TALMAGE.

THE BROOKLYN DIVINE IN CAMP.

He Discourses to Troop and Civilian on the Uses of Stratagem.

A Graphic Portrayal of the Battle Through Life to Final Victory Beyond the Ambuscades of the Adversary.

PERSEVILL, N. Y., July 22.—Charles T. DeWitt Talmage preached to-day to the Thirteenth Regiment of the New York State National Guards, who encamped here. The regiment assembled at 3 p. m., when people from the neighboring country, towns and cities were present in large numbers. A military band conducted the musical part of the service. Chaplain Talmage's sermon, which was on "Uses of Stratagem," was based on Joshua, Ch. 8, v. 7: "Then ye shall rise up from the ambush, and seize upon the city." He said:

Men of the Thirteenth Regiment, and their friends here gathered, of all occupations, and professions, men of the city and men of the fields, here is a theme fit for all of us.

One Sabbath evening with my family around me, we were talking over the scene of the text. In the wide-open eyes and the quick intermingling of the blanched cheeks, I realized what a thrilling drama it was. There is the old city, shorter by name than any other city in the world, and with two letters —A, I—Ai. Joshua and his men want to take it. How to do it is the question. On a former occasion, in a straightforward, honest face to face fight, it had been defeated; but now they are going to take it by ambuscade. General Joshua has two divisions in his army—the ambush division and the open commander will lead himself, the other division he sends off to encamp in an ambush on the west side of the city. At 10 o'clock at night, no sound of heavy battalions but 2,000 swarthy warriors moving in silence, only the tramp of the leaper, no clicking of swords against shields, lest the movement of Ai discover the plot. The stratagem be a failure. If a roystering soldier in the Israelitish army should whistle, all would lose him the word is "Hush!" Joshua takes the other division, the one which he is to march, and encamps on the north side of the city of Ai, and then spends the night with the army in their tents. There he is, thinking over the fortunes of the coming day, with somewhat of the feelings of Wellington on the night before Waterloo, or of Meade and Lee the night before gettysburg. He is up in the night, and says to himself: "Yonder is the division in ambush on the west side of the city. There is the division I have under my especial command on the north side of Ai. There is the old city sleeping in the dark. To-morrow we will be the battle. Look! the morning already begins to lip the hills. The military men of Ai will turn out in the morning very early, and while they do not know the division in ambush, they have given such a command as he seldom gave: 'Fall back!' Then they will pursue us with their own ears. Is Joshua's courage failing him?

The retreat is beaten, and the Israelites are flying, throwing blankets and canteens on every side that they may run faster than Bull Run defeat. And you ought to hear the soldiers of Ai shout and laugh and cheer. But they hazza too soon. The men lying in ambush are straining their eyes to get some signal from Joshua that they may know what time to drop upon the city. Joshua knows that terrible spear, glittering in the sun like a shaft of doom, and points it toward the city when it is time for the division in ambush which had taken the city marched down against the men of Ai on the one side, and of the troops under Joshua doubled up their enemies on the other side, and the men of Ai were caught between these two hurricanes of Israelitish courage, thrust together in the behind, stabbed in the breast and back, ground between the upper and the nether millstones of God's indignation. Woe to the city of Ai! Cheer for the triumphs of Israel!

Lesson the first: There is such a thing as victorious retreat. Joshua's falling back was the first chapter in his successful management. There are times in your life when the best thing you can do is to run. You were once the victim of strong drink, of blasphemy and decreaser were flerce foes. They came at you at