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A NEW YEAR'S SERMON

DR. TALMAGE'S DISCOURSE AT THE BROOKLYN TABERNACLE.

"Consider the Years of Many Generations" Was the Text, and the Sermon Was Regarding "The Chronology of the Bible, or God Among the Centuries."

BROOKLYN, Jan. 1.—Rev. Dr. Talmage this morning appropriately took for the subject of his New Year's day sermon "The Chronology of the Bible, or God Among the Centuries." Before the discourse the great audience which fully crowded the Tabernacle sang the hymn:

Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come.

The text chosen was Deuteronomy xxxii, 7, "Consider the years of many generations."

At 12 o'clock last night, while so many good people were watching, an old friend passed out of our homes and a stranger entered. The old friend making valedictory was 1892; the stranger arriving is 1893. The old friend was garrulous with the occurrences of many days, but the stranger put his finger over his lip and said nothing and seemed charged with many secrets and mysteries. I did not see either the departure or the arrival, but was sound asleep, thinking that was for me the best way to be wide awake now. Goodby, 1892! Welcome, 1893!

As an army is divided into brigades and regiments and companies, and they observe this order in their march and their tread is majestic, so the time of the world's existence is divided into an army divinely commanded; the eras are the brigades, the centuries are the regiments, and the years are the companies. Forward into the eternity past, out of the eternity to come! Forward is the command, and nothing can halt them, even though the world should die. While obeying my text, "Consider the years of many generations," I propose to speak of the "Chronology of the Bible, or God Among the Centuries."

ARRANGING EVENTS.

We make a distinction between time and eternity, but time is only a piece of eternity, and chronology has been engaged in the sublime work of dividing up this portion of eternity that we call time into compartments and putting events in their right compartment. It is as much an injustice against the past to wrongly arrange its events as it would be an injustice if, through neglect of chronological accuracy, it should in the far distant future be said that America was discovered in 1776, and the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1492, and Washington born on the 22d of March, and the civil war of the United States was fought in 1840.

As God puts all the events of time in the right place, let us be careful that we do not put them in the wrong place. The chronology of the Bible takes six steps, but they are steps so long it makes us hold our breath as we watch the movement. From Adam to Abraham. From Abraham to the exodus out of Egypt. From the exodus to the foundation of Solomon's temple. From the foundation of Solomon's temple to the destruction of that temple. From the destruction of the temple to the return from Babylonish captivity. From Babylonish captivity to the birth of Christ.

Chronology takes pen and pencil, and calling astronomy and history to help says: "Let us fix one event from which to calculate everything. Let it be a star, the Bethlehem star, the Christmas star." And from that we go back and see the world was created 4,004 years before Christ: the deluge came 2,348 years before Christ: the exodus out of Egypt occurred 1,491 years before Christ, and Solomon's temple was destroyed 586 years before Christ.

Chronology enters the first chapter of Genesis and says the day mentioned there is not a day of twenty-four hours, but of ages, the word there translated as "day" in other places meaning ages, and so the Bible account of the creation and the geologists' account of the creation are completely harmonious. Chronology enters the book of Daniel and says that the words "time and a half" mean a year and a half.

Chronology enters at another point and shows us that the seasons of the year were then only two—summer and winter. We find that the Bible year was 360 days instead of 365; that the day was calculated from 6 o'clock in the morning to 6 o'clock at night; that the night was divided into four watches—namely, the late watch, the midnight, the cock crowing, the early watch. The clock and watch were invented so long after the world began their mission that the day was not very sharply divided in Bible times. Ahaz had a sundial, or a flight of stairs with a column at the top, and the shadow which that column threw on the steps beneath indicated the hour, the shadow lengthening or withdrawing from step to step.

But the events of life and the events of the world moved so slowly for the most part in Bible times that they had no need of such timepieces as we stand on our mantels or carry in our pockets in an age when a man may have a half dozen or a dozen engagements for one day and needs to know the exact minute for each one of them. The earth itself in Bible times was the chief timepiece, and it turned once on its axis and that was a day, and once around the sun and that was a year.

THE ALMANAC.

It was not until the Fourteenth century that the almanac was born, the almanac that we toss carelessly about, not realizing that it took the accumulated ingenuity of more than 5,000 years to make one. Chronology had to bring into its service the monuments of Egypt, and the cylinders of Assyria, and the bricks of Babylon, and the pottery of Nineveh, and the medals struck at Antioch for the battle of Actium, and all the hieroglyphics that could be deciphered, and had to go into the extremely delicate business of asking the ages of Adam and Seth and Enoch and Methuselah, who after their 300th year wanted to be thought young.

I think it must have been in recognition of the stupendous work of making an almanac that all the days of the week are named after the gods. Sunday, after the sun, which was of old worshiped as a god. Monday, after the moon, which was also worshiped as a god. Tuesday, after Tuesco, the god of war. Wednesday, after Woden, the chief god of the Scandinavians. Thursday, after Thor, the god of thunder. Friday, after Frea, the goddess of marriage. And Saturday, after Saturn. The old Bible year began with the 25th of March. Not until 1752 did the first of the month of January get the honor in legal documents in England of being called the first day of the year.

Improvements all along have been made in chronology until the calendar and the almanac, and the clock, and the watch seem to have reached perfection, and all the nations of Christendom have similarity of time calculations and have adopted what is called "new style," except Russia, which keeps what is called the "old style," and is twelve days different, so that, writing from there, if you wish to be accurate, you date your letter Jan. 1 and Jan. 13, or Dec. 10 and Dec. 22. It is something to thank God for that the modes are so complete for calculating the cycles, the centuries, the decades, the years, the months, the days, the hours, the seconds.

Think of making appointments as in the Bible days for the time of the new moon. Think of making one of the watches of the night in Bible times a rooster crowing. The Bible says, "Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice," "If the Master cometh at the cockcrowing," and that was the way the midnight watch was indicated. The crowing of that barnyard bird has always been most uncertain. The crowing is at the lowest temperature of the night, and the amount of dew and the direction of the wind may bring the lowest temperature at 11 o'clock at night or 2 o'clock in the morning, and at any one of six hours. Just before a rain the crowing of chanticleer in the night is almost perpetual.

BE THANKFUL.

Compare these modes of marking time with our modes of marking time, when 12 o'clock is 12 o'clock, and 6 o'clock is 6 o'clock, and 10 o'clock is 10 o'clock, and independent of all weathers, and then thank God that you live now. But notwithstanding all the imperfect modes of marking hours or years or centuries Bible chronology never trips up, never falters, never contradicts itself, and here is one of the best arguments for the authenticity of the Scriptures.

If you can prove an alibi in the courts, and you can prove beyond doubt that you were in some particular place at the time you were charged with doing or saying something in quite another place, you gain the victory, and infidelity has tried to prove an alibi by contending that events and circumstances in the Bible ascribed to certain times must have taken place at some other time, if they took place at all. But this book's chronology has never been caught at fault. It has been proved that when the Hebrews went into Egypt there were only seventy of them, and that when they came out there were 3,000,000 of them.

"Now," says infidelity, with a guffaw that it cannot suppress, "what an absurdity! They went down into Egypt seventy and came out 3,000,000. That is a falsehood on the face of it. Nations do not increase in that ratio." But, my skeptical friend, hold a moment. The Bible says the Jews were 430 years in Egypt, and that explains the increase from seventy persons to 3,000,000, for it is no more, but rather less, than the ordinary increase of nations. The Pilgrim Fathers came to America in the Mayflower, one small shipload of passengers, less than 300 years ago, and now we have a nation of 60,000,000. Where, then, is so called impossibility that the seventy Jews who went into Egypt in 430 years became 3,000,000? Infidelity wrong and Bible chronology right.

SPLENDID REVIEW.

Now stop and reflect. Why is it that this sublime subject of Bible chronology has been so neglected, and that the most of you have never given ten minutes to the consideration of it, and that this is the first sermon ever preached on this stupendous and overwhelming theme? We have stood by the half day or the whole day at grand reviews and seen armies pass.

Again and again and again on the Champs Elysees Frenchmen by the hundreds of thousands have stood and watched the bannered armies go by, and the huzza has been three miles long and until the populace were so hoarse they could huzza no longer. Again and again and again the Germans by hundreds of thousands have stood on the palaced and statued Unter den Linden, Berlin, and strewn garlands under the feet of uniformed hosts led on by Von Moltke or Blucher or Frederick the Great.

When Wellington and Ponsonby and the Scots Grays came back from Waterloo, or Wolseley from Egypt, or Marlborough from Blenheim, what military processions through Regent street and along by the palaces of London and over the bridges of the Thames! What almost interminable lines of military on the streets of our American capitals, while mayors and governors and presidents, with uncovered heads, looked on! But put all those grand reviews together, and they are tame compared with the review which on this New Year's day you from the pew and I from the pulpit witness.

Hear them pass in chronological order—all the years before the flood; all the years since the flood; decades abreast; centuries abreast; epochs abreast; millenniums abreast; Egyptian civilization, Babylonian populations, Assyrian dominions; armies of Persian, Grecian, Peloponnesian and Roman wars; Byzantine empire, Saracenic hosts, crusaders of the first, the second, third and the last avalanche of men; Dark Ages in somber epaulets and brighter ages with shields of silver and helmets of gold; Italy, Spain, France, Russia, Germany, England and America, past and present; dynasties, feudal domains, despotisms, monarchies, republics, ages on ages, ages on ages, passing today in a chronological review, until one has no more power to look upon the advancing columns, now brilliant, now squalid, now garlanded with peace, now crimson with slaughter, now horrid with ghastliness, now radiant with love and joy.

THE GLORIES OF THE PRESENT.

This chronological study affords, among other practical thoughts, especially two—the one encouraging to the last degree and the other startling. The encouraging thought is that the main drift of the centuries has been toward betterment, with only here and there a stout reversal. Grecian civilization was a vast improvement on Egyptian civilization, and Roman civilization a vast improvement on Grecian civilization, and Christian civilization is a vast improvement on Roman civilization.

What was the boasted age of Pericles compared with the age of Longfellow and Tennyson? What was Queen Elizabeth as a specimen of moral womanhood compared with Queen Victoria? What were the cruel warriors of olden times compared with the most distinguished warriors of the last half century, all of them as much distinguished for kindness and good morals as for prowess—the two military leaders of our civil war on northern and southern side communicant members of Christian churches, and their home life as pure as their public life?

Nothing impresses me in this chronological review more than the fact that the regiments of years are better and better regiments as the troops move on. I thank God that you and I were not born any sooner than we were born. How could we have endured the disaster of being born in the Eighteenth or Seventeenth or Sixteenth century? Glad am I that we are in the regiment now passing the reviewing stand, and that our children will pass the stand in a still better regiment. God did not build this world for a slaughter house or a den of infamy.

A good deal of cleaning house will be necessary before this world becomes as clean and sweet as it ought to be, but the brooms, and the scrubbing brushes, and the upholsterers and plumbers are already busy, and when the world gets fixed up, as it will be, if Adam and Eve ever visit it, as I expect they will, they will say to each other, "Well, this beats paradise when we lived there, and the pears and the plums are better than we plucked from the first trees, and the wardrobes are more complete, and the climate is better."

Since I settled in my own mind the fact that God was stronger than the devil I have never lost faith in the emparadisation of this planet. With the exception of a retrogression in the Dark Ages, the movement of the world has been on and on, and up and up, and I have two jubilant hosannas—one for the closing year and the other for the new year.

PUNCTUALITY.

But the other thought coming out of this subject is that Biblical chronology, and indeed all chronology, is urging the world to more punctuality and immediateness. What an unsatisfactory and indefinite thing it must have been for two business men in the time of Ahaz to make an appointment, saying, "We will settle that business matter tomorrow when the shadow on the dial of Ahaz reaches the tenth step from the top," or "I will meet you in the street called Straight in Damascus in the time of the new moon," or when asked in a courtroom what time an occurrence took place should answer, "It was during the time of the latter rain," or "It was at the time of the third crowing of the barnyard!"

You and I remember when ministers of the Gospel in the country, giving out a notice of an evening service, instead of saying at 6 or 7 or 8 o'clock, would say, "The service will begin at early candle light." Thank God for chronological achievements which have ushered in calendars and almanacs and clocks and watches, and at so cheap a rate all may possess them! Chronology, beginning by appreciating the value of years and the value of days, has kept on until it cries out, "Man, immortal; woman, immortal; look out for that minute; look out for that second!"

We talk a great deal about the value of time, but will never fully appreciate its value until the last fragment of it has passed out of our possession forever. The greatest fraud a man can commit is to rob another of his time. Hear it, ye laggards and repent! All the fingers of chronology point to punctuality as one of the graces. The minister or the lecturer or business man who comes to his place ten minutes after the appointed time commits a crime the enormity of which can only be estimated by multiplying the number of persons present by ten. If the engagement be made with five persons, he has stolen fifty minutes, for he is ten minutes too late, and he has robbed each of the five persons of ten minutes apiece, and ten times five are fifty.

If there be 500 persons present and he be ten minutes too late, he has committed a robbery of 5,000 minutes, for ten time 500 are 5,000, and 5,000 minutes are eighty-three hours, which make more than three days. The thief of dry goods, the thief of bank bills, is not half so bad as the thief of time.

SOME EXAMPLES.

Dr. Rush, the greatest and busiest physician of his day, appreciated the value of time, and when asked how he had been able to gather so much information for his books and lectures he replied: "I have been able to do it by economizing my time. I have not spent one hour in amusement in thirty years." And taking a blankbook from his pocket he said, "I fill a book like this every week with thoughts that occur to me and facts collected in the rooms of my patients."

Napoleon appreciated the value of time when the sun was sinking upon Waterloo, and he thought that a little more time would retrieve his fortunes, and he pointed to the sinking sun and said, "What would I not give to be this day possessed of the power of Joshua and enabled to retard thy march for two hours!" The good old woman appreciated the value of time when at ninety-three years of age she said, "The Judge of all the earth does not mean that I shall have any excuse for not being prepared to meet him."

Voltaire, the blatant infidel, appreciated the value of time when in his dying moments he said to his doctor, "I will give you half of what I am worth if you will give me six months of life," and when told that he could not live six weeks he burst into tears and said, "Then I shall go to hell!" John Wesley appreciated the value of time when he stood on his steps waiting for a delayed carriage to take him to an appointment, saying, "I have lost ten minutes forever." Lord Nelson appreciated the value of time when he said, "I owe everything in the world to being always a quarter of an hour beforehand."

A clockmaker in one of the old English towns appreciated the value of time when he put the front of the town clock the words, "Now or when?" Mitchel, the astronomer, appreciated the value of time when he said, "I have been in the habit of calculating the value of a thousandth part of a second." That minister of the Gospel did not appreciate the value of time who during a season of illness, instead of employing his time in useful reading or writing, wrote a silly religious romance, which in some unknown way came into the possession of the famous Joe Smith, who introduced the book as a divine revelation, which became the foundation of Mormonism, the most beastly abomination of all time.

They best appreciate the value of time whose Sabbaths have been wasted and whose opportunities of repentance and usefulness are all agone, and who have nothing left but memories, baleful and elegiac. They stand in the bleak September, with bare feet, on the sharp stubble of a reaped wheat field, crying, "The harvest is past!" And the sough of an autumnal equinox moans forth in echo, "The harvest is past!"

THE LAST OF ALL.

But do not let us get an impression from chronology that because the years of time have been so long in procession they are to go on forever. Matter is not eternal. No, no! If you watch half a day, or a whole day, or two days, as I once did, to see a military procession, you remember the last brigade, and the last regiment, and the last company finally passed on, and as we rose to go we said to each other, "It is all over."

So this mighty procession of earthly years will terminate. Just when I have no power to prognosticate, but science confirms the Bible prophecy that the earth cannot always last. Indeed there has been a fatality of worlds. The moon is merely the corpse of what it once was, and scientists have again and again gone up in their observatories to attend the deathbed of dying worlds and have seen them cremated. So I am certain, both from the Word of God and science, that the world's chronology will sooner or later come to its last chapter.

The final century will arrive and pass on, and then will come the final decade, and then the final year, and the final month, and the final day. The last spring will swing its censer of apple blossoms and the last winter bank its snows. The last sunset will burn like Moscow and the last morning radiate the hills. The clocks will strike their last hour, and the watches will tick their last second. No incendiaries will be needed to run hither and yon with torches to set the world on fire.

Chemistry teaches us that there is a very inflammable element in water. While oxygen makes up a part of the water, the other part of the water is hydrogen, and that is very combustible. The oxygen drawn out from the water, the inflammable hydrogen will put instantly into conflagration the Hudsons and Savannahs and Mississippis and Rhines and Urals and Danubes, and Atlantic and Pacific and Indian and Mediterranean seas. And then the angel of God, descending from the throne, might put one foot on the surf of the sea and the other on the beach and cry to the four winds of heaven, "Time was, but time shall be no longer!" Yet, found in Christ, pardoned and sanctified, we shall welcome the day with more gladness than you ever welcomed a Christmas or New Year's morn.

When wrapt in fire the realms of ether glow
And heaven's last thunder shakes the earth below,
Thou, undismayed, shalt o'er the ruin smile
And light thy torch at nature's funeral pile.

Physical Culture in Women's Colleges.

The whole answer to the question, Is the health of the average young woman equal to the successful prosecution of the work of a college course? may be given in the briefest terms as follows: The first duty of the college authorities is to give just as careful a physical examination for original entrance as their examination into the applicant's scholarly proficiency, and their next duty, the applicant having been admitted, is to see that her advancement is symmetrical, and that she is led across the threshold of mature womanhood as well equipped by reason of bodily strength and development as by that of intellectual and moral development for the full enjoyment of life's pleasures, tasks and various wholesome activities.

In the future the question whether or not a young woman's health is quite safe at college will be absurd upon its face. It will be absurd because one of the definitions of a woman's college will be: A place where the health of young women is sedulously and scientifically guarded, and where her physical strength and well being are systematically developed. Tangible progress toward this ideal has been made within a very few years, but as yet we have only a beginning.—Review of Reviews.

ODDS AND ENDS.

The father of Pius V was a shepherd.

Paganini's father was a laborer in a factory.

Judge a maiden at the kneading pan, not at the dance.

A Washington man has been poisoned from a crab's bite.

In pica type 71.27 lines go to the foot of printed matter.

The Chinese do not count the hours, but have names for them

Those races of men who consume most meat are the most hirsute.

Chess is reported to be taught in all the Austrian public schools.

General Sherman's old home in St. Louis is to be sold at auction.

General William S. Rosecrans was dubbed "Rosy" by his soldiers.

No pretty girl or man of wealth ever got off a joke that was not applauded.

A clock is very different from a man When it strikes it keeps right on working.

The total annual issue of copies of papers in the United States is 3,481,610,000.

The first electromagnet in the form now used was made by Faraday in 1825.

An electric cigar lighter and an electric refrigerator are two late inventions.

Chinese are reported to control almost the entire shoemaking trade in California.

The first elevated railroad in England is fast approaching completion in Liverpool.

There is a wind and storm insurance company doing business in Pennsylvania counties.

A Saginaw (Mich.) man was recently fined six cents for accusing a person of incendiarism.

A little of the grated rind of the fruit is often more delicate for flavoring lemon than the extract.

The progress of the new system of horology bids fair to make it one of the important inventions of the age.

In using melted chocolate in cooking, first mix with it a part of the sugar before adding it to the other ingredients.

Among the most common of germ diseases are typhoid fever, diphtheria, cholera, cholera infantum and yellow fever.

Galileo's first telescope was made out of a common lead pipe, into the ends of which were glued ordinary spectacle glasses.

One hundred and twenty-eight invitations were sent out to a reception at Atchison (Kan.) the other day, and 131 guests came.

It is well known that exhausting marches, like the retreat of Napoleon's army from Russia, are attended by a frightful loss of life.

GOOD RESOLUTIONS.

A New Year Resolve to Do Better Is a Step in the Right Direction.

It is true, very possibly, that only one in a million of these resolutions ever amounts to anything permanently. A month, a week, a day, may see the end of them, and the old sin or delinquency or habit may be in the ascendant again, sometimes, alas! re-enforced and stronger than before, strong almost to the point of indifference as to its destruction on the part of him "breaking his oath and resolution like a twist of rotten silk."

What is the use? The question rises in the mind of the owner of the broken resolution; it can't be helped; the breaker was made to break; it runs in the blood; he was given the nature that experiences temptation; he was not given the strength to overcome temptation; you cannot change the spots in the leopard; that is he; if you want to change him, you want something other than he, you don't want him; ancestry is stronger than a desire to do otherwise; it's of no use. And thus the trick, the custom, the wholly undesirable habit, is left to run its race.

Yet that is but one possibility, and when this stage of indifference has not been reached how well it is only to have made the resolution, whether one is successful in keeping it or not! Just as hypocrisy is the tribute which vice pays to virtue, so the mere making of the resolution implies the knowledge of wrong, and of a right exceeding wrong, and to make a determination to discard the wrong is already one step toward embracing the right—is, in fact, embracing it—is, while being the resolve, also the carrying out of the resolve, however little way. The resolve is the outcome of the best part of one's nature; the not keeping it is one's weakness only.—Harper's Bazar.

Christmas Carols.

There is a traditional carol of Somersetshire, England, which begins:

As Joseph was a-walking
He heard an angel sing,
This night shall be the bir.htime
Of Christ, the heav'nly King,"

which has a very merry jingle that sounds almost irreverent. Then there is a pathetic Spanish air of three verses, of which the first is:

Oh, the little empty stocking,
Left of the dainty pair,
We hung beside the chimney
When baby was our care!
The year has brought us sorrow,
With tears that fell like rain.
Have we no smile or greeting
For Christmas come again?

Hanging Up the Stockings.

In Staffordshire, England, the children, when hanging up their stockings on Christmas eve, repeat the following rhyme, addressed to the good fairy of Christmas, believing that it will infallibly insure the bringing of whatever gift they most desire:

Christmas fay of Christmas day—
Let me wish what wish I may—
If I think with love of you,
You will make my wish come true.

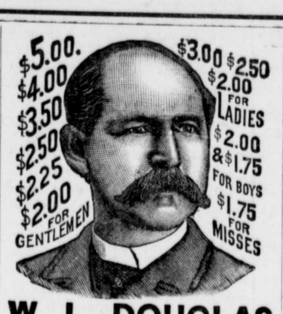
A Primitive Shelter.

While attached to a military expedition against the Sioux in Wyoming, in 1877, I saw those Indians construct at the various camps we made what I take to be the most primitive form of house built by human hands. It was simply a shelter, or tepee as they called it, made with the green boughs cut from the cottonwood trees. Without any especial preparation of the ground, they implanted the cut ends of the limbs in two parallel rows about eight feet long and five feet apart. The tops were adroitly bent over the inclosed space and fastened together along the middle line, thus creating a semicylindrical shelter open at both ends. These tepees were merely intended for two or three men to sleep in, all the cooking and other arrangements being performed outside.—R. W. Shufeldt, M. D., in Popular Science Monthly.

THE continual succession of boils, pimples, and eruptions from which many suffer, indicates an impure state of the blood. The most effective remedy is Ayer's Sarsaparilla. It expels the poison harmlessly through the natural channels, and leaves the skin clean and clear.

FRANCE will enter the new year with a strange comparison between these and those century old "tragic days of '93."—*Boston Transcript.*

PROVIDE yo... Cherry Pectoral, ... hand for conten... sudden cold. As a... it has no equal, ...



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AYER'S Sarsaparilla

"I cannot forbear to express my joy at the relief I have obtained from the use of AYER'S Sarsaparilla. I was afflicted with kidney troubles for about six months, suffering greatly with pains in the small of my back. In addition to this, my body was covered with pimply eruptions. The remedies prescribed failed to help me. I then began to take AYER'S Sarsaparilla, and, in a short time, the pains ceased and the pimples disappeared. I advise every young man or woman, in case of sickness resulting from impure blood, no matter how long standing the case may be, to take AYER'S Sarsaparilla."—H. L. Jarmann, 33 William st., New York City.

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