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HAMLET'S CITY.

By William Jackson Armstrong.

How many of those who sit in our theatres on Hamlet night and watch the solemn sentinels stalking in front of the giant walls of Kronborg Castle realize that the scenery in this opening act of the drama is not the fanciful work of the stage decorator, but a representation of an actual fortress standing in a remote corner of Northern Europe, and that while the mimic panorama of the play unfolds, the silent guardsmen of an actual Danish king are steadily tramping the ramparts of the real Kronborg, as they have tramped it unceasingly night and day during the three centuries since the king of dramatists laid there the scene of his kingliest plot?

Dear, distant, fascinating little Denmark, perched aloft atop of Europe, her bristling petty peninsula pointing forever like a magnetic needle to the pole, her tiny islands glassed about with serene waters that seem the fit mirror for the colossal shadows of departed pagan gods! Who that has dwelt in the quaint land, though ever so briefly, is not haunted by the memory of the subdued glory spread through level fields and solemn forests; by recollections of gray, tranquil days and flashing auroral nights; of gloomy, deserted palaces and stately parks of kings; of curious antique villages; and, more than all, of that transfigured spot of earth warped out of history and immortalized to fancy by one touch from the genius of the poet—Elsinore?

The traveller in Denmark usually reaches Hamlet's City by rail from Copenhagen. Taking the train just outside of the ancient ramparts of the Cimbrian capital, he is swiftly carried along the border of the compact little island of Zealand, at whose northern extremity Elsinore and its palace fortress stand. On either hand, as he goes, lies an entrancing picture: on the left the fertile Danish fields, green as those of England, dotted with the red-tiled cottages of peasant farmers, or again, a varied landscape of royal forests of oak and beech, above whose tops shoot up here and there the spires of cathedrals or the venerable towers of castle and palace; on the right the flashing waters of the Sound dividing the Kattegat from the Baltic, its surface sprinkled with sails, beyond which gleams the low white line of the Swedish coast. Midway down the Sound juts up visibly in its waters the little island of Hveen, famous as the locality of the castle observatory of the mediæval astronomer, Tycho Brahe—he of the golden nose—who played pranks alike with the stars of heaven and the kings of earth, and long lived here in his pinched domain after the most eccentric fashion ever adopted by a philosopher.

An hour out of Copenhagen, and the massive towers of Kronborg are already in sight. So giant-like and majestically they rise from the fortress against the low northern sky, that the little city at their feet appears abased into the very earth. In twenty minutes more the limits of the town itself are crossed, and the traveller, like Hamlet's guests, is "at home in Elsinore."

DR. TALMAGE'S OUT-OF-TOWN SERMONS.

AUTHORIZED AND REVISED PUBLICATION OF THE SERMONS DELIVERED BY REV. T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D.D., DURING HIS SUMMER VACATION, JUNE—SEPTEMBER, 1886, AT VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY.

☞ *The reports of Dr. Talmage's sermons delivered during the present summer vacation, to be printed in the ensuing numbers of* THE BROOKLYN MAGAZINE, *are furnished for this publication under special arrangements with the Tabernacle pastor, and receive his personal authorization and revision in every instance.*

AN ISLAND VISION.

DELIVERED FROM THE REAR PIAZZA OF THE THOUSAND ISLANDS HOUSE, ALEXANDRIA BAY, NEW YORK, SUNDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 27, 1886.

TEXTS: "I, John, was in the isle that is called Patmos."—REVELATION i. 9.

"And the twelve gates were twelve pearls."—REVELATION xxi. 21.

Sabbath finds us amid the Thousand Isles of the St. Lawrence. Amid the enchantment of the scenery some of us are like Paul when he said, "Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell." Not having read the geologists' account of how this region was formed, I may surmise that after the St. Lawrence began its majestic roll these islands were dropped into it out of the heavenly landscape. Islands above us, islands below us, islands all around us, I am reminded how much the islands of the world have had to do with sacred and profane history. Elba, from which Napoleon started for his last struggle; and St. Helena, where he ended it; Island of Guernsey, where the great soul of Victor Hugo chafed in exile until republicanism in France drove back despotism; Isle of Borneo, where Adoniram Judson stood, a flaming evangel; the Island of Caprera, where Garibaldi rested after the emancipation of Italy; Island of Cyprus, where Barnabas preached; Island of Melita, on which Paul was shipwrecked; and last of all, but mightier than all, and more impressive than all, the Island of Patmos, of which my text speaks, and from which St. John, the exiled Ephesian Gospelizer, saw the twelve pearline gates. If God will help us, we can from these Thousand Isles, on this Sabbath afternoon, see the same glittering portals.

Our subject speaks of a great metropolis, the existence of which many have doubted. Standing on the wharf and looking off upon the harbor, and seeing the merchantmen coming up the bay, the flags of foreign nations streaming from the top-gallants, you immediately make up your mind that those vessels came from foreign ports, and you say, "That is from Hamburg, and that is from Marseilles, and that is from Southampton, and that is from Havana;" and your supposition is accurate. But from the city of which I am now speaking no weather-beaten merchantmen or frigates with scarred bulkhead have ever come. There has been a vast emigration into that city, but no emigration from it—so far as our natural vision can descry.

"There is no such city," says the undevout astronomer. "I have stood in high towers with a mighty telescope and have swept the heavens, and I have seen spots on the sun and caverns in the moon, but no towers have ever risen on my vision, no palaces, no temples, no shining

RELIGION IN SUMMER.

It takes more grace to be an earnest and useful Christian in summer than in any other season. The very destitute, through lack of fuel and thick clothing, may find the winter the trying season, but those comfortably circumstanced find summer the Thermopylæ that tests their Christian courage and endurance.

The spring is suggestive of God and heaven and a resurrection day. That eye must be blind that does not see God's footsteps in the new grass, and hear His voice in the call of the swallow at the eaves. In the white blossoms of the orchards we find suggestion of those whose robes have been made white in the blood of the Lamb. A May morning is a door opening into heaven. So autumn mothers a great many moral and religious suggestions. The season of corn-husking, the gorgeous woods that are becoming the catafalque of the dead year, remind the dullest of his own fading and departure. But summer fatigues and weakens, and no man keeps his soul in as desirable a frame, unless by positive resolution and especial implorations. Pulpit and pew often get stupid together, and ardent devotion is adjourned until September.

But who can afford to lose two months out of each year, when the years are so short and so few? He who stops religious growth in July and August will require the next six months to get over it. Nay, he never recovers. At the season when the fields are most full of leafage and life, let us not be lethargic and stupid. Let us remember that iniquity does not cease in summer-time. She never takes a vacation. The devil never leaves town. The child of want, living up that dark alley, has not so much fresh air nor sees as many flowers as in winter-time. In cold weather the frost blossoms on her window-pane, and the snow falls in wreaths in the alley. God pity the wretchedness that pants and sweats and festers and dies on the hot pavements and in the suffocating cellars of the town!

Let us remember that our exit from this world will more probably be in the summer than in any other season, and we cannot afford to die at a time when we are least alert and worshipful. At midsummer the average of departures is larger than in cool weather. The sunstrokes, the dysenteries, the fevers, the choleras, have affinity for July and August. On the edge of summer Death stands whetting his scythe for a great harvest. We are most careful to have our doors locked, and our windows fastened, and our "burglar alarm" set at times when thieves are most busy; and at a season of the year when diseases are most active in their burglaries of life we need to be ready.

Our charge, therefore, is, make no adjournment of your religion till cool weather. Whether you stay in town, or seek the farmhouse, or the seashore, or the mountains, be faithful in prayer, in Bible reading, and in attendance upon Christian ordinances. He who throws away two months of life wastes that for which many a dying sinner would have been willing to give all his possessions when he found that the harvest was past and the summer was ended.

A tree, when in full leafage, drops a great deal of refreshment; but in a little while the sun strikes through, and you keep shifting your position, until, after a while, the sun is set at such a point that you have no shade at all. But go in the heart of some great rock, such as you see in Yosemite or the Alps, and there is everlasting shadow. There has been thick shade there for six thousand years, and will be for the next six thousand. So our divine Rock, once covering us, always covers us. The same yesterday, to-day, and forever! always good, always kind, always sympathetic! You often hold a sunshade over your head passing along the road or a street; but after a while your arm gets tired, and the very effort to create the shadow makes you weary. But the rock in the mountains, with fingers of everlasting stone, holds its own shadow. So God's sympathy needs no holding up from us. Though we are too weak from sickness or trouble to do anything but lie down, over us He stretches the shadow of His benediction.

God's shadow falls upon us, and we wrongly think that it is night. As a father in a garden stoops down to kiss his child the shadow of his body falls upon it; and so many of the dark misfortunes of our life are not God going away from us, but our Heavenly Father stooping down to give us the kiss of His infinite and everlasting love. It is the shadow of a sheltering Rock, and not of a devouring lion.

Instead of standing right out in the blistering noonday sun of earthly trial and trouble, come under the Rock. You may drive into it the longest caravan of disasters. Room for the suffering, heated, sunstruck, dying, of all generations, in the shadow of the great Rock.

"Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee."