

THE EVILS OF POLITICS

PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CONVENTIONS SUGGEST PREACHER'S TEXT.

PEOPLE'S CHOICE OF RULER

When the Bad Elements Got Control in Politics the Result Was a Curse to the Nation—Who Are Trying to Drive the Almighty From the Control of Public Life—National Value of Righteousness.

Entered according to Act of Parliament of Canada, in the year 1904, by William Baily of Toronto, at the Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa.

Los Angeles, Cal., July 24.—With the national conventions as a theme and an oriental fable as a text the preacher makes some timely reflections on certain evils that afflict our politics and threaten the well being of Government and people. The text is Judges ix, 14, "Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come, thou, and reign over us."

This is the year of great national conventions. The Republican party sent its representatives last June to Chicago to nominate their candidate for the presidency of the United States. The Democratic party this month met in St. Louis to nominate their candidate for the same office. The Prohibition party, the Populist party, the Labor party, all have had their conventions and nominated their leaders. From among the different statesmen nominated for the office of the Presidency of the United States by the different political parties the next chief executive of our nation is to be chosen. We, as intelligent men and women, are conversant with the struggles which the different political parties made in late convention halls. It is not inappropriate, therefore, for us to take as our sermon theme to-day the vision which Jotham had when all the trees of the forest came together in convention in the valley of Shechem, with the blue dome of the heavens for a roof, and selected the useless, destroying bramble as their King.

This famous parable or fable of Jotham was truly realistic in more ways than one. For a convention of trees it had a perfect topographic setting. On the southern side of this famous valley is mighty Mount Gerizim. On the northern side hoary headed Mount Ebal lifts its seared and wrinkled face. These two mountains as sounding boards tossed the echoing voices of the cheering delegates backward and forward, even as the shuttlecock might be thrown through the air by the powerful blows of two battledores. The soil of that valley was black and rich. There the gurgling waters of many fountains sounded a musical accompaniment to the murmurs of many voices trying to win votes for their favorite sons. Isaiah, in prophecy, saw "all the trees of the fields clap their hands." Jotham, in vision, saw the trees, as convention delegates, with moving hands, moving feet, moving lips and sparkling eyes. Their rustle was to him articulate speech. Their branches were outstretched arms. Their names were symbols to him of honor and truth or of dishonor and disgrace.

Hardly had this great convention of trees assembled in the valley of Shechem to select a king than it became self evident that the great majority of the delegates were ready to be stamped for one tree. "Come," the majority cried, "come, let us make the olive tree our king!" To Jotham the olive was the symbol of strength and wealth and power as well as of healing. But the olive tree would not become king. It declined the scepter of kingship over the trees. Then this great convention wanted to elect the fig tree king. The delegates next offered the nomination for rulership to the vine, whose rich blood had made the vineyards of Shechem famous. But the fig tree and the vine both refused the scepter of the forest.

But in this Jotham parable, after the olive and the fig and vine had all refused the scepter, the worst elements got control of the convention hall. Then these bad elements said to each other: "Let us nominate a king after our own spirit. Let us make the curse of the field our king. Hail, bramble! King Bramble! Hail, bramble, our future ruler!"

Jotham's purpose in this parable was to show a danger which menaced his own country and has menaced our country all through its history. There have been in the past, as there are to-day, men who conspire to get control of the political parties in order that they may nominate monstrosities for the high office of the Presidency of the United States. Thank God, they have not succeeded yet, for the men who have been nominated by the various parties are men of high character and sterling worth. But we need to be on our guard against the conspirators, who will never cease their efforts to win that great prize. Let us identify them, that we may sedulously guard against their insidious attacks.

First among the Satanic conspirators are the infidels. They say: "We cannot fight God in the open. We cannot as yet blot off the American silver dollar the sentence, 'In God we trust.' But we can plead for so called religious liberty. We can say that the Bible should be driven out of the public schools. We can place upon the statute books the statement, 'The United States Government is entirely a human Government. No divine hand is to-day guiding the helm of state. Therefore no name of God and no prayer to any God shall ever be heard in any of its legislative buildings or public halls. We, the people of this fair land, can decree that hereafter we can attend to our business. We will make no public recognition of an overruling Divine Providence.'"

My friends, as intelligent Americans, have you not recognized the fact that the infidels, the agnostics, the atheists, the deists and all those who would deny public recognition of God are trying to drive out the Almighty from the control of our public life? What is the meaning of the movement that has accomplished this one fact? There is hardly a state college in all this land where the Bible is now studied as a text book in all those different schools the faculty makes provision for the teaching of English belles lettres. They are willing to teach Grecian and Roman and Scythian and Alexandrian and Asiatic mythologies. They are willing to teach Buddhism, Confucianism, Brahmanism and all other isms, but they are not willing to teach who Jesus Christ was and is and for what the gospel of Jesus Christ stands.

Now, for my part, while I hold that denominationalism ought never to be taught in a state institution, I contend that no young man is properly educated who has not been made familiar with the Bible and its religious and moral principles. I claim that as educated men and women it is just as important to know who were Moses and Joshua and David as who were Shakespeare and Burns and Walter Scott and Goethe and Victor Hugo. I claim that it is more important educationally to know who Jesus Christ is than who Mohammed was and what was the cause of the Trojan war. If the atheistic elements of this country are not trying to get possession of this Government, why did certain infidel newspapers a few years ago denounce the presidential act of taking the oath of office upon the leaves of an open Bible? They claimed that, "as the Government had no established church, therefore the President elect had no right to render allegiance to any one particular God." Men who write sophistries of our kind are enemies whom we cannot afford to deride. I tell you that to-day the church as well as the people at large should recognize the evil influences which are working underneath us and all about us to render this a godless nation and to exclude all recognition of God from the acts and policy of the United States Government. Already this evil monster calling itself "Free Thought" has a grip upon our ballot box.

I would especially plead with the American people to fight the evil "bramble of free thought," because resistance of God is the spirit of anarchy, which, when developed, becomes social and political anarchy and is subversive of every form of Civil Government. When under the teaching of that great infidel Voltaire the churches of Paris were closed and a harlot dressed in gorgeous robes and seated about the French capital and worshipped, then the reign of terror was at hand. Where were the bullets of the slayer of Garfield and of the slayer of William McKinley molded? Amid the

not, missing names of a new star in the attempt to burn up the throne of God! You never saw in your life an anarchist who was not at heart an infidel.

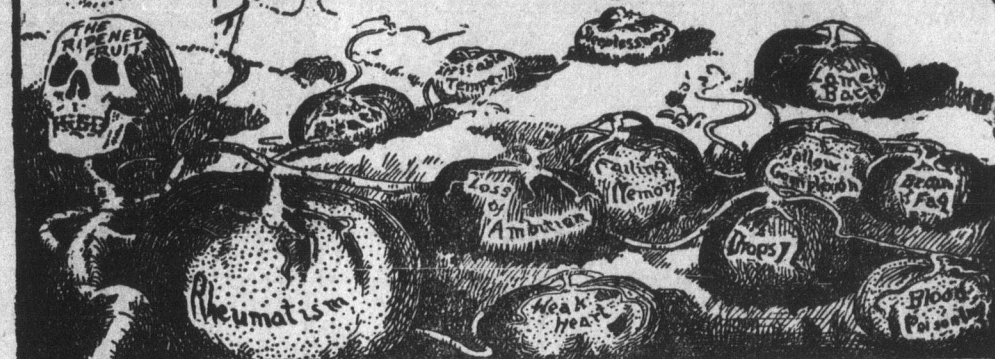
I was never more impressed with this thought than when some years ago from a noted atheistic as well as anarchistic paper I cut out the full developed poisonous results of those two accursed doctrines. Like Siamese twins, these two words, atheism and anarchy, in their ultimate meaning should never be separated. This was the editorial I found in that famous sheet: "This is our doctrine: We believe in no divine Government. We believe in no human Government. Might only is right. The only remedy for wrongs is butchery. The tree of liberty bears fruit only when manured with the bones of fat users, insistent despots, perfidious politicians and blacklegs generally. If squatters oppress you, plant rackarock for their buggies; also fire low and lay them out. If Shylocks of the bloody city fleece you, make their homes desolate. Study the science of death. Use bullets, steel, melinite, keerosene, phosphorus, fire sticks, torpedoes, lithrofracture, poison, blasting powder, bombshells—any weapon you can get hold of. Also you must steel like Spartans, think like heroes and lie like hell." Such is the full grown, poisonous plant which the soil and seed of atheism will ultimately produce if left alone. Ah, my fellow countrymen in the convention hall of the American people, fight this foe misnamed "free thought" as you would fight death. Drive God away from your land, and you hand over this Government to be the playing of anarchists, the spot of nihilists. Then you send forth the death knell to all order and to the protection of life and property.

But standing to-day in the great convention hall of Jotham's vision we see the bramble being advocated as king by another powerful faction. It is composed of the worshippers of wealth. When the members of this faction rise to make their dominating speeches you see that the speakers' teeth are all of gold, and their arms are of gold, and their hair is of gold, and their legs are of gold. Their fingers are of gold, though they have gold rings upon those fingers. Their necks also are of gold, though the necks are around their necks are of pure gold. Their feet are of gold, though the shoes which cover those feet are not made of leather, but of gold. By the old Roman law a man could not vote unless he was a property owner and his property was valued at \$1,200 in our money. To-day there is a tendency to restrict the vote in Presidential elections to the property owner as to those who either own gold or can be influenced by the prospect of getting gold.

Do you profess to believe that gold is not a powerful blemish in the life of a nation trying to get possession of this Government? Do you, for one moment profess to believe that the United States would be as quick to declare war against England or Russia or Germany or France as it was against a poverty-stricken nation like Spain? It is a rapidly developing pocketbook and in many parts of this land you will make the word "patronism" written in letters of gold, turn as black as the heart of selfishness and deceit. One of the great dangers threatening the welfare of our land is the power of the great money combinations. It is a rapidly developing power, and it is ever aimed to seat in the Presidential chair of this free nation its blemish king, gold, as the supreme ruler of this great people. When the great railroad trusts and the oil trusts and the tin can trusts and the beef trusts and the sugar trusts and the steel trusts can dictate who is to be President of the United States let us beware! Take thy cloven foot, O yellow and would be King Bramble, from off the front doorstep of the White House. Thou didst destroy the Roman and the Grecian Governments when their national power passed into the hands of the few capitalists. Thy foul breath is now upon our cheeks, but by God's help thou shalt not be allowed to destroy us.

But again we find the destroying blemish canvassing for supremacy in American politics in another way. He now appeals to the diseased and inflamed appetite of man for strong drink. But, though, if a man may look at this Bramble long enough, he can see him changed into the wriggling coil of a snake; yet, the Melusina, the most famous of the French fairies, when he first appears he looks like a beautiful god, instead of like a devil. His hair is a cluster of luscious grapes, rich as those of Eshcol, which the spies carried back from the promised land to the Hebrew encampment. His cheek has not the French friar's look of a corpse, but it is flushed with what looks like the redness of health. He comes to us not as a pauper. In his pocket he jingles the coin of his taxes as he says: "You cannot, you dare not, do without me. I am King Alcohol. There is not a political convention in all this land except one that has dared hurl defiance at my sceptre. My den may seem to be the saloon, but my throne will yet be built under the great dome in the rotunda of our national capitol. I shall yet be publicly recognized as king of America in secret recognized as King Alcohol now."

Is not the defiant assertion true? What political convention, with the exception of the Prohibition convention, dared double up its fist and smite this Bramble Alcohol a staggering blow alone, but all of the great political parties, with but one exception, are bidding for the alcoholic vote to-day. There may be silver planks, anti-trust planks, anti-imperialistic planks, woman suffrage planks, high tariff planks and low tariff planks found in the different convention platforms upon which the various candidates for the Presidency stand, but with the exception of the Prohibition party not one assembly of delegates to a national convention called to nominate a candidate



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for the Presidency of the United States has dared to say to the saloon keeper, to the brewer and to the wine merchant: "Get out of this convention hall! Be off! We defy you and your Satanic hirelings. You are destroying our youth and our strong manhood with your liquid poison. Out, agents of darkness! Out! Out!" No, that is not the way the different conventions spoke. In their suggestive silence they say: "Bramble Alcohol, we may yet elect you king—but not now. However, if you promise to help us now we will promise not to hurt your trade hereafter." Am I wrong in stating that Bramble Alcohol is one of the threatening dangers confronting the future sovereignty of this land?

I would like, if there had been time enough, to have spoken of another form of evil threatening this land and bidding for kingship. I allude to the blemish of licentiousness or of immorality. I know that most people will lift their hands in horror to the olive tree and say, "Why, there is no danger like that threatening us!" Yes, there is, my friends. When an honest man is elected to the highest executive office of a city he finds out, much to his surprise, he cannot shut up the brothels as he would. He cannot stop the immoral evils of the low dance halls. Everywhere our cities are honeycombed with vice, merely because the voters at the polls back up dishonest officials in their willingness to allow these evil resorts to exist.

"Well," says some one, "how, then, are we to keep the blemish of licentiousness from becoming ruler in American politics?" Ah, my friends, the direct teaching of this Jotham's fable tells the whole story. What did those delegates of trees do in the Valley of Shechem do? They first offered the rulership to the olive tree, then to the fig tree, then to the vine. But these three practically said: "Nay, we would not leave our respectability and comfort to go and mingle in dirty politics. We would stay off here alone in dignity and quiet and ease. That is the whole story. The reason the blemish became king in Jotham's fable was because the olive, the fig and the vine refused the rulership for which they were so eminently fitted. And to-day the reason the bad element predominates in so many of our city and county and State elections is because so many of the better element refuse to go to the primaries, refuse to be candidates for the humbler offices, refuse to see that public moneys are administered as honestly as private funds."

Thus Jotham's fable or parable teaches us that a man has a responsibility to his Government as well as to his home; a responsibility to those who shall rule over him as well as to those under him. By this statement am I here to tell you for whom to vote? Oh, no! In the coming election I say to you, "As a Christian man, think for yourself and let your conscience be your guide." But hereafter, in the home or on the street and in church, always make your public business your Christian business. Always make your duty to your city, to your State, to your nation, your Christian duty. Then the great dangers which threaten this our native land, from the rulership of the worthless blemish and its kind will be done away with, for the olive and the fig and the vine will be bending the knee in national worship at the foot of the cross.

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