

WOMAN'S LOVE.

We want more love—pure, sympathetic, tender, long-suffering love; and that is the solution of one of the many social problems that day by day draw their geometrical intricacies closer and wider around and over us. This is only the solving of one problem in the ethical mystery of life. But it is the secret why so many homes are unhappy; why many sons and even some daughters turn out ill; why not a few marriages seem unblessed.

It is to women chiefly—we had almost said exclusively—that we look for this large-hearted love, tender, sympathetic, forbearing, and indulgent, that has in it so much of the nature of God, that whilst it does not encourage evildoing, contemplates it in sorrow more than in anger, and does not spurn or drive to despair the doer. The world can sneer and censure and scoff at success and at failure, can find base motives in our holiest deeds, and has no mercy on our sins. Men and women want a haven of rest wherein they can lay aside the mask of society, or where the heart, maybe tortured with self-accusation, can find the comfort of sympathy in its sorrow, if not in its error, instead of the bitterness of reproach. Boys and girls who are brought up without such a tenderness, which so frequently marks a mother's love, are apt to be hard-natured and selfish and worldly and sharp. Young people are naturally less large-hearted and benevolent than their elders, and children exhibit little inclination to tenderness unless it is developed in them by example. The children of a gentle and affectionate mother are generally gentle and affectionate also.

We seldom meet with instances of children going astray when they are made the friends of their parents, and are not afraid to confess an error in ears indulgent with that large-hearted love of which we want more. The first error so confessed and corrected, if suppressed, would have arrested the first step in a downward career into a vale of evil, the depth and width of which is guesswork.

It is the love we want more of with which a mother first opens her arms to welcome back the prodigal son, smooths his way to recommence an honorable career, who was looked upon as lost; or if he is irreclaimable, saves him from sinking into a yet lower abyss, and, worthless as he is in the eyes of the world, loves him, comforts him, and prays for him still.

The possession and exercise of this love that we want more of is woman's greatest and crowning right. In it lies her greatest power; without it, or at least the semblance of it, she becomes a cipher on the face of the earth, albeit she may have gained the point of female suffrage and a place in all the learned and unlearned professions. A woman of this type is kind and generous and gentle to all around her. The lady reformers of the present day seem to have overlooked it; and whilst professing to labor for the establishment of 'Woman's Rights,' seem to ignore the glaring fact that women are most downtrodden by women, and that their hardest usage is meted out to them by the tyrants of their own sex. Not only does the tyranny exist of mistress over maid, but very often that of maid over mistress, a growing evil in the present day, when good servants are scarce, competent ones independent, and gentlefolks seem afraid to give orders in their own houses. Often, nowadays, must a guest go away empty rather than a servant be troubled to set a repeat on table, or even to produce a cup of tea; and master and mistress themselves suffer considerable discomfort at times rather than incur the risk of a 'warning' for giving some trifling additional trouble. In such cases the so-called servant is actually the mistress of the situation. When women serve a mistress they are sure of a harder time than when they serve a master. So that reform in the social condition of women should be so far a woman's mission, that the sex should reform themselves—pull out the beam in their own eyes first. We want more large-hearted love, which flows from the heart from pride and harshness, from envy and jealousy, from spite, meanness, and revenge; which sympathizes with the wants and wishes and weaknesses of others; in short, 'does as it would be done by.'

The majority of well-meaning and good persons seem to think it indelicate to speak of love, especially as between the sexes. Prudish mothers prohibit the mention of marriage as something their daughters must not contemplate; so that instead of imparting their own wisdom to their girls it is a matter of great importance to them, as the loving large-hearted mother would do, the young persons are driven to secret confidences in a matter sure to fill their minds, and very naturally so, with others similarly restricted, and no older or wiser than themselves, the result of all of which is very probably an imprudent flirtation and perhaps a clandestine and unsuitable match.

On the other hand, the match-making mother ignores the existence of love in favor of £ s. d. It is not only a foolish but a dangerous sentiment. Ridicule is a potent weapon, and if any primitive-minded and outspoken person ventures to mention it in her presence, she ridicules it as something too absurd to be supposed to exist at such an enlightened period of the world's history as the year of grace 18—when women are going to be educated as they ought to be, and placed in their proper sphere at last. The match-making mother is anxious to saddle her girl on any mule who can carry the burden; her daughter, to her, is merely the subject of a monetary speculation, in which her future spouse is viewed much in the light of the Irish

plig, which 'pays the rint, fairs, an' a thriffo beyont, maybe.'

In both cases the growth of the heart is dwarfed; it withers or grows into a social, sometimes a moral, deformity.

Now it is a fact that men want love; not the mere dalliance of the moment, not the homage of flattery, but the repose and the comfort of all-enduring, all-forbearing, all-faithful love; or at least the gentle, patient, and indulgent tenderness that wears a great semblance of the genuine and heroic. Between woman and woman (unless indeed it be mother and child) and between man and man friendship may, but love cannot exist. Man craves the love of a sympathizing human creature, who will excuse his conduct and cherish him, no matter what his errors to the world may be. The hackneyed saying, 'With all thy faults I love thee still,' is as truly the motto of woman's real affection now as when it was first written by hands long ago crumbled into dust. It is in its spirit of devotion that a mother's love is often so perfect. A son errs—nay, disgraces himself and family; his father curses him, but his mother clings to him and prays for him. Often her prayers are heard, or even after long years of doubt, when the world has abandoned him as lost, receive their answer.

A sister's love is often as full of devotion as a mother's. Many a girl has suffered privation and toil to enhance the interests, or remained single to take care, of a good brother; and many a gentle woman has clung faithfully to a rascally brother sacrificing herself and her possessions and her hopes, nursing him in self-wrought sickness, and loving him to the last.

Many girls are trained simply to regard marriage as settlement or provision for them in life, and the husband as a necessary encumbrance in the arrangement. Such a girl has sold herself for the good things of this world, and thinks she has a right to demand them. Her husband must provide her a house at such-and-such a rent and in such-and-such a neighborhood; he must furnish it handsomely. She must have as many dresses and of as costly a description as she thinks she wants. She must visit and give parties as she considers fit. If he tries to control her expenses, or speaks of temporary economy, or hints about money embarrassments, it is merely his meanness; he wants to out her down. She has sold herself for a price, and the price she will have. She pouts, and insists, and says hard things, and persists till her will is granted. Heaven knows at what cost. She makes no pretence of loving him, because that was not 'in the bond;' she only conceals her dislike of him because she is too well-bred to be rude; it creeps out when he refuses her monetary demands, to retire again when she is pacified by compliance. She has choked down and trampled on some girlish affection to marry him; or she has seen some one since to whom all her heart could have gone out, but she has shuddered and drawn up suddenly on the brink of a sin, and trampled it all out with a strong will; or she has simply never warmed in thought or feeling, but, wedded without regard to an uncongenial object, has gone on developing no affection, and devoid of happiness, till she is the very impersonation of a caustic, selfish, haughty woman. Her husband cannot confide in her. If he tells her of business embarrassments, she raises her marked eyebrows scornfully, and says in hard metallic tones, 'Why did you not manage better?' and adds indifferently, and in a tone that says 'I don't want to discuss the subject any more, it bores me,' 'I do not understand business.' In her mind, it is essential to her dignity to be quite ignorant of the business that engrosses nearly all her husband's thoughts and time, and by which she and her children are fed. Indeed, if any one asked her what her husband was, probably she would not know; 'Oh, he's a merchant or something or other in the City.' As he grows towards middle life, he feels the want of the repose of sympathy and affection more than when he was younger. He has had many hard jobs in life now. He is beginning to get weary and weary, aware of the hollowness of the world, and tired of the battle of life. Mercantile speculations are looking ugly; he wants to come to some haven of rest and comfort to refresh and invigorate him for continued struggles; he would gladly retire from the turmoil of City life; his luck seems changed, it would be well to give up before more is lost; but his wife exacts so much, her expenses are increasing at a moment when his income is diminishing, and she has always exacted so much, little has been saved. As he had gathered, so she has scattered. Then comes the crash. He goes home. 'To be comforted?' No. To be reproached. What, give up their home? Sink into comparative poverty? How dare he propose it? He is a fool, he is an idiot, not to manage better. To drag her to poverty! To make her a scorn and a byword! To deprive her of a carriage, an establishment, and a retinue! Did she not marry him for it, and what is this downfall but a fraud on her? Their humbler home might be happy enough with love in it, but instead he only meets a scowled, complaining, cross-grained creature. His own temper is none of the best; he has had no influence in his wedded life to improve it. Where she might forbear, she retorts; where she might soothe, she irritates. And what does he do? Seeks solace in the company of some more gentle if less-virtuous woman, with whom he finds the love, or at least the semblance of it, his soul craves; or he grasps the bottle and makes bad worse, till the terrible mad end; or he cuts the thread of life abruptly short, and a jury return a verdict of temporary insanity.

Many girls are forbidden to think of marriage or to mention love. They are "kept down" in the presence of their parents. A girl of such a sort procures absurd trashy love novels—"Oh the sly!" she seeks out companions like herself, and interchanges confidences. Above all, she delights in the servants' company, and makes herself one of them. She pants to find she has a lover. Almost any one would be better than none, even the boy in buttons might do if a little taller. If she rides, she possibly encourages the groom. She marries clandestinely if she can. If it must be with papa's and mamma's sanction, she submits, sighing, but it would be much nicer to run away, she thinks. She believes herself very much in love. She belongs rather to a bygone generation, and is scarce at the present day. After she is married, she is proved to be very useless. She understands nothing of housekeeping nor apparel-making. She does nothing herself, and does not arrange for others to do it. Her house is in a muddle and her children neglected. Everybody about her is unruly and uncontrolled. She expects her husband always to play the lover. After twenty years of married life, she thinks he ought to address her and flatter her as he did when he was courting. At thirty she feels neglected at missing the compliments he paid her, and the admiring looks he gave her, at twenty. She has grown very slovenly in her attire, and not changed the date of her fashions since the wedding-day. She is mopy and limp and hysterical, and complains that "Augustus doesn't love her;" and his return name is heralded by a shower of briny drops; and whilst she goes into fits on the sofa—and he cannot be such a brute as not to bring her to—the fish gets broken and the meat burned and the adjuncts cold, so that dinner is spoiled. Her semblance of love is a hollow mockery. She keeps him dancing attendance on her, is unsatisfied unless he clasps her hand or talks rubbish; but he cannot discuss his real anxieties with her; he can place no confidence in a woman who would repeat all he said to every one she knew within four-and-twenty hours. What repose or comfort has he with her?

Or she is of the dressy sort; she goes to the extreme in fashion. She runs up bills on the sly and never thinks what they cost. She has always been sly, and is sly now. When they come in she hides them, till they can be hidden no longer; her husband quarrels with her; he declines to play the spoony after seven or seventeen years of marriage; and she, rendered still rather attractive by aid of paints and washes and flighty manners, flirts openly, by way of retaliation, with every fellow who has no objection. On the sly she goes farther, and either runs off altogether or is detected and divorced, to the eternal shame—loss it is impossible to say—of her unhappy children.

A large number of men of all ages certainly go astray from the simple want of love—indulgent motherly love, which a wife should, but does not always give, and which mother, sister, or fiancée may in some measure supply. Denied in their own homes what they might expect it to yield of solace and cheer, they too frequently find in a questionable quarter the indulgence and consideration they have looked for in vain elsewhere.

Too many women when they marry expect to find perfection in their husbands, ignoring the fact that they are not perfect themselves; and finding their respective Benedicts fall short of their ideal, become dissatisfied and cross.

Man is not only far from perfect, but his standard of excellence falls short of that of women. Therefore as the weaker morally, not as the stronger physically, is it that women should forbear with and defer to men. Men have much to contend with also in the way of excitement and disappointment, or anxiety, in their business transactions, which produce an irritability of temper it is best and kindest to soothe, not to increase.

Of such men as exercise a coarse brutality towards their wives, we say nothing. They do not deserve, and are hardly likely to receive, the love which we want more of. We cannot admit such scoundrels even to a moment's consideration, but reject them unconditionally as out of the pale of decent and ordinary consideration.

Women of pure and gentle rearing would do well to think over these things. They would do well to remember that we want more consideration and tenderness in the world, and they might often soothe a sister's hard way, comfort her in her trials, or save her from the bitter consequences to which her own folly is hurrying her. Men are not the only ones who suffer from the lack of sympathetic and kindly indulgence. Many a promising girl has been hurried to a regretful fate out of an uncongenial home. Many a wife has forgotten God and man under the weight of her burden; and many a pure holy-minded creature has walked a living sacrifice, as it were, barefooted over the sharp flints through life.

We want more love—pure, sympathetic, long-suffering love—and less censure and harsh judgment between relatives, near and dear it should be. God causes his sun to shine on the just and the unjust. The rain falls. The plenty or the scarcity prevails irrespective of individual merit. We do not suggest complete immunity from wrong, absence of all punishment. Nemesis exists hydra-headed; but it should not be by a man's fireside that he encounters the stroke of fate or the lash of judgment. There he looks to woman to be his stay and comfort. Let woman think a little more of this, and with God's blessing the getting of their "rights" will crop up out of it without a platform.

A BRAKESMAN'S DREAM.

"Ed" is a brakeman employed on the Chicago, Alton and St. Louis Railroad. He was married only a few weeks ago. His wife had been wearing a piece of red flannel round her neck for the last ten days and complaining of a wry neck. This is how it came to pass:

"Ed" had just been doing extra duty, taking a stock friend's train in addition to his own, and had not been in bed for forty-eight hours. As a matter of course he was nearly worn out, and as soon as his supper had been eaten he went to bed to sleep, perchance to dream. He was soon locked in the arms of Morpheus and Mary, and dreaming. Again his foot was on his native platform, and he heard the warning toot of the whistle for brakes. The shadowy train bore him swiftly on; the telegraph posts flashed past quicker and quicker; the whole country fled like a panorama mounted on swift lightning rollers. In his dream he heard far off another roar, and swinging out by the railings he saw another train coming at lightning speed around the curve. Both trains were crowded with passengers; in another moment they would rush together, and from the ruins a cry of agony would shiver to the tingling stars from the lips of the maimed and dying. The engineer had seen their danger; for at that moment, in his dream, he heard the whistle calling for brakes sound loud and unearthly. With the strength of desperation he gripped the brake and turned it down. There was yell of pain, and "Ed" woke to find himself sitting up in bed and holding his wife by the ears, having almost twisted off her head.

That's how "Ed's" wife came to wear a piece of red flannel round her throat and complain of a wry neck.—*Missouri Democrat.*

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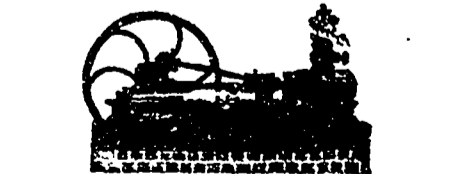
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