
Talks to Children

Eaton Thomas Treadwell

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TALKS TO CHILDREN

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
REV. JOHN A. BROADUS, D. D.

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TO THE MEMORY OF
JOHN LAWRENCE SMITH, M.D., LL.D.
COR. MEMBER INSTITUT DE FRANCE, ETC.,
WHO
"LOVED GOD AND LITTLE CHILDREN,"
THIS VOLUME
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
IN TOKEN OF HIGH PERSONAL REGARD, AND IN
RECOGNITION OF THE GREAT SERVICE
HE DID FOR THE CHILDREN OF
THIS AND SUCCEEDING
GENERATIONS.

PREFACE.

These talks were prepared for actual delivery without any thought of publication. Many addresses to children are simply strings of anecdotes with morals. In these talks, while anecdotes have not been wholly discarded, the aim has been to get the young interested in the Bible itself, by making its scenes real and its truths impressive. If only the young can be brought to love the Bible, the gravest problems of our times will be solved.

It has been deemed best to retain the original form of these discourses and to give them as real "talks" rather than as essays to the young. They are published by the advice of honored friends, and in the hope that they may prove in some way helpful.

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INTRODUCTION

Preaching to children is a characteristic of our time. In every age preachers have sometimes addressed certain portions of a discourse especially to children, and on rare occasions have even made them a formal address. But only within our century, and chiefly within half a century, has such a practice become common. Omitting Massillon's "Little Lent," ten sermons in Lent addressed to Louis XV., when nine years old, the earliest volumes of special discourses to children with which I am acquainted are John Todd's Lectures to Children, 1834, and Dr. Arnold's Rugby Sermons, of about the same date, both of them still interesting and profitable. Within the last twenty years many such books have appeared in England and America, and the number is now rapidly increasing. These represent a very large

number of such discourses annually delivered.

Here is one of the ideas of the age to which nobody need object. In many directions the evangelical minister has to oppose strong tendencies of the time, and it is pleasant to think of a favorite idea which all can approve. Besides the great good thus directly done to the children themselves, this practice greatly interests parents. Sam Slick says, "The road to a woman's heart lies through her child." Still oftener have irreligious fathers been drawn to general attendance upon preaching and public worship by some sermon to their children. Besides, sermons specially adapted to children are also extremely well suited to a large proportion of grown people. Dr. Richard Newton of Philadelphia, who has printed a far greater number of excellent sermons to children than any other preacher, says he used to notice that a man of his congregation who seldom came to church at other times always attended the monthly sermon to children. On being at length pleasantly asked the reason,