



# Acres of Diam

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## Acres of Diamonds

By Russell H. Conwell

**I am astonished** that so many people should care to hear this story over again. It has become a study in psychology; it often breaks all rules of oratory, departs from the rhetoric, and yet remains the most popular of any lecture I have delivered in the fifty-s public life. I have sometimes studied for a year upon a lecture and made careful resear presented the lecture just once -- never delivered it again. I put too much work on it. E on it -- thrown together perfectly at random, spoken offhand without any special prepa succeeds when the thing we study, work over, adjust to a plan, is an entire failure.

The "Acres of Diamonds" which I have mentioned through so many years are to be fou you are to find them. Many have found them. And what man has done, man can do. I c anything better to illustrate my thought than a story I have told over and over again, a found in books in nearly every library.

In 1870 we went down the Tigris River. We hired a guide at Bagdad to show us Persep Babylon, and the ancient countries of Assyria as far as the Arabian Gulf. He was well a land, but he was one of those guides who love to entertain their patrons; he was like a you many stories in order to keep your mind off the scratching and the scraping. He to stories that I grew tired of his telling them and I refused to listen -- looked away when commenced; that made the guide quite angry.

I remember that toward evening he took his Turkish cap off his head and swung it aroa gesture I did not understand and I did not dare look at him for fear I should become th story. But, although I am not a woman, I did look, and the instant I turned my eyes up guide he was off again. Said he, "I will tell you a story now which I reserve for my part then, counting myself a particular friend, I listened, and I have always been glad I did.



**He said** there once lived not far from the River Indus an ancient Persian by the name said that Al Hafed owned a very large farm with orchards, grain fields and gardens. He and wealthy man -- contented because he was wealthy, and wealthy because he was c there visited this old farmer one of those ancient Buddhist priests, and he sat down by told that old farmer how this world of ours was made.

He said that this world was once a mere bank of fog, which is scientifically true, and he Almighty thrust his finger into the bank of fog and then began slowly to move his finge gradually to increase the speed of his finger until at last he whirled that bank of fog int and it went rolling through the universe, burning its way through other cosmic banks o condensed the moisture without, and fell in floods of rain upon the heated surface and crust. Then the internal flames burst through the cooling crust and threw up the mount hills and the valleys of this wonderful world of ours. If this internal melted mass burst c quickly it became granite; that which cooled less quickly became silver; and less quickl gold diamonds were made. Said the old priest, "A diamond is a congealed drop of sunli

This is a scientific truth also. You all know that a diamond is pure carbon, actually depc and he said another thing I would not forget: he declared that a diamond is the last an mineral creations, as a woman is the last and highest of God's animal creations. I supp reason why the two have such a liking for each other. And the old priest told Al Hafed t handful of diamonds he could purchase a whole country, and with a mine of diamonds children upon thrones through the influence of their great wealth.

Al Hafed heard all about diamonds and how much they were worth, and went to his bea man -- not that he had lost anything, but poor because he was discontented and discor thought he was poor. He said: "I want a mine of diamonds!" So he lay awake all night, morning sought out the priest.

Now I know from experience that a priest when awakened early in the morning is cross priest out of his dreams and said to him, "Will you tell me where I can find diamonds?" "Diamonds? What do you want with diamonds?" "I want to be immensely rich," said Al

know where to go." "Well," said the priest, "if you will find a river that runs over white mountains, in those sands you will always see diamonds." "Do you really believe that there is a river?" "Plenty of them, plenty of them; all you have to do is just go and find them," the Arab said, "I will go." So he sold his farm, collected his money at interest, left his family and neighbors, and away he went in search of diamonds.

He began very properly, to my mind, at the Mountains of the Moon. Afterwards he went to Palestine, then wandered on into Europe, and at last, when his money was all spent, at a time of wretchedness and poverty, he stood on the shore of that bay in Barcelona, Spain, when he was rolling in through the Pillars of Hercules and the poor, afflicted, suffering man could not resist the temptation to cast himself into that incoming tide, and he sank beneath its foaming crests and ended this life again.

When that old guide had told me that very sad story, he stopped the camel I was riding and fixed the baggage on one of the other camels, and I remember thinking to myself, "Why did he do that for his particular friends?" There seemed to be no beginning, middle or end -- nothing like any other first story I ever heard told or read in which the hero was killed in the first chapter. I had heard of that story and the hero was dead.



**When** the guide came back and took up the halter of my camel again, he went right on with his story. He said that Al Hafed's successor led his camel out into the garden to drink, and with its nose down into the clear water of the garden brook Al Hafed's successor noticed a crackle from the sands of the shallow stream, and reaching in he pulled out a black stone having a rainbow that reflected all the colors of the rainbow, and he took that curious pebble into the holder of his mantle, then went on his way and forgot all about it.

A few days after that, this same old priest who told Al Hafed how diamonds were made found his successor, when he saw that flash of light from the mantle. He rushed up and said, -- here is a diamond! Has Al Hafed returned?" "No, no; Al Hafed has not returned and the diamond; that is nothing but a stone; we found it right out here in our garden." "But I know when I see it," said he; "that is a diamond!"

Then together they rushed to the garden and stirred up the white sands with their fingers, and found others more beautiful, more valuable diamonds than the first, and thus, said the guide, he discovered the diamond mines of Golconda, the most magnificent diamond mines in all the world, exceeding the Kimberley in its value. The great Kohinoor diamond in England is the largest crown diamond on earth in Russia's crown jewels, which I had often hoped to see before they had peace with Japan, came from that mine, and when the old guide had called attention to that wonderful discovery he took his Turkish cap off his head again and swung his hand in the air to call my attention to the moral.



**Those** Arab guides have a moral to each story, though the stories are not always moral. Al Hafed remained at home and dug in his own cellar or in his own garden, instead of wandering in search of starvation, poverty and death -- a strange land, he would have had "acres of diamonds" yes, every shovelful of that old farm afterwards revealed the gems which since have been sold to kings and monarchs. When he had given the moral to his story, I saw why he had reserved that moral for his "particular friends." I didn't tell him I could see it; I was not going to tell that old Arab that. For it was that mean old Arab's way of going around such a thing, like a lawyer, and so he did not dare say directly, that there was a certain young man that day traveling down that road that might better be at home in America. I didn't tell him I could see it.

I told him his story reminded me of one, and I told it to him quick. I told him about the man from California, who, in 1847, owned a ranch out there. He read that gold had been discovered in California, and he sold his ranch to Colonel Sutter and started off to hunt for gold. Colonel Sutter on the little stream in that farm and one day his little girl brought some wet sand from the mill into the house and placed it before the fire to dry, and as that sand was falling through her fingers a visitor saw the first shining scales of real gold that were ever discovered in California. The man who wanted the gold had sold his ranch and gone away, never to return.

I delivered this lecture two years ago in California, in the city that stands near that farm, and that the mine is not exhausted yet, and that a one-third owner of that farm has been getting in recent years twenty dollars of gold every fifteen minutes of his life, sleeping or waking. He would enjoy an income like that!

But the best illustration that I have now of this thought was found here in Pennsylvania

living in Pennsylvania who owned a farm here and he did what I should do if I had a farm here -- he sold it. But before he sold it he concluded to secure employment collecting coal oil in Canada. They first discovered coal oil there. So this farmer in Pennsylvania decided that he would take a position with his cousin in Canada. Now, you see, the farmer was not altogether a fool -- he did not leave his farm until he had something else to do.



**Of all the** simpletons the stars shine on there is none more foolish than a man who leaves one job before he has obtained another. And that has especial reference to gentlemen of my profession -- no reference to a man seeking a divorce. So I say this old farmer did not leave one job until he had obtained another. He wrote to Canada, but his cousin replied that he could not engage him until he knew something about the oil business. "Well, then," said he, "I will understand it." So he began the study of the whole subject. He began at the second day of the creation, he studied the primitive vegetation to the coal oil stage, until he knew all about it. Then he wrote to his cousin and said, "Now I understand the oil business." And his cousin replied to him, "All right, then

That man, by the record of the country, sold his farm for eight hundred and thirty-three dollars and thirty cents. He had scarcely gone from that farm before the man who purchased it arranged for watering the cattle and he found that the previous owner had arranged the dam. There is a stream running down the hillside there, and the previous owner had gone over the dam across that stream at an angle, extending across the brook and down edgewise a few inches above the surface of the water. The purpose of the plank across that brook was to throw over to the other side a dreadful-looking scum through which the cattle would not put their noses to drink although they would drink the water on one side below it.

Thus that man who had gone to Canada had been himself damming back for twenty-three years the coal oil which the State Geologist of Pennsylvania declared officially, as early as 1870, to be worth to our state a hundred millions of dollars. The city of Titusville now stands on that farm and the Pleasantville wells flow on, and that farmer who had studied all about the formation of the earth from the day of God's creation clear down to the present time, sold that farm for \$833, no cents sense."



**But I need** another illustration, and I found that in Massachusetts, and I am sorry I do not live in my old state. This young man I mention went out of the state to study -- went down to California to study mines and mining. They paid him fifteen dollars a week during his last year for his studies, and when he graduated they raised his pay from fifteen dollars to forty-five dollars and offered him a professorship. Then he went straight home to his mother and said, "Mother, I won't work for fifteen dollars a week. What is forty-five dollars a week for a man with a brain like mine! Mother, let me go to California and stake out gold claims and be immensely rich." "Now," said his mother, "I don't want you to be happy as it is to be rich."

But as he was the only son he had his way -- they always do; and they sold out in Massachusetts and he went to Wisconsin, where he went into the employ of the Superior Copper Mining Company. He was lost from sight in the employ of that company at fifteen dollars a week again. He was a geologist and had an interest in any mines that he should discover for that company. But I do not believe that he discovered a mine -- I do not know anything about it, but I do not believe he has. I know that he had gone from the old homestead before the farmer who had bought the homestead went to Canada, and he was bringing them in a large basket through the front gateway, the ends of the basket were fastened near together at the gate that the basket hugged very tight. So he set the basket on the ground and he pulled, first on one side and then on the other side.

Our farms in Massachusetts are mostly stone walls, and the farmers have to be economical in their gateways in order to have some place to put the stones. That basket hugged so tight that the farmer had to haul it through he noticed in the upper stone next the gate a block of native silver, and this professor of mines and mining and mineralogy, who would not work for forty-five dollars a week when he sold that homestead in Massachusetts, sat right on that stone to make the basket tight. When he brought up there; he had gone back and forth by that piece of silver, rubbed it with his hand and he seemed to say, "Come now, now, now, here is a hundred thousand dollars. Why not take it. There was no silver in Newburyport; it was all away off -- well, I don't know where it was, but it didn't, but somewhere else -- and he was a professor of mineralogy.



**I do not know** of anything I would enjoy better than to take the whole time tonight like that I have heard professors make. Yet I wish I knew what that man is doing out there, as he sits by his fireside, and he is saying to his friends. "Do you know that man Conwell that lives in Philadelphia?" "Oh, yes, I have heard of him." "And do you know that man that lives in that city?" "Yes, I have heard of him." And then he begins to laugh and laugh with his friends, "They have done the same thing I did, precisely." And that spoils the whole joke I have done it.

Ninety out of every hundred people here have made that mistake this very day. I say you ought to be rich; you have no right to be poor. To live in Philadelphia and not be rich is a misfortune, because you could have been rich just as well as be poor. Philadelphia furnishes many opportunities. You ought to be rich. But persons with certain religious prejudice will ask you to spend your time advising the rising generation to give their time to getting money -- do you have the commercial spirit?"

Yet I must say that you ought to spend time getting rich. You and I know there are some things more valuable than money; of course, we do. Ah, yes! By a heart made unspeakably sad by the autumn leaves now fall, I know there are some things higher and grander and sublimer than gold. Well does the man know, who has suffered, that there are some things sweeter and more sacred than gold. Nevertheless, the man of common sense also knows that there is not one thing that is not greatly enhanced by the use of money. Money is power.

Love is the grandest thing on God's earth, but fortunate the lover who has plenty of money. Money has powers; and for a man to say, "I do not want money," is to say, "I do not care for any good to my fellowmen." It is absurd thus to talk. It is absurd to disconnect them. I know a man of great life, and you ought to spend your time getting money, because of the power that money has. Yet this religious prejudice is so great that some people think it is a great honor to be called a saint, and am looking in the faces of people who think just that way.

I heard a man once say in a prayer-meeting that he was thankful that he was one of the poor. I silently wondered what his wife would say to that speech, as she took in washing to do while he sat and smoked on the veranda. I don't want to see any more of that kind of thing. I know a man who when a man could have been rich just as well, and he is now weak because he is poor, and he has done a great wrong; he has been untruthful to himself; he has been unkind to his fellowmen. I know a man who if we can by honorable and Christian methods, and these are the only methods that swing toward the goal of riches.



**I remember**, not many years ago, a young theological student who came into my room that he thought it was his duty to come in and "labor with me." I asked him what had he said: "I feel it is my duty to come in and speak to you, sir, and say that the Holy Scripture says that money is the root of all evil." I asked him where he found that saying, and he said he found it in the old Bible. I asked him whether he had made a new Bible, and he said, no, he had not gotten a new one in the old Bible. "Well," I said, "if it is in my Bible, I never saw it. Will you please get the book and let me see it?"

He left the room and soon came stalking in with his Bible open, with all the bigoted priestly sectarian, who founds his creed on some misinterpretation of Scripture, and he puts the book before me and fairly squealed into my ear, "There it is. You can read it for yourself." "Young man, you will learn, when you get a little older, that you cannot trust another to read the Bible for you." I said, "Now, you belong to another denomination. Please read the Bible for yourself. Remember that you are taught in a school where emphasis is exegesis." So he took the book and said, "The love of money is the root of all evil." Then he had it right.

The Great Book has come back into the esteem and love of the people, and into the remembrance of earth, and now you can quote it and rest your life and your death on it without any fear. When he quoted right from the Scriptures he quoted the truth. "The love of money is the root of all evil." Oh, that is it. It is the worship of the means instead of the end. Though you cannot read the Bible for yourself. When a man makes an idol of the money instead of the purposes for which he uses it, when he squeezes the dollar until the eagle squeals, then it is made the root of all evil. I know a man who had the money, what you could do for your wife, your child, and for your home and your education. Soon you could endow the Temple College yonder if you only had the money and the desire. And yet, my friend, people say you and I should not spend the time getting rich. How is it possible? The whole thing is. We ought to be rich, because money has power.

I think the best thing for me to do is to illustrate this, for if I say you ought to get rich, I will suggest how it is done. We get a prejudice against rich men because of the lies that are told about them. The lies that are told about Mr. Rockefeller because he has two hundred million dollars; yet how false is the representation of that man to the world. How little we can tell the truth nowadays when newspapers try to sell their papers entirely on some sensation! The way to get rich is something terrible, and I do not know that there is anything to illustrate this.

the newspapers now say about the city of Philadelphia.



**A young man** came to me the other day and said, "If Mr. Rockefeller, as you think, why is it that everybody says so much against him?" It is because he has gotten ahead whole of it -- just gotten ahead of us. Why is it Mr. Carnegie is criticized so sharply by . Because he has gotten more than we have. If a man knows more than I know, don't I i somewhat his learning? Let a man stand in a pulpit and preach to thousands, and if I h in my church, and they're all asleep, don't I criticize him? We always do that to the ma us. Why, the man you are criticizing has one hundred millions, and you have fifty cents have just what you are worth.

One of the richest men in this country came into my home and sat down in my parlor a see all those lies about my family in the papers?" "Certainly I did; I knew they were lie them." "Why do they lie about me the way they do?" "Well," I said to him, "if you will c for one hundred millions, I will take all the lies along with it." "Well," said he, "I don't s their thus talking about my family and myself. Conwell, tell me frankly, what do you th people think of me?" "Well," said I, "they think you are the blackest hearted villain that "But what can I do about it?" There is nothing he can do about it, and yet he is one of i Christian men I ever knew. If you get a hundred millions you will have the lies; you wil you can judge your success in any line by the lies that are told about you. I say that yc

But there are ever coming to me young men who say, "I would like to go into business "Why not?" "Because I have no capital to begin on." Capital, capital to begin on! What! in Philadelphia and looking at this wealthy generation, all of whom began as poor boys, capital to begin on? It is fortunate for you that you have no capital. I am glad you have rich man's son. A rich man's son in these days of ours occupies a very difficult position. pitied. A rich man's son cannot know the very best things in human life. He cannot. Th Massachusetts show us that not one out of seventeen rich men's sons ever die rich. Th luxury, they die in poverty. Even if a rich man's son retains his father's money, even th the best things of life.

A young man in our college yonder asked me to formulate for him what I thought was a man's history, and I studied it long and came back convinced that the happiest hour sees in any earthly matter is when a young man takes his bride over the threshold of t time, of the house he himself has earned and built, when he turns to his bride and with greater than any language of mine, he sayeth to his wife, "My loved one, I earned this earned it all. It is all mine, and I divide it with thee." That is the grandest moment a hu ever see. But a rich man's son cannot know that. He goes into a finer mansion, it may obliged to go through the house and say, "Mother gave me this, mother gave me that, me that, my mother gave me that," until his wife wishes she had married his mother.

Oh, I pity a rich man's son. I do. Until he gets so far along in his dudeism that he gets that and can't get them down. Didn't you ever see any of them astray at Atlantic City? scarecrows once and I never tire thinking about it. I was at Niagara Falls lecturing, and went to the hotel, and when I went up to the desk there stood there a millionaire's son was an indescribable specimen of anthropologic potency. He carried a goldheaded cane more in its head than he had in his. I do not believe I could describe the young man if still I must say that he wore an eye-glass he could not see through; patent leather sho walk in, and pants he could not sit down in -- dressed like a grasshopper!

Well, this human cricket came up to the clerk's desk just as I came in. He adjusted his in this wise and lisped to the clerk, because it's "Hinglish, you know," to lisp: "Thir, thir kindness to fuhnish me with thome papah and thome envelopehs!" The clerk measured and he pulled out a drawer and took some envelopes and paper and cast them across t turned away to his books.



**You should** have seen that specimen of humanity when the paper and envelopes ca counter -- he whose wants had always been anticipated by servants. He adjusted his u and he yelled after that clerk: "Come back here, thir, come right back here. Now, thir, thervant to take that papah and thothe envelopehs and carry them to yondah dethk." ( miserable, contemptible American monkey! He couldn't carry paper and envelopes twe he could not get his arms down. I have no pity for such travesties of human nature. If I am glad of it. You don't need capital; you need common sense, not copper cents.

A. T. Stewart, the great princely merchant of New York, the richest man in America in l

boy; he had a dollar and a half and went into the mercantile business. But he lost eight cents of his first dollar and a half because he bought some needles and thread and but people didn't want.



**Are you poor?** It is because you are not wanted and are left on your own hands. The lesson. Apply it whichever way you will it comes to every single person's life, young or old, and know what people needed, and consequently bought something they didn't want, and left on his hands a dead loss. A. T. Stewart learned there the great lesson of his mercantile business: never buy anything more until I first learn what the people want; then I'll make the purchase around to the doors and asked them what they did want, and when he found out what they wanted he invested his sixty-two and a half cents and began to supply a "known demand." I care not what your profession or occupation in life may be; I care not whether you are a lawyer, a doctor, a teacher or whatever else, the principle is precisely the same. We must know what the people want and then invest ourselves to supply that need, and success is almost certain.

A. T. Stewart went on until he was worth forty millions. "Well," you will say, "a man can get rich in New York, but cannot do it here in Philadelphia." The statistics very carefully gathered in New York showed one hundred and seven millionaires in the city worth over ten millions apiece. I have seen many men and people think they must go there to get rich. Out of that one hundred and seven millionaires, seven of them made their money in New York, and the others moved to New York after they had made, and sixty-seven out of the remaining hundred made their fortunes in towns of less than a thousand people, and the richest man in the country at that time lived in a town of thirty inhabitants, and always lived there and never moved away. It is not so much where you are. But at the same time if the largeness of the city comes into the problem, then remove to a smaller city that furnishes the great opportunity to make the millions of money.

The best illustration that I can give is in reference to John Jacob Astor, who was a poor man. He had all the money of the Astor family. He made more than his successors have ever earned. He held a mortgage on a millinery store in New York, and because the people could not manage to pay the interest and the rent, he foreclosed the mortgage and took possession of the store. He went into partnership with the man who had failed. He kept the same stock, did not give the man the capital, and he left them alone and he went out and sat down upon a bench in the park.



**Out there** on that bench in the park he had the most important, and, to my mind, the most profitable part of that partnership business. He was watching the ladies as they went by; and where is the opportunity that he wouldn't get rich at that business? But when John Jacob Astor saw a lady pass, with her head and her head up, as if she did not care if the whole world looked on her, he studied her. When that bonnet was out of sight he knew the shape of the frame and the color of the trim and the -- something on a bonnet. Sometimes I try to describe a woman's bonnet, but it is impossible. It would be out of style tomorrow night.

So John Jacob Astor went to the store and said: "Now, put in the show window just such a bonnet as you describe to me because," said he, "I have just seen a lady who likes just such a bonnet as you describe any more till I come back." And he went out again and sat on that bench in the park, and when a different form and complexion passed him with a bonnet of different shape and color, he said he, "put such a bonnet as that in the show window."

He didn't fill his show window with hats and bonnets which drive people away and then close the store and bawl because the people go somewhere else to trade. He didn't put a hat in the show window the like of which he had not seen before it was made up.



**In our city** especially, there are great opportunities for manufacturing, and the time the line is drawn very sharply between the stockholders of the factory and their employees. There has also come a discouraging gloom upon this country and the laboring men are discouraged because they are being held down by a crust over their heads through which they find it impossible to get up and the aristocratic moneyowner-himself is so far above that he will never descend to them. That is the thought that is in the minds of our people. But, friends, never in the history of this country there an opportunity so great for the poor man to get rich as there is now and in the cities. The very fact that they get discouraged is what prevents them from getting rich. That is the road is open, and let us keep it open between the poor and the rich.

I know that the labor unions have two great problems to contend with, and there is only one side to them. The labor unions are doing as much to prevent its solving as are capitalists today; positively two sides to it. The labor union has two difficulties; the first one is that it begins to scale for all classes on a par, and they scale down a man that can earn five dollars a day, in order to level up to him an imbecile that cannot earn fifty cents a day. That is a dangerous and discouraging thing for the working man. He cannot get the results of his better work or higher work or work longer; that is a dangerous thing, and in order to get a man free and every American equal to every other American, let the laboring man ask and get it -- not let any capitalist say to him: "You shall work for me for half of what you get; let any labor organization say: "You shall work for the capitalist for half your worth."

Be a man, be independent, and then shall the laboring man find the road ever open from poverty to wealth.

The other difficulty that the labor union has to consider, and this problem they have to solve, is the kind of orators who come and talk to them about the oppressive rich. I can in my own oration I have heard again and again under such circumstances. My life has been with me a laboring man myself. I have often, in their assemblies, heard the speech of the rich man invited to address the labor union. The man gets up before the assembled company of men and he begins by saying: "Oh, ye honest, industrious laboring men, who have furnished the world, who have built all the palaces and constructed all the railroads and covered the world with her steamships. Oh, you laboring men! You are nothing but slaves; you are ground down by the capitalist who is gloating over you as he enjoys his beautiful estates and as he has gold, and every dollar he owns is coined out of the heart's blood of the honest laboring man. He lies, and you know it is a lie; and yet that is the kind of speech that they are hearing and representing the capitalists as wicked and the laboring man so enslaved.

Why, how wrong it is! Let the man who loves his flag and believes in American principles, let his soul be brought to bring the capitalists and the laboring man together until they stand side by side, arm in arm, and work for the common good of humanity.

He is an enemy to his country who sets capital against labor or labor against capital.



**Suppose** I were to go down through this audience and ask you to introduce me to the man who lives here in Philadelphia. "The inventors of Philadelphia," you would say, "why, we have no great inventors here in Philadelphia. It is too slow to invent anything." But you do have just as great inventors in this audience, as ever invented a machine. But the probability is that the greatest inventor in the world with his discovery is some person, perhaps some lady, who thinks she could

Did you ever study the history of invention and see how strange it was that the man who made the greatest discovery did it without any previous idea that he was an inventor? Who are the inventors? They are persons with plain, straightforward common sense, who saw a need in the world and applied themselves to supply that need. If you want to invent anything, don't try to find the wheels in your head nor the wheels in your machine, but first find out what the people need, and then apply to that need, and this leads to invention on the part of people you would not dream of. The greatest inventors are simply great men; the greater the man the more simple the man; and the more simple the machine, the more valuable it is.

Did you ever know a really great man? His ways are so simple, so common, so plain, that any one could do what he is doing. So it is with the great men of the world over. If you know a neighbor of yours, you can go right up to him and say, "How are you, Jim, good morning. You are always so simple, for they are always so simple.

When I wrote the life of General Garfield, one of his neighbors took me to his back door and said, "Jim, Jim, Jim!" and very soon "Jim" came to the door and General Garfield let me in -- one of the grandest men of our century. The great men of the world are ever so. I was down in Virginia to an educational institution and was directed to a man who was setting out a tree. I asked him, "Do you think it would be possible for me to see General Robert E. Lee, the President of the University?" He said, "Sir, I am General Lee." Of course, when you meet such a man, you will find him a simple, plain man. Greatness is always just so modest and generally so simple.

I asked a class in school once who were the great inventors, and a little girl popped up and said, "Columbus." Well, now, she was not so far wrong. Columbus bought a farm and he carried on just as I carried on my father's farm. He took a hoe and went out and sat down on a rock as he sat upon that shore and looked out upon the ocean, noticed that the ships, as they sailed, sank deeper into the sea the farther they went. And since that time some other Spaniards have noticed that the tops of the masts dropped down out of the sea. But as Columbus noticed that the tops of the masts dropped down out of the sea, he is the way it is with this hoe handle; if you go around this hoe handle, the farther off you

down you go. I can sail around to the East Indies." How plain it all was. How simple the like the simplicity of a mountain in its greatness. Who are the great inventors? They are plain, everyday people who see the need and set about to supply it.

I was once lecturing in North Carolina, and the cashier of the bank sat directly behind a very large hat. I said to that audience, "Your wealth is too near to you; you are looking whispered to his friend, "Well, then, my wealth is in that hat." A little later, as he wrote "Wherever there is a human need there is a greater fortune than a mine can furnish." I thought, and he drew up his plan for a better hat pin than was in the hat before him as being manufactured. He was offered fifty-two thousand dollars for his patent. That morning before he got out of that hall. This is the whole question: Do you see a need?"



**I remember** well a man up in my native hills, a poor man, who for twenty years was in town in his poverty, who owned a widespreading maple tree that covered the poor man's benediction from on high. I remember that tree, for in the spring -- there were some rocks in that neighborhood when I was young -- in the spring of the year the man would put a ladder and the spouts that catch the maple sap, and I remember where that bucket was; and when the boys were, oh, so mean, that they went to that tree before that man had gotten out of morning, and after he had gone to bed at night, and drank up that sweet sap, I could see

He didn't make a great deal of maple sugar from that tree. But one day he made the sugar crystalline that the visitor did not believe it was maple sugar; thought maple sugar must be. He said to the old man: "Why don't you make it that way and sell it for confectionery?" The visitor caught his thought and invented the "rock maple crystal," and before that patent expired he had made a thousand dollars and had built a beautiful palace on the site of that tree. After forty years he awoke to find it had fortunes of money indeed in it. And many of us are right by the way of the fortune for us, and we own it, possess it, do what we will with it, but we do not learn it. We do not see the human need, and in these discoveries and inventions that is one of the most important things of life. I have received letters from all over the country and from England, where they are saying that they have discovered this and that, and one man out in Ohio took me through his factories last spring, and said that they cost him \$680,000, and, said he, "I was not so rich in the world when I heard your lecture 'Acres of Diamonds'; but I made up my mind to stop my fortune here, and here it is." He showed me through his unmortgaged possessions. I have had continual experience now as I travel through the country, after these many years. I do not mean to boast, but to show you that you can do the same if you will.

Who are the great inventors? I remember a good illustration in a man who used to live in Massachusetts. He was a shoemaker, and he was out of work and he sat around the house until he could go out doors." And he did what every husband is compelled by law to do -- he obeyed the law and went out and sat down on an ash barrel in his back yard. Think of it! Stranded on an ash barrel, an enemy in possession of the house! As he sat on that ash barrel, he looked down into the stream that ran through that back yard into the meadows, and he saw a little trout go flashing up to the bank, hiding under the bank. I do not suppose he thought of Tennyson's beautiful poem:

"Chatter, chatter as I flow,  
To join the brimming river,  
Men may come, and men  
may go, But I go on forever."

But as this man looked into the brook, he leaped off that ash barrel and managed to catch the trout with his fingers, and sent it to Worcester. They wrote back that they would give a five-dollar bill for the trout as that, not that it was worth that much, but they wished to help the poor man. So the man and his wife, now perfectly united, that five-dollar bill in prospect, went out to get another trout, but not another trout went up the stream to its source and down to the brimming river, but not another trout was caught the whole stream; and so they came home disconsolate and went to the minister. The minister said, "The trout grew, but he pointed the way. Said he, "Get Seth Green's book, and that will give you the information you want."

They did so, and found all about the culture of trout. They found that a trout lays thirty eggs every year and every trout gains a quarter of a pound every year, so that in four years a trout will furnish four tons per annum to sell to the market at fifty cents a pound. When they found that they didn't believe any such story as that, but if they could get five dollars apiece they would do something. And right in that same back yard with the coal sifter up stream and window looking down the stream, they began the culture of trout. They afterwards moved to the Hudson, and he became the authority in the United States upon the raising of fish, and he has been named to the United States Fish Commission in Washington. My lesson is that man's wealth was in that back yard for twenty years, but he didn't see it until his wife drove him out with a mop stick



**I remember** meeting personally a poor carpenter of Hingham, Massachusetts, who and in poverty. His wife also drove him out of doors. He sat down on the shore and wh shingle into a wooden chain. His children quarreled over it in the evening, and while he second one, a neighbor came along and said, "Why don't you whittle toys if you can ca said, "I don't know what to make!"

There is the whole thing. His neighbor said to him: "Why don't you ask your own childr is the use of doing that? My children are different from other people's children." I used that when I taught school. The next morning when his boy came down the stairway, he do you want for a toy?" "I want a wheelbarrow." When his little girl came down, he ask wanted, and she said, "I want a little doll's wash-stand, a little doll's carriage, a little d went on with a whole lot of things that would have taken his lifetime to supply. He con: children right there in his own house and began to whittle out toys to please them.

He began with his jack-knife, and made those unpainted Hingham toys. He is the riche New England States, if Mr. Lawson is to be trusted in his statement concerning such th man's fortune was made by consulting his own children in his own house. You don't ne own house to find out what to invent or what to make. I always talk too long on this su to meet the great men who are here tonight. The great men! We don't have any great Great men! You say that they all come from London, or San Francisco, or Rome, or Ma anywhere else but there -- anywhere else but Philadelphia -- and yet, in fact, there are in Philadelphia as in any city of its size. There are great men and women in this audien

Great men, I have said, are very simple men. Just as many great men here as are to b The greatest error in judging great men is that we think that they always hold an office nothing of its greatest men. Who are the great men of the world? The young man and well ask the question. It is not necessary that they should hold an office, and yet that i That is the idea we teach now in our high schools and common schools, that the great are those who hold some high office, and unless we change that very soon and do awa prejudice, we are going to change to an empire. There is no question about it. We mus are great only on their intrinsic value, and not on the position they may incidentally ha yet, don't blame the young men saying that they are going to be great when they get i position.



**I ask this audience** again who of you are going to be great? Says a young man: great." "When are you going to be great?" "When I am elected to some political office.' the lesson, young man; that it is prima facie evidence of littleness to hold public office government? Think of it. This is a government of the people, and by the people, and fo not for the officeholder, and if the people in this country rule as they always should rul only the servant of the people, and the Bible says that "the servant cannot be greater t

The Bible says that "he that is sent cannot be greater than he who sent him." In this cc are the masters, and the officeholders can never be greater than the people; they shou servants of the people, but they are not our greatest men. Young man, remember that a great man holding any political office in this country unless he took that office at an e It is a loss to every great man to take a public office in our country. Bear this in mind, you cannot be made great by a political election.



**Another young man** says, "I am going to be a great man in Philadelphia some tir When are you going to be great?" "When there comes another war! When we get into c Mexico, or England, or Russia, or Japan, or with Spain again over Cuba, or with New Je up to the cannon's mouth, and amid the glistening bayonets I will tear down their flag : will come home with stars on my shoulders, and hold every office in the gift of the gov: be great." "No, you won't! No, you won't; that is no evidence of true greatness, young blame that young man for thinking that way; that is the way he is taught in the high sc way history is taught in college. He is taught that the men who held the office did all th

I remember we had a Peace Jubilee here in Philadelphia soon after the Spanish War. Pe these visitors think we should not have had it until now in Philadelphia, and as the grea going up Broad Street I was told that the tally-ho coach stopped right in front of my hc coach was Hobson, and all the people threw up their hats and swung their handkerchie

"Hurrah for Hobson!" I would have yelled too, because he deserves much more of his credit than he ever received. But suppose I go into the high school tomorrow and ask, "Boys, who surprised them? They answer me "Hobson," they tell me seven-eighths of a lie -- seven-eighths of a lie were eight men who sunk the Merrimac. The other seven men, by virtue of their position, were exposed to the Spanish fire while Hobson, as an officer, might reasonably be behind them.

Why, my friends, in this intelligent audience gathered here tonight I do not believe I can find a person that can name the other seven men who were with Hobson. Why do we teach history? We ought to teach that however humble the station a man may occupy, if he does his duty in his place, he is just as much entitled to the American people's honor as is a king upon a throne. It is as a mother did her little boy in New York when he said, "Mamma, what great building is that?" "That is General Grant's tomb." "Who was General Grant?" "He was the man who put down the rebellion and the way to teach history?"

Do you think we would have gained a victory if it had depended on General Grant alone? Is there a tomb on the Hudson at all? Why, not simply because General Grant was present, but that tomb is there because he was a representative man and represented a thousand men who went down to death for this nation and many of them as great as General Grant. It is why that beautiful tomb stands on the heights over the Hudson.

I remember an incident that will illustrate this, the only one that I can give tonight. I am sure you know it, but I don't dare leave it out. I close my eyes now; I look back through the years to 1862, in my native town in the Berkshire Hills, I can see that cattle-show ground filled with people; the church there and the town hall crowded, and hear bands playing, and see flags flying and a stream of people -- well do I recall at this moment that day.



**The people** had turned out to receive a company of soldiers, and that company carried the Common. They had served out one term in the Civil War and had reenlisted, and they were received by their native townsmen. I was but a boy, but I was captain of that company and they were proud on that day -- why, a cambric needle would have burst me all to pieces.

As I marched on the Common at the head of my company, there was not a man more than I. I marched into the town hall and then they seated my soldiers down in the center of the town hall, my place down on the front seat, and then the town officers filed through the great hall and stood close and packed in that little hall. They came up on the platform, formed a half circle, and the mayor of the town, the "chairman of the selectmen" in New England, took his seat at the head of that half circle.

He was an old man, his hair was gray; he never held an office before in his life. He thought that was all he needed to be a truly great man, and when he came up he adjusted his position and glanced calmly around the audience with amazing dignity. Suddenly his eyes fell upon me, and the good old man came right forward and invited me to come up on the stand with the town officers. I went up on the stand! No town officer ever took notice of me before I went to war. Now, my friends, that one town officer was there who advised the teachers to "whale" me, but I mean to mention him.

So I was invited up on the stand with the town officers. I took my seat and let my sword rest on my lap and folded my arms across my breast and waited to be received. Napoleon the Fifth! Peace and destruction and a fall. When I had gotten my seat and all became silent through the hall, the selectmen arose and came forward with great dignity to the table, and we all supplicated the Congregational minister, who was the only orator in the town, and who was invited to give an oration to the returning soldiers.

But, friends, you should have seen the surprise that ran over that audience when they saw that old farmer was going to deliver that oration himself. He had never made a speech in his life, but he fell into the same error that others have fallen into, he seemed to think that the office of an orator. So he had written out a speech and walked up and down the pasture until he had frightened the heart and frightened the cattle, and he brought that manuscript with him, and, taking it up, he spread it carefully upon the table. Then he adjusted his spectacles to be sure that he could read, he walked far back on the platform and then stepped forward like this. He must have studied much, for he assumed an elocutionary attitude; he rested heavily upon his left heel, slipped his right foot, threw back his shoulders, opened the organs of speech, and advanced his right leg at an angle of forty-five.



**As he stood** in this elocutionary attitude this is just the way that speech went, this

of my friends have asked me if I do not exaggerate it, but I could not exaggerate it. In the way it went; although I am not here for the story but the lesson that is back of it:

"Fellow citizens." As soon as he heard his voice, his hand began to shake like that, his tremble, and then he shook all over. He coughed and choked and finally came around to a manuscript. Then he began again: "Fellow citizens: We -- are -- we are -- we are -- we are -- we are very happy -- we are very happy -- we are very happy -- to welcome back to their native to who have fought and bled -- and come back again to their native town. We are especially especially -- we are especially -- we are especially pleased to see with us today this young hero who in imagination (friends, remember, he said 'imaginatic' said that, I would not be egotistical enough to refer to it) this young hero who, in imagination seen leading his troops -- leading -- we have seen leading -- we have seen leading his deadly breach. We have seen his shining -- his shining -- we have seen his shining -- we have seen his shining sword -- flashing in the sunlight as he shouted to his troops, 'Con



**Oh dear,** dear, dear, dear! How little that good, old man knew about war. If he had known about war, he ought to have known what any soldier in this audience knows is true, that it is a crime for an officer of infantry ever in time of danger to go ahead of his men. I, with my shining sword flashing in the sunlight, shouting to my troops: "Come on." I never did it. Do you suppose I went ahead of my men to be shot in the front by the enemy and in the back by my own men for an officer. The place for the officer is behind the private soldier in actual fighting.

How often, as a staff officer, I rode down the line when the rebel cry and yell was coming through the woods, sweeping along over the fields, and shouted, "Officers to the rear! Officers to the rear!" Every officer goes behind the line of battle, and the higher the officer rank, the farther behind because he is any the less brave, but because the laws of war require that to be done. I was up on the front line and were killed you would lose your battle anyhow, because he has his battle in his brain, and must be kept in comparative safety.

I, with my "shining sword flashing in the sunlight." Ah! There sat in the hall that day my boy that boy their last hardtack, who had carried him on their backs through deep rivers. But they were there; they had gone down to death for their country. The speaker mentioned them, but they were little noticed, and yet they had gone down to death for their country, gone down for a cause that was right and still believe was right, though I grant to the other side the same that I grant to these men who had actually died for their country were little noticed, and the hero of that day was little noticed.

Why was he the hero? Simply because that man fell into the same foolishness. This boy and those were only private soldiers. I learned a lesson that I will never forget. Greatness is not in holding some office; greatness really consists in doing some great deed with little means. The accomplishment of vast purposes from the private ranks of life, that is true greatness.

He who can give to this people better streets, better homes, better schools, better churches, better religion, more of happiness, more of God, he that can be a blessing to the community in his day, that man tonight will be great anywhere, but he who cannot be a blessing where he now lives will be little noticed anywhere on the face of God's earth. "We live in deeds, not years, in feeling, not in figures, in thoughts, not breaths; we should count time by heart throbs, in the cause of right." But the man who lives who thinks most."

If you forget everything I have said to you, do not forget this, because it contains more than all I have said. Baily says: "He most lives who thinks most, who feels the noblest, and

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