

TO THE STORE CLERK

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR SALESMEN AND SALESWOMEN.

Rev. Talmage Preaches to a Mighty Host of Tollers—He Gives Good Advice for the Life that Now Is as Well as for the Life to Come.

Our Washington Pulpit.

This sermon of Dr. Talmage addressed to the great host of clerks in stores and offices and factories will inspire such persons with healthful ambition and allay many of their annoyances. Text, Acts xvi. 14. "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us, whose heart the Lord opened."

The first passage introduces to you Lydia, a Christian merchantess. Her business is to deal in purple cloths or silks. She is not a giggling coquette, but a practical woman, not ashamed to work or her living. All the other women of Philippi and Thyatira have been forgotten, but God has made immortal in our text Lydia, the Christian saleswoman. The other text shows you a man with head and heart and foot all busy toiling on up until he gains a princely success. "Seekest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings."

Great encouragement in these two passages for men and women who will be busy, but no solace for those who are waiting for good luck to show them at the foot of the rainbow a basket of buried gold. It is folly for anybody in this world to wait for something to turn up. It will turn down. The law of thrift is as inexorable as the law of the tides. Fortune, the magician, may wave her wand a third direction until castles and palaces come, but she will after awhile invert the same wand, and all the splendors will vanish into thin air.

There are certain styles of behavior which lead to usefulness, honor and permanent success, and there are certain styles of behavior which lead to dishonor and moral default. I would like to fire the ambition of young people, I have sympathy with those who would prepare young folks for life by whittling down their expectations. That man or woman will be worth nothing to church or state who begins life cowed down. The business of Christianity is not to quench but to direct human ambition. Therefore it is that I utter words of encouragement to those who are occupied as clerks in the stores and shops and banking houses of the country. They are not an exceptional class. They belong to a great company of tens of thousands who are in this country, amid circumstances which will either make or break them for time and for eternity. Many of these people have already achieved a Christian manliness and a Christian womanliness which will serve their passport to any position. I have seen their trials. I have watched their perplexities. There are evils abroad which need to be hunted down and dragged out into the noontide light.

Only a Schoolroom.

In the first place, I counsel clerks to remember that for the most part their clerkship is only a school from which they are to be graduated. It takes about eight years to get into one of the learned professions. It takes about eight years to get to be a merchant. Some of you will be clerks all your lives, but the vast majority of you are only in a transient position. After awhile some December day the head men of the firm will call you into the back office, and they will say to you: "Now, you have done well by us. We are going to do well by you. We invite you to have an interest in our concern." You will bow to that edict very gratefully. Getting into a street car to go home an old comrade will meet you and say, "What makes you look so happy to-night?" "Oh, in a few days, "nothing, nothing." But in a few days your name will blossom on the sign. Either in the store or bank where you are now, or in some other store or bank, you will take a higher position than that which you now occupy. So I feel I am now addressing people who will yet have their hand on the helm of the world's commerce and you will turn it this way or that. Now clerks, but to be bankers, importers, insurance company directors, shippers, contractors, superintendents of railroads—your voice mightily "on change"—standing foremost in the great financial and religious enterprises of the day. For, though we who are in the professions may on the platform plead for the philanthropies, after all, the merchants must come forward with their millions to sustain the movement.

Be therefore patient and diligent in this transient position. You are now where you can learn things you can never learn in any other place. What you consider your disadvantages are your grand opportunity. You see an affluent father some day come down a prominent street with his son who has just graduated from the university and establishing him in business, putting \$50,000 of capital in the store. Well, you are envious. You say, "Oh, if I only had a chance like that young man—if I only had a father to put \$50,000 in a business for me, then I would have some chance in the world." Be not envious. You have advantages over that young man which he has not over you. As well might I come down to the docks when a vessel is about to sail for Valparaiso and say, "Let me pilot this ship out to sea." Why, I would sink crew and cargo before I got out of the harbor simply because I know nothing about pilotage. Wealthy sea captains put their sons before the mast for the reason that they know it is the only place where they can learn to be successful sailors. It is only under drill that people get to understand pilotage and navigation, and I want you to understand that it takes no more skill to conduct a vessel out of the harbor and across the sea than to steer a commercial establishment clear of the rocks. You see every day the folly of people going into a business they know nothing about. A man makes a fortune in one business, thinks there is another occupation more comfortable, goes into it and sinks all. Many of the commercial establishments of our cities are giving their clerks a mercantile education as thorough as Yale or Harvard or Princeton are giving scientific attainment to the students of those universities. The reason there are so many failures in business from the fact that they are not trained in the business they are engaged in. Ask the merchant who has failed, and he will tell you that he was not trained in the business he was engaged in.

Annoyances.

Again, I counsel all clerks to conquer the trials of their particular position. One great trial for clerks is the inconsideration of customers. There are people who are entirely polite everywhere else, but gruff and dictatorial and contemptible when they come into a store to buy anything. There are thousands of men and women who go from store to store to price things without any idea of purchase. They are not satisfied until every roll of goods is brought down and they have pointed out all the real or imaginary defects. They try on all kinds of kid gloves and stretch them out of shape, and they put on all styles of cloak and walk to the mirror to see how they look, and then they sit out of the store, saying, "I will not take it to-day," which means, "I don't want it at all," leaving the clerk amid a wreath of ribbons and laces and cloths to worth out \$1,000 worth of goods, not a cent of which did that man or woman buy or expect to buy. Now, I call that a dishonesty on the part of the customer. If a boy runs into a store and takes a roll of cloth off the counter and sneaks out into the street, you all join in the cry pell-mell, "Stop thief!" When I see you go into a store not expecting to buy anything, but to price things, stealing the time of the clerk and stealing the time of his employer, I say, too, "Stop thief!"

Divine Justice.

If I were asked which class of persons most need the grace of God amid their annoyances, I would say, "Dry goods clerks." All the indignation of customers about the high price comes on the clerk. For instance, a great war comes. The manufacturers are closed. The people go off to battle. The price of goods runs up. A customer comes into a store. Goods have gone up. "How much is that worth?" "A dollar." "A dollar? Outrageous! A dollar? Why, who is to blame for the fact that it has got to be a dollar? Does the indignation go out to the manufacturers on the banks of the Merrimack because they have closed up? No. Does the indignation go out toward the employer who is out at his country seat? No. It comes on the clerk. He got up the war. He levied the taxes. He puts up the rents. Of course the clerk!" Then a great trial comes to clerks in the fact that they see the parsimonious side of human nature. You talk about lies being the counter—there are just as many lies before the counter.

Had Employers.

Then there are all the trials which come to clerks from the treatment of inconsiderate employers. There are professed Christian men who have no more regard for their clerks than they have for the scales on which the sugars are weighed. A clerk is no more than so much store furniture. No consideration for their rights or interests. Not one word of encouragement from carrier to sunset, not one word from January to December, but when

anything goes wrong—a streak of fire on the counter or a box with the cover off—thunder showers of scolding. Men imperious, capricious, cranky toward their clerks, their whole manner as much as to say, "All the interest I have in you is to see what I can get out of you." Then there are all the trials of incompetent wages, not in such times as these, when if a man gets half a salary for his services he ought to be thankful, but I mean in prosperous times. Some of you remember when the war broke out and all merchandise went up and merchants were made millionaires in six months by the simple rise in the value of goods. Did the clerks get advantage of that rise? Sometimes; not always. I saw estates rather in those times over which the curse of God has hung ever since. The cry of unpaid men and women in those stores reached the Lord of Sabaoth, and the indignation of God has been around those establishments ever since, flashing in the chandeliers, glowing from the crimson upholstery, rumbling in the long roll of the teapin alley. Such men may build up palaces of merchandise heaven high, but after awhile a disaster will come along and will put one hand on this pillar and another hand on that pillar and throw itself forward until down will come the whole structure, crushing the worshippers as grapes are mashed in the wine press.

Discipline.

The second counsel I have to give to clerks is that you seek out what are the lawful regulations of your establishment and then submit to them. Every well-ordered house has its usages. In military life, on ship's deck, in commercial life, there must be order and discipline. Those people who do not learn how to obey will never know how to command. I will tell you what young man will make ruin, financial and moral. It is the young man who thrusts his thumb into his vest and says: "Nobody shall dictate to me. I am my own master. I will not submit to the regulations of this house." Between an establishment in which all the employees are under thorough discipline and the establishment in which the employees do about as they choose is the difference between success and failure, between rapid accumulation and utter bankruptcy. Do not come to the store ten minutes after the time. Be there within two seconds, and let it be two seconds before instead of two seconds after. Do not think anything too insignificant to do well. Do not say, "It's only just once." From the most important transaction in commerce down to the particular style in which you tie a string around a bundle of oranges. Do not get easily disgusted. While others in the store may lounge or fret or complain, you go with ready hands and cheerful face and contented spirit to your work. When the bugle sounds, the good soldier asks no questions, but shoulders his knapsack, fills his canteen and listens for the command of "March!"

Good Employers.

Oh, what a contrast between those men and Christian merchants who to-day are sympathetic with their clerks, when they pay the salary, acting in this way: "This salary that I give you is not all my interest in you. You are an immortal man; you are an immortal woman. I am interested in your present and your everlasting welfare. I want you to understand that if I am a little higher up in this store I am beside you in Christian sympathy." Go back forty or fifty years to Arthur Tappan's store in New York, a man whose true enemies never questioned his honesty. Every morning he brought all the clerks, and the accountants, and the weighers into a room for devotion. They sang, they prayed, they exhorted. On Monday morning the clerks were asked where they had attended church on the previous day and what the sermons were about. It must have sounded strangely, that voice of praise along the streets where the devotees of Mammon were coming their golden beads. You say Arthur Tappan failed. Yes, he was unfortunate, like a great many good men, but I understand he met all his obligations before he left this world, and I know that he died in the peace of the gospel, and that he is before the throne of God to-day, forever blessed. If that be failing, I wish you might all fail.

The Final Lesson.

My word is to all clerks—be mightier than your temptations. A Sandwich Islander used to think when he slew an enemy all the strength of that enemy came into his own right arm. And I have to tell you that every misfortune you conquer is so much added to your own moral power. With omnipotence for a lever and the throne of God for a fulcrum you can move earth and heaven. While there are other young men putting the cup of sin to their lips, you stoop down and drink out of the fountains of God and you will rise up strong to thrash the mountains. O young man, while you have goods to sell, remember you have a soul to save!

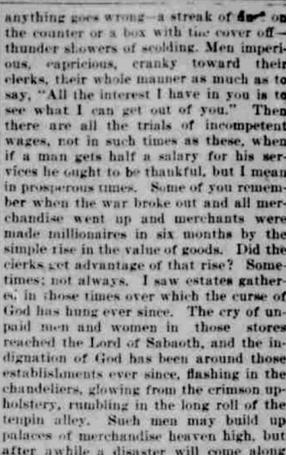
After the last store has been closed, after the last bank has gone down, after the shuffle of the quick feet on the custom house steps has stopped, after the long line of merchantmen on the sea have taken sail of flame, after Washington and New York and London and Vienna have gone down into the grave where Thebes and Babylon and Tyre lie buried, after the great fire bells of the judgment day have tolled at the burning of a world—that day all the affairs of banking houses and stores will come up for inspection. Oh, what an opening of account books! Side by side the clerks and the men who employed them. Every invoice made out, all the labels of goods, all certificates of stock, all the lists of prices, all private marks of the firm, now explained so everybody can understand them. All the maps of cities that were never built, but in which lots were sold. All bargains, all goings, all snap judgments, all false entries, all adulteration of liquors with copperas and strychnine. All mixing of teas and sugars and coffees and syrups with cheaper material. All embezzlements of trust funds. All swindles in coal and iron and oil and silver and stocks. On that day, when the cities of this world are smoking in the last conflagration, the trial will go on, and down in an avalanche of destruction will go those who wronged man or woman, insulted God and defied the judgment. Oh, that will be a great day for you, honest Christian clerks! No getting up early, no retiring late, no walking around with weary limbs, but a mansion in which to live and a realm of light and love and joy over which to hold everlasting dominion. Hoist him up from glory to glory, and from song to song, and from throne to throne, for while others go down into the sea with their gold like a millstone hanging to their neck, this one shall come up the heights of armist and alabaster, holding in his right hand the pearl of great price in a sparkling, glittering, flaming casket.

Divine Justice.

The very moment that the majority of the citizens of a community choose to get their living by selling shoddy goods, by lying advertisements, and skillfully transferring to their pockets the wealth that other people have produced, and prefer wealth even of tainted money rather than a crust with a spotless integrity, that moment, if there is a divine justice in the world, that justice is pledged to accomplish industrial overthrow.—Rev. W. D. Hills, Independent, Chicago, Ill.

The Worthiest People.

The worthiest people are the most injured by scandal, as we usually find that to be the best fruit which the birds have been pecking at.



THE FAMILY HISTORY



FASTEST HORSE EVER FOALED.

BUCK PATTERSON, owner of many cattle and many acres down in the Coast country, spent several days in San Antonio, taking in the races and other things, with myself as chaperon. The chief attraction at the races was the quickness of a man's thinking. The horse went under me so fast no split timer ever made could catch it. Yet in that fizzle of a second, thinks I, "I'll ride you now, 3-4 you." I dropped, and in right straddle of him, sover back towards his rump. I flattened out right forward, struck my heels in his flanks and got a saving bolt with my arms round his neck, for I expected to feel the most topknotical, jolting pitching ever felt by man. He pitched a pitch. Just sorter squatted, gave a sorter squeal and took out straight north, pacer like the wind. He was a going so fast it would a-took two men, a quarter mile apart, to fell about. One to say, "Here he comes" and "There he goes." I heard a yell back to me, and turned my head a little to look. Here comes the boys after us on their ponies, a-giving them the quirt and spur every jump. The ponies' necks were stretched and they were running their damndest, but Lord, Lord, Whitey was pacer ten feet while they was running five. I didn't look round no more. If the wind had caught my face, I'd been strangled. The boys' faces grew fainter and fainter, until right soon I heard nothing but a zooling and a humming in my ears. It was the easiest ridin' I ever rid, and the swiftest. It was like riding a straight streak of lightning, sitting in a rocking chair. He was so easy gaited you would a-put a marble in the hollow of his back, and it wouldn't a-been jostled off. He was the smoothest pacer in the world, and if old Jehu had a-seen him he wouldn't a-bragged about his team no more. I begun to think it was near time for him to sorter slacken, but the further he went the faster he went. We passed what I knowed was bunches of grazing cattle, but they looked like flyin' red and white streaks. We passed birds a-flyin' the way we was going, went right past them, and I never was on a railroad train what could even keep up with them. We passed two or three line riders. They give a yell and put their ponies after us, but it was

me right away, and broke straight at me, ears back and teeth a-showing. I took a skeer, turned round and jumped for that bar. I got a bolt, and was a-drawing myself up, when he come a-flyin' and pacer right under me. I never knowed till then the quickness of a man's thinking. The horse went under me so fast no split timer ever made could catch it. Yet in that fizzle of a second, thinks I, "I'll ride you now, 3-4 you." I dropped, and in right straddle of him, sover back towards his rump. I flattened out right forward, struck my heels in his flanks and got a saving bolt with my arms round his neck, for I expected to feel the most topknotical, jolting pitching ever felt by man. He pitched a pitch. Just sorter squatted, gave a sorter squeal and took out straight north, pacer like the wind. He was a going so fast it would a-took two men, a quarter mile apart, to fell about. One to say, "Here he comes" and "There he goes." I heard a yell back to me, and turned my head a little to look. Here comes the boys after us on their ponies, a-giving them the quirt and spur every jump. The ponies' necks were stretched and they were running their damndest, but Lord, Lord, Whitey was pacer ten feet while they was running five. I didn't look round no more. If the wind had caught my face, I'd been strangled. The boys' faces grew fainter and fainter, until right soon I heard nothing but a zooling and a humming in my ears. It was the easiest ridin' I ever rid, and the swiftest. It was like riding a straight streak of lightning, sitting in a rocking chair. He was so easy gaited you would a-put a marble in the hollow of his back, and it wouldn't a-been jostled off. He was the smoothest pacer in the world, and if old Jehu had a-seen him he wouldn't a-bragged about his team no more. I begun to think it was near time for him to sorter slacken, but the further he went the faster he went. We passed what I knowed was bunches of grazing cattle, but they looked like flyin' red and white streaks. We passed birds a-flyin' the way we was going, went right past them, and I never was on a railroad train what could even keep up with them. We passed two or three line riders. They give a yell and put their ponies after us, but it was

SUICIDE OF THE WHITE PACER.

what these wild ones would come around and call them off. When a broke pony takes up with a wild bunch he's sure to be lost forever more. Now there was one bunch what everybody knowed, for it was led by a stallion as white as milk. It made no difference how bad this bunch was skeered or how fast they was running, this white pacer was always in the lead, and always a pacer. Nobody ever see him break a pace, no matter what was doing. Everybody noticed him and hoped for him, but nobody could ever get close enough to rope him. Fellers come from everywhere after him, but all they ever got was a see.

"Well, one season, old Ferguson had a big corral built of upright posts to do his branding in. It was all done but a gate, and for that an open space was had left with a cross bar over it, from post to post, about nine or ten feet from the ground. One night we tied a fer wealth even of tainted money rather than a crust with a spotless integrity, that moment, if there is a divine justice in the world, that justice is pledged to accomplish industrial overthrow.—Rev. W. D. Hills, Independent, Chicago, Ill.



SUICIDE OF THE WHITE PACER.

like a three-legged terrapin trying to run down a skeered jack rabbit. When we come to a ditch or low place he'd rise in the air and light a pacer in the other side. I never heard him breathe hard once, or show the least sign of quitting. If he sweat any, he cut the air so fast the wind dried it up, but the foam flew like whip lashes up. I begin to think of all these here skeery stories about ghost horses, and witch horses, and a queer kind of sick feeling began to spread around down in me some where. I lifted up my head, caught a look of where we was, and then you bet I was sure skeered, and it was solid, sure-enough thing to get rattled about, too. We was twenty miles away, and right in front of us, about a mile, was the Colorado River. I wouldn't a-cares a cuss for just water, but we was just a bulging straight for a place where I knowed the upland prairie broke right off short, and there was a straight fall down over a bluff of 200 foot. It wasn't no distance for that flying critter to cover. The place seemed to be coming up itself right at us. I loosened all holts, said a prayer and rolled off—ker-bim. I was tough in them days or something would a-broke when I hit the ground. I was a heap jarred, but I staggered up in time to see the horse pace right into the air off that bluff. Then there was nothing but the blue sky, the grass and the acat-

tered trees whirling in a mad dance all around me. The fastest horse ever foaled had succided. I fell down in a faint right where I was. The boys never found me till late in the day and they bring me to. If I'd a-stuck on—well, did you ever bust a red, ripe tomato against a rock wall—that's the way I'd a-looked at the bottom of them bluffs. This Patcher's pacer looks tame and slow to me. Fact is, that ride has spiled me for speed. I've never rid nothing since so fast but what it seemed to sorter have a slowness about it." —Globe-Democrat.

Expensive Good Fortune.

The following story of a "great find"—a five-dollar bill—and its greater consequences is reprinted from the New York World. It bears very plainly the marks of exaggeration, but there must be many of our readers who will know by their own experience that it is based on one of the facts of human nature.

Barbaric Chinese Music.

Chinese music is described by a writer in Lippincott's Magazine as composed of almost unheard-of sounds to European ears. Chinese music has a sort of softness and melancholy in its tones that sometimes pleases, but it is so intolerably monotonous that if prolonged it becomes exceedingly irritating to the nerves. They have no semitones; indeed, they seem only to blow into the instrument or twang strings at random from the inspiration of the moment. However, it appears they have notes, though their compositions are not of much scientific value. You sometimes hear something like simple melody, not unlike that which runs through the chants of savages.

Seeing by Night.

Nocturnal creatures assume night activity for other reasons than that they see better by night. The bat sees admirably in the brightest sunlight, as any one knows who has ever teased one by poking a stick at it. It will open its mouth and make an angry grab at the stick, when it is several inches distant from it. Prof. Boile says it is the same with the owl. They see perfectly in bright sunlight, and better at night than most creatures.

Of Courses.

The master was asking questions—masters are apt to ask questions, and sometimes, too, the answers are apt. This question was as follows: "Now, boys, how many months have twenty-eight days?" "All of them, sir," replied a boy in front.—San Francisco Examiner.

Shirt-Collar Holder.

A device to keep in position the points of flannel or unlaundered shirts consists of a circular wire passing under the turn-down collar, and provided at the front ends with V-shaped loops, which clasp and retain the corners in position.

Bicycles on Street Cars.

The street cars of San Francisco are provided with a holder on the rear platform on which bicycles can be hung.

There is one thing about men and women that you can always depend upon: they are all sickle.

A girl should never marry a man whose mother was a good cook.