

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

HOME LIFE THE SUBJECT LAST SUNDAY.

The Duties of Parents to Their Children — "A Wise Son Maketh a Glad Father; but a Foolish Son Is the Heaviness of His Mother."

[Copyright, 1900, by Louis Klipsch.] In this graphic way Solomon sets forth the idea that the good or evil behavior of children blesses or blights the parental heart. I know there are persons who seem to have no especial interest in the welfare of their children. The father says: "My boy must take the risks I took in life. If he turns out well, all right; if he turns out ill, he will have to bear the consequences. He has the same chance that I had. He must take care of himself."

A shepherd might just as well thrust a lamb into a den of lions and say, "Little lamb, take care of yourself."

Nearly all the brute creation are kind enough to look after their young. I was going through the woods, and heard a shrill cry in a nest. I climbed up to the bird's nest, and I found that the old bird had left the brood to starve. But that is a very rare occurrence. Generally a bird will pick your eyes out rather than surrender her young to your keeping or your touch. A lion will rend you if you come too near the whelps; even the barnyard fowl, with its clumsy foot and heavy wing, will come at you if you approach its young too nearly, and God certainly intended to have fathers and mothers as kind as the brutes.

Christ comes through all our household today, and he says: "You take care of the bodies of your children and the minds of your children. What are you doing for their immortal souls?" I read of a ship that foundered. A lifeboat was launched. Many of the passengers were in the water. A mother with one hand beating the waves and the other hand holding her little child out toward the lifeboat cried out, "Save my child!" And that impassioned cry is the one that finds an echo in every parental heart in this land today. "Save my child!" That man out there says: "I have fought my own way through life. I have got along tolerably well. The world has buffeted me, and I have had many a hard struggle. It doesn't make much difference what happens to me, but save my child." You see, I have a subject of stupendous import, and I am going, as God may help me, to show the cause of parental solicitude and then the alleviations of that solicitude.

The first cause of parental solicitude, I think, arises from the imperfection of parents on their own part. We all somehow want our children to avoid our faults. We hope that if we have any excellences they will copy them, but the probability is they will copy our faults and omit our excellences. Children are very apt to be echoes of the parental life. Some one meets a lad in the back street, finds him smoking and says: "Why, I am astonished at you. What would your father say if he knew this? Where did you get that cigar?" "Oh, I picked it up on the street?" "What would your father say and your mother say if they knew this?" "Oh," he replies, "that's nothing. My father smokes." There is not one of us today who would like to have our children copy all our example. And that is the cause of solicitude on the part of all of us. We have so many faults we do not want them copied and stereotyped in the lives and characters of those who come after us.

The Matter of Discipline. Then solicitude arises from our conscious insufficiency and unwisdom of discipline. Out of 20 parents there may be one parent who understands how thoroughly and skillfully to discipline; perhaps not more than one out of 20. We, nearly all of us, err on one side or on the other. Here is a father who says: "I am going to bring up my children right. My sons shall know nothing but religion, shall see nothing but religion and hear nothing but religion." They are routed out at 6 o'clock in the morning to recite the Ten Commandments. They are wakened up from the sofa on Sunday night to recite the Westminster catechism. Their bedroom walls are covered with religious pictures and quotations of Scripture, and when the boy looks for the day of the month he looks for it in a religious almanac. If a minister comes to the house, he is requested to take the boy aside and tell him what a great sinner he is. It is religion morning, noon and night.

Time passes on, and the parents are waiting for the return of the son at night. It is 9 o'clock, it is 10 o'clock, it is 11 o'clock, it is 12 o'clock, it is half-past 12 o'clock. Then they hear a rattling of the night key, and George comes in and hastens up stairs lest he be accosted. His father says, "George, where have you been?" He says, "I have been out." Yes, he has been out, and he has been down, and he has started on the broad road to ruin for this life and ruin for the life to come, and the father says to his wife: "Mother, the Ten Commandments are a failure. No use of Westminster catechism. I have done my very best for that boy. Just see how he has turned out." Ah, my friend, you have stuffed that boy with religion. You had no sympathy with innocent hilarities. You had no common sense. A man at mid-life said to me: "I haven't much desire for religion. My father was as good a man as ever lived, but he jammed religion down my throat when I was a boy until I got disgusted with it, and I haven't wanted any of it since." That father erred on one side.

Then the discipline is an entire failure in many households because the father pulls one way and the mother pulls the other way. The father says, "My son, I told you if I ever found

you guilty of falsehood again I would chastise you, and I am going to keep my promise. The mother says: "Don't let him off this time." A father says: "I have seen so many that make mistake by too great severity in the rearing of their children. Now, I will let my boy do as he pleases. He shall have full swing. Here, my son, are tickets to the theater and opera. If you don't want to play cards, do so. If you don't want to play cards, you need not play them. Go when you want and come back when you want to. Have a good time. Go it!" Give a boy plenty of money and ask him not what he does with it, and you pay his way straight to perdition. But after awhile the lad thinks he ought to have a still larger supply. He has been treated, and he must treat. He must have wine suppers. There are larger and larger expenses.

Result of Lax Discipline. After awhile one day a messenger from the bank over the way calls in and says to the father of the household of which I am speaking: "The officers of the bank would like to have you step over a minute." The father steps over, and a bank officer says, "Is that your check?" "No," he says, "that is not my check. I never make an 'H' in that way. I never put a curl to the 'Y' in that way. That is not my writing; that is not my signature; that is a counterfeit. Send for the police." "Stop," says the bank officer, "your son wrote that."

Now the father and mother are waiting for the son to come home at night. It is 12 o'clock, it is half-past 12 o'clock, it is 1 o'clock. The son comes through the hallway. The father says: "My son, what does all this mean? I gave you every opportunity. I gave you all the money you wanted, and here in my old days I find that you have become a spendthrift, a libertine and a sot." The son says: "Now, father, what is the use of your talking that way? You told me to go it, and I just took your suggestion." And so to strike the medium between severity and too great leniency, to strike the happy medium between the two and to train our children for God and for heaven is the anxiety of every intelligent parent.

Another great solicitude is in the fact that so early is developed childish selfishness. Morning glories put out their bloom in the early part of the day, but as the hot sun comes on they close up. While there are other flowers that blaze their beauty along the Amazon for a week at a time without closing, yet the morning glory does its work as certainly as Victoria regia, so there are some children that just put forth their bloom, and they close, and they are gone. There is something supernatural about them while they tarry, and there is an ethereal appearance about them. There is a wonderful depth to their eyes, and they are gone. They are too delicate a plant for this world. The Heavenly Gardener sees them, and he takes them in.

But for the most part the children that live sometimes get cross and pick up bad words in the street or are disposed to quarrel with brother or sister and show that they are wicked. You see them in the Sabbath school class. They are so sunshiny and bright you would think they were always so, but the mother looking over at them remembers what an awful time she had to get them ready. Time passes on. They get considerably older, and the son comes in from the street from a pugilistic encounter, bearing on his appearance the marks of defeat, or the daughter practices some little deception in the household. The mother says: "I can't always be scolding and fretting and finding fault, but this must be stopped." So in many a household there is the sign of sin, the sign of the truthfulness of what the Bible says when it declares: "They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies."

Picking at Boys. Some go to work and try to correct all this, and the boy is picked at and picked at and picked at. That always is ruinous. There is more help in one good thunderstorm than in five days of cold drizzle. Better the old-fashioned style of chastisement if that be necessary than the fretting and the scolding which have destroyed so many.

There is also a cause of great solicitude sometimes because our young people are surrounded by so many temptations. A castle may not be taken by a straightforward siege, but suppose there be inside the castle an enemy, and in the night he shoves back the bolt and swings open the door. Our young folks have foes without, and they have foes within. Who does not understand it? Who is the man here who is not aware of the fact that the young people of this day have tremendous temptations? Some man will come to the young people and try to persuade them that purity and honesty and uprightness are a sign of weakness. Some man will talk a dramatic attitude, and he will talk to the young man, and he will say: "You must break away from your mother's apron strings. You must get out of that puritanical straitjacket. It is time you were your own master. You are verdant. You are green. You are unsophisticated. Come with me; I'll show you the world. I'll show you life. Come with me. You need to see the world. It won't hurt you." After awhile the young man says: "Well, I can't afford to be odd. I can't afford to be peculiar. I can't afford to sacrifice all my friends. I'll just go and see for myself." Farewell to innocence, which one never fully comes back. Do not be under the delusion that because you repent of sin you get rid forever of its consequences. I say farewell to innocence, which once gone never fully comes back.

Necessity of Early Training. Begin early with your children. You stand on the banks of a river and you try to change its course. It has been rolling now for 100 miles. You cannot change it. But just go to the source of that river, go to where the water just

drips down on the rock. Then with your knife make a channel this way and a channel that way, and it will take it. Come out and stand on the banks of your child's life when it was 30 or 40 years of age, or even 20, and try to change the course of that life. It is too late! It is too late! Go further up at the source of life and nearest to the mother's heart, where the character starts, and try to take it in the right direction. But, oh, my friend, be careful to make a line, a distinct line, between Innocent hilarity on the one hand and vicious proclivity on the other. Do not think your children are going to ruin because they make a racket. All healthy children make a racket. But do not laugh at your child's sin because it is smart. If you do, you will cry after awhile because it is malleous. Remember it is what you do more than what you say that is going to affect your children. Do you suppose Noah would have got his family to go into the ark if he staid out? No. His sons would have said: "I am not going into the boat. There's something wrong. Father won't go in. If father stays out I'll stay out." An officer may stand in a castle and look off upon an army fighting, but he cannot be much of an officer, he cannot excite much enthusiasm on the part of his troops standing in a castle or on hill-top looking off upon a fight. It is a Garibaldi or a Napoleon I. who leaps into the stirrups and dashes ahead. And you stand outside the Christian life and tell your children to go in. They will not go. But you dash on ahead, you enter the kingdom of God, and they themselves will become good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

A Personal Appeal. Are your children safe? I know it is a stupendous question to ask, but I must ask it. Are all your children safe? A mother when the house was on fire got out the household goods, many articles of beautiful furniture, but forgot to ask until too late, "Are the children safe?" When the elements are melting with fervent heat and God shall burn the world up and the cry of "Fire, fire!" shall resound amid the mountains and the valleys, will your children be safe? I wonder if the subject strikes a chord in the heart of any man who had Christian parentage, but has not lived as he ought? God brought you here this morning to have your memory revived. Did you have a Christian ancestry? "Oh, yes," says one man. "If there ever was a good woman, my mother was good." How she watched you when you were sick! Others wearied. If she got weary, she nevertheless was wakeful, and the medicine was given at the right time, and when the pillow was hot she turned it. And, oh, then when you began to go astray, what a grief it was to her heart! All the scene comes back. You remember the chairs, you remember the table, you remember the doorsill where you played, you remember the tones of her voice. She seems calling you now, not by the formal title with which we address you, saying, "Mr." this or "Mr." that, or "Honorable" this or "Honorable" that. It is just the first name, your first name, she calls you by this morning. She bids you to a better life. She says: "Forget not all the counsel I gave you, my wandering boy. Turn into paths of righteousness. I am waiting for you at the gate." Oh, yes. God brought you here this morning to have that memory revived, and I shout upward the tidings. Angels of God, send forward the news! Ring! Ring! The dead is alive again, and the lost is found!

HOME FOR HORSES. Permanent Asylum for Equines That Have Outlived Their Usefulness. Horses were the sole guests at a recent dinner given by a company of English men and women who journeyed from London into the country for the sole purpose of entertaining their four-footed dependants. The scene of the banquet was the Home for Rest for Horses, Friar's place farm, Acton. It is an institution presided over by the Duke of Portland, and patronized by many of the best-known horse-lovers in the United Kingdom. Primarily its object is to enable poor people to obtain a few weeks' rest and recuperation for their overworked and underfed beasts of burden, but it also affords a permanent asylum for old favorites that have outlived their usefulness. The menu included chopped apples and carrots, and slices of white and brown bread, mixed with a few handfuls of loaf sugar. Nothing could have been more to the taste of the guests, judging from the eagerness with which they plucked their noses into the delicate pot-pourri. There are forty-three horses at the home—twenty-three of them in the "old favorite" or "pensioner" class—and two donkeys. The most famous inmate is Boxes, an old charger of the Horse Guards, who survived the battle of Tel-el-Kebir, and was afterwards bought by Dorothy Hardy, the artist, who used him as a model. He has been in the home six years. Then there is a superannuated brown gelding, whose owner, a woman, provides him with pillows and blankets, and has established her home at Acton in order to be in constant attendance upon him.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Feminine Strategy. A—"Have you noticed that when Miss Gettinggold goes out for a walk with gentlemen she always invites them to that large oak tree?" B—"Yes; while there she tells them of the great number of centuries the oak has stood, and what are her twenty-five (!) years in comparison?"—Fliegende Blaetter.

This earth would again be an Eden if men would only do what women think they ought to.

HOSPITABLE CANNIBALS.

Kind to White Strangers, Though They Occasionally Eat a Black Man.

Rev. Dr. R. H. Nassau expects to return in the spring to his field of missionary work in equatorial Africa. This is Dr. Nassau's fourth visit to the United States since, as a young man, he was sent to Africa as a missionary 39 years ago. During the last five years he has been stationed at Liberville, Gaboon province (French), engaged in translating 14 books of the Bible into the Fang language. These translations are being printed by the American Bible society. The Fangs are a tribe of cannibals, numbering about 1,000,000, and inhabiting the country lying far up the Ogove river. They are large of stature, warlike, and represent much the strongest tribe in that portion of the country. Dr. Nassau said before leaving Baltimore that he could not call the natives that he meets in Africa savages; they are cruel, he said, but not bloodthirsty; their desire to kill is more for superstitious reasons. There are cannibals, he said among them. He has seen them boiling human arms for food and offering for sale with other meats human hands; "and one day," continued the doctor, "while floating down the river in a canoe, accompanied by my little girl and two natives to row the boat, we were called to from a group of naked men standing on the shore to know if we wished to buy any meat, and, holding up a human arm, they informed us in their language that they had just killed two men belonging to a hostile tribe not far from there. This was about thirty miles below my house." The only means of transportation through that portion of the country, Dr. Nassau said, is by boat. Trade is carried on without money, a cake of soap or a piece of calico or beads being all that is necessary. "The men there are polygamists, their importance in the community being estimated according to the number of wives," said the doctor. They are kind to their mothers, but abuse their wives. Our mission has succeeded in bringing about 1,800 of them into the Presbyterian church. If before coming Christians they had married more than one wife we require them to set all free (all their wives are slaves, bought and sold) but one—the one they might prefer. The African is very hospitable. No medicine ever gave me more benefit than the Christian kindness of these heathen friends of our little mission. They have a religion—they are more religious than you or I. They feel honored to receive us as their 'official' guests, and so we can depend upon their protection."

ANTI-TREATERS.

They Organize in Baltimore, Md., and Propose to Save Lots of Money. The latest movement of the anti-treaters has its headquarters in Baltimore, Md., where an anti-treat circle, with a president, officers and twenty-eight members has been formed. Its object is, of course, to break up treating. The members meet at their hall once a week, but no one ever dares to say, "Have one on me," for if he should he would be penalized with a fine of 25 cents for each treat. Some of the reason which led to the formation of this circle may be gained from this lucid statement from one of the members, who draws a picture whose fidelity to truth will be recognized from Maine to Manila: "You and I go into a saloon with the intention of having one drink—perhaps two. We meet eight or ten friends who insist upon our joining them. We do so. Then you and I reciprocate. Finally every man in the crowd insists on everybody else having 'one with him.' The consequence is that each man takes eight or ten drinks of whisky or beer, and after the bout is over there is not one but who would have preferred a halt at the first drink. This custom, repeated several times a day, year in and year out, will ruin a man physically and financially."

Too Dred Turkeys.

A produce dealer who deals in both live and dressed poultry, says the Albany Argus, sent to the consignee of his dressed poultry a letter intended for the shipper of the live turkeys, as follows: "Dear Sir: We regret to advise you that four of the turkeys in your consignment of December—reached here dead. Please make deduction for same and return corrected account. Yours truly." The poultry man commended with himself and replied thusly: "Dear Sir: I am sorry to say that I find it impossible to make concession requested. I have established a rule requiring all customers who desire live dressed turkeys to notify us in advance, so we can send them in heated cars. Turkeys without their feathers and insides are liable to catch cold if shipped in the ordinary manner. The mortality among dressed turkeys was very large this year. Yours mournfully."

Melting Muskmelons in Southern Italy.

In southern Italy muskmelons are at best much inferior to the American fruit, lacking the sweetness and flavor of our fruit. Strange to say, however, this inferior melon, when saved for winter consumption, becomes of an excellent flavor. The melons are pulled from the vines while green and hung in the open air until winter, when they are eaten. The melon treated thus becomes not only far superior to the ripe fruit of summer, but equal to the American melon in sweetness and flavor.

Hair Growing Time.

The hair grows considerably faster in winter than in summer.

Mrs. Dewey's Ambition.

There is still much gossip in Washington regarding the presidential aspirations of Admiral Dewey—of rather Mrs. Dewey, for she is credited with being much more desirous of such advancement than her sailor husband. It is said to be the desire of John R. McLean, Mrs. Dewey's brother, to keep the admiral in the public eye until the campaign four years hence. According to report the sister and brother are entirely at one in this matter.

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Dust in Brit: in's Eyes.

The recent pronouncement of the ameer of Afghanistan to the British government, avowing eternal hatred to Russia and undying fealty to the British empire, had the peculiar glitter of Oriental duplicity in it. Such, at least, is the opinion of Henry Savage Landor, the English Oriental traveler, who regards the ameer's words "as dust thrown into our eyes to blind us."

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