

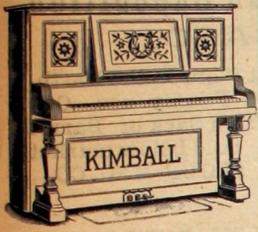
Dwight Star and Herald.

DEVOTED TO LOCAL AND COUNTY INTERESTS AND GENERAL INFORMATION.

VOL. XXX.

DWIGHT, LIVINGSTON COUNTY, ILL., SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1895.

NO. 7



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That Woman.

There is a great deal of discussion nowadays in regard to the "modern woman," what she is developing into, and what the future result will be. You can scarcely pick up a newspaper or magazine but you will find something directly or indirectly on the subject. Well, that is all right. I think women should have some share of public attention; but there is one phase of this criticism that I wish to speak about particularly, and that is that woman is losing her womanliness; that in reaching upward to higher education, and outward for wider privileges, she is losing that fine edge, that indefinable quality peculiar to womanhood, and which constitutes her chief charm. Now, in the first place, I do not think this criticism is right nor just. Who would pass judgment on a half finished painting, and tell the artist his work was a failure before it was half completed? Or who would say to the sculptor that his statue was full of blemishes when only a few chips had been taken off from the rough block? Yet, that is what the people are doing who are saying such harsh, unkind things about the modern woman. In the second place I do not think it is true. This talk of unsexed womanhood is all nonsense. Liberal education and liberal franchise will develop the best that is in woman, just as it develops the best that is in man, if rightly used. "The bravest is the tenderest, the loving is the daring," is just as true of woman as of man, and the strong, brave-hearted highly educated woman, bearing all of life's burdens and responsibilities, makes the most loving, tender and devoted wife and mother. Of course, the woman who breaks away from old traditions and old customs must labor under disadvantages, as is always the case when radical changes in the conditions and customs of society are taking place. For a time she must seem out of joint with things, but the next generation will rise up and call her blessed, for the better conditions under which they can govern their home and bring up their children.

Perhaps the two things which attract most attention in this connection are woman's dress and woman suffrage. Although, too, a great hue and cry is set up that woman is aping man in every department of life, they are "Andromaniacs," as the respected Rev. Dr. Valiant, for purity has it. He says: "There is an element in the community—a small one I would fain hope, yet the size of a thing is no measure of the disquiet it will produce, even as one little piping frog in the meadow will outdo all the crickets that are chirping in the grass and all the whippoorwills that are singing in the air—there is an element in the feminine world that is suffering from what I will venture to call "Andromania." It is an attempt on the part of those effected with the disease to minimize distinctions by which manhood and womanhood are differentiated, whether as regards their culture, their interests or their activities.

Now, in regard to woman's dress, any one who has worn a woman's dress knows that there is great need of reform. In fact we must have dress reform if we are ever to be free to rise to the best that is in us; to develop the best temper, the happiest heart, a high degree of patience and nobility of soul; for the presence of the opposite of these qualities is due in great measure to suffering directly traceable to woman's faulty dress. If any man is not convinced of the truth of this let him dress in ordinary woman's attire and go out shopping on a windy day, then with a parcel or two in his arms, which are too precious to trust to other hands, let him try to cross a muddy street or walk along dirty, crowded sidewalks, and I think he will be fully convinced of the need of a change somewhere. Instead of wondering how many women suffer from ill health and nervousness he will probably think the greater wonder is that so many are healthy, cheerful and happy. Now, is it any wonder that, seeing man's dress appears to be comfortable, she naturally assumes if she can adapt something in the same style it will meet the demands of the case? This was the original motive which prompted woman to borrow man's style of dress, little dreaming in her innocence, that he would resent it like a selfish boy whose sister wants part of his pie. True, there are a few young girls mainly, who think it would be "just fun" to wear a man's "necktie, coat, collar and hat," but those are just like children, who, having found some dresses in the garret that grandma wore when she was a young lady, are delighted over what to them is a great novelty, and put them on in great glee, but who would ever think of saying those happy children would never become true, noble women, or that the

household was devoid of decorum because the children romp in the garret wearing dresses that do not become their years?

Then, as to woman suffrage, will some candid reader tell me why any class of law-abiding citizens, that are responsible in every way, should not have the full rights of citizenship? By what right are they kept from it? Oh, the cry is, "women are different," and with solemn emphasis they quote: "Male and female created He them." Yes, they were created male and female; they are different and will always be different; but is the line to be drawn in the matter of citizenship? The only instance I remember of in the Bible where God gave special command in this matter, was when Moses asked Him if the daughters of Zelophehad should have an inheritance among their father's brethren. God said they should have the same inheritance as if they were sons instead of daughters, and their names are given among the heads of families in numbering the children of Israel. I think this would indicate that God intended that they should have equal rights of citizenship, and if He had been consulted in regard to all other laws relating to woman, there would be no need at this late day of their having to band together to demand the right of equal privileges for equal responsibilities, and equal reward for equal service, which is all the woman rights' movement amounts to. It is not a mere hankering after forbidden fruit.

One writer says: "I cannot understand why the question of woman suffrage should so excite public opinion. It is entirely profitless to her. If her husband strains every nerve already to provide her with all the luxuries of life, he will certainly not relax in defending those interests which are identical with those of his family." The fallacy of this line of argument shows very plainly on the face of it. It is based on the assumption that every woman has a husband or some male provider and protector, and that there are no women who are entirely dependent on their own exertions for their daily bread, often with helpless ones depending on them; and also, that there are no useless, idle and debauched husbands. Of course, if every woman had comfortable, luxurious homes, and if every man was straining every nerve to maintain the sanctity of the home and the purity of society, suffrage would be entirely profitless to her, and you may rest assured she would never think of taking up this burden.

Then, another dreadful thing that will happen the modern woman if she persists in developing brains, is, that she will not be so "interesting" to the sovereign lord of creation—man. I will just quote from Aline Gorren's article, "Womanliness as a Profession." She says: "The man whose own intellectual faculties have the ripeness and flexible play that the largest culture gives, is beginning to ask himself whether the intellectualized American womanhood promises to be as interesting as womanhood always should be on this earth. If he happens to have studied our young girls who leave our woman's colleges, the young women who act as professors in the same, the youthful doctresses in our large cities, he is conscious on the whole of a faint chill mis-giving. * * * Now, when such a man, as has been described, recognizes this, he is apt to turn cold, and ask himself whether there is not something amiss in a scheme of education which brings together all the elements of influence, and then leaves out altogether the one magic ingredient which shall set the forces of that influence free." The writer then goes on to say that woman must cultivate the emotions, that is where the true field of her advancement lies. Now, I think it is the duty of everyone, whether man or woman, to make himself or herself as attractive and interesting as possible, but to make that the aim and end of one's being is directly contrary to the laws of God and nature. God, her heavenly Father and Judge, to whom she is just as responsible as is man, must be her chief judge, and the principles laid down by Him her chief criterion. Is it woman's highest and noblest aim to be interesting to man? Then man must be perfect and infallible. Is he? Only under such conditions can she take his rulings as the guide for her conduct. Certainly let her cultivate the emotions, especially tenderness, sympathy, love and pity. It is these emotions which leads the woman who is surrounded with all the comforts and luxuries that love can give, to sacrifice some of her time and comforts in order to ameliorate the condition of her less fortunate sister. Because, forsooth, those young women did not display any emotions while those intellectual and highly cultured gentle-

men had them under their dissecting knives, they must necessarily not possess any.

I believe in the future woman, that she will be kind-hearted, tender, true and everything that is womanly, and although I may not join in her work I stretch my hand to her and bid her God-speed. I also believe in the future man, that he will in every way be worthy the future woman, that instead of a playing thing, woman will be his friend, helper and companion, as God intended she should be when he created her.

MRS. LAVINIA M. SPENCER.

"As a Thief in the Night."

We are filled almost with a feeling of dismay as we pause for a moment and contemplate the work of the Death Angel in the past few weeks. It would seem that the old-time, long, lingering illness, which terminated in the final sleep, was known no more, and that the new order of things brought in its place, sudden and swift disaster. We cannot take up a daily paper without seeing a startling account of some terrible fire, resulting in the death of one or more of the brave firemen. Or an explosion, hurling many, without a second's warning, into eternity. The whole country has been anxiously waiting and scanning the icy waters of Lake Michigan for a glimpse of the lost "Chicora," till hope has died out, and we shudder to think of the fate of more than a score of men. Then again comes the terrible news of the sinking of the "Elbe" with its freight of more than three hundred precious lives. Oh, the pity of it!

—hurled from their sleep,
To a watery grave in the briny deep.
And all in twenty minutes' time—"As a thief in the night"—how true. Yet, after the first paroxysm of these dread casualties, we turn again to our usual pursuits, to the business which engrosses us, to the pleasure that amuses us, and calmly lie on. After all, these fires, and explosions, and disasters of the sea, have an unreality and dimness about them, that distance lends. We hastily glance over the list of the dead and injured, and find, with a sigh of relief, that no one whom we knew or loved, is there. It is not that we are more selfish or heartless than our fellows. We are truly sorry for those thus bereaved, we are shocked at the dreadful details of the disaster, and all that, yet—it does not really touch us. And perhaps it is better so. We could not bear the sorrows of the whole world and still live on. Our time has not come. But wait! A messenger comes to the door, perchance at the dead of night, with a message of woe. A young man of our own town, known and respected by all, loved and cherished by many, is dead. Struck down while at his post of duty. Killed by the train, by that car of modern Juggernaut, that, in these latter days, is crushing out the lives of so many, many. He was a son, a brother, a lover, a friend. Ah! now we are touched. As we stand by the dear, mangled form, there is no unreality that distance lends. It is very near now, very real. Perhaps the Death Angel steals into the town in the form of some dread disease, the mention of which blanches the cheek of the bravest. There is a hasty burial by hired hands under the pale light of the cold stars. It is sad, it seems barbarous, but it must needs be so. Ah, this is our town, these are our fears, our loved ones are threatened now, our time has come—"As a thief in the night." Ah, yes. If the strong man of the house had known when the thief was coming, he would not have been sleeping. If the passengers of the "Elbe" could have known the fate of the gallant ship, they would never have taken passage thereon. But if the strong man of the house had been wise as well as strong, the treasures which his house contained would have been carefully secured before the shadows of the night came on. And to those to whom the summons has so suddenly come who had a right to the "Tree of Life," and to the "mansions prepared above," it was only a hastening home, after all.

MATTIE S. WRIGHT.

Installation.

The installations of the G. A. R., W. R. C. and S. of V. will be held Tuesday evening, February 19th. The two former will be held in Keeley Hall and the latter in their hall.

A luncheon will be served by the corps after installation in the same hall. Every member should be present.

Pay Your Taxes.

The tax books are now ready at the store of Baker Bros., Dwight.
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For Sale.

Ten head of work horses, one set team harness, one wagon. Inquire of
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