

Women AND THEIR Interests

Modern Marriage and Divorce

By ELLA WHEELER WILCOX
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Why the contention, the separations, the ever-increasing ratio of divorces that follow the marriages of to-day? In short, what is the matter with the modern marriage?

There is nothing the matter with modern men and women, save growing pains.

When boys and girls are growing up they lose much of the charm of early childhood and display ungraceful and awkward traits; they do not know what to do with their hands and feet, and their manners and attitudes are self-conscious. They are frequently in the way of their elders.

So the men and women who are passing from early immature social conditions to a higher state are similarly afflicted.

They have lost the old repose of accepted traditions; they are restless with self-consciousness, and their manners and emotions cause them to be in their own way and in the way of others. It is often remarked by the pessimist, who feels that the race is going to the wall, that divorce is a modern evil, and that its frequency today proves how the human family in civilized lands has degenerated in two or three generations.

Our grandparents regarded divorce as a disgrace. There was one divorce in their day to a hundred in the present time. But that does not mean that there were ninety-nine happy marriages in those days compared to one in this epoch.

More Patient Then

It means that men and women bore their marital unhappiness more patiently and silently in older times because it was the custom; and because they dreaded the scandal and reproach which would result if they sought freedom.

Women, especially in the days of our ancestors, had not begun to feel growing pains. They accepted whatever ills fell to their lot in marriage with a certain "Patient Griselda" spirit, believing it to be woman's sphere in life to submit to man's will in all things.

If the man built large, comfortable barns for his stock and housed his horses more luxuriously than his family, if he compelled his wife to do her household work under the most trying conditions, if he was niggardly with his money and humiliated her to the dust by making her beg for every penny she spent on her wearing apparel, and then complained of her extravagance, she bore it all without an idea of retelling and telling her troubles only to her mother, who advised her to be patient and make the best of the situation.

She had little opportunity to compare her destiny with other lives, as homes were isolated, methods of travel primitive and newspapers did not lay bare the domestic lives of communities, as in the present day.

Even infidelity on the part of the husband was borne as best it might be in those days, because separation of man and wife left the wife with a stigma upon her forever. And rather than return to her parents' home, branded and ostracized, she remained in her husband's house and tried to ignore her humiliating position.

To listen to the bragging of people who delight in lauding the past to the

detriment of the present, one would be led to believe that our ancestors were all models of nobility, and that the men and women of the present day are poor specimens of worthy forbears.

But a little investigation will prove that the sins of omission and commission of our ancestors produced the "divorced wife-waiter" type of men and women of our own times.

Had the old man never failed in his duty the new woman would never have sprung into existence. All the one-time domestic virtues of women were taken as a matter of course by the men folk.

Woman's work is in the home, and it was a too general acceptance of ideas that she was incapable of handling money and that she needed no diversion, no independent purse and no mental outlook beyond the walls of her home and the village church.

The type of man who held such ideas prepared the way for the suffragists who march through the land in the light of knowledge and demand more in their attitude toward a woman who made a misstep in the path of rectitude, and the two standards of morals, which made light of the sin of the erring youth and condemned forever the erring girl, helped to bring about the revolt of woman against the established order of things.

The silence of mothers on matters of sex has paved a broad highway for unhappy marriages, and now that women are reading, thinking and observing, they dare to stand forth in the light of knowledge and demand cleaner, saner and safer laws to protect them from the evils which the old-fashioned wives endured in silent shame and sorrow.

It has been the boast of senseless and unthinking mothers, backed by selfish and uncomprehending fathers, that the daughters went to the marriage altar "as ignorant and innocent in mind as new-born babes" in matters of sex. It would be just as sensible to boast that a school teacher went to her duties ignorant of reading and writing, the musician ignorant of notes. The misery, the destruction of health and happiness, the wretchedness which has gone into the second and third generations through this ignorant of girl wives and mothers regarding the natural laws which govern marriage and motherhood would fill volumes.

The alliance of fathers toward their sons on these great laws of life has aided and abetted selfishness of the masculine nature in relation to women, and the fact that until within a comparatively short period of time all physicians were men has been another factor in the building of conditions which, in their time, inevitably produced revolt.

The report of the "Committee of One Hundred" on health, together with the statistics of the Board of Health of New York and other States, combats the most optimistic mind to realize the menace to the national conservation of vitality which lies in the ignorance of men and women in matters of sex hygiene.

When men are educated in early youth to understand the importance of keeping the blood pure and the body and mind clean, in order to produce some, strong children who are mentally and physically a credit to the race, there will be a notable reduction in divorces, and wives and offspring will find less and less need of the surgeon's and physician's skill.

PREACHER WHO CAPTURED ARMY

Old Intelligence Department Surpassed Secret Service of Present War

The International Sunday School Lesson For October 24 is "Elisha's Heavenly Defenders."

(By William T. Ellis)

Spies and secret agents have bulked large in the present war; but the Sunday School lesson which we are now studying tells a more dramatic tale of an "intelligence department" than any of them. Also it narrates a capture more spectacular than any incident of the day's world war. Most important of all, the lesson is a timely reminder that when conditions seem hopeless, when force and evil appear to be having their ruthless way, God still has unexpected resources, which turn seeming evil into great good. In this day, when there is added to a world war the worst persecution of Christians that has been witnessed for a thousand years, with atrocities rivaling those of Nero and Diocletian, the comfort of this Old Testament story is precious.

The Bible episode which forms the lesson deals with the invasions of Israel by the King of Syria, and how they were thwarted by the watchfulness and knowledge of the Prophet Elisha, until at last, in a climax, the man of God, with his heavenly helpers, led the whole Syrian army captive.

Who Is the Spy?

Somebody was revealing all the military secrets of Syria concerning Israel. Whenever the king planned a foray into the territory of the Jews, he found that they were forewarned of it. So he suspected a spy in his councils. He was in the plights of more than one of the military commanders of our own day, whose plans have been revealed prematurely by the secret service of the enemy. Baffled again and again, the King of Syria demanded that the spy be pointed out.

Whereupon one of his shrewd lieutenants reported that the informant was no spy at all, but Elisha, the prophet and seer, who was able to understand even the secret whispered in the king's harem. Knowing no other argument than force, the Syrian king joined that large company of men in all ages who have sought to combat spiritual things by material might, and he ordered an army sent against Elisha in the little town of Dothan. Hunting the Preacher With Chariots

Then followed a great spectacle—a host of soldiers, with horses and chariots, sent out to hunt down one lone man of God! This was a compliment worth having. British soldiers, and you, too, Mr. Present-Day Preacher, when the liquor men defame you and try to blow up your house or waylay you on a dark night—count it far more of a tribute than anything the mothers in Israel may say about your sermons. Let us not pity the man who has made the forces of unrighteousness his active enemy; pity, rather, the Christian minister who has never raised a growl or a yelp from the evil pack. Elisha was untroubled by the army he knew to be advancing.

Not so his servant. When that young man arose early one morning and, with the sleep scarcely out of his eyes, saw the city of Dothan entirely surrounded by Syrian soldiers, he collapsed in panic. "Alas, my master! how shall we do?"

Right in the midst of alarms, with the Syrian cohorts on every hand, Elisha took time to preach to his helper a sermon—the sermon which most of us need to hear. "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." The prophet's servant was in the plights of many a person to-day who seems wholly surrounded by evil men, and who can scarcely believe that God has a majority anywhere.

Eyes and No Eyes

Poor eyesight was the cause. Elisha's servant suffered from that commonest of all defects of vision, inability to see spiritual realities, and in their due proportion. Because he cannot see aright we spend our lives in pursuit of second-rate gains and second-rate pleasures, and we fill our hours with second-rate deeds, second-rate books, and second-rate

thoughts. This young Israelite had the form of blindness which St. Peter described as "seeing only that which is near."

Open eyes would solve most of our perplexities and soothe most of our fears. So Elisha prayed that the servant's eyes might be opened, and they were, "and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire about Elisha."

O weary ones, ye may not see Your helpers in their downward flight, Nor hear the sound of silver wings low beating through the hush of night!

There are who like the seer of old Can see the helpers God has sent, And hope Life's rugged mountain side is white with many an angel tent. —Whittier.

Blinded by the dazzling light of her throne, the Syrian host was captured by Elisha, and led to Samaria, where, instead of slaying them, as was the usage of the time, the prophet restored their sight, fed them, and sent them back to Syria, as messengers of magnanimity.

The Preacher as a Prophet

What Elisha did for his ratherland is what a legion of preachers and priests are doing on the battlefields of to-day. He gave his best to his country. He served his own time. No cloistered recluse was he. Whatever touched the welfare of his people concerned him. The king on the throne of Israel was not a man according to Elisha's taste, but he was king, and so the prophet upheld him, even at the risk of his own head.

Out of this, and the other Old Testament stories which we are now studying, there should come afresh the message of the high and holy character of patriotism. There never was a better time than now for inculcating into youth the truth that loyalty to country is the second highest obligation of mortal, only loyalty to God Himself taking precedence of it. In every Sunday School class, and in every church and school, there should be a cult of patriotism, that our people may rightly understand and support the nation. We need patriotic prophets even more than we need patriotic soldiers.

Do thy part Here in the living day, as did the great Who made old days immortal! Serving the State anew by virtuous lives; Guard the country's honor as their own, And their own as their country's and their sons'; Defying leagued fraud with single truth; Not fearing loss; and daring to be pure. —Richard Watson Gilder.

This is a time for patriotism, and for praying patriotism at that. Like Elisha, we should be driven to our knees by the great emergency of our time, if the present world situation does not set Christians to praying, what conceivable conditions can do so? A sense of our divine allies is our greatest need. Simple reliance upon God is our only recourse. "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

The Vaster Strategy

Pertinent as powerful comes this message from ancient Israel's history, of the help that the hosts of heaven extend to the needs of earth. Our present danger is that we shall lose God out of our world. The

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THIS IS A TRUE, IF AN ANCIENT SAYING



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crushing and incomprehensible conditions abroad, which are breaking our hearts, are fairly robbing some souls of their faith in God. Yet we cannot forget that now, as ever in the past, God's strategy is vaster than earth's. His purposes are larger than our perceptions. "What I do not know thou knowest not, but thou shalt know hereafter."

A large world of love, of brotherhood, of a new social order, will surely emerge from the earth's present social chaos. Myriads of disciples of the Cross in the land we call holy believe that Christianity is being exterminated; for the hosts of unbeliever seem invincible, and they have already slain approximately half a million Christian women and children. Surely there is some inconceivably great purpose of God to be worked out, if this is the cost of it. Let us pray for open eyes and remember the heavenly hosts.

"Thrice blest is he to whom is given, The instinct which can tell, That God is on the field, When He is most invisible."

Many Examinations For Civil Service to Be Held

The United States Civil Service Commission announces the following competitive examinations to be held in Harrisburg. Persons who meet the requirements and desire any of the examinations should at once apply to the secretary, third civil service district, Philadelphia, or local secretary: November 2, senior civil engineer, \$1,800-\$2,700; senior signal engineer, \$1,800 to \$2,700; senior mechanical engineer, \$1,800 to \$2,700; senior electrical engineer, \$1,800 to \$2,700; senior structural engineer, \$1,800 to \$2,700; senior architect, \$1,800 to \$2,700; November 3, engineer, plumber and general mechanic, \$720, and associate gas engineer, \$2,000; December 8-9, surveyor, \$100 to \$150 a month.

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Dr. Shope is converting his hospital property at Second and Harris streets into an apartment house. Important changes and additions are being made to the property.

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