TALMAGE SERMON

By Rev.

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Pastor of Jefferson Park Presbyterian Church, Chicago

Los Angeles, Cal., Feb. 7.—At the time when the whole nation is honoring the memory of Lincoln this anniversary sermon sheds a new and interesting light upon the character of the statesman-president. The text is James v, 8, "Be ye also patient."

"What was the most powerful address you ever heard?" I once asked my father in one of our conversations when journeying around the world. "Well," he replied, "I have listened to nearly all the great American orators of my time. I have been personally acquainted with most of them and have spoken from the same platform with many of them. But without any doubt the greatest address I ever heard—if it is to be judged by its electric and overwhelming instantaneous effect—was that delivered by Henry W. Grady of Georgia in 1888 at the annual banquet of the New England society. I had just finished a speech on 'The Coming American' when Mr. Grady arose. After a few introductory remarks he said: 'My friends, Dr. Talmage has told you that the typical American has got to come. Let me tell you that he has already come. Great types, like valuable plants, are slow to flower and fruit. But from the union of these colonists, Puritans and Cavaliers, from the strengthening of their purposes and the crossing of their blood, slow perfecting, through a century, came the man who stands as the first typical American, the first who comprehended within himself all the strength and gentleness, all the majesty and grace, of this republic—Abraham Lincoln.' These words were quoted almost verbatim from memory.

The tremendous impression produced by Henry Grady's speech was not due to the fact that he was saying something that no other man had said before, but to the fact that, for the first time since the civil war, the great leaders of the north realized that Lincoln was appreciated and honored as much south of Mason and Dixon's line as he was among the Michigan pines and upon the Illinois prairie.

Second to Only One.

Since that time I have read almost every biography written about the personality of that man who stands second to only one, if he does not stand side by side with George Washington, in the affections of the American people. I find that Henry Watterson of Kentucky has as deep a reverance for Lincoln as had Charles W. Dana or Nicolay or Joseph Medill or William Herndon or David Davis or Swett or Speed, who knew him by personal contact. Therefore I am sure that on this Sunday preceding the celebration of Lincoln's birthday I shall have with me the cordial approbation of the south as well as of the north as I draw from his character lessons of inspiration and pay tribute to his memory. At heart he was a true friend of the south, and I believe that his untimely death retarded the consummation of reconstruction at least a quarter of a century.

Most Lincoln eulogists start, as Henry Watterson beautifully expressed it, by looking into a "crystal globe that, slowly turning, tells the story of his life, and they see therein a little heartbroken boy weeping by the outstretched form of a dead mother." But this I do not intend to do. You are already familiar with the facts of that eventful life. In speaking of him today I would try to get the keynote of his character and show the predominant quality which made him so great and so useful to the nation. That quality I conceive to be his patience, and I shall recall to your minds the times and the circumstances in which, by the exercise of that quality, he proved the grandeur of his nature. At the base of the gigantic statue of Faith, overlooking the pilgrims' graves at Plymouth and the harbor where the Mayflower cast anchor, are figures symbolizing Freedom, Education, Law and Morality. But here today, standing by the grave of this great man, we see the figure of sanctified Patience. We find this figure not cut from stone or cast in iron, but made out of dust which was once living, breathing, throbbing, moving flesh and blood. As the paramount desire of Lincoln's last four years on earth and those tumultuous years which led up to them was to save the Union, I shall try in this brief eulogy to show how, by glorious patience, that great purpose of his life was accomplished.

A Positive Man.

In the first place, we must start with the well accepted and universally acknowledged fact that Abraham Lincoln was a man of positive characteristics. William Herndon just after Lincoln's nomination wrote to Senator Wilson of Massachusetts that when Lincoln made up his mind to do anything he had "a will of iron." After the assassination in Ford's theater Senator Wilson wrote a letter to Lincoln's old law partner that he had truly analyzed Lincoln's character in reference to this one characteristic. But though Lincoln was a positive man and had well settled convictions, he never believed that "two wrongs make one right." In order to accomplish his patriotic purposes he was unwilling to defile the majesty of the law. He was always ready to try to change the law, but never to break it. In his methods and principles he was neither violent nor revolutionary. He was not, as many people supposed in 1860, a wild eyed visionary or a crazed enthusiast who would, to reach a beneficent end, trample on vested rights and interests regardless of justice and equity. He himself was obedient to the laws as well as a faithful executive of the law. He was a respecter of the law in private life as well as a conservative lawmaker in public life.

An Advocate of the Law.

What was Lincoln's stand when a great abolitionist meeting was held in Springfield some years before the war? There the opponents of slavery proposed by force of arms to defy the public authorities and drive out the slaveholders from the then territory of Kansas. When called upon for a speech Lincoln shocked some of his very best friends and, as some thought, then and there signed his own political death warrant. "Let there be peace!" he emphatically said. "Revolutionize through the ballot box. Your attempt, if there be such to resist the laws of Kansas by force is criminal and wicked, and all your feeble attempts will be follies and end by bringing sorrow on your own heads and ruin on the cause you would fondly die to preserve." What said he in his famous speech delivered on July 17, 1858, in answer to one of the charges made against him by Douglas? "Now, as to the Dred Scott decision, for upon that Senator Douglas makes his last point against me. I am opposed to that decision in a certain sense, but not in the sense in which he puts it. I say that in so far as it decided in favor of Dred Scott's master and against Dred Scott and his family I do not propose to disturb or resist the decision. I never have proposed to do any such thing. I think that in respect for judicial authority my humble history would not suffer in comparison with that of Judge Douglas." When some enthusiastic admirers asked him this question: "Has the territory of Kansas a right to come into the Union a slave state if the people wish?" Lincoln said: "Yes. By the national law it has a right which you cannot take away unless by national legislation you change that law." In all the fifty-six years of Lincoln's life, both as a public officeholder and as a private citizen, you cannot put your finger upon one act where he was an advocate of violation of the law. He was patient in his belief that moral right would ultimately become legal right.

Followed the Path of Rectitude.

On the approaching anniversary of this great American's birth let us learn one of the greatest lessons of his life. Even amid the injustices and the weaknesses of the law let us bow before and recognize the majesty of the law. Because in some municipalities the citizens may be terrorized every winter by "holdup" men who walk around at night shooting down innocent pedestrians in cold blood, that is no reason why, in order to extirpate them, we ourselves should become criminals. Because Alexander of Servia was a bad man, that does not place the stamp of respectability upon those who, by regicide, proved they were as lawless as their detested king. Always obey the law. If it be wrong, then make the law right, but never defile the majesty of the law.

Though Abraham Lincoln was a man of positive characteristics, yet he was patient in the fact that he was ready to keep step with the march of the common people. He never for one moment left the path of rectitude and honor. He was not a foolish color bearer, leaving the ranks of his fellow soldiers and plunging far ahead of the lines, thereby courting death and annihilation. As the national standard bearer he was ready, if necessary, to "mark time," so that the common people could catch up with him, that all might advance in line.

Man of Patience.

All things may be lawful, but all things are not expedient. What did he do after he had delivered his first inaugural address? Did he do anything to antagonize the southern leaders and people, as some rash statesmen would have had him do? No; that was not his way. He had "malice toward none and charity for all." He bided his time, though in every town, village and city he was called a coward. If possible he wanted to win the southern leaders back by love and kindness. He knew that hate and bumbugaste and club never won a willing subject. He was patient, very patient. His patience was expressed powerfully in the words he once spoke to Alexander H. Stephens at the memorable conference held at Hampton Roads with the southern commissioners. "Stephens," he said, "let me write 'Union' at the top of that page, and you may write below it whatever else you please."

To placate the southern leaders was one reason for delay. But there was still another reason why he was patient. There were scores and hundreds and thousands of men at the north as well as the south who believed that as the original southern states came into the Union of their own accord they had therefore the right to leave of their own accord. As Lincoln in his quaint language put the "popular sovereignty idea," "They believed that the big kettle of the United States government could be squeezed into the little kettle of state rights." Horace Greeley believed this; Wendell Phillips believed this; other mighty northern leaders believed this. Had Abraham Lincoln, on the night of March 4, 1861, started the invasion of the south he might have had two wars on his hands. War would have been in the front of him, war in the rear of him. When he entered the White House he had two purposes: First, to do anything and everything that was honorable to save the Union. Secondly, if there was to be a war then let others take the responsibility of striking the first blow.

Calm Under Criticism.

But if Lincoln was willing to be patient with his northern enemies and with the south how much more was he willing to be patient with his so called friends, upon whose arm he had a right to lean and from whose influence he had a right to expect succor and help! If the armies of Lee were attacking him in the front, the rancorous tongues of some who were his closest advisers were broadcasting their evil murmurs everywhere.

"Well," says some hearer, "why did he allow those men who were nearest to him to criticise him? Why did he not do as one of his Springfield friends suggested, 'kick them out of office?'" That question cannot be answered in a better way than by quoting the words Lincoln spoke when he said, quietly, that it was easy enough to kick a man out, but not always so easy to get another man to fill his place and do as well as he did. In those few words we realize the results of Lincoln's patience with those so called friends who kept publicly criticising their chief. He once said to Leonard Swett, "I may not have made as great a president as some other men, but I believe I have kept the discordant elements together as well as any one could." Like Abraham Lincoln, are we as Christians ready to let men criticise us and find fault with us if only we can use them for the cause of Christ, as Lincoln was able to use Stanton and Seward and Simon Cameron and Hooker and McClellan and Thaddeus Stevens and Greeley and Bennett to help save the Union?

Leader of the People.

As the twilight is the most beautiful part of the day, so we find that the mellowing sunset of Lincoln's life was even more glorious in its golden reflections than when he was accomplishing the great purpose of his life—the preservation of the Union. Like Moses of old, he was able to lead his people through the dark wanderings in the wilderness; but, also, like Moses, he was not to be allowed to plant his foot in the promised land. The Jordan which separated him from his southern people in the reconstructive period was to be a great river whose waters came from the falling tears that millions of eyes shed over his bier and by his coffin lid. In those few days that led up to Appomattox and thereafter we may know what fruit the patience of Lincoln would have borne. His purpose was to bind up the nation's bleeding wounds and make the "boy in gray" and the "boy in blue" clasp hands as brothers.

A Noble American.

How, then, did he want to reach out the hand of reconciliation? On Feb. 5, 1865, after the outcome of the war was practically decided, he drafted a bill by which, if congress consented, $400,000,000 was to be paid on account of the liberation of the slaves. He presented this proposed bill to his cabinet, and when they unanimously rejected it the president, as Norman Hapgood tells us, "sadly folded it up and laid it away." As soon as Richmond had been evacuated he got on the cars and started south. He went not as a conqueror, but as a messenger of peace. In his plain, simple way he practically said to the old Virginians: "I am your brother. I am your friend. Come, be my brother and my friend." When that other messenger of peace, Ulysses S. Grant, practically said to the officers and men of the disbanding southern armies alike: "Go home. Take your horses and plow your fields. Go home and be our friends and comrades instead of our foes," what was Lincoln's comment? "Good! Good! All right! Exactly the thing!" Admiral Porter gives these as Lincoln's words, which he heard him repeat a dozen times. In the glorious hopes Lincoln held of future reconciliation, do you wonder that Henry Grady, the eloquent Georgian, was impelled to say "that the first who comprehended within himself all the strength and gentleness, all the majesty and grace of this republic was Abraham Lincoln." He was as true and pure and noble and patient and God inspired an American as ever lived.

A Lesson of Love.

Today, if I had it in my power, I would start a pilgrimage to the Springfield tomb. I would have the southerner as well as the northerner, easterner and the westerner go there and learn the lesson of gentle and glorious love. "What," some cynic cries, "would you have the southerner go there as to a shrine?" Yes, my brother, I would have the southerner go to Lincoln's tomb and kneel, the same as I would have the northerner go to the sacred tomb of Lexington, Va., and bow reverently before the dust of honored, gentle Robert E. Lee. Both of these men were conquerors. Both have subdued and by their example will yet subdue great hosts, whose numbers, in the dim future, will be counted by the millions. Both have won and will win their greatest victories not by the sword, but by love. When the civil war was closing these two great leaders were able to say to each other, "Thou art my brother." Both are enshrined in their nation's love and admiration.

Trust In God.

Therefore, fellow countrymen, with the universal affections of the American people, cannot the north come with her sacred dust of Springfield, Ill., and the south come with her sacred dust of Lexington, Va.; then after the north and south with their precious burdens have both met at the national capitol at Washington cannot the two different sections which once stood face to face in battle now stand side by side and bury their two sacred dead in one grave? Then over this one grave, entombing the commingling dust of the two sacred dead, cannot and will not the reconciled north and south chisel one single God given epitaph, such as old Kentucky placed upon her memorial shaft, erected upon the ones blood soaked field of Chickamauga to her "boys in gray" and to her "boys in blue:" "As we are united in life and they united in death, let one monument perpetuate their deeds and one people, forgetful of all asperities, forever hold in grateful remembrance all the glories of that terrible conflict which made all men free and retained every star upon the nation's flag."

Abraham Lincoln's parting words to his fellow townsmen when for the last time he left the Springfield depot for the national capital were these: "Today I leave you. I go to assume a task more difficult than that which devolved upon Washington. Unless the great God who assisted him shall be with and aid me I must fail, but if the same omniscient mind and Almighty arm that directed and protected him shall guide and support me I shall not fail. I shall succeed. Let us all pray that the God of our fathers may not forsake us now. To him I commend you all. Permit me to ask that with equal sincerity and faith you will invoke his wisdom and guidance for me." This was the key note of his whole gentle, loving, patient, forgiving life: Trust in God and patient dependence upon the divine will. To Abraham Lincoln's God I commend you. May that God forever guide us all.

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The Best Novels.

The Back Bay Literary circle of Boston recently voted on what the members considered the best novels. These received the majority of votes:

Best sensational novel, "Woman In White," Collins.

Best historical novel, "Kenilworth," Scott.

Best dramatic novel, "Jane Eyre," Bronte.

Best marine novel, "Red Rover," Cooper.

Best country life novel, "Lorna Doone," Blackmore.

Best military novel, "Charles O'Malley," Lever.

Best religious novel, "Hypatia," Kingsley.

Best sporting novel, "Digby Grand," Melville.

Best political novel, "Coningsby," Disraeli.

Best novel written for a purpose, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," Stowe.

Best imaginative novel, "Marble Faun," Hawthorne.

Best pathetic novel, "Silas Marner," Eliot.

Best humorous novel, "Pickwick Papers," Dickens.

Best English novel, "Adam Bede," Eliot.

Best American novel, "Scarlet Letter," Hawthorne.

Best novel in all, "Henry Esmond," Thackeray.

A Modest Banquet.

W. J. Arkell, formerly publisher of Judge and Leslie's Weekly, tells this story apropos of Mr. Joseph Pulitzer's gift to Columbia university:

"When Joseph Pulitzer came to New York to take the World out of the hands of William Hurlbert and Manton Marble he invited a notable company to dinner on the evening after the first paper was issued under his management. The party included, as nearly as I can remember, John A. Cockerill, who afterward died in Alexandria, Egypt, while in the service of the New York Herald; Ballard Smith, who was for a time managing editor of the Sun; Charles Brooks, the criminal lawyer; John R. Fellows, the talented district attorney, and others whose names I cannot now recall. Instead of taking them to Delmonico's, where they all expected to go, Mr. Pulitzer conducted them to Hitchcock's famous beanery, then occupying a cellar on the spot where the Pulitzer building now stands. Said he as he ordered beef and beans and 'sinkers' and coffee for the whole party:

"'Gentlemen, when the Princeton or Harvard graduate comes to New York to enter journalism he dines first at Delmonico's and ends up at Hitchcock's. We will begin, with your permission, at Hitchcock's, and we hope to end at Delmonico's.'"

There's Nothing New.

The delicate operation of trephining was known to "the neolithic age," when men lived in caves and fought with stone hammers. Savage tribes perform the same operation today. Eighty per cent of the cases treated in New Britain with a piece of stone or shell as a surgeon's knife recover.

George Washington's famous set of false teeth, which fitted so badly that they gave his mouth the square look noted in his later portraits, were almost the only ones in the country in his day. The art of making them had been rediscovered for perhaps the hundredth time by a French doctor. Yet false teeth have been found in Etruscan graves made long before the historic period.

The newest model of "double saucepan," to prevent food from burning while being cooked, has been dug up in the ruins of Pompeii.

An ancient vase in a Roman museum, made no one knows when and representing Homer's heroes resting during the period of the Trojan war, represents one of the young fellows as busy with a "punching bag" hung at the limb of a tree.

A Queer Legal Decision.

The Australian government finds itself the defendant in a suit for $5,000 on account of the most absurd of decisions. The new immigration law declares that an immigrant must submit to an educational test in his native language before he is allowed to land. Not long ago a mate on a ship was arrested for smuggling. When he was released, he was ordered to submit to the test or be expelled from the country. It was found that his father was a German and his mother a native of Egypt. He was born in Alexandria. It was decided, therefore, that his native language was Greek, since Greece is the European country nearest to Egypt. He failed to pass an examination and was condemned to a further imprisonment of six months. Now he is suing for damages, with a fair chance of getting them.

A COUNTY ORGANIZATION.

Blacksmiths and Horseshoers Form Organization at a Meeting Here.

There was fun galore at the Avery house on Wednesday evening when the master horseshoers and blacksmiths of Cayuga county met for the purpose of organization. There were over 50 present, and those from the country towns were complimented on their pluck in braving the bad roads and storms to get here. The towns of Moravia, Locke, Scipio, Niles, Owasco, Sterling—in fact nearly all towns in the county were represented and some men were present from Seneca and Tompkins counties. A lot of routine business was transacted early in the evening and officers were chosen as follows: President, James H. Cole, Auburn; vice president, E. M. Babcock, Moravia; secretary, Charles Hutchings, Auburn; treasurer, Benjamin Hutchings, Auburn. The business meeting was then adjourned until Wednesday next at 10:30 a. m. at Moravia.

Following the business session merriment reigned. Refreshments were served and there were numerous discussions and some excellent essays on the faulty action of the horse. Suggestions as to treating corns and handling vicious horses were also offered. The wagon makers had a lively discussion over the quickest way of resetting a set of buggy tires. The meeting at Moravia next week promises to be even larger than the one here.

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A SLEIGHRIDE.

Thursday night as the whistles were blowing and the bells tolling the hour of 6 the employes of William B. Hiscop, Angus & Co. packed themselves into a large bob sleigh, their destination being the residence of George Graham at the foot of the lake. The route taken was up William street, down South to Genesee and along Owasco street. The tooting of horns and the laughter and merry chatter of the happy party, with Mr. Angus up in front, attracted the attention of the large crowds hurrying home after work. They reached their objective point about 7 o'clock when preparations for supper were hastily entered upon and when all was ready the large company sat down to do justice to the good things prepared. It was generally remarked when the party got up there was nothing left but crockery to clear away. Vocal and instrumental music and games of various kinds were indulged in, and the evening was one of unalloyed enjoyment. They reached the city in the wee sma' hours of the morning.

TO RAISE CAPITAL STOCK.

WATERLOO, Feb. 5.—The Empire Coke company, which is erecting the big plant at Border City, in Seneca county, for the manufacture of coke and gas, and which has obtained franchises for the supplying of gas to Geneva, Waterloo, Seneca Falls, Auburn and all intervening territory, has issued a notice calling a meeting of the stockholders of the company to be held at its branch office, No. 84 Clark street, Geneva, Saturday, February 13, at 2 p. m. This meeting is to vote upon a proposition to increase the capital stock of the company from $1,000,000 to $1,200,000.

SURROGATE'S COURT.

Surrogate Woodin entered an order Friday dismissing the petition of Joseph B. Stoup for the vacation of the appointment of Eliza E. Wright, as general guardian of Flossie Fiero, an infant, on the ground that she was not a suitable person to act as such guardian. The petitioner did not appear when the matter came up Friday.

The will of Henry Bostwick, of Locke, was admitted to probate and letters testamentary were issued to Ray Bostwick, who is the sole executor.

Petition filed and citation issued to February 16 in the matter of the will of Moses B. Conklin, of Aurelius. The estate consists of $1,500 personal property and $5,500 real estate.

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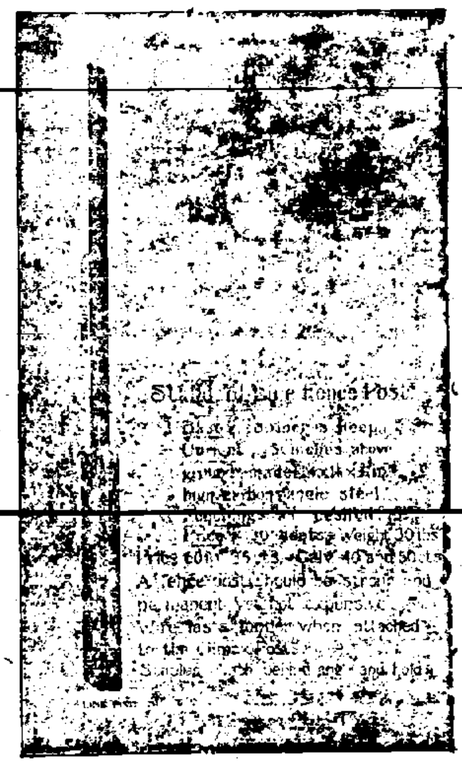

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