

# TALMAGE'S SERMON.

## "WATCHING THE BOAT." LAST SUNDAY'S SUBJECT.

From the Text, Exodus 4:2 as follows: "And His Sister Stood Afar Off, to Witness What Would Be Done to Him."



PRINCESS THERMUTIS, daughter of Pharaoh, looking out through the lattice of her bathing house, on the banks of the Nile, saw a curious boat on the river. It had neither oar nor helm, and they would have been useless anyhow. There was only one passenger, and that a baby boy. But the Mayflower, that brought the Pilgrim Fathers to America, carried not so precious a load. The boat was made of the broad leaves of papyrus, tightened together by bitumen. Boats were sometimes made of that material, as we learn from Pliny and Herodotus, and Theophrastus. "Kill all the Hebrew children born," had been Pharaoh's order. To save her boy, Jochebed, the mother of little Moses, had put him in that queer boat and launched him. His sister, Miriam, stood on the bank watching that precious craft. She was far enough off not to draw attention to the boat, but near enough to offer protection. There she stands on the bank—Miriam, the poetess, Miriam, the quick-witted, Miriam, the faithful, though very human, for in after years she demonstrated it.

Miriam was a splendid sister, but had her faults, like all the rest of us. How carefully she watched the boat containing her brother! A strong wind often upset it. The buffaloes often found there might in a sudden plunge of thirst sink it. Some ravenous water fowl might swoop and pick his eyes out with iron beak. Some crocodile or hippopotamus crawling through the rushes might crunch the babe. Miriam watched and watched until Princess Thermutis, a maiden on each side of her holding palm leaves over her head to shelter her from the sun, came down and entered her bathing house. When from the lattice she saw that boat she ordered it brought, and when the leaves were pulled back from the face of the child and the boy looked up he cried aloud, for he was hungry and frightened, and would not even let the princess take him. The infant would rather stay hungry than acknowledge any one of the court as mother. Now Miriam, the sister, incognito, no one suspecting her relation to the child, leaps from the bank and rushes down and offers to get a nurse to pacify the child. Consent is given, and she brings Jochebed, the boy's mother, incognito, none of the court knowing that she was the mother; and when Jochebed arrived, the child stopped crying, for its fright was calmed and its hunger appeased. You may admire Jochebed, the mother, and all the ages may admire Moses, but I clap my hands in applause at the behavior of Miriam, the faithful, brilliant and strategic sister.

"Go home," some one might have said to Miriam; "why risk yourself out there alone on the banks of the Nile, breathing the miasma, and in danger of being attacked of wild beast or ruffian; go home!" No; Miriam, the sister, more lovingly watched and bravely defended Moses, the brother. Is he worthy her care and courage? Oh, yes; the sixty centuries of the world's history have never had so much involved in the arrival of any ship at any port as in the landing of that papyrus boat calked with bitumen! Its one passenger was to be a non-such in history—lawyer, statesman, politician, legislator, organizer, conqueror, deliverer. He had such remarkable beauty in childhood that Josephus says, when he was carried along the road, people stopped to gaze at him, and workmen would leave their work to admire him. When the king playfully put his crown upon this boy, he threw it off indignantly, and put his foot upon it. The king, fearing that this might be a sign that the child might yet take down his crown, applied another test. According to the Jewish legend, the king ordered two bowls to be put before the child, one containing rubies and the other burning coals; and if he took the coals, he was to live, and if he took the rubies, he was to die. For some reason the child took one of the coals, and put it in his mouth, so that his life was spared, although it burned the tongue till he was indistinct of utterance ever after. Having come to manhood, he spread open the palms of his hands in prayer, and the Red Sea parted to let two million five hundred thousand people escape. And he put the palms of his hands together in prayer, and the Red Sea closed on a stragulated host.

His life so unutterably grand, his burial must be on the same scale. God would let neither man nor saint nor archangel have anything to do with weeping for him a shroud or digging for him a grave. The omnipotent God left his throne in heaven one day, and if the question was asked, "Whither is the King of the Universe going?" the answer was, "I am going down to bury Moses." And the Lord took this mightiest of men to the top of a hill, and the day was clear, and Moses ran his eye over the magnificent range of country. Here, the valley of Esdras, where the final battle of all nations is to be fought; and yonder, the mountains Hermon and Lebanon and Gerizim, and the hills of Judea; and the village of Bethelhem there, and the city of Jericho yonder, and the vast stretch of landscape that almost took the old lawgiver's breath away as he looked at it. And then without a pang—as I learn from the statement that the eye of Moses was undimmed and his

natural force unabated—God touched great lawgiver's eyes and they closed; and his lungs, and they ceased; and his heart, and it stopped; and commanded, saying, "To the skies, thou immortal spirit!" And then one Divine hand was put against the back of Moses, and the other hand against the pulseless breast, and God laid him softly down on Mount Nebo, and then the lawgiver, lifted in the Almighty's arms, was carried to the opening of a cave, and placed in a crypt, and one stroke of the Divine hand smoothed the features into an everlasting calm, and a rock was rolled to the door, and the only obsequies, at which God did all the offices of priest, and undertaker, and gravedigger, and mourner, were ended.

Oh, was not Miriam, the sister of Moses, doing a good thing, an important thing, a glorious thing when she watched the boat woven of river plants and made water-tight with asphaltum, carrying its one passenger? Did she not put all the ages of time and of a coming eternity under obligation when she defended her helpless brother from the perils aquatic, reptilian, and ravenous? She it was that brought that wonderful babe and his mother together, so that he was reared to be the deliverer of his nation, when otherwise, if saved at all from the rushes of the Nile, he would have been only one more of the God-defying Pharaohs; for Princess Thermutis of the bathing-house would have inherited the crown of Egypt; and as she had no child of her own, this adopted child would have come to coronation. Had there been no Miriam there would have been no Moses. What a garland for faithful sisterhood! For how many a lawgiver, and how many a hero, and how many a deliverer and how many a saint are the world and the church indebted to a watchful, loving, faithful, godly sister? Come up out of the farm-houses, come up out of the inconspicuous homes, come up from the banks of the Hudson and Penobscot, and the Savannah, and the Mobile, and the Mississippi, and all the other Niles of America and let us see you, the Miriams who watched and protected the leaders in law, and medicine, and merchandise, and art and agriculture, and mechanics, and religion! If I should ask all physicians and attorneys and merchants and ministers of religion and successful men of all professions and trades, who are indebted to an elder sister for good influences and perhaps for an education or a prosperous start, to let it be known, hundreds would testify. God knows how many of our Greek lexicons and how much of our schooling was paid for by money that would otherwise have gone for the replenishing of a sister's wardrobe. While the brother sailed off for a resounding sphere, the sister watched him from the banks of self-denial.

Miriam was the eldest of the family; Moses and Aaron, her brothers, were younger. Oh, the power of the elder sister to help decide the brother's character for usefulness and for heaven! She can keep off from her brother more evils than Miriam could have driven back water-fowl or crocodile from the ark of bulrushes. The older sister decides the direction in which the cradle boat shall sail. By gentleness, by good sense, by Christian principle she can turn it toward the palace, not of a wicked Pharaoh, but of a holy God; and a brighter princess than Thermutis should lift him out of peril, even religion, whose ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace. The older sister, how much the world owes her! Born while yet the family was in limited circumstances, she had to hold and take care of her younger brothers. And if there is anything that excites my sympathy, it is a little girl lugging round a great fat child and getting her ears boxed because she cannot keep him quiet! By the time she gets to young womanhood she is pale and worn out, and her attractiveness has been sacrificed on the altar of sisterly fidelity, and she is assigned to celibacy, and society calls her by an unfair name; but in heaven they call her Miriam. In most families the two most undesirable places in the record of births are the first and the last; the first because she is worn out with the cares of a home that cannot afford to hire help, and the last because she is spoiled as a pet. Among the grandest equipages that sweep through the streets of heaven will be those occupied by sisters who sacrificed themselves for brothers. They will have the finest of the Apocalyptic white horses, and many who on earth looked down upon them will have to turn out to let them pass, the charioter crying: "Clear the way! A queen is coming!"

General Bauer, of the Russian cavalry, had in early life wandered off in the army, and the family supposed he was dead. After he gained a fortune he encamped one day in Husam, his native place, and made a banquet; and among the great military men who were to dine, he invited a plain miller and his wife who lived near by and who, afflicted, came, fearing some harm would be done them. The miller and his wife were placed one on each side of the general at the table. The general asked the miller all about his family, and the miller said that he had two brothers and a sister. "No other brothers?" "My younger brother went off with the army many years ago, and no doubt was long ago killed." Then the general said: "Soldiers, I am this man's younger brother, whom he thought was dead." And how loud was the cheer, and how warm the embrace!

Brother and sister, you used as much of an introduction to each other as they did. You do not know each other. You think your brother is grouchy and

cross and queer, and he thinks you are selfish and proud and unlovely. Both wrong! That brother will be a prince in some woman's eyes, and that sister a queen in the estimation of some man. That brother is a magnificent fellow, and that sister is a morning in June. Come, let me introduce you: "Moses, this is Miriam." "Miriam, this is Moses." Add seventy-five per cent to your present appreciation of each other, and when you kiss good morning do not stick up your cold cheek, wet from the recent washing, as though you hated to touch each other's lips in affectionate caress. Let it have all the fondness and cordiality of a loving sister's kiss.

Make yourself as agreeable and helpful to each other as possible, remembering that soon you part. The few years of boyhood and girlhood will soon slip by, and you will go out to homes of your own, and into the battle with the world, and amid ever-changing vicissitudes, and on paths crossed with graves, and up steeply hard to climb, and through shadowy ravines. But, O my God and Saviour! may the terminus of the journey be the same as the start—namely, at the father's and mother's knee, if they have inherited the kingdom. Then, as in boyhood and girlhood days, we rushed in after the day's absence with much to tell of exciting adventure, and father and mother enjoyed the recital as much as we who made it, so we shall on the hillside of heaven rehearse to them all the scenes of our earthly expedition, and they shall welcome us home, as we say: "Father and mother, we have come and brought our children with us." The old revival hymn described it with glorious repetition: "Brothers and sisters there will meet, Brothers and sisters there will meet, Brothers and sisters there will meet, Will meet to part no more."

I read of a child in the country who was detained at a neighbor's house on a stormy night by some fascinating stories that were being told him, and then looked out and saw it was so dark he did not dare go home. The incident impressed me the more because in my childhood I had much the same experience. The boy asked his comrades to go with him, but they dared not. It got later and later—seven o'clock, eight o'clock, nine o'clock. "Oh," he said, "I wish I were home!" As he opened the door the last time a blinding flash of lightning and a deafening roar overcame him. But after awhile he saw in the distance a lantern, and lo! his brother was coming to fetch him home, and the lad stepped out and with swift feet hastened on to his brother, who took him home, where they were so glad to greet him, and for a long time supper had been waiting. So may it be when the night of death comes and our earthly friends cannot go with us, and we dare not go alone; may our Brother, our Elder Brother, our Friend closer than a Brother, come out to meet us with the light of the promises, which shall be a lantern to our feet; and then we will go in to join our loved ones waiting for us, supper all ready, the marriage supper of the Lamb!

**Rich Rocky River Bottoms.**  
We mentioned a year ago the remarkable crop of corn raised by W. Q. Hammond on 150 acres of bottom land on Rocky river, aggregating over 5,000 bushels, says the Honea Path (S. C.) Chronicle. The present year he has done even better than that. He planted 110 acres of bottom land and has finished gathering the corn, which has yielded him 7,400 bushels, or a fraction over 67 bushels to the acre. This is a wonderful crop. In addition to that he has gathered about 350 bales of cotton by field weights, as none of it has been ginned yet. This crop has cost him, he says, a cash outlay of about \$6,000. At \$25 a bale this cotton will pay the expense of making the crop and leave him a net profit of \$2,500 and all his corn. Or, if the corn were sold at the current market price of 60 cents per bushel, it would bring \$4,400, nearly enough to pay the expense. He has twenty-six mules on his farm and his farm operations have been conducted by a force of thirty-five convicts. Besides this, he raised 1,000 bushels of oats. He informs us that his corn crop would have been larger, but fifteen acres of it were badly damaged by the cut worms. He says he had several acres that produced over 100 bushels to the acre. And, besides, he now has on hand a quantity of his last year's crop of corn for sale. This is the most successful example of good farming we know of.

**A Few Palindromes.**  
The palindromist sends us the following list of words, clipped from some paper, which may be spelled forward or backward: "Anna, bab, bib, bob, bub, civic, dad, deed, deified, did, ecce, eve, eye, ego, gig, gag, level, madam, noon, otto, pap, peep, pip, pop, pup, redder, refer, repaper, reviver, rotator, sees, sexes, shahs, tat, tit, toot." This leads us to ask: "What is the matter with Hannah?" Her name is also palindromical. Dr. Moxem's family name is equally capable of being spelled backward. But can we not add to the above list? Adam's alleged remark to Eve, "Madam, I'm Adam," and Napoleon's "Able was I ere I saw Elba," should be barred on account of age.—Boston Journal.

**Blasted Hopes.**  
Old Gentleman—"Why are you crying, my little man?" Small boy (sobbing)—"I dreamt last night dat de school burned."—Puck.

Brides and horses both require groomers.

# ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.



DAY of rites and festivities was the 15th of February in ancient Rome, where the Lupercalia was celebrated in honor of a deity designated by the various titles. Upon the blotter of the modern police court the gentleman would appear as "Pan, alias Lupercus, alias Faunus, alias Inuus, dealer in grain and crops, grape grower, proprietor of the woods and fields, the god of plenty." In ancient times so important a personage as he who controlled the increase of the products of the earth must necessarily have been shown great consideration, and it was peculiarly fitting, when the grasp of winter was about to be loosened from the face of the earth and life was about to spring up in grass and flower and tree, that an entertainment should be given for this god of the aliaes.

From time immemorial, therefore, the 15th of February was given up to his worship. Youths of the best Roman families assembled then in the grove of the Palatine hill. Cakes made by the vestal virgins from the first fruits of the preceding year were offered. Goats and young dogs were killed and, when two of the youths had been chosen and brought forward, their foreheads were smeared with the blood from the knives used in the sacrifice. A feast followed, and then the young men, clad in the skins of goats and armed with thongs of the same material, ran around the city, striking with the thongs the thousands who put themselves in the way. To be struck thus was a symbol of purification, implying increase for the future. The thongs were "februa," purifiers, and so the month. But the most popular custom of this festival day was the assembling of youths and maidens. The names of the maidens were put into an urn and those of the youths likewise, and then each drew a slip from the proper vessel, having upon it the name of the one to whom it was his duty to be devoted during the remainder of the year. The custom was almost universal in the city of Rome, and continued unabated for five hundred years of the Christian era. Then happened one of the most humorous incidents recorded in history. Pope Gelasius was a sober minded man, shrewd and sanctimonious, having little tolerance for the revelries of pagan Rome. The festival of the Lupercal, with its attendant wordly customs, seemed to him out of place in a Christian age. He was sagacious enough, moreover, to know that a suppression of so long standing popular observance was impossible. He therefore decreed this change in 496. The date of the festival was put a day earlier in the month and the occasion was made one in honor to St. Valentine, a good and charitable bishop who had become a martyr two hundred years before. When the young people were assembled for the drawing of lots, instead of writing their own names upon the slips, they were to inscribe there the name of saints. The saint whose name anyone might draw was to be his patron for the rest of the year, to be honored and worshipped by him. It was indeed a clever idea to accept the existing conditions, and to endeavor to turn them into a channel which would make for the building up of the new faith. But, shrewd as he was, Gelasius was not far sighted enough to see that there was something deeper than the worship of Pagan Pan behind this little custom of the Lupercalia. Human nature was there, at the heart of it, and the task of Hercules with the River Aulis was less difficult of successful achievement than the slight change which the pious pope had made, involving a matter of popular fancy.

It is little wonder, then, that, though the name and date remained as changed, the old custom of drawing lots for partners, or "valentines," reappeared. In Europe and England until recently young people came together on the day in question and observed the identical custom which the Romans celebrated of old on the day of the Lupercalia. It is little wonder, then, that, though the name and date remained as changed, the old custom of drawing lots for partners, or "valentines," reappeared. In Europe and England until recently young people came together on the day in question and observed the identical custom which the Romans celebrated of old on the day of the Lupercalia.

There will long remain, notwithstanding the practical, hardening tendency of the age, something of the sentimentality peculiar to St. Valentine's day, which led the Roman lady to choose and honor their lady loves. Though the New York postmen may cease to carry 200,000 extra letters on that day, Cupid will continue to be honored, and the confectioner and the florist may notice an increased sale of their wares, for the spring still comes and the birds still mate, and human nature is much as it used to be in the olden days at Rome.

**E. I. SANDERSON.**  
When a woman tells you she will be ready in a minute she doesn't say which minute.

**CLAD IN SKINS OF GOATS.**  
Billets of paper bearing the names of the young women were drawn from a jar by the young men, and afterwards the young women reciprocated. Each one was thus "valentine" to two others, the one whom he had drawn and the one to whom he had fallen by lot. "But," observes Samuel Pepys in his diary, "a man doth pay much more attention to the one he had drawn than to the one to whom he hath fallen," or, in other words, the billets drawn by the men counted for more than those drawn by the women. The "valentine," thus paired, showed each other marked attention. Gifts of jewelry, silks, gloves and sweetmeats were made. Nor was the custom confined to young people. Married men and women and

courtiers were partakers in it, and the gifts they made to each other were many times costly. In one of the English counties, Hertfordshire, it was the custom for the poor children, as gayly dressed as their scant means would permit, to march through the towns, early in the morning, stopping beneath the windows here and there, and singing "Good Morrow, Valentine." A shower of pennies was the usual result. In Norwich, gifts were sent to fair ones anonymously.

The number of poems written about the custom of the day is beyond counting. From Chaucer down, the poets have sung of the god of love to whom the popular observance has ever dedicated the day. John Lydgate, 1449, wrote: "Saynt Valentine, of custom yeere by yeere, Men have an usance in this region, To loke and serche Cupide's kalendere, And chose theyr chosye by grete affection."

In Hamlet, Ophelia is heard to sing: "To-morrow is St. Valentine's day, All in the morning betime, And I, a maid at your window, To be your valentine."

Some have accounted for the origin of the day's observances by saying that it is the time of year when the birds are mating and, with the feathered world,

"The young man's fancy Lightly turns to thoughts of love." In some parts of England, it was the custom, on St. Valentine's eve, to walk the woods with a bird-net, in the hope of catching an owl. Success in love was the result of bringing home a live owl from the hunt, for, as the wisest of birds, it was supposed to have the secret of success which it would impart on this night. It was believed that the first person of the opposite sex one met on St. Valentine's morning was to be that one's "valentine," and records remain of young ladies who conscientiously locked themselves in their rooms, with eyes tightly closed when leaving it, until the right young man was announced.

To-day, the spirit of independence which has come over the world, has



A LIBELOUS VALENTINE.

done away with the drawing of lots. Young people are not satisfied with leaving the matter to fortune, as were their ancestors, but fix it themselves. The universal means used to celebrate the day is a combination of lace paper, pictured hearts, cupids and verses, thousands of which now hang in the stationers' window. From one to a dozen of these are selected, at a cost of from one cent to several dollars, and entrusted, properly addressed, to the postman's care. Invariably, the missive is sent anonymously. Often, too, the sender steals, missive in hand, up to the door of the one who is to receive it, after dusk of St. Valentine's day. The bell is pulled, the valentine dropped, and away runs the young one in high glee. The most delightful joy, however, is experienced when the "irrepressible" steals thus up the steps, chalks a white square the size of an envelope upon the porch, rings the bell, and scampers away. Of course, in the darkness, the square resembles a valentine, and the fair one, her heart beating a little faster than ordinarily, stoops to pick up—nothing.

A spirit of irreverence for the sentiment of St. Valentine's observances has sprung up within the memory of living man. Instead of the regulation lace and verses, the latter of which are of the "molasses drip" sort, contracted for by the hundred pounds, there is now a most grotesque sort of caricature, with a libelous accompaniment of lines. Great swollen heads, emaciated chests, and misshapen feet, printed upon cheap paper, are dedicated to a tradesman or a man of professional calling. Some of the caricatures have their foundations based on peculiarities of custom or eccentricities of habit. One of these eccentricities is taken apart from any other trait, dressed in an outrageous body and glaring clothes, and becomes the missile of the small boy with which to attack the foibles and foolish conventions of society.

There will long remain, notwithstanding the practical, hardening tendency of the age, something of the sentimentality peculiar to St. Valentine's day, which led the Roman lady to choose and honor their lady loves. Though the New York postmen may cease to carry 200,000 extra letters on that day, Cupid will continue to be honored, and the confectioner and the florist may notice an increased sale of their wares, for the spring still comes and the birds still mate, and human nature is much as it used to be in the olden days at Rome.

**E. I. SANDERSON.**  
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# LINCOLN'S BOYHOOD.

## A Playmate Who Saved Him from Death by Drowning.

The child's life during the time the family lived in Kentucky appears to have been entirely uneventful, says St. Nicholas. He helped his mother after he was 3 years old in the simple household duties, went to the district school and played with the children of the neighborhood. The only one of young Lincoln's playmates now living is an old man, nearly 100 years old, named Austin Gollaber, whose mind is bright and clear and who never tires of telling of the days Lincoln and he "were little tikes and played together." This old man, who yet lives in the log house in which he has always lived, a few miles from the old Lincoln place, tells entertaining stories about the president's boyhood.

Mr. Gollaber says that they were together more than the other boys in school; that he became fond of his little friend, and he believed that Abe thought a great deal of him.

In speaking of various events of minor importance in their boyhood days, Mr. Gollaber remarked: "I once saved Lincoln's life." Upon being urged to tell of the occurrence he thus related it: "We had been going to school together one year, but the next year we had no school, because there were so few scholars to attend, there being only about twenty in the school the year before. Consequently Abe and I had not much to do, but as we did not go to school and our mothers were strict with us we did not get to see each other very often. One Sunday morning my mother waked me early, saying she was going to see Mrs. Lincoln, and that I could go along. Glad of the chance, I was soon dressed and ready to go. After my mother and I got there Abe and I played all through the day. While we were wandering up and down the little stream called Knob creek Abe said: 'Right up there, pointing to the east, 'we saw a covey of partridges yesterday. Let's go over and get some of them.' The stream was swollen and was too wide for us to jump across. Finally we saw a narrow footing and we concluded to try it. It was narrow, but Abe said: 'Let's

go on it.' I went first and reached the other side all right. Abe went about half way across, when he got scared and began trembling. I hollered to him: 'Don't look down nor up nor sideways, but look right at me and hold on tight.' But he fell off into the creek, and as the water was about seven or eight feet deep and I could not swim and neither could Abe I knew it would do no good for me to go in after him. So I got a stick—a long water sprout—and held it out to him. He came up, grabbing with both hands, and I put the stick into his hands. He clung to it and I pulled him out on the bank, almost dead. I got him by the arms and shook him well and then rolled him on the ground, when the water poured out of his mouth. He was all right very soon. We promised each other that we would never tell anybody about it, and never did for years.



EARLIEST PORTRAIT OF LINCOLN.

I never told any one of it until after Lincoln was killed."

**Bismarck of Jewish Descent.**  
Few people are aware that Prince Bismarck is of Hebrew descent. He derives his Jewish blood from his mother, whose father—Anastasius Menken, one of the favorite bureaucrats of Frederick the Great—was of Hebrew parentage. Although of late it has evidently appeared politic to the prince to countenance the anti-semitic movement both in Germany and Austria, yet while in office he invariably showed himself a good friend to the Jewish nation, and chose the Hebrew banker, at Berlin, Baron von Bleichroeder, as his most trusted confidant. Indeed, in those days he was so well disposed toward the Jews that he even discussed the advisability of marrying his sons of Jewesses, on the ground that it would bring money into the family again, and likewise "improve both morally and physically the Bismarck breed."

**A Persian Lady's Room.**  
A Persian lady's room do not occupy much of her time or attention. They are very simple and taste plays no important part in them. The walls are either plainly tinted, ornamented with scrolls, carved in plaster, or inlaid up to the ceiling with fragments of looking glass. Her bedding by day is rolled up in a corner of the room she generally inhabits. On a shelf in every niche stands a turquoise colored vase, on which rests a strongly scented shaddock. This is the only decoration except the exquisite carpets and rugs which are spread about the floor. She is thoroughly domestic, and treats her woman servants and slaves much as if they were her equals. Interesting herself in the cookery, and often making the sweetmeats in which an Oriental household delights.—Exchange.