

THE TALMAGE SERMON

A PLAIN TALK ABOUT THE PLAIN PEOPLE.

They Who Provide the Food of the World, Physical as Well as Moral, Also Decide the Health of the World—Trials of Conspicuous People.



NEW YORK, July 21, 1895.—Rev. Dr. Talmage, who is still absent on his annual mid-summer tour, preaching and lecturing, has prepared for to-day a sermon on "Plain People," a topic which will appeal to a very large majority of readers anywhere.

The text selected was: Romans 16:14-15, "Salute Asyncritus, Philegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, Philologus and Julia."

Matthew Henry, Albert Barnes, Adam Clark, Thomas Scott and all the commentators pass by these verses without any special remark. The other twenty people mentioned in the chapter were distinguished for something, and were therefore discussed by the illustrious expositors; but nothing is said about Asyncritus, Philegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, Philologus and Julia. Where were they born? No one knows. Where did they die? There is no record of their decease.

For what were they distinguished? Absolutely for nothing or the trait of character would have been brought out by the apostle, if they had been very intrepid or opulent, or heroic, or musical, or cadence, or crass of style, or in anywise anomalous, that feature would have been caught by the apostolic camera. But they were good people, because Paul sent to them his high Christian regards. They were ordinary people, moving in ordinary sphere, attending to ordinary duty, and meeting ordinary responsibilities.

What the world wants is a religion for ordinary people. If there be in the United States 65,000,000 people, there are certainly not more than 1,000,000 extraordinary; and then there are 64,000,000 ordinary, and we do well to turn our backs for a little while upon the distinguished and conspicuous people of the Bible and consider to our text the seven ordinary. We spend too much of our time in twisting garlands for remarkable, and building thrones for magnates, and sculpturing warriors, and apotheosizing philanthropists. The rank and file of the Lord's soldiery need special help.

The vast majority of people to whom this sermon comes will never lead an army, will never write a State constitution, will never electrify a Senate, will never make an important invention, will never introduce a new philosophy, will never decide the fate of a nation. You do not expect to; you do not want to. You will not be a Moses to lead a nation out of bondage. You will not be a Joshua to prolong the daylight until you can shut five kings in a cavern. You will not be a St. John to unroll an Apocalypse. You will not be a Paul to preside over an apostolic college. You will not be a Mary to mother a Christ. You will more probably be Asyncritus, or Philegon, or Hermas, or Patrobas, or Hermes, or Philologus, or Julia.

Many of you are women at the head of households. This morning you launched the family for Sabbath observance. Your brain decided the apparel, your judgment was final on all questions of personal attire. Every morning you plan for the day. The culinary department of your household is in your dominion. You decide all questions of diet. All the sanitary regulations of your house are under your supervision. To regulate the food, and the apparel, and the habits, and decide the thousand questions of home life is a tax upon brain and nerve and general health absolutely appalling. If there be no divine alleviation.

It does not help you much to be told that Elizabeth Fry did wonderful things among the criminals of Newgate. It does not help you much to be told that Mrs. Judson was very brave among the Bornean cannibals. It does not help you much to be told that Florence Nightingale was very kind to the wounded in the Crimea. It would be better for me to tell you that the divine Friend of Mary and Martha is your Friend, and that he sees all the annoyances and disappointments and abrasions and exasperations of an ordinary housekeeper from morn till night, and from the first day of the year to the last day of the year, and at your call he is ready with help and reinforcement.

They who provide the food of the world decide the health of the world. One of the greatest battles of this century was lost because the commander that morning had a fit of indigestion. You have only to go on some errand amid the taverns and the hotels of the United States and Great Britain to appreciate the fact that a vast multitude of the human race are slaughtered by incompetent cookery. Though a young woman may have taken lessons in music, and lessons in astronomy, she is not well educated unless she has taken lessons in dough! They who decide the apparel of the world and the food of the world decide the endurance of the world.

An unthinking man may consider it a matter of little importance—the cares of the household and the economies of domestic life—but I tell you the earth is strewn with the martyrs of kitchen and nursery. The health-shattered womanhood of America cries out for a God who can help ordinary women in the ordinary duties of housekeeping. The wearing, grinding unappreciated work goes on, but the same Christ who stood on the bank of Galilee in the early morning and kindled the fire and had the fish already cleaned and broiling when the sportsmen stepped ashore chilled and hungry, will help every woman to prepare breakfast, whether by her own hand or by the hand of her hired help. The God who made indestructible eulogy of Hannah, who made a coat for Samuel, her son, and carried it to the temple every year, will help every woman in preparing the family wardrobe. The God who opens the Bible with the story of Abraham's entertainment of the three angels on the plains of Mamre will help every woman to provide hospitality, however rare and embarrassing. It is high time that some of the attention we have been giving to the remarkable women of the Bible—remarkable for their virtue or their want of it, or remarkable for their deeds—Deborah and Jezebel, and Herodias and

Atallah, and Dorcas and the Marys, excellent or abandoned—it is high time some of the attention we have been giving to these conspicuous women of the Bible be given to Julia of the text, an ordinary woman amid ordinary circumstances, attending to ordinary duties and meeting ordinary responsibilities.

Then there are all the ordinary business men. They need divine and Christian help. When we begin to talk about business life we shoot right off and talk about men who did business on a large scale, and who sold millions of dollars of goods a year; but the vast majority of business men do not sell a million dollars of goods, nor half a million, nor a quarter of a million, nor the eighth part of a million. Put all the business men of our cities, towns, villages and neighborhoods side by side, and you will find that they sell less than fifty thousand dollars worth of goods. All these men in ordinary business life want divine help. You see how the wrinkles of printing on the countenance the story of worm and care. You cannot tell how old a business man is by looking at him. Gray hairs at thirty. A man at forty-five with the stoop of a nonagenarian. No time to attend to improved dentistry, the grinders cease because they are few. Actually dying of old age at forty or fifty, when they ought to be at the meridian. Many of these business men have bodies like a neglected clock to which you come and you wind it up, and it begins to buzz and roar, and then the hands start around very rapidly, and then the clock strikes five, or ten, or forty, and strikes without any sense, and then suddenly stops. So in the body of that worn-out business man.

Now, what is wanted is grace—divine grace for ordinary business men, men who are harnessed from morn till night and all the days of their life—harnessed in business. Not grace to lose a hundred thousand, but grace to lose ten dollars. Not grace to supervise two hundred and fifty employes in a factory, but grace to supervise the book-keeper, and two salesmen and the small boy that sweeps the store. Grace to invest not the eighty thousand dollars of net profit, but the twenty-five hundred of clear gain. Grace not to endure the loss of a whole shipment of spices from the Indies, but grace to endure the loss of a paper of collars from the leakage of a displaced shingle on a poor roof. Grace not to endure the tardiness of the American Congress in passing a necessary law, but grace to endure the tardiness of an errand boy stopping to play marbles when he ought to deliver the goods. Such a grace as thousands of business men have to-day—keeping them tranquil whether goods sell or do not sell, whether customers pay or do not pay, whether tariff is up or tariff is down, whether the crops are luxuriant or are a dead failure—calm in all circumstances and amid all vicissitudes.

That is the kind of grace we want. Millions of men want it, and they may have it for the asking. Some hero or heroine comes to town, and as the procession passes through the street, the business men come out and stand upon tiptoe on their store steps and look at some one who in Arctic clime, or in ocean storm, or in day of battle, or in hospital agonies, did the brave thing, not realizing that they, the enthusiastic spectators, have gone through trials in business life that are just as great before God. There are men who have gone through freezing Arctics, and burning torrids, and awful Marenegos of experiences without moving five miles from their door. Now, what ordinary business men need is to realize that they have the friendship of that Christ who looked after the religious interests of Matthew, the custom-house clerk, and helped Lydia of Thyatira, to sell the dry goods, and who opened a bakery and fish-market in the wilderness of Asia Minor to feed the seven thousand who had come out on a religious picnic, and who counts the hairs of your head with as much particularity as though they were the plumes of a coronation, and who took the trouble to stoop down with his finger writing on the ground, although the first shuffe of feet obliterated the divine calligraphy, and who knows just how many locusts there were in the Egyptian plague, and knew just how many ravens were necessary to supply Elijah's pantry by the brook Cherith, and who, as floral commander, leads forth all the regiments of primroses, and gladioli, and daffodils, and carnations, and lilies which pitch their tent of beauty and kindle their camp-fires of color all around the hemisphere—that Christ and that God knows the most minute affairs of your business life and however inconsiderable, understanding all the affairs of that woman who keeps a thread-and-needle store as well as all the affairs of a Rothschild and a Stewart.

Then there are all the ordinary farmers. We talk about agricultural life, and we immediately shoot off to talk about Cincinnatus, the patrician, who went from the plough to a high position, and after he got through the dictatorship in twenty-one days went back again to the plough. What encouragement is that to ordinary farmers? The vast majority of them—none of them will be patricians. Perhaps none of them will be Senators. If any of them have dictatorships it will be over forty, or fifty, or a hundred acres of the old homestead. What those men want is grace to keep their patience while ploughing with balky oxen, and to keep cheerful amid the drought that destroys the corn crop, and that enables them to restore the garden the day after the neighbor's cattle have broken in and trampled out the strawberry bed, and gone through the Lima-bean patch, and eaten up the sweet corn in such large quantities that they must be kept from the water lest they swell up and die. Grace in catching weather that enables them, without imprecation, to spread out the hay the third time, although again and again they had again it has been almost ready for the mow. A grace to doctor the sheep with a hollow horn, and the sheep with the distemper, and to compel the unwilling acres to yield a livelihood for the family, and schooling for the children, and little extras to help the older boy in business, and something for the daughter's wedding outfit, and a little surplus for the time when the ankles will get stiff with age, and the breath will be a little short, and the swinging of the cradle through the hot harvest field will bring on the old man's vertigo. Better close up about Cincinnatus. I know five hundred farmers just as noble as he was.

What they want is to know that they have the friendship of that Christ who often drew his smiles from the farmer's life, as when he said: "A sower went forth to sow;" as when he built his best parable out of the scene of a farmer's boy coming back from his wanderings, and the old farmhouse shook that night with rural jubilee; and who compared himself to a lamb in the pasture field, and who said the eternal God is a farmer, declaring: "My Father is the husbandman."

Those stone masons do not want to know about Christopher Wren, the architect, who built St. Paul's Cathedral. It would be better to tell them how to carry the hod of bricks up the ladder without slipping, and how on a cold morning with the trowel to smooth off the mortar and keep cheerful, and how to be thankful to God for the plain food taken from the pail by the roadside. Carpenters standing amid the adze, and the bit, and the plane, and the broad axe need to be told that Christ was a carpenter, with his own hand wielding saw and hammer. Oh, this is a tired world, and it is an overworked world, and it is a wrung-out world, and men and women need to know that there is rest and recuperation in God and in that religion which was not so much intended for extraordinary people as for ordinary people because there are more of them.

The healing profession has had its Abercrombie and its Abernethys, and its Valentine Motts and its Willard Parkers; but the ordinary physicians do the most of the world's medicine, and they need to understand that while taking diagnosis or prognosis, or writing prescription, or compounding medicament, or holding the delicate pulse of a dying child they may have the presence and the dictation of the Almighty Doctor who took the case of the mad man, and after he had torn off his garments in foaming dementia, clothed him again, body and mind, and who lifted up the woman who for eighteen years had been bent almost double with the rheumatism, into graceful stature, and who turned the scabs of leprosy into rubicund complexion, and who rubbed the numbness out of paralysis, and who swung wide open the closed windows of hereditary or accidental blindness, until the morning light came streaming through the fleshy casements, and who knows all the diseases, and all the remedies, and all the herbs, and all the cathartics, and is monarch of pharmacy and therapeutics, and who has sent out ten thousand doctors of whom the world makes no record; but to prove that they are angels of mercy, I invoke the thousands of men whose ailments have been assuaged and the thousands of women to whom in crisis of pain they have been next to God in beneficence.

—Come, now, let us have a religion for ordinary people in professions, in occupations, in agriculture, in the household, in merchandise, in everything. I salute across the centuries Asyncritus, Philegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, Philologus and Julia.

First of all, if you feel that you are ordinary, thank God that you are not extraordinary. I am tired and sick, and bored almost to death with extraordinary people. They take all their time to tell us how very extraordinary they really are. You know as well as I do, my brother and sister, that the most of the useful work of the world is done by unpretentious people who toil right on—by people who do not get much approval, and no one seems to say, "that is well done." Phenomena are of but little use. Things that are exceptional cannot be depended on. Better trust the smallest planet that swings on its orbit than ten comets shooting this way and that, imperiling the longevity of worlds attending to their own business. For steady illumination better is a lamp than a rocket. Then, if you feel that you are ordinary, remember that your position invites the less attack.

Conspicuous people—how they have to take it! How they are misrepresented, and abused, and shot at! The higher the horns of a roebuck the easier to track him down. What a delicious thing it must be to be a candidate for President of the United States! It must be so soothing to the nerves! It must pour into the soul of a candidate such a sense of serenity when he reads the blessed newspapers!

I came into the possession of the abusive cartoons in the time of Napoleon I, printed while he was yet alive. The retreat of the army from Moscow, that army buried in the snows of Russia, one of the most awful tragedies of the centuries, represented under the figure of a monster called General Frost shaving the French Emperor with a razor of icicle. As Satyr and Beelzebub he is represented, page after page, page after page. England cursing him, Spain cursing him, Germany cursing him, Russia cursing him, Europe cursing him. North and South America cursing him. The most remarkable man of his day, and the most abused. All those men in history who now have a halo around their name, on earth were a crown of thorns. Take the few extraordinary railroad men of our time, and see what abuse comes upon them, while thousands of stockholders escape. All the world took after Thomas Scott, President of the Pennsylvania Railroad, abused him until he got under the ground. Thousands of stockholders in that company. All the blame on one man! The Central Pacific Railroad—two or three men get all the blame if anything goes wrong. There are 10,000 in that company.

At an anniversary of a deaf and dumb asylum one of the children wrote upon the blackboard words as sublime as the Iliad, the Odyssey, and the "Divina Commedia," all compressed in one paragraph. The examiner, in the signs of the mute language, asked her, "Who made the world?" The deaf and dumb girl wrote upon the blackboard, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The examiner asked her, "For what purpose did Christ come into the world to save sinners?" dumb girl wrote upon the blackboard, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." The examiner said to her, "Why were you born deaf and dumb, while I hear and speak?" She wrote upon the blackboard, "Even so, Father; for so it seemeth good in thy sight." Oh, that we might be baptized with a contented spirit! The spider draws poison out of a flower, the bee gets honey out of a thistle; but happiness is a heavenly elixir, and the contented spirit extracts it not from the rhododendron of the hills, but from the lily of the valley.

A Mighty Fact. One can find many a cheap man in this world bragging about the superiority of his sex who owes his standing in respectable society to the very neat manner in which his wife patches his trousers.

IS QUITE GRAY NOW.

MRS. WILCOX WAS BORN IN THE WHITE HOUSE.

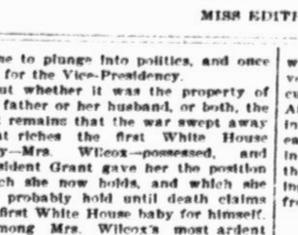
The Daughter of Andrew Jackson's Niece—Still Lives at the Capital and Is a Clerk in the Treasury Department.



BABY Esther Cleveland was the last child born at the White House. The first White House baby was also a girl and made her debut during the far away reign of Jackson, back in 1830. There was a space of sixty-three years between the first and the last White House baby. Who was the first? She was the daughter of President Jackson's niece, who was the wife of Andrew Jackson Donaldson. This latter gentleman was the Thurber of his day, and performed as Jackson's private secretary. Mrs. Donaldson, Jackson's niece, not yet 20, came with her uncle to the White House to reside as his mistress. The first White House baby, Baby Donaldson, grew up and married a Mississippi gentleman once in Congress—named Wilcox. General Wilcox has now been dead fully 30 years, and Mrs. Wilcox, who was the first baby to try the White House as a place wherein to be born, has, since Grant's time, been a clerk in the Treasury Department. The first White House baby is an old gray lady now, and the day Baby Esther was born, she was busy at her desk in the Treasury, not 100 yards from the last baby's cradle.

Yet the first baby has witnessed much of the world. Her father, Donaldson, following his term as Jackson's private secretary, was at various European courts as minister. He came home to plunge into politics, and once ran for the Vice-Presidency. But whether it was the property of her father or her husband, or both, the fact remains that the war swept away what riches the first White House baby—Mrs. Wilcox—possessed, and President Grant gave her the position which she now holds, and which she will probably hold until death claims the first White House baby for himself. Among Mrs. Wilcox's most ardent admirers is Senator Hill, and she can boast of the distinction of having received more calls from him than any other lady in the country. Her intimate knowledge of the history of Democracy since the time of Andrew Jackson is a perfect mine of interest to the Senator, and he takes great delight in talking over the old days with her. Just before the State election last year she had a cup made from the wood which came from the doorstep of the house where Andrew Jackson was born. This she presented to Tammany, and Senator Hill made the presentation speech. Mrs. Wilcox is a fine-looking, elderly lady. She speaks with a low, sweet voice. Her flow of language is very remarkable for one at her age. In all these years of toil, since the death of her husband, she has kept up her languages, and speaks German and French just as well to-day as when she was a belle at the German court 45 years ago.

There is a saloon on Van Buren street, Chicago, which was formerly occupied as a mission. The man who now has the place has whitewashed the wall, on which were some religious texts, but the wash is wearing off, and one of the texts which is coming out is "I Need Thee Every Hour." An old soak with grim humor suggested to the proprietor that he should move his bar over to that side of the room.



MISS EDITH GRIFFIN.

Harmon an Able Lawyer. The new Attorney-General of the United States, Judson Harmon, of Ohio, is one of the ablest and most popular lawyers of that State. He is 49 years of age, is about 5 feet 2 inches in height, athletic in appearance, and well preserved, though his hair is slightly tinged with gray. In any assembly he would attract attention.

Cecil Rhodes' Estate. Cecil Rhodes' estate, near Cape Town, South Africa, is laid out on an ambitious scale. Among its features are a preserve for big game, containing lions and antelopes, several miles of fine avenues, a glen carpeted with violets

The Harp of Erin. The emblem of the harp used in Ireland comes from the fact that one of earliest lords of the country was named David, and he chose the harp for his coat of arms, in honor of Israel's David who sang so divinely.

A man is generally at his heaviest in his fortieth year.

A SLOPE BEAUTY.

Edith Griffin, Who Recently Won the Newspaper Prize.

One of the most enterprising San Francisco papers recently set out to discover the prettiest girl in California, and asked for photographs of all those likely to win the prize. The editorial rooms were promptly flooded with photographs. A committee of San Francisco citizens noted for good taste in such matters was selected to pick out the prize beauty. We print to-day the picture of the young lady selected. She is Miss Edith Griffin, daughter of O. F. Griffin, Esq., of Pomona, Cal.

How to Be One's Own Manicurist.

Hot water is the first requisite, and a thorough washing or soaking of the hands. This is best attained by having the hot water poured into a basin continually for two or three minutes. The hands must be allowed to soak for fully five minutes, and it is well, instead of soap, to wash the hands very thoroughly in bran, which makes the skin soft and white. After the hands have been thoroughly cleansed, the nails should then be attended to. With a piece of orange-wood stick sharpened to a point, and a bit of jeweler's cotton rolled around the point and wet with the acid that comes for this purpose, every particle of dirt and stain should be removed. The hands must then again be washed, this time in warm, not hot, water. Scissors, very sharp and fine, must then be taken, and all loose flesh at the side of the nails carefully trimmed. The nails must be shaped in a pointed oval. All roughness must be filed away, and the flesh at the base of the nail pushed smoothly and firmly back, so that the half-moon, supposed to be a point of beauty, can be discerned. It is no longer considered good form to have so much polish on the nails that they look as though they had been buttered, as was the fashion two or three years ago. But a certain amount of polish is necessary. Rosaline put on over the entire nail and the end of the finger, then washed off again, and the nails polished briskly

Next night he came again. Fickle fortune still frowned. Once more the genial Alabamian's pile grew small rapidly and hideously low. Finally a pat flush swept his last dollar, and he rose from the table a trifle hasty. "Don't go," cried the winning senator, chirpily; "sit in again and try it over."

"Gentlemen, you mistake my mission entirely," retorted the Alabamian, backing to the door; "I wish you to understand that I came to Washington to get an appropriation—not to make one!"—Argonaut.

Knocked Her Fainting Bell. The other evening an immense crowd got jammed in a theater lobby and some women grew hysterical. "Oh, I shall faint!" exclaimed a stout blonde, looking piteously at her escort. Men on all sides glanced at her sympathetically, and those nearest made a frantic effort to give the stout blonde more room. Her escort looked down into her face tenderly. "I am going to faint!" she cried, and she got ready to fall gracefully into his arms.

Well, faint! shouted a robust lady at her elbow. "For heaven's sake, faint and be done with it, for the rest of us want to get out!" Some people glanced at her indignantly, and others tittered; but the stout blonde who was about to faint braced up suddenly and concluded she wouldn't. No sniff of sweat could have done the business quicker or more satisfactorily.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

A Tabooed Text. Down in the black belt of Georgia a Presbyterian minister received a visit from a colored pastor who wanted counsel and advice. "Well, sir, it's just this way," said he; "I've done preached myself plumb out. I've worked on election, sanctification, predestination, hell inside and out, till I couldn't say another to save my life." His white brother suggested that he should preach a sermon by way of change on "Thou shalt not steal" for a text. "Well, boss, dat certainly is a good text; but I'm monstous 'fraid it will produce a coolness in the congregation."—Washington Post.

In the Neck. Mrs. Flynn—Can you tell me where I'll get the Columbus Avenue car, Officer? Officer Burke—Faith, ma'am, you'll get it in the neck, if you don't get off the track.

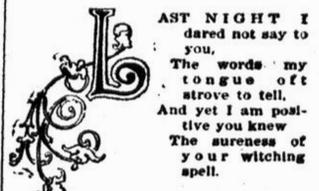
The Congregation Inferred. When the bellows gave out and the organist in a Rockland church was unable to get anything but a few groans from the instrument, and the pastor remarked: "The organist has failed us at a vital moment; let us rise and sing 'Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.'" some of the people wondered just what he meant.—Lewiston Evening Journal.

Had Wheels. Lumleigh—What makes you think young Phether Waite is a drummer for a bicycle concern? Chumleigh—Anybody can see that. He carries samples in his hand.

OUR WIT AND HUMOR.

WEEKLY CRIST OF THE FUNNY GRINDERS.

The Lover's Mislove—A Turkish Bath—Where the Car Might Hit Her—Flotsam and Jetsam—Sifters from Texas Siftings.



LAST NIGHT I dared not say to you. The words my tongue oft strove to tell. And yet I am positive you knew The sureness of your witching spell.

When'er I gazed into your eyes— October's most delicious brown— They looked at me in mild surprise, As one who sees a clumsy clown.

And when I left you at the gate And gave your hand one chaste salute, I tried to ask of you my fate In love. Alas! my lips were mute.

And so my emissaries must Be pen and ink and halting measure; But you will answer this I trust— One word from you will be a treasure.

SHE WROTE:

This morning, Jack, I got your letter. Foolish boy to waste your scrips! But as for answer—well, you'd better Come and take it from my lips!

They Mistook His Mission. Some years ago a delegation went from a certain city to Washington to work a great appropriation for the benefit of Mobile's harbor. Among the party was a general major, who was well primed with facts.

He longed, moreover to see the inside of senatorial poker. Soon occasion presented itself. The general major dropped his evening's pile and smiled himself out. Next night he came again. Fickle fortune still frowned. Once more the genial Alabamian's pile grew small rapidly and hideously low. Finally a pat flush swept his last dollar, and he rose from the table a trifle hasty. "Don't go," cried the winning senator, chirpily; "sit in again and try it over."

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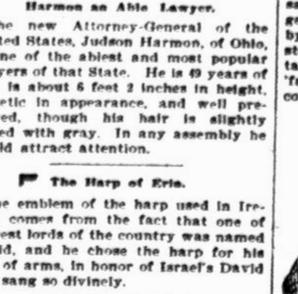
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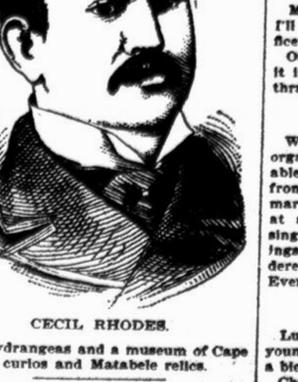
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