THE MARRIAGE VOWS

The Ease with Which They Are Broken Is Deplored.

Timely Discourse of Dr. Talmage on the Marital Relations-Uniform Divorce Laws Are Needed.

[Copyright, 1899, by Louis Klopsch.] Washington, Sept. 17.

Dr. Talmage in this discourse discusses a question of national importance, which is confessedly as difficult as it is urgent. The text is Matthew 19:6: "What therefore God hath joined together let no man put asunder."

That there are hundreds and thousands of infelicitous homes in America no one will doubt. If there were only one skeleton in the closet, that might be locked up and abandoned, but in many a home there is a skeleton in the hallway and a skeleton in all the apartments. "Unhappily married" are two words descriptive of many a homestead. It needs no orthodox minister to prove to a badly mated pair that there is a hell. They are there now. Sometimes a grand and gracious woman will be thus incarcerated, and her life will be a crucifixion, as was the case with Mrs. Sigourney, the great poetess and the great soul. Sometimes a consecrated man will be united to a fury, as was John Wesley, or united to a vixen, as was John Milton. Sometimes, and generally, both parties are to blame, and Thomas Carlyle is an intolerable grumbler, and his wife has a pungent retort always ready, and Froude, the historian, pledged to tell the plain truth, has to pull aside the curtain from the lifelong squabble at Craigenputtock and 5 Cheyne row.

Some say that for the alleviation of all these domestic disorders of which we hear easy divorce is a good prescription? God sometimes authorizes divorce as certainly as he authorizes marriage. I have just as much regard for one lawfully divorced as I have for one lawfully married. But you know and I know that wholesale divorce is one of our national scourges. I am not surprised at this when I think of the influences which have been abroad militating against the marriage relation. For many years the platforms of the country rang with talk about a free love millennium. There were meetings of this kind held in the Academy of Music, Brooklyn; Cooper institute, New York; Tremont temple, Boston, and all over the land. Some of the women who were most prominent in that movement have since been distinguished for great promiscuosity of affection. Popular themes for such occasions were the tyranny of man, the oppression of the marriage relation, women's rights and the affinities. Prominent speakers were women with short curls and short dress and very long tongue, everlastingly at war with God because they were created women, while on the platform sat meek men with soft accent and cowed demeanor, apologetic for masculinity and holding the parasols while the termagant orafree love. That campaign of about 20 years set more devils into the marriage relation than will be exorcised in the next 50. Men and women went home from such meetings so permanently confused as to who were their wives and husbands that they never got out of the perplexity, and the criminal and the rivil courts tried to disentangle the Iliad of woes, and this one got alimony, and that one got a limited divorce, and this mother kept the children on condition that the father could sometimes come and look at them, and these went into poorhouses, and those went into an insane asylum, and those went into dissolute public life, and all went to destruction. The mightiest war ever made against the marriage institution was that free love campaign, sometimes under one name and sometimes under an-

Another influence that has warred upon the marriage relation has been polygamy in Utah. That is a stereotyped caricature of the marriage relation and has poisoned the whole land. You might as well think that you can have an arm in a state of mortification and yet the whole body not be sickened as to have any territories or states polygamized and yet the body of the pation not feel the putrefaction. Hear it, good men and women of America, that so long ago as 1862 a law was passed by congress forbidding polygamy in the territories and in all the places where they had jurisdiction. Thirty-seven years have passed along and nine administrations, yet not until the passage of the Edmunds law in 1882 was any active policy of polygamic suppression adopted. Armed with all the power of government and having an army at their disposal, the first brick had not till then been knocked from that fortress of libertinism. Every new president in his inaugural tickled that monster with the straw of condemnation, and every congress stultified itself in proposing some plan that would not work. Polygamy stood in Utah and in other of the territ tories more intrenched, more brazen, more puissant, more braggart and more infernal than at any time in its history. James Buchanan, a much abused man of his day, did more for the extirpation of this villainy than all the subsequent administrations dared to do up to 1882. Mr. Buchanan sent out an army, and, although it was halted in its work, still he accomplished more than the subsequent administrations, which did nothing but talk, talk, talk. Even at this late day and with the Edmunds act in force the evil has not been wholly extirpated. Polygamy in Utah, though outlawed, is still practiced in secret. It has warred against the marriage relation throughout the land. It is impossible to have such an awful sewer of iniquity sending 'up its miasma, which is wafted by the winds north, south, east and west without the whole land being affected by it.

Another influence that has warred against the marriage relation in this country has been a pustulous literature, with its millions of sheets every week choked with stories of domestic wrongs and infidelities and massacres and outrages, until it is a wonder to me that there are any decencies or any common sense left on the subject of marriage. One-half of the news stands of our great cities reek with the filth.

The congress of the United States needs to move for a change of the national constitution and then to appoint a committee-not made up of single gentlemen, but of men of families, and their familes in Washington-who shall prepare a good, honest, righteous, comprehensive, uniform law that will control everything from Sandy Hook to the Golden Gate. That will put an end to brokerages in marriage. That will send divorce lawyers into a decent business. That will set people agitated for many years on the question of how they shall get away from each other to planning how they can adjust themselves to the more or less unfavorable circumstances.

More difficult divorce will put an es-

toppel to a great extent upon marriage as a financial speculation. There are men who go into the relation just as they go into Wall street to purchase shares. The female to be invited into the partnership of wedlock is utterly unattractive and in disposition a suppressed Vesuvius. Everybody knows it, but this masculine candidate for matrimonial orders, through the commercial agency or through the county records finds out how much estate is to be inherited, and he calculates it. He thinks out how long it will be before the old man will die, and whether he can stand the refractory temper until he does die, and then he enters the relation, for he says: "If I cannot stand it, then through the divorce law I will back out. That process is going on all the time, and men enter the relation without any moral principle, without any affection, and it is as much a matter of stock speculation as anything that was transacted yesterday in Union Pacific, Wabash and Delaware and Lackawanna. Now, suppose a man understood, as he ought to understand, that if he goes into that relation there is no possibility of his getting out, or no probability. He would be more slow to put his neck in the yoke. He should say to himself: "Rather than a Caribbean whirlwind with a whole fleet of shipping in its arms, give me a zephyr off fields of sunshine and gardens of peace."

Rigorous divorce law will also hinder women from the fatal mistake of marrying men to reform them. If a young man, by 25 years of age or 30 years of age, have the habit of strong drink fixed on him, he is as certainly bound for a drunkard's grave as that a train starting out from the Grand Central depot at eight o'clock to-morrow morning is bound for Albany. The train may not reach Albany, for it may be thrown from the track. The young man may not reach a drunkard's grave, for something may throw him off the iron track of evil habit. But the probability is that the train that starts to-morrow morning at eight o'clock for Albany will get there, and the probability is that tors went on preaching the gospel of the young man who has the habit of strong drink fixed on him before 25 or 30 years of age will arrive at a drunkard's grave. She knows he drinks, although he tries to hide it by chewing cloves. Everybody knows he drinks. Parents warn; neighbors and friends warn. She will marry him; she will reform him. If she is unsuccessful in the experiment, why, then, the divorce law will emancipate her, because habitual drunkenness is a cause for divorce in Indiana, Kentucky, Florida, Connecticut and nearly all the states. So the poor thing goes to the altar of sacrifice. If you will show me the poverty struck streets in any city, I will show you the homes of the women who married men to reform them. In one case out of ten thousand it may be a successful experiment. I never saw the successful experiment. But have a rigorous divorce law, and that woman will say: "If I am affianced to that man, it is for life, and if now, in the ardor of his young love and I the prize to be won, he will not give up his cups, when he has won the prize surely he will not give up his cups." "No, sir; you are already married to the club, and you are married to that evil habit, and to you are married twice, and you are a biga-

mist. Go!" A rigorous divorce law will also do much to hinder hasty and inconsiderate marriages. Under the impression that one can be easily released, people enter the relation without inquiry and without reflection. Romance and impulse rule the day. Perhaps the only ground for the marriage compact is that she likes his looks, and he admires the graceful way she passes around the ice cream at the pienie! It is all they know about each other. It is all the preparation for life. A man not able to pay his own board bill, with not a dollar in his possession, will stand at the altar and take the loving hand and say: "With all my wordly goods I thee endow." A woman that could not make a loaf of bread to save her life will swear to love and keep him in sickness and in health. A Christian will marry an atheist, and that always makes conjoined wretchedness; for if a man does not believe there is a God he is neither to be trusted with a dollar nor with your lifelong happiness. Having read much about love in | And for every paradise lost may there a cottage, people brought up in ease . be a paradise regained. And after we will go and starve in a hovel. Runaway matches and elopements, nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand of which mean death and hell, multiplying on all hands. You see them in every

day's newspapers. Our ministers in some regions have no defense such as they have in other regions where the banns must be previously published and an officer of the law must give a certificate that all is right, so clergymen are left defenseless and unite those who ought never to be united. Perhaps they are too young, or perhaps they are standing already in some domestic compact. By the

wreck of 19,000 homes, by the holocaust of 10,000 secrifices men and women, by the hear totone of the family, which is the corner stone of the state, and in the name of that God who hath set up the family institution and who hath made the breaking of the marital oath the most appalling of all perjuries. I imolore the congress of the United States o make some righteous, uniform law tor all the states and from ocean to ocean on this subject of marriage and

Let me say to all young people, before ou give your heart and hand in holy alliance, use all caution. Inquire outside as to habits, explore the disposition, scrutinize the taste, question the ancestry and find out the ambitions. Do not take the heroes and the heroines of cheap novels for a model. Do not put your lifetime happiness in the keeping of a man who has a reputation for being a little loose in morals or in the keeping of a woman who dresses immodestly. Remember that, while good looks are a kindly gift of God, wrinkles or accident may despoil them. Remember that Byron was no more celebrated for his beauty than for his depravity. Remember that Absalom's hair was not more splendid than his habits were despicable. Hear it! Hear it! The only foundation for happy marriage that ever has been or ever will be is good

Ask the counsel of father and mother in this most important step of your life. They are good advisers. They are the best friends you ever had. They made more sacrifices for you than anyone else ever did, and they will do more to-day for your happiness than any other people. Ask them, and, above all, ask God. used to smile at John Brown, of Hadlington, because, when he was about to offer his hand and heart in marriage to one who became his lifelong companion, he opened the conversation by saying: "Let us pray." But I have seen so many shipwrecks on the sea of matrimony I have made up my mind that John Brown, of Haddington, was right. A union formed in prayer will be a happy union, though sickness pale the cheek and poverty empty the bread trav and death open the small graves and all the path of life be strewn with thorns. from the marriage altar with its wedding march and orange blossoms clear on down to the last farewell at that gate where Isaac and Rebecca, Abraham and Sarah, Adam and Eve, parted. And let me say to you who are in this relation, if you make one man or woman happy you have not lived in vain. Christ says that what He is to the church you ought to be to each other, and if sometimes, through the difference of opinion or difference of disposition, you make up your mind that your marriage was a mistake patiently bear and forbear, remembering that there is a glory in the patient endurance of a sad voke. Life at the longest is short, and for those who have been badly mated in this world death will give quick and final bill of divorcement written in letters of green grass on quiet graves. And perhaps, my brother, my sister, perhaps you may appreciate each other better in Heaven than you have appreciated each other on earth.

In the "Farm Ballads" our American poet puts into the lips of a repentant and, after a life of married per turbation, these suggestive words: And when she dies I wish that she would be

And, lying together in silence, perhaps we

will agree. And if ever we meet in Heaven I would not think it queer If we love each other better because we

quarreled here.

And let me say to those of you who are in happy married union, stoid first quarrels: have no unexplained correpondence with former admirers; cultivate no suspicions; in a moment of bad tember do not rush out and tell the neighbors; do not let any of those gadabouts of society unload in your house their baggage of gab and tittletattle; do not make it an invariable rule to stand on your rights; learn how to apologize; do not be so proud or so stubborn or so devilish that you will not make up. Remember that the worst domestic misfortunes and most scandalous divorce cases started from little infelicities. The whole piled up train of ten rail cars telescoped and smashed at the foot of an embankment 100 feet down came to that catastrophe by getting two or three inches off the track. Some of the greatest domestic misfortunes and the widest resounding divorce cases have started from little misunderstandings that were allowed to go on and go on until home and respectability and religion and immortal soul went down in the crash.

Fellow citizens as well as fellow Christians, let us have a divine rage against anything that wars on the marriage state. Blessed institution! Instead of two arms to fight the battle of life, four; instead of two eyes to scrutinize the path of life, four; instead of two shoulders to lift the burden of life, four; twice the energy, twice the courage, twice the holy ambition, twice the probability of worldly success, twice the prospect of Heaven. Into that matrimonial bower God fetches two souls. Outside the bower, room for all contentions, and all bickerings, and all controversies, but inside that bower there is room for only one guest-the angel of love. Let that angel stand at the floral doorway of this Edenic bower with drawn sword to hew down the worst foe of that bower-easy divorce. quit our home here may we have a brighter home in Heaven, at the windows of which, this moment, are familiar faces watching for our arrival and wondering why so long we tarry.

A Fashionable Novelty. It can be said with perfect safety that the collarette in its numerous different forms has come to stay. There was some doubt as to whether it would take well at first, especially in high-grade goods, but it is now a well-known fact that they will be largely used this fall and no doubt continue right through winter.-Dry Goods Economist.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

Rats are unknown in the town of Deblois, Me.

Ten per cent. of the caged canary birds drift into consumption, and they communicate the disease to those who keep them.

A "Filipino" means a person of pure Spanish extraction, born in the Philippines; a Mestizo is one of mixed blood; and the descendants of the Aborgines are known as "Indians."

Tramps who wander into Oakland, Me., are forced to take seats in what is called a "Baker primitive chair." It is a sort of modernized stocks, and one experience is considered enough by even a half-witted tramp.

Deep curiosity was aroused by a Wisoonsin paper when it announced a lecture on "The Beneficial Effect of Flirtation on the Public Health." It partially subsided when the letters forming the fifth word were subsequently rearranged so as to read "filtration."

The measles caused the death of an old resident at Chapman, Kan., at the age of 84. A local paper, in announcing the death, touchingly remarked: "We would hate like the mischief to live three-quarters of a century and then be carried off by a baby disease."

Since July 1 12 merchant vessels have been named by their owners after Admiral Dewey, six after Admiral Sampson, two after Admiral Schley, one for Ensign Worth Bagley and one for "Bob" Evans, two for Gen. Joe Wheeler and one for Fitzhugh Lee. War memories are also preserved in the merchant marine thus far this year by one Maine, three Oregons, two Iowas, two Olympias, one Rough Rider and two Manilas.

A hungry traveler, a stranger in Red Bank, N. J., entered a restaurant in that town and ordered ham and eggs, as that seemed to be the only available dish. After he had waited half an hour, staring impatiently at the verdigris-covered bottles in the caster, he summoned the proprietor, whom he questioned regarding the delay. "The ham is all cooked," was the reply, "but my little girl is still out in the yard waiting for the hen to lay another egg."

THE NIGHTINGALE.

A Singer That Has Been the Inspiration of Poets of Every Age.

Here comes a singer, indeed, who has neither equal nor second. If its song is unknown to any who read this, I would say, wait until you hear music solemn and yet jubilant as ever came from a bird; a voice of transcendent sweetness, variety, and with a supreme power of impressing itself on the very inmost fiber of our minds, and bringing us into some mysterious sympathy with things beyond our understanding; and when you hear it you must know you are listening to the nightingale. That song has been described over and over again; poets have loved to sing of it, and Milfon, in his "O nightingale that on you blooming spray," has, with his curious and accurate felicity, found just the word that expresses one of its chief charms-its "liquid notes."

Wordsworth's Those notes of thine, they thrill and pierce, Tumultuous harmony and fierce, express other of its beauties. Keats' famous ode has in it less of the nightingale, but yet his epithet, "full-throated ease," hits that carelessness of utterance, that unpremeditativeness joined with a supreme finish, which places it above and beyond all bird artists. But if I were asked what is its best, its most wonderful achievement, I should say it was the marvelous crescendo on one note, almost human in its artistic perfection. This is "the one low piping sound more sweet than all" of Coleridge-Coleridge, who has so defended

a plagiarism of his. 'Tis the merry nightingale That crowds and hurries and precipitates With fast thick warbles his delicious notes. Indeed, I do not know how the fable of the melancholy nightingale has crept into the minds of men; not only is the song exultant, but every movement of the bird is full of nerve and joyousness. -Gentleman's Magazine.

the bird against the charge of melan-

choly that all other defenses can be but

A Minor Victory.

Surveying a field of battle the duke of Wellington could detect almost at a glance the weak points in the disposition of the forces, and when the weakness was on his own side he promptly and resolutely caused it to be made strong. An English magazine tells this story of him which ought to be true: One day, when some small visitors happened to be in the nursery at Strathfieldsage, he walked up to the top of the house and found the youngsters at tea. He gazed grimly around as if the room were a field of battle and noticed that there was no jam on the table. Without a word he rang the bell violently. A footman appeared and stood petrified. "Have the goodness to understand," said the duke in a voice of thunder, "that when children are invited to my house to tea they are to have jam." Then he departed, and before he was out of earshot a shout went up that must have reminded him of Waterloo .-Philadelphia Press.

Straight Cuts.

Gratitude is a debt that the average man is least likely to pay, but when there is a grudge to be settled he chafes while waiting for the first opportunity. Beware of quarrels. They are like a runaway horse; easy to start, but ugly

to handle when under way. Philosophical research and political theorizing can never get beyond the fact that the community, state or country is most prosperous that has the hap-

piest firesides. One of the surest ways on earth of getting rid of affliction is to heed the lesson it teaches.

No man is truly strong who has to hear from others before deciding whether he approves of himself .- Detroit Free Press.

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