

THE TREASURE TOWER

A STORY OF MALTA
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"Oh, yes," laughed Dolores. "I am English, or Maltese. My mother was Spanish. I can dance, perhaps, but I should be afraid to sing here."

"I am not afraid to sing before all the Grand Dukes in Christendom," retorted the Uadine of the water-lilies, with a little grimace. "I only hope I may obtain an engagement at St. Petersburg soon. I am to make my debut at the Maltese opera-house, you know—in the 'Barber of Seville.' I have taken the name of Signorina Giulia Melita. I was born in Chicago, and my real name is Lizzie Shannon. I shall be known as Melita all over the world. Are you coming to hear me on Thursday night?"

"Oh, how I wish I could!" sighed Dolores, clasping her hands together. "I fear that grandpapa never goes to the theater."

"There comes Mr. Brown," said the embryo Diva, quickly.

"Mr. Brown?" repeated Dolores, interrogatively, and much interested in her new acquaintance.

"You know him, of course. No? You must have heard of Mr. Brown. Why! everybody knows him from Vienna and Paris to London and New York. Mr. Brown is at present my guardian dragon, and keeps all small fry at a safe distance. If I were a race horse of blood, you might say he had bet on my winning—invested in me. He is a good soul, too, and looks after my onion soup as well as my future engagements."

Mr. Brown approached. He was a portly man of mature age, with a highly-colored countenance, and jet black hair and mustache. He was attired in what may be termed effulgent, masculine evening dress, and had the ponderous grace of manner of the ringmaster of a circus.

"They are ready to hear you sing, my dear," he announced, in a paternal and wheezy voice. "Give that aria from the Sicilian Vespers with as much finish as possible, Melita."

"Are they ready for me?" she retorted, with a sarcastic intonation.

"Supposing that I am not ready for them, Mr. Brown?"

Mr. Brown smiled a fat smile, a facial wrinkle that rippled over cheek and jowl as the surface of water is stirred by a falling pebble, bowed profoundly, and kissed the tips of the girl's fingers, as if saluting a princess.

"Patience, my angel," he said, indulgently. "We must strive to make a good impression to-night by our modesty and grace. Later, we shall make our own terms. Eh?"

She sighed impatiently, and shook out the train of her dress.

"Come along, then," was her unceremonious assent. "I hate being patronized, though."

She moved away a few paces, remembered Dolores, ran back, and kissed her suddenly. "You must come to my debut," she said. "Ask for Mr. Brown at the stage door. Bring your grandpapa, too. And—your gloves are shabby, child," halting, with conviction.

"I know it," confessed Dolores, ruefully. "They are old ones that I found in a box. I tried to clean them with bread-crumbs, and I thought, perhaps, they would not show much."

"I have some nice gloves," affirmed the Signorina Giulia Melita, shaking her head as she scrutinized those of Dolores. "Mr. Brown always carries a lot in his pocket in case I should change my mind about a pair. Your gloves have a great deal to do with your temper. You are a Spaniard and I am an American, so our hands are small. Give me the package, quick, Mr. Brown. These pink ones will suit you, child. I wish I could stop to help you button them, but I may see you again, later. Don't forget the night of my debut, and to come to the stage door. She may bring me good luck, Mr. Brown. Who knows?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

He Identified the Corps.

The waters of the bay had washed up a long, lank body and for two days it lay in an undertaker's shop waiting identification. Nobody on Cape Cod knew the man. At last an old rickety wagon rattled up and Farmer Hall got down. Passing into the back room he looked at the body for a moment and said: "That's him."

The undertaker asked for further information, but Farmer Hall could only say it was Tompkins, his hired man.

"But can't you tell just why he is Tompkins? Are they his clothes? Can't you furnish some positive means of identification?" And the undertaker looked expectant.

Farmer Hall shifted his place and was lost in thought. Suddenly he slapped his leg.

"Well?"

"He stammered."—Boston Budget.

Where He Saw It.

Mr. Hayseed—Marier, I've made up my mind to send my boy to the city writing school to learn how to write.

Mrs. Hayseed—He writes a good hand.

"Yes, Marier, but he's too slow for these times. The city's the place to learn things, Marier, no matter what. They write like greased lightning there. Why, Marier, while I was in the city I saw a man write a two-page love letter in seventeen seconds, by the watch. He was a regular city feller, too—I could tell by his clothes. Why, Marier, when the girl that letter was written to got it, it took her most five minutes to read it. I timed her, too."

"Love letter—girl reading it! Why, where and how on 'arth did you see a letter written, and then—"

"Oh, it's all so, Marier. I saw it in a theater."

EVERY farrowing sow should have a shelter to herself and be put in in time to get acquainted with her surroundings.

THE TALMAGE SERMON

"OPPORTUNITY" THE SUBJECT OF AN INTERESTING TALK.

"As We Have Therefore Opportunity Let Us Do Good"—Gal. 6:10—A Story of the Great Preacher's Boyhood Days—Life's Sublime Victory.



T DENVER, COLO., years ago, an audience had assembled for divine worship. The pastor of the church for whom it was to be held, 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 conjunction of favorable circumstances for 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 fathomless 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 revival. 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 spay 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. I see you would have taken 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 know 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 look! 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 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" underlined. 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 Christian 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 afeared to die." 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-go'in' and I am afeared to die." 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, "Alas! 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 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 symbols at the joy! Wave all the palm branches at the triumph! Victory! Victory!

MONTE CARLO'S PATRONS.

The Ladies Are the Most Profitable Customers at the Gaming.

The English, the Americans and the French are probably the most remunerative patrons of Monte Carlo, and it is to Switzerland and not to the frontier of Italy, that the vast majority of pleasure seekers repair in summer, says the London Daily Telegraph. Again, at the very period when the Casino people wish to allure English visitors to the Riviera the London season is at its height, and the parliamentary session has as yet shown no sign of waning. The Atlantic steamships are bringing to Europe every week shoals of American tourists, but our trans-Atlantic visitors usually pass the summer in London or Paris or at English or French watering places, and await cooler weather before they journey down south.

Another suggestion made to the perplexed administration is that a club for the use of gentleman visitors should be established in connection with the Casino, it being proposed to utilize for the purpose the premises of the Hotel Monte Carlo, but it is difficult to see that the financial prosperity of the Casino company would be increased by supplementing the existing tripot with a club. Visitors who really belong to cosmopolitan clubland can easily become members of the Cercle de la Méditerranée at Nice, and after all, it is not the serious players, the scientific operators a ronge et noir, who despise the merry but frivolous game of roulette, that are the most lucrative customers of the Casino. At trent-et-quarante it is really possible to win very large sums of money, not indeed to break the bank—since Napoleon's dictum of the big battalions eventually winning still holds—and always will hold good—but enough to cause the administration to close a particular table for a few hours. At roulette, however, for one winner of any considerable amount there are possibly 100 who, sooner or later, will be utterly and hopelessly decaved, or "cleaned out."

Moreover, in modern times it has been the lady punters who, in the aggregate, bring the greatest amount of grist to the mill of the Casino company. It is not that the ladies often go to the maximum of stakes to be realized—they are in general too timorous for that; but they play recklessly, and they will continue to play until they have lost their last 5-franc piece on the tapis vert, and a club from which ladies were excluded would be bereft of the contributions of the sex who are, as gamblers, not less adventurous and perhaps a little more incorrigible than men.

FOOLING THE SCHOOLMARM.

How an Omaha Girl Communicates with the Forbidden Sweetheart.

A friend of mine out in Omaha has a daughter, and that daughter has, among other girlish trinkets, a sweetheart, who is rendered doubly dear to her by the fact that her parents have forbidden her to see him. He is, to be sure, a very commonplace person, but no girl can resist a man her parents have forbidden her to see, you know.

This particular girl is in Washington now for safe keeping, in a private school, where incoming and outgoing letters are read by a stern faced teacher. I went to see her the other day, just after the mail was in. She had received a letter from a school girl friend in Omaha and there wasn't a noun or pronoun of the masculine gender in the whole of it.

The girl read it demurely and showed it to me. Then we went to her room. The door was no sooner closed than she flew to her curling tongs, heated them, held them close to the written sheet, and read with delight the y-l-o-l letters in a masculine hand which appeared between the lines and faded again as soon as the paper cooled.

The moral of this is that love will find a way, and so long as chloride of copper in solution is to be had I advise every keeper of a girl's school to burn all letters well before she detains them.—Washington Post.