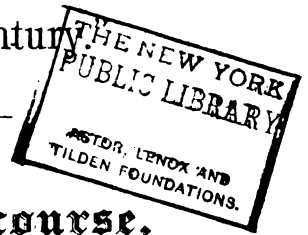


AMERICAN COMMERCE
 AND THE
 NEW ORLEANS EXPOSITION.

"The Hinge of the Century"



Thanksgiving Discourse,

BY

REV. T. DEWITT TALMAGE, D. D.,

At Brooklyn Tabernacle, November 27, 1884.

NEW YORK :

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY OF THE EXPOSITION.

1884.

THE NATION'S OPPORTUNITY.

DR. TALMAGE'S THANKSGIVING DISCOURSE.

"Another door toward the south."—EZEKIEL 41 : 11.

"On the south three gates."—REV. 21 : 13.

King George of England, at the close of the Revolutionary War, in which he had lost thirteen colonies, proclaimed a day of thanksgiving because of the return of peace. His chaplain said to him : "For what would your majesty have us give thanks? for the fact that you have lost thirteen of the brightest jewels of your crown?" "No, not for that," said the king. "Because we have added millions to our national debt?" "No, not for that," said the king. "Because tens of thousands of people of the same race and religion have been destroyed?" "No, not that," said the king. "Why, then?" insisted the chaplain, "and

FOR WHAT SHALL WE GIVE THANKS?"

"Thank God," said the king, with great vehemence—"thank God because matters are no worse." And if the year now past has been to any of you misfortune, or calamity, or bereavement, you have so many mercies left you ought to thank God things are no worse with you than they are.

But to vast throngs of us the year has been one of overarching mercy, and as individuals, and as a church, and as a nation we keep jubilee. And would God that our habit of gratitude might become as fixed as that of St. Felix, the monk of Cartalice, who, on all occasions, whether stopping a fight or soliciting alms for the monastery, cried out, "Deo Gratias"—thanks be to God—until the church called him "Brother Deo Gratias," and the children hailed him on the street as "Father Deo Gratias." After a year in which other nations have felt the scourge of epidemic, but this land has been spared, and after emerging unhurt from a Presidential contest in which the blind Samson of partisanship threatened to pull down the pillars of State and to leave the temple flat in the dust, and after three hundred and sixty-five more days of kindness from our God, we are here.

In the graceful and splendid decorations of this church to day, with the grains and fruits of all sections, we have an American

CONGRESS OF NATIONAL PRODUCTS.

Delegations from North, South, East, and West. Here are delegations with white hair from the cotton fields of the South. Here are

those with auburn beard and looks from the golden wheat fields of the North. Here are fruits that have in their round cheeks the blush of the setting sun of the West. Behold this moss from Southern woods, the bridal veil of the forest. Behold these plumes of pampos from the far West. Behold this rice from the Carolinas and these grapes and pears from California. Behold these apples from Connecticut, the "Land of Steady Habits." Your father, perhaps, planted the tree. Behold these great banana trees standing sentinel at either end the platform, by last steamer from Florida, but the fruit this moment growing, and one of them in blossom of resplendent orb. Behold this coal from Pennsylvania, and this iron from Idaho, and this silver from Nevada, and this lead from Colorado, and this copper from Lake Superior, and these great specimens of cereal luxuriance from New York, and New Jersey, and Long Island.

HARVESTS OF 1884

looking down upon all their predecessors. The wave of temporal blessing has dashed to the top of the nation's corn-crib. Ay, the prosperity of this country has rolled up until the crest of the wave has broken and recoiled upon itself. More corn, and wheat, and cotton, and rice than we can find profitable market for. More manufactured goods than we can dispose of. The grain markets all glutted, and the factories by scores stopping, or run with only half the spindles harnessed, and wages are cut down in some places because the supply has swamped the demand, and nothing is the matter to-day with this country but over-production and under-consumption. Where there is work for ten there are twenty who offer their services, and the hundred thousand wheels of American industry are slowing up, not because there is too little, but because there is too much. God has snowed upon the track of this nation such vast accumulations of prosperity that the engine that draws the train can hardly plough through. The American nation is being choked to death with surplus of production and manufactures. Too much wheat, too much corn, too much cotton, too much fruit, too much hardware, too many drygoods, too many shoes, too many carpets, too many philosophical instruments, too many printing-presses, too many cattle, too many sheep, too many artisans, too many merchants, too many lawyers, too many doctors, and from the large number of excellent men in my own profession without settlements, some might think, too many ministers.

The deluge of supply has risen fifteen cubits higher than the mountains of demand. The load of national wealth is so great that the team cannot draw it. The man who dies for lack of a crust of bread

is no worse off than the man who is smothered to death in a wheat-bin. The nation suffers to-day, not from marasmus, but from plethora; not from consumption, but from threatened apoplexy.

WHAT SHALL WE DO?

"Let us rush right down to Washington and have the tariff changed," say a great multitude. But put up the tariff as high as Tiptop House on Mount Washington, and while you might keep out foreign goods, we have enough mills of our own left to weave ten woolen shirts where there is one back to wear them, and make ten pair of shoes for every ten feet that need them, and twenty curtains for every window that could support them, and twenty pairs of eyeglasses for every vision that *might be reinforced* by them. Doctor the tariff with homeopathic, or allopathic, or eclectic dose from now until the Thanksgiving Day of the year 2000, and you cannot in that way cure this chronic malady.

THE PRESIDENT CANNOT DO IT.

Others hope by change of national administration to correct the trouble; but no President, though he had the combined patriotism of Washington, and the broad views of Jefferson, and the suavity of a Madison, and the courage of an Andrew Jackson, and the old-fashioned honesty of an Abraham Lincoln, could regulate the inexorable laws of supply and demand.

WORSE IN EUROPE.

Well, some say, "Let us pack up our trunks and move east, or north, or west." Going east toward Europe would be exodus into starvation. The avalanche of emigration shows us that those continents are overcrowded. We all know that this is *the best country in all the world* to live in. I have eight hundred and fifty thousand fresh reasons for saying so. Eight hundred and fifty thousand people in one year coming from other shores to live in America. If America had not been the best place to live, there would have been eight hundred and fifty thousand Americans going to Europe. Shall we go north? Already the busiest hives of competition are along the St. Lawrence, and the Androscoggin, and the Penobscot, and and the voices of the woods of Maine and the forests of the lake chain answer: "No room here!" Shall we move West?

THERE IS NO WEST.

The emigrants chased it across the Ohio, across the Mississippi, across the La Platte, and the Fremont exploring expedition put their

spurs into the horses' flanks and chased the West from the Rocky Mountains to the Sierra Nevadas, and the Forty-niners from California, landing from the ships on the Pacific beach, attacked the West in the rear, and the workmen of the Union Pacific, and Northern Pacific, and Southern Pacific railroads came upon it with their spades, and the giant West has ceased ; and though some might say of it, as was said in regard to Moses, " No man knoweth of his sepulchre to this day," I think the Yosemite Valley is its sarcophagus, with El Capitain for the headstone and Cathedral Rock for the footstone.

Millions of foreign population that are yet to cross the sea for America will soon enough fill all the area between Atlantic and Pacific beaches. But in the words of my text, I now declare

" ANOTHER DOOR

toward the south—on the south three gates." When I say south I do not mean the Southern States of our own American Union, but I mean the magnificent infinity of opportunity beyond—Portuguese America and the fifteen Spanish American republics, and the islands of the South Pacific. Through that door will come the complete and glorious relief for all this over-supply. It will come within ten years, within five, within three.

On the sixteenth of next month, at the New Orleans Exposition, that door will begin to swing open, and if the Government of the United States fully appreciate the opportunity, and the people of this country will help, the highest water mark that the wave of our national prosperity has ever reached will be one hundred feet under what shall speedily be the full tide of commercial, agricultural, manufacturing, literary and moral success. In the name of God *I proclaim revolution*, not by sword or dynamite, or nitro-glycerine or giant powder, but by plough, and sword, and yardstick, and factory band, and new lines of steamers, and whole nations rising up to greet our nation in commercial amity.

Our people for the most part sit in appalling ignorance of

AN OPPORTUNITY

such as was never spread out before any nation since the morning stars sang together. " On the south three gates"—ay, three thousand gates, and all of them wide open. I have had facts put before me enough to keep a man awake nights because of their thrilling significance, and statistics so loaded that they move with the splendor and power of the Iron Duke's army at Waterloo, Scots Grays,

and the Life Guards, and Paek's Infantry, and battalions of Ponsonby, and Ryland, and the Dutch Belgians, while the Highlanders play their bagpipes. Ay, ay, it will be

A BLOODLESS WATERLOO

which will decide the commercial destiny of North and South America. The simple fact is, that the vast realm of population in the tropics are buying from transatlantic nations almost everything and from us almost nothing, and the tide ought to turn, and the tide will turn, and I preach this sermon to help it turn.

Your ears will tingle with the intensity of this recital: In 1880 five billion three hundred and sixty-nine million dollars worth of goods manufactured in the United States, and only two per cent. taken by foreign markets! Is it not a marvel that American manufactures are not as dead as the proverbial door nail? My only wonder is that nine-tenths of the manufacturers have not gone into bankruptcy, and ninety-nine one hundredths of the factory hands have not gone into starvation or the almshouse; and it will be worse if the battle is to go on between Lowell spindles here and Manchester spindles there, between foreign merchants who want tariffs down and American merchants who want tariffs up. There is no relief for us in the markets of Europe, and there will be none until

“Moons shall wax and wane no more.”

“Another door toward the south—on the south three gates.” This nation to-day is like a silly drygoods merchant who stands behind the counter haggling with a small customer about three yards of tape, when there are at the counter, impatiently waiting, three princesses wishing to purchase their bridal trousseau! May God arouse this nation from its

COMMERCIAL IDIOCY!

On the south of us are regions nearly three times as large as the United States without manufactories, without woolen goods, without agricultural implements, without telegraphs, without telephones, without shoes, without sewing machines, without ten thousand things that we have and they must have. Not tens of thousands, but millions of consumers. Where shall they get their supplies? They are getting them from another hemisphere three thousand miles away, and we at their next door are buried under a surplus of those very things. They are able to trade with us for their sugars, and coffees, and spices, and fruits, and valuable woods, and a thousand other

commodities we need as much as they need our products. But look, and then hang your heads at the statement, that while our next-door neighbors, the southern republics, and Brazil and neighboring colonies import six hundred and seventy-five million dollars worth of goods a year, only one hundred and twenty-six million dollars worth are from the United States—one hundred and twenty-six million dollars out of six hundred and seventy-five million dollars—only one-fifth of the trade ours. European nations taking their four fingers and leaving us the poor thumb. The sister republics on the American continent, with a foreign commerce, with a foreign commerce amounting to four hundred and twenty-eight million dollars, trade with us to the feeble and paltry sum of sixty-three million dollars. There is nothing but a comparative ferry between this country and the West Indies, while there are raging seas and long voyage between them and other continents, yet they import one hundred and sixteen million dollars worth of goods, and only thirty-one million dollars worth come from us.

Now, all this is going

SPERDILY TO BE CHANGED,

and it is going to be the solution of the labor question, of the bread question, of the communistic question, of the over production and under consumption question, and nearly all other questions. It is going to set all the mills on the Merrimac, and the Connecticut, and the Susquehanna, and the Chattahooche, and the Alabama running day and night with double set of hands, and calling for ten factories where we have one, and putting all the men out of employ into work at good wages, and it is going to change this story of dull times into a prosperity which will roll on in full tide until the Mississippi loses its way to the Gulf of Mexico.

No more thankful am I for the past blessings to this nation than I am thankful to God for this opening opportunity, in its height stupendous and its width hemispheric.

HOW WILL IT BE DONE?

Among other things, by such action as that which led our Congress to appropriate one million three hundred thousand dollars to the New Orleans Exposition, and led Mexico to appropriate two hundred thousand dollars, and New Orleans to appropriate five hundred thousand dollars. That Exposition preceded by the Sydenham Crystal Palace and the French and Vienna and Philadelphia expositions, yet in far-

reaching significance more important than all of them put together. It is going to be the *hinge of this century*. Those other expositions showed chiefly what had already been done. This of next month will build a platform on which the nations of this American continent shall come up for introduction to a new commercial epoch in the history of the ages. On that platform will come up Bolivia, Peru, Paraguay, Uruguay, Venezuela, Salvador, Nicaragua, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Brazil, and the brunette West Indies to meet the blonde and smiling United States.

HAIL! MARRIAGE DAY

of North and South. While the pessimists have been hunting up the burial service to read out the death of American commerce, and the stops of the organ were being pulled out for the Dead March in Saul, I, an optimist both by nature and by grace, take up in anticipation the bright, covered wedding liturgy, and as the blonde North takes the brunette South by the hand, saying, "With all my worldly goods I thee endow," I cry, "Whom God hath joined together let neither foreign despotism nor American demagogism ever put asunder." Then let all the organs and choirs and orchestras make everything, from the Montreal ice palace to the halls of the Montezumas, quake under the rolling thunders of the grand march of North and South American progress.

This southern door will be further fastened open by the tides of

TRAVEL DIVERTED

from Europe to the land of the Aztecs. Much of the hundred and six million five hundred thousand dollars yearly expended by Americans in Europe will be expended in southern exploration, in looking at some of the ruins of the forty-seven cities which Stephens, the traveler, found only a little way apart, and walking through the corridors, and under the arches, and in the great doorways and over the miracles of mosaic, and along by the monumental glories of another civilization, and ancient America will, with cold lips of stone, kiss the warm lips of modern America, and to have seen the Andes and Popocatepetl will be deemed as important as to have seen the Alpine and Balkan ranges.

So there will be fewer people spoiled by foreign travel, and in our midst there will be less poor and nauseating imitation of the French shrug and the intentional hesitancy of a brainless foreign swell. The fact is, that there are more people made fools of by European travel than in any other way. And though sensible when they embark, they

return with a collar, and a cravat, and a shoe, and a coat, and a pronunciation, and a contempt for American institutions, and a bend of the elbow that makes one believe in evolution backward from man to ape! Of the thirty thousand Americans who now cross the sea annually, thousands will, on pleasure and business, visit the tropics, and so tourists and merchants and scientists and capitalists will all help in this national development.

I wish that somehow our next Congress might take the one hundred million dollars of surplus in the United States Treasury which the Republicans neglected to steal and before the Democrats get a chance to steal it, and in some way expend it in establishing new lines of shipping between the ports of North and South America, and in dredging their harbors, and in building telegraph lines, and in the quickening of that glorious consummation which is sure to come. I want it to come very soon. I want it to come before there is any more suffering. I want it to come before there is any more sorrow. Go on, gentlemen, discussing your high tariff, and low tariff, and horizontal tariff, and no tariff at all until the questions are as stale and malodorous as the moss-bunkers which the Long Island fishermen throw on the fields to enrich the farms. But in the meanwhile God is going to appear for the rescue of the multitudes of hard-working men and women of this country who have been hungry and cold long enough. And this door of the south opened is going to let in on them a Summer of bright and glorious prosperity. I believe it just as certainly as I stand here. In anticipation I nail on the front door of the nation

AN ADVERTISEMENT :

Wanted, one hundred thousand men to build a South American railroad as long as from here to San Francisco.

Wanted, five thousand telegraph operators.

Wanted, twenty million dollars worth of dry-goods and hardware from New York City.

Wanted, all the clocks you can make at New Haven, and all the shoes you can manufacture at Natick, and all the brains you can spare from Boston, and all the bells you can mold at Troy, and all the McCormick reapers you can fashion at Chicago, and all the hams you can turn out at Cincinnati, and all the railroad iron you can send from Pittsburgh.

Wanted, wanted right away, wanted by express, wanted C. O. D., wanted by railroad train, wanted by steamer, wanted lawyers to plead our causes, wanted doctors to cure our sick, wanted ministers to evan-

gelize our population, wanted professors to establish our universities.

“Another door toward the south—on the south three gates.” Lift up ye heads, ye everlasting gates, and let the north come south, and the south come north. Correct forever.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL BLUNDER

of the centuries, which says there are five continents when there are only four—Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. Our arctic and antarctic are only the crystal latches on front and back gate of one palace yard. Ay, this continent is one living queen of beauty and power. Though the continent is narrow at the waist if you girdle it at Aspinwall, nevertheless the narrow waist will make more graceful the living queen upon whom God has put the richest diadem of the planet. On this Thanksgiving Day I announce

YOUR INHERITANCE.

Get ready. Henceforth put this into your prayers, into your doxologies, and let capitalists, bankers, and statesmen lift it into their plans. What is the use of gathering a whole fleet of laden steamers at the mouth of a small river, trying to pilot them in, jostling and stuck fast, when there is this great wide southern sea, with room for largest merchantman to spread sail or drop anchor!

Without this opening prospect this Thanksgiving Day would be dark for those of us who are interested in the laboring classes. To-day there are *one million people out of work* in this country—ten per cent. of the laboring classes with nothing to do but suffer, and another twenty per cent. toiling on reduced wages. Can I, a minister of religion, stand in this place to-day, amid all these signs of prosperity and great harvests, which have brought blessings to so many of our doors, and forget this fact? I cannot. I shall not take my seat at the Thanksgiving table with wife and children to-day, until I look at the bare plates of these multitudes, and at their empty wardrobes, and invoke upon them the mercy of God and the generous consideration of those in comfortable circumstances, and send from my own pocket my individual quota.

Congress will assemble next week, and let it waste no time in abstractions, but by some swift enactment open this door south, and all the other legitimate doors, for the relief of men who can get no work, and who stand in this cold November weather wringing their numb fingers, with their helpless families at their back.

God help them!