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Never Disappoints

Valet to the Shark.

The shark and pilot fish are occasionally found in the Southern California sea waters. The pilot fish is known as *Naucratetis ductor*. Without the partnership of the shark it would die. Attacked to the skin of the shark's head it repays its big and savage ally for its habitation there by piloting the shark to food. How the little fish does that is one of the unknown things of our branch of science. The pilot fish is about seven inches long and has the calibre of a man's wrist. It is smooth and dark-skinned. It has an oval mouth under the head, and the mouth enables it to get a firm hold by sucking. By this means the pilot fish attaches itself at will to a shark, generally between the big fish's eyes, and when once fastened there it sucks its sustenance from the shark, and gets free transportation. This fish acts as a valet for deep sea sharks. It is the pomilus of the ancients, who described it as pointing out the way to embarrassed sailors. They regarded it as a sacred fish.

Soldiers returning to the United States who have served beyond the seas are sporting their foreign service stripes proudly. This stripe, as new to our army as foreign service is to our history, is a narrow bar of red worn low down on each sleeve.



An Excellent Combination.

The pleasant method and beneficial effects of the well known remedy, SYRUP OF FIGS, manufactured by the CALIFORNIA FIG SYRUP CO., illustrate the value of obtaining the liquid laxative principles of plants known to be medicinally laxative and presenting them in the form most refreshing to the taste and acceptable to the system. It is the one perfect strengthening laxative, cleansing the system effectually, dispelling colds, headaches and fevers gently yet promptly and enabling one to overcome habitual constipation permanently. Its perfect freedom from every objectionable quality and substance, and its acting on the kidneys, liver and bowels, without weakening or irritating them, make it the ideal laxative.

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DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON.

PREPARED ESPECIALLY FOR YOUNG AND OLD.

Subject: Choice of Beliefs—Religious Tol-
erance Advocated—All Evangelical
Churches Are Good and Are Seeking
the Same Praiseworthy End.

(Copyright, Louis Klopsch, 1897.)

WASHINGTON, D. C.—In this sermon Dr. Talmage discusses a topic which will interest domestic circles everywhere. The text is Genesis xiii, 8: "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee and between my herdmen and thy herdmen. Is not the whole land before thee?"

Uncle and nephew, Abram and Lot, both pious, both millionaires, and with such large flocks of bleating sheep and lowing cattle that their herdmen got into a fight, perhaps about the best pasture or about the best water privilege or because the cow of one got hooked by the horns of the other. Not their poverty of opportunity, but their wealth, was the cause of controversy between these two men. To Abram, the glorious old Mesopotamian sheik, such controversy seemed absurd. It was like two ships quarreling for sea room in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. There was a vast reach of country, cornfields, vineyards, harvests and plenty of room in illimitable acreage. "Now," says Abram, "let us agree to differ. Here are the mountain districts, swept by the tonic sea breeze and with wide-reaching prospect, and there is the plain of the Jordan, with tropical luxuriance. You may have either." Lot, who was not as rich as Abram, and might have been expected to take the second choice, made the first selection and with a modesty that must have made Abram smile said to him:

"You may have the rocks and the fine prospect; I will take the valley of the Jordan, with all its luxuriance of corn fields and the river to water the flocks and the genial climate and the wealth immeasurable." So the controversy was forever settled and great-souled Abram carried out the suggestion of the text: "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen. Is not the whole land before thee?"

Well, in this the last decade of the nineteenth century and in this beautiful land, which was called America, after Americus Vesputius, but should have been called Columbia, after its discoverer, Columbus, we have a wealth of religious privilege and opportunity that is positively bewildering. Churches of all sorts of creeds and of all kinds of government and all forms of worship and all styles of architecture—what opulence of ecclesiastical opportunity! Now, while in desolate regions there may be only one church, in the opulent districts of this country there is such a profusion that there ought to be no difficulty in making a selection. No fight about vestments, or between liturgical or nonliturgical adherents, or as to baptismal modes, or a handful of water as compared with a riverful. If Abram prefers to dwell on the heights, where he can get only a sprinkling from the clouds, let him consent that Lot have all the Jordan in which to immerse himself. "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee and between my herdmen and thy herdmen. Is not the whole land before thee?"

Especially is it unfortunate when families allow angry discussion at the breakfast or dining or tea table as to which is the best church or denomination, one at one end of the table saying he could never endure the rigid doctrines of Presbyterianism, one at the other end responding that she never could stand the forms of Episcopacy, and one at one side of the table saying he did not understand how anybody could bear the noise in the Methodist church, and another declaring all the Baptists bigots. There are hundreds of families hopelessly split on ecclesiasticism, and in the middle of every discussion on such subjects there is a kindling of indignation, and it needs some old father Abram to come and put his foot on the loaded fuse before the explosion takes place and say: "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee and between my herdmen and thy herdmen. Is not the whole land before thee?"

I undertake a subject never undertaken by any other pulpit, for it is an exceedingly delicate subject, and if not rightly handled might give serious offense, but I approach it without the slightest trepidation, for I am sure I have the divine direction in the matters I propose to present. It is a tremendous question, asked all over Christendom, often asked with tears and sobs and heart breaks and involving the peace of families, the eternal happiness of many souls. In matters of church attendance should the wife go with the husband or the husband go with the wife?

First, remember that all the evangelical churches have enough truth in them to save the soul and prepare us for happiness on earth and in heaven. I will go with you into any well selected theological library, and I will show you sermons from ministers in all denominations that set forth man as a sinner and Christ as a deliverer from sin and sorrow. That is the whole Gospel. Get that into your soul and you are fitted for the here and the hereafter. There are differences, we admit, and some denominations we like better than others. But suppose three or four of us make solemn agreement to meet each other a week from now in Chicago on important business, and one goes by the New York Central Railroad, another by the Erie Railroad, another by the Pennsylvania Railroad, another by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. One

goes this way because the mountains are grander; another takes this because the cars are more luxurious; another that because the speed is greater; another takes the other because he has long been accustomed to that route, and all the employees are familiar. So far as our engagement to meet is concerned it makes no difference if we only get there. Now, any one of the innumerable evangelical denominations; if you practice its teaching—although some of their trains run on a broad gauge and some on a narrow gauge—will bring you out at the city of the New Jerusalem.

It being evident that you will be safe in any of the evangelical denominations, I proceed to remark, first, if one of the married couple be a Christian and the other not, the one a Christian is bound to go anywhere to a church where the unconverted companion is willing to go, if he or she will go to no other. You of the conjugal partnership are a Christian. You are safe for the skies. Then it is your first duty to secure the eternal safety of your lifetime associate. Is not the everlasting welfare of your wife impenitent, or your husband impenitent, of more importance than your church relationship? Is not the condition of your companion for the next quadrillion of years a mightier consideration to you than the gratification of your ecclesiastical taste for forty or fifty years? A man or a woman that would stop half a minute to weigh preferences as to whether he or she had better go with the unconverted companion to this or that church or denomination, has no religion at all, and never has had, and I fear never will have. You are loaded up with what you suppose to be religion, but you are like Captain Frohisher, who brought back from his voyage of discovery a shipment of what he supposed valuable minerals, yet, instead of being silver and gold, were nothing but common stones of the field, to be hauled out as fire-bricks.

Mighty God! In all Thy realm is there a man or woman professing religion, yet so stolid, so unfeeling, so far gone into death that there would be any hesitancy in surrendering all preferences before such an opportunity of salvation and heavenly reunion? If you, a Christian wife, are an attendant upon any church, and your unconverted husband does not go there because he does not like its preacher, or its music, or its architecture, or its uncomfortable crowding, and goes not to any house of worship, but would go if you would accompany him somewhere else, change your church relations. Take your hymnbook home with you to-day. Say good-by to your friends in the neighboring pews, and go with him to any one of a hundred churches till his soul is saved and he joins you in the march to heaven. More important than that ring on the third finger of your left hand is that your heavenly Father command the angel of mercy, concerning your husband at his conversion, as in the parable of old, "Put a ring on his hand."

No letter of more importance ever came to the great city of Corinth, situated on what was called the "Bridge of the Sea," and glistening with sculpture and gated with a style of brass the magnificence of which the following ages have not been able to successfully imitate and overshadowed by the Acro-Corinthus, a fortress of rock 2000 feet high—no letter ever came to that great city of more importance than that letter in which Paul puts the two startling questions: "What knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" The dearest sacrifice on the part of the one is cheap if it rescue the other. Better go to the smallest, weakest, most insignificant church on earth and be copartners in eternal bliss than pass your earthly membership in most gorgeously attractive church while your companion stays outside of evangelical privilege. Better have the drowning saved by a scow or a sloop than let him or her go down while you sail by in the gilded cabins of a majestic or Campana.

Second remark: If both of the married couples be Christians, but one is so naturally constructed that it is impossible to enjoy the services of a particular denomination, and the other is not so sectarian or punctilious, let the one less particular go with the other who is very particular. As for myself, I feel as much at home in one denomination of evangelical Christians as another, and I think I must have been born very near the line. I like the solemn roll of the Episcopal liturgy, and I like the spontaneity of the Methodists and I like the importance given to the ordinance of baptism by the Baptists and I like the freedom of the Congregationalists and I like the government and the sublime doctrine of the Presbyterians and I like many of the others just as much as any I have mentioned and I could happily give and preach and die and be buried from any of them. But others are born with a liking so stout, so unbending, so inexorable for some denomination that it is a positive necessity they have the advantage of that one; what they were intended to be in ecclesiasticism was written in the sides of their cradle, if the father and mother had eyes keen enough to see it. They would not stop crying until they had put in their hands as a plaything a Westminster Catechism or the Thirty-nine Articles. The whole current of their temperament and thought and character runs into one sect of religionists as naturally as the Jones River into the Chesapeake. It would be a torture to such persons to be anywhere outside of that one church.

Now, let the wife or husband who is not so constructed sacrifice the milder preference for the one more inflexible and rigorous. Let the grapevine follow the ruggedities and sinuosities of the oak or hickory. Abram, the richer in flocks of Christian grace, should say to Lot, who is built on a smaller scale: "Let there be no strife, I

pray thee, between me and thee and between my herdmen and thy herdmen. Is not the whole land before thee?"

Remember the third: If both the married couple are very strong in their religious faith, let them attend the different churches preferred. It is not necessary that they attend the same church. There is no friction between your conscience and your God-like Abram and Lot, when you attend different churches, although you attend different paths, and that you have both been on the Mount of Transfiguration, although you went up by different paths, and that you have both been fed by the bread of life, though kneaded by different hands in different trays and baked in different ovens. "But how about the children?" I am often asked by scores of parents. Let them also make their own choice. They will grow up with reverence for both the denominations represented by father and mother if you, by holy lives, commend those denominations. If the father lives the better life, they will have the more favorable opinion of his denomination. If the mother lives the better life, they will have the more favorable opinion of her denomination. And some day both the parents will, for at least one service, go to the same church. The neighbors will say, "I wonder what is going on to-day for I saw our neighbor and his wife, who always go to different churches, going arm in arm to the same sanctuary."

Well, I will tell you what has brought them together, arm in arm, to the same altar. Something very important has happened. Their son is to-day uniting with the church. He is standing in the aisle, taking the vows of a Christian. He had been somewhat wayward, and gave father and mother a good deal of anxiety, but their prayers have been answered in his conversion, and as he stands in the aisle and the minister of religion says, "Do you consecrate yourself to the God who made and redeemed you and do you promise to serve Him all your days?" and with many voice he answers, "I do," there is an April shower in the pew where father and mother sit and a rainbow of joy which arches both their souls, that makes all differences of creed infinitesimal. And the daughter who had been very worldly and gay and thoughtless, puts her life on the altar of consecration, and as the sunlight of that Sabbath streams through the church window and falls upon her brow and cheek, she looks like their other daughter, whose face was illumined with the brightness of another world on the day when the Lord took her into His heavenly keeping years ago.

I should not wonder, if, after all, these parents pass the evening of their life in the same church, all differences of church preference overcome by the joy of being in the house of God where their children were prepared for usefulness and heaven. But I can give you a recipe for ruining your children. Agrily contented in the household that your church is right and the church of your companion is wrong. Bring sneer and caricature to emphasize your opinions, and your children will make up their minds that religion is a sham, and they will have none of it. In the northeast storm of domestic controversy the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley will not grow. Fight about apostolic succession, fight about election and free agency, fight about baptism, fight about the bishopric, fight about gown and surplice, and the religious prospect of your children will be left dead on the field. You will be as unfortunate as Charles, Duke of Burgundy, who in battle lost a diamond the value of a kingdom, for in your fight you will lose the jewel of salvation for your entire household. This is nothing against the advocacy of your own religious theories. Use all forcible argument, bring all telling illustration, array all demonstrative facts, but let there be no acerbity, no stinging retort, no mean insinuation, no superciliousness, as though all others were wrong and you infallibly right.

Licentiate May Use Tobacco.

The Presbytery of Boston has refused to make total abstinence from tobacco a condition precedent of ordination in the case of the young licentiate under its care and of elders-elect.

Germans and the Nicaragua Canal
Germans are said to be trying to get control of the Nicaragua Canal route.

At Staunton, Va., for seventy-two hours Charles Armentrout had a spell of hiccupping which his physicians could not relieve.

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