

"BEHOLD ALSO THE SHIPS."

REV. DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON TO THE NAVAL POSTS.

Decoration Day Services in the Brooklyn Tabernacle—Survivors of the Navy Advised to Take Admiral Farragut as Their Exemplar.

BROOKLYN, May 22.—As this is the time for the decoration of the graves of those who fell in the war, the naval posts invited the Rev. T. De Witt Talmage, D. D., to preach a sermon at the Brooklyn tabernacle...

My country, 'tis of thee, Sweet land of liberty,

Dr. Talmage's text was from James iii, 4—"Behold also the ships." He said:

If this exclamation was appropriate about 1860 years ago, when it was written concerning the crude fishing smacks that sailed Lake Galilee, how much more appropriate in an age which has launched from the dry docks for purposes of peace the Arizona, of the Guion line; the City of Richmond, of the Inman line; the Egypt, of the National line; the Germania, of the White Star line; the Circassia, of the Anchor line; the Euribia, of the Cunard line, and the Great Eastern, with hull 680 feet long—not a failure, for it helped lay the Atlantic cable, and that was enough glory for one ship's existence—and in an age which for purposes of war has launched the screw sloops like the Idaho, the Shenandoah, the Osagee, and our ironclads like the Kearsarge, the Roanoke and the Dunderberg, and those which have already been buried in the deep like the Monitor, the Housatonic, the Weehawken and the Tecumseh, the tempests ever since sounding a volley over their vantage...

At the annual decoration of graves north and south among Federals and Confederates full justice has been done to the memory of those who fought on the land in our sad contest, but not enough has been said of those who on ship's deck dared and suffered all things. Lord God of the rivers and the sea, help me in this mission! So, ye admirals, commanders, captains, pilots, gunners, boatswains, sailmakers, surgeons, stokers, messmates and crew members of the fleet, your own parlance, we might as well get under way and stand out toward sea. Let all land lubbers go ashore. Full speed now! Four bells!

Never since the sea fight of Lepanto, where 300 royal galleys, manned by 50,000 warriors, at sunrise, Sept. 7, 1571, met 250 royal galleys, manned by 120,000 men, and in the four hours of battle 8,000 fell on one side and 25,000 on the other; you, never since the day when at Actium, thirty-one years before Christ, Augustus, with 200 ships, scattered the 220 ships of Mark Antony and gained universal dominion as the prize; or when at Salamis, in the Persian, manned by 600,000 men, were crushed by Greeks with less than a third of that force; you, never since the time of Noah, the first ship captain, has the world seen such a miraculous creation as that of the American navy in 1861. There were about 300 available seamen in the navy when we were called upon to defend the coast against the invader. Yet orders were given to blockade 3,500 miles of sea coast, greater than the whole coast of Europe, and beside that, the Ohio, Tennessee, Cumberland, Mississippi and other great rivers, covering an extent of 2,000 more miles, were to be patrolled. No wonder the whole civilized world has been torn from both sides belched on your fury and the heavens glowed with the ascending and descending missiles of death, and your ship quaked under the recoil of the 100-pounder, while all the gunners, according to command, stood on tiptoe, and month-wide open, lest the concussion shatter hearing or brain. He remembers it all better than you remember it, and in some shape reward will be given. God is the best of all paymasters, and for those who do their whole duty to him and the world the pension awarded is an everlasting heaven.

Sometimes off the coast of England the royal family have inspected the British navy, maneuvered before them for that purpose. In the Baltic sea the czar and czarina have reviewed the Russian navy. To bring before the American people the debt they owe to the navy I go out with you on the Atlantic ocean, where there is plenty of room, and in imagination review the war shipping of our three great conflicts, 1776, 1812 and 1865. Swings into line, all ye frigates, ironclads, fire rafts, gunboats and men of war! There they come, all sail set and all furnaces in full blast, sheaves of crystal tossing from their cutting prows. That is the Delaware, an old revolutionary war frigate, commanded by Commodore Decatur, Yonder goes the Constitution, Commodore Hull commanding. There is the Chesapeake, commanded by Capt. Lawrence, whose dying words were: "Don't give up the ship!" Yonder is the Niagara, of 1812, commanded by Commodore Perry, who wrote on the back of an old letter, resting on his navy cap: "We have met the enemy and they are ours."

Chipping Irving's Tombstone. I confess I heard not without a secret pleasure that the relic hunters so chip and hammer the stone that marks Irving's grave and seem to me a grievous wrong, nor in any true sense a profanation of the grave, but rather a testimony to the loveliness of Irving's character and an evidence of the wide extent of his fame, that, from filling the circle of the educated and refined among his countrymen, has now come to include that lower stratum of our common humanity which has only instinctive and, so to speak, mechanical ways of expressing its feelings—Clarence Cook in The Century.

since we were a nation. Grandest fleet the world ever saw. Sail on before all ages! Run up all the colors! Ring the bells! Ye open all the port holes! Unlimber the guns and load and fire one great broadside that shall shake the continents in honor of peace and the eternity of the American union!

At the annual commemoration I think that most of you who were in the naval service during our late war are now in the afternoon or evening of life. With some of you it is 2 o'clock, 3 o'clock, 4 o'clock, 6 o'clock, and it will soon be sundown. If you were of age when the war broke out you are now at least 48. Many of you have passed into the sixties and the seventies; therefore it is appropriate that I hold two great lights for your illumination—the example of Christian admirals consecrated to Christ and their country—Admiral Foote and Admiral Farragut.

Had the Christian religion been a cowardly thing, it had never had nothing to do with it. In its faith they lived and died. In our Brooklyn navy Admiral Foote held prayer meetings and conducted a revival on the receiving ship North Carolina, and on Sabbath, far out at sea, followed the chaplain with religious exhortation. In early life, on board the sloop of war Natchez, impressed by the faith of a Christian sailor, he gave his spare time for two weeks to the Bible, and at the end of that declared openly: "Henceforth, under all circumstances, I will act for God." His last words, while dying at the Astor house, New York, were: "I thank God for all his goodness to me. He has been very good to me. When he entered heaven he did not have to run a blockade, for it was amid the cheers of a great welcome. The other Christian admiral will be honored until the day when the fires from above shall lick up the waters from beneath and there shall be no more sea."

Oh, while old ocean's breast Bears a white sail, And God's soft stars best Guide through the gale, Men will never forget, Old heart of oak! Farragut! Thunderbolt stroke!

According to his own statement, Farragut was very loose in his morals in early manhood, and practiced all kinds of sin. One day he was called into the cabin of his father, who was a merchant. His father said: "Farragut, what are you going to be, anyhow?" He answered: "I am going to follow the sea." "Follow the sea," said the father, "and be kicked about the world and die in a foreign hospital!" "No," said David; "I am going to command, like you." "No," said the father: "a boy of your habits will never command anything," and his father burst into tears and left the cabin. From that day David Farragut started on a new life. Capt. Pennington, an honored elder of this church, was with him in most of his battles and had his intimate friendship, and he confirms what I had heard elsewhere, that Farragut was good and a Christian. In every great crisis of life he asked aid obtained the divine direction. When in Mobile bay the monitor Tecumseh sank from a torpedo and the great war ship Brooklyn, that was to lead the squadron, turned back he said he was at a loss to know whether to give up the chase or to persevere in the attempt. "Oh, God, who created man and gave him reason, direct me what to do. Shall I go on? And a voice commanded me: 'Go on, and I went on.'"

Cheerful to the end, he said on board the Tallapoosa in the last voyage he ever took: "It would be well if I died now in harness." The sublime Episcopal service for the dead was never more appropriately read than over his casket, and well did all the forts in New York harbor thunder as his body was brought to our wharf, and well did the minute guns sound and the bells toll as in a procession having in its ranks the president of the United States and his cabinet, and the mighty men of land and sea, the old admiral was carried and laid to rest. He rests with his hands on Broadway and laid on his pillow of dust in beautiful Woodlawn, Sept. 30, amid the pomp of our autumnal forests. To veterans who sailed and fought under him, take your admirals' God and Christ for your God and Christ. After a few more conflicts you too will rest. For the few remaining weeks of life with sin and death's helm made ready. Strip your vessel for the fray; hang the sheet chains over the side. Send down the topgallant masts. Barricade the wheel. Rig in the flying jib boom. Steer straight for the shining shore, and hear the shout of the great Commander of earth and heaven as he comes from the shrouds: "To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

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