THE TALMAGE SERMON

"OPPORTUNITY" THE SUBJECT OF AN INTERESTING TALK.

"As We Have Therefore Opportunity Let Us Do Good"—Gal. 6 : x—A Story of the Great Preacher's Boyhood Days—Life's Sublime Victory.

IN DENVER, COLO., years ago, an audience had assembled for divine worship. The pastor of the church for whom I was to preach that night, interested in the seating of the people, stood in the pulpit looking from side to side, and when no more people could be crowded within the walls, he turned to me and said, with startling emphasis: "What an opportunity!" Immediately that word began to enlarge, and while a hymn was being sung, at every stanza the word "opportunity" swiftly and mightily unfolded, and while the opening prayer was being made, the word piled up into Alps and Himalayas of meaning, and spread out into other latitudes and longitudes of significance until it became hemispheric, and it still grew in altitude and circumference until it encircled other worlds, and swept out and on, and around until it was as big as eternity. Never since have I read or heard that word without being thrilled with its magnitude and momentum. Opportunity! Although in the text to some it may seem a mild and quiet note, in the great gospel harmony it is a staccato passage. It is one of the loveliest and awfulest words in our language of more than one hundred thousand words of English vocabulary. "As we have opportunity, let us do good."

What is an opportunity? The lexicographer would coolly tell you it is a combination of favorable circumstances accomplishing a purpose; but words can not tell what it is. Take a thousand years to manufacture a definition, and you could not successfully describe it. Opportunity! The measuring rod with which the Angel of the Apocalypse measured heaven could not measure this pivotal word of my text. Stand on the edge of the precipice of all time and let down the fathoming line hand under hand, and lower down and lower down, and for a quintillion of years let it sink, and the lead will not strike bottom. Opportunity! But while I do not attempt to measure or define the word, I will, God helping me, take the responsibility of telling you something about opportunity.

First, it is very swift in its motions. Sometimes within one minute it starts from the throne of God, sweeps around the earth, and reascends the throne from which it started. Within less than sixty seconds it fulfilled its mission.

In the second place opportunity never comes back. Perhaps an opportunity very much like it may arrive, but that one never. Naturalists tell us of insects that are born, fulfill their mission, and expire in an hour; but many opportunities die so soon after they are born that their brevity of life is incalculable. What most amazes me is that opportunities do such overshadowing, far reaching and tremendous work in such short earthly allowance. You are a business man of large experience. The past eighteen months have been hard on business men. A young merchant at his wits' end came into your office, or your house, and you said, "Times are hard now, but better days will come. I have seen things as bad, or worse, but we got out, and we will get out of this. The brightest days that this country ever saw are yet to come." The young man to whom you said that was ready for suicide, or something worse, namely, a fraudulent turn to get out of his despairful position. Your hopefulness inspired him for all time, and thirty years after you are dead he will be reaping the advantage of your optimism. Your opportunity to do that one thing for that young man was not half as long as the time I have taken to rehearse it.

In yonder third gallery you sit, a man of the world, but you wish everybody well. While the clerks are standing round in your store, or the men in your factory are taking their noon spell, some one says, "Have you heard that one of our men has been converted at the revival meeting in the Methodist church?" While it is being talked over you say, "Well, I do not believe in revivals. Those things do not last. People get excited and join the church and are no better than they were before. I wish our men would keep away from those meetings." Do you know, oh, man, what you did in that minute of depreciation? There were two young men in that group who that night would have gone to those meetings and been saved for this world and the next, but you decided them not to go. They are social natures. They already drink more than is good for them, and are disposed to be wild. From the time they heard you say that they accelerated their steps on the downward road. In ten years they will be through with their dissipations and pass into the great beyond. That little talk of yours decided their destiny for this world and the next. You had an opportunity that you misimproved, and how will you feel when you confront those two immortals in the last judgment and they tell you of that unfortunate talk of yours that flung them over the precipice? Oh, man of the world, why did you not say in that noon spell of conversation, "Good! I am glad that man has got religion. I wish I had it myself. Let us all go to-night. Come on; I will meet you at the church door at 8 o'clock." You see you would have taken them all to heaven and you would have got there yourself. Lost opportunity!

The day I left our country home to look after myself, we rode across the country, and my father was driving. Of course I said nothing that implied how I felt. But there are hundreds of men here, who from their own experience knew how I felt. At such a time a young man may be hopeful, and even impatient, to get into the battle of life himself, but to leave the home where everything has been done for you; your father or older brothers taking your part when you were imposed on by larger boys; and your mother always around, when you got the cold, with mustard applications for the chest, or herb tea to make you sweat off the fever, and sweet mixtures in the cup by the bed to stop the cough, taking sometimes too much of it because it was pleasant to take; and then to go out with no one to stand between you and the world, gives one a choking sensation at the throat, and a homesickness before you have got three miles away from the old folks. There was on the day I spoke of a silence for a long while, and then my father began to tell how good the Lord had been to him, in sickness and in health, and when times of hardship came how Providence had always provided the means of livelihood for the large household: and he wound up by saying "De Witt, I have always found it safe to trust the Lord." My father has been dead thirty years, but in all the crises of my life—and there have been many of them—I have felt the mighty boost of that lesson in the farm wagon: "De Witt, I have always found it safe to trust the Lord." The fact was, my father saw that was his opportunity, and he improved it. This is one reason why I am an enthusiastic friend of all Young Men's Christian associations. They get hold of so many young men just arriving in the city, and while they are very impressionable, and it is the best opportunity. Why, how big the houses looked to us as we first entered the great city; and so many people! It seemed some meeting must have just closed to fill the streets in that way; and then the big placards announcing all styles of amusements, and so many of them on the same night, and every night, after our boyhood had been spent in regions where only once or twice in a whole year there had been an entertainment in school house or church. That is the opportunity. Start that innocent young man in the right direction. Six weeks after will be too late. Tell me what such a young man does with his first six weeks in a great city, and I will tell you what he will be throughout his life on earth, and where he will spend the ages of eternity. Opportunity!

A city missionary in the lower parts of the city found a young woman in wretchedness and sin. He said, "Why do you not go home?" She said, "They would not receive me at home." He said, "What is your father's name, and where does he live?" Having obtained the address and written to the father, the city missionary got a reply, on the outside of the letter the word "immediate" underscored. It was the heartiest possible invitation for the wanderer to come home. That was the city missionary's opportunity. And there are opportunities all about you, and on them written by the hand of the God who will bless you, and bless those whom you help, in capitals of light, the word "immediate."

A military officer very profane in his habits was going down into a mine at Cornwall, England, with a Christain miner, for many of those miners are Christians. The officer used profane language while in the cage going down. As they were coming up out of the mine the profane officer said, "If it be so far down to your work, how much farther would it be to the bottomless pit?" The Christian miner responded, "I do not know how far it is down to that place, but if this rope should break you would be there in a minute." It was the Christian miner's opportunity. Many years ago a clergyman was on a sloop on our Hudson river, and hearing a man utter a blasphemy, the clergyman said, "You have spoken against my best friend, Jesus Christ." Seven years after, this same clergyman was on his way to the general assembly of the Presbyterian church at Philadelphia, when a young minister addressed him and asked him if he was not on a sloop on the Hudson river seven years before? The reply was in the affirmative. "Well," said the young minister, "I was the man whom you corrected for uttering that oath. It led me to think and repent, and I am trying to atone somewhat for my early behavior. I am a preacher of the gospel, and a delegate to the general assembly." Seven years before on that Hudson river sloop was the clergyman's opportunity.

A Scotch shepherd was dying and had the pastor called in. The dying shepherd said to his wife, "Mary, please to go into the next room, for I want to see the minister alone." When the two were alone the dying shepherd said, "I have known the Bible all my life, but I am going, and I am 'afeered to dee.'" Then the pastor quoted the Psalm, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." "Yes, mon," said the shepherd, "I was familiar with that before you were born, but I am a-goin,' and I am afeered to dee." Then said the pastor, "You know that Psalm says, 'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." "Yes," said the dying shepherd, "I knew that before you were born, but it does not help me." Then said the pastor, "Don't you know that sometimes when you were driving the sheep down through the valleys and ravines there would be shadows all about you, while there was plenty of sunshine on the hills above? You are in the shadows now, but it is sunshine higher up." Then said the dying shepherd, "Ah! that is good. I never saw it that way before. All is well. 'Though I pass through the valley of the shadow of death, Thou art with me.' Shadows here, but sunshine above." So the dying shepherd got peace. Living and dying may we have the same peace! Opportunity! Under the arch of that splendid word let this multitude of my hearers pass into the pardon, and hope, and triumph of the gospel. Go by companies of a hundred each. Go by regiments of a thousand each. The aged leaning on a staff; the middle aged throwing off their burdens as they pass; and the young to have their present joys augmented by more glorious satisfactions. Forward into the kingdom! As soon as you pass the dividing line there will be shouting all up and down the heavens. The crowned immortals will look down and cheer. Jesus of the many scars will rejoice at the result of his earthly sacrifices. Departed saints will be gladdened that their prayers are answered. An order will be given for the spreading of a banquet at which you will be the honored guest. From the imperial gardens the wreaths will be twisted for your brow, and from the halls of eternal music the harpers will bring their harps, and the trumpeters their trumpets, and all up and down the amethystine stairways of the castles, and in all the rooms of the House of Many Mansions, it will be talked over with holy glee that this day while one plain man stood on the platform of this vast building giving the gospel call, an assemblage made up from all parts of the earth and piled up in these galleries, chose Christ as their portion, and started for Heaven as their everlasting home. Ring all the bells of Heaven at the tidings! Strike all the cymbals at the joy! Wave all the palm branches at the triumph! Victory! Victory!

BEYOND THE BIG POND.

The average wheat yield in England is said to be thirty-six bushels to the acre.

Public school children of Paris are not allowed to use tobacco upon pain of dismissal.

The director of the Austrian railroads had a locomotive constructed which makes a run of seventy-four miles an hour.

Purulent pneumonia is prevalent in Paris. It originated with a cargo of green parrots landed some time ago at Bordeaux, and spread to all the towns to which they were sent.

Of the 222,000 officers and men on the rolls of the British army at the close of 1894, 106,000 are stationed in the British isles, 26,000 of them in Ireland, 38,000 are in the colonies and Egypt and 78,000 in India.

It is proposed to establish a telephone line between England and Holland. The London chamber of commerce and the Netherland chamber of commerce are trying to ascertain if the time is yet ripe for the undertaking.

In 1865 not a single town in India had a supply of pure water; now nearly all the large cities and cantonments have water-works, with the result that the death rate among the British troops of sixty-nine per 1,000 thirty years ago has been reduced to fifteen per 1,000.

Swend Foyn, known as the founder of whale catching on a large scale in Norway, and the inventor of the harpoon cannon, died in Tonsberg, Norway, the other day, aged 85. It was due to his invention, in which a peculiar kind of ball was used, generating gas after it entered the body of the animal, and preventing it from sinking, that whale fishing became so great an industry in the North.

Not Stayers.

Hashaway—Does Mrs. Oliphant keep a good many boarders now?

Dashaway—Yes, she does; generally for about two days or a week.—Chicago Record.

A WOMAN'S NERVES.

THE STORY OF A WOMAN TO WHOM NOISE WAS TORTURE.

Prostrated By the Least Excitement—Physicians Baffled By Her Case.

[From the Gate City, Keokuk, Iowa.]

Mrs. Helen Meyers, whose home is at 3515 Vernon avenue, Chicago, and whose visit to Keokuk, Ia., will long be remembered, was at one time afflicted with a nervous malady which at times drove her nearly to distraction. "Those terrible headaches are a thing of the past," she said the other day to a Gate City representative, "and there is quite a story in connection with it, too. "My nervous system sustained a great shock some fifteen years ago, brought on, I believe, through too much worrying over family matters and then allowing my love for my books to get the better of my discretion where my health was concerned. Why, whenever my affairs at home did not go along just as I expected, I would invariably become prostrated from the excitement and I would consider myself fortunate indeed if the effects of the attack would not remain for a week. I was obliged to give up our pleasant home not far from the Lake Shore drive, because I could not stand the noise in that locality. I could find no place in the city which I deemed suitable to one whose nervous system was always on the point of explosion. To add to my misfortunes my complexion underwent a change and I looked so yellow and sallow that I was ashamed to venture from the house at all.

"'Madam,' said my doctor to me soon after an unusually severe attack of the malady, 'unless you leave the city and seek some place of quiet, you will never recover.' So I concluded I would visit my uncle, who lives in Dallas county, Iowa, and whose farm would surely be a good place for one in my pitiable condition. I picked up the Gate City one day and happened to come across an interesting recital of the recovery of some woman in New York state who was afflicted as I had been. This woman had been cured by Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People. I thought that if Pink Pills cured that woman they might do the same for me. I began to take the pills according to directions and I began to feel better from the start. After I had taken several boxes of them I was ready to go back to Chicago. My nervousness was gone and my complexion was as fresh as that of any 16-year-old girl in Iowa, and Pink Pills is what put the color in my cheeks. No wonder I am in such high spirits and feel like a prize fighter. And no wonder I like to come to Keokuk, for if it had not been for Pink Pills bought from a Keokuk firm I would not be alive now," laughingly concluded the lady.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills contain all the elements necessary to give new life and richness to the blood and restore shattered nerves. They are for sale by all druggists, or may be had by mail from Dr. Williams' Medicine company, Schenectady, N. Y., for 50 cents per box, or six boxes for $2.50.

QUEER FOLKS.

Human Wolf is the name of a men's furnisher in Philadelphia.

Paul Wilson of Concord, Ky., unable to cure an aching tooth, hanged himself.

A Superior, Wis., man asks a divorce from his wife on the ground that she is an atheist.

Mrs. Maria Lawrence of Palmer, Mass., is a member of the fire department of her town.

A son of Isaac Vickery, formerly of Norridgewock, is drawing a good salary as a freak, and he will undoubtedly be quite a boy when he gets his growth. Now, at the tender age of 15 years, he is six feet four inches tall, weighs 290 pounds and is daily increasing in weight, height and breadth.

"What paper does Grabber take?" "Sometimes the janitor's and sometimes the boarder's."

Coe's Cough Balsam.

is the oldest and best. It will break up a Cold quicker than anything else. It is always reliable. Try it.

There is always something coming to us, but it is not always just what we prefer.

I use Piso's Cure for Consumption both in my family and practice.—Dr. G. W. PATTERSON, Inkster, Mich., Nov. 5, 1894.

"She made a show of herself at the theater from my point of view." "Indeed." "Yes, she took the place of the stage as far as I was concerned."

1,000 BUS. POTATOES PER ACRE.

Wonderful yields in potatoes, oats, corn, farm and vegetable seeds. Cut this out and send 5c postage to the John A. Salzer Seed Co., La Crosse, Wis., for their great seed book and sample of Giant Spurry. WNU

"I want a canary bird for my wife." "Here is a nice singer for $10." "I'll give you $20 for one that never sings."

A Pertinent Paragraph.

"Our country if right should be kept right; if wrong should be put right," is a political maxim which paraphrased applies to other conditions of life, thus: our health if right, should be kept right; if wrong should be put right, especially in bodily ailments, such as pains and aches, which St. Jacobs Oil promptly cures. Many out of work should heed to give it a chance to cure and it will give them a chance to go to work cured. Another adage is: "he doeth best who doeth well." Well, of course, you want to be well from all sorts of aches, and the best thing to do is to use the great remedy. He who does so does well indeed.

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A Terrible Visitant.

Pain is always a terrible visitant, and often domiciles itself with one for life. This infliction is preventable, in cases of rheumatism, by a timely resort to Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, which checks the encroachments of this obstinate and dangerous malady at the outset. The term "dangerous" is used advisedly, for rheumatism is always liable to attack the vital organs and terminate life. No testimony is more conclusive and concurrent than that of physicians who testify to the excellent effect of the Bitters in this disease. Persons incur a wetting in rainy or snowy weather, and who are exposed to draughts, should use the Bitters as a preventive of ill effects. Malaria, dyspepsia, liver and kidney trouble, nervousness and debility are also among the ailments to which this popular medicine is adapted. For the infirmities, soreness and stiffness of the aged it is highly beneficial.

Another marriage after a courtship through the medium of the mails. It saved fuel and gas.

"Is there anything wrong with the pie, Robbie?" "I guess there must be, for I can't find any fingers in it, and mamma says you have one in every pie."

Purify Your Blood

Strengthen and invigorate your nerves and muscles, tone your stomach and digestive organs, and build up your whole system by the use of Hood's Sarsaparilla if you would avoid the grip, pneumonia, diphtheria and typhoid fever. These diseases seek for their most ready victims, persons who are weak, tired, debilitated and all run down, owing to impure and impoverished blood. Hood's Sarsaparilla purifies and vitalizes the blood and thus wards off disease.

Hood's Sarsaparilla Cures

Hood's Pills cure nausea, sick headache.

$1,000,000 CURE FOR RHEUMATISM.

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Never Failed. Pleasant, harmless. Highest endorsements. Doctors praise it. Cures where all else fails. Free investigation. True Testimonials free. **Write to-day.** Mail orders filled. Ten Thousand True Testimonials. Bank references everywhere. Take nothing "just as good" on which your dealer makes **twice** as much. Purifies the blood. No opium or mercury. A few good agents wanted.

SWANSON RHEUMATIC CURE CO., 167 Dearborn St., CHICAGO.

One of my children had a very bad discharge from the nose. Physicians prescribed without benefit. After using Ely's Cream Balm a short time the disease was cured.—A. O. Cary, Corning, N. Y.

CATARRH

ELY'S CREAM BALM opens and cleanses the Nasal Passages, Allays Pain and Inflammation, Heals the Sores, protects the Membrane from Colds, Restores the Senses of Taste and Smell. The Balm is quickly absorbed and gives relief at once.

A particle is applied into each nostril and is agreeable. Price 50 cents at Druggists or by mail.

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