both parents, have been born in wedlock and are in need. The boys are kept till they reach fourteen or fifteen, when they are apprenticed to suitable trades, and the girls till they are about seventeen, when decent, comfortable situations are easily attainable. When leaving, each child is provided with a good outfit. There is nothing of the "Institution" air about the inmates. They seem always bright and happy, and on certain days of the week romp about in the public park at St. Andrews just like the children of the ordinary citizen. Up to 1896 ten thousand orphans had passed through the homes, of whom many are occupying good positions in life. That the number is not greater is explained by the fact that numbers of the children are admitted as infants, and remain for fifteen years.

The tall, slim figure of the philanthro-

Visible from all parts of the room was the casket, resting on high supports. The orphans as they looked at it wept until they sobbed; and well they might, for it contained the remains of one who had stood to them in the place of father and mother—a man whose character they had learned to reverence, the friend and helper of them all. Such a tearful scene I have never witnessed, and never expect to see again. After the service the orphans—1,500 of them—followed the coffin to the



SCENE AT THE CEMETERY, WHERE 10,000 PEOPLE GATHERED.

Bethesda chapel, where another service was to be held. As it was carried in they turned and went sorrowfully back to the orphanages, a great family bereft. It was a wonderful sight, never to be forgotten by any who witnessed it.

Then came services in historic Bethesda; then the march to Arno's Vale Cemetery, through throngs that crowded the streets for two and a half miles. Flags at half-mast and the great bells tolling all over the city. A conservative estimate indicates that at least 100,000 people honored George Muller by their quiet, respectful presence at the funeral, either on the streets, at the chapel, or the cemetery. The day's proceedings formed a remarkable end to a unique career; they seemed, at least, to indicate how deeply the great work of the deceased veteran had found its way to the hearts of the Bristol citizens. It was impossible to move among the vast crowds without realizing there was something beyond the spirit of mere sight-seeing. The severe simplicity of the funeral arrangements left little in the way of the spectacular. Mr. Muller was the poor man's friend, and they turned out to honor him. The elmwood coffin, with plain brass furnishings, without a single flower, told out the wish of the orphan's friend, who would have not a penny wasted on himself; he would have it go to support the children, whom he loved so well.

AT ARNO'S VALE CEMETERY.

Fully 10,000 people stood on the slope of the western hill during the closing services. The grave prepared for the interment of the great philanthropist was that in which lay the remains of his two wives. The excavation was between two tall yew trees, under the shadow of a large evergreen, and was carried down through the clayey soil, until the top of the coffin laid there some three years ago was plainly visible.

Thousands looked into the grave and then quietly took their places on the hillside among the graves and waited for the cortege. Nearly the whole concourse belonged to the middle and working classes, the latter predominating. His grave is across the valley from the rich people and the world's great ones. He preferred to lie among the poor.

This evening the church bells all over Bristol are being tolled with muffled hammers; and thus all denominations, Roman Catholic as well as Protestant, are testifying to the respect in which Christian men of every name held the good man who gave his life to the cause of the most helpless of the human family. It was said of him as of one of old: "He was a good man, full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith, and much people were added unto the Lord."

The prayers of the readers of this journal are requested for the blessing of God upon its proprietor, and also upon those whose sermons, articles, or labors for Christ, are printed in it; and that its circulation may be used by the Holy Spirit for the conversion of sinners and the quickening of God's people.