

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

"WOMAN SACRIFICED" THE SUBJECT FOR LAST SUNDAY.

To Bring Vashti, the Queen, Before the King with the Crown Royal; for She Was Fair to Look Upon.—Ezther, 1-11.

W E stand amid the palaces of Shushan. The pinnacles are aflame with the morning light. The columns rise festooned and wreathed, the wealth of empires flashing from the groves; the ceilings adorned with images of birds and beasts, and scenes of prowess and conquest. The walls are hung with shields, and emblazoned until it seems that the whole round of splendors is exhausted. Each arch is a mighty leap of architectural achievement. Golden stars, shining down on glowing arabesque. Hangings of embroidered work in which mingles the blueness of the sky, the greenness of the grass, and the whiteness of the sea-foam. Tapestries hung on silver rings, wedding together the pillars of marble. Pavilions reaching out in every direction. These for repose, filled with luxuriant couches, into which weary limbs sink until all fatigue is submerged. These for carousal, where kings drink down a kingdom at one swallow. Amazing spectacle: Light of silver dropping down over stairs of ivory on shields of gold. Floors of stained marble, sunset red and night black, and inlaid with gleaming pearls. Why, it seems as if a heavenly vision of amethyst and jacinth and topaz and chrysopterus had descended and lighted upon Shushan. It seems as if a billow of celestial glory had dashed clear over heaven's battlefields upon the metropolis of Persia. In connection with this palace there is a garden where the mighty men of foreign lands are seated at a banquet. Under the spread of oak and linden and acacia, the tables are arranged. The breath of honeysuckle and frankincense fills the air. Fountains leap up into the light, the spray struck through with rainbows falling in crystalline baptism upon flowering shrubs—then rolling down through channels of marble, and widening out here and there into pools swirling with the flamy tribes of foreign aquariums, bordered with scarlet anemones, hyacinths, and many colored ranunculus. Meats of rarest bird and beast smoking up amid wreaths of aromatics. The vases filled with apricots and almonds. The baskets filled up with apricots and dates and figs and oranges and pomegranates. Melons tastefully twined with leaves of scacia. The bright waters of Eulaeus filling the urns and sweating outside the rim in flashing beads amid the traceries. Wine from the royal vats of Ispahan and Shiraz, in bottles of tinged shell, and lily-shaped cups of silver, and flacons and tankards of solid gold. The music rises higher and the revelry breaks out into wilder transport, and the wine has flushed the cheek and touched the brain, and louder than all other voices are the hiccough of the inebriates, the gabble of fools, and the song of the drunkards. In another part of the palace, Queen Vashti is entertaining the princesses of Persia at a banquet. Drunken Ahasuerus says to his servants: "You go out and fetch Vashti from that banquet with the women, and bring her to this banquet with the men, and let me display her beauty." The servants immediately start to obey the king's command; but there was a rule in Oriental society that no woman might appear in public without having her face veiled. Yet here was a mandate that no one dare dispute, demanding that Vashti come in unveiled before the multitude. However, there was in Vashti's soul a principle more regal than Ahasuerus, more brilliant than the gold of Shushan, of more wealth than the realm of Persia, which commanded her to disobey this order of the king; and so all the righteousness and holiness and modesty of her nature rises up into one sublime refusal. She says: "I will not go into the banquet unveiled." Of course Ahasuerus was infuriated; and Vashti, robbed of her position and her estate, is driven forth in poverty and ruin to suffer the scorn of a nation, and yet to receive the applause of after generations who shall rise up to admire this martyr to kingly insolence. Well, the last vestige of that feast is gone; the last garland has faded; the last arch has fallen; the last tankard has been destroyed; and Shushan is a ruin; but as long as the world stands there will be multitudes of men and women, familiar with the Bible, who will come into this picture gallery of God, and admire the divine portrait of Vashti the queen, Vashti the veiled, Vashti the sacrifice, Vashti, the silent. In the first place I want you to look upon Vashti the queen. A blue ribbon, rayed with white, drawn around her forehead, indicated her queenly position. It was no small honor to be queen in such a realm as that. Hark to the rustle of her robes! See the blaze of her jewels! And yet, my friends, it is not necessary to have palace and regal robe in order to be queenly. When I see a woman with strong faith in God, putting her foot upon all meanness and selfishness and godless display, going right forward to serve Christ and the race by a grand and glorious service, I say: "That woman is a queen," and the ranks of heaven look over the battlements upon the coronation, and whether she comes up from the shanty on the commons or from the mansion of the fashionable square, I greet her with the shout: "All hail! Queen Vashti." What glory was there on the brow of Mary of Scotland, or Elizabeth of England, or Margaret of

France, or Catherine of Russia, compared with the worth of some of our Christian mothers, many of them gone into glory?—or of that woman mentioned in the Scriptures, who put all her money in the Lord's treasury?—or of Jephthah's daughter, who made a demonstration of unselfish patriotism?—or of Abigail, who rescued the herds and flocks of her husband?—or of Ruth, who toiled under a tropical sun for poor, old, helpless Naomi!—or of Florence Nightingale, who went at midnight to stanch the battle-wounds of the Crimea?—or of Mrs. Adoniram Judson, who kindled the lights of salvation amid the darkness of Burmah?—or of Mrs. Hemans, who poured out her holy soul in words which will forever be associated with hunter's horn, and captive's chain, and bridal hour, and lute's throb, and curfew's knell at the dying day?—and scores and hundreds of women, unknown on earth, who have given water to the thirsty and bread to the hungry and medicine to the sick and smiles to the discouraged—their footsteps heard along dark lane and in government hospital and in almshouse corridor and by prison gate? There may be no royal robe—there may be no palatial surroundings. She does not need them; for all charitable men will unite with the crackling lips of fever-struck hospital and plague-blotched lazaretto in greeting her as she passes: "Hail! Hail! Queen of Vashti."

Again: I want you to consider Vashti the veiled. Had she appeared before Ahasuerus and his court upon that day, with her face uncovered, she would have shocked all the delicacies of Oriental society, and the very men who in their intoxication demanded that she come, in their sober moments would have despised her. As some flowers seem to thrive best in the dark lane and in the shadow, and where the sun does not reach them, so God appoints to most womanly natures a retiring and unobtrusive spirit. God once in a while does call an Isabella to a throne, or a Miriam to strike the timbrel at the front of a host, or a Marie Antoinette to quell a French mob, or a Deborah to stand at the front of an armed battalion, crying out, "Up! Up! This is the day in which the Lord will deliver Sisera into thine hand." And when women are called to such outdoor work and to such heroic positions, God prepares them for it; and they have iron in their souls and lightning in their eye, and whirlwinds in their breath, and the borrowed strength of the Lord Omnipotent in their right arm. They walk through furnaces as though they were hedges of wild-flowers, and cross seas as though they were shimmering sapphire; and all the harpings of hell down to their dungeon at the stamp of her womanly indignation. But these are the exceptions. Generally, Dorcas would rather make a garment for the poor boy; Rebecca would rather fill the trough for the camels; Hannah would rather make a coat for Samuel; the Hebrew maid would rather give a prescription for Naaman's leprosy; the woman of Sarepta would rather gather a few sticks to cook a meal for famished Elijah; Phebe would rather carry a letter for the inspired apostle; mother Lois would rather educate Timothy in the Scriptures. When I see a woman going about her daily duty—with cheerful dignity presiding at the table, with kind and gentle, but firm discipline presiding in the nursery, going out into the world without any blast of trumpets, following in the footsteps of him who went about doing good—I say: "This is Vashti with a veil on." But when I see a woman of unblushing boldness, loud-voiced, with a tongue of infinite clatter-clatter, with arrogant look, passing through the streets with the step of a walking-beam, gayly arrayed in a very hurricane of millinery, I cry out: "Vashti has lost her veil!" When I see a woman of comely features, and of adroitness of intellect, and endowed with all that the schools can do for one, and of high social position, yet, moving in society with superciliousness and hauteur, as though she would have people know their place, and an undivided combination of giggle and strut and rhodomontade, endowed with allopathic quantities of talk, but only homeopathic infinitesimals of sense, the terror of dry-goods clerks and railroad conductors, discoverers of significant meaning in plain conversation, prodigies of badinage and innuendo—I say: "Look! look! Vashti has lost her veil!"

Again: I want you to consider Vashti the sacrifice. Who is this I see coming out of that palace gate of Shushan? It seems to me that I have seen her before. She comes homeless, houseless, friendless, trudging along with a broken heart. Who is she? It is Vashti the sacrifice. Oh, what a change from regal position to a wayfarer's crust. A little while ago, approved and sought for, now, none so poor as to acknowledge her acquaintanceship. Vashti the sacrifice! Ah! you and I have seen it many a time. Here is a home emancipated with beauty. All that refinement and books and wealth can do for that home has been done; but Ahasuerus, the husband and father, is taking hold on paths of sin. He is gradually going down. After awhile he will flounder and struggle like a wild beast in the hunter's net—farther away from God, further away from the right. Soon the bright apparel of the children will turn to rags; soon the household song will become the sobbing of a broken heart. The old story over again. Brutal Centaurs breaking up the marriage feast of Lapithae. The house full of outrage and cruelty and abomination, while trudging forth from the palace gate are Vashti and her children. There are homes that are in danger of such a breaking up. Oh, Ahasuerus! that you should stand in a home, by a disappated life destroying the peace and comfort of that home. God forbid that your children should ever have to

wring their hands, and have people point their finger at them as they pass down the street and say, "There goes a drunkard's child." God forbid that the little feet should ever have to trudge the path of poverty and wretchedness! God forbid that any evil spirit born of the wine-cup or the brandy glass should come forth and uproot that garden, and with a lasting, blistering, all-consuming curse, shut forever the palace gate against Vashti and the children!

During the war I went to Hagerstown to look at the army, and I stood in the night on a hill-top and looked down upon them. I saw the camp-fires all through the valleys and all over the hills. It was a weird spectacle, those camp-fires, and I stood and watched them; and the soldiers who were gathered around them were, no doubt, talking of their homes and of the long march they had taken and of the battles they were to fight; but after awhile I saw those camp-fires begin to lower; and they continued to lower until they were all gone out, and the army slept. It was imposing when I saw the camp-fires; it was imposing in the darkness when I thought of that great host asleep. Well, God looks down from heaven, and he sees the firesides of Christendom and the loves ones gathered around these firesides. These are the camp-fires where we warm ourselves at the close of the day, and talk over the battles of life we have fought and the battles that are yet to come. God grant that when at last these fires begin to go out and continue to lower until finally they are extinguished, and the ashes of consumed hopes strew the hearth of the old homestead, it may be because we have

Gone to sleep that last long sleep, From which none ever wake to weep. O, woman! does not this story of Vashti the queen, Vashti the veiled, Vashti the sacrifice, Vashti the silent, move your soul? My sermon converges into the one absorbing hope that none of you may be shut out of the palace gate of heaven. You can endure the hardships and the privations and the cruelties and the misfortunes of this life, if you can only gain admission there. Through the blood of the everlasting covenant, you go through these gates or never go at all. God forbid that you should at last be banished from the society of angels, and banished from the companionship of your glorified kindred, and banished forever. Through the rich grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, may you be enabled to imitate the example of Rachel and Hannah and Abigail and Deborah and Mary and Esther and Vashti. Amen.

Reading His Own Shame. Brewer Jones, of New Hampshire, has a scrap book, ten inches thick, of clippings from prohibition papers, which he says is to show his grandchildren the crankiness of the present generation. "We have no doubt," says the Midland, "that his grandchildren will be more ashamed of their grandfather's business than amused at the folly of prohibitionists. Not many children to-day are boasting of their father selling slaves before the war. The time is coming when it will be considered as great a disgrace to have kept a saloon or brewery, as to have conducted an auction block for the sale of human beings."

The Full Account. A prosperous liquor dealer was boasting to a group of men standing near his saloon of the amount of money he had made. "I have made \$1,000 in the last three months," he said. "You have made more than that," quietly remarked a listener. "What is that?" was the quick response. "You have made my two sons drunkards. You have made their mother a broken-hearted woman. You have made much more than I can reckon, but you'll get the full account some day!"

Optimism. The world is coming every day to be a better place to live; human life more sacred and more worth living, because Christianity is fast girdling the earth and is exercising more and more a gracious influence on mankind.—Rev. A. L. Banks, Methodist, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Divorce. In this country divorce is wickedly common. In Connecticut and Dakota the giving or withholding of divorce is practically in the hands of the judges. There is great need for a universal law of divorce applicable to all states.—Rev. G. C. Jorck, Methodist, Pittsburg, Pa.

Gambling. Gambling is stealing another's property without just return. He who wins \$1,000 from another betting on a horse race, a faro bank or a game of cards has given no return for what he has received.—Rev. M. J. Breaker.

Was. It is rapidly coming to be fact that war should be as much denounced as slavery, and that the function of a righteous government will be to prevent war, to forbid it and render it impossible.—Rev. Wallace Nutting.

Repentance. The Gospel is the Gospel of salvation, but there is no salvation without repentance. Man is saved from sin, but not saved in sin. There must be a change of mind.—Rev. J. W. Sullivan.

18 TO 1. You Will Like Virginia. July 7 and 21, August 4 and 18, tickets will be sold from all points in the northwest over the Big Four Route and Chesapeake and Ohio Railway to Virginia at one fare plus \$2.00 for the round trip. Home-seekers should take advantage of this cheap rate to visit the rich farm lands. Virginia never had a cyclone. It has a perfect climate, cheap transportation, and the best markets in the world. Send for rates, free descriptive pamphlet and list of desirable farms for sale. U. L. Truitt, N. W. P. A., 231 Clark street, Chicago.

The Latest Paris Amusement. Blase Parisians have a new form of gambling for amusement. They set off a lot of toy balloons, and bet on the chances of their sailing a certain distance in a certain time. Each balloon bears an addressed postal card with the request that the finder note the time and place of the balloon's arrival and mail the card back. A week is allowed for the cards to come in and then bets are paid accordingly.

Home-seekers' Excursions South. On July 6, 7, 20, 21, and several dates during August, September and October, the Chicago & Eastern Illinois R. R. will sell first class round trip tickets, good 31 days from date of sale, for one fare plus \$2 for the round trip, to all points in Florida and the South. Tracks, trains, time, all the best. For further information address C. W. Humphrey, N. P. A., St. Paul, Minn. City Ticket Office, 182 Clark street, or C. L. Stone, G. P. & T. A., Chicago.

A Hint to Others. A man in Lewiston, Me., who had his shoulder dislocated in a runaway accident, was invited into the house by a sympathetic woman who hung the disabled member over the back of a chair, ordered him to take hold of a lower rung and pull, which he did, only to find that the shoulder had slipped back into place again and that he could go on about his business comfortably and thankful.

Half-Fare Excursions. The Missouri Pacific Railway and Iron Mountain route will sell round trip tickets on July 7 and 21, at one fare plus \$2 to certain points in Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Missouri, Arkansas, Texas and Louisiana. Tickets limited to 21 days from date of sale, with stop-over privileges. For particulars, address Bissell Wilson, D. P. A., 111 Adams street, Chicago.

Lightning and Trees. Cedar and fig trees are rarely struck by lightning. The beech, the larch, the fir and the chestnut also seem to be peculiarly obnoxious to the "bolts of Jove." There are trees, however, which appear to attract rather than to repel the lightning flash. The trees generally enumerated in the category of those which the lightning is most apt to strike are the oak, the yew, the elm and the Lombardy poplar.

W. Hatch of Marshalltown, Iowa writes: "I have been sick for the last four years with Rheumatism and nervousness. Have tried doctors and all kinds of medicines all of which have failed. I have used Dr. Kay's Renovator for the past six weeks and never felt better than I do at the present time. I will never fail to recommend Dr. Kay's Renovator to others on every occasion that presents itself." Sold by drug gists for 25 cts and \$1, or sent by mail by Dr. B. J. Kay Medical Co., Omaha, Neb. Send address for Free Sample and booklet.

The Courteous Bicycle Thief. The English bicycles thieves are ingenious. A lady was riding near Sarbiton when a gentlemanly looking person called out to her that her tire was out of order and offered to inflate it for her. She accepted his offer and, after remedying the fault, he got on the wheel to show her that it was all right, and rode off with the machine.

A Walkertown, Ont., merchant last season handled 9,000,000 eggs.

WOMAN TO WOMAN. Women are being taught by bitter experience that many physicians cannot successfully handle their peculiar ailments known as female diseases. Doctors are willing and anxious to help them, but they are the wrong sex to work understandingly. When the woman of to-day experiences such symptoms as backache, nervousness, lassitude, whites, irregular or painful menstruation, pains in groins, bearing-down sensation, palpitation, "all gone" feeling and blues, she at once takes Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, feeling sure of obtaining immediate relief. Should her symptoms be new to her, she writes to a woman, Mrs. Pinkham, Lynn, Mass., who promptly explains her case, and tells her free how to get well. Indeed, so many women are now appealing to Mrs. Pinkham for advice, that a score of lady secretaries are kept constantly at work answering the great volume of correspondence which comes in every day. Each letter is answered carefully and accurately, as Mrs. Pinkham fully realizes that a life may depend upon her reply, and into many and many a home has she shed the rays of happiness.

Domestic Reporter. "After a man has reached the age of 40," said Mrs. Disbrow, "he thinks every good-looking woman he sees is in love with him." "I am sure, my dear," retorted Mr. D., "I have never accused you."—Detroit Free Press.

FITZ stopped free and permanently cured. He has after five days' use of Dr. King's Great Nerve Restorer. Price 50 cents a bottle and 100 cents a three-months' course. Dr. King, 301 Arch St., Phila., Pa.

A nail-making machine produces as many nails in a given time as were formerly made by 1,000 men.

Ooe's Cough Balsam. Is the oldest and best. It will treat up Cold quicker than anything else. It is always reliable. Try it.

A very rarely found bird, a white wild goose, was recently shot at Mathews Island, Me.

If the Baby is Cutting Teeth, Be sure and use that old and well-tried remedy, Mrs. Winslow's SOOTHING SYRUP for Children Teething.

It is said that a good railroad locomotive will travel 1,000,000 miles before it is worn out.

Hall's Catarrh Cure. Is taken internally. Price, 75c.

Mrs. Mary Abair, a woman who never had a headache, died recently at St. Ignace, Mich.

I shall recommend Piso's Cure for Consumption far and wide.—Mrs. Mulligan, Plumstead, Kent, England, Nov. 8, 1894.

A boy in Brunswick, Me., has two artificial legs, and yet he is an expert bicycle rider.

What street do you live on? asked the police judge. "I don't live on the street," responded Perry Pathetic, with warmth, "I live on the sidewalk. Do you take me for a horse?"—Cincinnati Enquirer.

The Bane of Beauty.

Beauty's bane is the fading or falling of the hair. Luxuriant tresses are far more to the matron than to the maid whose casket of charms is yet untrifled by time. Beautiful women will be glad to be reminded that falling or fading hair is unknown to those who use Ayer's Hair Vigor.

W. N. U. CHICAGO, VOL. XI, NO. 25. When Answering Advertisements Kindly Mention This Paper.

The Governor of North Carolina said to the Governor of South Carolina

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