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TALMAGE'S SERMON.

AN ELOQUENT PLEA FOR CHRISTIAN TOLERATION.

He Advocates the Greatest Liberty in All Religious Belief and Form of Worship and Severe Intolerance and Bigotry—A Broad Gospel Platform.

He Sees Every Side.

Rev. Dr. Talmage, who is now in Australia, whence he will shortly sail for Ceylon and India, selected as the subject for last Sunday's sermon through the press "Communion of Saints," the text chosen being Judges xii, 6: "Then said they unto him, Say now shibboleth, and he said shibboleth, for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him and slew him at the passages of Jordan."

Do you not see the difference of pronunciation between shibboleth and sibboleth? A very small and unimportant difference, you say. And yet that difference was the difference between life and death for a great many people. The Lord's people, Gilead and Ephraim, got into a great fight, and Ephraim was worsted, and on the retreat came to the fords of the river Jordan to cross. Order was given that all Ephraimites coming there be slain. But how could it be found out who were Ephraimites? They were detected by their pronunciation. Shibboleth was a word that stood for river. The Ephraimites had a brogue of their own, and when they tried to say "shibboleth" always left out the sound of the "h." When it was asked that they say shibboleth, they said sibboleth and were slain. Then said they unto him, Say now shibboleth, and he said sibboleth, or he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him and slew him at the passages of Jordan."

A very small difference, you say, between Gilead and Ephraim, and yet how much into entrance about that small difference! The Lord's tribes, in our time, by which I mean the different denominations of Christians—sometimes magnify a small difference, and the only difference between scores of denominations to-day is the difference between shibboleth and sibboleth.

The church of God is divided into a great number of denominations. Time would fail me to tell of the Calvinists, and the Arminians, and the Sabatarians, and the Baxterians, and the Duncans, and the Shakers, and the Quakers, and the Methodists, and the Baptists, and the Episcopalians, and the Lutherans, and the Congregationalists, and the Presbyterians, and the Spiritualists, and a score of other denominations of religionists, some of them founded by very good men, some of them founded by very good men, some of them founded by very bad men. But as I demand for myself liberty of conscience I must give that same liberty to every other man, remembering that he no more differs from me than I differ from him. I advocate the largest liberty in all religious belief and form of worship. In art, in politics, in morals, and in religion let there be no gag law, no moving of the previous question, no persecution, no intolerance.

You know that the air and the water keep pure by constant circulation, and I think there is a tendency in religious discussion to purification and moral health. Between the fourth and the sixteenth century the church proposed to make people think aright by prohibiting discussion, and by strong censorship of the press and rack and gibbet and hot lead down the throat tried to make people orthodox, but it was discovered that you cannot change a man's belief by twisting of his head nor make a man see differently by putting an awl through his eyes. There is something in a man's conscience which will hurl off the mountain that you threw upon it, and, unaided of the fire, out of the flame will make red wings on which the martyr will mount to glory.

In that time of which I speak, between the fourth and sixteenth centuries, people went from the house of God into the most appalling iniquity, and right along by consecrated altars there were fires of drunkenness and licentiousness such as the world never heard of, and the very severers of perdition broke loose and flooded the church. After awhile the printing press was freed, and it broke the shackles of the human mind. Then there came a large number of bad books, and where there was one man hostile to the Christian religion there were twenty men ready to advocate it. So I have not any nervousness in regard to this battle going on between truth and error. The truth will conquer just as certainly as that God is stronger than the devil. Let error run if you only let truth run along with it. Urged on by skeptic's shout and transcendentalist's spur, let it run. God's angels of wrath are in hot pursuit, and quicker than eagle's beak clutches out a hawk's heart God's vengeance will tear it to pieces.

Evils of Sectarianism.

I propose to speak to you of sectarianism—its origin, its evils, and its cures. There are those who would make us think that this monster with horns and hoofs, is religion. I shall chase it to its hiding place and drag it out of the caverns of darkness and rip off its hide. But I want to make a distinction between bigotry and the lawful fondness of peculiar religious belief and forms of worship. I have no admiration for a pathologist.

In a world of such tremendous vicissitude and temptation, and with a soul that must after awhile stand before a throne of insufferable brightness, in a day when the rooking of the mountains, and the flaming of the heavens, and the upheaval of the seas shall be among the least of the excitements, to give account for every thought, word, action, preference, and dislike, man is mad who has no religious preference. But our early education, our

physical temperament, our mental constitution, with very much decide our form of worship.

A style of psalmody that may please me may displease you. Some would like to have a minister in gown and bands and surplice, and others prefer to have a minister in plain citizen's apparel. Some are most impressed when a child is presented at the altar and a rinkled of the waters of a holy benediction "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," and others are more impressed when the penitent comes out of the river, his garments dripping with the waters of a baptism which signifies the washing away of sin. Let either have his own way. One man likes no so in prayer, not a word, not a whisper. Another man, just as good, prefers to gesticulate and exclamation to express his devotional aspirations. One is just as good as the other. "Every man fully persuaded in his own mind," George Whitefield was going over a Quaker rather roughly for some of his religious sentiments, and the Quaker said, "George, I am as thou art. I am for bringing all men to the hope of the gospel. Therefore, if thou wilt not quarrel with me about my broad brim, I will not quarrel with thee about thy black gown. George, give me thy hand."

Parents of Bigotry.

In tracing out the religion of sectarianism or bigotry I find that a great deal of it comes from a wrong education in the home circle. There are parents who do not think it wrong to caricature and deride the peculiar forms of religion in the world and denounce other sects and other denominations. It is very often the case that that kind of education acts just opposite to what was expected, and the children grow up and after awhile go and see for themselves, and looking in those churches and finding that the people are good there, and they love God and keep his commandments, they are very reaction they go and join those very churches. I could mention the names of prominent ministers of the gospel who spent their whole life bombarding other denominations and who lived to see their children preach the gospel in those very denominations. But it is often the case that bigotry starts in a household, and that the subject of it never recovers. There are tens of thousands of bigots 10 years old.

I think sectarianism and bigotry also rise from too great prominence of any one denomination in a community. All the other denominations are wrong, and his denomination is right, wealthy, or the most popular, or the most influential, and it is "our" church, and "our" religious organization, and "our" choir, and "our" minister, and the man tosses his head and wants other denominations to know their places.

It is a great deal better in any community when the great denominations of Christians are about equal in power, marching side by side for the world's common good. Mere outside prosperity, mere worldly power, is no evidence that the church is acceptable to God. Better a barn with Christ in the manger than a Cathedral with magnificent harmonies rolling through the long drawn aisle and an angel from heaven in the pulpit if there is no Christ in the chancel and no Christ in the robes. Bigotry is often the child of ignorance.

Another great damage done by the sectarianism and bigotry of the church is that it disgusts people with the Christian religion. Now, my friends, the Church of God was never intended for a war barracks. People are afraid of a riot. You go down the street, and you see an excitement and missiles flying through the air, and you hear the shock of firearms. Do you, the peaceful and industrious citizen, go through that street? Oh, no, you will say; "I'll go around the block." Now, men come and look upon this narrow path to Heaven and sometimes see the ecclesiastical brickbats flying every where, and they say, "Well, I guess I'll take the broad road. There is so much sharpshooting on the narrow road I guess I'll try the broad road!"

Francis I. so hated the Lutherans that he said that if he thought there was one drop of Lutheran blood in his veins he would puncture them and let that drop out. Just as long as there is so much hostility between denomination and denomination, or between one professed Christian and another, so long men will be disgusted with the Christian religion, and say, "If that is religion, I want none of it."

Again, bigotry and sectarianism do great damage in the fact that they hinder the triumphs of the gospel. Oh, how much wasted ammunition, how many men of splendid intellect have given their whole life to controverted disputes when, if they had given their life to something practical, they might have been vastly useful! Suppose, while I speak, there was a common enemy coming up the bay, and all the forts around the harbor began to fire into each other you would cry out: "National suicide! Why don't those forts blaze away in one direction, and that against the common enemy?" And yet I sometimes see in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ a strange thing going on—church against church, minister against minister, denomination against denomination, firing away into their own fort, or the fort which ought to be on the same side, instead of concentrating their energy and giving one mighty and everlasting volley against the navies of darkness riding up through the bay.

Christian Grace.

I go out sometimes in the summer, and I find two beehives, and these two hives are in a quarrel. I come near enough, not to be stung but I come just near enough to hear the controversy, and one beehive says, "That field of clover is the sweetest," and another beehive says, "That field of clover is the sweetest." I come in between them, and I say, "Stop this quarrel. If you like that field of clover

best, go there, but let me tell you that that hive which gets the most honey is the best hive." So I come out between the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. One denomination on Christian says, "That field of Christian doctrine is best," and the other says, "That field of Christian doctrine is the best." Well, I say, "Go where you get the most honey." That is the best church which gets the most honey of Christian grace for the heart, and the most honey of Christian usefulness for the life.

Besides that, if you want to build up any denomination, you will never build it up by trying to pull some other down. Intolerance never put anything down.

Intolerance.

What did intolerance accomplish against the Baptist Church? If laughing, scorn and tirade could destroy the church, it would not have to-day a disciple left. The Baptists were hurled out of Boston in olden times. Those who sympathized with them were imprisoned, and when a petition was offered asking leniency in their behalf, all the men who signed it were indicted. Has intolerance stopped the Baptist church? The last statistics in regard to it showed 25,000 churches and 3,000,000 communicants. Intolerance never put down anything.

In England a law was made against the Jew. England thrust back the Jew and thrust down the Jew and declared that no Jew should hold official position. What came of it? Were the Jews destroyed? Was their religion overthrown? No. Who became Prime Minister of England? Who was higher than the throne because he was counselor and adviser? Disraeli, a Jew. What were we celebrating in all our churches as well as synagogues only a few years ago? The one hundredth birthday anniversary of Montefiore, the great Jewish philanthropist. Intolerance never put down anything.

But now, my friends, having shown you the origin of bigotry or sectarianism, and having shown you the damage it does, I want briefly to show you how it is to be war against the terrible evil, and I think we ought to begin our war by realizing our own weakness and our imperfections. If we make so many mistakes in the common affairs of life, is it not possible that we may make mistakes in regard to our religious affairs? Shall we take a man by the throat or by the collar because he cannot see religious truths just as we do? In the light of eternity it will be found out, I think, there was something wrong in all our creeds and something right in all our creeds. But since we may make mistakes in regard to things of the world, do not let us be so egotistic and so puffed up as to have an idea that we cannot make any mistake in regard to religious theories. And then I think we will do a great deal to get rid of the sectarianism from our heart and the sectarianism from the world by chiefly enlarging in those things in which we agree rather than those on which we differ.

Now, here is a great gospel platform. A man comes up on his side of the platform and says, "I don't believe in baby sprinkling." Shall I shove him over? Here is a man coming up on this side of the platform, and he says, "I don't believe in the perseverance of the saints." Shall I shove him off? No. I will say, "Do you believe in the Lord Jesus as your Saviour? Do you trust Him for time and for eternity?" He says, "Yes." "Do you take Christ for time and for eternity?" "Yes," I say, "Come on, brother. One in time, and one in eternity. Brother now, brother forever." Blessed be God for a gospel platform so large that all who receive Christ may stand on it!

Moreover, we may also overthrow the feeling of severe sectarianism by joining other denominations in Christian work. I like when the spring-time comes and the anniversary occasions begin and all denominations come upon the same platform. That overthrows sectarianism. In the Young Men's Christian Associations, in the Bible Society, in the Tract Society, in the Foreign Missionary Society, shoulder to shoulder all denominations.

Perhaps I might forcibly illustrate this truth by calling your attention to an incident which took place about 23 years ago. One Monday morning about 2 o'clock while her 400 passengers were sound asleep in her berth the steaming of home, the steamer Atlantic crashed into Mars Head. Five hundred souls in ten minutes landed into eternity! Oh, what a scene! Agonized men and women running up and down the gangways and clutching for the rigging, and the plunge of the helpless steamer and the clapping of the hands of the merciless sea over the drowning and the dead threw two continents into terror.

But see this brave quartermaster pushing out with the life line until he gets to the rock, and see these fishermen gathering up the shipwrecked and taking them into the cabins and wrapping them in the flannels snug and warm, and see that minister of the gospel, with three other men, getting into a lifeboat and pushing out for the wreck, pulling away across the surf and pulling away until they saved one more man and then getting back with him to the shore. Can those men ever forget that night, and can they ever forget their companionship in peril, companionship in struggle, companionship in awful catastrophe and rescue? Never! Never! In whatever part of the earth they meet, they will be friends when they mention the story of that night when the Atlantic struck Mars Head. Well, my friends, our world has gone into a worse shipwreck. It is drove 't on the rocks. The old ship has lurched and tumbled in the tempests of 6,000 years. Out with the life line! I do not care what denomination carries it. Out with the lifeboat. I do not care what denomination rows it. Side by side, in the memory of common hardships and common trials and common prayers and common tears, let us be brothers forever. We must be.

One army of the living God,
To His command we bow.

Part of the boat has crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now.

And I expect to see the day when all denominations of Christians shall join hands around the cross of Christ and recite the creed "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, and in the communion of saints, and in life everlasting. Amen."

Effects of Deep Sea Pressure.

It is not unusual for bottles of champagne to be dipped and trolled in salt water when there is no ice on shipboard, in order to get the wine to a palatable temperature, but never long enough to cause contact between the salt water and the wine. We can hardly tell what the effect upon the wine would be if the bottle were immersed in it at a great depth for any considerable time. It is a fact, however, that if an ordinary glass bottle, tightly corked and sealed, be sunk in salt water for about ten minutes, it may, when brought to the surface, be found partly full of water. We say "partly" because the pressure of the superincumbent mass of water will either force the water through the porous glass, or force the cork into the bottle or break the bottle. By a law of hydrostatics the pressure of water is in proportion to its vertical height and its area at the base. It is reckoned that the pressure of water on any body plunged into it is about one pound to the square inch for every two feet of the depth. Bottles filled with fresh water, tightly corked and sealed, have been sunk to a great depth in the ocean, and where the enormous pressure has not burst the bottles it has driven in the cork and displaced the fresh with salt water. Pieces of wood have been weighed and sunk in the sea, with the result that the tissues have become so condensed that the wood has lost its buoyancy and will never float again. It could not even be burned when apparently dry.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Stedman Got Them In.

John Hawley, author, journalist, politician, and traveler, after discussing the infamous dictation of Abraham Lincoln and the President's great lack of education, said:

"I never knew a really good writer or speaker who lacked a college education who did not regret and lament it as a serious loss. Nevertheless we have had many remarkable examples of what Americans may accomplish in literature without having a college training. Not long ago I found Clarence Stedman was walking down Fifth Avenue, New York, with Thomas B. Aldrich and William D. Howells. As they caught sight of the University Club Mr. Stedman began to expatiate upon the pleasures of belonging to the club and urged that he be allowed to put up the names of Mr. Aldrich and Mr. Howells as candidates for membership. Final one of them—Mr. Howells, I think—responded with the confession that, as he was not a graduate of any college, he was not eligible for membership. The other followed with a similar confession. Mr. Stedman was astonished that two of the most polished and distinguished writers in America had not received a college education. But Mr. Stedman did not let the matter rest there. He was determined to have them in the University Club. As a result Harvard and Yale shortly afterward conferred degrees upon Aldrich and Howells, and this removed the bar to their membership in the club."—Chicago Post.

Something Like a Word.

Probably the maximum in long German words is reached in one which a correspondent of the Youth's Companion, himself a German, sends by way of pendant to another long word recently printed. The correspondent vouches for it as a genuine and properly formed word, in which the material has not been strained at all in the making. It is:

Exklusivitätserscheinendelformelsternsterlieferungsanstaltsüberaufsichtskasse.

This word, which contains seventy-seven letters, means in English: "The treasury of the direction of the establishment for furnishing patterns to master tailors making clothes for exclusively living gentlemen only."

There is one advantage about the use of words like this: One could never have occasion to regret having hastily spoken them.

A Perilous Walk.

People residing on Washington street, near Carlton street, were horrified a day or two ago at the dangerous position of two little boys not above 6 years old, who had climbed out of an attic window and were slowly making their way across the front of the building, standing on a narrow projection even with the eaves. There was nothing for them to cling to, and they placed their hands flat against the building. People who witnessed the perilous feat of the youngsters dared not call to them for fear the little fellows would be startled and lose their balance. (One woman, who saw them in their hazardous walk, was so moved that she trembled violently after they had reached a place of safety.—Buffalo Courier.)

If a wife sees her husband there
at night, so that he can sleep, it is
a sign that she is a good woman.