

DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON.

The Grandmother.

"The unforgotten fact that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois. II Tim. 1:5.

In this love-letter which Paul, the old minister, is writing to Timothy, the young minister, the family record is brought out. Paul practically says: "Timothy, what a good grandmother you had! You ought to be better than most good folks, because not only was your mother good, but your grandmother. Two preceding generations of piety ought to give you a mighty push in the right direction."

The fact was that Timothy needed encouragement. He was in poor health, having a weak stomach, and was dyspeptic, and Paul prescribed for him a tonic, "a little wine, for thy stomach's sake"—not much wine, but a little wine, and only as a medicine. And if the wine then had been as much adulterated with logwood and strychnine as our modern wines, he would not have prescribed any.

But Timothy, not strong physically, is encouraged spiritually by the recital of grandmotherly excellence, Paul hinting to him, as I hint this day to you, that God sometimes gathers up, as in a reservoir away back of the active generations of to-day, a godly influence, and then in response to prayer, lets down the power upon children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The world is woefully in want of a table of statistics in regard to what is the protractedness and immensity of INFLUENCE OF ONE GOOD WOMAN in the Church and world. We have accounts of how much evil has been wrought by Margaret, the mother of criminals, who lived near a hundred years ago, and of how many hundreds of criminals she descended furnished for the penitentiary and the gallows, and how many hundreds of thousands of dollars they cost this country in their arraignment and prison support, as well as in the property they burglarized or destroyed. But will not some one come out with brain comprehensive enough, and heart warm enough, and pen keen enough to give us the facts in regard to some good woman of a hundred years ago, and let us know how many Christian men and women and reformers and useful people have been found among her descendants, and how many asylums and colleges and churches they built, and how many millions of dollars they contributed for humanitarian and Christian purposes?

The good woman whose tombstones were planted in the eighteenth century are more ALIVE FOR GOOD in the nineteenth century than they were before, as the good women of the nineteenth century will be more alive for good in the twentieth century than now. Mark you, I have no idea that the grandmothers were any better than their granddaughters. You cannot get very old people to talk much about how things were when they were boys and girls. They have a reticence and a non-committal which makes me think they feel themselves to be the custodians of the reputation of their early comrades. While our dear old folks are rehearsing the follies of the present, if you put them on the witness-stand and cross-examine them as to how things were seventy years ago, the silence becomes oppressive.

A celebrated Frenchman by the name of Yorney visited this country in 1790, and he says of

WOMAN'S DIET

in those times: "If a premium was offered for a regimen most destructive to health, none could be devised more efficacious for these ends than that in use among these people." That eclipses our lobster salad at midnight. Everybody talks about the dissipations of modern society, and how womanly health goes down under it, but it was worse a hundred years ago, for the chaplain of a French regiment in our Revolutionary war wrote in 1782, in his book of American women, saying: "They are tall and well proportioned, their features are generally regular, their complexions are generally fair and without color. At twenty years of age the women have no longer the freshness of youth. At thirty or forty they are decrepit." In 1812 a foreign consul wrote a book entitled, "A Sketch of the United States at the Commencement of the Present Century," and he says of the women of those times: "At the age of thirty all their charms have disappeared." One glance at the portraits of the women a hundred years ago and their style of dress makes us wonder how they ever got their breath. All this makes me think that the express rail train is no more an improvement on the old canal-boat, or the telegraph no more an improvement on the old-time saddlebags, than the women of our day are an improvement on the women of the last century.

But still, notwithstanding that those times were so much worse than ours, there was

A GLORIOUS RACE OF GODLY WOMEN

safety and a hundred years ago, who held the world back from sin and lifted it toward virtue, and without their exalted and sanctified influence before this, the last good influence would have perished from the earth. Indeed, all over this land there are seated to-day—not so many in churches, for many of them are too feeble to come—a great many aged grandmothers. They sometimes feel that the world has gone past them, and they have an idea that they are of little account. Their head sometimes gets aching from the racket of the grandchildren downstairs or in the next room. They steady themselves by the banisters as they go up and down. When they get a cold, it hangs on to them, longer than it used to. They cannot bear to have the grandchildren punished even when they deserve it, and have so relaxed their ideas of family discipline that they would spoil all the youngsters of the household by too great leniency.

These old folks are the resort when great troubles come, and there is a calming and soothing power in the touch of an aged hand that is almost supernatural. They feel they are almost through with the journey of life,

and read the old Book more than they used to, hardly knowing which most they enjoy, the Old Testament or the New, and often stop and dwell tearfully over the family record half way between. We hail them to-day, whether in the house of God or at the home-stead. Blessed is that household that has in it a grandmother Lois. Where she is, angels are hovering round, and God is in the room. May her last days be like those lovely autumnal days that we call Indian Summer.

I never knew the joy of having a grandmother; that is the disadvantage of being the youngest child of the family. The elder members only have that benediction. But though she went up out of this life before I began it, I have heard of her faith in God, that brought all her children into the kingdom and two of them into the ministry, and then brought all her grandchildren into the kingdom, myself the last and least worthy. Is it not time that you and I do two things, swing open a picture-gallery of the wrinkled faces and stooped shoulders of the past, and call down their heavenly thrones the godly grandmothers, to give them our thanks, and then persuade the mothers of to-day that they are living for all time, and that against the sides of every cradle in which a child is rocked beat

THE TWO ENTERNITIES.

Here we have an untried, undiscussed and unexplored subject. You often hear about your influence upon your own children—I am not talking about that. What about your influence upon the twentieth century, upon the thirtieth century, upon the fortieth century, upon the year two thousand, upon the year four thousand, if the world lasts so long? The world stood four thousand years before Christ came; it is not unreasonable to suppose that it may stand four thousand years after His arrival. Four thousand years the world swung off in sin, four thousand years it may be swinging back into righteousness. By the ordinary rate of multiplication of the world's population in a century, your descendants will be over three hundred, and by two centuries at least over fifty thousand, and upon every one of them you, the mother of to-day, will have an influence for good. And if in four centuries your descendants shall have with their names filled a scroll of hundreds of thousands, will some angel from heaven to whom is given the capacity to calculate the number of the stars of heaven and the sands of the seashore, step down and tell us how many descendants you will have in the four thousandth year of the world's possible continuance?

Do not let the grandmothers any longer think that they are retired, and sit clear back out of sight from the world, feeling that they have no relation to it. The mothers of the last century are to-day in the senates, the parliaments, the palaces, the pulpits, the banking houses, the professional chairs, the prisons, the almshouses, the courts, the midship brigands, the cellars, the dignities of this country. You have been thinking about the importance of having the right influence upon one nursery. You have been thinking about the importance of getting those two little feet on the right path. You have been thinking of your child's destiny for the next eighty years, if it should pass on to be an octogenarian. That is well, but my subject sweeps a thousand years, a million years, a quadrillion of years. I cannot stop at one cradle; I am looking at the cradles that reach all round the world and across all time. I am not talking of mother Eunice, I am talking of grandmother Lois.

The only way you can tell the force of a current is by sailing up stream; or the force of an ocean wave, by running the ship against it. Running along with it we cannot appreciate the force. In

ESTIMATING MATERNAL INFLUENCE

we generally run a'long with it down the stream of time, and so we don't understand the full force. Let us come up to it from the eternity side, after it has been working on for centuries, and see all the good it has done and all the evil it has accomplished multiplied in magnificent or appalling compound interest. The difference between that mother's influence on her children now, and the influence when it has been multiplied in hundreds of thousands of lives; is the difference between the Mississippi River way up at the top of the continent, starting from the little lake Itasca, seven miles long and one wide, and its mouth at the Gulf of Mexico, where navies might ride. Between the birth of that river and its burial in the sea, the Missouri pours in, and the Ohio pours in, and the Arkansas pours in, and the Red and White and Yazoo rivers pour in, and all the States and Territories between the Alleghany and Rocky mountains make contributions. Now, in order to test the power of a mother's influence, we need to come in off the ocean of eternity and sail up toward the one cradle, and we will find ten thousand tributaries pouring in and pouring down. But it is, after all,

ONE GREAT RIVER OF POWER

rolling on and rolling forever. Who can fathom it? Who can bridge it? Who can stop it? Had not mothers better be intensifying their prayers? Had they not better be elevating by their example? Had they not better be rousing themselves with the consideration that by their faithfulness or neglect they are starting an influence which will be stupending after the last mountain of earth is flat, and the last sea has been dried up, and the last flake of the ashes of a consumed world shall have been blown away, and all the telescopes of other worlds directed to the track around which our world once swung, shall discover not so much as a cinder of the burned-down and swept-off planet.

In Ceylon there is a granite column thirty-six square feet in size, which is thought, by the natives, to decide the world's continuance. An angel with robe spun from zephyrs is once a century to descend and sweep the hem of that robe across the granite, and when, by that attrition the column is worn away, they say time will end. But, by that process, that granite column would be worn out of existence before

mother's influence will begin to give away.

MOTHERS SOWING SEED

If a mother tell a child he is not good, some bugaboo will come and catch him, the fear excited may make the child a coward, and the fact that he finds that there is no bugaboo may make him a liar, and the echo of that false alarm may be heard after fifteen generations have been born and have expired. If a mother promise a child a reward for good behavior, and after the good behavior forgets to give the reward, the cheat may crop out in some faithless half a thousand years further on. If a mother culture a child's vanity, and exultize his curls, and extol the night-black or sky blue, or nut-brown of the child's eyes, and call out in his presence the admiration of spectators, pride and arrogance may be prolonged after a dozen family records have been obliterated. If a mother express doubt about some statement of the Holy Bible in a child's presence, long after the gates of this historical era have closed and the gates of another era have opened, the result may be seen in a champion blasphemer.

But, on the other hand, if a mother walking with a child see a suffering one by the wayside and say: "My child, give that ten-cent piece to that lame boy," the result may be seen on the other side of the following century in some George Muller building a whole village of orphanages. If a mother sit almost every evening by the trundle-bed of a child and teach it lessons of the mother's love and a Saviour's example, of the importance of truth and the horror of a lie, and the virtues of industry and kindness and sympathy and self-sacrifice, long after the mother has gone, and the child has gone, and the letters on both the tombs-ones shall have been washed out by the storms of innumerable winters, there may be standing, as a result of those trundled lessons, flaming evangelists, world-moving reformers, seraphic Summerfields, weeping Paysons, thundering White Chlds, emancipating Washingtons.

Good or bad influence may skip one generation or two generations, but it will be sure to land in

THE THIRD OF FOURTH GENERATION.

just as the Ten Commandments, speaking of the visitation of God on families, says nothing about the second generation, but entirely skips the second and speaks of the third and fourth generation: "Visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the third and fourth generations of them that hate me." Parental influence, right and wrong, may jump over a generation, but it will come down further on, as sure as you sit there and I stand here. Timothy's ministry was projected by his grandmother Lois. The sons and daughters of the Christian Church, who are such as a result of the consecration of great-grandmothers. Why, who do you think the Lord is? You talk as though His memory was weak. He can no easier remember a prayer five minutes than he can five centuries.

This explains what we often see—some man or woman distinguished for benevolence when the father or mother were distinguished for penuriousness; or you see some young man or woman with a bad father and a hard mother come out gloriously for Christ, and make the church sob and shout and sing under their exhortations. We stand in corners of the vestry and whisper over the matter and say: "How is this, such great piety in sons and daughters of such parental wrongdoings and sin?" I will explain it to you if you will fetch me the old Family Bible containing the full record. Let some septuagenarian look with me clear upon the page of births and marriages, and tell me who that woman was with the old-fashioned name of Gemima or Betsy or Mehitabel. Ah, there she is, the old grandmother or great-grandmother, who had enough RELIGION TO SATURATE A CENTURY.

The she is, the dear old soul, grandmother Lois. In our beautiful Greenwood (may we all sleep there when our work is done, for when I get up in the Resurrection morning I want my congregation all about me)—in Greenwood there is the resting-place of George W. Bellune, once a minister of Brooklyn Heights, his name never spoken among intelligent Americans without suggestion of two things—disobedience and evangelism. In the same tomb sleeps his grandmother, Isabella Graham, who was the chief inspiration of his ministry. You are not surprised at the poetry and pathos and pulp power of the grand-son when you read of the faith and devotion of his wonderful ancestress. When you read

THIS GRANDMOTHER'S LETTER, in which she poured out her widowed soul in longings for a son's salvation, you will not wonder that succeeding generations have been blessed:

"NEW YORK, May 29, 1791.

"This day my only son left me in bitter wringings of heart; he is again launched on the ocean, God's ocean. The Lord saved him from shipwreck, brought him to my home and allowed me once more to indulge my affections over him. He has been with me but a short time, and ill have I improved it; he is gone from my sight, and my heart bursts with tumultuous grief. Lord, have mercy on the widow's son, 'the only son of his mother.'"

"I ask nothing in all this world for him; I repeat my petition—save his soul alive, give him salvation from sin. It is not the danger of the seas that distresses me; it is not the hardships he must undergo; it is not the dread of never seeing him more in this world; it is because I cannot discern the fulfillment of the promise in him, I cannot discern the new birth, nor its fruit, but every symptom of captivity to Satan, the world and self-will. This is what distresses me, and in connection with this, his being shut out from ordinances at a distance from Christians; shut up with those who forget God, profane His name and break His Sabbaths; men who often live and die like beasts, yet are accountable creatures, who must answer for every moment of time and word, thought and action.

"O Lord, many wonders hast thou shown me; Thy ways of dealing with me and mine have not been common ones; add this wonder to the rest. Call,

convert, regenerate and establish a sailor in faith. Lord, all things are possible with Thee; glorify Thy Son and extend His kingdom by sea and land; take the prey from the strong. I roll him over upon Thee. Many friends try to comfort me; miserable comforters are they all. Thou art the God of consolation; only confirm to me Thy precious word, on which thou caust me to hope in the day when Thou saidst to me, 'Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive.' Only let this life be a spiritual life, and I put a blank in Thy hand as to all temporal things. Amen."

"I wait for Thy salvation, Amen."

With such a grandmother, would you not have a right to expect a George W. Bellune? and all the thousands dated through his ministry may date the saving power back to Isabella Graham.

God fill the earth and the heavens with such grandmothers; we must some day go up and thank these dear old souls. Surely, God will let us go up and tell them of the results of their influence. Among our

FIRST QUESTIONS IN HEAVEN will be, "Where is grandmother?" They will point her out, for we would hardly know her even if we had seen her on earth, so bent over with years once, and there so straight, so dim of eye through the blinding of earthly tears, and now her eye as clear of heaven, so full of aches and pains once, and now so agile with celestial health, the wrinkles blooming into carnation roses, and her step like the rye on the mountains. Yes, I must see her, my grandmother on my father's side, Mary McCoy, descendant of the Scotch. When I first spoke to an audience in Glasgow, Scotland, and felt somewhat diffident, being a stranger, I began by telling them my grandmother was a Scotch woman, and then there went up a shout of welcome which made me feel as easy as I do here. I must see her.

You must see those women of the early nineteenth century and of the eighteenth century, the answer of whose prayers is in your welfare to-day.

GOD BLESS ALL THE AGED WOMAN up and down the land and in all lands! What a happy thing, Pomponius Atticus, to say, when making the funeral address of his mother: "Though I have resided with her sixty-seven years, I was never once reconciled to her, because there never happened the least discord between us, and consequently, there was no need of reconciliation." Make it as easy for the old folks as you can. When they are sick, get for them the best doctors. Give them your arm when the streets are slippery. Stay with them all the time you can. Go home and see the old folks. Find the place for them in the hymn book. Never be ashamed if they prefer styles of apparel a little antiquated. Never say anything that implies they are in the way. Make the road for the last mile as smooth as you can. Oh, my!

HOW YOU WILL MISS HER

when she is gone. I would give the house from over my head to see mother. I have so many things I would like to tell her, things that have happened in twenty-four years since she went away. Morning, noon and night let us thank God for the good influences that have come down from good mothers all the way back. Timothy, don't forget your mother Eunice, and don't forget your grandmother Lois. And hand down to others this patrimony of blessing. Pass along the crown. Make religion an heirloom from generation to generation. Mothers of America, consecrate yourselves to God, and you will help consecrate all the ages following! Do not dwell so much on your hardships that you miss your chance of wielding an influence that shall look down upon you from the towers of an endless future.

I know Martin Luther was right when he consoled his wife over the death of their daughter, by saying: "Don't take on so, wife; remember that this is a hard world for girls." Yes; I go further and say: It is

A HARD WORLD FOR WOMEN.

Aye, I go further and say: It is a hard world for men. But for all women and men who trust their bodies and souls in the hand of Christ, the shining gates will soon swing open, Don't you see the sickly pallor on the sky? That is the pallor on the cold cheek of the dying infant. Don't you see the brightening of the clouds? That is the flush on the warm forehead of the morning. Cheer up, you are coming within sight of the Celestial City.

THE CELESTIAL CITY.

Cairo, capital of Egypt, was called "City of Victory." Athens, capital of Greece, was called "City of the Violet Crown." Babylon was called "City of the Sun." London was called "The City of Masts." Lucien's imaginary metropolis beyond the Zodiac was called "The City of Lanterns." But the city to which you journey hath all these in one, the victory, the crowns, the masts, of those that have been harbored after the storm. Aye, all but the lanterns and the sun, because they have no need of any other light, since the Lamb is the light thereof.

How to Select a Wife.

In the first place, see the girl you intend to honor as early in the morning as possible, and note whether she is fresh and tidy or limp and frowzy.

Watch how she treats her pets—her dog, her canary, her little sisters.

Discover what she eats and drinks, and make yourself certain whether she bathes or uses perfumery.

Remember if she makes a habit of walking or driving.

Inform yourself whether she dotes upon Owen Meredith and Henry James, or reads Longfellow and Fenimore Cooper.

Go to church with her and see if she cares more for the preacher than for the Gospel.

Make a sly study of her anatomy when you get a chance. Walk her up Murray hill as fast as you can, and dance a whole waltz through with her, and mark if she allows herself breathing room and wears tight slippers.

Familiarize yourself with her father's affairs and her mother's temper; and then, my boy, when you've found a girl who is neat, trim, true, healthy, wealthy, and wise, sail in and win her.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 1893.

The Son Rejected.

LESSON TEXT. (Matt. 21:33-46. Memory verses, 42-44.)

LESSON PLAN.

TOPIC OF THE QUARTER: Jesus the King in Zion.

GOLDEN TEXT FOR THE QUARTER: He is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.—Rev. 17:14.

LESSON TOPIC: The King's Lessons on True Justice.

1. The Servants Rejected, vs. 33-46. Lesson 2. The Son Slain, vs. 47-52. Outline: 1. The Conspirators Destroyed, vs. 40-46.

GOLDEN TEXT: He came unto his own, and his own received him not.—John 1:11.

DAILY HOME READINGS: M.—Matt. 21:33-46. Lessons on true justice. T.—Mark 12:1-12. Mark's parallel narrative. W.—Luke 20:9-19. Luke's parallel narrative. T.—Acts 13:44-52. God's servants rejected. F.—Luke 23:1-25. God's Son rejected. S.—Luke 23:26-46. God's Son slain. S.—Rev. 20:1-15. God's enemies destroyed.

LESSON ANALYSIS.

I. THE SERVANTS REJECTED.

A. A Generous Opportunity:

A vineyard, . . . a hedge, . . . a winepress, . . . a tower (33). Thou broughtest a vine out of Egypt (Psa. 80:8).

My wellbeloved had a vineyard in a very fruitful hill (Isa. 5:2).

I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed (Jer. 2:21).

A man planted a vineyard, and let it out (Luke 20:9).

II. Reasonable Demand:

He sent his servants, . . . to receive his fruits (34).

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart (Deut. 6:5).

What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord? (Deut. 10:12).

Fear God; . . . for this is the whole duty of man (Ecc. 12:13).

Whosoever ye do, do all to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31).

III. Brutal Rejection:

The husbandmen . . . beat one, and killed another, and stoned another (35).

So persecuted they the prophets (Matt. 5:12).

Some of them shall ye kill and crucify (Matt. 23:34).

Which killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent (Matt. 23:37).

They were stoned, they were sawn asunder (Heb. 11:37).

1. "Let it out to husbandmen." (1) The prepared vineyard; (2) The reasonable owner; (3) The unprincipled lessees.

2. "He sent his servants, . . . to receive his fruits." (1) The master's expectation; (2) The servants errand; (3) The husbandmen's treachery.

3. "They did unto them in like manner." (1) Mercenary motives; (2) Base dishonor; (3) Brutal deportment.

II. THE SON SLAIN.

Afterward he sent unto them his son (37).

God sent . . . the son; . . . that the world should be saved (John 3:17).

God . . . sent him to bless you (Acts 3:26).

God sent forth his son, . . . that he might redeem them (Gal. 4:4, 5).

God hath sent his only begotten Son, that he might live (1 John 4:9).

III. The Son Conspired Against:

Come, let us kill him, and take his inheritance (38).

The rulers take counsel together, against the Lord (Psa. 2:2).

They took counsel . . . that they might take Jesus, . . . and kill him (Matt. 26:4).

They took counsel that they might put him to death (John 11:53).

Against . . . Jesus, the peoples of Israel were gathered (Acts 4:27).

IV. The Son Slain:

They took him, and cast him forth, . . . and killed him (39).

Then they . . . laid hands on Jesus, and took him (Matt. 26:50).

The officers received him with blows of their hands (Mark 14:65).

They crucified him (Luke 23:33).

Ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay (Acts 2:23).

1. "They will reverence my son." (1) Past misdeeds overlooked; (2) Future improvement anticipated.—(1) The son's appointed mission; (2) The son's appropriate reverence.

2. "Let us kill him, and take his inheritance." (1) Avarice; (2) Conspiracy; (3) Murder.

3. "They took him, and cast him forth, . . . and killed him." (1) The captive; (2) The captors; (3) The consequences.—(1) Base motives; (2) Shameful abuse; (3) Cruel slaughter.

III. THE CONSPIRATORS DESTROYED.

I. The Coming Lord:

When . . . the lord of the vineyard shall come (40).

There came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man (Dan. 7:13).

Jesus . . . shall so come . . . as ye beheld him going (Acts 1:11).

The Lord himself shall descend from heaven (1 Thess. 4:16).

He cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him (Rev. 1:7).

II. The Terrific Destruction:

He will miserably destroy those miserable men (41).

Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel (Psa. 2:9).

He . . . shall suddenly be broken and that without remedy (Prov. 29:1).

Vengeance belongeth to me; I will recompense (Rom. 12:19).

Rendering vengeance to them that know not God (2 Thess. 1:8).

III. The Helpless Culprits:

On whomsoever it shall fall, it will scatter him as dust (44).

They are as stubble before the wind (Job 21:18).

The wicked . . . are like the chaff which the wind driveth away (Psa. 1:4).

Chased, . . . like the whirling dust before the storm (Isa. 17:13).

Fall on us, and hide us . . . from the wrath of the Lamb (Rev. 6:16).

1. "What will he do unto those husbandmen?" (1) His limitless resources; (2) His righteous indignation; (3) Their just doom.

2. "He will miserably destroy those miserable men." (1) Miserable characters; (2) Miserable conduct; (3) Miserable doom.—(1) The Lord's judgment of their conduct; (2) The Lord's assignment of their fate.

3. "It will scatter him as dust." (1) An impending fall; (2) An imperilled culprit; (3) A terrific end.

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LESSON BIBLE READING.

THE LORD'S SECOND COMING.

1. Foretold: By prophets (Dan. 7:13; Jude 14). By apostles (Acts 3:19-21; 1 Thess. 4:15-17). By angels (Acts 1:10, 11). By the Lord (Matt. 25:31; John 14:3).

2. Described: In clouds (Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Rev. 1:7). In the glory of the Father (Matt. 16:27). In flaming fire (2 Thess. 1:7, 8). With attendant angels (Matt. 25:31; 1 Thess. 4:16).

3. Anticipated: Patiently (1 Cor. 1