

GRANDMOTHER LOIS.

DR. TALMAGE'S EIGHTH SERMON TO THE WOMEN OF AMERICA.

This is a Hard World for Women, and Also for Men—A Mother's Influence of Immense and Lasting Importance on Unborn Generations.

BROOKLYN, Feb. 26.—The Rev. T. Do Witt Talmage, D. D., preached in the Brooklyn Tabernacle to the eighth of his series of "Sermons to the women of America, with important hints to men." His subject was: "The Grandmother and Her Children." A vast congregation was present. The opening hymn begins:

Give to the wind thy fears, Hope and be undismayed; God hears thy sighs and counts thy tears, God shall lift up thy head.

Dr. Talmage's text was from II Timothy 1, 5: "The undefiled faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois." The eloquent preacher said:

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 grand-grandmother you had. You ought to be better than most folks, because not only was your mother good but your grandmother. Two preceding generations of piety ought to give you a definite path 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 today 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 nearly 100 years, and of how many hundreds of criminals her descendants 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 women 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 this 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-committalism which makes me think they feel themselves to be the custodians of the reputation of their early comrades. While our dear old folks are reticent, the folks of the present, if you put them in 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 Volney stated this country in 1789, 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 evidence our lobster salad at midnight. Everybody talks about the dissipation 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 20 years of age the women have no longer the freshness of youth. At 30 or 40 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 30 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, seventy 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 much 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 they are of little account. Their head sometimes gets aching from the racket of the grandchildren down stairs 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 today whether in the house of God or at the homestead. 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 older 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 from their heavenly thrones the godly grandmothers, to give them our thanks, and then persuade the mothers of today that they are living for all time, and that against the sides of every cradle in which a child is rocked beat the two eternities.

Here we have an untried, undiscussed and unexplored subject. You often hear about your influences 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 six hundred, and by two centuries at least over a hundred thousand, and upon every one of them you, the mother of today, will have an influence for good or evil. And if in two 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 today in the senate, the parliament, the palace, the pulpit, the banking houses, the professional chairs, the prisons, the almshouses, the company of midnight brigands, the cellars, the ditches of this century. You have been thinking about the importance of having the right influence upon one nursery. You have been thinking of 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 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 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 along 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 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 which 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 contribution. Now, in order to test the power of a mother's influence, we need to come in off of the ocean of eternity and sail up toward the one cradle, and we will find ten thousand tributaries of influence 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 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 stupendous 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 beam 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 a mother's influence will begin to give away.

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 promises a child a reward for good behavior and after the good behavior forgets to give the reward, the cheat may creep into some faithfulness half a thousand years further on. If a mother culture a child's vanity and enlarge 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 half 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 a Saviour'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 lettering on both the tombstones shall have been washed out by the storms of innumerable winters, there may be standing, as a result of those trundle bed lessons, flaming evangelists, moral moving reformers, circulating Summerfields, weeping Paysons, thundering Whitefields, emancipating Washingtons.

Good or bad influence may skip one generation, or two generations, but it will be sure to land in the third or 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." Parents' 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. There are men and women here, 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 is 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 and 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 for 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 worldliness 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 Jemima or Betsey or Mehitabel. Ah, there she is, the old grandmother or great grandmother, who had enough religion to saturate a century.

There 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. Bethune, once a minister of Brooklyn Heights, his name never spoken among intelligent Americans without suggesting two things—eloquence 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 pulpit power of the grandson when you read of the faith and devotion of his wonderful ancestress. When you read this 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 wrappings of heart; he is again languishing on the 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 repent my petition, save his soul alive, give him salvation for every moment of time and every word of thought and action. Oh 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 the 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, minister to me, but forces are they all. Then art the God of consolation; only confirm to me thy precious word, on which thou causedst me to hope in the day when thou saidst to me, "Leave thy father's children, I will preserve them alive." Only by this life be a spiritual life and I put a blanket thy hand as to all temporal things. I wait for thy salvation. Amen.

With such a grandmother would you not have a right to expect a George W. Bethune? and all the thousands converted 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 and with a thousand straight, so dim of eye through the blinding of earthly tears and now her eyes clear as heaven, so full of rest and pains once and now so agile with substantial health, the wrinkles blooming like caruncles 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 Scotchwoman, 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 today. God bless all the aged women up and down the land and in all lands! What a happy thing Pomponius Atticus says 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 an envy 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 in the place for them in the by-and-by. 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 the 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 Leah. And look down to others the patrimony of blessing. Pass along the cocoons. 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 me, 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 be swung open. Don't you see the sickly pallor on the cheek of the dying child? That is the brightening of the dawn! That is the flush on the warm forehead of the morning. Cheer up, you are coming within sight of the Celestial City. Cairo, capital of Egypt, was called "City of Victories"; Athens, capital of Greece, was called "City of the Victorious Crown"; Baslebeck was called "City of the Sun"; London was called "The City of Mists"; Lucian'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 crown, the sun, the lantern. Aye, all but the lanterns and the sun, because they have no need of any other light since the Lamb is the light thereof.

Women Suffragists in England. Mrs. Frank Leslie, cleverest of New York business women, discussed some points of her recent sojourn in Europe. She met there all sorts of people, under all sorts of circumstances. She happened to mention the fact that she was brought in contact with a number of women who devote their lives to the struggle for woman suffrage in England. She was asked how this set of women compare with their sisters in the United States. She said: "They are quite as earnest and indomitable, and fire away at parliament as regularly as our women do at the legislatures. The only points of difference which I observed were these: The woman suffrage champions whom I met in England were ladies charming in manner and fair to look upon, and, strange as it may seem, ladies who took considerable interest in gentlemen and their society. Here, you may have observed, they are not always charming, are seldom comely, and, as a rule, either the society of men except such as openly espouse their theories."—New York Sun.

Sham Fight in the Crimea. The Russians recently had a sham fight at Sebastopol in the Crimea. The ships anchored in the roads as were the allies in the Crimean war, sending a force ashore to assault the works. The landing was made under a heavy fire from the marine guns, and was repelled to the old Redan and the new works by what is described as a terrible cross-fire concentrated, point by point, on the line of the advance from the sea. The Wochenblatt says that, while these guns remained in play, it is hard to see how such a maneuver as that of the Anglo-French armies could be repeated, even at night, for such is the disposition of the electric search lights that even the darkness of night would scarcely prove a sufficient cloak for such an adventure. It does not say, however, what might happen if these operating lights were shelled out.—Scientific American.

Was Napoleon a German? M. Poyre, in his new book, "Napoleon For Sea Temps," proves by documentary evidence to his own satisfaction that the great Frenchman was in German family. The Chollingers, a German family in Genoa, became members of the Good party (Bona Part) in Gibraltar times, and finally settled in Genoa, where they adopted the party nickname as their surname, and the first Napoleon was one of them.—Excelsior.

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The Year 1888

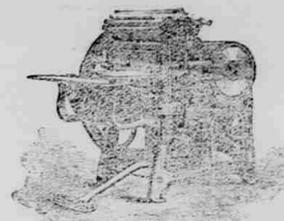
Will be one during which the subjects of national interest and importance will be strongly agitated and the election of a President will take place. The people of Cass County who would like to learn of Political, Commercial and Social Transactions

of this year and would keep abreast with the times should

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