

# CHRISTIAN HERALD

AND SIGNS OF OUR TIMES

OFFICES: BIBLE HOUSE, NEW YORK.  
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NEW YORK, MAY 25, 1898.

VOLUME 21.—NUMBER 21.  
PRICE FIVE CENTS.



## MEMORIAL DAY—1898.

Cover them gently—with each blossomed wreath  
Goes thought as fragrant to our boys beneath,  
Who taught all men with loyal deeds and true  
For such a Country's cause to dare and do.

Ascending with flower-odors from this ground,  
Let Faith look up and gratitude abound,  
Until the Resurrection reveille shall sound.  
May, 1898.

I. EDGAR JONES.



THE METROPOLITAN PULPIT



Exasperating Comforters.

A Sermon by Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, D.D., on the Text: Job 16: 2, . . . Miserable comforters are ye all.



HE man of Uz had a great many trials—the loss of his family, the loss of his property, the loss of his health; but the most exasperating thing that came upon him was the tantalizing talk of those who ought to have sympathized with him. And looking around upon them, and weighing what they had said, he utters the words of my text.

Why did God let sin come into the world? It is a question I often hear discussed, but never satisfactorily answered. God made the world fair and beautiful at the start. Why did it not stay so? God had the power to keep back sin and woe. Why did he not keep them back? Why not every cloud roseate, and every step a joy, and every sound music, and all the ages a long jubilee of sinless men and sinless women? God can make a rose as easily as he can make a thorn. Why, then, the predominance of thorns? He can make good, fair, ripe fruit as well as gnarled and sour fruit. Why so much, then, that is gnarled and sour? He can make men robust in health. Why, then, are there so many invalids? Why not have for our whole race perpetual leisure instead of this tug, and toil, and tussle for a livelihood? I will tell you why, God let sin come into the world—when I get on the other side of the river of death. That is the place where such questions will be answered and such mysteries solved. He who this side that river attempts to answer the question only illustrates his own ignorance and incompetency. All I know is one great fact, and that is, that a herd of woes has come in upon us, trampling down everything fair and beautiful. A sword at the gate of Eden and a sword at every gate.

More people under the ground than on it. The graveyards in vast majority. The six thousand winters have made more scars than the six thousand summers can cover up. Trouble has taken the tender heart of this world in its two rough hands and pinched it until the nations wail with the agony. If all the mounds of graveyards that have been raised were put side by side, you might step on them and nothing else, going all around the world, and around again, and around again. These are the facts. And now I have to say that, in a world like this, the grandest occupation is that of giving condolence. The holy science of imparting comfort to the troubled we ought all of us to study. There are many of you who could look around upon some of your very best friends, who wish you well, and are very intelligent, and yet be able truthfully to say to them in your days of trouble: "Miserable comforters are ye all."

I remark, in the first place, that very voluble people are incompetent for the work of giving comfort. Bildad and Eliphaz had the gift of language, and with their words almost bothered Job's life out. Alas! for these voluble people that go among the homes of the afflicted, and talk, and talk, and talk, and talk. They release their own sorrows, and then they tell the poor sufferers that they feel badly now but they will be worse after awhile. Silence! Do you expect with a thin court plaster of words to heal a wound deep as the soul? Step very gently around about a broken heart. Talk very softly around those whom God has afflicted. They go your way. A man has a terrible wound in his arm. The surgeon comes and binds it up. "Now," he says, "be very firm in a shoe, and be very careful of it. Let no one touch it." But the neighbors have heard of the accident, and they come in, and they say: "Let us see it." And the bandage is pulled off, and this one and that one must feel it and see how much it is swollen, and there is irritation, and inflammation, and exasperation, where there ought to be healing and cooling. The surgeon comes in, and says: "What does all this mean? You have no busi-

ness to touch those bandages. That wound will never heal unless you let it alone." So there are souls broken down in sorrow. What they most want is rest, or very careful and gentle treatment; but the neighbors have heard of the bereavement, or of the loss, and they come in to sympathize, and they say: "Show us now the wound. What were his last words? Rehearse now the whole scene. How did you feel when you found you were an orphan?" Tearing off the bandages here, and pulling them off there, leaving a ghastly wound that the balm of God's grace had already begun to heal. Oh, let no loquacious people, with ever-rattling tongues, go into the homes of the distressed!

Again I remark: that all those persons are incompetent to give any kind of comfort who act merely as worldly philosophers. They come in and say: "Why, this is what you ought to have expected. The laws of nature must have their way;" and then they get eloquent over something they have seen in post-mortem examinations. Now, away with all human philosophy at such a time. What difference does it make to that father and mother what disease their son died of? He is dead, and it makes no difference whether the trouble was in the epigastric or hypogastric region. If the philosopher be of the stoical school, he will come and say: "You ought to control your feelings. You must not cry so. You must cultivate a cooler temperament. You must have self-reliance, self-government, self-control;"—an iceberg reproving a hyacinth for having a drop of dew in its eye. A violinist has his instrument, and he sweeps his fingers across the strings, now evoking strains of joy, and now strains of sadness. He cannot play all the tunes on one string. The human soul is an instrument of a thousand strings, and all sorts of emotions were made to play on it. Now an anthem, now a dirge. It is no evidence of weakness when one is overcome of sorrow. Edmund Burke was found in the pasture-field with his arms around a horse's neck, caressing him, and some one said: "Why, the great man has lost his mind." No; the horse belonged to his son who had recently died; and his great heart broke over the grief. It is no sign of weakness that men are overcome of their sorrows. Thank God for the relief of tears. Have you never been in trouble when you could not weep, and you would have given anything for a cry? David did well when he mourned for Absalom, Abraham did well when he bemoaned Sarah, Christ wept for Lazarus; and the last man that I want to see come anywhere near me when I have any kind of trouble is a worldly philosopher.

Again, I remark: that those persons are incompetent for the work of comfort-bearing who have nothing but cant to offer. There are those who have the idea that you must groan over the distressed and afflicted. There are times in grief when one cheerful face, dawning upon a man's soul, is worth a thousand dollars to him. Do not whine over the afflicted. Take the promises of the Gospel, and utter them in a manly tone. Do not be afraid to smile if you feel like it. Do not drive any more hearse-strings through that poor soul. Do not tell him the trouble was fore-ordained; it will not be any comfort to know it was a million years coming. If you want to find splinters for a broken bone, do not take cast iron. Do not tell them it is God's justice that weighs out grief. They want to hear of God's tender mercy. In other words, do not give them aquafortis when they need valerian.

Again I remark: that those persons are poor comforters who have never had any trouble themselves. God keeps aged people in the world, I think, for this very work of sympathy. They have been through all these trials. They know all that which irritates and all that which

soothes. If there are men and women here who have old people in the house, or near at hand, so that they can easily reach them, I congratulate you. Some of us have had trials in life, and although we have had many friends around about us, we have wished that father and mother were still alive that we might go and tell them. Perhaps they could not say much, but it would have been such a comfort to have them around. These aged ones who have been all through the trials of life know how to give condolence. Cherish them; let them lean on your arm—these aged people. If, when you speak to them, they cannot hear just what you say the first time, and you have to say it a second time, when you say it a second time, do not say it sharply. If you do, you will be sorry for it on the day when you take the last look and brush back the silvery locks from the wrinkled brow just before they screw the lid on. Blessed be God for the old people! They may not have much strength to go around, but they are God's appointed ministers of comfort to a broken heart.

People who have not had trial themselves cannot give comfort to others. They may talk very beautifully and they may give you a great deal of poetic sentiment; but while poetry is perfume that smells sweet, it makes a very poor salve. If you have a grave in a pathway, and somebody comes and covers it all over with flowers, it is a grave yet. Those who have not had grief themselves know not the mystery of a broken heart. They know not the meaning of childlessness, and the having no one to put to bed at night, or the standing in a room where every book and picture, and door are full of memories—the door-mat where she sat, the cup out of which she drank—the place where she stood at the door and clapped her hands—the odd figures that she scribbled—the blocks she built into a house. Ah! no, you must have trouble yourself before you can comfort trouble in others. But come all ye who have been bereft, and ye who have been comforted in your sorrows, and stand around these afflicted souls and say to them: "I had that very sorrow myself. God comforted me and he will comfort you;" and that will go right to the spot. In other words, to comfort others, we must have faith in God, practical experience, and good, sound, common sense.

But there are three or four considerations that I will bring to those who are sorrowful and distressed, and that we can always bring to them, knowing that they will effect a cure. And the first consideration is that God sends our troubles in love. I often hear people in their troubles say: "Why, I wonder what God has against me?" They seem to think God has some grudge against them because trouble and misfortune have come. Oh, no. Do you not remember that passage of Scripture: "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth?" A child comes in with a very bad splinter in its hand, and you try to extract it. It is a very painful operation. The child draws back from you, but you persist. You are going to take that splinter out, so you take the child with a gentle but firm grasp, for although there may be pain in it, the splinter must come out. And it is love that dictates it, and makes you persist. My friends, I really think that nearly all our sorrows in this world are only the hand of our Father extracting some thorn. If all these sorrows were sent by enemies, I would say, Arm yourselves against them, and as in tropical climes when a tiger comes down from the mountains, and carries off a child from the village, the neighbors band together and go into the forest and hunt the monster, so I would have you, if I thought these misfortunes were sent by an enemy, go out and battle against them. But no, they come from a Father so kind, so loving, so gentle, that the prophet speaking of his tenderness and mercy, drops the idea of a father, and says: "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."

Again I remark there is comfort in the thought that God by all this process is going to make you useful. Do you know that those who accomplish the most for God and heaven have all been under the harrow? Show me a man that has done anything for Christ in this day, in a public or private place, who has had no trouble, and whose path has been smooth. Ah, no. I once went through an axe factory, and

I saw them take the bars of iron thrust them into the terrible furnace. Then besweated workmen with long-stirred the blaze. Then they brought a bar of iron and put it in a crushing chine, and then they put it between that bit it in twain. Then they put an anvil, and there were great hammers swung by machinery—each one half in weight—that went thump! thump! If that iron could have spoken it would have said: "Why all this beating? Why must I be pounded any more any other iron?" The workmen would have said: "We want to make axes of you, keen, sharp axes—axes with which to hew down the forest, and build ship, and erect houses, and carry thousand enterprises of civilization. This is the reason we pound you." Now, God puts a soul into the furnace of trial then it is brought out and run through the crushing machine, and then it comes down on the anvil and upon it, blow blow, blow after blow, until the soul comes out: "O Lord, what does all this mean? God says: 'I want to make some very useful out of you. You shall be something to hew with and something to build with. It is a practical process through which I am putting you.' My Christian friends, we want more in the church of God; not more wedges split with. We have enough of that. Not more bores with which to drill. We have too many bores. What we want is keen, sharp, well-tempered axes, and if there be any other way of making them than in the hot furnace, and under the hard anvil, and under the heavy hammer, I do not know what it is. Remember if God brings any kind of chastisement upon you, it is only to make you useful. Do not sit down discouraged and say: 'I have no more reason for living. I will have been dead.' Oh, there never was so good a reason for your living as now! By this ordeal you have been consecrated a part of the most high God. Go out and do your whole work for the Master.

Again: there is comfort in the thought that all our troubles are a revelation. Have you ever thought of it in that connection? The man who has never been through chastisement is ignorant about a thousand things in his soul he ought to know. For instance, here is a man who prides himself on his cheerfulness of character. He has no patience with anybody who is depressed in spirits. Oh, it is easy for him to be cheerful, with his house, his filled wardrobe, and well-stocked instruments of music, and tapestried parlor, and plenty of money in the bank, and a plan for some permanent investment. It is easy for him to be cheerful. But suppose his fortune goes to pieces, and his house goes down under the sheriff's hammer, and the banks will not have anything to do with his paper. Suppose people who were once elegantly entertained at his table get so short-sighted that they cannot recognize him upon the street. How then? Is it so easy to be cheerful? It is easy to be cheerful in the home, after the day's work is done, and the piano is turned on, and the house is full of romping little ones. But suppose the piano is shut because the fingers are played on it will no more touch the keys, and the childish voice that asked so many questions will ask no more. Then it is so easy? When a man wakes up and finds that his resources are all gone, he begins to rebel, and he says: "God is hard; God is outrageous. He has no business to do this to me." My friends, those of us who have been through trouble know what a sinful and rebellious heart we have, and how much God has put up with, and how much we need pardon. It is only in the light of a flaming furnace that we can learn our own weakness and our own lack of resource.

There is also a great deal of comfort in the fact that there will be a family reconstruction in a better place. From the land, or England, or Ireland, a man emigrates to America. It is very hard parting, but he comes, after awhile, bringing home as to what a good land. Another brother comes, a sister comes, and another, and after a while the mother comes, and after a while the father comes, and now they are all here, and they are a time of great congratulation and a very pleasant reunion. Well, it is just so with our families; they are emigrating toward a better land. Now, one



### SPRING OPENS THE KLONDIKE.

Letters from Gold-Seekers Who Tempted the Passes—Sufferings, Dangers, Disappointments — The Great Treasury of Alaskan Gold.

THUS far the Klondike has verified its claim as the possessor of vast riches difficult of access. Still the glowing expectations of many who have gone to Alaska have not been realized, and the caution which THE CHRISTIAN HERALD gave to its readers when the excitement broke out a year ago, is still in order. There are, undoubtedly, numbers of people now preparing to go who, before many months are passed, will be among the great army of the disappointed, who gave up the comforts and manifold advantages they were enjoying at

rived at the fields, who will set to work earnestly endeavoring to win the wealth for which they have made so great a sacrifice.

Evidences of winter in the Klondike are now rapidly passing away, and in a short time the roads will be open for travel. It has been a hard winter for many who months ago, settled up their affairs and after spending all their available means in an outfit, started for the gold fields. Tacoma and Seattle are the points of departure from which the pilgrims of the pick set forth for the northern Eldorado, and since the gold fever began the development of these two

our young State might, like Tacoma, well tempt the traveler to stay his footsteps here rather than tempt the Alaskan passes for the Yukon's hidden gold.

Having shown clearly and conscientiously that great difficulties, dangers and uncertainty beset the quest of Yukon gold, we may state in cold figures the brilliant facts so far as they can be tabulated correctly of Alaskan gold production. Up to 1890 the Alaskan output of gold and silver was \$5,000,000; from 1890 to 1896, inclusive, the output of gold alone was \$30,000,000; that for 1897 has been estimated at \$10,000,000. The number of lives lost, of physical constitutions wrecked forever, of unutterable sufferings endured in wresting these millions from mother earth's unfriendly treasure-house in the Arctic, has never been computed.

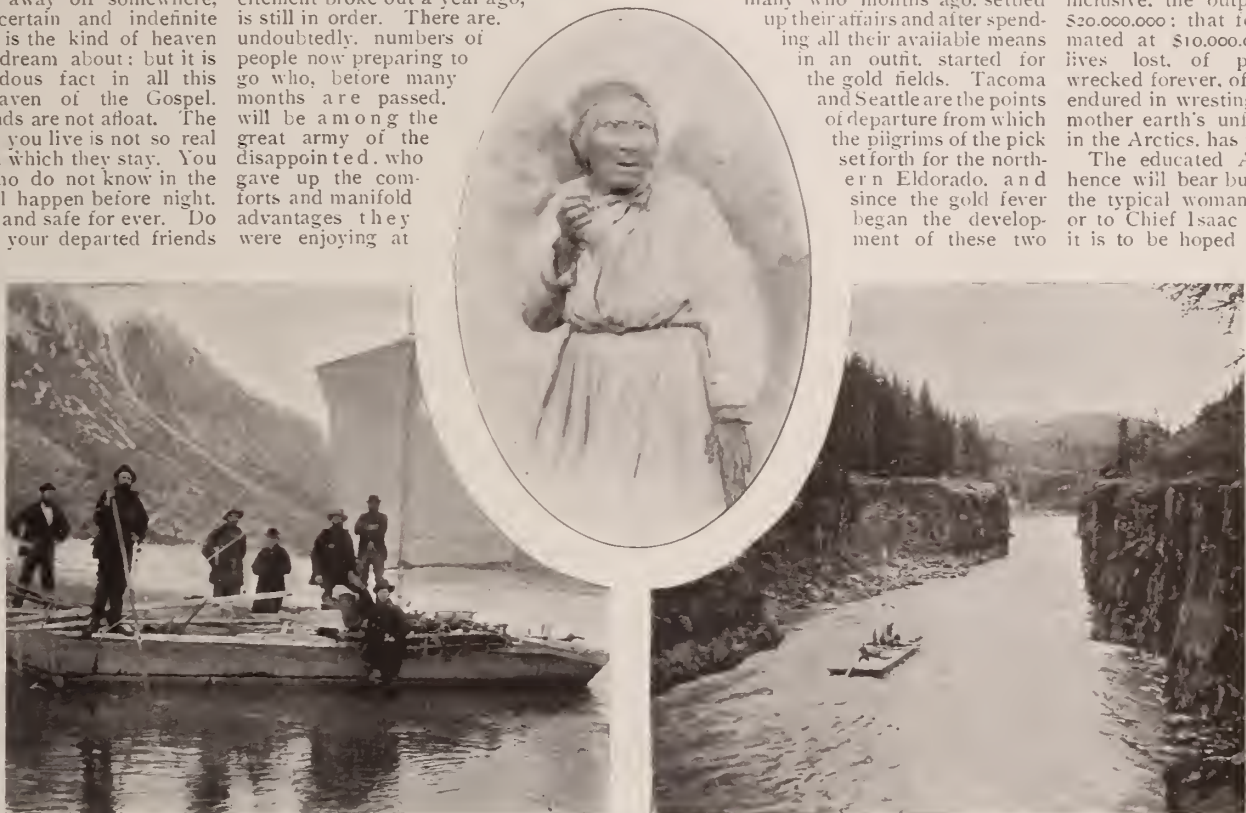
The educated Alaskan of fifty years hence will bear but small resemblance to the typical woman, as shown in our cut, or to Chief Isaac and his sons, although it is to be hoped that their qualities of

robust endurance will not be eliminated by the sometimes weakening process of civilization. It is interesting to forecast in a speculative way the changes time will work in the territory's rugged physical features. Science may find better ways than now exist of overcoming the difficulties of Miles Canyon and White Horse Rapids (other wise known as "Miner's Grave," the most dangerous parts of the Yukon. Through Miles Canyon, 50 feet at the broadest and 25 feet at the narrowest, the Lewis River rushes between perpendicular walls of red granite, 50 feet high

and even dogs show fear of the journey as they drag the sleds along the narrowing ridge of ice on the side of the swirling rapids, down which boats go at the rate of many miles an hour when the stream is fairly open for travel. Railway and steamboat connection between Dyea and Dawson City, by way of Lakes Tagish and Atlin and the Hootalinqua River, avoiding White Horse Rapids and Miles Canyon, have already been planned.

Bushrod Washington James, in his interesting book on Alaska, writes that the native Indians of the territory, with few exceptions, "are teachable, intelligent, and eager to learn. . . . There is not the usual wild rush for freedom so characteristic of children used to civilization. The world of wonders open to the Indian children and even adult scholars, is so fascinating that the hour for leaving them is received without any demonstration of delight. . . . With mining machinery and tools for building, let school supplies be forthcoming, together with facilities for teaching properly, so that there may be no half-Christian natives to redeem from vice." The influx from all points of the globe, means the importation of many vices, and the

importance of planting schools and missions throughout the territory cannot be too strongly emphasized. In addition to the Sitka Industrial School and the Haines Training school at Chilkoot (which are the educational centres), there are about fourteen schools all under Government supervision and making reports to the Government. Most of these schools—if not all—were planted by missionaries, and the degree of civilization found in Alaska is conceded to be the work of missions established prior to gold discoveries.



AN OUTFIT ON TAGISH LAKE.—INDIAN WOMAN OF THE LOWER YUKON.—"MILES CANYON" ON LEWIS RIVER.

Oh, how hard it is to part with hi! Another goes. Oh, how hard it is to part with her! And another, and another, and we ourselves will, after awhile, go over, and then we will be tother. Oh, what a reunion! Do you believe that? "Yes," you say. Oh! you do not. You do not believe it as you believe other things. If you do, and with the same emphasis, why it would take tenths of your trouble off your heart. That fact is, heaven to many of us is a great fog. It is away off somewhere, shrouded with an uncertain and indefinite illumination. That is the kind of heaven that many of us dream about: but it is the most tremendous fact in all this universe—this heaven of the Gospel. Departed friends are not afloat. The presence in which you live is not so real as the residence in which they stay. You are afloat—you who do not know in the morning what will happen before night. You are housed and safe for ever. Do not therefore, pity your departed friends who have died in Christ. They do not need your pity. Do not say to those who have departed: "For child!" "For father!" "For mother!" They are not dead. You are not dead. You are at home — you are at home — your homes have not been shattered, not they. Do not dwell on your sorrows with your relatives in this world. All day long you are off to business. Will it not be pleasant when you can be together for a while? I expect to see my kindred in heaven! I expect to see them just as certainly as I expect to go to-day. Aye, I shall more certainly see them. Eight or ten will come from the graveyard back of Somerville; thirty will come up from Greenwood; and I shall know them better than I ever knew them here. And your friends may be across the sea, but the trumpet that sounds here will sound there. Be what Haliburton (I think it was) — he told Mr. Haliburton—said in his last moments: "I thank God that I ever lived, and that I have a father in heaven, and a mother in heaven, and brothers in heaven, and sisters in heaven, and I am now going up to see them."

Remember once more: our troubles in this world are preparative for glory. What a consolation it was for Paul — from the stern deck of a foundering ship to the calm presence of Jesus! What a transition it was for Latimer — from the stake to the throne! What a transition it was for Rert Hall — from insanity to glory! What a transition it was for Richard Baxter from the dropsy to the "Saint's Everlasting Rest!" And what a transition it was for you — from a world of sorrow to a world of joy! John Holland, when he was dying, said: "What means this brightness in the room? Have you lighted the candles?" "No," they replied, "we have not lighted any candles." Then said he, "Welcome heaven!" The light already shining upon his pillow. Oh! ye who are persecuted in this world, your enemies will wipe off the track after awhile, and all will speak well of you among the thrones. Hail ye who are sick now. No medicines will cure you. One breath of the eternal will thrill you with immortal vigor. Hail ye who are lonesome now. There are a million spirits to welcome you in their companionship. O ye bereft souls, there will be no gravedigger's spade that will cleave the side of that hill, and there will be no dirge wailing from that vale. The river of God, deep as the joy of heaven, will roll on between banks of preciousness with balm, and over depths bright with jewels, and under skies roseate with brightness, argosies of light going down the stream to the stroke of glittering oar and the throng of angels! Not a sigh in the wind; not a tear mingling with the waters.

home to seek that which proved to be a shadow.

Some of the gold-seekers who set out last fall have written letters to friends in New York City, regretting the step they have taken, and describing, in a pathetic way, the hardships they have had to undergo. One declares that he is now sure a kind providence did not construct his physical frame on principles which would warrant him in standing for several hours daily in snow up to his waist, and that he wishes he was again by his own fireside. Another writes that he never knew what misery was until, with hundreds of others, he made the desperate venture of crossing the Chilkoot in winter. The writer of this last-mentioned letter was one of a party who narrowly escaped being suffocated in the great snow-slide, or avalanche, which overwhelmed nearly a hundred victims in the mountain pass. He describes the scene after the avalanche as heart-rending—friends vainly calling for friends, wives for husbands, brothers for brothers. Large numbers threw up their outfits, representing all their possessions, and turned their backs forever on the fatal mountains, beyond which lay the gold which had already cost so many lives. Many of the gold-seekers, too disabled to turn back or go forward alone, required a great deal of attention from those more fortunate. Comfort of any description was out of the question: colds, sickness, pneumonia and a multitude of other troubles met them everywhere.

These depressing accounts are, of course, from those who belong to the army of the unsuccessful. There are others, of brave hearts, who have overcome the dangers of the journey and ar-

cities has been phenomenal. Many curious visitors, not seeking gold so much as recreation, will doubtless spend summer vacations in interested study of both places and neighboring districts. Tacoma, "Bride of the Opal Sea," as the Western poets call this city, more practically known as the head of navigation on Puget Sound and the late terminus of a great transcontinental railway system, recently extended to its northern neighbor, Seattle, hardly needs further description than has been given it many times by enthusiastic writers, with



ISAAC, CHIEF OF THE KLONDIKE TRIBE, AND HIS TWO SONS.