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—THE—

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### TALMAGE'S SERMON.

SERMONS FOUND IN THE EX-AMPLE OF THE JEWESS.

Her Real Name Was Hadassah, Which Means "Myrtle"—She Was Equally Good and True in Prosperity and Adversity—The Vile Court of Ahasuerus.

Rev. Dr. Talmage, who is still absent on his round the world tour, selected as the subject of last Sunday's sermon through the press "Hadassah," the text chosen being Esther ii, 7, "And he brought up Hadassah."

A beautiful child was born in the capital of Persia. She was an orphan and a captive, her parents having been stolen from their Israelitish home and carried to Shushan and died, leaving their daughter poor and in a strange land. But an Israelite who had been carried into the same captivity was attracted by the case of the orphan. He educated her in his holy religion, and under the roof of that good man this adopted child began to develop a sweetness and excellency of character, if ever equaled, certainly never surpassed. Beautiful Hadassah—Could that adopted father ever spare her from his household? Her artlessness, her girlish sports, her innocence, her orphanage, had wound themselves thoroughly around his heart, just as around each parent's heart among us there are tendrils climbing and fastening and blossoming and growing stronger. I expect he was like others who have loved ones at home wondering sometimes if sickness will come and death and bereavement. Alas, worse than anything the father expects happens to his adopted child. Ahasuerus, a princely scoundrel, demands that Hadassah, the fairest one in all the kingdom, become his wife. Worse than death was marriage to such a monster of iniquity. How great the change when this young woman left the home where God was worshiped and religion honored to enter a palace devoted to pride, idolatry, and sensuality! "As a lamb to the slaughter."

Ahasuerus knew not that his wife was a Jewess. At the instigation of the infamous crime minister the King decreed that all the Jews in the land should be slain. Hadassah pleads the cause of her people, breaking through the rules of the court and pleading herself in the very face of death, crying, "If I perish, I perish!" Oh, it was a sad time among that English people. They had all heard the decree concerning their death. Sorrow, gaunt and ghastly, sat in thousands of households, and mothers wildly pressed their infants to their breasts as the days of massacre hastened on, praying that the same sword stroke which slew the mother might also slay the child, rosebud and bud perishing in the same blast.

But Hadassah is busy at court. The hard heart of the King is touched by her story, and although he could not reverse the decree for the slaying of the Jews he sent forth an order that they should arm themselves for defense. On horseback, on mules, on dromedaries, messengers sped through the land, bearing the King's dispatches, and a shout of joy went up from that enslaved people at the faint hope of success. I doubt not many a rusty blade was taken down and sharpened. Unbearded youths grew stout as giants at the thought of defending mothers and sisters. Desperation strung up cowards into heroes, and fragile women, grasping their weapons, swung them about the cradles impatient for the time to strike the blow in behalf of household and country.

The day of execution dawned. Government officials, armed and drilled, cowed before the battle shout of the oppressed people. The cry of defeat rang back to the palaces, but above the mountains of dead, above 75,000 crushed and mangled corpses, sounded the triumph of the delivered Jews, and their enthusiasm was as when the Highlanders came to the relief of Lucknow, and the English army, which stood in the very jaws of death, at the sudden hope of assistance and rescue lifted the shout above belching cannon and the death groan of hosts, crying: "We are saved! We are saved!"

Christian Perseverance. My subject affords me opportunity of illustrating what Christian character may be under the greatest disadvantages. There is no Christian now exactly what he wants to be. Your standard is much higher than anything you have attained unto. If there be a man so pulled up as to be thoroughly satisfied with the amount of excellency he has already attained, have nothing to say to such a one. But to those who are dissatisfied with past attainments, who are toiling under disadvantages which are keeping them from what they ought to be, I have a message from God. You each of you labor under difficulties. There is something in your temperament, in your worldly circumstances, in your calling, that sets powerfully against you. Admitting all this, I introduce to you Hadassah of the text, a noble Christian, notwithstanding the most gigantic difficulties. She whom you might have expected to be one of the worst of women is one of the best.

In the first place, our subject is an illustration of what Christian character may be under orphanage. This Bible line tells a long story about Hadassah. "She had neither father nor mother." A nobleman had become her guardian, but there is no one who can take the place of a parent. Who so able at night to hear a child's prayer or at twilight to chide youthful wanderings or to soothe youthful sorrows? An individual will go through life bearing the marks of orphanage. It will require more strength, more persistence, more grace, to make such a one the right kind of a Christian. He

who at forty years loses a parent must reel under the blow. Even down to old age men are accustomed to rely upon the counsel or be powerfully influenced by the advice of parents. If they are still alive. But how much greater the bereavement when it comes in early life before the character is self-reliant and when naturally the heart is unsophisticated and easily tempted!

The Triumph of Grace. And yet behold what a nobility of disposition Hadassah exhibited. Though father and mother were gone, grace had triumphed over all disadvantages. Her willingness to self-sacrifice, her control over the sting, her humility, her faithful worship of God, show her to have been one of the best of the world's Christians.

There are those who did not enjoy remarkable early privileges. Perhaps, like the beautiful captive of the text, you were an orphan. You had huge sorrows in your little heart. You sometimes wept in the night when you knew not what was the matter. You felt and sometimes even on the playground. Your father or mother did not stand in the door to welcome you when you came home from a long journey. You still feel the effect of early disadvantages, and you have sometimes offered them as a reason for your not being as thoroughly religious as you would like to be. But these excuses are not sufficient. God's grace will triumph if you seek it. He knows what obstacles you have fought against, and the more trial the more help. After all there are no orphans in the world, for the great God is the Father of us all.

Again our subject is an illustration of what religion may be under the pressure of poverty. The captivity and crushed condition of this orphan girl and of the kind man who adopted her suggested a condition of poverty. Yet from the very first acquaintance we had with Hadassah we find her the same happy and contented Christian. It was only by compulsion she was afterward taken into a sphere of honor and a palace. In the humble home of Mordecai, her adopted father, she was a light that illumined every privation. In some period in a most every man's life there comes a season of straitened circumstances, when the severest calculation and most scrupling economy are necessary in order to subsistence and respectability.

Trials of the Poor. Christians in satin slippers, with their feet on damask ottoman, may scout at such a class of temptations, but those who the selves have been in the struggle and grip of hard fortune can appreciate the power of the Holy Spirit to dissipate the soul away from its temptations. We admit the strength of the temptation, but then we point to Hadassah, her poverty equalled by her piety. Courage, down there in the battle! Hurl away your disappointment. Men of half your heart have through Christ been more than conquerors. In the name of God, come out of that! The religion of Christ is just what you want out of among the empty four barrels and beside the cold hearths.

You have never told any one of what a hard time you have had, but God knows it as well as you know it. Your easy times will come after awhile. Do not let your spirits break down middle life. What if your coat is thin? Run fast enough to keep warm. What if you have no luxuries on your table? High expectations will make your blood tingle better than the best Madeira. If you cannot afford to smoke, you can afford to whistle. But merely animal spirits are not sufficient; the power of the gospel—that is what you want to wrench despair out of the soil and put you forward into the front of the hosts in impenetrable armor.

Again, our subject illustrates what religion may be under the temptation of personal attractiveness. The inspired record says of the heroine of my text, "She was fair and beautiful." Her very name signifies "a myrtle." Yet the admiration and praise and flattery of the world did not blight her humility. The simplicity of her manners and behavior equalled extraordinary attractions. It is the same divine goodness which puts the tinge on the rose's cheek, and sparkle in the eye, and majesty in the forehead, and symmetry into the form, and gracefulness into the gait. But many through the very charm of their personal appearance have been destroyed. What simperings and affectations and impertinences have often been the result of that which God sent as a blessing! Japonics, anemones and heliotropes never swagger at the beauty God planted in their very leaf, sepal, axil, and stamen. There are many flowers that bow down so modestly you cannot see the color in their cheek until you lift up their head, putting your hand under their round chin. Indeed any kind of personal attractions, whether they be those of the body, the mind or the heart, may become temptations to pride and arbitrariness and foolish assumption.

The mythological story of a man who, seeing himself in a stream, became so enamored of his appearance that he died of the effects illustrates the fatalities under which thousands of both sexes have fallen by the view of their own superiority. Extraordinary capacities cause extraordinary temptations. Men who have good moral health down in the valley, on the top of the mountain are seized of consumption. Monimia, the wife of Mithridates, was strangled with her own diadem. While the most of us will not have the same kind of temptation which Hadassah must have felt from her attractiveness of personal appearance, there may be some to whom it will be an advantage to hold up the character of the beautiful captive who sacrificed not her humility and earnestness of disposition to the world's admiration and flattery. The chief secret of the beauty of the violet is that away down in the grass from one week's end to another it never mistrusts that it is a violet.

### Domestic Trials.

Again, our subject exhibits what religion may be under bad domestic influences. Hadassah was snatched from her godly home into which she had been adopted and introduced into the abominable associations of which wicked Ahasuerus was the center. What a whirl of blasphemy and drunkenness and licentiousness! No altar, no prayer, no Sabbath, no God! If this captive girl can be a Christian there, then it is possible to be a Christian anywhere. There are many of the best people of the world who are obliged to contend with the most adverse domestic influences, children who have grown up into the love of God under the frown of parents and under the discouragement of bad example. Some sister of the family having professed the faith of Jesus is the subject of unbounded satire inflicted by brothers and sisters. Yes, Hadassah was not the only Christian who had a queer home.

It is no easy matter to maintain correct Christian principles when there is a companion disposed to scoff at them and to ascribe every imperfection of character to hypocrisy. What a hard thing for one member of the family to rightly keep the Sabbath when others are disposed to make it a day of revelry, or to indicate propriety of speech in the minds of children when there are others to offset the instructions by loose and profane utterances, or to be regularly in attendance upon church when there is more household work demanded for the Lord's day than for any secular day. Do I speak to any laboring under these blighting disadvantages? My subject is full of encouragement. Vast responsibilities rest upon you, faithful, though you stand as much alone as did Lot in Sodom, or Jeremiah in Jerusalem, or Jonah in Nineveh, or Hadassah in the court of Ahasuerus. There are trees which grow the best when their roots clutch among the jagged rocks, and you verily have but poor soil in which to develop, but grace is a thorough husbandman and can raise a crop anywhere. Glass-ware is molded over the fire, and in the same way you are to be fitted as a vessel of mercy. The best timber must have on it saw and gouge and beetle. The foundation stone of yours and every other house came out only under crowbar and blast. Files and wrenches and hammers belong to the church. The Christian victory will be bright just in proportion as the battle is hot. Never despair being a thorough Christian in any household which is not worse than the court of Ahasuerus.

Religion in High Places. Finally our subject illustrates what religion may be in high worldly position. The last we see in the Bible of Hadassah is that she has become the queen of Persia. Prepare now to see the departure of her humility and self-sacrifice and religious principle. As she goes up you may expect grace to go down. It is easier to be humble in the obscure house of her adopted father than on a throne of dominion. But you misjudge this noble woman. What she was before she is now the myrtle. Applauded for her beauty and her crown, she forgets not the cause of her suffering people, and with all simplicity of heart still remains a worshiper of the God of Heaven.

Noble example, followed only by a very few. I address some who, through the goodness of God, have risen to positions of influence in the community where you live. In law, in merchandise, in medicine, in mechanics and in other useful occupations and professions you hold an influence for good or for evil. Let us see whether, like Hadassah, you can stand elevation. Have you as much simplicity of character as once you evinced? Do you feel as much dependence upon God, as much your own weakness, as much your accountability for talents intrusted? Or are you proud and over-demanding and ungrateful and unsympathetic and untruthful and sensual and devilish? Then you have been spoiled by your success, and you shall not sit on the throne with the heroine of my text. In the day when Hadassah shall come to the grand coronation in the presence of Christ and the bannered hosts of the redeemed you will be poor indeed. Oh, there are thousands of men who can easily endure to be knocked down of misfortune, who are utterly destroyed if lifted up of success. Satan takes them to the top of the pinnacle of the temple and shoves them off. Their head begins to waver, and they lose their balance, and down they go.

Dangers of Pride. While last autumn all through the forests there were luxuriant trees with moderate outbranch and moderate height, pretending but little, there were foliage plants that shot far up, looking down with contempt on the whole forest, clapping their hands in the breeze and shouting, "Aha, do you not wish you were as high up as we are?" But last week a blast let loose from the north came rushing along, and grasping the boasting oaks and hurled them to the ground, and as they went down an old tree that had been singing psalms with the thunder a hundred summers cried out, "Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall." The humble hickory and pine and chestnut that had never said their prayers before bowed their heads as much as to say, "Amen."

My friends, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." Take from my subject encouragement. Attempt the service of God whatever your disadvantages, and whatever our lot let us seek that grace which is ostentatious all the splendors of the palace of Shushan.

AFTER A woman has kept a cow a few years, her troubles are so great that she is ready for religion.

If a man's natural disposition to do a thing is strong enough, principle will not keep him from it.

WHEN A doctor advises a patient that he needs relaxation, why doesn't he prescribe a laxative?

### McLaughlin Threw the Bull

The Famous Wrestler Cross-Buttoked the brute and sat on its head.

A Seattle correspondent writes: Col. J. H. McLaughlin, once the champion collar-and-elbow wrestler of the world, has just come off the victor in a struggle for life with a bull. Recently he had an opportunity to show that he had not lost his former skill. He was crossing a ten-acre lot, filled with brush, stumps and fallen timber. He was in the center of the lot, when he saw a big, red bull coming toward him. Supposing the bull to be of peaceful disposition, Col. McLaughlin walked leisurely along until, warned by an angry bellowing, he turned and saw the bull within ten feet of him. There was no mistaking the animal's intentions, for its head was down, tail erect, and feet pawing the earth. The Colonel knew he was in for a struggle, but before he could move the infuriated beast had him on his horns. The wrestler's presence of mind did not desert him. Quick as a flash he seized the horns, and after the first lunge he found himself on the back of the animal, but still clinging to the horns. An instant later the bull bucked, and McLaughlin was lying in a brush heap ten or fifteen feet away.

The man picked himself up just in time to receive a fresh onslaught. By a dexterous feint he avoided the rush, and with his right hand seized the left horn of the bull, and with his left hand the nose ring. The contest then became one of brute strength against human skill and intelligence combined with unusual force and endurance. For a time the bull seemed to be getting the best of the bout and the battle. The beast would toss his head in the air, hurling the wrestler aloft, and bringing him to earth again with a crash among the bushes and brambles. The athlete held his grip, however, and avoided being thrown under the feet of his adversary.

With his clothes torn from his body, and bleeding from many scratches and bruises, Col. McLaughlin had about made up his mind that the championship belt of the world for collar-and-elbow wrestling, which hangs in his house, must go to the bull, when he thought of an expedient. Without loosening his hold he sprang to one side, placed his hip against the bull's shoulder, and exerting all his strength succeeded in cross-buttocking the animal. The bull went heavily down, head under, and one horn driven deep into the ground. The man had won the match.

Then he was in the plight of the hunter with the bear by the tail. He could hold the bull, but he did not dare to let it go. He sat on the bear's head and rested. Finally he drew his knife, and was opening it with his teeth, to put an end to the bull's life, when some men, who had seen the combat from a distance, came to the rescue and secured the bull. Col. McLaughlin's clothes hung in tatters and he was badly bruised and scratched, but he still held the championship belt.

### Valuable Advice.

A gentleman who believed that to an important extent clothes make the man, even when the man is a royal personage, visited the Comte de Chambord at Frohsdorf a few years ago.

Perhaps some of our readers do not know that the Comte de Chambord was the grandson of Charles X., the last Bourbon king of France, and that the French Royalists call him Henry V., and hoped, until his death, in 1883, to restore him to the throne.

The marquis of whom this story is told was a Parisian, a man of fashion, and an ardent Royalist. The Comte de Chambord was glad of an opportunity to talk over political affairs with a man who must know what was going on in Paris, so after a few minutes' chat he said,—

"Marquis, it is not often that I have a chance to talk with any one so well informed on the signs of the times in Paris. What would you advise me to do?"

He waited for a bit of profound political philosophy. The marquis looked at "Henri V.," and hesitated. Should he venture on a great liberty? But his advice had been asked; as a royal subject he would give it frankly. "Sire—monseigneur," he stammered, "I think you had better give up your German tailor, and not employ one at Vienna either, but have your trousers made in Paris."

"My trousers?"

"Yes, sire, pardon me; your trousers are out of fashion."

### Indians and Fork.

The anti-pork people say that the eating of pork is the fruitful cause of scrofulous diseases, not to speak of the deadly trichina. But an eminent physician declares that of all the races in the world, the North American Indians are the most afflicted with scrofula, though they eat very little pork.

### Execution for Forgery.

The last execution for forgery in England took place at the Old Bailey Dec. 21, 1894. The name of the convict was Thomas Maynard.