SPEAK A GOOD WORD.

Rev. Dr. Talmage Tells How You May Be Happy.

A despatch from Washington says; —Rev. Dr. Talmage preached from the following text:—Acts xxviii, 2, "The barbarous people showed us no little kindness."

Here we are on the Island of Malta, another name for Melita. This island, which has always been an important commercial centre, belonging at different times to Phoenicia, to Greece, to Rome, to Arabia, to Spain, to France, now belonging to England. The area of the island is about 100 square miles. It is in the Mediterranean sea and of such clarity of atmosphere that Mount Aetna, 130 miles away, can be distinctly seen. The island is gloriously memorable because the Knights of Malta for a long while ruled there, but most famous because of the apostolic shipwreck. The bestormed vessel on which Paul sailed had "laid to" on the starboard tack, and the wind was blowing east-northeast, and, the vessel drifting probably a mile and a half an hour, she struck at what is now called St. Paul's Bay. Practical sailors have taken up the Bible account and decided beyond controversy the place of the shipwreck. But the island, which has so rough a coast, is for the most part a garden. Richest fruits and a profusion of honey characterized it in Paul's time as well as now. The finest oranges, figs and olives grow there.

When Paul and his comrades crawled up on the beach, saturated and hungry from long abstinence from food and

CHILLED TO THE BONE,

the islanders, though called barbarians because they could not speak Greek, opened their doors to the shipwrecked unfortunates. Everything had gone to the bottom of the deep, and the barefooted, bareheaded apostle and ship's crew were in a condition to appreciate hospitality.

My text finds the ship's crew ashore on Malta and around a hot fire drying themselves and with the best provision the islanders can offer them. And they go into Government quarters for three days to recuperate, Publius, the ruler, inviting them, although he had severe sickness in the house at the time, his father down with a dangerous illness. Yea, for three months they stayed on the island watching for a ship and putting the hospitalities of the islanders to a severe test. But it endured the test satisfactorily, and it is recorded for all the ages of time and eternity to read and hear in regard to the inhabitants of Malta, "The barbarous people showed us no little kindness."

Kindness! What a great word that is! It would take a reed as long as that which the apocalyptic angel used to measure heaven to tell the length, the breadth, the height of that munificent word. It is a favorite Bible word, and it is early launched in the book of Genesis, caught up in the book of Joshua, embraced in the book of Ruth, sworn by in the book of Samuel, crowned in the book of Psalms and enthroned in many places in the New Testament. Kindness! A word no more gentle than mighty. I expect it will

WRESTLE ME DOWN.

before I get through with it. It is strong enough to throw an archangel. But it will be well for us to stand around it and warm ourselves by its glow as Paul and his fellow voyagers stood around the fire on the Island of Malta, where the Maltese made themselves immortal in my text by the way they treated their victims of the sea. "The barbarous people showed us no little kindness."

Kindness! All definitions of that multipotent word break down half way. You say it is clemency, benignity, generosity; it is made up of good wishes; it is an expression of beneficence; it is a contribution to the happiness of others. Some one else says, "Why, I can give you a definition of kindness; it is sunshine of the soul; it is affection perennial; it is a climacteric grace; it is the combination of all graces; it is compassion; it is the perfection of gentle manliness and womanliness." Are you through? You have made a dead failure in your definition. It cannot be defined, but we all know what it is for we have felt its power. Some of you may have felt it as Paul felt it, on some coast of rock as the ship went to pieces, but more of us have again and again in some awful stress of life had either from earth or heaven hands stretched out which "showed us no little kindness."

There is kindness of disposition, kindness of word, kindness of act, and there is Jesus Christ, the impersonation of all of them. Kindness! You cannot affect it. You cannot play it as a part.

YOU CANNOT ENACT IT.

By the grace of God you must have it inside of you, an everlasting summer, or, rather, a combination of June and October, the geniality of the one and the tonic of the other. It cannot dwell with arrogance or spite or revenge or malevolence. At its first appearance in the soul all these Amalekites and Gergishites, and Hittites and Jebusites must quit, and quit forever—every man well, every woman well, every child well, every bird well, every horse well, every dog well, every cat well. Give this spirit full swing, and you would have no more need of societies for prevention of cruelty to animals, no more need of protective sewing woman's associations, and it would dull every sword until it would not cut skin deep, and unwheel every battery till it could not roll, and make gunpowder of no more use in the world except for rock blasting or pyrotechnic celebration. Kindness is a spirit divinely implanted and in answer to prayer, and then to be sedulously cultivated until it fills all the nature with a perfume richer and more pungent than mignonette, and, as if you put a tuft of that aromatic beauty behind the clock on the mantel or in some corner where nobody can see it, you find people walking about your room looking this way and that, and you ask them, "What are you looking for?" and they answer, "Where is that flower?" so if one has in his soul this infinite sweetness of disposition its perfume will whelm everything.

Still further, I must speak of kindness of word. When you meet any one, do you say a pleasant thing or an unpleasant? Do you tell him of agreeable things you have heard about him or the disagreeable? When he leaves you does he feel better or

DOES HE FEEL WORSE.

Oh, the power of the tongue for the production of happiness or misery! One would think from the way the tongue is caged in we might take the hint that it was a dangerous power. First it is chained to the back part of the mouth by strong muscles. Then it is surrounded by teeth of the lower jaw, so many ivory bars, and then by the teeth of the upper jaw, more ivory bars. Then, outside of all, are the two lips with the power of compression and arrest. And yet, notwithstanding these four imprisonments or limitations, how many take no hint in regard to the dangerous power of the tongue, and the results are laceration, scarification and damnation. There are those if they know a good thing about you and a bad thing, will mention the bad thing and act as though they had never heard the good thing. Now, there are two sides to almost every one's character, and we have the choice of overhauling the virtue or the vice. We can greet Paul and the ship's crew as they come up the beach of Malta with the words, "What a sorry looking set you are! How little of navigation you must know to run on these rocks! Didn't you know better than to put out on the Mediterranean this wintry month? It was not much of a ship anyhow, or it would not have gone to pieces as soon as that. Well, what do you want? We have hard enough work to make a living for ourselves without having thrust on us 276 ragamuffins." Not so said the Maltese. I think they said, "Come in! Sit down by the fire and warm yourselves. Glad that you all got off with your lives.

MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME.

You are welcome to all we have until some ship comes in sight and you resume your voyage. Here, let me put a bandage on your forehead, for that is an ugly gash you got from the floating timbers. And here is a man with a broken arm; we will have a doctor come to attend to this fracture." And, though for three months the kindness went on, we have little more than this brief record: "The barbarous people showed us no little kindness."

Furthermore, there is kindness of action. That is what Joseph showed to his outrageous brothers. That is what David showed to Mephibosheth for his father Jonathan's sake. That is what Onesiphorus showed to Paul in the Roman penitentiary. Kindness to all! Surely it ought not to be a difficult grace to cultivate when we see towering above the centuries such an example that one glimpse of it ought to melt and transform all nations. Kindness brought our Lord from heaven. Kindness to miscreants, kindness to persecutors, kindness to the crippled and the blind and the cataleptic and the leprous and the dropsical and the demoniacal characterized him all the way and on the cross, kindness to the bandits suffering on the side of him, and kindness to the executioners while yet they pushed the spear and hammered the spikes and howled the blasphemies. All the stories of the John Howards and the Florence Nightingales and the Grace Darlings and the Ida Lewises pale before this transcendent example of him whose birth and life and death are

THE GREATEST STORY

that the world ever heard and the theme of the mightiest hosanna that heaven ever lifted. Yea, the very kindness that allowed both hands to be nailed to the horizontal timber of the cross with that cruel thump, thump, now stretches down from the skies those same hands filled with balm for all our wounds, forgiveness for all our crimes, rescue for all our serfdoms.

And while we take this matchless kindness from God may it be found that we have uttered our last bitter word, written our last cutting paragraph, done our last retaliatory action, felt our last revengeful heart throb. And it would not be a bad epitaph for any of us if, by the grace of God, from this time forth, we lived such beneficent lives that the tombstone's chisel could appropriately cut upon the plain slab that marks our grave a suggestion from the text, "He showed us no little kindness." But not until the last child of God has got ashore from the earthly storms that drove him on the rocks like Mediterranean Euroclydons, not until all the thrones of heaven are mounted, and all the conquerors crowned, and all the harps and trumpets and organs of heaven are thrummed or blown or sounded and the ransomed of all climes and ages are in full chorus under the jubilant swing of angelic baton, and we shall for thousands of years have seen the river from under the throne rolling into the "sea of glass mingled with fire," and this world we now inhabit shall be so far in the past that only a stretch of celestial memory can recall that it ever existed at all, not until then will we understand what Nehemial calls "the great kindness," and Isaiah calls "the everlasting kindness" of God.

THE S. S. LESSON.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON.
OCT. 13.

Text of the Lesson, Gen. xxxix, 20, to xi, 15. Golden Text, Gen. xxxix, 21.

20, 21. "He was there in the prison, but the Lord was with Joseph" The last lesson left Joseph a slave in the house of Potiphar in Egypt, but verse 2 of this chapter says, "The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man." He seems by the grace of God to have risen above all his circumstances, young though he was, and trying though they were, and to have determined that God should be glorified in him (Phil. i, 20). Potiphar saw that the Lord was with him and made all that he did prosper. This is splendid testimony and might, by the grace of God, be true of every believer (compare chapter xxvi, 28). Then notice Potiphar's unbounded confidence in him. He put all that he had in Joseph's hand and left it there without a care (see in verses 4 to 6 the expression "all that he had" four times). Let us without hesitation place all that we are and have in the hands of our Lord Jesus and leave all there with the full assurance that He will see to it (Ps. xxxvii, 5; Prov. xvi, 3). Think of the widow and the boy who each gave all to Him (Luke xxi, 4; John vi, 11). The adversary cannot stand such righteousness and victory over circumstances, and he is permitted to humiliate Joseph yet more, so under a base, false accusation Joseph is cast into prison, but being innocent the Lord is with him and lightens his affliction somewhat by giving him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. But it was hard for him, for a time, for it is written that they hurt his feet with fetters, he was laid in iron, until the time that his word came, the word of the Lord tried him (Ps. cv, 18, 19). We may imagine the adversary suggesting that now all his visions and dreams had come to naught, for he would never get out of this prison, yet we doubt not that his mind was staid upon Jehovah, and he had victory by faith.

22, 23. "Whatsoever they did there he was the doer of it." As in Potiphar's house so in the prison all things were placed under him. The keeper of the prison looked not to anything, for it was evident that the Lord was with him and made all that he did to prosper. Circumstances do not always indicate prosperity or otherwise. It is the presence and blessing of God that constitute true prosperity; Daniel was prosperous in the lions' den, and his friends in the fiery furnace; David was more prosperous than Saul the king, even though he fled from him, for God was with him. Every step in the life of Joseph and of David was a step to a throne, and so it is with the believer, for the overcomer is promised a seat with Christ on His throne (Rev. iii, 21). The cross is the way to the crown.

xl, 1-4. Pharaoh's chief butler and baker suddenly find themselves with Joseph in the prison, and he serves them while they continue there for a season. Like our Lord Jesus, Joseph is not only numbered with transgressors and has things laid to his charge that he knew not, but he is also an illustration of ministering unto others rather than being ministered unto (Isa. liii, 12; Ps. xxxv, 11; Matth. xx, 28). The offence of these officers brought them not only imprisonment, but the possibility of death. If our Lord was strict to mark iniquity, who could stand? But He is the Lord God, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, though He will by no means clear the guilty who refuse to turn to Him (Ex. xxxiv, 6, 7).

5-7. One morning Joseph finds these two prisoners very unhappy and manifesting it so plainly in their faces that he asked them, "Wherefore look ye so sadly today?" We think of the Lord's question to the two who walked to Emmaus, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another as ye walk and are sad?" (Luke xxiv, 17). But their sadness was due to their unbelief. One day the king noticed that Nehemiah was sad (Neh. ii, 1-5), but his sadness was due to his sorrow because of the desolation of the holy city Jerusalem. The fellowship of Christ's sufferings will bring us much sorrow, but in the midst of all we may rejoice in the Lord, as sorrowful yet always rejoicing (II. Cor, vi, 10).

8. "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me them, I pray you." They were sad because of their dreams, which they had each dreamed in the same night and which they could not understand. They had forgotten their dreams and retained only a sort of troubled remembrance, like Nebuchadnezzar, but, though they could not tell each one his dream, they feared lest no one could explain the dreams. Joseph's saying, "Interpretations belong to God; tell your dream to me," was equal to saying, "I am acquainted with God," or "I am here for God," or "God is with me." See chapter xli, 16, and also Dan. ii, 18, 28. What a blessed thing to be so intimate with God, to walk with Him in such communion! Yet that is the privilege of a child of God (II. Cor. vi, 16-18; John xiv, 23; Deut. xxxiv, 10).

9-15. They told their dreams to Joseph, and he interpreted them, and it came to pass according to the interpretation, the chief butler was restored to his butlership again, and the chief baker was hanged (verses 21, 22). The butler told his dream first, and when the baker saw that the interpretation was good he also told his dream, and Joseph was faithful in his interpretation, though it foreboded no good to the baker. The servant of God must declare judgment and mercy with equal faithfulness. It is not for him to withhold anything for fear of hurting people's feelings. See the faithfulness of Samuel, when but a child, in declaring the whole message to Eli (I. Sam. iii, 17, 18). How touching the entreaty of Joseph to the chief butler, "Think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me," etc. (verses 14, 15.) He did not cease to feel the wrong that was done to him, he did not forget his poor old father from whom he had been stolen, nor the home from which he had been so cruelly snatched away, and probably it was a daily conflict to rise above these things and do his work with a quiet mind. How sad to read in verse 23, "Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgat him." It makes one think of the poor wise man who delivered a city, yet no one remembered that same poor man (Eccl. ix, 14, 15).

WORKING ITS OWN CURE.

The "Midway" Nuisance at Agricultural Fairs.

The days of the Ontario Agricultural Fair "Midway," as now conducted, are numbered. The scathing criticisms delivered last year by the Farmers' Advocate and other agricultural and rural papers, produced a marked improvement in the Toronto Exhibition; and the exposure, this year, before the Board, of the London Midway, by Rev. Robert Johnston and Mr. Adam Beck of that city, is likely to alter the regrettable conditions for three years prevalent at the Western Ontario Exposition.

While children and young people are pressingly invited to attend such places, and their presence secured by means of school holidays and low admission fees, the least that can be expected is that all side shows permitted shall be free from vicious features. A good spice of fun of a clean nature, cannot be objected to, and ought to serve as a sauce for the more stable articles of mental diet provided by the various exhibits. But when fun degenerates into simple nastiness, it is time to call a halt, and Dr. Johnston and Mr. Beck deserve the thanks of the parents of London and vicinity for their personal investigation and fearless denunciation of the evils that, to within the last two days of the close of the London Exhibition, drew large crowds of men and boys to their lacivious performances.

Dr. Johnston, who is one of London's most honored Presbyterian ministers, said before the Board:—

"It is not in the English language to describe the horrible lewdness and indescribably filthy suggestiveness of the grossly immoral performances which we witnessed. It was an atrocious outrage on decency, and we would ask on behalf of the citizens of London, not that the objectionable features be expunged, for there is nothing in the shows which is not objectionable, but that the Board should rid itself of these shows, root and branch.

"In the city hall, on the streets, even in the hospitals and at the railroad stations," continued Dr. Johnston, "these performances are, I understand, the principal subject of conversation to-day. I hope it is not true that features which were excluded from Toronto and Buffalo fairs have been permitted ta flourish at the Western Fair, but I have heard that one attraction here was not allowed at Buffalo.

"I do not wish to pose as a censor of the morals of the Western Fair Board, but I have sufficient confidence in you gentlemen to believe that the immorality was unknown to you, and that you will take steps to put a stop to it."

Dr. Johnston stated that he was not speaking of an exhibition which might be considered immoral from a puritanical standpoint, and which some might consider perfectly clean.

"The shows I speak of," he said, "contain nothing but what is degrading. You have to go back to the days of ancient Rome to find anything to equal them for lasciviousness."

"I would advocate that the Fair Board hereafter appoint persons in whose judgment they have confidence to see that nothing objectionable is allowed to run, and I hope that the Fair will be kept above even suspicion and certainly above anything immoral."

CONFIDENCE IN THE BOARD.

Dr. Johnston's confidence in the Fair Board was justified in that they disclaimed knowledge of the immoralities presented by the side shows and promptly ordered three of them off the grounds, for breach of contract. Greater care will be exercised in the future. The Board has had its eyes opened as to what may be expected when low theatres are allowed to run. Lacking any real ability or merit, they depend for their custom on an appeal to the bestial side of human nature.

We may expect next year to find the London Midway rightly censored and therefore free from inner-tent performances, to which "men only" are invited.

Referring to the above the London News says (in part) editorially:—

"The side show attractions which were in operation at the Western Fair during the past week were the most disgraceful ever presented in London, perhaps in Ontario. There should be no place in a large agricultural and industrial exhibition for any of those theatrical side show attractions. The Fair Board points to the fact that the amusement features are patronized. But the Fair Board has for years been catering to a specialty loving class, and it would be unusual if they did not secure them.

GLASGOW EXHIBITION.

The Glasgow Exhibition should be a model for exhibitions in Canada. There is not a Midway nor a side show, not a sign of a fake is to be seen. Yet this fair has been one of the most successful that the world has ever known.

The Western Fair Board is open to criticism for permitting the performances to which special objections were made. The Fair Board was responsible for the morality of the exhibitions given.

But it is said "they did not know." But they should have known. If one of the buildongs had been defective, had fallen and injured many people, the Board would have been held responsible.

It is to be hoped that the authorities will see to it that no theatrical side shows are on the grounds next year, and that if they are not prepared to eliminate all the specialty features they will curtail them to such an extent as to make them the trimming and not the body of the exhibition.—(Mrs.) Emma Waterson, Ont. Prov. Press Supt. in W.C.T.U.

GRAINS OF GOLD.

Dispatch is the soul of business—Chesterfield.

There is not a moment without some duty—Cicero.

Distance lends enchantment to the view—Campbell.

How disappointment tracks the steps of hope.—Landon.

What loneliness is more lonely than distrust.—George Eliot.

The early morning hath gold in its mouth.—Franklin.

True dignity is never gained by place, and never lost when honors are withdrawn.—Massinger.

We love in others what we lack in ourselves, and would be everything but what we are.—Stoddard.

There is no readier way for a man to bring his own worth into question, than by endeavoring to detract from the worth of other men.—Tillotson.

There is no merit where there is no trial; and till experience stamps the mark of strength, cowards may pass for heroes, and faith for falsehood.—A. Hill.

Much depends upon a man's courage when he is slandered and traduced. Weak men are crushed by detraction, but the brave hold on and succeed.—Feltham.

Discretion is the perfection of reason, and a guide to us in all the duties of life. It is only found in men of sound sense and good understanding.—Bruyere.

TO THE POINT.

A poet met a pretty maid,
And vowed that he would woo her,
Day after day he spent his time
In writing sonnets to her;
And through the post his passions told,
For though it did him honour,
He was so very bashful that
He feared to call upon her.

Another met this self-same maid,
But he was not a poet,
And when he found he loved her well,
He vowed that she should know it;
He spent no time on sonnets grand,
But said, "I want a wife, dear;"
To him the pretty maid replied:
"Well, I'll be yours for life, dear."

London's daily and weekly papers are 20 per cent. more in number than those of Ireland combined.

Of 100 units of work done in Great Britain, 13 are accomplished by man power unaided by machinery. In the United States only 4 per cent. of work is done by man-power.