

AMERICA'S LIFE RESTS ON FAMILY

Without Soundness In the Home All Else Is Naught.

WOMAN THERE PRE-EMINENT

By Rev. Dr. NEWELL DWIGHT HILLIS, Pastor of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, N. Y.



REV. DR. NEWELL DWIGHT HILLIS.

In "The American Family" Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis, pastor of Plymouth church, Brooklyn, pays tribute to American womanhood and its work in uplifting and maintaining the good in American life. He chose as his text for this one of the series of sermons he is preaching Proverbs xxxi.

By way of pre-eminence the American family is the first and most important of American institutions. No other idea lies so close to the heart of our eager and commanding American society. From the family have come our school, our church and all our civic ideas. The republic could spare all its other forms of democracy more easily than it could the loss of the idea of the family.

The mere mention of certain names—the Field family in connection with the Atlantic cable, the movement for international law and the great names on the bench of the supreme court—is filled with suggestion. Witness also the family of Lyman Beecher and the Adams family of New England. Multiply these families and their influence is the shadow cast across the land in the form of the institutions they created. No other nation has exalted the family after the fashion of this republic. In this republic all things were and are and will be for the sake of the family.

In the interest of the home and the beloved ones there all the wheels turn round, all the ships set sail, all the tools work by night and day. To bring back treasure to the home men dare the chill under the frozen north and burn under the tropic sun. Take the family out of American society and it is taking the intellect from the body, the heat from the sunbeam, the culture from the library, the sun from the sky, leaving only a black and empty socket. When the sun dies all the harvests die with it.

The History of the Family is the History of Woman.

In general the history of the family is the history of woman and her love. It is a singular fact that the libraries hold the history of wars, arts, law, ships, engines, stones, stars, but that no one has ever written a history of love. An American scholar in one of his "club essays" has commented with keen satire upon the oversight of the historian as to that strange tumult of the heart that begins with the exchange of flowers, that journeys on toward poetry and daily letters, that begins to talk in images of paradise or hell and before the inflammation has subsided culminates in a wedding or a suicide.

The history of literature is very largely the history of this beautiful and pathetic attachment that establishes the family and has enriched the home through all the centuries. In the far off Hebrew days the old book tells us about a brave boy and a beautiful girl who at night fell down and prayed to God that they might grow old together. That enthronement of the heart explains the ideal of Rebekah and Isaac.

Woman's Place in Literature.

Italian literature was born with Beatrice, just as Laura made Petrarch and Francesca transfigured Paolo. It is a woman also that walks through all the pages of Mallory's "Morte d'Arthur" and glorifies each idyl of the king. Shakespeare understood, for it is a man's blunder that precipitates every crisis in the life of Hamlet, slain by indecision; of Othello, stupid, slain by his own jealousy; of Henry VIII. and Wolsey, ruined through selfishness and blind ambition. Always when redemption comes it is at the hand of some Imogene, Portia or Cordelia. Every novelist of the first order of intellect puts woman in the very heart of the scene. Jeanie Deans sheds luster upon all who stand within the circle of her life. Hawthorne's Hester glorifies the dark shadows of "The Scarlet Letter." At the Monday Literary club in the Parker House, Boston, about 1870 Ralph Waldo Emerson made the statement that the novel was in some respects the highest form of literature, but was impossible without a woman standing in the center.

A Book Without a Woman.

A young man, "Adirondack" Murray, then and there affirmed that he could write a novel that would succeed without mentioning the name of woman. No woman's name is mentioned in the pages, but unconsciously Murray revealed the failure of his book in the title, "The Story of a Man Who Didn't Know Much." The central figure in Murray's tale is a youth who had all the feminine qualities, through which

Murray hoped to evoke the sympathetic interest of his readers. It could not be otherwise. Society is a unit representing the union of two temperaments, the masculine that is fixed and unalterable, the feminine with which the woman is stained through and through, like crimson set in the finest wool that cannot be washed out. God never intended that men should be feminized or women made virile. The pathetic attachment that has subsisted between great souls like Rebekah and Isaac, Aspasia and Pericles, Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett tells us plainly that the path of love is the only road that leads to paradise, that can turn a hut into a house, a tent into a palace and, though the house be only a frail tent set up in the desert, with no lamp save the light of the firefly, yet for Jacob home is where Rachel is and heaven is that unseen city of amethyst behind whose walls of silver Rachel hath disappeared.

The Breakdown of the Family.

Now, all these considerations increase the alarm of patriots who love their country when we come to consider the threatened breakdown of the American family. There is a well known principle in economics that a strong demand will create the instruments for the supply. The mere fact that there are now 3,000 courts to which unhappy couples may repair for divorce publishes the keen demand for institutions that can sever a tie that is frail as a thread, but should be as strong as a steel cable. It is a far cry from the 3,000 divorce courts of today back to the time a century and a half ago, when the mother of Alexander Hamilton, a beautiful Huguenot girl, living in the West India islands, wanted a divorce from the Dane, who had become drunken, cruel and depraved, who had gone back to Europe and from whom she never heard again. There was not one court in the British colonies or in Great Britain that could give a decree of separation. Divorce meant that the woman with her wrongs must go to London, secure influence strong enough to carry a bill through the house of commons at an expense of about \$5,000. Now the pendulum has swung to the other extreme.

Divorce in America.

There are now 3,000 divorce mills grinding all day long in our country. Sixteen thousand divorces have been granted within a single year, though the same year witnessed only 800 divorces in England and about a score in Canada. Indeed, the records of our country showed some time ago three divorces in Canada and over 10,000 in our country. Most disquieting the spectacle of the minister uniting young men and women in the morning and a judge separating them in the afternoon. The blackest part of the tragedy concerns the children, now denied a father's guiding hand and now without a mother's love.

Reasons For Divorce.

From the viewpoint of Tennyson's "Dream of Fair Women" of the nineteenth century and our own observation of noble women in the twentieth woman's chief motive for asking separation is her revulsion from the immorality of man. Some poor women appeal to the courts because of non-support and the neglect of a man to provide for his children. At rare intervals a working woman seeks redress from a judge because the man is a tyrant and so brutal in his speech that the little children flee at the approach of their father as the dove flees from the hawk and the lamb from the coming of the wolf. But the chief motive in the vast majority of cases is woman's dislike of lepers, physical and moral. Think of what lies back of the fact that in a brief interval recently fifteen hundred babes born in the tenement regions of New York were committed to homes for feeble minded children! Even in the faroff times of Pliny, sixty years after the birth of Jesus, the Roman lawyer explains the divorce evil by the immorality of men. How significant is this passage: "Five hundred years after the City of the Seven Hills was founded a divorce case obtained a place in our legal record. I will not undertake to assert that there were no divorces for the first 500 years of the life of Rome, but certain it is that there is no authentic recorded divorce during these first five centuries." Then what happened? During the era of luxury and mammonism men became false, immoral, sensual. For a time the Roman matrons cherished secret anger, then their indignation broke into speech. At last these injured women took on the aspect of the unrelenting tigress whose whelps have been injured, and within a single month fifty Roman matrons poisoned their husbands. What evil men did sow that they were made to reap.

Woman's Revolt.

Either the workmen of this country must give up whisky, sensualism, drugs, and maintain a life of health and sobriety and keep themselves as clean within and without as they were during their twenties when they were lovers, or else the working women are going to refuse to bear children that carry forward the sins of their fathers. These women understand the threatened breakdown of the American physique. It is not their fault that in the tenement house region children are born with imperfect vision, teeth without enamel, feeble hearts and poor circulation. Science, sound ethics, love of humanity, all unite in telling us that these working women are right in the rebellion that they are organizing. One of the duties that lie in front of our legislators is the duty of giving every mother, rich or poor, at least \$100 a year for the support of every babe she bears until the child is fourteen years of age. When the state plays fair with these mothers there will

be a revolution in this country. The overthrow of the saloon will do much to bring in this new era, and that is a victory already within sight.

The New Woman.

What, then, is the influence of the so called "new woman" upon the American family? So far-reaching is that question that the answer must be based upon an analysis of what makes the twentieth century American woman to be spoken of as a "new woman." First of all, she is an educated woman. One hundred years have now passed since the Boston High school was thrown open to girls with hungry minds. During this century young women have exhibited an enthusiasm for the higher education quite undreamed of during other centuries. In the average high school of the country two young women graduate to every young man. The boy in his eagerness to enter business drops out of the high school, while the girl carries on her studies. In the state university also, little by little, young women are equaling in number the young men who are studying for the professions. If this tendency continues the time is not far distant when the overwhelming majority of the students receiving their diplomas in the departments of literature, languages and the sciences will be women.

The New Woman Has a Clear Vision and a Warm Heart.

To the education of the new woman we must now add her clear vision and her warm heart. Of old philosophers used to say that man has an intellect first and incidentally a heart, but that woman has a heart first and incidentally a mind. The statement is meaningless because it is untrue. When fully unfolded the intellect means the whole soul in the act of knowing, and the heart means the whole man or woman in the act of feeling; but, given a great sorrow, woman is strangely gifted with sympathy. From a woman's heart is born the movement of brave Mary Ware in the time of the plague in London; the struggle for soldiers on the battlefield by Florence Nightingale and Lady Augusta Stanley, braving every form of death in the Crimea; the plans of the Christian commission women in our civil war, working with the ambulance force in the very midst of battle; the Red Cross movement at the battle front of Europe. And think of Mary Slessor, beginning as a missionary in Africa and little by little achieving an influence so unique that the members of the cabinet in England sought her advice, that the native tribes appealed to her decision, that feuds between states and warring hosts might be settled!

Influence of Women in American Society.

No words can describe the influence of the modern woman in American society. Who can tell the achievements of these women who have organized the movement for the higher education in Wellesley, Yassar, Smith and Bryn Mawr! Women like Frances Willard and Jane Addams and Dr. Anna Shaw and a host of others have changed the very atmosphere of this land.

Women without financial ability? Harriman and Russell Sage and the man who founded the Bon Marche in Paris all left their millions to their wives. When that Frenchwoman lost her husband she carried the sales of the Bon Marche from 50,000,000 francs up to 100,000,000 and 200,000,000, because she was free through death to work out her own ideas. When the bees that are the female workers and collect all the sweets in the hive have gotten through with their lords they sting the males to death, and the females spend the winter eating the honey that their own skill gathered.

Pre-eminence of Women Through Skill and Delicacy.

An ox cart demands a man's muscle; steam locomotives depend upon a man's brute strength; the next age will be an age of electricity and chemistry. An electric machine is best handled by a delicate finger. Once the giant forces are controlled by electricity, a woman's sensitive hand may handle them better than a man's. An era may come, therefore, in which women will have the same pre-eminence in society and the creation of wealth as the female workers have in the beehive.

Most of the charges brought against woman as to her inferiority represent the verdict of a male jury and a male judge, who for purposes of self defense brought in a verdict against woman in general and pronounced her guilty of inferiority. The time may come when women will constitute the jury and indict the man for inferiority, and then— heaven help us all in the hour of the jury's verdict, for it remains for us to confess that in no country have women tried so successfully to put ethics into industry, justice into law, gentleness into government, sympathy into reform and purity and tenderness and love into the household. No land can boast a womanhood more glorious.

Great is the power of trade and commerce. Wonderful the strength of man to fill the granary and the storehouse. Marvelous the achievements of the soldier and the sailor, but man is not a body. His soul uses the body, and the chief influences that shape character, create institutions and regenerate laws are the influences of heart and conscience and social sympathy, that are the pre-eminent gifts of women. As children we all wake to conscious life lying upon a woman's lap, in youth it was a woman's hand that pointed to the paths of prosperity and peace, and when the end comes, happy is the old man upon whose fevered brow in the last hour a woman's hand falls, and the first face beyond into which the weary and worn man shall look will be the face of a woman, his mother, who lingers about the gate of heaven until her son comes home.

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NOTICE OF LAND SALE.

Under and by virtue of the powers contained in a certain mortgage deed executed on February 4, 1915, by G. W. Lawhon and wife, Emma Lawhon, to Willie F. Starling and duly recorded in Book No. 24, page 38, Registry of Johnston County, and the same having been duly transferred to the undersigned, the conditions of said mortgage deed not having been complied, I shall offer for sale to the highest bidder for Cash, at the Court House door, in Smithfield, Johnston County, N. C., at 12 o'clock M., on August 11th, 1917, the following described tract of land: Beginning at a stake, J. A. Starling's (now Willie F. Starling's) corner, and runs with W. S. Stevens' line to a stake his corner, on the Big Ditch; thence nearly South with John Sanders' line to an ash in a gut near Neuse River; thence down said gut to Neuse River; thence up Neuse River to a hickory stump, J. A. Starling's corner (now Willie F. Starling's); thence with his line to the beginning, containing 45 acres, more or less. Also another tract containing 66 1/2 acres and known as the land that was given to Willie F. Starling by J. A. Starling, as will be found by reference to said Will, duly probated and recorded. July 19, 1917. WILLIE F. STARLING, SALLIE F. LAWHON, Transferees.