SUNDAY'S SERMON.

ONE OF DR. T. DEWITT TALMAGE'S STERLING DISCOURSES.

Subject: "The Rustic in the Palace."

TEXT: "I will go and see him before I die."—Genesis xlv., 28.

Jacob had long since passed the hundredth year milestone. In those times people were distinguished for longevity. In the centuries afterward persons living to great age, Galen, the most celebrated physician of his time, took so little of his own medicine that he lived to 140 years. A man of undoubted veracity on the witness stand in England swore that he remembered an event 150 years before. Lord Bacon speaks of a countess who had cut three sets of teeth and died at 140 years. Joseph Cesle, of Pennsylvania, lived 140 years. In 1857 a book was printed containing the names of thirty-seven persons who lived 140 years, and the names of eleven persons who lived 150 years.

Among the grand old people of whom we have record was Jacob, the shepherd of the text. But he had a bad lot of boys. They were jealous and ambitious and every way unprincipled. Joseph, however, seemed to be an exception, but he had been gone many years, and the probability was that he was dead. As sometimes now in a house you will find kept at the table a vacant chair, a plate, a knife, a fork, for some deceased member of the family, so Jacob kept in his heart a place for his beloved Joseph. There sits the old man, the flock of 140 years in their flight having alighted long enough to leave the marks of their claw on forehead and cheek and temple. His long beard snows down over his chest. His eyes are somewhat dim, and he can see farther when they are closed than when they are open, for he can see clear back into the time when beautiful Rachel, his wife, was living and his children shook the oriental abode with their merriment.

The centenarian is sitting dreaming over the past when he hears a wagon rumbling to the front door. He gets up and goes to the door to see who has arrived, and his long absent sons from Egypt come in and announce to him that Joseph instead of being dead is still living in an Egyptian palace, with all the investiture of prime minister, next to the king in the mightiest empire of all the world! The news was too sudden and too glad for the old man, and his cheeks whiten, and he has a dazed look, and his staff falls out of his hand, and he would have dropped had not the sons caught him and led him to a lounge and put cold water on his face and fanned him a little.

In that half delirium the old man mumbles something about his son Joseph. He says: "You don't mean Joseph, do you—my dear son who has been dead so long? You don't mean Joseph, do you?" But after they had fully resuscitated him and the news was confirmed the tears begin their winding way down the crossroads of the wrinkles, and the sunken lips of the old man quiver, and he brings his bent fingers together as he says: "Joseph is yet alive. I will go and see him before I die."

It did not take the old man a great while to get ready, I warrant you. He put on the best clothes that the shepherd's wardrobe could afford. He got into the wagon, and though the aged are cautious and like to ride slow the wagon did not get along fast enough for this old man, and when the wagon with the old man met Joseph's chariot coming down to meet him, and Joseph got out of the chariot and got into the wagon and threw his arms around his father's neck, it was an antithesis of royalty and rusticity, of simplicity and pomp, of filial affection and paternal love, which leaves us so much in doubt about whether we had better laugh or cry that we do both. So Jacob kept the resolution of the text, "I will go and see him before I die."

What a strong and unfailing thing is parental attachment! Was it not almost time for Jacob to forget Joseph? The hot suns of many summers had blazed on the heath; the river Nile had overflowed and receded, overflowed and receded again and again; the seed had been sown and the harvest reaped; stars rose and set; years of plenty and years of famine had passed on, but the love of Jacob for Joseph in my text is overwhelmingly dramatic. Oh, that is a cord that is not snapped, though pulled on by many decades! Though when the little child expired the parents may not have been more than twenty-five years of age, and now they are seventy-five yet the vision of the cradle, and the childish face, and the first utterances of the infantile lips are fresh to-day, in spite of the passage of a half century. Joseph was as fresh in Jacob's memory as ever, though at seventeen years of age the boy had disappeared from the old homestead. I found in our family record the story of an infant that had died fifty years before, and I said to my parents, "What is this record, and what does it mean?" Their chief answer was a long, deep sigh. It was yet to them a very tender sorrow. What does that all mean? Why, it means our children departed are ours yet, and that cord of attachment reaching across the years will hold us until it brings us together in the palace, as Jacob and Joseph were brought together. That is one thing that makes old people happy. They realize it is reunion with those from whom they have long been separated.

I am often asked, as pastor, and every pastor is asked the question: "Will my children be children in heaven and forever children?" Well, there was no doubt a great change in Joseph from the time Jacob lost him and the time when Jacob found him—between the boy seventeen years of age and the man in mid-life; his forehead developed with the great business of state—but Jacob was glad to get back Joseph anyhow, and it did not make much difference to the old man whether the boy looked older or looked younger. And it will be enough joy for that parent if he can get back that son, that daughter, at the gate of heaven, whether the departed loved one shall come a cherub or in full grown angelhood. There must be a change wrought by that celestial climate and by those supernal years, but it will only be from loveliness to more loveliness and from health to more radiant health. O parent, as you think of the darling panting and white in membraneous croup I want you to know it will be gloriously better in that land where there has never been a death and where all the inhabitants will live on in the great future as long as God! Joseph was Joseph, notwithstanding the palace, and your child will be your child notwithstanding all the reigning splendors of everlasting noon.

What a thrilling visit was that of the old shepherd to the prime minister Joseph! I see the old countryman seated in the palace looking around at the mirrors, and the fountains, and the carved pillars, and, oh, how he wishes that Rachel, his wife, was alive and she could have come there with him to see their son in his great house! "Oh," says the old man within himself, "I do wish Rachel could be here to see all this!" I visited the farmhouse of the father of Millard Fillmore when the son was President of the United States, and the octogenarian farmer entertained me until 11 o'clock at night, telling me what great things he saw in his son's house at Washington, and what Daniel Webster said to him, and how grandly Millard treated his father in the White House. The old man's face was illumined with the story until almost the midnight. He had just been visiting his son at the capital. And I suppose it was something of the same joy that thrilled the heart of the old shepherd as he stood in the palace of the prime minister.

It is a great day with you when your old parents come to visit you. Your little children stand around with great wide open eyes, wondering how anybody could be so old. The parents cannot stay many days, for they are a little restless, and especially at nightfall, because they sleep better in their own bed, but while they tarry you somehow feel there is a benediction in every room in the house. They are a little feeble, and you make it as easy as you can for them, and you realize they will probably not visit you very often—perhaps never again. You go to their room after they have retired at night to see if the lights are properly put out, for the old people understand candle and lamp better than the modern apparatus for illumination. In the morning, with real interest in their health, you ask them how they rested last night. Joseph, in the historical scene of the text, did not think any more of his father than you do of your parents. The probability is, before they leave your house they half spoil your children with kindness. Grandfather and grandmother are more lenient and indulgent to your children than they ever were with you. And what wonders of revelation in the bombazine pocket of the one and the sleeve of the other! Blessed is that home where Christian parents come to visit! Whatever may have been the style of the architecture when they came, it is a palace before they leave. If they visit you fifty times, the two most memorable visits will be the first and the last. Those two pictures will hang in the hall of your memory while memory lasts, and you will remember just how they looked, and where they sat, and what they said, and at what figure of the carpet, and at what doorsill they parted with you, giving you the final goodby. Do not be embarrassed if your father come to town and he have the manners of the shepherd, and if your mother come to town and there be in her hat no sign of costly millinery. The wife of the Emperor Theodosius said a wise thing when she said, "Husbands, remember what you lately were and remember what you are and be thankful."

By this time you all notice what kindly provision Joseph made for his father, Jacob. Joseph did not say: "I can't have the old man around this place. How clumsy he would look climbing up these marble stairs and walking over these mosaics! Then he would be putting his hands upon some of these frescoes. People would wonder where that old greenhorn came from. He would shock all the Egyptian court with his manners at table. Besides that he might get sick on my hands, and he might be querulous, and he might talk to me as though I were only a boy, when I am the second man in all the realm. Of course he must not suffer, and if there is famine in this country—and I hear there is—I will send him some provisions, but I can't take a man from Padanaram and introduce him into this polite Egyptian Court. What a nuisance it is to have poor relations!"

Joseph did not say that, but he rushed out to meet his father with perfect abandon of affection, and brought him up to the palace and introduced him to the emperor, and provided for all the rest of the father's days, and nothing was too good for the old man while living, and when he was dead Joseph, with military escort, took his father's remains to the family cemetery. Would God all children were as kind to their parents!

If the father have large property, and he be wise enough to keep it in his own name, he will be respected by the heirs, but how often it is when the son finds his father in famine, as Joseph found Jacob in famine, the young people make it very hard for the old man! They are so surprised he eats with a knife instead of a fork. They are chagrined at his antediluvian habits. They are provoked because he cannot hear as well as he used to, and when he asks it over again and the son has to repeat it he bawls in the old man's ear, "I hope you hear that!" How long he must wear the old coat or the old hat before they get him a new one! How chagrined they are at his independence of the English grammar! How long he hangs on! Seventy years, and not gone yet! Seventy-five years, and not gone yet! Eighty years, and not gone yet! Will he ever go? They think it of no use to have a doctor in his last sickness, and go up to the drug store, and get a dose of something that makes him worse, and economize on a coffin, and beat the undertaker down to the last point, giving a note for the reduced amount, which they never pay. I have officiated at obsequies of aged people where the family have been so inordinately resigned to Providence that I felt like taking my text from Proverbs, "The eye that mocketh at its father and refuseth to obey its mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it." In other words, such an ingrate ought to have a flock of crows for pallbearers! I congratulate you if you have the honor of providing for aged parents. The blessings of the Lord God of Joseph and Jacob will be on you.

I rejoice to remember that, though my father lived in a plain house the most of his days, he died in a mansion provided by the filial piety of a son who had achieved a fortune. There the octogenarian sat, and the servants waited on him, and there were plenty of horses and plenty of carriages to convey him, and a bower in which to sit on long summer afternoons dreaming over the past, and there was not a room in the house where he was not welcome, and there were musical instruments of all sorts to regale him, and when life had passed the neighbors came out and expressed all honor possible an I carried him to the village Mashpolah and put him down beside the Rachel with whom he had lived more than half a century. Share your successes with the old people. The probability is that the principles they inculcated achieved your fortune. Give them a Christian percentage of kindly consideration. Let Joseph divide with Jacob the pasture fields of Goshen and the glories of the Egyptian court.

And here I would like to sing the praises of the sisterhood who remain unmarried that they might administer to aged parents. The brutal world calls these sacrificing ones peculiar or angular, but if you have had as many annoyances as they have had Xantippe would have been an angel compared to you. It is easier to take care of five rollicking, romping children than of one childish old man. Among the best women are those who allowed the bloom of life to pass away while they were caring for their parents. While other maidens were sound asleep they were soaking the old man's feet or tucking up the covers around the invalid mother. While other maidens were in the cotillion they were dancing attendance upon rheumatism and spreading plasters for the lame back of the septenarian and heating catnip tea for insomnia.

In almost every circle of our kindred there has been some queen of self-sacrifice to whom jeweled hand after jeweled hand was offered in marriage, but who stayed on the old place because of the sense of filial obligation until the health was gone and the attractiveness of personal presence had vanished. Brutal society may call such a one by a nickname. God calls her daughter, and heaven calls her saint, and I call her domestic martyr. A half dozen ordinary women have not as much nobility as could be found in the smallest joint of the little finger of her left hand. Although the world has stood 6000 years, this is the first apotheosis of maidenhood, although in the long line of those who have declined marriage that they might be qualified for some especial mission are the names of Anna Ross and Margaret Breckinridge and Mary Shelton and Anna Etheridge and Georgiana Willetts, the angels of the battlefields of Fair Oaks and Lookout Mountain and Chancellorsville, and though single life has been honored by the fact that the three greatest men of the Bible—John and Paul and Christ—were celibates.

Let the ungrateful world sneer at the maiden aunt, but God has a throne burnished for her arrival, and on one side of that throne in heaven there is a vase containing two jewels, the one brighter than the Kohinoor of London Tower and the other larger than any diamond ever found in the districts of Golconda—the one jewel by the lapidary of the palace cut with the words, "Inasmuch as ye did it to father;" the other jewel by the lapidary of the palace cut with the words, "Inasmuch as ye did it to mother." "Over the Hills to the Poorhouse" is the exquisite ballad of Will Carleton, who found an old woman who had been turned off by her prosperous sons, but I thank God I may find in my text "Over the hills to the palace."

As if to disgust us with unfilial conduct, the Bible presents us the story of Micah, who stole the 1100 shekels from his mother, and the story of Absalom, who tried to dethrone his father. But all history is beautiful, with stories of filial fidelity. Epaminondas, the warrior, found his chief delight in reciting to his parents his victories. There goes Æneas from burning Troy, on his shoulders Anchises, his father. The Athenians punished with death any unfilial conduct. There goes beautiful Ruth escorting venerable Naomi across the desert amid the howling of the wolves and the barking of the jackals. John Lawrence, burned at the stake in Colchester, was cheered in the flames by his children, who said, "O, God, strengthen Thy servant and keep Thy promise!" And Christ in the hour of exoruciation provided for His old mother. Jacob kept his resolution, "I will go and see him before I die," and a little while after we find them walking the tessellated floor of the palace, Jacob and Joseph, the prime minister proud of his shepherd.

I may say in regard to the most of you that your parents have probably visited you for the last time or will soon pay you such a visit, and I have wondered if they will ever visit you in the King's palace. "Oh," you say, "I am in the pit of sin!" Joseph was in the pit. "Oh," you say, "I am in the prison of mine iniquity!" Joseph was once in prison. "Oh," you say, "I didn't have a fair chance. I was denied maternal kindness!" Joseph was denied maternal attendance. "Oh," you say, "I am far away from the land of my nativity!" Joseph was far from home. "Oh," you say, "I have been betrayed and exasperated!" Did not Joseph's brethren sell him to a passing Ishmaelitish caravan? Yet God brought him to that emblazoned residence, and if you will trust His grace in Jesus Christ you, too, will be embalmed.

Oh, what a day that will be when the old folks come from an adjoining mansion in heaven and find you amid the alabaster pillars of the throneroom and living with the King! They are coming up the steps now, and the epaulated guard of the palace rushes in and says: "Your father's coming! Your mother's coming!" And when under the arches of precious stones and on the pavement of porphyry you greet each other the scene will eclipse the meeting on the Goshen highway when Joseph and Jacob fell on each other's neck and wept a good while.

But, oh, how changed the old folks will be! Their cheek smoothed into the flesh of a little child. Their stooped posture lifted into immortal symmetry. Their foot now so feeble, then with the sprightliness of a bounding roe as they shall say to you, "A spirit passed this way from earth and told us that you were wayward and dissipated after we left the world, but you have repented, our prayer has been answered, and you are here, and as we used to visit you on earth before we died now we visit you in your new home after our ascension." And father will say, "Mother, don't you see Joseph is yet alive?" And mother will say, "Yes, father, Joseph is yet alive." And then they will talk over their earthly anxieties in regard to you, and the midnight supplications in your behalf, and they will recite to each other the old Scripture passage with which they used to cheer their staggering faith, "I will be a God to thee and thy seed after thee." Oh, the palace, the palace, the palace! That is what Richard Baxter called "The saints' everlasting rest." That is what John Bunyan called the "Celestial City." That is Young's "Night Thoughts" turned into morning exultations. That is Gray's "Elegy In a Churchyard" turned to resurrection spectacle. That is the "Cotter's Saturday Night" exchanged for the Cotter's Sabbath morning. That is the shepherd of Salisbury plains amid the flocks on the hills of heaven. That is the famine struck Padanaram turned into the rich pasture fields of Goshen. That is Jacob visiting Joseph at the emerald castle.

AN Ohio militia captain and his company came upon a body of unarmed Huns, Poles, and Italian strikers, laid aside their guns, and licked them with their fists. This recalls the story of the sentinel who, posted on a precipitous outlook, was suddenly confronted by a Confederate who had quietly climbed up the precipitous side of the rock. The old German dropped his gun and grappled with his enemy, and after a rough and tumble struggle, threw him over the precipice. Asked why he didn't shoot his man, the old fellow said: "It makes too much noise, and maybe he feel worse now than if he had been shot."

THE work of our experiment stations is appreciated abroad, if not at home. In reference to the question of the influence of the cow's food on butter fat the Edinburgh Farming World says: In America they are more advanced on these questions than we are, and consequently the major portion of our researches comes from transatlantic experimental stations which have government sanction and support.

EVERY man has an agreeable side to him, but it is sometimes necessary to go entirely around him to get at it.

COXEY in the lecture field! Well, well, well! Was that what it was all for?

Testimony of Finger Prints.

When a finger or a finger print is closely examined under a lens of only moderate power, it is seen to abound in minute peculiarities. These are caused by the branchings of some of the ridges; the sudden appearance of new ones; the formation of rings, or ovals, like eyelets, and the abrupt stoppage of ridges without any apparent cause.

It is in these countless little peculiarities even more than in the general character of the pattern that the value of the finger prints as proof of identity lies. For these appearances, however minute, do not change in the smallest particular during life. A pattern may be traced on the fingers of the babe when born, it will be found the same on those fingers when he has grown to manhood, and may be imprinted from the fingers of the dead without change in the smallest point, though a hundred years should intervene between birth and death.

The pattern grows together with the finger. Its proportions vary with fatness or leaness. They may be further affected by wear, gout or age. But such changes appear in the pattern as a whole, never in the form of correlation of its constituent parts. The pattern may become altered in length or breadth by hard wear of a peculiar kind, but the number of ridges that concur in forming the pattern, their embranchments, their archings, loop and other minute characteristics, are not subject to change. They are indestructible as the finger. —[Atlanta Constitution.

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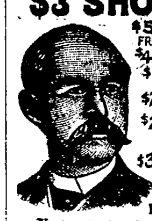

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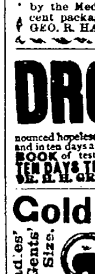

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IN A SHIP-YARD.

Army of Men Building Monster Battle-Ships.

In the Century Albert Franklin Mathews describes "The Evolution of a Battle-ship," mainly with reference to the building of the Indiana, the most formidable engine of war in the world. It is worth while to look at a place that produces such a monster, he says.

The Cramp ship-yard has nearly a quarter of a mile of water-front. Along this frontage are ships in various stages of construction, some on the stocks and some in the water illustrating almost every step in the building of a vessel. Here, near the entrance to the yard, is an acre or more of punching-machines, enormous contrivances that, as they close their jaws, with their ungainly teeth punch holes for rivets in the plates and frames as easily as a farmer's wife takes out the core of an apple. Further there is a steel checker-board of holes into which big pins are set in regular curve. Against the pins stalwart sledge-swingers, half naked, bend the cherry-red frames and plates, as they are slid out of the furnace, into the grasping jaws they must assume for use in the vessels. Here is a great row of blacksmith forges.

Further there is a building where a dozen monster boilers are in connection, and where a traveling crane lifts and moves them as easily as a hotel porter does big trunks. Here are big ship-engines, some set up and some taken down. Here are foundries where manganese-bronze screws are cast, and where brass and steel are fashioned into a thousand forms. Here is the great mold-loft where every line in the ship is laid down, and from which wooden counterparts of the vessels are made before the steel construction begins. Here are the wood-working shops, the gun factory, the great storehouse, and there is the floating dock that can pick up a 70-ton boiler and move it 300 feet, lift it high in the air, and place in a ship in thirty minutes, with as careful an adjustment as a watchmaker uses in fitting the movement into its place.

And here are 5,000 men employed in various capacities—machinists, wood-workers, molders, and perhaps the most noticeable of all, riveters in sets of three, one man to hold a big sledge against the red-hot rivet, and two, a right-handed worker and the other left-handed, to pound it until it becomes a part of the ship. So the work goes on until after about two years the ship that existed only in specifications becomes a living thing.

The Oculist's Stratagem.

There is an interesting account of a very clever bit of detective work by an oculist. It appears that in a large factory, in which were employed several hundred persons, one of the workmen, in wielding his hammer carelessly allowed it to slip from his hand. It flew halfway across the room and struck a fellow workman in the left eye. The man averred that the eye was blinded by the blow, although a careful examination failed to reveal any injury, there being not a speck visible. He brought a suit in the courts for compensation for the loss of half of his eyesight, and offered all offers of compromise.

Under the law the owner of the factory was responsible for the injury resulting from an accident of this kind, and although he believed that the man was shamming, and that the whole case was an attempt at swindling, he had about made up his mind that he would be compelled to pay the claim. The day of the trial arrived, and in open court an eminent oculist retained for the defense examined the alleged injured member, and gave it as his opinion that it was as good as the right eye. Upon the plaintiff's loud protest of his inability to see with his left eye, the oculist declared him a perjurer and satisfied the court and jury of the falsity of his claim.

"And how do you suppose he did it? Why, simply by knowing that the color green and red combined make black. He procured a black card on which a few words were written with red ink. Then the plaintiff was ordered to put on a pair of spectacles having two different glasses, the one for the right eye being red, and the one for the left eye consisting of ordinary glass. Then the card was handed to him and he was ordered to read the words on it. This he did without hesitation, and the cheat was at once exposed. The sound right eye, fitted with the red glass, was unable to distinguish the green writing on the white surface of the card, while the left eye, which he pretended was useless, was the one with which the reading had to be done.—[Sheffield, Eng., Telegraph.

Good Teeth Diet.

Bread is excellent as nourishment for the teeth, because it makes the enamel strong, flint-like and decay resisting. Bread made of whole wheat, and brown bread made of wheat and cornmeal are superior to white bread for bone building. Beans should be used at least once a week.