

HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DIVORCES IN THE UNITED STATES

WHY?

WITHIN the last 20 years there have been 1,300,000 divorces in the United States. These figures are supplied by the census bureau at Washington, which is still at work preparing the complete and official report. This is an increase of 1,000,000 in the last 20 years over the 29 preceding years, and the appalling part of it is that two-thirds, or nearly 900,000, of these divorces have been granted, says the New York Sunday Herald.

Hasty Marriages



REV. PHOEBE A. HANAFORD

I AM a minister of the gospel. I believe in the Bible. It is regrettable that there are so many different state laws governing divorce, and I feel sorry for the children of all these divorced people, says Rev. Phoebe A. Hanaford.

No, it is not the fault of the "new woman." There is no "new woman." A woman is a woman. There are good women and bad women, but no "new women."

There are too many hasty marriages. This should be looked after.

When the census bureau began its investigation it had to leave out nearly 500,000 cases which were pending, and of the 2,900 investigators, clerks, etc., employed in the bureau in the preparation of this report 140 are still at work getting it in its final and complete shape.

France has only 79 divorce courts, Germany only 28, England only one, and the United States has 2,921 courts empowered to grant divorces. These facts alone are sufficient to give the thinker pause and ask "What is the remedy?"

"New Woman" Blamed.

Writers who defend the conventional and "domestic" type of woman put all the blame on the "new woman." They say she has left her legitimate sphere—the home—that she no longer loves or inspires love, and that, in defiance of all history and her own apparent destiny, refuses to consider marriage and motherhood the object of her existence.

They urge she has abandoned the hearthstone to become a writer, an artist, a playwright, an actress, a teacher, or whatnot, and during the period in which she has gained her "rights" (the last 20 years) the marriage institution has been assailed on all sides.

Is it the "new woman's" fault? The "new woman" differs from her sister in this respect at least—she has no flattery for "the tyrant man." She turns right around and places all the blame for the marital unrest on his shoulders.

"Man does not understand our complex nature," she says, "and while he considers marriage as only one stage of his own mental and spiritual development, he insists that we shall consider it the only excuse for our existence."

Calls Contentions Unfair.

"This is unfair," she continues. "We are not to be classed with our 'domestic' sisters. We pity them but we are not of them. We have aims, aspirations and ambitions the same as men, and to attempt to force us into domesticity is to suffocate us. We object to being called undutiful helpmeets because we are not 'submissive' to our husbands' misconception and misunderstanding of us."

"But," the defenders of the conventional type of woman reply, "you cannot accomplish anything great in literature, science or religion, and you never have produced works of great and universal genius. The most you can do is to make your own bread and butter. Your trivial creations in art and literature can be spared, and it is your intellectual discontent and unrest that is spreading the divorce germ, which threatens soon to develop into a divorce epidemic. Take

the place assigned to you by nature, be man's helpmeet and all will be well."

Has higher education made woman dissatisfied with the domestic sphere?

Or is it that the high tension of modern everyday business life has prevented the husband from giving his wife the romantic attentions and caresses demanded by her nature?

Modern Man Too Busy.

It is not uncommon for the wives of business men to spend summer in Europe and winter in the south, and many times they find in these places the romantic companionship and attention their own husbands had not time to give them at home.

Like "birds in a gilded cage" they were treated, their husbands sending them packages of lace and bundles of silks, and bringing them home handfuls of jewels, but if they ever suspected their wives' need of romance and tenderness they were unable to supply it, because of the demands on their time by their many business interests.

Or is it that the modern inventions for pickling, preserving, dyeing and cleaning have left the twentieth century woman with "vast leisure" on her hands, and has her lack of domestic occupations and cares made her dissatisfied and hypercritical of her busy and worried husband?

And does she brood over his "coldness" all day because in his haste to keep some business engagement he hurries forth without the morning kiss?

Other Reasons Given.

Or is it that young couples look at marriage too childishly and do not see the economic, sociological and political sides of the family? Do they not realize its integral relation to the state?

Do they consider it as a personal thing, and does their dull sense of the sociological aspect of marriage dull them to the sociological aspect of divorce?

Or are marriages too lightly entered

Should Be Sacrament



MRS. ELIZABETH BACON WALLING

THE reason for so many divorces is that women do not spend enough time studying the characteristics of their intended husbands, according to Mrs. Elizabeth Bacon Walling. It is not caused by the fact that modern machinery and inventions have taken woman's domestic work from her, thus leaving her with lots of time on her hands to flirt and get into mischief. The athletic girl is all right. I have nothing against her.

A young woman living in Nineteenth street married a man she had only known three months. One day, in looking from her front window, she saw him sitting in a back window of a Twentieth street apartment, writing letters and reading a newspaper complacently.

She asked him what he was doing there. He replied he was visiting his friend Johnson. Subsequently it developed that he had a wife and family there. Isn't this appalling?

The young woman came to me heartbroken. What could I do? When people understand that marriage is a sacrament as the church knows it to be there will be fewer divorces, and to a large extent there will be no marital unrest.

into? Rev. Dr. Houghton, pastor of "The Little Church Around the Corner," now has the bans called, which means that three weeks' public notice is given of all intended marriages in the church.

Do husbands and wives expect to find in marriage only a continuation of the romantic bliss of courtship? And when they find each day there is less ecstasy and more imperfections discoverable in each other do they

rush immediately and without second thought to the divorce courts?

The reason, "I just got tired of Alfred," or "Margaret became such a bore," has been given by more than one person who has applied for divorce. Looking in marriage for individual happiness only, how could they remember their duty to the state?

Sociologists, writers, doctors and legalists on all hands are asking, "What is to be done? Should there be a uniform divorce law that all the different states will ratify? Should the magistrate, the priest and the

For Separation



DR. FELIX ADLER

WHAT we need is a doctrine of marriage. There is no clear cut doctrine of marriage. The church is tied up to the ethics of 2,000 years ago, the oriental fantasies of Paul.

"The old idea of marriage was inculcated and secured through two fundamental principles—reverence to parents and the understanding that marriage was to be permanent. These principles are both imperiled," is the idea of Dr. Felix Adler.

"Under present conditions they are no longer tenable, for the first was founded on the idea that the child had no rights except through its parents. Its position was one of the subservience, of unquestioned obedience to the parents, and as regards the permanence of the marriage tie, it was chiefly a bond that tied the woman to the man. Her position was one of subordination."

"To-day we admit that the child has rights which we are bound to respect and that the woman is the equal of the man."

"One trouble with modern marriage is that the masculine element predominates in the ceremonial. This should not be so. The great trouble is that people who marry nowadays look in marriage only for happiness. Happiness is not the end of marriage, as most people think, but only an incident of married life. They are bound to find many trials. They should respect the ethical ideals; their great responsibility is to future generations, the good of the race!"

"Under the multiplication of divorces in this country the issue is whether the sensuous nature of the marriage contract is to prevail or whether the spiritual is to predominate. I believe in separation, but never in divorce."

preacher, when marrying couples, impress upon them the sociological aspect of their union, as well as the spiritual and romantic?

From Various Views.

The different churches have different beliefs concerning marriage, the different states have different laws governing it, and they are both content to rest their case there!

Thus the greatest sociological problem in the United States to-day is being tossed back and forth as if it were some rubber ball, and yet 1,300,000 divorces in 20 years are sure to leave their influence on many lives and many families.

Back in 1748 Mme. de Chateauroux said: "I see plainly that there will be a general overthrow if no remedy is used."

What she said about the political

Marital Unrest



REV. GEORGE CLARKE HOUGHTON

MARITAL unrest is neither an off-spring of the new woman nor the evil outgrowth of freer and juster divorce laws, declares Dr. Clarke Houghton. It is as old as the world. To charge it up to the conscience of the "new woman" is neither fair minded nor rational. The Old Testament reels with it, and the biographers of our great warriors, statesmen, poets and prophets all the way down the ages, from Earle or Gorky of the pres-

ent day back to Potiphar's wife and David of old show it to have been the same yesterday, to-day and forever!

David's own wives are described as women of comely countenance and of good understanding, and there is no record where either Abigail or Ahinoam closed their cook books to study law or uttered a single idea not the echo of their joint husband. If they had, who knows? They might have saved him from the sin of sending the poor Hittite to the forefront of the hottest battle that he might take his beautiful wife Bathsheba. Who knows, had they seasoned the sameness of the married way with an occasional dash of original thought?

The sacred Milton, the divine Shelley, Cicero, Dante and the immortal Shakespeare are all melancholy examples of marital unrest, though none of them was divorced.

If divorce is growing greater it is not because marital unrest is growing worse, but because offenses in marriage and hypocrisy are growing less.

To make the happiness of the individuals only an incident in marriage is only to defend Dr. Adler's dream of a higher and finer race. Insure the happiness of husband and wife and it will follow as the day the night that we will have a finer generation of offspring and a purer society of men and women.

condition of France then we may say about the divorce situation in the United States to-day.

The divorce congress two years ago accomplished practically nothing, well intentioned as it was. If federal legislation is urged in the spring on the strength of the detailed report of the census bureau it will be challenged on the ground of its being unconstitutional.

Divorce a Reproach



DR. ROBERT STUART MACARTHUR

THE prevalence of divorces in the United States is a reproach alike to the country and to the church, is the declaration of Dr. Robert Stuart MacArthur. The American republic has a most unenviable prominence in this regard. The detailed accounts of suits for divorce, as these suits are pressed in the various courts, are disgusting in the extreme. They bring reproach alike upon American men and women in all parts of our country. These facts are admitted and at the same time are sadly regretted by our best citizens and our most devoted churchmen and churchwomen.

The causes for divorce are numerous. They are not limited in responsibility, either to men or to women. It is not a sufficient statement to say that the broader education of women and their emancipation from the greater subjection of former years is the chief cause, as Mrs. Anna Rogers says. The men and women who rush into the divorce courts elicit our contempt for their vulgarity and coarseness, not to use even stronger terms. It is difficult to control one's moral indignation because of the vulgarity of these divorce cases as to speak of them with the restraint becoming a newspaper article. How men and women can stoop to charge abominable crimes against each other in order to secure divorces makes one ashamed of his race. Idleness, lack of spiritual occupation and suggestion, and vulgar conformity to low ideals in life—these are causes largely responsible for the prevalence of divorce. Hasty marriage is also somewhat responsible. Many men and women rush into marriage with less serious thoughtfulness than they would show regarding any ordinary business transaction. The clergy also are somewhat responsible by the haste with which they officiate at marriages without knowing the facts in the case of those who desire to enter into this relationship.

Marriage must be made more honorable, its obligations must be lifted to a higher level. In a single word, the correction of the evils of divorce, as in the case of all other evils, must, in its finality, depend upon higher spiritual ideals, nobler characters and more religious conceptions of all the duties and obligations of life in its manifold relations. Uniform divorce laws in the states would partially remove the evils of divorce. There is no one specific cause—there is no one specific cure. When men and women realize their dignity and glory as the children of God and heirs of eternity, they will so order their lives that ill-advised marriages will be rare, and they will then so conduct themselves in their married relations that divorces will be practically unknown.

A YOUTH OF PROMISE

One of the Twelve Stories of Solomon.

BY THE "HIGHWAY AND BYWAY" PREACHER

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Scripture Authority:—"And he called his name Solomon; and the Lord loved him. And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah, because of the Lord."—2 Samuel 12:24, 25.

SERMONETTE.

"And the Lord loved him."—In a sense God loves everybody. Scripture saith: "God is love." Every relation of God to the children of this world is an expression of love. The condition of the heart and life of each individual may call forth different methods of dealing, but however God touches the life, whether in judgment or mercy, in discipline or blessing, it is all done in love. God loves too faithfully, too deeply, too truly to do aught in his dealings with man but that which is according to the Divine righteousness and justice.

But God loves in a special sense, as there is some special attribute in the life and character to call forth that love. Just as a parent loves with a fuller, deeper, truer love the child who lives in closer sympathy and fellowship with himself than that other child who is wayward and disobedient, so God, our Heavenly Father, in his infinite love rejoices in and fellowships with the human heart that seeks to know and do his will. Love towards God calls out fuller, freer expression of love from God.

God loves us when we are bad, because he longs to help us.

God loves us when we are good, because he rejoices in goodness, and longs to see us grow into his likeness.

God loves us in a special way, because his infinite wisdom sees within us the future possibilities of goodness and greatness, and knows that in us is to be found an opportunity of expressing the attributes of the Divine nature and executing the Divine will.

What father is there who does not rejoice with a peculiar joy as he notes the first indication of budding genius in the boy? He is ambitious for that boy and he is anxious to see the best in the boy brought out. And as his every effort meets with glad response from the boy how glad and proud the father is. So is it with God, only infinitely more so.

The splendid development of Solomon's early life was due no doubt largely to the influences which Nathan the prophet threw around the young lad, and emphasizes the importance of this period in determining the destiny of a life. The testimony of Scripture that "The Lord loved Solomon," tells us enough to make it certain that in his young heart there stirred a glowing love for God and the desire to do his will.

THE STORY.

A FAMILIAR knock sounded upon the door, and an instant later, without waiting for the cheery invitation from within, the young lad came bounding in, the flushed face and sparkling eye and eager manner indicating clearly that he had some matter of tremendous interest and importance, at least to himself, to communicate. In fact so impatient was he to unburden his mind that he scarcely responded to the hearty words of welcome which were spoken by the elderly man who was seated by a table near a small, low window.

"You will ask father for me, won't you? My good, dear friend, Nathan," burst out the lad as he threw himself at the feet of the elderly man and looked eagerly up into his face.

"Ask him if thou canst come and see me oftener," responded the prophet, half playfully, half seriously. "Yes, I had thought thou hadst quite forgotten me." And he put his arm affectionately about the shoulder of the youth and glanced with proud, glad look into his animated countenance.

"Don't tease me!" pleaded the boy. "I couldn't come yesterday to see you, for the Egyptian scholar, the guest of my father, was going that day, and I could not bear to miss one word of the wonderful things he was telling me."

"Ah, have I lost my boy to him?" asked the prophet, the shadow of a pained look upon his face betraying the forced playfulness which sounded in the voice.

"No, no!" was the quick reply. "But, oh, it means so much to me. I do want to go."

"Want to go where, Jedidiah?" asked Nathan, softly, with a tremor in his voice.

"Oh, the Egyptian told me of the scholars of his country, of their wisdom and learning, and I would like to go there and study. He said that I could find but the beginning of

knowledge in my land." And after a pause he added: "I would rather study books than learn a trade."

Nathan the prophet looked earnestly into the thoughtful eyes of the boy before him. He was almost 12, the age at which every Hebrew boy was taught a trade, and even now the prophet was planning the future of the young man before him. Not all the king's sons had learned trades, but Nathan felt that even though he was a king's son, it would be better for Solomon that he be given the training common to Hebrew lads. The care over and discipline of the young boy had fallen into Nathan's hands. He it was who had been first to speak over the little life the benediction and blessing of the Lord, and when he had given him the name of Jedidiah he realized better than any one else that he was indeed the "beloved of the Lord" and that the Lord had destined him as the future king of Israel. For this reason consternation filled his heart as he heard the words of the young lad. He had wanted to hold him under Jewish influences and training, and here he was with longing eyes looking toward Egypt as the goal of his ambition. For some few minutes the prophet did not answer, the meantime keeping his eyes upon the boy's face as though he would look to the soul within and read its every secret.

The open, frank, clear eye did not flinch before the searching gaze, but instead the boy stood quietly and deferentially waiting for Nathan to speak. He had learned to love this man of God as a father, and in many respects there were closer bonds of union between them than existed between him and his own father, King David.

"Jedidiah," at last softly spoke the prophet, "knowest thou the thing that thou hast asked?"

"Yes, that I may possess the learning of Egypt."

"Nay, rather thou art asking for the right to forget thy God and thy people."

The face of the boy flushed crimson, but his eyes did not falter as they looked into the older man's face and he said:

"But is it disloyal to God or to my nation to desire knowledge?"

"Nay, but cannot thy heart content itself with what thy nation can give thee?"

"And have I not been content, but should it remain content when there is more beyond?"

The prophet did not make reply and the boy went on after a moment's pause:

"The Egyptian said that as son of a king I would have special advantages and privileges. You'll ask father, won't you? And I want you to go with me; I wouldn't want to be separated from you," and the boy put his hand affectionately upon the other's arm.

The heart of the prophet was touched, and a tear glistened in his eye as he said:

"Leave me now, Jedidiah, I will give thee answer later."

"What would be the result," he he asked himself, as he sat alone, "if the boy should go into Egypt? Would the boy come back less an Israelite and a follower of the true God? Would God be pleased at his going?" Such were the flood of questions which surged through the heart of Nathan. "Had not the lad spoken truly when he had said that it was not disloyalty to God to desire knowledge?" He would speak to David, he finally resolved. King David should decide.

"You didn't tell me when to come back," apologetically spoke Solomon as he entered the room of the prophet that evening, "so I came back to-night."

"Thou art determined to go?" "Not determined," replied Solomon respectfully, "for I will abide by thy decision, and that of my father, the king. But I do want to go."

The prophet placed both his hands upon the shoulders of the young lad and looking him squarely in the eyes with tender, earnest gaze, he said, slowly, as though he would measure each word and note its effect: "And thou shalt."

The Look of a Child.

"I remember that the greatest lesson I have ever learned in my life," said the bystander, "was pointed out to me by my little daughter. I had never been a drinking man; but sometimes after the theater, I am ashamed to confess, I came home many a night slightly the worse for wear and liquor. The habit grew on me, in spite of tearful entreaties from my wife. I took a bottle of whisky home one afternoon. After dinner I made for the bottle, which I had left in my study, poured out a glass and raised it to my lips, when I caught a reflection in the polished woodwork of the wall. I turned quickly, and there was my little daughter standing in the doorway looking at me. I could never describe the expression on her face. If one might say it of a child, it was a commingling of reproach, pity and disgust. Probably she had overheard conversations between her mother and myself; perhaps the mother had instilled that feeling; perhaps it was instinct. I have not taken another drink from that day to this."

Baptist College for Oklahoma.

The Baptist state commission has chosen Lawton, Okla., as the site for the new Baptist university, the city of Lawton offering 40 acres of land and \$75,000 in cash.

Big Advancement in Porto Rico.

The Porto Rican year book for 1901 contains a story of the marvelous advancement of Methodism in that island.