

COMING ELECTIONS.

REV. DR. TALMAGE'S VIEWS ON A TIMELY SUBJECT.

The Politics of a Popular Pastor. Character as a Test of Fitness for Office. A Plea for the Sacredness of the Ten Commandments.

BROOKLYN, Oct. 20.—The text of Rev. Dr. Talmage's anti-election sermon was Exodus 18: 18. "And all the people saw the thunderings and the lightnings and the voice of the trumpet and the mountain smoking." To sell.

On the eve of elections in all the counties of this State, and in all the counties of most of the United States, while there are many hundreds of nominees for office, it is appropriate and important that I preach this before election sermon.

My text informs you that the lightnings and earthquakes united their forces to wreck a mountain of Arabia Petraea in olden time and travelers today find heaps of porphyry and andesitic rocks, boulders against Jordan, the remains of a mountain wall, the remains of a mountain wall, the remains of a mountain wall, the remains of a mountain wall.

All Roman law, all French law, all English law, all American law that is worth anything, all common law, civil law, criminal law, martial law, law of nations were worked in the crucible of the twentieth chapter of Exodus. And it would be well if these times of great political agitation if the newspapers would print the Decalogue some day before the remains of the mountain wall. The fact is that some people suppose that the law has passed out of existence, and some are not aware of some of the passages of that law, and others say that it is that of the more importance, that no one has any right to make such an assertion. The laws are the pillars of society, and if you remove one pillar you damage the whole structure.

I have noticed that men are particularly vehement against sins to which they are not particularly tempted and find no especial wrath against sins in which they themselves indulge. They take out one gun from the battery of 10 guns, and load that, and unlimber that, and fire that. They say, "This is an Armstrong gun, and this is a Krupp gun, and this is a Nordenfledt gun, and this is a Gatling 10 barreled gun, and this is a Martin 37 barreled gun." But I have to tell them that they are all of the same caliber, and that they shoot from eternity to eternity.

Many questions are before the people in the coming elections all over this land, but I shall try to direct you to the most important thing to be settled about all these candidates is their personal, moral character. The Decalogue forbids idolatry, image making, profanity, maltreatment of parents, Sabbath breaking, adultery, murder, theft, incontinence, lying and covetousness. That is the Decalogue by which you and I will have to be tried, and by the same Decalogue you and I must try candidates for office.

SPLITTING THE DIFFERENCE. Of course we shall not find anything like perfection. If we do not vote until we find an immaculate nominee, we will never vote at all. We have so many faults of our own we ought not to be censorious or malicious or hypocritical in regard to the faults of others. The Christy rule is as appropriate for November as any other month in the year. Judge not that ye be not judged, for what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again.

Most certainly are we not to take the statement of religious partisanship as the real character of any man. From nearly all the great cities of this land I receive daily or weekly newspapers, sent to me regularly and in compliance, so I see both sides—I see all sides—and it is most entertaining and my regular amusement to read the opposite statements. The one statement says the man is an angel, and the other says he is a devil; and I split the difference and I find him half way between.

There never has been a honest or respectable man in any prominent position in the States presidency, or for a judge, or for the mayoralty, or for the shirivalty since the foundation of the American government, if we may believe the old files of newspapers in the States. What a mercy it is that they were not all hung before they were inaugurated! If a man believe one-half of what he sees in the newspapers in these times, his career will be very short outside of Blooming Grove insane asylum.

I was absent two or three years ago during one week of a political canvass, and I was dependent entirely upon what I read in regard to what had occurred in these cities, and I read there was a procession in New York of 5,000 patriots, and a minute after I read in another sheet that there were 17,000, and then I read in regard to another procession that there were 10,000, and then I read in another paper that there were 9,000.

A campaign orator in the Rink or the Academy of Music received a very cold reception—a very chilling reception—said one statement. The other statement said the audience rose at one, and another statement that for a long while the orator could not be heard, and it was only after "lifting his hand that the vociferation began to subside." The statement will twist an interview one way, and another statement will twist an interview another way. You must admit it is a very difficult thing in times like these to get a very accurate estimate of a man's character, and I charge you, as your religious teacher, I charge you to continue and to mercifulness and to prayer.

I warn you also against the mistake which many are making and always do make of applying a different standard of character for those in prominent position from the standard they apply for ordinary persons. However much a man may have or however high the position he gets, he has no special liberty given him in the interpretation of the Ten Commandments. A great sinner is no more to be excused than a small sinner. Do not charge illustrious deflection to eccentricity or chop off the Ten Commandments to suit special cases. The right is everlastingly right, and the wrong is everlastingly wrong. If any man nominated for any office in this city or State differs from the Decalogue, do not fix up the Decalogue, but fix him up. The law must stand, whatever else may fall.

COMMITMENT BREAKING. I call your attention also to the fact that you are all aware of—that the breaking of one commandment makes it the more easy to break all of them—and the philosophy is plain. Any kind of weakness in the conscience, and if the conscience is weakened that opens the door for all kinds of transgression. If, for instance, a man go into this political campaign wielding servility as his chief weapon, and he believes every thing bad about a man and believes nothing good, how long before that man himself will get over the moral depression. Neither in time nor eternity.

If I utter a falsehood in regard to a man, I may damage him, but I get for myself ten-fold more damage. That is a gun that kicks. If, for instance, a man be profane, under provocation he will commit any crime. I say under provocation. For, if a man will maltreat the Lord Almighty, will he not maltreat his fellow man? If a man be guilty of malfeasance in office, he will under provocation commit any sin. He who will steal will lie, and he who will lie will steal.

If, for instance, a man be impure, it opens the door for all other iniquity, for in that one iniquity he commits the rest of the worst kind, and covetousness of the worst kind, and falsehood—pretending to be honest when he is not—and maltrates his parents by disgracing their name, if they were good. Be careful, therefore, how you charge that sin against any man either in high office or in low place, either in office or out of office, because when you make that charge against a man you charge him with all villainies, with all disgusting propensities, with all crimes.

A thief has a lion's lower than the vermin that crawl over a summer carcass—lower than the swine, for the swine has no intelligence to sin against. Bewareful, then, how you charge that against any man. You must be so certain that a mathematical demonstration is doubtful as compared with it.

And then, when you investigate a man on such subjects, you must go to the whole length of investigation and find out whether or not he has repented. He may have been on his knees before God and implored the divine forgiveness, and he may have improved the forgiveness of society and the forgiveness of the world. Although if a man commit that sin at 30 or 35 years of age, there is not one case out of a thousand where he ever repents. You must in your investigation see if it is possible that the one case investigated may not have been the exception, but do not chop off the seventh commandment away that man does not change Faltrabink's scale to suit what you are weighing with it. Do not cut off a yardstick to suit the dry goods you are measuring. Let the law stand and never tamper with it.

Above all, I charge you do not join in the cry that I have heard—for 15, 20 years I have heard it—that there is no such thing as purity. If you make that charge, you are a fool and a scoundrel of the human race. You are a leper. Make room for that leper! When a man, by pen or type or tongue, utters such a slander on the human race that there is no such thing as purity, I know right away that that man himself is a walking leprosy, a reeking ulcer, and is fit for no society better than that of devils damned. We may enlarge our charities in such a case, but in no such case let us allow off the Ten Commandments. Let them stand as the everlasting defense of society and of the church of God.

The committing of one sin opens the door for the commission of other sins. You see it every day. Those embelzers, those leak canisters ascending as soon as they are brought to justice, develop the fact that they were in all kinds of sin. No exception to the rule. They all kept bad company, they nearly all gambled, they all went to places where they ought not. Why? The commission of the one sin opened the gate for all the other sins. Sins go in flocks, in droves and in herds. You open the door for one sin, that invites in all the miserable assemblage.

THE LETTER OF THE DECALOGUE. Some of the campaign orators this autumn—some of them—bombarding the suffering candidates all the week, will think no wrong in Sabbath breaking. All the week harping the eighth commandment at one candidate, the seventh commandment at another candidate and the ninth commandment at still another, what are they doing with the fourth commandment? Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy? Breaking it, is not the fourth commandment as important as the eighth, as the seventh, as the ninth?

Some of these political campaign orators, as I have seen them report in other years, and as I have heard it in regard to them, bombarding the suffering candidates all the week, yet tossing the name of God from their lips recklessly, guilty of profanity—what are they doing with the third commandment? Is not the third commandment, which says, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain"—is not that third commandment as important as the other seven? Oh, yes, we find in all department men are hurrying their indignation against sins perhaps to which they are not especially tempted—hurrying it against iniquity toward which they are not particularly drawn.

I have this book for my authority when I say that the man who swears or the man who breaks the Sabbath is as culpable before God as those candidates who break other commandments. What right have you and I to select which commandment we will keep and which we will break? Better not try to measure the thunderbolts of the Almighty, saying there is less blaze, this is less momentous. Better not handle the guns, better not experiment much with the divine ammunition.

Cicero said he saw the "Hiel" written on a nutshell, and you and I have seen the Lord's Prayer written on a 5 cent piece, but the whole tendency of these times is to write the Ten Commandments so small nobody can see them. I protest this day against the attempt to revise the Decalogue which was given on Mount Sinai amid the blast of trumpets, and the cracking of the rocks, and the pyroxyam of the mountain of Arabia Petraea.

I bring up the candidates for ward and township and city and county office. I bring them up, and I try them by this Decalogue. Of course they are imperfect. We are all imperfect. We say things we ought not to do; we do things we ought not to do; we have all been wrong, we have all done wrong. But I shall find out one of the candidates who comes, in my estimation, nearest to obedience of the Ten Commandments, and I will vote for him, and you will vote for him unless you will do less than your party—then you will not.

Herodotus said that Nitocris, the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, was so fascinated with her beautiful village of Andria that she had the river about Babylon changed so it would this way and would that, and curved this way and curved that, and though you sailed on it for three days every day you would be in sight of that exquisite village. Now, I do not care which way you sail in words or which way you sail in life.

There is nothing worse to fight than the 10 regiments, with bayonets and sabers of fire, marching down the side of Mount Sinai. They always gain the victory, and those who fight against them go under. There are thousands and tens of thousands of men being slain by the Decalogue. What is the matter with that young man of whom I read, dying in his dissipation? In his dying delirium he said: "Now fetch on the dice. It is mine! No, not! It is gone, all is gone! Bring on more wine! Bring on more wine! Oh, how they rattle their chains! Fiends, fiends, fiends! I say you cheat! The cards are marked! Oh, death! Oh, death! Oh, death! Fiends, fiends, fiends!" And he gasped his last and was gone. The Ten Commandments slew him.

CHARACTER OF CANDIDATES. Let not ladies and gentlemen in this nineteenth century revise the Ten Commandments, but let them in society and at the polls put to the front those who come nearest to this God lifted standard. On the first Tuesday morning of November read the twentieth chapter of Exodus at family prayers. The moral or immoral character of the officers elected will add 75 per cent unto or subtract 75 per cent from the public morals. You and I cannot afford to have bad officials. The young men of this country cannot afford to have bad officials. The

commercial, the moral, the artistic, the agricultural, the manufacturing, the religious interests of this country cannot afford to have bad officials, and if you, on looking over the whole field, cannot find men who in your estimation come within reasonable distance of obedience of the Decalogue stay at home and do not vote at all.

I suppose when in the city of Sodom there were four candidates put up for office, and Lot did not believe in any of them, he did not register. I suppose if there came a crisis in the politics of Babylon, where Daniel did not believe in any of the candidates, he staid at home on election day, praying with his face toward Jerusalem. But we have no such exigency. We have no such exigency, thank God. But I have to say to you today that the moral character of rulers always affects the ruled, and I appeal to history.

Wicked King Manasseh depressed the moral tone of all the nation of Judah and threw them into idolatry. Good King Josiah lifted up the whole nation by his excellent example. Why is it that today England is higher up in the moral than at any point in her national history? It is because she has the best ruler in all Europe—all the attempts to scandalize her name a failure. The political power of Talleyrand broadened all the political tricksters of the last 60 years. The dishonest vice presidency of Aaron Burr blasted this nation until important letters were written in cipher, because the people could not trust the United States mail. And let the court circles of Louis XV and Henry VIII march out, followed by the delusional nations.

The higher you put a bad man the worse is his power for evil. The great fabulist says that the pigeons were in flight at a later flying in the air, and so these pigeons hovered near the dovecot, but one day the kite said: "Why are you so afraid? Why do you pass your life in terror? Make me king, and I'll destroy all your nestlings." So the pigeons chose the king, and as soon as he got the throne his regular diet was a pigeon a day. And while one of his victims was waiting for its turn to come to it, said: "Served us right!" The malaria of swamps rises from a plain to the height, but moral malaria descends from the mountain to the plain. Be careful therefore how you elevate into any style of authority men who are in any wise antagonistic to the Ten Commandments.

As near as I can tell, the most important thing now to be done is to have about 40,000,000 copies of the Sinaitic Decalogue printed and scattered throughout the land. It was a terrible waste, when the Alexandrian library was destroyed, and the books were taken to heat 4,000 baths for the citizens of Alexandria. It was very expensive heat. But without any harm to the Decalogue you could with it heat 100,000 baths of moral purification for the American people.

I say we want a tonic—a mighty tonic, a corrective, an all powerful corrective—and Moses in the text, with steady hand, notwithstanding the rattling mountain, and the full orchestra of the tempest, and the buzzing of the air, pours out the 10 drops—no more, no less—which our people need to take for their moral convalescence.

THE CROSSING OF THE MOUNTAINS. But I shall not leave you under the discouragement of the Ten Commandments, because we have all offended. There is another mountain in sight, and while one mountain thunders the other answers in thunder, and while Mount Sinai, with lightning, writes doom, the other mountain, with lightning, writes mercy. The only way you will ever spike the guns of the Decalogue is by the spike of the cross. The only rock that will ever stop the Sinaitic upheavals is the Rock of Ages, Mount Calvary is higher than Mount Sinai.

The English survey expedition, I know, say that one Sinaitic peak is 7,000 feet high, and another 8,000, and another 9,000 feet high, and travelers tell us that Mount Calvary is only a bluff outside of the wall of Jerusalem, but Calvary, in moral significance, overtops and overshadows all the mountains of the compasses, and Mount Sinai and Mount Blanc and the Himalayas are hillocks compared with it. You know that sometimes one fortress will silence another fortress.

Mourful silenced Sinner, and against the mountain of the law I put the mountain of the cross. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," booms one until the earth jars under the canonade. "Save them from going down to the pit. I have found a ransom," pleads the other, until earth and heaven and hell tremble under the reverberation. And Moses, who commands the one, surrenders to Christ, who commands the other.

Once by the law our hopes were slain. But now in Christ we live again. Aristotle says that Mount Etna erupted one day and poured torrents of scoria upon the villages at the base, but that the mountain divided its flame and made a lane of safety for all those who came to rescue their aged parents. And their volcanic Sinai divides its fury for all those whom Christ has come to rescue from the red ruin on both sides. Standing as I do today, half way between the two mountains—the mountain of the Exodus and the mountain of the nineteenth of John—all my terror comes into supernatural calm, for the approach of the one mountain subdues into quiet and comes down into so deep a silence that I can hear the other mountain speak; I can hear it whisper, "The blood, the blood, the blood that cleanseth from all sin."

The survey expedition says that the Sinaitic mountains have wadis or watercourses—Alleghy and Alleghy—emptying into Feilan. But those streams are not navigable. No boat can enter those rocky streams could sail. But I have to tell you this day that the boat of gospel rescue comes right up amid the watercourses of Sinaitic gloom and ready, to take us off from under the shadows into the calm sunlight of God's pardon and into the land of peace.

Oh, if you could see that boat of gospel rescue coming this day you would feel as John Gilmore in his book, "The Storm Warriors," says that a ship's crew felt on the Kenilworth Knack sands, off the coast of England, when they were being beaten into pieces and they felt they must die! They had given up all hope, and every moment washed off another plank from the wreck, and they said, "We must die, we must die." But after awhile they saw a frigate lifeboat coming through the breakers for them, and the man standing highest up on the wreck said: "Can it be? It is, it is, it is, it is, Thank God! It is the Hauss-gate lifeboat. It is, it is, it is, it is." And the old Jack Tar, describing that lifeboat to his comrades after he got ashore, said, "Oh, my lads, what a beauty it did seem, coming through the breakers that way! They were all in a heap, and in Jesus Christ, take us all of the miserable wreck of our sin into the beautiful lifeboat of the gospel!"

A Lunatic Peer's Vote. There is only one well authenticated case of a lunatic having voted in a division either in the house of lords or the house of commons. In 1841, on the occasion when Lord Melbourne's government was defeated by one vote on Sir Robert Peel's notice of want of confidence, the Whigs brought down Lord X—who was a member for a Scotch county, although he was in a state of absolute driveling idocy, and his vote was duly recorded on the government side. Mr. Charles Greyllie states that "this poor wretch was brought in a chair. They got him into the house and then wheeled him past the tellers. Charles Howard, Melbourne's private secretary, told me he thought it a monstrous and indecent proceeding."—London Tit-Bits.

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