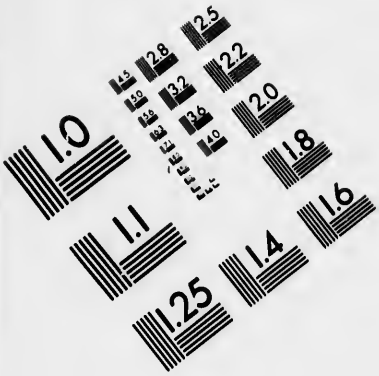

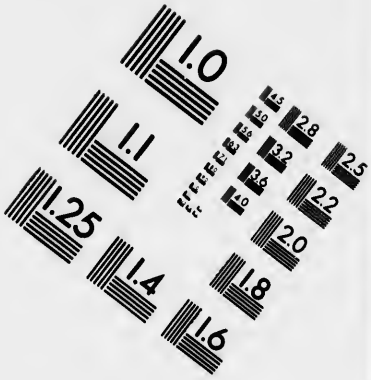

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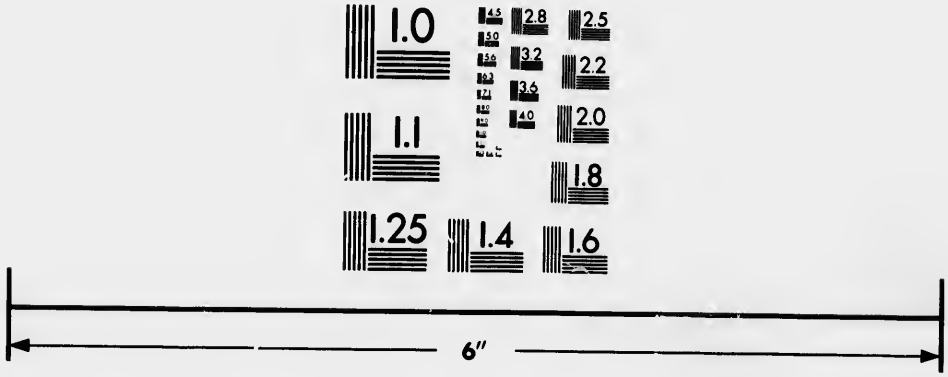

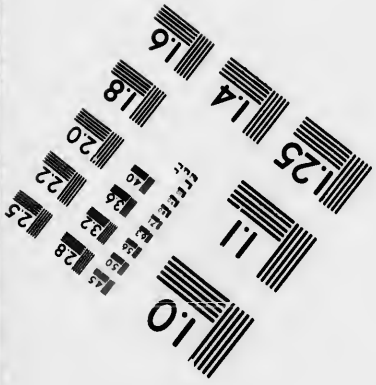

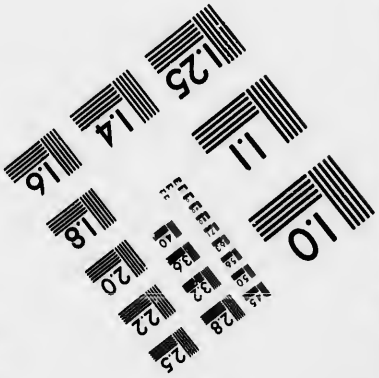

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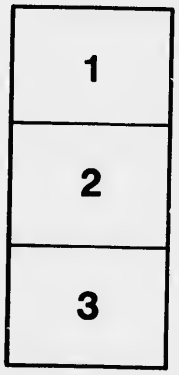

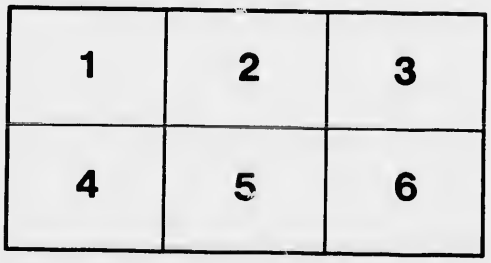

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"HOME, SWEET HOME."

A LECTURE

— BY —

REV. SAMUEL MASSEY,

— ON —

"OUR CITY HOMES,

— AND —

HOW TO MAKE THEM HEALTHY AND SWEET."

— DELIVERED IN —

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH,

MONTREAL.

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LECTURE.

"CITY HOMES."

There is no word in the English language so fixed in the memory and the heart as the word home. There is no place on earth so sacred or so dear. It is there the weary workers, and the sad-hearted, find rest and comfort, protection and peace. To all good and virtuous people the word home is a charm and an inspiration. Wherever a man roams he never forgets this one sacred spot. The heart of the travellers in distant lands, the missionary in the wilds of an African desert, and the tempest-tossed mariner on the sea, always in times of difficulty and danger turns like the needle to the pole—toward home. That one spot has always the uppermost and the warmest place in his heart of hearts. As he paces the deck of his ship on a cold, stormy night, he thinks less of either the ship or himself than he does of those dear ones he has left behind him at home. And when the ship arrives safely in port he sings with all his heart,—

"Home again, Home again, from a foreign shore.
It fills my heart with joy, to meet my friends once more."

The love of home is a strong and universal sentiment, deeply graven in the human heart Even the Indian savage and the Hottentot has his wigwam and his hut, which although a bushranger and hunter, is his home, and which to him is dearer than any other spot.

THE DIVINE CREATOR

has implanted this sacred feeling in every heart, in common with other creatures who build houses, adapted to their nature and habits. The human family home was doubtless instituted to serve important moral purposes in connection with the divine government of nations. In proportion as a man rises in character and religious refinement, he will endeavor to improve and beautify his home. And as a man gets down in character and self respect he will neglect his home and his family will suffer. It is the same with

WOMEN.

Home is a mirror which reflects character be it good or bad. Show me the home of a man or woman and I will tell you what sort of stuff they are made of. On the other hand a man's character and happiness depend much upon the character of his home, and the habits and temper of his wife. Let the storms of life beat never so violently without, if a man has a pleasant cheerful home and a good tempered wife who meets him with a smile when he returns from the toil and trials of the day, he can bid defiance to the rudest blasts, for such a home will give him a safe and sure retreat from every storm of life. His home is his castle, there he is safe and happy, especially if there are little ones growing up as olive plants around his table. Whatever a man's circumstances, be he as rich as a Jew, if he has no home, or if his home be cold and cheerless and made more so by a scolding, gossiping wife, he can hardly be either good or happy. He has no retreat, no quiet-resting place in life's journey, no soft pillow on which to rest his often weary head, and consequently he sometimes feels as if life were hardly worth living. The rich may find a tolerably good substitute for home, for "money answereth all things," but the workingman must find his home in the heart and bosom of his wife and family, and every one in a new country and city like this should, if possible, live in his own cottage and "sit under his own vine and fig tree."

No one needs our pity more than a man without a home. It is said by a certain

writer, when speaking of Napoleon I., that probably one of the chief causes of his becoming an ambitious military adventurer, was that he was never domestically happy,—never had a happy home Cold and cruel because he never knew and felt the mellowing and cheering influence of a "sweet home." Home more than any other agency developes and manifests the innate sympathies and finer feelings of our nature. Who among us has not seen the rough, strong man as sweet and gentle as a child among his little ones at home? To me one of the most pleasant things to be seen in our city, especially in the cold season, is to take a walk along the streets between six and eight o'clock in the evening, and see the well lighted rooms with the table set and the family seated around it, partaking of the "cup that cheers, but not inebriates," peeping into the evening papers, or chatting over the events of the day. Such pleasant evening scenes have often reminded me of what probably were the sad feelings of the author of "Sweet Home," when he wrote that beautiful poem. He had no home, and had just observed such a scene as I have now described, when he retired into some corner and wrote—

Home, sweet home,
There is no place like home;
Be it ever so humble,
There is no place like home.

However humble a man's home may be, to him it is the sweetest spot of earth. The family is a

DIVINE INSTITUTION.

"God has placed the solitary in families." "He is the God of all the families of the earth." He has given laws for their regulation and well being. These laws are designed to promote and perpetuate purity, love and good order. If obeyed, they bring peace and prosperity; if disobeyed, disorder and punishment.

WORK AND WAGES.

Every man should have "a fair day's wages for a fair day's work," and every man has a perfect right to sell his labor and skill in the highest market. His labor is his capital, and he has a right to put it where it is safest and where he can get the highest rate of interest. But high wages alone cannot make home either prosperous or happy. Where habits of economy and sobriety are wanting, high wages only tend to make unhappy homes still more unhappy. Nothing would compensate for the lack of these two important qualities in the make up of a man's character and home.

ORDER

is said to be Heaven's first law. A home without order is like a ship at sea without either ballast or rudder—driven about, hither and thither, by the wind of every little event that comes in the way. Attention to the old proverb, "Have a place for everything and keep everything in its place," would prevent much confusion and vexation, for strife and loss of time and temper are the inevitable consequences of disorder. It is the misfortune for some good men to be united to women who spend most of their time in talking about and in looking after other people's business, while neglecting their own. You enter her house at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and you find the breakfast dishes still on the table. She comes in from her neighbor's house, a little before noon, all hurry and scurry, and finds that she has no time to cook a decent dinner for her good man, so she runs into the nearest corner store and buys a red herring and hastily cooks that for him, with the excuse that she has had the headache all forenoon, and hopes he will excuse her this time. The quiet man knows better, and he submits and says nothing, fearing that he might get something worse than a red herring! She spends the afternoon very much as she spent the morning and is out until nearly tea time, when she returns, and in her hurry she smashes the tea pot, scalds the children and boxes their ears, and declares that they are the worst children she ever saw in her life. All this, because she has imbibed something stronger than tea. Thus, day after day passes away, one day being pretty much the same as another; all is disorder, confusion and strife. This is

NO IMAGINARY PICTURE,

but I am glad to say not a very common one, it is a real case, and a picture of real life. In this way well disposed men and good husbands and fathers are driven from their homes to spend their evenings in well lighted saloons, which are more attractive than their homes.

Every good wife and mother will endea-

vor to make her house as tidy and attractive as possible, so that she may induce her husband to spend his evenings at home, as he should, with his wife and children, when he conveniently can. But the fault is not always on the side of the wife. Sometimes it is all the other way. Both would do well to remember the old saying "A good Jack makes a good Gill, and a good Gill makes a good Jack." Much depends upon both Jack and Gill, whether their home is happy or miserable. Another important matter is

ECONOMY.

The cultivation of habits of economy will contribute much toward the comfort and happiness of home. What a man earns by the "sweat of his face," should be expended carefully in the cheapest and best market. Some wives will make a dollar go a great way further than others. Some spend money needlessly and without careful thought, and they are surprised that their purse gets empty so soon, while others never spend a cent until it is really necessary, as they know that money is much easier spent than earned. As a rule women know how to spend it better than men. There should never be two separate purses. The husband and wife should have only one interest, one aim, one heart and one purse. Separate interests rarely fail to create acrimony, covetness and domestic strife. Everything should be open and above board, "waste not, want not" is a good

MOTTO,

and every working man should try to save up for a rainy day, for such days come to all. It is a good thing to have a friend in your pocket, for as the Scriptures say, "adversity trieth friends," that is human friends, for when you need them most they often forsake you, but, as "Poor Richard" says "when I have a sheep and a cow, everybody bids me good morrow." The husband is the divinely appointed

HEAD OF THE HOME.

I know that some strong minded women dispute this, but it is true nevertheless. A quaint old writer has said that "the woman was made out of the rib from the side of the man, and not out of head to top him, not out of his feet to trample upon, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected by him, and near his heart to be loved by him." She owes her high position to that Book which teaches her that she is not to usurp over the man. There is a specific place for her in the home and in the family. She has her own special domestic duties marked out, and no good can ever come from her changing places with the man. They have a mutual interest in the well being of the family. They are "one flesh," and whatever injures one will injure the other. Both should therefore strive to promote the health and happiness of their common home. A certain woman and wife was wont to say, that her John and herself were both

BAD TEMPERED,

but they always agreed and got along splendidly, because they never got out of temper at one and the same time. They had two

BEARS

in the house, and their names were "Bear and Forbear," they kept them both in lively exercise, and so they never had any words.

"The wisest and the happiest pair,
Will find occasion to forbear,
And something every day they live,
To pass along, and perhaps forgive."

SANITATION.

On this important matter relating to our home life, it has been my custom to deliver an annual address, which, I believe, has not been without some good effect, for in some known cases health has been greatly improved, and possibly some lives have been saved, and much sorrow prevented. I now repeat my former counsels. The time will again soon be here when many of our citizens will "move," and some who now listen to me will be looking out for new homes. Let me say then: Avoid all swampy localities, narrow crowded streets and lanes, and closely crowded yards. Select, if possible, a house on high ground, fronting south or south-west. See that the street is well sewered and the house well drained. Much practical attention is now being given to this feature of sanitation in this and many other cities. Other things being equal, those cities and houses that are the best sewered and drained will have the lowest death rate and the best health. We, none of us, can get all we wish with

regard to the choice of locality, house and drainage, but we can all keep these matters in mind when moving to a new locality or house. Choose a house where you can get plenty of light and

SUNSHINE,

for no house can be healthy in which the sun does not shine. No plant can grow without sunlight, neither will a tree bear fruit to perfection, nor a flower bloom in a shady unventilated room. So with human plants and flowers, they often wither and die in our city homes from sheer want of sunshine. The cultivation of window plants and flowers, and the songs of a canary bird, will make home all the sweeter.

PROPER VENTILATION.

Pure air is as necessary to health and comfort, as pure food or pure water, and yet hundreds, perhaps thousands, of our citizens, pay little or no attention to it. From fall to spring you will find their doors and windows closed against the admission of pure air, or any air at all, from outside, as if against a thief who would steal their clothes. Far better have clothes stolen than their health. For months they are inhaling the same noxious air, that has passed through their lungs a thousand times. No wonder that we have a high death rate, which is caused chiefly by the death of young children, and which is a disgrace and a shame to us. Of course there are other causes, such as a very imperfect sewer system, defective drainage and some thousands of filthy cesspits, which chiefly affect the health of the poor. By these things the reputation of our city suffers, while in other respects it is one of the healthiest and most beautiful cities on the continent. Meanwhile let us do our best to make our homes as sweet and healthy as possible, by constant cleanliness and ventilation.

Sydney Smith when visiting his friends used to say, glorify the room, open the shutters, up with the blinds, let in the sunlight and glorify the room. Good advice. But great mistakes, we fear, are sometimes made in our schools and homes, by letting in a rush of cold air upon the children, when they are overheated by the previous warm temperature of the room. Serious consequences have been known to result from this. We may overdo anything, and it should be remembered that in all schools there are almost always children in a delicate state of health. Much care is needed in regard to the proper manner and time chosen to ventilate the school-room and the house, or much harm may be done to the health of those inside. I know well that many refuse or neglect to ventilate for economical reasons, because, as they say, it keeps the house warm and saves fuel. But much more than this is often lost in the languor, sickness and bereavements which come as a consequence, to say nothing of doctors' bills. Therefore, it actually *pays better* to ventilate prudently our city homes and schools.

CLEANLINESS.

There is a good deal of truth in the old proverb, "Cleanliness is next to godliness." A dirty Christian or a dirty Christian home would be a spiritual curiosity. Such a thing could hardly be, for true religion never fails to improve a man in all the relations of life. It cleanses and purifies him inside and out. If you show me a dirty home, I will vouch for it that the woman who lives there has much yet to learn of the first duties of a Christian life. The man who said that "*God looks at the heart*, and his heart was so clean that it didn't matter much whether his house and hands and face were clean or not," wasn't much of a Christian. You may be sure that if there is no religion in cleanliness there can be none in dirt.

A clean, tidy, cheerful home is generally a healthy one, and an unclean home is generally an unhealthy one. Cleanliness makes all the difference. Plenty of paint, whitewash, soap and water are good, healthy things in a house—the more the better.

THE WATER TAX.

He was sorry to learn that the water had been shut off from four thousand homes, as that meant an increase of dirt, misery, sickness and death chiefly in the homes of the poor. Doubtless some deserved to be deprived of water; possibly out of four thousand there might be some —say one thousand—who are dissipated or dishonest and will not pay, but then you have three thousand left, perhaps many of them widows, aged and infirm persons, and some out of employment, who would gladly pay if they could. Was it then politic or just, or humane to deprive such of our citizens of that which is so essential to health and life? We are assured that the needs of the sick have been kindly considered, but that

is not sufficient. I believe that it is very difficult to know what is the best thing to do under the circumstances. But as the matter stands it seems to me to be unwise, if not cruel and wicked, to cut off the water, especially at this season of the year, from so many of the homes of the poor. I have often seen the grevious consequences of this unwise policy, and hope that a remedy will soon be found. I believe collecting the tax all in one sum is a mistake, as many find it almost impossible to scrape it together. It is very difficult for some of our "city fathers" to realize this. I am strongly inclined to think that the only remedy is to levy the tax upon property, and collect it from the landlords, who can charge by adding it to the rent, which is generally paid monthly.

CHILDREN.

There are children in most homes, and when they are well behaved and healthy they contribute no little to make the home sweet and lively. "Children are an heritage from the Lord," they are His "little ones," "the lambs of His flock," and therefore should be carefully trained and kindly cared for. Early and prompt obedience should be one of the first lessons in a child's life. "As the twig is bent the tree's inclined." You may bend the young twig and cause it to grow almost in any shape or form you like, but if you leave it awhile you will find that it is stiff and strong, and will resist all your attempts to bend or train it into any shape. It is so with a child. Nature is full of useful lessons if we will only open our eyes. There is a very common and serious mistake made by fathers and mothers in training their children. Some mothers leave all the chastisement to be done by the father, but if he attempt to use the rod himself she will take sides with the child, and thus frustrate the purpose of the father in inflicting the punishment. They should always be of one mind, and the rod should never be used in anger, but in love and for the improvement of the child. Almost everything with regard to a child's future depends upon its early training and the example of its parents at home. The character and comfort of home depends much upon the behavior of the children. The mother's influence is immense in forming their character and fixing their destiny. The force of home example is often final, either for good or for evil. If you wish your children to be strong and healthy, let them have plenty of free exercise in the open air at all seasons, and in all kinds of weather. If children were allowed and encouraged to do this, we should have fewer little graves in our cemeteries. Nature has nothing prettier, or more beautiful to show us, than a romping, rosy-cheeked merry-hearted child. Many parents keep their children in-doors and physic them too much during the cold season. If they had more out-door exercise they would require less physic and more food. I must add that it is of the utmost importance that you should not fail to get *all* your children vaccinated as early as convenient. I need not state why you should do so, as we have lately had ample proof that it is a very dangerous thing to reside in a locality where parents neglect to vaccinate their children.

There is one thing which, above all others, is necessary and essential to the peace and happiness of home, and that is

RELIGION.

By religion I do not mean any mere *form* of godliness, I mean the religion of the heart, manifested in a holy and righteous life. Godliness, Christlikeness, that is religion, pure and undefiled. Christ should reign in our hearts, and then he will reign in our homes. A home without religion is like a house without a roof, there is no protection from the tempests and trials of life. Nothing can make up for the absence of religion. It is the "one thing needful." A home may be everything that wealth and refinement can make it, but if piety be not there there can be no solid peace, no sweet repose, such as Christ alone can give. Have we not seen homes of this kind, only lacking this one thing? On the other hand, a home may be never so humble and obscure but if true religion and Christ be there, it will be in the best and highest sense a sweet and happy home. We have seen and known such homes, and we have had sweet fellowship with those in them who could truly say, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." "The Lord blesseth the habitation of the just." "Godliness with contentment is great gain."

THE END.

I have spoken of the importance of giving attention to cleanliness, order, economy, sobriety, sanitation, ventilation, the proper training of children and religion, as things calculated to make our homes both healthy and happy. If you will give them the attention which their importance demands, you will gain much with regard to the life present and the life to come. Our home life here is designed to fit us for a better home above, where there will be neither sickness nor death, and where God will wipe away all tears from our eyes. He concluded by saying that if any apology were necessary for addressing them so plainly on that occasion on a subject so vital to health and life, it must be his long service in "visiting from house to house," in order to make their homes more "sweet" and healthy and happy.

As citizens in this regard, we owe a duty to every other citizen, and especially to those residing near us, "for no man liveth to himself." If every citizen does his best to keep his own home sweet and healthy, then we shall have a healthier city, a lower death rate, and a better reputation. At this time, after we have suffered so much, Montreal expects every man (and woman too) to do his duty.

Sweet the Home, when God is there,
And love fills every breast,
Where one their wish, and one their prayer,
And one their heavenly rest.

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