### A FAMILY RELIGION.

WHAT CHRISTIANITY DOES FOR THE HOME CIRCLE.

Dr. Talmage at Chicago Prepares a Sermon For the Press-The Mothers of Greatness-The Resolve of Joshua-No One

CHICAGO, March 19.—Rev. Dr. Talmage, who is now in this city on a brief visit, did

house, we will serve the Lord." Absurd, Joshua! You will have no time with affairs connected with the army. You are a statesman, and your time will betaken up with public affairs. You are the Wash-Ington, the Wellington, the McMahon of the Israelitish host; you will have a great serve the Lord."

Before we adopt the resolution of this old soldier we want to be certain it is a wise resolution. If religion is going to put my piano out of tune and clog the feet of the children racing through the hall, and sour the bread and put crape on the doorbell, I do not want it in my house. I once gave & to hear Jenny Lind warble. I have never given a cent to hear any one groan. Will this religion spoken of in my text do anything for the dining hall, for the nursery, for the parlor, for the sleeping apartment? agreeable guest than to get rid of him. If you do not want religion you had better not ask it to come, for after coming it may stay a great while. Isaac Watts went to visit Sir Thomas and Lady Abney at their place in Theobald and was to stay a week and staid 35 years, and if religion once gets into your household the probability is it will

THE FAMILY ALTAR. Now, the question I want to discuss is What will religion do for the household? Question the first: What did it do for your father's house if you were brought up in a Christian home?

stay there forever.

That whole scene has vanished, but it comes back today. The hour for morning prayers came. You were invited in. Somewhat fidgety, you sat and listened. Your father made no pretention of rhetorical reading, and he just went through the chapter in a plain, straightforward way. Then you knelt. It was about the same prayer morning by morning and night by night, for he had the same sins to ask pardon for, and he had the same blessings for which to be grateful day after day and year after

The prayer was longer than you would like to have had it, for the game at ball was waiting, or the skates were lying under the shed, or the schoolbooks needed one or two more looking at the lessons. Your parents, somewhat rheumatic and stiffened with age, found it difficult to rise from their kneeling. The chair at which they knelt is gone, the Bible out of which they read has perhaps fallen to pieces, the parents are gone, the children scattered north, east, south and west, but that whole scene flashes upon your memory today.

in your father's house debasing or clevat-Was that morning and evening exercise ing? Is it not among the most sacred reminiscences? You were not as devotional as some of the older members of your father's house who were kneeling with you at the time, and you did not bow your head as closely as they did, and you looked around, and you saw just the posture your father and mother assumed while they were kneeling on the floor. The whole scene is so photograp ied on your memory that if you were an artist you could draw it now just as they knelt.

For how auch would you have that scene obliterated from your memory? It all comes back today, and you are in the homestead again. Father is there, mother is there, all of you children are there. It is the same old prayer, opening with the same petition, closing with the same thanksgiving. The family players of 1840, 1859 as fresh in your memory as though they were uttered yesterday. The tear that starts from your eye melts all that scene. Gone. is it? Why, many a time it has held you steady in the struggle of life. You once started for a place, and that memory jerked you back, and you could not enter.

FARREACHING PRAYERS. more effect upon you than all you ever read in Shakespeare and Milton and Tennyson side the door for a little while I will be sal Dante. You have gone over mountains and across seas. You never for a moment .o. out of sight of that domestic altar. Oh, my friends, is it your opinion this morning that the 10 or 15 minutes subtracted from each day for family devotion was an economy or a waste of time in your father's household? I think some of us are coming to the conclusion that the religion which was in our father's house would be a very appropriate religion for our homes. If family prayers did not damage that household, there is no probability that they will damage our household.

'Is God dead?" said a child to her father. "No," he replied; "why do you ask that?" "Well," she said, "when mother was living we used to have prayers, but since her death we haven't had family prayers, and I didn't know but that God was dead too!" A family that is launched in the morning with family prayers is well launched. Breakfast over, the family scatter, some to school, some to household duties, some to business. During the day there will be a thousand perils abroad—perils of the street car, of the scaffolding, of the ungoverned horse, of the misstep, of the aroused temper, of multitudinous temptations to de

Some time between 7 o'clock in the morning and 10 o'clock at night there may be a moment when you will be in urgent need of God. Besides that, family prayers will be a secular advantage. A father went into the war to serve his country. His children staid and cultivated the farm. His wife prayed. One of the sons said afterward: "Father is fighting, and we are digging, and mother is praying!" "Ah!" said some one, "praying and digging and fighting will bring us out of our national troubles." We may pray in the morning, "Give us this day our daily bread," and sit down in idleness and starve to death, but prayer and hard work will give a livelihood to any family. Family religion pays for both worlds. Let us have an altar in each one of our households. You may not be able to formulate a prayer. Then there are Philip Henry's prayers, and there are McDuff's prayers, and there are Philip Doddridge's prayers, and there are the Episcopal church prayers, and there are scores of books with supplications just suited to the domestic circle.
"Oh," says some man, "I don't feel com-



petent to lead my household in prayer."

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Well, I do not know that it is your duty to lead. I think perhaps it is sometimes better for the mother of the household to lead. She knows better the wants of the household. She can read the Scriptures with a more tender enunciation. She knows more of God. I will put it plainly and say she prays better. Oh, these mothers decide almost everything. Nero's mother was a murderess. Lord Byron's mother was haughty and impious. You might have quessed that from their children. Walter Scott's mother was fond of poetry.

Washington's mother was patriotic. famuel Budget's mother was a thorough not is now in this city on a state of the preach today. He prepared for the press, however, the fellowing discourse on "Religion at Home," the text selected be"Religion at Home," the text selected be"their children. Good men always have Ing Joshua xxiv, 15, "As for me and my good mothers. There may once in 10 or 20 years be an exception to the rule, but it is only an exception. Benjamin West's for family religion. You are a military mother kissed him after she had seen his character, and your time will be taken up first wonderful sketch with the pencil. Benjamin West afterward said, "That kiss made me a painter."

A young man received a furlough to return from the army to his father's house. Afterward he took the furlough back to fnany questions to settle: you will have no time for religion. But Joshua, with the pone my visit for two weeks." At the end the army, and I was resolved not to go home until I could answer her first question." Oh, the almost omnipotent power of the mother! But if both the father and the mother be right, then the children are

almost sure to be right. The young people may make a wide curve from the straight path, but they are almost sure to come back to the right road. It may not be until the death of one of the parents. How often it is that we hear some one say, "Oh, he was a wild young man, but since his father's death he has been different!" It is a great deal easier to invite a dis- The fact is that the father's coffin, or the mother's coflin, is often the altar of repentance for the child. Oh, that was a stupendous day, the day of father's burial. It was not the officiating clergyman who made the chief impression, nor the sympathizing mourners; it was the father asleep in the

The hands that had toiled for that household so long, folded. The brain cooled off after 20 or 40 years of anxiety about how to put that family in right position. The lips closed after so many years of good advice. There are more tears falling in mother's grave than in father's grave, but over the father's tomb I think there is a kind of awe. It is at that marble pillar many a young man has been revolutionized.

MEDITATION AT THE GRAVE. Oh, young man with cheek flushed with lissipation! how long is it since you have been out to your father's grave? Will you not go this week? Perhaps the storms of the last few days may have bent the headstone until it leans far over. You had better go out and see whether the lettering has been defaced. You had better go out and see whether the gate of the lot is closed. You had better go and see if you cannot find a sermon in the springing grass. Oh, young man, go out this week and see your

father's grave! Religion did so much for our Christian ancestry. Are we not ready this morning to be willing to receive it into our own households? If we do receive it, let it come through the front door-not through the back door. In other words, do not let us smuggle it in. There are a great many families who want to be religious, but they do not want anybody outside to know it. They would be mortified to death if you. bors would hear them. They do not have

prayers when they have company! They do not know much about the nobility of the western trapper. A traveler going along was overtaken by night and a storm, and he entered a cabin. There were firearms hung up around the cabin. He was alarmed. He had a large amount of money with him, but he did not dare to venture out into the night in the storm. He did not like the looks of the household. After awhile the father-the western trapper-came in, gun on shoulder, and when the traveler looked at him he was still more affrighted.

After awhile the family were whispering together in one corner of the room, and the traveler thought to himself, "Oh! now my time has come; I wish I was out in the storm and in the night rather than here." But the swarthy man came up to him and said: "Sir, we are a rough people; we get our living by hunting, and we are very tired when the night comes, but before going to bed we always have a habit of reading a little out of the Bible and having prayers, and I think we will have our usual The broken prayer of your father has had custom tonight, and if you don't believe in much obliged to you."

Oh, there are many Christian parents who have not half the courage of that western trapper. They do not want their religion projecting too conspicuously. They would like to have it near by so as to call on it in case of a funeral, but as to having it dominant in the household from the 1st of January, 7 o'clock a. m., to the 31st of December, 10 o'clock p. m., they do not want it. They would rather die and have their families perish with them than to cry out in the bold words of the soldier in my text, 'As for me and my house, we will serve the

INCIDENT IN THE TALMAGE FAMILY. There was in my ancestral line an incident so strangely impressive that it seems more like romance than reality. It has sometimes been so inaccurately put forth that I now give you the true incident. My grandfather and grandmother, living at Somerville, N. J., went to Basking Ridge to witness a revival under the ministry of the Rev. Dr. Finley. They came home so impressed with what they had seen that they resolved on the salvation of their children. The young people of the house were to go off for an evening party, and my grand-

mother said: "Now, when you are all ready for the party, come to my room, for I have something very important to tell you." All ready for departure, they came to her room, and she said to them, "Now, I want you to remember, while you are away this evening, that I am all the time in this room praying for your salvation, and I shall not cease praying until you get back." The young people went to the party, but amid the loudest hilarities of the night they could not ferget that their mother was praying for them. The evening passed,

and the night passed. The next day my grandparents heard an outery in an adjoining room, and they went and found their daughter imploring the salvation of the gospel. The daughter told them that her brothers were at the barn and at the wagon house under powerful conviction of sin. They went to the barn. They found my uncle Jehiah, who afterward became a minister of the gospel, crying to God for mercy. They went to the wagon house. They found their son David, who afterward became my father, imploring God's pardon and mercy. Before a great while the whole family were saved.

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and David went and told the story to a young woman to whom he was aflianced, who, as a result of the story, became a Christian, and from her own lips-my nother's-I have received the incident. The story of that converted household ran through all the neighborhood, from family to family, until the whole region was whelmed with religious awakening, and at the next communion in the village thurch at Somerville over 200 souls stood up to profess the faith of the gospel. My mother, carrying the memory of this scene from early womanhood into further life, in after years was resolved upon the salvation of her children, and for many years every week she met three other Christian mothers to pray for the salvation of their families. I think that all the members of those families were saved-myself, the youngest

GRANDMOTHER'S PRAYER. There were 12 of us children. I trace the whole line of mercy back to that hour when my Christian grandmother sat in her room imploring the blessing of God upon her children. Nine of her descendants became preachers of the gospel. Many of her decendants are in heaven, many of them still in the Christian conflict. Did it pay for her to spend the whole evening in prayer for her household? Ask her before the throne of God surrounded by her children. In the presence of the Christian church today I make this record of ancestral piety. Oh, there is a beauty and a tenderness and a sublimity in family religion!

There are but four or five pictures in the old family Bible that I inherited, but Dore never illustrated a Bible as that book is illustrated to my eyes. Through it I can see into marriages and burials, joys and sorrows, meetings and partings, Thanksgiving days and Christmas festivals, cralles and deathbeds. Old, old book! speak out and tell of the sorrows comforted and of the dying hours irradiated. Old, old book! the hands that held thee are ashes, the eyes that perused thee are closed. What a pillow thou wouldst make for a dying head! I salute all the memories of the past when I press it to my heart and when I press it to my lips.

THE OLD FAMILY BIBLE.
Oh, that family Bible! The New Testanent in small type is not worthy of being called by that name. Have a whole Bible in large type, with the family record of marriages and births and deaths. What if the curious should turn over the leaves to see how old you are? You are younger now than you will ever be again. The curious will find out from those with whom you have played in your childhood how old you are. Have a family Bible. It will go down from generation to generation full of holy memories. A hundred years after you are dead it will be a benediction to those who come after you. Other books worn out or fallen apart will be flung to the garret or the cellar, but this will be inviolate, and it will be your protest for centuries against in-iquity and in behalf of righteousness.

Oh, when we see what family religion did for our father's household, do we not want it to come into the dining room to break the bread, into the nursery to bless the young, into the parlor to purify the socialities, into the library to control the reading, into the bedroom to hallow the slumber, into the hall to watch our going out and our coming in? Aye, there are hundreds of voices in this house ready to cry out: "Yes! Yes! As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." There are two arms to this subject. The

says to them: "Don't interfere with your ent great structure was erected, which, children's welfare. Don't interfere with ter, the insurance, the everlasting help of Christian parentage. Catechisms will not save them, though catechisms are good. may be necessary. Lessons of virtue will not save them, though they are very important. Becoming a through and through, up and down, out and out Christian yourself will make them Christians."

up, but who as yet have disappointed the expectations excited in regard to them. I households, though they might make a wide curve, were very apt to come back to the straight path. Have you not been curving out long enough, and is it not most time for you to begin to curve in? "Oh," you say, "they were too rigid." Well now, my brother, I think you have a pretty good character considering what you say your parents were. Do not boast too much about the style in which your parents brought you up. Might it not be possible that you would be an exception to the general rule laid down, and that you might spend your eternity in a different world from that in which your parents are spending theirs?

CHRISTIAN SOLICITUDE. I feel anxious about you; you feel anxious about yourself. Oh, cross over into the right path! If your parents prayed for you twice a day—each of them twice a day for 20 years-that would make 29,000 pray-

ers for you. Think of them! By the memory of the cradle in which your childhood was rocked with the foot that long ago ceased to move; by the crib in which your own children slumber night by night under God's protecting care; by the two graves in which sleep those two old hearts that beat with love so long for your welfare, and by the two graves in which you, now the living father and mother, will find your last repose, I urge you to the discharge of your duty.

Though parents may in covenant be And have their heaven in view,

They are not happy till they see Their children happy too. Oh, you departed Christian ancestry fathers and mothers in glory, bend from the skies today and give new emphasis to what you told us on earth with many tears and anxieties! Keep a place for us by your blissful side, for today, in the presence of earth and heaven and hell, and by the help of the cross, and amid overwhelming and gracious memories, we resolve, each one for himself, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord,"

His Own Son. "Frederic de Belleville tells a good story on himself," said Richard F. Baker at the "You know De Belleville is his right name, and his father is a sure enough count in Belgium. De Belleville is very swell and always travels with a valet. A few years ago he went to Europe and was to meet his father in the Hotel Continental in Paris. He had not seen the old gentleman for 16 years. Frederic had his valet with him in the person of a big negro. The servant was of about the same stature as his master and was rather light for a negro, although not quite a mulatto. When they arrived in Paris, they were shown to a room. Count de Belleville was announced. and the valet opened the door for him. Now the old man bad never seen a negro in all his life, and as he looked the valet over from head to foot he threw up both hands, crying in French, 'My son, my son, you were not so black when last I saw you.'"—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

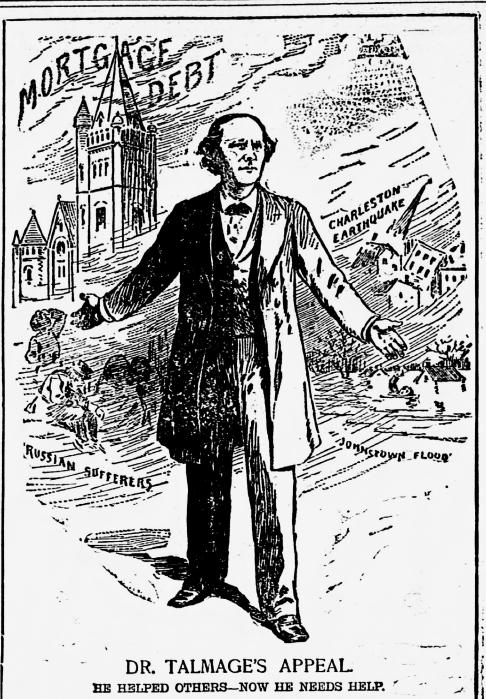
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Your watch needs cleaning and oi



An Appeal For Aid.

A big black cloud of debt hangs over the spacious Tabernacle in Brooklyn, where Rev. Dr. Talmage speaks every Sunday to thousands. If it be not speedily dispelled, this great preacher and teacher must give up his labors in a locality where he can do more good than in any place else on earth. The story of the financial trouble at this church seems to be a simple one. It casts not the slightest reflection upon the care, prudence or foresight of either Dr. Talmage or his congregation. Several years ago a large church was built. The year following it was found necessary to enlarge it at almost the expense of a new church. Just as they were getting it paid for it took fire and burned down. Then another large edifice was constructed. But a lightning bolt set fire to it, and this also was destroyed just as the debt upon one arm puts its hand on all parents. It it was being wiped out. Then the prestheir eternal happiness. Don't you by anything you do put out your foot and trip | practically comprises four churches that this congregation has built within a few years. During Dr. Talmage's pastorate in Brooklyn his people have raised The rod will not save them, though the rod | the sum of \$1,040,000 for religious purposes. This, for a congregation of which the members are almost without exception in poor or moderate circumstances financially, is a remarkable example

The other arm of this subject puts its of self sacrifice and liberality. Nor are hand upon those who had a pious bringing they weary in this well doing. They say they are willing to work day and night said that children brought up in Christian | to be rid of this financial embarrassment. Twenty-five thousand dollars of the debt must be paid at once, or the noble institution will pass out of the possession of the congregation. The present pecuniary distress is greater than they or any other average church congregation where the poor far outnumber the rich can carry.

Will they get the needed assistance? There should be no question about it. It need not come as a work of charity or sense of obligation. Dr. Talmage is the world's preacher and the world's benedistress his heart and his hand, his voice and his pen, have responded as soon as the cry reached his ears. When Charleshis response in deeds and words was most

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potent. When the cry of distress came from the starving peasants in Russia, he went 6,000 miles to distribute bread. For every local charity and every case of individual distress his right hand has literally been extended at all times, and his left knew nothing about it.

If this unfortunate financial embar rassment of his church had not occurred, Dr. Talmage would probably never have troubled himself to correct the prevailing opinion that he had been drawing from \$10,000 to \$20,000 per year for his services as pastor, but in speaking of the difficulty the other day he remarked incidentally that for the past three years he had received \$680 for his work, the balance of his salary having been turned back to the church.

The Brooklyn Tabernacle is unique. It is crowded at every service in the year. Everybody is just as welcome there as Somebody, and it is quite unnecessary to go to the highways and the byways to draw people in. Nor do the masses go to or rich church decorations, for these are very simple at the Tabernacle.

They go to hear Talmage preach. And his sermons are so luminous, so fresh, so inexhaustible, so full of interest and power, that they never tire of him. Dr. Talmage does not trouble his congregation much about theological dogma. Nobody can tell whether the Tabernacle puloit is Baptist, Methodist or Presbyterian. His religious views are as broad as the poles, as deep as human needs and as high as heaven. He is no half hearted or doubting preacher, but he handles the truth forcibly and fearlessly.

A movement has been started to help Dr. Talmage and his congregation. Perhaps many readers of this paper who have had the rare pleasure of reading his sermons will be glad to contribute to the success of this movement. The testimonial is to be a popular one, and dolof good will either, but rather from a lars, dimes and pennies will be received with equal gratitude. It is hoped that a large number of contributions may be factor. At the call of every species of tendered by our readers, to whom Dr. Talmage's utterances have proved helpful as they have appeared in these columns and elsewhere.

All subscriptions sent to the office of ton was stricken by an earthquake, he was this paper will be acknowledged and fora leader in the work of relief. When the warded at once to Dr. Talmage in Brook-Johnstown flood catastrophe occurred, Iyn, together with the names of the do-





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