

## SUNDAY'S SERMON.

ONE OF DR. T. DEWITT TALMAGE'S  
SPEERING DISCOURSES.

Subject: "God Among the Shells."

TEXT: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte and onycha."—Exodus xxxiii, 24.

You may not have noticed the shells of the Bible, although it is so clearly the sacred book God calls you to consider and employ them as He called Moses to consider and employ them. The onycha of my text is a shell found on the banks of the Red Sea, and Moses and his army must have crushed many of them under foot as they crossed the hithered waters, onycha on the beach and onycha in the unfolded bed of the deep. I shall speak of this shell as a beautiful and practical revelation of God, and as true as the first chapter of Genesis and the last chapter of Revelation or everything between.

Not only is this shell, the onycha, found at the Red Sea, but in the waters of India. It not only delectates the eye with its convolutions of beauty, white and lustrous and serrated, but blesses the nostril with a pungent aroma. This shellfish, accustomed to feed on spikenard, is redolent with that odoriferous plant—redolent when alive and redolent when dead. Its shells when burned bewitch the air with fragrance.

In my text God commands Moses to mix this onycha with the perfumes of the altar in the ancient tabernacle, and I propose to mix some of its perfume at the altar of Brookline Tabernacle, for, having spoken of you on the "Astronomy of the Bible," or "God Among the Stars," the "Chronology of the Bible," or "God Among the Centuries," the "Ornithology of the Bible," or "God Among the Birds," the "Mineralogy of the Bible," or "God Among the Minerals," the "Ichthyology of the Bible," or "God Among the Fishes," I now come to speak of the "Conchology of the Bible," or "God Among the Shells."

It is a secret that you may keep for me, for I have never before told it to any one, that in all the realms of the natural world there is nothing to me so fascinating, so completely absorbing, so full of suggestiveness, as a shell. What? More entertaining than a bird, which can sing, when a shell cannot sing? Well, there you have made a great mistake. Pick up the onycha from the banks of the Red Sea or pick up a bivalve from the beach of the Atlantic Ocean and listen, and you hear a whole choir of marine voices—bass, alto, soprano—in an unknown tongue, but seeming to chant, as I put them to my ear, "The sea is His and He made it," others singing, "Praise God, God is in the sea," others hymning, "He ruleth the raging of the sea."

"What," says some one else, "does the shell impress you more than the star?" In some respects, yes, because I can handle the shell and closely study the shell, while I cannot handle the star, and if I study it must study it at a distance of millions and millions of miles.

"What," says some one else, "are you more impressed by the shell than the flower?" Yes, for it has far greater varieties and far greater richness of color, as I could show you in thousands of specimens, and because the shell does not fade, as does the rose leaf, but maintains its beauty century after century, so that the onycha which the hoof of Pharaoh's horse knocked aside in the chase of the Israelites across the Red Sea may have kept its luster to this hour. Yes, they are more particular and more colored that you might pile them up until you would have a wall with all the colors of the wall of heaven, from the jasper at the bottom to the amethyst at the top.

Oh, the shells! The petrified foam of the sea. Oh, the shells! The hardened bubbles of the deep. Oh, the shells, which are the diadems thrown by the ocean to the foot of the continents. How the shells are ribbed, grooved, cylindered, mottled, iridescent! They were used as coin by some of the Nations. They were fastened in belts by others, and many in handles of wooden implements by still others. Mollusks not only of the sea, but mollusks of the land, do you know how much they have had to do with the world's history? They saved the church of God from extinguishment.

The Israelites marched out of Egypt 2,000,000 strong, besides flocks and herds. The Bible says the people were weary of their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in the clothes on their shoulders. They were thrust forth out of Egypt and could not tarry; neither had they prepared for themselves any victuals. Just think of it. Forty years in the wilderness. Infidelity triumphed over faith. How could they live forty years in the wilderness without food? You say manna fell. Oh, that was after a long while. They would have starved fifty times before the manna fell. The fact is, they were chiefly kept alive by the mollusks of the land or shelled creatures. Mr. Frome, the great Egyptian scholar, says the same route from Egypt toward Canaan that the Israelites took, and they give this as their testimony.

"Although the children of Israel must have consisted of about 2,000,000 souls, with baggage and immovable flocks and herds, they were not likely to experience any inconvenience in their march. Several thousand persons might walk abreast with the greatest ease in the very narrowest part of the valley in which they first began to file off. It soon afterward expands to above three leagues in width. The forage they would be at no loss to find. The ground is covered with tamarisk, broom-clover and saint foin, of which latter especially camels are passionately fond, besides almost every variety of odoriferous plant and herb proper for pasturage.

"The whole series of the valley through which the children of Israel marched are still sufficed with brushwood, which doubtless afforded food for their beasts, together with many drier sorts for lighting fires, on which the Israelites could with the greatest ease bake the dough they brought with them on small iron plates, which form a constant appendage to the baggage of an oriental traveler. Lastly, the herbage underneath these trees and shrubs is completely covered with snails of a prodigious size and of the best sort, and, however unwholesome such a repast might appear to us, they are here esteemed a great delicacy. They are so plentiful in the valley that it may be literally said that it is difficult to take one step without treading on them."

So the shelled creatures saved the host of Israelites on the march to the promised land, and the attack of infidelity at this point is defeated by the facts, as infidelity is always defeated by facts, since it is founded on ignorance and twisting and printing out interpretation points at the bottom of a dark like a period and over it a flourish like the swing of a teamster's whip, and we put this interpretation point at the end of a question, but in the Spanish language the interpretation point is placed upside down, and at the close of the question on right side up. When infidelity puts a question about the Scriptures, as it always indicates ignorance, the question ought to be printed with two interpretation points, one at the bottom

and one at the close, but both upside down.

Thank God for the wealth of mollusks all up and down the earth, whether feeling the Israelites on their way to the land flowing with milk and honey, or, as we are better acquainted with the mollusks, when sunk to the bottom of lake or sea. There are three great families of mollusks. If I should ask you to name three of the great royal families of the earth, perhaps you would respond, the houses of Stewart, the house of Hapsburg, the house of Bourbon, but the three royal families of mollusks are the univalve, or shell in one part, the bivalve, or shell in two parts, and the nautilus, or shell in many parts, and I see God in their every hinge, in their every tooth, in their every cartilage, in their every ligament, in their every spiral ridge, and in their every cone, prism or prism, and their adaptation of this shell for still ponds and dash coating for hithered seas. They all dash upon me the thought of the providential care of God.

What is the use of all this architecture of the shell, and why is it pictured from the outside lip clear down into its labyrinth of construction? Why the infinity of skill and color and exquisite curve of a thing so insignificant as a shellfish? Why, when the conchologist by dredge or rake fetches the crustaceous specimens to the shore, does he find at his feet whole alambas and coliums and parthenons and crystal palaces of beauty in miniature, and these bring to light only an infinitesimal part of the opulence in the great subaqueous world. Linnaeus counted 3500 species of shells, but conchology had then only begun its achievements.

While exploring the had of the Atlantic Ocean in preparation for laying the cable, shelled animals were brought up from depths of 100 fathoms. The telegraph wire from the Mediterranean and Red Seas, shelled creatures were brought up from depths of 3000 fathoms. The English admiralty, exploring in behalf of science, found mollusks at a depth of 2435 fathoms, or 14,310 feet deep. What a realm awaits for research!

As the shell is only the house and the workroom of insignificant animals of the deep, why all that wonder and beauty of construction, God's care for them is the only reason. And if God provide so munificently for them, will He not see that you have wardrobe and shelter? Wardrobe and shelter for a periwinkle! Shall there not be wardrobe and shelter for a man? Could you give a coat of mail for the defense of a nautilus and leave you no defense against the storm? Does He build a stone house for a creature that lasts a season and leave without a roof that takes hold on centuries and eons?

Hugh Miller found "the footprints of the Creator in the old red sandstone," and I hear the harmonies of God in the tinkle of the sea shells when the tides come in. The same Christ who drew a lesson of providence from the fact that God clothes with grass the field instructs man to draw the same lesson from the shell.

In almost every man's life, however well born and prosperous for years, and in almost every woman's life, there comes a very dark time, at least once. A conjunction of circumstances will threaten bankruptcy and homelessness and starvation. It may be that these words will meet this ear and will meet the eye of those who are in such a state of foreboding. Come, then, and see how God gives an ivory palace to a water animal that you could cover with a ten cent piece, and clothes in armor against all attack a coral on an ocean wall. I do not think that God will take better care of a millionaire than of one of His own children.

I take to your feet with the gospel rake the most thorough evidences of God's care for His creatures. I pile around you great mounds of shells that they may teach you by their theology. Oh, ye of little faith, walk among these armor-clad creatures and look at these bouquets of shell, fit to be handed a queen on her coronation day, and see these fallen rainbows of color, and examine these lilies in stone, these primroses in stone, these heliotropes in stone, these constancies in stone, these geraniums in stone, these jonquils in stone.

O ye who have your telescopes ready looking out on clear nights, trying to see what is transpiring in Mars, Jupiter and Mercury, know that within a few hours' walk or ride of where you now are there are whole worlds that you might explore, but of which you are unconscious, among the most beautiful and suggestive of the world is the conchological world. Take this lesson of a providential care. How does that old hymn go:

We may, like ships, by tempests be tossed  
On perilous depths, but cannot be lost.  
Though man can outrage the man of the tide,  
The promise assures us the Lord will provide.

But while you get this pointed lesson of providential care from the shelled creatures of the deep, notice in their construction that God helps them to help themselves. This house of stone in which they live is not dropped on them, and is not built around them. The material for it is taken from their own bodies and is adorned with a colored fluid from the pores of their own neck. It is a most interesting thing to see these crustacean animals fashion their own homes out of carbonate of lime and membrane.

All of this is a mighty lesson to those who are waiting for others to lead them to fortune when they ought to go to work and, like the mollusks, build their own fortunes out of their own brain, out of their own sweat, out of their own industries. Not a mollusk on all the beaches of all the seas would have a house of shell if it had not itself built one. Do not wait for others to shelter you or prosper you. All the crustaceous creatures of the earth from every flake of their covering and from every ridge of their tiny castles on Atlantic and Pacific and Mediterranean coasts say, "Help yourself," while God helps you to help yourself.

Those people who are waiting for their father or rich old uncle to die and leave them a fortune are as silly as a mollusk would be to wait for some other mollusk to drop on its shell equipment. It would kill the mollusk as in most cases it destroys a man. Not one person out of a hundred ever was strong enough to stand a large estate by inheritance dropped on him in a chunk. Have great expectations from only two persons—God and yourself. Let the onycha of my text become your precursor.

But the mors I examine the shells the more I am impressed that God is a God of emotion. Many scoff at emotion and seem to think that God is a God of cold geometry and iron laws and eternal apathy and order reign in the universe, you have but to see the lavishness of color on the crustaceans, all shades of crimson from faintest blush to blood of battlefield, all shades of green, all shades of all colors from deepest blue to the most light just call it out on the shells with no more color than a mother premeditates or calculates how many kisses and hugs she shall give her babe waking up in the morning sunlight.

Yes, my God is an emotional God, and He says, "We must have colors and let us turn, bring all of them on the scroll of that scroll, and we must have music, and here is a canon for the robin, and a psalm for man, and a song for the seraphim, and a resurrection call for the archangel." Aye, He showed Himself a God of sublime emotion

when He hung Himself on this world in the personality of Christ to save it, without regard to the tears it would take, or the blood it would exhaust, or the agonies it would crush out.

When I see the Louvres and the Luxembourg and the Vatican of Livius painting strown along the 8000 miles of coast, and I hear of a forest on a summer morning musical academies and Handel societies of full orchestra, I say God is a God of emotion, and if He observe mathematics it is mathematics set to music, and His figures are written not in white chalk on blackboards, but written by a finger of sunlight on walls of jasper.

In my study of the conchology of the Bible this onycha of the text also impresses me with the fact that religion is performed. What else could God have meant when He said to Moses, "Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte and onycha?" Moses took that shell of the onycha, put it over the fire, and as it crumbled into ashes it exhaled an odor that hung in every corner and filled the ancient tabernacle, and its sweet smoke escaped from the sacred precincts and saturated the outside air.

Perfume. That is what religion is. But instead of that some make it a malodorous. They serve God in a rough and harsh way. They box their child's ears because he does not properly keep Sunday instead of making Sunday so attractive the child could not help but keep it. They make him learn by heart a difficult chapter in the book of Exodus, with all the hard names, because he has been naughty. How many disagreeable good people there are! No one doubts their piety, and they will reach heaven, but they will have to get fixed up before they go there or they will make trouble by calling out to us: "Keep off that grass!" "What do you mean by plucking that flower?" "Show your ticket!"

Oh, how many Christian people need to obey my text and to take their worship and their behavior and their consciences and presbyteries and general assemblies and conferences more onycha! I have sometimes gone in a very gala of spirit into the presence of some disagreeable Christians and in five minutes felt wretched, and at another time I have gone depressed into the company of suave and genial souls, and in a few moments I felt exhilarated. What was the difference? It was the difference in what they burned on their censers. The one burned onycha; the other burned asafetida.

In this conchological study of the Bible I also note that the mollusks or shelled animals furnish the purple that you see richly darkening so many Scripture chapters. The purple stuff in the ancient tabernacle, the purple girdle of the priests, the purple mantle of Roman Emperors, the apparel of Dives in purple and fine linen—aye, the purple robe which in mockery was thrown upon Christ—were colored by the purple of the shells on the shores of the Mediterranean. It was discovered by a shepherd's dog having stained his mouth by breaking one of the shells, and the purple aroused admiration.

Costly purple! Six pounds of the purple liquor extracted from the shellfishes were used to prepare one pound of wool. Purple was also used on the pages of books, and prayer books appeared in purple vellum, which may still be found in some of the national libraries of Europe. Plutarch speaks of the purple which kept his beauty for 199 years. But after awhile the purple became easier to get, and that which had been a sign of imperial authority when worn in Rome was adopted by many people, and so an emperor, jealous of the purple of the purple, made a law that any person wearing purple should be put to death.

Then, as if to punish the world for that outrage of exclusiveness, God obliterated the color from the earth, as much as to say, "If I cannot have it, none shall have it." But though God has deprived the race of that shellfish which afforded the purple there are shells enough left to make us glad and worshipful. Oh, the enchantment of hue and shape still left all up and down the benches of all the continents! These creatures of the sea have what rocks of colored porcelain! They dwell under what rainbow blue as the sky and fiery as a sunset and mysterious as an aurora! And am I not right in leading you for a few moments through this mighty realm of God so neglected by human eye and human footstep?

It is said that the harp and lute were invented from the fact that in Egypt the Nile overflowed its banks, and the tortoises retreated tortoises were left by the millions on all the lands, and these tortoises died, and soon nothing was left but the cartilages and gristle of these creatures, which tightened under the heat into musical strings that when touched by the wind or foot of a man vibrated, making sweet sound, and the world took the hint and fashioned the harp, and am I not right in trying to make music out of the shells and lifting them as a harp from which to thrum the jubilant praises of the Lord and the pathetic strains of his condolence?

But I find the climax of this conchology of the Bible in the shell, which has this distinction above all other gems—take it to the man of human hand to bring out its beauties. Job speaks of it, and its sheen is in Christ's sermon, and the Bible, which opens with the onycha of my text, closes with the pearl. O such value is this crustaceous product! It does not wonder that the exclusive right of fishing for it on the shores of Ceylon a man paid to the English Government \$300,000 for one season.

No exclusive is the pearl I do not wonder that Phry thought it was made out of a diamond, and that the creature rising to the surface to take it and its nature turning the liquid into a solid. You will see why the Bible makes so much of the pearl in its similitudes if you know how much it costs to get it. Boats with divers sail out from the island of Ceylon, and divers to each boat. Thirteen men guide and manage the boat. Down into the dangerous depths, amid sharks that whirl around them, plunge the divers, while 60,000 people anxiously gaze on. After three or four minutes' absence from the air the diver rushes up, gasping, strangled and blood rushing from ears and nostrils, and flinging his prey, treasure on the sand falls into unconsciousness.

Oh, it is an awful exposure and strain and peril to fish for pearls, and yet they do so, and it is not a wonder that to get that which the Bible calls the pearl of great price, worth more than all other pearls put together, there should be so little anxiety, so little struggle, so little enthusiasm? Would God that we were all as wise as the merchantman Christ commended, "who, when he had the consolation, all ye who have been hurt, whether hurt in body, or hurt in mind, or hurt in soul, get your treasure up and hid it with Him in glory. The tear of earth are the crystals of heaven. 'Every several gate was of one pearl.'"

Celebrated the Birth of Washington.  
New York, Feb. 30.—The third annual service of the Sons of the Revolution in the State of New York was held in St. Paul's chapel yesterday to celebrate the 161st anniversary of the birth of Washington. Delegates from societies in New York, Pennsylvania, the District of Columbia, Georgia, Iowa, Massachusetts and Maryland were present.

These Self-Patching Trowsers.

A Rochester man certainly deserves to have his name written among the benefactors of the race. He has invented self-patching jackets and trowsers, and his idea is said to work admirably in practice. The scheme is a simple one, but so are hundreds of inventions that have brought fame and fortune to their originators. The cloth is of double thickness where most of the wear comes, the pattern being carefully adjusted so as to coincide in each place. When the outer covering wears through only the rough edges have to be darned in, and the pattern and cloth remains intact.

The man in whose mind this great idea developed has other fields to conquer. Self-adjustable shoe and suspender buttons are the natural accompaniments to self-darning clothing. When these are forthcoming, perhaps we can spare the woman for politics.—Albany Argus.

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"Brown's BRONCHIAL TROCHES" are excellent for the relief of Hoarseness or Sore Throat. They are exceedingly effective."—Christian World, London, Eng.

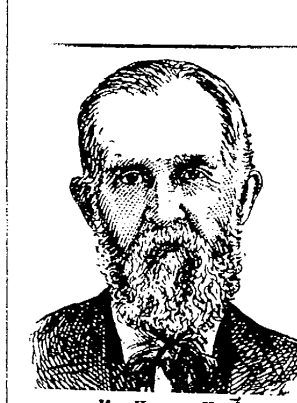
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As mercury will surely destroy the sense of smell and completely derange the whole system when entering it through the mucous surfaces. Such articles should never be used except on prescriptions from reputable physicians, as the damage they will do is tenfold to the good you can possibly derive from them. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, O., contains no mercury, and is taken internally, and acts directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. In buying Hall's Catarrh Cure be sure you get the genuine. It is taken internally, and made in Toledo, Ohio, by F. J. Cheney & Co. Sold by Druggists, price 50c. per bottle.



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"Gentlemen: For the benefit of suffering humanity I wish to state a few facts: For several years I have suffered from catarrh and heart failure, getting so bad I could not work and

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At Death's Door  
but was entirely cured by Hood's Sarsaparilla. After talking with Mr. Smith, I concluded to try Hood's Sarsaparilla. When I had taken

Hood's Sarsaparilla  
two bottles I felt much better. I have continued taking it, and am now feeling excellent. I thank God, and Hood's Sarsaparilla, and my wife for my restoration to perfect health." HARVEY REED, Laceyville, O.

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Troy, N. Y.

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Old Chronic Complaints were hard to cure. Their medicine did me no good. I stopped taking it and bought a bottle of DANA'S SARSAPARILLA. Before I had taken half of it I felt better. I have taken three bottles of

DANA'S SARSAPARILLA!

and am better than for years. IT HAS DONE WONDERS FOR ME. I can eat anything I want and it does not distress me in the least.

Yours truly,  
Troy, N. Y. MRS. MILLY FERGUSON.

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He not required. Only a hammer needed to which and clinch them easily and quickly, leaving the leather not hurt by the rivet. They are strong, tough and durable. Millions now in use. Ask your dealer for them. Or send for a sample for a box of 100, assorted sizes. Write to JUDSON L. THOMSON MFG. CO., WALTHAM, MASS.

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The new spring front, which is made of steel, is a new and improved machine.

The machine is a new and improved machine.

The machine is a new and improved machine.

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