

FISH IN DEEP WATER.

Do Not Paddle Along the Shore of the Sea of the Lord's Mercy Is

THE ADVICE OF REV. DR. TALMAGE.

Good Counsel for the Lost, the Timid and the Christian Worker.

KEEP CLEAR OF ALL SINFUL COASTS

Brooklyn, Oct. 2.—Dr. Talmage's text this morning was taken from Luke v-4, "Launch out into the deep." Christ, starting on the campaign of the world's conquest, was selecting His staff officers. There were plenty of students with high foreheads, and white hands, and intellectual faces, and refined tastes, in Rome and in Jerusalem. Christ might have called into the apostleship 12 book-worms, or 12 rhetoricians, or 12 artists. Instead, He takes a group of men who had never made a speech, never delivered a lecture, never written a letter, never been sick enough to make them look delicate—their hands broad, clumsy and hard-knuckled. He chose fishermen, among other reasons, I think, because they were physically hardy. He chose fishermen, also, because they were used to hard knocks. The man who cannot stand assault is not fit for the ministry. It always has been and always will be rough work; and the man who, at every rebuff or caricature, sits down to cry had better be at some other work. It is no place for ecclesiastical doll babies. A man who cannot preach because he has forgotten his manuscript or lost his spectacles ought not to preach at all. Heaven deliver the Church from a ministry that preach in kid gloves, and from sermons in black morocco covers!

Do Not Paddle Along the Shore. The advice that my Lord gave to Simon is as appropriate for us as in a spiritual sense. The fact is that most of us are just paddling along the shore. We are afraid to venture out into the great depths of God and Christian experience. There is no book in the world that demands so much of our attention as the Bible. Yet nine-tenths of Christian men get no more than a "skim" of it. They think it is a good sign not to venture too far. They never ask how or why; and if they see some Christian becoming inquisitive about the deep things of God they say: "Be careful; you had better not go too far from shore. My pastor, the minister, the man who goes to the better, if you have the right kind of ship. If you have more water, the philosophy for the bulk, and pride for a sail, and self-conceit for the helm, the first squall will destroy you. But if you take the blue for your craft, the farther you go the better. Walk all up and down the Bible domain! Try every part of it; and at the end of the day come out at the epistles. Go with the patriarchs, until you meet the evangelists. Rummage and rummage, as children who are not satisfied when they come to a new house, until they have explored every room, and into what every door opens. This river of God's word is not a straight stream, but a winding river. It is not a narrow waterway to attract still ripper vintage pressing to the brink. The sea of God's word is not like Genesee, 12 miles by 6, but boundless; and in any one direction you can sail on it forever. Why then, confine yourself to a short psalm, or to a few verses of an epistle? The largest fish are not near the shore.

Classes to Whom the Text Applies. The text is appropriate to all Christians of shallow experience. Doubts and fears have in our day been increased to the detriment of Christian grace. Some consider it a bad sign not to have any doubts. Doubts and fears are not signs of health, but fevers and carbuncles. The text is appropriate to all who are engaged in Christian work. The Church of God has been hindered along the shore. We set our net in a good, calm place, and in sight of fine company, and we go down every Sunday to see if the fish have been wise enough to come into our net. We might learn something from that boy who cast the hook and line. He throws his line from the bridge no fish. He sits down on a log; no fish. He stands in the sunlight and casts the line, but no fish. He goes up to the mill, and stands behind the dam, where the fish cannot see him, and he has hardly

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