

BOOK THREE.

MERCHANTS' TRIBUTE.

LUNCHEON TENDERED BY THE MERCHANTS OF THE
UNITED STATES, NOVEMBER 16, 1911.

THAT Mr. Wanamaker the merchant has only competitors among his fellow-merchants, not rivals—only friends, not enemies—was proved at the luncheon which was given to him by the merchants of the country in celebration of his fiftieth year in business—his Golden Jubilee—and the fifteenth anniversary of his entrance into New York mercantile life by acquiring the old A. T. Stewart Store on Broadway.

To mark these events, a massive silver loving cup was presented to him.

The foremost merchants of the country, prominent professional men, members of the clergy, eminent journalists, public officials and bankers were the hosts of Mr. Wanamaker at luncheon on the afternoon of November 16, 1911, at Sherry's in New York City.

He was escorted there from his New York Store by a group of merchant friends led by Mr. John Daniell, Jr., of the firm of John Daniell's Sons on Broadway, whose members have for many years been personal and business friends of Mr. Wanamaker. Mr. Daniell was Chairman of the day.

The decorations for the occasion were golden in color, to mark the Jubilee, and the loving cup rested—veiled—on a pedestal behind the head table, near the guest of honor.

The invocation was offered by the Rev. Dr. Edward G. Thurber.

"Oh, my God, we thank Thee for every kind and noble gift which Thou hast bestowed upon us, and we lift up our eyes and voices in grateful recognition of Thy most tender mercies and for all that Thou hast done for us through all the walks of life, and we beg Thy blessing upon us, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN."

During the dinner a flashlight photograph was taken, which is reproduced opposite this page.

Mr. Daniell introduced the toastmaster, Mr. Patrick Francis Murphy, president of the firm of Mark Cross & Sons, who was greeted with the expectant cheerfulness which that gentleman's widely known wit always evokes.

Mr. Murphy spoke as follows:

"Gentlemen:—It may not have escaped the notice of this intelligent audience that the reward of labor is tardy indeed when a man must wait fifty years for his luncheon. (*Laughter.*) For a man to have lived without luncheon is not so remarkable as to have lived to obtain one—from his competitors. (*Laughter and applause.*)

"It is one of the fine arts to achieve success and be forgiven, for in this life recognition is generally tardy. The man who is universally admired and praised by his fellow-creatures is seldom in competition with the living, and the longer he is dead the more keenly alive are his competitors to acknowledge his merits. (*Laughter.*)

"Many an obituary notice reads: '*Please omit flowers.*' This may be a gentle yet grave reminder that a few bouquets during lifetime might have been of more service. (*Applause.*) Listening to men's voices, as our guest does today, in testimony of their high and distinguished regard, is, perhaps, more acceptable than to wait to be called the 'late lamented,' or to have created in his honor one of those marble ingenuities of post-

mortem politeness. In this life—and I may say in the next—the inscription on the tombstone can seldom be used as a reference. (*Laughter.*)

"Every man knows how embarrassing it is to receive tributes, and whether he deserves them or not, it is just as embarrassing. (*Laughter.*) Some men never realize how valuable they are until they are sued for breach of promise, (*Laughter*) and often on an occasion like this, the guest of honor suddenly discovers what a great man he really is without knowing it. And when he hears amiable qualities attributed to him he begins to wonder whether he has not been of too modest a disposition. And that is fatal, for when a man knows that he is modest, then half his modesty is already gone. Modesty is an old-fashioned virtue and an excellent thing; still, in this strenuous age some people seem to get along very well without it. (*Laughter and applause.*) The meek may inherit the earth—later.

"Some men are born great, some acquire greatness in Philadelphia, and the greater they are the more this great city welcomes and assimilates them. New York takes a special pride in our guest; a pride in his character, a pride in his success. He has come here in the Autumn of life to sow his 'Quaker Oats,' (*laughter and applause*) and they have grown to be one of New York's great assets—I may say one of its luxuries.

"Our guest agrees that once only a man is young, so he gives that 'once' an infinite extension. To be seventy-three years young is better than to be forty years old. (*Applause.*) Our guest illustrates the fact that a man's age is not always determined by his birth certificate. A man's mind is parcel of his fortunes, and with that disposition he may cultivate a youthfulness in the heart that bids defiance to old age.

"The Greeks had a classic saying that '*Whom the gods love die young,*' and they must have meant that no matter how many years roll their relentless wheels over a man—though the snows of age fall on his head—they do not always change the complexion of his heart. Blest

with those serene qualities of mind he comes, like our guest, under the full meaning of that verse: *'Whom the gods love die young'*—he will die young because he refuses to grow old! (*Applause.*)

"I am reminded at this time, gentlemen, that it is afternoon in the busy marts of commerce, and it would be better for a speaker to close his remarks in the middle of his speech. This gives the audience a chance to be satisfied.

"I will call upon a gentleman who enters on a new occupation today. We have a secretary of this affair who has something to read and say to you—Mr. George B. Cortelyou." (*Applause.*)

Mr. Cortelyou opened his remarks by quoting some of the letters received in answer to the invitations for the luncheon.

"Mr. Toastmaster and Gentlemen:—I have here a few sheets stripped from a great mass of similar communications handed me by my friend Mr. Murphy. They begin with the sincere regrets of THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES and of his SECRETARY that they cannot be here, and next I come to a communication reading as follows:

"ALBANY, N. Y., Nov. 14, 1911.

"MR. JOHN DANIELL, JR.,

"Dear Sir:—I am directed by Governor Dix to acknowledge the receipt of the invitation of the Merchants of the United States to be present at the luncheon to Honorable John Wanamaker, to be held at Sherry's, November 16th. His Excellency deeply regrets that it will be impossible for him to be present on this occasion, and directs me to convey to Mr. Wanamaker his hearty congratulations on having rounded out with great success fifty years of business life.

"Yours very truly,

"JOHN A. DIX,

"Signed for the Governor by his Military Secretary."

"I have next a communication from Philadelphia:

"On my return, too late to accept, I find an invitation to be a guest at the luncheon to Mr. John Wanamaker. I am well within limits of conservatism when I say that the service your distinguished guest has rendered to the mercantile world has not be excelled by any living man. The merchants of New York, the merchants of America, the merchants of the world, honor themselves and honor their calling by honoring John Wanamaker. I regret my inability to attend. My good wishes go with you.

"(Signed) LESLIE M. SHAW."

"I have also a very earnest letter from GENERAL FREDERICK D. GRANT; also a cordial letter from one of Mr. Wanamaker's old competitors and old friends, ISAAC CLOTHIER, of Philadelphia.

"I will read you now a telegram from Chicago:

"Am detained in Chicago by legal matters and cannot be with you when you give to John Wanamaker, on his fiftieth anniversary in business, the cup that is a testimonial of the honor in which this foremost American merchant is held by his fellow-merchants. It gave me great pleasure to coöperate in planning this presentation, and it would give me still greater pleasure to be present to manifest my admiration for the high business principles which he has practiced during his long career and which have been an inspiration to every other merchant. I send sincerest wishes for his continued prosperity through many more years of health and happiness.

"(Signed) HENRY SIEGEL."

"Here is a very interesting letter from another of Mr. Wanamaker's competitors:

"It would afford me very great pleasure to attend the celebration in honor of John Wanamaker. I regret exceedingly, however, my inability to be present in person. I desire to take this opportunity to convey to Mr. Wanamaker my sincere appreciation and esteem, and to offer my congratulations together with my very best wishes to him on this occasion.

"(Signed) BENJAMIN ALTMAN."

"Also a letter of a similar character from MR. A. D. JUILLIARD and a letter from the VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE PENN MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY, MR. L. K. PASSMORE, in the course of which he says:

"There is no man who deserves such a compliment above Mr. Wanamaker, in my estimation. Not only his success in business, but the great work he has done socially, politically and religiously, stamps him in many ways the greatest man of our time. If opportunity presents, assure him of my highest respect and tender him my best regard."

"I have here also a letter from MR. FRANK DALE LANNE, the PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL BOARD OF TRADE, in which he says:

"To honor Mr. Wanamaker as being the great leader in business methods is but right. His fifty years of honorable business have proven to the business world both his ability and integrity, and all join in wishing him a long life and continued success. Will you express to Mr. Wanamaker my sincerest regrets that I did not get this invitation earlier and could then have been with you all in his honor?"

"I will now read a part of a letter from one of New York's leading bankers, who regrets his inability to be present:

"His whole career has been one which may well serve as a path to be followed by our children and our children's children. If a dime were to be donated by every one of the legions who admire him, there would be no banquet hall in the world large enough to contain the loving-cup made from the silver that would be contributed. The merchants honor themselves in honoring him, and I hope that he will be blessed with a long life to enjoy the fruits of his labor.

"(Signed) HENRY CLEWS."

"The following, after expressing regrets, reads:

"The tribute you are paying Mr. Wanamaker is well deserved, for he is a towering figure in American mercantile life. He won his success by ability little less than genius. He is a veritable merchant prince, and his

career is an inspiration to every able-bodied, sane-minded American youth, however humble his circumstances. I heartily join in the congratulations to Mr. Wanamaker on the fiftieth anniversary of his business life and in the wish that he may enjoy many more years of usefulness.

"(Signed) ADOLPH S. OCHS,
"Editor of *The New York Times*."

"Now it does not fall exactly within the rôle of secretary to do anything more than to read such communications, but I was asked also to say just a word, and it will be only a word.

"Four years ago, at the opening of the New Store here in New York, I had the great privilege of being present. At that time several of the speakers referred not only to the great development of Mr. Wanamaker's business, but also to the wonderful development of business in this city of New York, and I think the keynote of the addresses on that occasion was this: That however great the business advance might have been, and however much greater advance we might look for in the future, it would not be deserved by the city or its people if in any way they lost their moral sense in the conduct of business. At that time we felt that the man we then honored, and today honor, had, in the various relations in which he had been prominent in his own city of Philadelphia, in his relations as a great merchant, in his relations to political activity in city and state, and later in the much greater development of business in this city—that he has stood for those things which meant stability and growth on right lines. And today, gentlemen, speaking to you as business men, it seems to me that this is a great opportunity to emphasize those things which are needful to us as business men at the present time.

"Of course, we all know that the people today are seeking for the things that are vital to their welfare, and they are looking earnestly for men and measures that shall be agencies through which may be accomplished the things they have in mind and that are wanted all over the land—honest business and honest government; and I firmly believe they want peace in the business world. (*Applause.*) But they insist that the only peace upon which business men can thrive, as this business has thriven, is the peace of fair play and honorable deal-

ing. (*Applause.*) And it is because this man has stood for fifty years or more as an exponent of that kind of business that I address these remarks to him—not because he is exceptional, but because I consider him a type of the American merchant who is largely in the majority in this country today. It is because he is a type of the fair-minded business man that we gladly gather round this board today to pay him tribute at the end of fifty years of honorable business life." (*Loud applause.*)

THE TOASTMASTER:

"*Gentlemen.*—The injunction to love your neighbor has been repeated so often that there is no doubt but that it sometimes happens, and one of the neighbors of Mr. Wanamaker has been selected to perform the principal part in the proceedings this afternoon, a neighbor for whom Mr. Wanamaker has a deep love, loyal attachment and loyal devotion. I present to you Mr. J. F. Daniell." (*Applause.*)

"*Mr. Toastmaster and Gentlemen.*—On occasions of this kind it is generally the rule for the speaker to address the assemblage. On this occasion I do not speak to them but for them, and my remarks are addressed to the gentleman whom we honor today.

"Mr. Wanamaker, it is an uncommon occurrence for a man to celebrate fifty years of business life, and it must be pleasing to you, sir, to realize that your fellow business men throughout this country desire to join with you in the happiness of this occasion. While this celebration primarily is in honor of your fifty years of active business life, the date of this luncheon marks the fifteenth anniversary of your branching out from the City of Brotherly Devotion to the City of Brotherly Commotion.

"To refer to 'The Wanamaker Store' (as you so modestly term it) as a mercantile establishment would be an injustice to that great educational institution which you have built and are operating, where thousands of people receive a thorough education in modern and honest business methods, and—in addition thereto—receive liberal salaries. You also educate the public—your visitors—for do you not present to them exhibitions, one

after another, of the highest character? Truly a man's personality is reflected in his business or in any endeavor, and your entire personality, sir, is reflected in all your business operations.

"While carving your own fortune you are not carving the fortunes of others, but assisting them to carve fortunes of their own. You are the father of modern, honest advertising; you are so broad and you love sentiment and tradition so much that you keep alive the name of our foremost business man of a generation ago, Alexander T. Stewart. (*Applause.*) In your busy existence you have not neglected your patriotic duty as a citizen: you have lent your services to the Federal Government as Postmaster-General and reflected great credit on yourself and on the Nation. To be sure, you met defeat running for Governor and Senator, but that defeat was handed to you by professional politicians, and you have the satisfaction of knowing, Mr. Wanamaker, that you went into defeat standing for honest and clean government. (*Applause.*)

"Truly a man knows his own virtues better than anyone else, but I am expressing to you, Mr. Wanamaker, the sentiments of your fellow-merchants throughout the country, and as a tribute of the high esteem in which you are held, we desire to present to our foremost merchant this cup, bearing, as it does appropriately, the oak and the laurel, so truthfully representative of yourself, Mr. Wanamaker; and we hope you will live many years of happiness and health and that this cup will recall the sentiment which goes with it!" (*Loud applause.*)

As he spoke, Mr. Daniell turned to the pedestal behind him, and drew away the flag from the loving cup which it veiled. It was of silver, standing nearly two feet high, in the Greek amphora shape, with decorations of gold. Under a wreath of oak and laurel leaves appeared the following inscription:

PRESENTED TO
JOHN WANAMAKER
AS A TRIBUTE OF THE HIGH ESTEEM
IN WHICH HE IS HELD BY HIS FELLOW MERCHANTS
OF THE UNITED STATES
1911-1861

There was an outburst of applause as Mr. Wanamaker rose to speak. His manner revealed how deeply he was affected by the cordial expressions of good will and affection on every hand. He said:

*“Mr. Toastmaster and Gentlemen:—*I am very pleased to be sure that I really am John Wanamaker. The graceful and most complimentary speeches that have introduced the hospitality of the day led me to think that it must be some other man of whom you were speaking! It must be very clear to you that there are compensations in a business life beyond the percentages of profit that appear in the cash book.

*“*Before I venture to speak I want to warn you that I would seem to be taxing your courtesy were I to trust myself—as I like best to do—just to the freedom of the hour, and to the inspiration of the occasion, because first of all I want to say some things to you that I shall not be able to say when the centennial comes around. I should like to live long enough to come to your fiftieth anniversary and to see the white wine of your lives put into silver!

*“*First of all, I think it only proper for me to say—understanding as I do the engagements of business life, since you have taken so much of the heart of the day to give me the pleasure of taking your hands and looking into your faces and hearing the good cheer of your voices—that you must feel free to leave at any time, if you have engagements, without any sense of discourtesy to me.

*“*It is impossible for me to convey to you the kind of emotion that is filling me. You will have to live, to climb for fifty years through the stiff winds and breast the stirring seas of a busy life, to understand that in all that time, almost unconsciously, other people were making records of something about you.

*“*I stood one day in the Empire Building, I think it was, waiting for some information about the coming underground roads, when Mr. Edward M. Shepard came in. We talked and looked out over the graveyard from the tenth story. And he said, as I remember it, (it was recalled to me today by what the Toastmaster said) *“*These are the men who have finished their work, and

made their record, and filed their accounts in stone.’ I am glad that I have not done that. Life is a beautiful thing to us. The purposes of our lives are in some sense being worked out day by day with honor to ourselves and with benefit to our country.

*“*To be the guest of a company so distinguished—prominent men from several States West and East, North and South, and from this city—easily overcomes a Philadelphian. I feel as I were transported to the mountain peaks of the great Himalayas in India—until I remember that I am in the United States, and then I realize that it is the Himalayas of American business men that I am in the presence of, who have given me the privilege of seeing them together, that I may get the inspiration of their forceful lives.

*“*I am an old-timer in the total abstinence ranks, but today I am drinking very deeply and intoxicatingly of the wine of adulation. The vintage, fifty years in ripening, brims over from the loving cup that you have so generously chosen for me. Its shining beauty is emblematic of the honor, the bright good faith and the enduring qualities of the new friendships born with your kindness to me.

*“*In almost every period in the history of the world, generals on battlefields who have returned from their victories have been crowned with high titles, and positions of honor have been bestowed upon them by their countrymen and their Kings. It would seem by this token that those of us who are in the battle of daily life, striving for principle and raising the level of the daily transactions, may at some time, not so far distant, find that such heroism was worth while, and that it did receive the notice that encourages other men to do similar work. It is one of the beautiful things about the old country, and especially of the British Empire, that not only are the distinguished military and naval men given recognition, but the humbler men in professional life; in literary work; in mercantile and in mechanical life; inventors and artists; all receive at the hands of the King some kind of notice that presents them before the community as being worthy of special honors. It seems to me that it is a wonderful encouragement for the young man, and I have often felt that it might be a

great service in our country if there were any way to do it here.

"Fifty years steadily in business life seems like a long time to be in one place working out one purpose. To a man of my age fifty years does not seem to be as much as it did when I was twenty-two, beginning to save a part of the first of my own earnings that I was able to put aside. But there are trees in California, in the Yosemite, said to be two thousand years old; fish in the sea said to be five hundred years old; turtles now and then picked up in the forests that have had their backs scraped with an age of one and two hundred years. One ought to leave some kind of mark with fifty years to make it.

"To love to work and to have fifty years in active business is a great privilege. I would be glad to be called as a witness in this high court that the merchant's life, with its necessity for study, for hard, straight thinking, for knowledge of the world and apprenticeship in the questions of tariff and of finance, is a wonderful education; and that it takes wonderful self-denial and long hours of toil to become equipped to be a good citizen. I am willing to confess to you that I have endeavored to make a boy's dream a tangible reality, and with unconquerable purpose I have steadily followed the North Star that I saw in the sky from the beginning, keeping it ahead of me always, and taking every kind of encouragement as simply the starting point for some other achievement.

"There are no locks on the doors of wisdom, knowledge, honest enterprise and the opportunities on every side. Wherever a man's lot is cast, or whoever he may be, capitalist or capitalless, knocking steadily and persistently at these doors will surely open at least one of them to success.

"I am proud of each of the two cities in which I find so much pleasure and labor. The old city of the Declaration of Independence is taking on a new life. New York, the gateway to America, is, in many respects, the most wonderful city in the world and hardly any of us can tell what its greatness will be. This is a good deal for a native-born Philadelphian to say of a two-million city two hours distant!

"But not as a Philadelphian nor as a New Yorker do

I wish to speak to you today. This distinguished company gathers representatives from the East and West, the North and South. I hail you as citizens of the United States, and, sinking personalities, I take the liberty of stepping out of the narrow circle of one city and one business, claiming citizenship with you in the United States. Standing here together in good-fellowship, hailing each other as citizens of the world's greatest nation—proud of its history and its present position among the nations, its growth and its prosperity—as laborers for its success and pledged to its further development, may it not be possible for us to throw into the stream of business life a Golden Anniversary pebble that will make an everlasting circle until it ripples over the entire continent? (*Applause.*)

"Greater than any line of railroads from the Atlantic Coast to the Golden Horn, greater than any fleet of ocean greyhounds, is the body of commercial men scattered all over the United States, of which body you and I are units. These are they who initiate and maintain, by manufacture and distribution, the business which makes the life and prosperity of the Nation. But for the commerce of the land the bankers could not use their money, nor could the railroads be supported by freights and travelers. We are at the very heart of the prosperity of this country.

"Commerce is not a speculation; it is the very life blood that pulsates through every fibre of a healthy body politic. What will it matter what Wall Street does, or what the great Steel, Tobacco or Oil Trusts do, if the commerce of the country is kept on an even keel? (*Applause.*)

"To be so busy, each of us in our exclusive corner, and to be unmindful of the things that underlie the foundations which safeguard the steady and successful condition of commercial life, is to have no one to blame but ourselves for halting, sluggish, uncertain and unprofitable trade. Business is a science, and it requires thorough knowledge, scientific treatment and far-seeing vision on the part of the efficient, unselfish, broad and patriotic men who love their country and who are capable of steering affairs, to avoid striking the treacherous rocks of falsehood, panic, and the depressing years which grow out of other conditions than famine, fire

and floods. The Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce, useful as they are, do little more than right the less important matters—mostly detail—rather than inaugurate great movements that promote prosperity.

“In this assembly of more than one hundred able and successful representative leaders of commerce from various parts of the United States, there is enough power to set in motion a force—not new, but only latent—that would put new life into the business arteries of the United States. The same spirit and enthusiasm and broad outlook that constituted the Union Leagues of the North and South fifty years ago, doubled now in strength and ability by the new Union in which we live, move and have our being, which makes us brothers, one and inseparable, now and forever—this is what is needed to work not alone for the welfare and success of mere individuals, but for the welfare of all.

“By joining hands in a practical way, the power of a million of merchants, of whom we are one hundred representatives, may be exerted for the things which guarantee the general good, which will conserve business prosperity throughout the nation. The country has given to us everything we have got. We have toiled for it, but we have had the opportunity. We owe something to the country as merchants, and it is for this that I am speaking to you today: we must have some patriotism for the greatest kingdom on the face of the earth—the United States of America. (*Applause.*)

“It is known that certain organized societies and religious bodies, in this and other countries, concentrate occasionally and project their power for or against public measures, legislation, and even candidates for office. Why is it not wise and noble for the Honorable Merchants of the United States to be united in a fraternity, non-political and non-sectarian, independent of race, creed or color, for the safeguarding and guiding of business conditions, to make possible the steady continuance of good times and employments for the people by checking sensationalisms? In the business of the country it seems to me that the merchant has a far wider reach of contact with men and affairs. It is not a life in a little court of honor to the men who know the law and execute it. It is the greatest of the stars of

the old British Empire—the respect for law and the assurance of its prompt and not tardy administration.

“Is there anything more practical than the establishment in the Government, or outside of it, of a Supreme Bench of qualified business men—not lawyers (with all honor to these distinguished gentlemen, one of the greatest of them all in the chair of the Chief Executive of this country, magnificent in his honesty and in his clear head)—not doctors, nor men of other professions; but plain, trusted, experienced business men—as a Court of Authority, with a million of votes behind it, and important enough to command the attention of Presidents, Congressmen and Senators, few of whom know the actualities or the realities of the tariff or the changing trend of commercial or financial questions?

“By getting advance intelligent informations, giving discreet and patient counsel and assistance to our public officials, and forecasting perils to business so as to prevent them, by their knowledge and labors, they could aid in formulating legislation and movements; they could watch and prevent, by publicity and otherwise, the selfish efforts of schemers to gain dishonest profit by dishonest combinations and misstatements, for gambling purposes, precipitating such general and country-wide depression as affects all business interests.

“The widespread hatred engendered unfairly, as I firmly believe, against Wall Street and the Trusts, paralyzing honorable business undertakings and creating prejudices, irritations and losses of millions of dollars, has been most harmful to the United States at home and abroad. The men who combined their own private capital in the Steel and other Trusts, have saved many concerns from bankruptcy. Many old, dying plants were reorganized and by economies made to produce profits for poverty-stricken owners. I might take you back to the days referred to by my good friend the Ex-Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Cortelyou, when John Sherman, the author of the Sherman Act, and Benjamin Harrison, one of the greatest lawyers of his time, and John W. Noble, one of the most important lawyers of St. Louis, were in constant discussion over that Sherman Bill.

“It is a serious thing to fill the people's minds with wrong, and to spread such poison over all the country, checking business, stopping building and lowering the