Peninsula Enterprise.

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Attorney-at-Law.
OFFICES—Accomac C. H. and Fair Oaks, Va.
Practices in all the courts on the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

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Talmage Sermon

By Rev.
Frank De Witt Talmage, D.D.

Los Angeles, Cal., July 10.—The preacher in this sermon shows by illustration and incident that true and enduring happiness and satisfaction are not to be found in worldly success, but in embracing the offer of salvation through Christ. The text is Mark xii, 34, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

What is to you the saddest word in all the English language? Edgar Allan Poe, that brilliant genius of American literature, whose dissipations endungeoned him in a chamber of horrors as ghastly as that in which Thomas De Quincey was compelled to live and whose raven of delirium tremens sounded his death knell when he had just reached forty years of age, has made the word "nevermore" awful in its significance. In it we hear the black bird of demoniacal despair croaking a dirge. In it are heard the sobs of breaking hearts and are seen the ghostlike horrors of a living charnel house. "Nevermore! Nevermore! Nevermore!" To many that word will always be the saddest of all words.

Thomas Carlyle, the great English essayist and philosopher, the master of mighty sentences and prose masterpieces, dipped his pen in the reddest of all inks when he wrote the word "ought." The great author of the justly famous philosophical dissertation upon "The French Revolution" declared that the word "ought" is the saddest of all words. It has in it all the harsh and reverberating voices which run the gamut of remorse. Carlyle's conception of the imperial force of that word "ought" had in it the thunder of Sinai, and to the offender recreant to duty it still sounded, mingled with the taunts of the fiends of the eternal inferno, deciding and mocking the miserable sufferer with the reminders of the bliss he might have enjoyed if he had done as he ought. Some have declared that the saddest of all words is "gone," others "death," others "despair." But today I want to call your attention to another word which I think is the saddest word ever uttered by man. It was that which King Agrippa spake to Paul when on the Roman tribunal of Caesarea Philippi he said: "Almost! Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Ah, yes, King Agrippa was so near the kingdom of God that just one step forward would have placed the Roman ruler at the feet of Christ. Just one step more would have changed him from a pagan into a humble and repentant follower of the Nazarene. But that one step was never taken. King Agrippa was "almost" persuaded to be a Christian, but his "almost" never brought him into safety and eternal life.

Today I am going to try to help some of you to overcome that saddest of all words, "almost." I am going to show some of you that, like the scribe of my text, who came to question Jesus, you are "not far from the kingdom of God," but I am also going to show you that to be "almost" saved and yet not saved is to be lost completely and utterly lost, just as much as were the poor fellows who were imprisoned a few years ago in the iron hulk of the steamers burning at the wharfs of Hoboken, in New York harbor. Frantically they stood at the barred portholes. Frantically they stretched forth their arms through the iron gratings. The could see the blue waters of the harbor. They could hear the calls of the would be rescuers hard at work. But they were lost, entirely lost, though there was "only one step" between them and perfect safety.

Advantage of a Christian Home.

Almost saved! Yes, you are. How do I know it? I learn how near you have come to salvation as I look at the entries on those white pages sewed between the Old and the New Testaments of the family Bible. By this record of the family births and deaths I find your father was a Christian. Your mother was a Christian. Your sisters and brothers were all Christians. I find also that your parents reconsecrated their lives for God's service when they held you before the sacred altar on the day you were baptized. It is a very easy matter for you to become a Christian, with such a family history.

"'Tis true," says some young man to me, "I was born in a Christian home. I am not near, however, but very, very far from the kingdom of God. Why, after I left my Christian home I seemed to be possessed not with seven devils, but seventy times seven devils. No sooner did I leave home and go away from mother and father than I plunged into a life of dissipation. I drank, I gambled, I blasphemed. I did everything I ought not to have done, and I left undone everything I ought to have done. It is said that when Lysimachus was fighting against the Getae he was entrapped by his enemies in the desert sands. His thirst became so great that he offered his whole kingdom for a drink of water, as Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. But no sooner had Lysimachus slaked his thirst than he cried: 'Ah, wretched me, who for such a mementary gratification should have lost so great a kingdom.' Though I have been brought up in a Christian home, for the momentary satisfying of my evil desires I have stifled all those pure influences of the past. I am like a man who, to quench his thirst, has done more than to barter away a kingdom. I have bartered away my life.

Not so fast, brother; not so fast. You have flung yourself into the quagmire of sin, but by your very words of despair I know you are near to the kingdom. I have had in my time much experience with young men, and I have sometimes found that, like the prodigal who left his father's home for the far country, many young men reared in the best of homes have flung themselves into the seething whirlpool of sin. But these young men were like the prodigal also in that they came back to their father's home after they had spent their all. The golden cords of parental prayer are now tugging at your heart. Vilest of sinners you may have been; most heartless of wayward boys may have been your history, but today God is calling; your dead mother, your redeemed mother, is calling; your broken hearted father is calling: "Come, come, come home! Oh, sinner, come home!" Will you hear the cry? Way off in that far country of sin "thou art not far from the kingdom of God." Thou art not far from Christ, but near, on account of your early Christian home training.

Don't Live For Yourself Alone.

Almost saved! Yes, you are. I know it by the unhappy looks that are chiseled in the wrinkles of your face. When you started out in life you thought the height of a man's happiness could be estimated by the length of his bank account. You thought the worldwide area of his joy could be always circumscribed only by the hemispheric spread of his fame. But now by bitter experience you know that wealth and fame only bring added cares. You know that if a man lives for himself alone, if he does not seek the higher joys of the soul, if he does not live for Christ, seeking also the welfare of his brother man, he can find no happiness on earth at all.

I can imagine a scene in your life which brought its emptiness vividly before you. Such scenes, varying in their details, come to many a man, bidding him pause and consider what is the true purpose of life. Let me see! Where did this scene happen? In Chicago. You are a wealthy merchant. You have come out on a visit to Los Angeles. It was in Chicago, as near as I can make out, on a Saturday night, the second week of January. The fire was burning brightly on your office hearth. The table by your side was filled with papers. The employees, working ten hours a day, sometimes think the employer entering his office at 9 or 10 o'clock in the morning has a very easy time. But long after the busy beehive of the modern dry goods emporium has stopped its hum, and the tired little cash girls have crowded the streets, laughing, shouting, perhaps smiling at the passersby, in juvenile delight at being set free from toil, and the bookkeepers have balanced the accounts, and the iron shutters have been pulled down, and the clerks have closed their counters, and the cashiers have locked their safes, and the delivery wagons have ceased their rumbling, and the wornout horses have been fed and blanketed in their stalls, and the street lamps have become as multitudinous as the visible stars of the heavens, the tired merchant works on. The wood in the fire place crackled and laughed. The flames leaped higher and higher and sputtered more loudly as the reports of the different departments recorded the business triumph of a whole year. Stock had been taken, for the holiday goods were all sold. Every promissory note had been met. There was plenty of money in the bank to clear away the remaining debit sides of the ledger.

What Shall It Profit a Man?

Was not that the history, O rich Chicago merchant, of the first results of your mathematical calculations on the Saturday night of the second week in last January? But what about the second calculation you made that important night? As you sat there in your easy armchair you began to dream about the past. You began to wonder if all this endless struggle for a worldly success really paid. As you dreamed you thought of the many nights when, unable to sleep, you had tossed about your hot pillow and thought how the business world was trying to drive you to the financial wall, even as some man with the death marks upon his cheek in his old age may be fleeced of his all. You thought how your very best motives had always been impugned. And then, strange to say, instead of gloating over your past financial success as the fire flickered lower and lower an unseen power made you write upon a broad sheet of white paper this problem, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" And as you studied that problem you were compelled to write after it a word of seven letters. You wrote that one word in letters of fire. "Nothing." "Nothing." "Nothing." Am I wrong, O financial magnate, in stating today "thou art not far from the kingdom of God?"

My hearers may think I have overdrawn the picture in asserting that worldly success from a mere selfish standpoint never pays, and that only the Christ life is the happy life. Well, then, to illustrate whether mere earthly success is a satisfying success or the reverse let me read to you a eulogy delivered lately in reference to that Warwick of American statesmanship, that president maker, Marcus A. Hanna. In the memorial meeting held in the senate chamber a short time ago Senator Scott, Senator Hanna's intimate friend, arose and spoke these words: "Mr. President, I shall never forget one early morning when Senator Hanna handed me a New York paper containing a cartoon of himself, pictured as a huge monster, clad in a suit covered over with dollar marks, smoking an immense cigar and trampling under foot women and children, with their eyes protruding from their sockets and their skeleton forms writhing in agony. After I looked at it a moment he said to me: 'Scott, that hurts. I have tried all my life to put myself in the other fellow's place. I have tried to help those in need and lighten the burdens of those less fortunate than myself. Yet I am here held up to the gaze of the world as a murderer of women and children. I tell you, it hurts.' And Mr. President, looking up into that manly face I saw the tears coursing down his cheeks as he turned and silently walked away."

You think worldly success can bring true happiness? If it could, why did it not bring happiness to James G. Blaine, the "Henry Clay" of the latter part of the past century? Murat Halstead relates how he went to see Mr. Blaine in the Fifth Avenue hotel, New York. The death pallor was on his cheek. In a few weeks his broken heart was to cease to beat. Mr. Blaine sat looking into the blazing fire. Murat Halstead could not say a word. His heart was too full. After two friends sat thus for a short time, Mr. Blaine heaved a deep sigh as he said, "Oh, Halstead, I could have stood it all if I had not lost my two boys." He was finding then, as Hanna found, and as a host of famous men have found, that happiness and true satisfaction cannot be obtained from the world. The world misrepresents them, ridicules them and decries them, and, whether it gives them its prizes or not, it wounds and tortures them.

Happiness Is Not In Wealth.

Oh, rich man! I appeal to your experience. Have you not realized that happiness is not in wealth? Have there not come times in your life when you have felt that money and honor and power alike fail to give you satisfaction? You are disappointed with your life. Turn to Christ, who says to such as you, "He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst again." Come to him. Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.

Almost saved! Yes, I know it. Why? For weeks, perhaps, you have been lying prostrate with a danerous sickness near the dividing line, the crossing of which means the re-creation and the spiritualization and the redemption of your life. That sick bed means to you in a spiritual sense what an invalid's bed meant in a physical sense to him sick of the palsy who was laid at Christ's feet. In the second chapter of Mark we read about the wonderful incident which took place in Capernaum. No sooner did the people of that city hear that Jesus had come than the multitudes began to gather about him. They crowded into the room where he was. They crowded the front yard of his residence. On the outskirts of the crowd we see a couple of men carrying between them one who was sick of the palsy. "Oh," they say to each other, "if we can only bring our brother to Christ, he will cure him." I think, from reading between the lines of this chapter, that the invalid himself did not care whether he saw Christ or not. He was too sick to care. His limbs hung limp and heavy. His eyelids drooped; the eyes were glassy. His skin was flabby and almost dead. But because the invalid was nine-tenths dead that made no difference to the two friends. As they could not push through the crowds who were jostling about the front door they climbed up to the roof of the house. They then let down the ropes and pulled the sick man up, bed and all. Then with their axes they broke open the roof and lowered the sick man down through the roof to the feet of the Saviour, who, seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." And he arose. The loose muscles stiffened. The eyes became alert. The blood again coursed rapidly through the clogged arteries. He walked; yea, the sick man walked. He was healed by being placed, a hopeless, helpless invalid, at the feet of Jesus Christ.

Sickness has been a spiritual blessing to you, O man, as the palsy was to the invalid of old. It has placed you almost within touch of our Saviour and King. For years and years you did not know what a pain meant. When you heard people complaining about their invalidism you had no sympathy. You would petulantly say: "Nine-tenths of these so called invalids are mere hypochondriacs. If men and women would only get up and stop their complaining and stop dosing themselves with medicines they would be all right." When a minister in church would preach from the text, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee," you would settle back in your seat and smile. You would say to yourself: "Perhaps. Perhaps not. My ancestors were all long lived. I guess I will be also." Then you would complacently pat your chest as you expanded your lungs three or four inches, and you would say: "Well, my ancestors never had a finer breathing apparatus than I have. Perhaps I shall die tonight. Perhaps not."

But two years ago there came that sudden attack of illness. It came almost without any warning at all. You remember how your cheek became as white as that of a corpse and your lips turned blue and cold. You remember how that pneumonia stabbed at your lungs, or how that typhoid made you sink so low that for weeks and weeks you hovered between life and death. You remember how asthma choked you until it seemed as though you would go mad with the agony. Aye, that sickness made out of you a changed man. When the minister now announces the text, Luke, twelfth chapter and twentieth verse, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee," you do not flippantly say: "Perhaps. Perhaps not." You know it is not out of the range of possibilities that this night you may be brought face to face with God at the judgment seat of Christ. O man, even while I speak today all the good and the bad of your past life are flying swifter than the winds through your seething brain. Aye, they are flying as swiftly as the panorama of bygone years in a second of time moves before the vision of a drowning man. Your past sicknesses have changed your feelings toward God. The pain at your heart is warning you that "God shall bring every work unto judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." This day—aye, this very minute—on account of that past sick bed, "thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

Signs of the Time.

Almost saved! Yes, you are. I know it. Why? The many "signs of the time" tell us that hundreds and thousands of immortal men and women are now enrolling themselves as Christian soldiers under the standard of the cross. And there is a mighty propelling force in the power of numbers.

We all marvel at the wonderful ability of observation to which the trappers and the hunters of old were able to train their visual powers. For days and weeks the Indian scouts were able to follow their enemies across the western prairies. By the twisted blades of grass and by other minute signs they were able to tell how many Indians were in the war party ahead, how many horses and cattle and squaws and papooses. During the Austro-Prussian war in 1866 Archduke Joseph of Austria was warned of an imminent night attack by a gypsy soldier who was able to foresee the advance of the pursuing hosts by watching the birds fly over the Austrian encampment. This soldier said to Prince Joseph: "Your highness, birds sleep as well as men. These birds would not be flying about at this time of night if they had not been disturbed. The enemy in large numbers is marching through the woods and has frightened them. There will soon be fighting on our front lines." But, though hunters and trappers have almost miraculous seeing powers in reference to the natural world, it does not take an inspired vision to see that we are now living in a time of great religious awakening. How else can you account for the thousands who, as converts, are giving their hearts to Jesus Christ under the consecrated labors of the evangelistic committee of the Presbyterian church? How else can you account for the wonderful meetings of Campbell Morgan in America, and of Torrey and Alexander in Australia and England, and the crowded schools for Bible study in Winona and Northfield and Chautauqua and Moody's institute of Chicago? Everywhere the vital question is upon every lip, "What shall I then do with Jesus, who is called the Christ?" Like Pilate before the Jewish people, you must decide the question in reference to Jesus. You must decide for Christ or against Christ. And in bringing you up to this question I cannot be far wrong in stating that "thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

But why talk so much about the wonderful manifestations of the Holy Spirit's power in reference to the world at large? Have not we seen that power manifested in our own church? Men and women, can you sit stolidly in your pews when husbands and wives and children and young men and women are seeking Jesus Christ, while so many old people and middle aged people and young people are coming? God will never give you a better opportunity to seek him than just now. Will you not come to the Saviour now?

The last time Dwight L. Moody ever preached was at a great series of meetings being held in Convention hall, Kansas City. Suddenly he broke down, and the doctors told him he must stop work at once. They bundled the great evangelist up and started him east for his Northfield home. But, though the doctors could silence his tongue, they could not keep still his pen. When they carried him to Northfield, with his weak fingers he wrote out a telegram to his Kansas City friends who were carrying on the meetings in his stead. His telegram went something like this: "Mr. So-and-so, Kansas City: Have reached home safely. Regret exceedingly being forced to leave. Had I been with you tonight I would have preached on 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.' My prayer is that many may be led into the kingdom under Mr. Torrey's preaching." Oh, my friends, the redeemed lips of the sainted evangelist are pleading with you from this text in this service today. That same divine power which brought thousands and tens of thousands of sinners to the fountain of eternal life is pleading with you to come to Christ, even now while great multitudes are seeking him. Like King Agrippa, are you going to be "almost persuaded" and lost? Or like Paul, the "chief of sinners," are you to be coronated and to have a seat upon a throne in heaven with Jesus Christ?

I know of a land where the streets are paved
With the things which we meant to achieve.
It is walled with the money we meant to have saved
And the pleasures for which we grieve.
The kind words unspoken, the promises broken
And many a coveted boon
Are stored away in that land somewhere—
The land of "Pretty Soon."

There are uncut jewels of possible fame
Lying there about in the dust.
And many a noble and lofty aim
Covered with mold and rust.
And, oh! this place, while it seems so near.
Is farther away than the moon;
Though our purpose is fair we never get there—
The land of "Pretty Soon."

The road that leads to this mystic land
Is strewn with pitiful wrecks.
And the ships that have sailed from its shining strand
Bear skeletons on their decks.
It is farther away at noon than at dawn,
And farther away at night than at noon.
Oh, let us beware of that land down there,
The land of "Pretty Soon."

[Copyright, 1904, by Louis Klopsch.]

Direct Evidence.

The lawyer shook his finger warningly at the witness and said: "Now, we want to hear just what you know, not what some one else knows or what you think or anything of that kind, but what you know. Do you understand?"

"Waal, I know," said the witness, with emphasis, as he lifted one limber leg and laid it across the other—"I know that Clay Grubbs said that Bill Thomson told him that he heard John Thomas' wife tell Sid Shuford's gal that her husband was there when the fight tuk place and that he said that they slung each other around in the bushes right consid'able."

The Man Who Attracts Business.

A sunny man attracts business success. Everybody likes to deal with agreeable, cheerful people. We instinctively shrink from a crabbed, cross, contemptible character, no matter how able he may be. We would raher do a little less business or pay rather do a little less business or pay with an optimist.—Success.

Taking a Rest.

Church—I saw your clerk on the car yesterday. He had a child on one arm, a basket on the other, and he couldn't find a seat. Gotham—Yes; he said he was overworked, and he wanted to take a day's rest.—Yonkers Statesman.

Happiness when at a distance appears so great as to touch the sky. When it enters our door it so dwindles that very often we no longer recognize it.

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Petersburg Savings & Insurance Company, Petersburg, Va
Virginia State, Richmond, Va.
Mutual Life, New York.
—REPRESENTED BY—
KELLY & NOTTINGHAM,
ONANCOCK, VA.
Correspondence Solicited.
Strict attention to business.

A. B. BULACK,
—OF THE—
Chesapeake House,
223 E. Pratt St.,
which was destroyed by the recent fire, has fitted up a handsome CAFE at
No 6 W. Pratt St.,
near Charles, where he will be pleased to see all his old friends. Choice wines, liquors and cigars at the bar.