

AT FIRST.
I should have been a day.
All should my spirit from the clay.
As drawing out the heavenly way,
Or hence he softly bore.
I pray you, angels, do not first
Lead me to the land of the dead,
With that black armor, oft rehearsal,
"Behold, the hosts of death are burst."
Lead, I should have been with thee.
But let some happy bird, at hand,
The all new break.
So shall I daily understand
That have his love, his blossoming land,
And sigh my self awake.
From that deep rest emerging so,
To lift the head,
And see the sun-shower, a bell of snow,
The pink arbours, and the low
Spring beauty streaked with red,
Will all suffice. No elsewhere
Impelled to roam,
To see some billow, passing fair,
Will, smiling, pause—come aware—
And murmur, "Welcome home!"
So sweetly greeted I shall rise
To kiss her cheek;
Then lightly come, and with the skies,
As one familiar with the skies,
Who finds and need not seek.
matry.

A NOBLE HEART.

The battle was over. The enemy was vanishing in scattered groups over the sands of the Soudan far from the ghastly-looking spot which had been the scene of the thickest of the fight. At dawn the ground round the wells had been green with the upspringing grass with which nature covers our rugged mother earth. At nightfall it was down-trodden with the tread of man who there had met and struggled for supremacy, each one glorying in the death of some fellow-man, who but for war's fell chance might have been his friend had they met in other lands among their surroundings.

The victors were now doing all that lay in their power to relieve the sufferings of the wounded or to identify the slain. No matter now if it were a comrade or a foe who lay upon the sand; the last drop of water from a weary soldier's canteen, or the last of the treasured liquid in some officer's flask, was tendered as freely as though it had been his nearest and dearest companion who was in need of it. Small chance was theirs of obtaining rest and food; for they had made a forced march to intercept the enemy, and the wells were all but dry in the oasis where the opposing columns had at last met.

A young officer was among the most earnest of the searchers and at last he came upon the one he feared, yet wished to find. For if alive, he must try to fan the flickering flame of life into an enduring one; and if numbered among the slain, he must write home and torture loving hearts with the terrible news.

It was not alone for love's sake that he searched; it was for honor, which to him was a higher, more compelling motive than any other could have been.

The missing man was his foster-brother, and, although humbler in rank, both in social position and in the army, was an obstacle which stood between his superior officer and the realization of what had been his most cherished hopes.

Allan Fairford was the heir to a goodly fortune, and his foster-brother, Richard Oldacre, was the only child of his father's gamekeeper, whose wife had taken Allan to nurse soon after his birth. She had cared for him as tenderly as though the blood which flowed in his veins had been of her own, instead of the purest patrician purple, and Allan had ever kept a warm portion of his heart for her.

Near Mrs. Oldacre's cottage stood another—the retreat of a retired army officer and his motherless daughter. Little was known of them, save that the father, Captain Rathbone, was a cross-grained recluse, and that Nellie, his daughter, was a lovely child, fast growing into a beautiful woman.

What stands between you and Nellie?" But Allan's cheek had taken on a pallor which had been strange to it even on the ensanguined day through which he had just passed, and with a horror at himself for once harboring such a thought, he had started with feverish haste to find him.

At last, partially hidden by the body of a dead camel which had fallen across him, Allan descried him, insensible, but alive.

Lifting him in his strong young arms, he bore him to the nearest ambulance, anxiously superintending what rough arrangements could be made for his removal and watching eagerly for some sign of life.

After some time Dick opened his eyes, and saw Allan standing beside him. He was conscious.

"God be praised!" ejaculated the young officer heartily. "I feared you were sleeping your last, Dick, but I hope you will have strength to weather it now. Here, drink this."

Dick obeyed, but soon relapsed again into insensibility. His wounds had been dressed, and the surgeon pronounced them to be necessarily fatal, but added that only good care and nursing could save him.

"I will see that he has it," was Allan's reply, and he kept his word so faithfully that before many days Richard Oldacre was pronounced out of danger.

One morning he had been lying awake for a long time with many thoughts busy in his brain. Allan was using his knapsack for a writing desk, and Dick's eyes followed the swift moving pen with languid interest.

Allan glanced up and saw that his change was awake.

"I am writing good news to Nellie, Dick. I am telling her you are out of danger."

"For a moment the young man was silent. His face was working with some strong emotion. Then he said suddenly—

"But you are strong and determined. You can fight for your rights, if you like, and win the day, too. What will you do, my son?"

"I cannot tell," he son said slowly, "I must have time to think. I shall know my mind by to-morrow."

A struggle had already commenced in his grateful heart. He had already won the love of Nellie, while Allan had been the loser of his heart's dearest wish. Now, should he, the peasant-educated, whom his friend had nursed back to life so tenderly—should he also take from him his position?

The tempter whispered: "Nellie will then be a grand lady. You can deck her with silks and gems."

That was a bewitching prospect indeed. But gratitude won.

"Mother," he said, "I shall not claim my rights. Bring me the marriage certificate and I will burn it. Allan has been educated to his high position, and it would hurt him to displace him from it. I am used to mine, and Nellie loves me just as well as though I were in a loftier place in the world. We will go to America, and there every honest man is a noble. I will win fortune, and we will be happy."

"But, Dick, I cannot obey you in one thing; in all else it shall be as you say, for you are sensible, and are old enough to judge. But I will not burn the certificate. I should then have nothing to prove to myself that my marriage to my darling was not a dream. Oh, no! I will not burn it, but no one shall be the wiser about it. I will lock the box it is in, and throw away the key."

Thus the matter was settled.

Richard Oldacre and Nellie were married, and, with their mother, sailed for the New World.

Little thought Allan Fairford, as he stood upon the deck bidding them good-bye, that among the luggage contained in one of Mrs. Oldacre's strong chests was a document which would have made him the poor man, and Dick the rich and titled heir to the estate he deemed his own.

Which gave to the other the greater gift? Which man was the more generous?—Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post.

DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON.

BUSINESS LIFE IS A SCHOOL FOR GOOD.

The Importance and Minute Ramifications of Trade—How the Dishonesty of One Man May Destroy Others—How Business Men May Be Improved.

The Tabernacle Pulpit, Dr. Talmage's text was Proverbs 11, 6, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths."

"A promise good enough for many kinds of life, but not for my kind of life," says one busy man; "the law of supply and demand controls the business world."

There is no war between religion and business, between ledgers and Bibles, between churches and counting houses.

The industrial classes are divided into three groups—producers, manufacturers, traders. Producers, such as farmers and mechanics, are the most honest.

High, low, wise, ignorant, you in one occupation, in another, all bound together. So that the business man is a continuous line of sympathy with each other's work.

Business life is a school of energy. God gives us a certain amount of raw material out of which we are to hew our character.

The "Liberty Tree," frequently alluded to in the history of New England, was in Boston. In 1765 the "Sons of Liberty" were organized under a widespread, beautiful elm, which stood in front of a grocery, near what is now the corner of Essex and Washington streets, Boston.

John Hoy invented by accident, the system of sending money by express. While a clerk in the Adams Express Company's employment he was asked by a woman to send some money to her son, a soldier at Washington and bound for the front.

BYSTANDER Pat! Pat! You should never hit a man when he is down. Pat! Bogobs, what did I work so hard to get him down for?"

dispute! Bargains will rub. Commercial men will sometimes fall to meet their engagements. Cash book and money drawer will sometimes quarrel. Goods ordered for a special emergency will come too late or be damaged in the transportation. People intending no harm will go shopping without any intention to purchase, overturning great stocks of goods and insisting on a break in the dozen. More bad debts on the ledger. More counterfeit bills in the drawer. More debts to pay for other people. More meanness on the part of partners in business. Annoyance after annoyance, vexation after vexation, and loss after loss.

All that process will either break you down or brighten you up. It is a school of patience. You have known men under the process to become petulant and choleric and angry and pugnacious and cross and sour and queer, and they lost their customers and their friends became a detestation. Other men have been brightened up under the process. They were toughened by the exposure. They were like rocks, all the more valuable for being blasted. At first they had to show down their anger; but as they had to bite their lips, at first they thought of some stinging retort they would like to make; but they conquered their impatience. They have kind words now for sarcastic flings. They have gentle behavior now for unmannerly criticisms. They are patient now with unfortunate debtors. They have Christian reflections now for sudden reverses.

Where did they get that patience? By hearing a minister preach concerning it on the Sabbath? Oh, no. They got it just where you get it. It is all gone. You say, "That is a dead loss." Oh, no. You are paying the schooling. That was only tuition—I told you it was a schoolmistress—but it was worth it. You learned things under that process you would not have learned in any other way.

Can it be that you have been dealing with foreign lands and never had the missionary spirit? Can it be that you have never tried to bring to bear that Gospel which is to extirpate all evil and correct all wrong and illumine all darkness and lift all wretchedness and save men from all perdition and the world to come? Can it be that, understanding all the intricacies of business, you know nothing about those things which will last after all bills of exchange and consignments and all invoices are paid?

Can it be that you have never been tested? A man was elected Treasurer of the State of Maine some years ago. He was distinguished for his honesty, usefulness, and upright-ness, but before one of his public trials he had been crumpled up and been consumed in the fires of the last great day? Can it be that a man will be wise for time and a fool for eternity?

Can it be that you have been dealing with foreign lands and never had the missionary spirit? Can it be that you have never tried to bring to bear that Gospel which is to extirpate all evil and correct all wrong and illumine all darkness and lift all wretchedness and save men from all perdition and the world to come?

Never so many temptations to scoundrelism as now. Not a law on the statute book but has some back door through which a miscreant can escape. Ah, how many a man has been ruined by the goods which he plundered in commercial life that if a man talk about living a life of complete commercial accuracy there are those who ascribe to greenness and lack of tact. More need of honesty now than ever before; tried honesty, complete honesty, more than in those times when business was a plain affair and woollens were woollens and silks were silks and men were men.

How many men do you suppose there are in commercial life who could say truthfully, "I have never oversteered the value of goods; in all the sales I have ever made I have never covered up an imperfection in the fabric; of all the thousands of dollars I have ever made I have not taken one dishonest farthing?"

But they never took one step on that pathway of hell fire. They can say their prayers without hearing the clink of dishonest dollars. They can sleep at night without the knocking of the time when, with a lie on their soul, in the Custom House, they kissed the Book. They can think of death and the judgment that comes after it without any flinching—that day when all charlatans and cheats and jockeys and

frauds shall be doubly damned." It does not make their knees knock together, and it does not make their teeth chatter to read "the partridge siteth on a rock, and she hath no nest, so her right shall leave her in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool."

"Oh, what a school of integrity business life is! If you have ever been tempted to integrity, cringe before present advantage, if you have ever weakened up in some embarrassment and said, "Now, I'll step a little aside from the right path and no one will know it, and I'll come all right again; it is only one day," Oh, that only once has ruined tens of thousands of men for this life and blasted their souls for eternity. It is a tremendous school, business life, a school of integrity. A merchant in Liverpool got a five pound Bank of England note and holding it up toward the light he saw some fine interlacings in what seemed red ink.

He finally deciphered the letters, and found out that the writing had been made by a slave in Algiers, saying in substance, "Whoever gets this banknote will not be a slave, but he will become a slave of the bey of Algiers." The merchant sent word, employed government officers and found who this man was spoken of in this bank bill. After while the man was rescued, who for eleven years had been a slave of the bey of Algiers. He was immediately emancipated, but was so worn out by hardship and exposure he soon after died. Oh, if some of the bank bills that come through your hands could tell all the scenes that would be passed, how many would be a tragedy eclipsing the tragedy of Shakespeare, mightier than King Lear or Macbeth.

As I go on in this subject I am impressed with the importance of our having more sympathy with business men. It is not a shame to have a man who does not often preach about their struggles, their trials and their temptations? Men who toil with the hand are not apt to be very sympathetic with those who toil with the brain. The farmers who raise the corn, and the oars, and the wheel, sometimes are tempted to think that grain merchants have an easy time and get their profits without giving any equivalent.

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Business life is a school, and the tasks are hard, and the chastisements sometimes are very grievous; but do not complain. The hour is not long. For the lack of Him some that you have known have consented to forge, and to maltreat their friends, and to curse their enemies, and their names have been bulletined among scoundrels, and they have been ground to powder, while other men you have known have stood firm. Do the very same stress of circumstances triumphant. There are men here to-day who fought the battle and gained the victory. People come out of that man's store, and they say, "Well, if there ever was a Christian trader that is one." Integrity to the bottom of the heart, and to the customers. Light from the eternal world flashed through the show windows. Love to God and love to man presided in that storehouse.

Some day people going through the street notice a man who shatters the windows and is not down. The bar of that store door has not been removed. People say, "What is the matter?" You go up a little closer, and you see written on the card of that window, "Closed on account of the death of one of the firm." That is the end of the circles of business there is talk about how a good man has gone. Boards of Trade pass resolutions of sympathy, and the churches of Christ pray, "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth."

He has made a mistake, he has suffered a loss, he has shed with the result of his industry, or if through misfortune there be no dollars left, they will have an estate of prayer and Christian example which will be a blessing. Heavily rewarded for earthly discipline. There "the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

A Comprehensive Assent. A young man in Auburn, Me., who applied to the City Clerk for a marriage license, gave his age as 23 years, and was informed that that account of his youthfulness he would also have to cure his parents' written consent before a certificate could be issued. He went out and soon returned with a brief but pointed document: "This is to certify that my son John has my consent to marry Ann or any other woman."

"Man wants but little here below." But woman wants something all the time.