

myself, "Who is this woman that seems to mean so much to this dear old lady," and I thought of the five splendid sons she had so wisely mothered, and of the grand-children who said that to talk with her and see her face seems to make one want to live better.

There must be something in the life of the woman whose picture hangs on the walls, and whose miniature is worn at the throat of the grandmother, that is worthy of study. It must have been a noble life.

The picture on the wall and the books in the little library and the photo in the brooch are those of Frances Willard.

Then this mother whom five big men adore and whom many grand-children honor was influenced by the life of Frances Willard.

It must have been a noble life—and I turn to study the noble life of Frances Willard, for her life influenced not only this dear old mother, but thousands of other mothers, and the number is increasing with marvelous growth, so let us study not her biography but her life—the purity, the tenderness, the helpfulness, the sympathy, the thoughtfulness, the helpfulness, the cheerfulness, the inspiration, the godliness that make up a noble life. I sometimes think we dwell too much on the fearful evils of sin and not enough on the blessings of good.

I think our faces should be directed upward to view the great, and good, and beautiful, more than lowered to face the awful tragedies of evil doing. It is true we need to know the sad and pathetic about us in order to sympathize, but I believe we need to look up more, for by looking up we shall be able to lift up more. Purity seems to be the first requisite of the noble life. Do you want a clean soul? Do you want a stained soul? Your thoughts clean or stain your soul.

What is it in Frances Willard that lives?

Her character. Many other famous women live only in name.

There may be brilliant women, there may be clever men of world-wide reputation, but they are not noble men and women if their characters be not pure.

The lives of some of our most noted men and women in history are scarred with the black blots of impure character, and their power in the world's history is weakened when we refer to them personally.

The noble life is a pure character.

The heart that is lifted up to God as a Lily lifts up its chalice to the sun will be purified and cleaned, because impurity must decay in the light of the cleansing power of the Heavenly father's love.

The noble life is a tender hearted life—it is full of little kindnesses for others. Frances Willard had a heart and mind that were filled with great longings for the betterment of humanity. She heard the moaning of heart-broken lives, the cry of a hurt baby, or the agony of the strong. One writer says she stood on the shore of life and battled to save human souls and bodies from its angry waves.

Frances Willard was a lover of humanity.

She longed to share with everybody all the good things in life.

She said at one time:

"In spite of what is said of dishonesty I believe in human nature next to God. I believe the eyes into which I look are friendly." What we need is not only love, but radiant love.

A little child one time at a great meeting gave her a bouquet—lifting the floral gift up and holding it toward the audience she said:

"Blessed is the woman to whom children give flowers."

There was intense interest manifested and tears were wiped away.

She showed her appreciation of life's blessings—radiating love and help wherever needed. Is thy heart a well left empty? None but God the void can fill. Nothing but a ceaseless fountain can its ceaseless longings still.

Is thy heart a living power? Self-entwined, its strength sinks low. It can

only live in loving and by serving, love will grow.

Words of sympathy and praise and helpfulness came from Frances Willard because her heart was overflowing with loving kindness. This is one great lesson from her noble life that I wish to impress. We do not praise and help others enough, but we criticize others enough. There seems to be a serpent-like fascination to criticism. It is the most poisonous element that can crawl into our personality. Let us choke it. One time when Miss Willard's friends were greatly aroused over some act of grave injustice toward her and were criticizing them severely Miss Willard said: "Now girls, I've been thinking it over, and it isn't the Christian way to air our grievances. I'm going to quit; and in token I'm going to sign off from speaking ill of people, and in my Bible I want you to take the pledge with me."

They signed the pledge. Could not we be more helpful if we would sign a similar pledge?

We so often criticize when we do not know the environment in which the one criticized is placed.

Kind words are the music of the world.

One of the surest hindrances to right-doing is talking about people's wrong doing. Gossip and love do not get along well together.

Frances Willard was a true friend. How often we wonder if a friend be true.

We say we cannot tell. What is a true friend?

A true friend is one that keeps us facing the ideal in life.

When an acquaintance turns your face from the ideal, he is not a friend.

Take this thought as a test and go review your acquaintances.

Miss Willard appealed to the highest in human nature and brought it out. She discovered people, she saw talents in others that they did not dream of possessing. She had the ability to recognize possibilities in others of which they themselves were not conscious. Then she opened new and wider paths of usefulness for them. In her presence one felt at once called to the highest and best. Such a woman is a friend.

I wish you would, in your room when alone, review your acquaintances. Make two lists. In one put those who are an inspiration to you—who make you face the ideal—and in the other those who turn your mind away from the ideal.

Which is the longer list?

"Which will you choose as friends?"

Another phase of Miss Willard's nobleness of heart was that she was not

jealous of others' greatness. Small souls are filled with jealousy. They are afraid that another may outshine them.

The truly great think of the welfare of the work which claims the use of their talent.

Miss Willard drew about her strong women who were able to accomplish tasks, because she was not afraid that their success might outshine her own. Many great undertakings fail for lack of this broad-minded generosity on the part of the leaders.

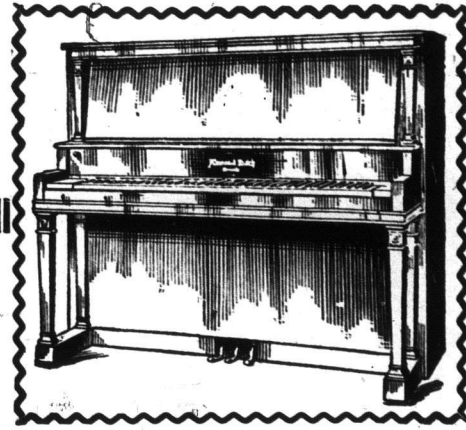
Miss Willard drew strength and love from other great women—so should we, it would aid us much more than harboring jealousy.

In analyzing the characteristics of Miss Willard's noble life we must not forget her unusual thoughtfulness, the most memorable thing about her. Those most closely associated with her in public work were deeply moved by her loving mindfulness of others.

One night after a very hard day's work when her friends urged her to rest, she saw an old woman in a distant corner of the church who seemed to be alone. Quick as thought she said: I want to speak to that lonely-looking sister.

As Miss Willard approached, the old woman timidly arose, but when her hands, rough with daily toil, were clasped cordially by Miss Willard, the old lady's face was filled with a light that lasted for many days.

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