

A WORD WITH WOMEN

REV. DR. TALMAGE CHOOSES AN INTERESTING TOPIC.

His Views of the New Woman—Spiritual and Physical Health—A Word for Mothers—Their Influence and Counsel—A Strong Peroration.

Washington, Nov. 17.—Rev. Dr. Talmage took for the subject of to-day's sermon "A Word With Women," the text for the occasion being the following letter received by the distinguished preacher:

Reverend Sir: You delivered a discourse in answer to a letter from six young men of Fayette, O., requesting you to preach a sermon on "Advice to Young Men." Are we justified in asking you to preach a sermon on "Advice to Young Women?"

Letter Signed Six Young Women. Christ, who took his text from a flock of birds flying overhead, saying "Behold the fowls of the air" and from the flowers in the valley, saying, "Consider the lilies of the field," and from the clucking of a barnyard fowl, saying, "As a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings," and from a crystal of salt picked up by the roadside, saying "Salt is good," will grant us a blessing, if, instead of taking a text from the Bible, I take for my text this letter from Cincinnati, which is only one of many letters, which I have received from young men and women of New York, New Orleans, San Francisco, London, Edinburgh and from the ends of the earth, all implying that, having some months ago preached the sermon on "Advice to Young Men," I could not, without neglect of duty, refuse to preach a sermon on "Advice to Young Women."

It is more important that the pulpit be heard on this subject at this time when we are having such an illimitable discussion about what is called the "new woman," as though some new creature God had arrived on earth or were about to arrive. One theory is that she will be an athlete and boxing glove and football and pugilistic encounter will characterize her. Another theory is that she will be a superintend ball box, sit in congressional hall and through the politics bring the millennium by the evil she will extirpate and the good she will instill. Another theory is that she will adopt masculine attire and make sacred a vulgarism positively horrid. Another theory is that she will be so aesthetic that she will have rolling pin and coal scuttle will be pictorialized with tints from soft skies or suggestions of Rembrandt and Raphael.

Heaven deliver the church and the world from any one of these styles of new woman! God will never come. I have so much faith in the evangelistic triumph and in the progress of all things in the right direction that I prophesy that style of new woman will never arrive. She would hand over this world to diabolism, and from being she is now, the mightiest agency for the world's uplifting she would be the mightiest force for its down thrust. I will tell you who the new woman will be. She will be the good woman of all the ages past. Here and there a difference of opinion as to the temporary custom may command, but the same good, honest, lovely Christian, all influential being that your mother and mine was. Of that kind of woman was Christian Eddy who, talking to a man who was so much of an unbeliever he had named his two children Voltair and Tom Paine, nevertheless said him converted, he breaking down with emotion as he said to her: "I cannot stand you. You talk like my mother."

And telling the story of his conversion to twelve converts who had been blatant opposers of religion they asked her to come and see them also and tell them of Christ, and four of them were converted and all the others greatly changed, and the leader of the band, departing for heaven shouted: "Joyful! Joyful! Joyful! Joyful!" You know that, where is she? The world cannot improve on that kind. The new woman may have more knowledge, because she will have more books, but she will have no more common sense than that which tried to manage and discipline and educate us and did as well as she could with such uncompromising material. She may have more health than the woman of other days, for the sewing machine and the sanitary regulations and educated intelligence on the subjects of diet, ventilation and exercise and rescue from many forms of drudgery may allow her more longevity, but she will have the same characteristics which God gave her in paradise, and in the exception of the nervous shock and moral jolt of the fall she got that day when not noticing where she stepped she looked up into the branches of the fruit tree.

But I must be specific. This letter before me wants advice to young women. Advice the first: Get your soul right with God, and you will be in the best attitude for everything that comes. New ways of voyaging by sea, new ways of traveling by land, new ways of threshing the harvests, new ways of printing books—and the patent of invention is enough to enchant a man who has mechanical ingenuity and knows a good deal of levers and wheels—and we hardly do anything as it used to be done; invention after invention. But invention on top of getting right with God there has not been an invention for 6,000 years. It is on the same line of repentance that David exercised about his sins, and the same old when he prayed that the publican used when he emphasized it by the same faith in Christ that Paul suggested to the jailer the night the penitentiary broke down.

Aye, that is the reason I have more confidence in it. It has been tried by more millions than I dare to state least come short of the brilliant facts. All who through Christ earnestly tried to get right with God are right and always will be right, that is the young woman who gets right, beats the young man over all rivalries, all jealousies, all misfortunes, all health failings, all social disasters and all the combined troubles of 80 years if she shall live to be an octogenarian. If the world fails to appreciate her, she says "God loves me, the angels in heaven are in sympathy with me, and I can afford to be patient until the day when the imperial chariot shall draw me to my door to take me up to my coronation." If health goes, she says,

"I can endure the present distress, for I am on the way to a climate the first breath of which will make me proof against even the slightest discomfort." If she be jostled with perturbations of social life she can say, "Well, when I begin my life among the thrones of heaven and the kings and queens on earth God shall be my associate, it will not make much difference who on earth forgot me when the invitations to that reception were made out." All right with God, you are all right with everything.

Martin Luther, writing a letter of condolence to one of his friends who had lost his daughter, began by saying, "This is a hard world for girls." It is for those who are dependent upon their own wits and the whims of the world and the preferences of human favor, but those who take the Eternal God for their portion not later than 15 years of age, and that is ten years later than it ought to be, will find that while Martin Luther's letter of condolence was true in regard to many, if not most, with respect to those who have the wisdom and promptitude and the earnestness to get right with God, I declare that this is a good world for girls.

Advice the second: Make it a matter of religion to take care of your physical health. I do not wonder that the Greeks deified and named Hygieia as a goddess. I rejoice that there have been so many modes of maintaining and restoring young womanly health invented in our time. They may have been known a long time back, but they have been popularized in our day—lawns, tennis, croquet and golf and the bicycle. It always seemed strange and inscrutable that our human race should be so slow of locomotion, when creatures of less importance have powers of velocity, wing of bird or foot of antelope, leaving us far behind, and while it seems so important that we be in many places in a short while we are weighed down with incapacities, and most men, if they run a mile, are exhausted or dead from the exhaustion. It was not until the last decade of the nineteenth century, to give the speed which we see whirling through all our cities and along the country roads, and with that speed comes health. The women of the next decade will be healthier than at any time since the world was created, while the invalidism which has so often characterized womanhood will pass over to manhood, which, by its posture on the wheel, is coming to curved spine and cramped chest and a deformity for which another 50 years will not have power to make rescue. Young man, sit up straight when you ride. Darwin says the human race is descended from the monkey, but the bicycle will turn a hundred thousand men of the present generation in physical condition from man to monkey.

For good womanhood, I thank God that this mode of recreation has been invented. Use it wisely, modestly, Christianly. No good woman needs to be told what attire is proper and what behavior is right. If anything is doubtful, reject it. A hoydenish, boisterous, masculine woman is the deterioration of all, and every revolution of the wheel she rides is toward depreciation and downfall. Take care of your health, woman, of your nerves, in not reading the trash which makes up 99 out of 100 novels, or by eating too many connoisseurs of confectionery. Take care of your eyes by not reading at hours when you ought to be sleeping. Take care of your ears by stopping them against the tides of gossip that surge through every neighborhood.

Health! Only those know its value who have lost it. The earth is girdled with pain, and a vast proportion of it is the price paid for early recklessness. I close this, though, with the salutation in Macbeth:

Now good digestion wait on appetite And health on both.

Advice the third: Appreciate your mother while you have her. It is the almost universal testimony of young women who have lost mother that they did not realize what she was to them until after her exit from this life. Indeed mother is in the appreciation of many a young lady a hindrance. The maternal inspection is often considered an obstacle. Mother has so many notions about that which is proper and that which is improper. It is astounding how much more many girls know what an elaborate argument, or perhaps spiced with some temper, the young man tries to reverse the opinion of the oldling. The sprinkle of gray hairs on the maternal forehead is rather an indication to the recent graduate of the female seminary that the invalid woman is not full of life and vigor. What a wise board school that would be if the mothers were the pupils and the daughters the teachers! How well the teens could chaperon the fifties! Then mothers do not amount to much anyhow. They are in a way, and are always asking questions about postage marks of letters and asking, "Who is that Mary D.?" and "Where did you form that acquaintance, Flora?" and "Where did you get that ring, Mary?" For did you get that ring, Mary? For did you get that ring, Mary? For did you get that ring, Mary?

Advice the fourth: Allow no time to pass without brightening some one's life. Within five minutes of you there is some one in tragedy compared with which Shakespeare's Hamlet is a trifle. Go out and brighten somebody's life with a cheering word or smile or a flower. Take a good book and read a chapter to that blind man. Go up that dark alley and make the invalid woman laugh with some good story. Go to that house from which that child has been taken by death and tell the father and mother what an escape the child has had from the winter of earth into the springtime of heaven. For the God's sake make some one happy for ten minutes if for no longer a time.

A young woman bound on such a mission, what might she not accomplish. Oh, there are thousands of these King's Daughters, whether inside or outside that delightful organization. They do more good before they are 20 years of age than selfish women who live and care such a young woman who feels pure such a mission with one who lives a round of vanities, carcase in hand, calling on people for whom she does not care, except for some social advantage, and is returned, and trying when the call is long, and living a life of insensibility and hollowness and dramatization and sham. Young women, live to make others happy, and you will be happy! There never has been an exception to the rule; there never will be an exception.

I have noticed on many of the railroads that the porter will go around and light the lamps while it is broad daylight, and I am so first surprised, but I afterward find that we are about to enter a tunnel, and its darkness is thus illuminated. Oh, kindly, a light for those who are plunging into financial or domestic or spiritual midnight! Advice the fifth: Plan out your life on a big scale, whether you are a farmer's daughter or a shepherdess among the hills, or the fastidious artist in a drawing-room filled with statuary and pictures, and bric-a-brac. Stop where you are and make a plan for your lifetime. You cannot be satisfied with a life of frivolity and giggle and indirection. Trust the world, and if you do not destroy it, it will destroy you. The Redoubtable was the name of an enemy's ship that Lord Nelson spared twice from demolition, but that same ship afterward sent the ball that

asked in a whisper by all the group, "Is she gone?" And all is over.

Now come the regrets. Now the daughter reviews her former criticisms of maternal supervision. For the first time she realizes what it is to have a mother and what it is to lose a mother, and old, did you appreciate how much mother was what you were going to lose? Young woman, you will probably never have a more disinterested friend than your mother. When she says anything is unsafe or imprudent, believe it. It is unsafe or imprudent. When she declares it is something you had better do, you ought to do it. She has seen more of the world than you have. Do you think she could have any mercenary or contemptible motive in what she advises you? She would give you an instance of any one else who would do more than that for you? Do you know of any one who would do as much? Again and again she has already endangered that life during six weeks of diphtheria or scarlet fever, and she has brought up the question of whether she had better stay, breathing day and night the contagion.

The graveyards are full of mothers who died taking care of their children. Better appreciate your mother before your appreciation of her will be no kindness to her, and the post mortem regrets will be more and more of an agony as the years pass on. Big names of polished Aberdeen and the best epithets which the family put together could not describe the grandeur of white roses from the consecrated earth are often the attempt to atone for the things we ought to have uttered in living ears and the kind words that would have done more good than all the calla lilies ever piled up on the silent mounds of the cemeteries. The world makes applaudatory ado over the work of mothers who raised boys to be great men, and I could turn to my bookshelves and find the names of 50 distinguished men who had great mothers—Cuvier's mother, Walter Scott's mother, St. Bernard's mother, Benjamin West's mother. But who praises mothers for what they do for daughters who make the homes of America? I do not know of any instance of such recognition. I declare to you that I believe I am uttering the first word that has ever been uttered in appreciation of the self denial, of the fatigues and the sense of duty, and yet nothing of those mothers go through with me, I do not know of any instance of such recognition. I declare to you that I believe I am uttering the first word that has ever been uttered in appreciation of the self denial, of the fatigues and the sense of duty, and yet nothing of those mothers go through with me, I do not know of any instance of such recognition. I declare to you that I believe I am uttering the first word that has ever been uttered in appreciation of the self denial, of the fatigues and the sense of duty, and yet nothing of those mothers go through with me, I do not know of any instance of such recognition. 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