

DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON.

HE PREACHES ABOUT THE GIANT'S BEDSTEAD.

Lessons Drawn from the Bible Recital of the Encounter of the Israelites with the Eleven Foot Heathen Warrior—A Powerful Sermon.

Og, King of Bashan.

The text was Deuteronomy 11, 11: "Only Og, King of Bashan, remained of the remnant of giants; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; it is not in Rabboth of the children of Ammon? Nine cubits was the length thereof and four cubits the breadth of it."

The story of giants is mixed with myth. William the Conqueror was said to have been of overtowering altitude, but when in aftertime his tomb was opened his bones indicated that he had been physically of ordinary size. Roland the Hero was said to have been of astounding stature, but when his sepulcher was examined his armor was found only large enough to fit an ordinary man. Alexander the Great had helmets and shields of enormous size made and left among the people whom he had conquered, so as to give the impression that he was a giant, although he was rather under than over the usual height of a man. But that in other days and lands there were real giants is authentic. One of the guards of the Duke of Brunswick was eight feet tall, and in a museum in London is the skeleton of Charles Birne, eight feet four inches in stature. The Emperor Maximian was over eight feet.

Pliny tells of a giant nine feet high and two other giants nine feet high and a half feet. So I am not sure when I come to my text and find King Og, a giant, and the size of his bedstead, turning the cubits of the text into feet, the bedstead of Og, the King, must have been about thirteen and a half feet long. Judging from that the giant who occupied it was probably about eleven feet in stature, or nearly twice the average human size. There was no need of Rabbinical writers trying to account for the presence of this giant, King Og, as they did, by saying that he came down from the other side of the world, being tall enough to wade the waters beside Noah's ark, or that he rode on the top of the ark, the passengers inside the ark daily providing him with food. There was nothing supernatural about him. He was simply a man of unusual height.

Cyris and Solomon slept on beds of gold, and Sardanapalus had 150 bedsteads of gold burned up with him, but this bedstead of my text was of iron—everything sacrificed for strength to hold this excessive avoidpious, this Alp of bone and flesh. No wonder this couch was kept as a curiosity at Rabboth, and people went from far and near to see it, just as now people go to museums to behold the armor of the ancients. You say what a lighter this giant, King Og, must have been. No doubt of it. Suppose the size of his sword and breastplate corresponded to the size of his bedstead, and his stride across the battlefield and the full stroke of his arm must have been appalling. With an armed host he comes down to drive back the Israelites, who are marching on from Egypt to Canaan.

We have no particulars of the battle, but I think the Israelites trembled when they saw this monster of a man moving down to crush them. Alas for the Israelites! Will their troubles never cease? What can be done? A giant ten feet high do against this warrior of eleven feet, and what can short swords do against a sword whose gleam must have been like a flash of lightning? The battle of Edrei opened, Moses and his army met the giant and his army. The Lord of Hosts descended into the fight, and the gigantic strides that Og had made when advancing into the battle were more than equaled by the gigantic strides with which he retreated. Huzza for triumphant Israel! Sixty fortified cities surrendered to his sword, and of indescribable offence comes into their possession, and all that is left of the giant king is the iron bedstead. "Nine cubits was the length thereof and four cubits the breadth of it."

Why did not the Bible give us the size of the giant instead of the size of the bedstead? Why did it not indicate that the giant was eleven feet high instead of telling us that his couch was thirteen and a half feet long? No doubt among other things it was to teach us that you can judge of a man by his sword and shield. Show me a man's associates, show me a man's home, and I will tell you what he is without your telling me one word about him. You cannot only tell a man according to the old adage, "By the company he keeps," but by the books he reads, by the pictures he admires, by the church he attends, by the places he visits. Moral giants and moral pygmies, intellectual giants and intellectual pygmies, like physical giants or physical pygmies can be judged by their surroundings.

That a man in his thirty years faithful in attendance upon churches and prayer meetings and Sunday-schools, and putting himself among intense religious associations. He may have his imperfections, but he is a very good man. Great is his religious stature. The other man has been for thirty years among influences intensely worldly, and he has shut himself out from all other influences, and his religious stature is that of a dwarf. No man ever has been or can be independent of his surroundings—social, intellectual, moral, religious. The Bible indicates the length of the giant by the length of his bedstead. Let no man say, "I will be good," and yet keep evil surroundings. Let no man say, "I will be faithful as a Christian," and yet consort chiefly with worldlings. You are proposing an everlasting impossibility.

When a man departs this life you can tell what has been his influence in a community for good by those who mourn for him and by how sincere and long continued are the regrets of his taking off. There may be no pomp or obsequies and no pretense at eulphology, but you can tell how high he was in consecration, and how high in usefulness by how low is his shadow when he comes to lie down. What is true of individuals is true of cities and nations. Show me the free libraries and schools of a city, and I will tell you the intelligence of the people. Show me its gallery of painting and sculpture, and I will tell you the artistic advancement of its citizens. Show me its churches, and I will tell you the moral and religious status of the place. From the fact that Og's bedstead was thirteen and a half feet long, I conclude the giant himself was about eleven feet high. But let no one by this thought be induced to surrender to unfavorable environments. A man can make his own

bedstead. Chantry and Hugh Miller were born stonemasons, but the one became an immortal sculptor and the other a Christian scientist whose name will never die. Turner, the painter, in whose praise John Ruskin expended the greatest zenith of his life, was the son of a shoemaker and a "poor old man with a hair shave." Dr. Prudden, one of the greatest scholars of all time, earned his way through college by scouring pots and pans. The late Judge Bradley worked his own way up from a charcoal burner to the bench of the Supreme Court of the United States. Yes, a man can decide the size of his own bedstead.

Notice furthermore that even giants must rest. Such enormous physical endowment on the part of King Og might suggest the capacity to stride across all fatigues and on all lands. No. He has required an iron bedstead. Giants must rest. Not appreciating that fact, how many of the giants yearly break down. Giants in business, giants in art, giants in eloquence, giants in usefulness. They have no rest in their days. They try to escape the consequence of overwork by a voyage across the sea or a sail in a summer yacht, or call on physicians for relief from insomnia or restoration of unstrung nerves or the arrest of appetites when all they need is what the giant of my text resorted to—an iron bedstead.

Let no one think because he has great strength of body or mind that he can afford to trifle with his unusual gifts. The commercial world, the political world, the religious world, are all the time shaken with the crash of falling giants. King Og no doubt had a throne, but the Bible never mentions his throne. King Og no doubt had a crown, but the Bible never mentions his crown. King Og no doubt had a scepter, but the Bible does not mention his scepter. Yet one of the largest verses of the Bible is taken up in describing his bedstead. So God all up and down the Bible honors sleep. Adam, with his head on a pillow of Edenic roses, has his own divine gift of a beautiful companionship. Jacob, with his head on a pillow of rock, has his sleep glorified with a ladder filled with descending and ascending angels. Christ, with a pillow made out of the folded up cat of the monarchs slumber in the back part of the storm tossed boat.

The only case of accident to sleep mentioned in the Bible was when Eutychus fell from a window during a sermon of Paul, who had preached until midnight, but that was not so much a condemnation sleep as a warning of long sermons. More sleep is what the world wants. Economize in everything but sleep.

Notice, furthermore, that God's people on the way to Canaan need not be surprised if they confront some sort of a giant. Had not Israel's host had trouble enough already? No! Red Sea not enough. Water famine not enough. Long marches not enough. Opposition by enemies of ordinary stature not enough. They must need Og, the giant of the iron bedstead, to give them the length thereof and four cubits the breadth of it." Why not let these Israelites go smoothly into Canaan without this gigantic opposition? Oh, they needed to have their courage and faith further tested and developed! And blessed the man who, in his march toward the Promised Land, does not meet more than one giant. Do not conclude that you are not on the way to Canaan because of this obstacle.

As well might the Israelites conclude they were not on the way to the Promised Land because they met one giant. Standing in your way is some evil propensity, some social persecution, some business misfortune, some physical distress. Not one of you but meets a giant who would like to hew you in twain. Higher than the clouds he darkens the sky and the rattle of his buckler stuns the ear. But you are going to get the victory, as did the Israelites. In the name of the God of Moses and David and Joshua and Paul, charge on him, and you will leave his carcass in the wilderness that was to be his home.

Brethren, I have made up my mind that we will have to fight all the way up to the Promised Land. I used to think that after awhile I would get into a time where it would be smooth and easy, but the time does not seem to be coming in this world. By the time King Og is used up so that he cannot get into his iron bedstead, some other giant of opposition looms up to dispute our way. Let us stop looking for an easy time and make it a thirty years' war, or a sixty years' war, or a hundred years' war, if we live so long.

Must I be carried to the skies in power and glory and to the right? While others fought in my prize And sailed through bloody seas?

Do you know the name of the biggest giant that you can possibly meet—and you can meet him? He is thirteen and a half feet high, but 100 feet high. His bedstead is as long as the continent. His name is Doubt. His common food is infidel books and skeptical lectures and ministers who do not know whether the Bible is inspired at all, inspired in spots, and Christians who are more in fact than Christian. You will never reach the Promised Land unless you slay the giant, Kill Doubt or Doubt will kill you. How to overcome this giant? By faith, go with people who have faith, read every thing that comes in your faith, avoid as you would ship fever and smallpox the people who lack faith.

In this battle against King Og use not for weapons the crutch of a limping man, the sword of a sharp pen of a controversialist, but the sword of truth, which is the word of God. The word "I" is made up of the same number of letters as the word "Og," and it is just as big a giant. If the Bible be true, if the Bible be inspired, if Christ be God, if our belief and behavior decide our future destiny. If, if, if. I hate that word "If." Noah Webster says it is a conjunction; I say it is an armed giant. Satan breathed upon it a curse when he said to Christ, "Thou art the Son of God." What a deadly and insidious "If." Against that giant "If" hurl Job's "I know" and Paul's "I know." "I know that my Redeemer liveth." "I know in whom I have believed." Down with the "If." "Oh, that giant Doubt is such a cruel giant! It attacks man in the last hour. It did not let my mother alone even in her dying moments. After a life of holiness and consecration such as I never had in my life, she said to me, "Father, what if, after all, my prayers and struggles should go for nothing." Why could she not, after all the trials and sicknesses and bereavements in her life, be allowed to go without a cruel stroke from Doubt, the giant? Do you wonder I have a grudge against the old monster? If I could I would give him a bigger bounce than Satan got when

ILLINOIS INCIDENTS.

Incendiarism at Waverly—Business of Insurance Companies—Torn by His Own Dog—Crossed the Sea to Wed Her Old Sweetheart—Sudden Deaths.

At Vandalla Ross Locke was acquitted of murdering Charles Stolle, self-defense being admitted.

At Mascoutah Mrs. Barbara Fehl was found dead at her home. Death is supposed to have been caused by a stroke of apoplexy. Her husband met death in a runaway accident a few years ago.

FREDERICK REISS, a prosperous German farmer of Marissa, has long led the lonely life of a bachelor. Recently he decided to make a change. A blue-eyed school girl, the ideal of his boyhood days, arose in his mind, and he wrote to the fatherland to inquire of his sweetheart of long ago. The answer came that she had been married, but was a widow. A handsome, middle-aged lady came to Marissa, Wis. She had traveled across the sea to marry her schoolboy sweetheart.

DEC. 25 the west side of the square at Waverly was burned. The other night fire broke out between W. C. Fleming's drug and Dennis & Leake's grocery store and burned Fleming's drug store, a two-story building owned by John Skohan, and two-story blocks occupied by Dennis & Leake and T. Micham's clothing store. W. C. Fleming barely escaped with his life, his hair and beard being entirely burned off. Mayor Wemple received a letter saying, "Stop the Sturgis case or the town will burn."

The Sturgis case is a whisky-peddling one and the Mayor paid no attention to the letter and prosecuted the case. It is almost known who wrote the letter, and a lynching was talked of.

AUDITOR PAVRY has issued a summary of the business done and the standing of the fire and marine insurance companies doing business in this State. Seven joint stock companies of this State wrote \$77,926,073 in risks, received \$1,047,897 in premiums, and paid \$455,320 in losses. Joint stock companies of other States wrote \$20,337,430 of risks in Illinois, received \$7,043,696 in premiums, and paid \$3,419,708 of loss. Foreign companies with United States branches wrote \$30,396,237 in risks in Illinois, received premiums amounting to \$2,843,356 and paid losses \$1,207,477. Mutual companies of this State wrote risks amounting to \$3,753,358, received premiums \$147,955, and paid \$557,344 on losses. Mutual companies of other States wrote risks in Illinois amounting to \$21,245,861, received \$2,711,015 in premiums, and paid losses aggregating \$68,235. Plate glass guarantee, steam boiler and live stock insurance companies wrote risks amounting to \$109,737,482, received on premiums \$872,430, and paid on losses \$305,723.

The case of the village of Benton against James Wolverton for selling whisky will go down in history. Mr. Wolverton took a change of venue from the city courts to Esquire Mulkey's court. The proceedings were as usual until the court rendered judgment against Mr. Wolverton, fining him \$20 and costs. Immediately Wolverton left the room and made a desperate break for freedom. Mr. Ragland, the marshal, is a big 200-pounder, and shouting into the court-room for help, he made a dash for his horse and started in pursuit. William Hart, the city attorney, rushed out. He is an athletic athlete and holds a record of ten and one-half seconds. Taking in the situation at a glance he hastened to join in the cross-country free-for-all. Wolverton, having some three hundred yards the start, seemed likely to reach the road before being overtaken by the marshal. Mulkey, seeing the advantage of short cuts, leaped on a horse standing near, and clearing fences with a bound was soon ahead of the prisoner and between him and liberty. Marshal Ragland bore down on the north and Attorney Hart on the south and together they came up from behind the bird was hemmed. Mr. Wolverton, after vain efforts to give security for fine and costs, paid and left town. Judge Mulkey, Marshal Ragland, and Attorney Hart are the heroes of the hour.

The Auditor of Public Accounts has issued a report on Charles F. Grey, Robert D. Shepard and John R. Lindgren to organize the State Bank of Evanston, at Evanston, with a capital stock of \$100,000.

At Lincoln Ralph Gevers' little daughter fell into a tub of boiling soft soap, causing such injuries that death occurred. In rescuing the child the mother was badly burned. Mrs. Gevers had poured the soap into the tub to cool.

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SOBER OR STARTLING, FAITHFULLY RECORDED.

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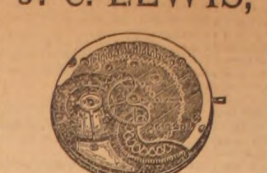
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