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Marriage
and the
Woman Movement

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SIXTH THOUSAND.

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Marriage and the Woman Movement.

SOCIETY never made marriage; it found it; marriage is a direct act of God, based on a direct word of God.

Our Lord goes behind the Law of Moses, back to the bedrock of Creation, and says,—"For this cause"—i.e., because God had made a man and a woman, and one man and one woman only—"the *twain* shall become *one flesh*: what therefore *God* hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt. xix. 5). Essentially, therefore, marriage is not a legal contract; or an economic corner-stone of the State; or a union of mutual love: it is all these, but it is immeasurably deeper; *it is an act of God* —"GOD hath joined together"—so making the persons directly responsible to Himself; and it is God, our Lord says, who decreed the union,—"*He* which made them, *said*, the twain shall become one flesh." God gave away the first bride,—"God brought her unto the man" (Gen. ii. 22), and so sanctified wedlock for ever.

Thus marriage is one of the primal laws of God: "be fruitful and multiply" is a command that has never been rescinded for the Gentile nations; and all assaults upon the marriage state are thus direct assaults upon Jehovah. Believers now, it is true, may, with the full approval of God, avoid the gracious but binding tyrannies of domestic union for a fuller devotion to Christ: so the Scripture says,—"It is good for a man to be as he is" (1 Cor. vii. 26): an abiding exhortation throughout the dispensation *because the reasons given for it* (*vv.* 32–35) *are abiding;* and the "present distress" is thus the age-long tribulation of a pilgrim Church. But the sanctity, the general advisability (1 Cor. vii. 2, 1 Tim. v. 14, Matt. xix. 10–12), and the fundamental divineness of marriage, remain: a sanctity which has been made final by our Lord's adoption of it as the supreme symbol of His relationship to His Church, His Bride. "LET MARRIAGE BE HAD IN HONOUR AMONG ALL" (Heb. xiii. 4).

For the Holy Spirit, by drawing the veil from God's creative acts, before either man or woman had sinned at all, reveals—like a fossil creation found embedded in a rock—God's bedrock design for manhood and womanhood;

an unveiling which carries with it the enormous corollary that Paul's instructions are no local or temporary customs of the East, but the unearthing of God's mind from the very bowels and internals of creation itself. And the first fact thus unearthed is this:—that a profound order runs through the entire creation; and that all things, *including God*, are involved in this order. For "the head of every man is *Christ;* and the head of the woman is the *man;* and the head of Christ is *God*" (1 Cor. xi. 3). "In the word 'head' dominion is expressed; as in the human body the exercise of dominion over all the members proceeds from the head: so in the family, from man; in the Church, from Christ; in the universe, from God" (Olshausen). As co-equal in substance and Godhead, God and Christ are one; and yet the subordination of the Son to the Father is inherent and eternal: so, when the woman acquiesces in her subordination to the man, she imitates Christ, and it is no more a dishonour to her than our Lord's subordination is a dishonour to Him, or than the man's subjection to Christ is *his* disgrace. *For each subordination is for the benefit of the one next below.* God is the head of Christ to do all that it is in the power of God to do for Christ: Christ is the head of the man to do all that it is in the power of Christ to do for man: so the man is the head of the woman to nourish and cherish her, to provide and care for her, to protect and defend her—to do all that it is in the power of man to do for woman.

The Holy Spirit draws the veil further aside. "The man is the image"—the sovereign's head on the coin—"and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man." Adam's body appears to have been moulded, either after the design God always had in mind for Christ's body, or else after the actual form of the Son of God as the Jehovah Angel: Eve's, on the other hand, was a creation out of a section of Adam; so that, while both were given dominion over all creation (Gen. i. 26, 27), Adam was given dominion over *her*. Eve was no more made in the image of God than she was made in the image of Adam: neither is ever asserted: for she is *female*—that is, diverse in image from both, a creation by herself; and as his helpmeet and counterpart, she is man's glory

(Prov. xiii. 4). She reaches her highest through him: she ranks alongside him: if he becomes a king, she becomes a queen. "Doth not nature itself teach you?" Nature is a hieroglyph of grace: so that man and woman's physique is each a revelation of the Creator's will for their function and destiny; and the woman's flowing tresses, contrasted with the man's comparatively uncovered head—the veil (not to conceal the face, but a head-dress) is but an artificial extension of the hair[1]—stamp them for ever, the one as the image and glory of God, the other as the glory of the man. "For the man is not *of* the woman"; the man existed before the woman had been created at all; "but the woman *of the man*"; she drew both her name and nature from him; she slept in his side before ever she awoke in the world, and so is *ipso facto* subordinate: "neither was the man created *for* [because of: Alford] the woman, but the woman for [because of] the man"—the woman proceeded from the man because she was intended to serve as his helper, and to complete his existence (Godet). "I will make him an *helpmeet* for him" (Gen. ii. 18)—a counterpart, a complement; one who, as being unlike, supplies his defects; so that all the man lacks, his other self—for she was created out of him—contributes physically, intellectually, socially and as hydrogen and oxygen blend to produce water, so man and woman blend to make the perfect marriage—God's conjoint creation for which Christ died.

Thus we arrive at the balanced relationship of the home. As a Christian, the wife is her husband's "sister"; as married, she is his "wife": as sister she has an exact equality in standing and redemption—for "there can be *no male and female,* for ye are all one *in Christ Jesus*" (Gal. iii. 28); as wife she is subordinate and obedient, even as the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, is subject to Him. For "as the church is subject to Christ, *so* let the wives also be to their husbands *in everything*"; a truth which is

[1] In a day when, for industrial and other reasons, women are assuming man's dress, it is well to remember the words of Jehovah:—"A woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment; *for whosoever doeth these things is an* ABOMINATION *unto the Lord thy God*" (Deut. xxii. 5).

balanced by its correlated truth,—" husbands, *love* your wives, *even as* Christ also loved the church " (Eph. v. 24). *Calvary is to be the standard of the husband's love.* For subordination, woven by the Creator into the very fabric of the social order, is neither a proof nor a badge of inferiority: it is an indispensable barrier against anarchy. No social order which is built in defiance of nature and revelation—and the exact conformity of nature and revelation on sexual relationship is one of the overwhelming facts of the situation—can end in anything but wreckage and anarchy. The child is to obey the parent (Eph. vi. 1), the subject is to obey the civil ruler (Tit. iii. 1), the disciple is to obey the Church ruler (Heb. xiii. 17), the servant is to obey the master, even though an unbeliever (1 Pet. ii. 18); although " in Christ " there is neither male nor female, parent nor child, subject nor ruler, servant nor master. In all these cases the subordinate is frequently the superior; nevertheless, for purposes of order, subordination is essential,—" Sarah obeyed," as the Holy Ghost notes with marked approval (1 Pet. iii. 6), " *calling him lord.*" Subordination—a subordination which may win the husband (1 Pet. iii. 1)—is the part of the wife: love is the equal obligation of the husband. Three times, the wife is bidden to obey, three times the husband to love (Eph. v.).[1]

Nor is marriage the only relationship which is regulated by the creative act. " I PERMIT NOT A WOMAN TO TEACH " —as wider than ' evangelize ' or ' preach,' the word includes all public instruction—" *nor to have dominion over a man,*" ——the second clause is vitally linked with the first—" but to be in quietness " (1 Tim. ii. 12). Women may teach women (Titus ii. 4), and children (2 Tim. iii. 15), and instruct individuals, as did the woman of Sychar (John iv. 28), Mary (John xx. 18), and Priscilla (Acts

[1] For delicate chivalry and warmth of appreciation, Paul, the first of all ancient writers to declare the Christian exaltation of woman, and the spiritual equality of the sexes, remains unsurpassed. " Priscilla, unto whom not only I give thanks, but all the churches; Phoebe, a succourer of many, and of myself also; the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord; the mother of Rufus, his mother and mine; help these women, for they laboured with me in the gospel, whose names are in the book of life." The Scriptures have ever been the magna charta of ideal womanhood.

xviii. 26): *she may thus teach four-fifths of the human race:* but publicity in mixed assemblies, hitherto neither desired nor approved by the great majority of those to whom the Holy Ghost has given the magnificent title of ' daughters of the Lord God Almighty," is strictly prohibited. It is now her forbidden fruit. " *For* "—the root reason is again inextricably intertwined with the creative act—" Adam was *first* formed, *then* Eve." It is not personal disqualification, for inherent superiority in everything belongs to neither sex: but the order in which He created them has revealed God's design for their relationship; and superiority in status lies with the man, together with natural aptitude for initiative and rule. Nor is it with particular classes of women, such as loose Corinthians, or women in particular localities, as in Ephesus or Corinth, but with women *as women* that Paul deals; and it is " *all* subjection " that he commands, that is, complete subordination. " *I* suffer not a woman to *teach* "; " be ye *imitators of me,* even as I also am of Christ " (1 Cor. xi. 1) —a commanded imitation, occurring in the very context of the headship of the man, the meaning of which a child cannot mistake, and the force of which a giant cannot overthrow. Very solemnly our Lord rebukes a church officer for neglecting to enforce this rule:—" I have THIS *against* thee, that thou sufferest the woman Jezebel *to teach* " (Rev. ii. 20).[1] They alone hold the true custody of woman's honour who counsel her to obey her God.

But there is a second reason for the prohibition to teach. " For Adam was *not* beguiled "—that is, he fell with open eyes, and through love of his wife—" but the woman *being beguiled* "—being caught, being trapt, as the sole direct victim of the Tempter; Adam is nowhere said to have come into contact with the Serpent at all—" hath fallen into transgression "—and so induced the fearful

[1] The Angel, like all who yield in the littles, ignored the wise proverb—*Obsta principiis:* we must choke evil in its fountain, or it grows into an unmanageable flood. How far this lawlessness will push itself is already being revealed. " Those who have read the proceedings of the Divorce Court Commission," says Sir Robertson Nicoll (*British Weekly,* Jan. 19th, 1911), " know how startling, how revolutionary, how abominable, were some of the proposals laid before that body. *It is an ominous and fearful fact that the very worst of these proposals were made by organized bodies of women.*'

entail of sin upon the race. Because of a misuse so grave God has now explicitly forbidden to the woman an initiative which He had never given her: her interpretation of Scripture in Eden, and her rejection of the Word of God, have permanently disqualified her for the more responsible and prominent functions of teaching. Adam's sin was the greater, for the prohibition of the Tree he received direct from God, while she received it only from him; and, as a gift put into his hands by God, he was responsible to control her: nevertheless her sin revealed her incapacity for initiative; and so drew from Jehovah the first verbally expressed subordination—"Thy desire shall be to thy husband, *and he shall rule over thee*" (Gen. iii. 16).[1]

The subtlest and deadliest sects to-day spring from repetitions of this primal sin. The bulk of Spiritualistic mediums, who are women; Theosophy, founded by Madame Blavatsky, and propagated by Mrs. Besant; Christian Science, organized throughout by Mrs. Eddy: the New Thought Church, the manufacture of Mrs. Sears: —all these are, or were, Spiritualistic mediums. *Woman, again a pliant tool, is listening once more to the reappearing Serpent.* But the disability is not eternal. Presumably, in so far as the subordination sprang, not from the woman's mode of creation, but from her priority in sin, it will ultimately disappear, together with its sign—travail in childbirth—at the final obliteration of all penal consequences of sin in both sexes; but meanwhile the prohibition of public instruction abides in full dispensational force,[2]—*as is proved by the continuance of travail in childbirth.*

It is not only loyalty to the Word of God, or a consciousness of perils which history has shown to be far from

[1] Yet the second Garden has redressed the balance of the first: first in the transgression, Woman was also last at the Cross, and first at the Tomb. The three Marys around the Cross (John xix. 25) are the triple crown of womanhood.

[2] On the ground of our Lord's principle (Matt. xii. 7) that when the rule of order clashes with the rule of necessity or of love, the lesser rule must give way to the greater, it is possible that, in lonely missionary stations where male supervision, either native or foreign, is unobtainable, women's temporary teaching and oversight may be legitimate. David can eat shewbread and be blameless: *but shewbread is not to be David's habitual diet.* How

imaginary, which compels us, at all costs, to enforce the Scriptures; but a sweeter motive wooes and wins—"that we may present every [believer] *perfect* in Christ" (Col. i. 28), "giving honour unto the woman, as unto the weaker vessel" (1 Pet. iii. 7)—a sentence which holds in it the whole soul of chivalry; and no honour is so real or effectual as clearing her pathway, by eliciting her own glad obedience, into the heart of the coming glory. For an athlete "is *not* crowned, except he have contended *lawfully*" (2 Tim. ii. 5): the regulations for women, as also for men in their sphere, will decide the issue of their coronation: woman's obedience is essential to her glory. It is lowliness, not publicity, which determines, for both sexes, degree of rank (Matt. xx. 26) in the coming Kingdom. So we arrive at the final regulation. "LET THE WOMEN KEEP SILENCE IN THE CHURCHES: FOR IT IS NOT PERMITTED UNTO THEM TO SPEAK" (1 Cor. xiv. 34); a Scripture so clear, so decisive, that no one doubts what it *seems* to mean: let us ponder, therefore, the explanations advanced to prove that it does *not* mean what it *seems* to mean—namely, the absolute silence of sisters.

(1) It is said that the word here should be translated 'wives,' not 'women,' and that thus it is a rule for the married only. But the vast majority of women, as of men, *are* married: this objection, therefore, would give but little relief: the rule would still be binding on the vast majority of womankind. Moreover, if so, it compels the inference that while godly and mature matrons are enjoined to silence, girls in their teens (as well as mature unmarried women) may rise and teach the Church; a

rapid and appalling is the defection even from all primal law! "There are no fewer than seven thousand ordained women in the Free Churches of America" (*Nineteenth Century*, Sept., 1916): and the *British Weekly* (Sept. 21st, 1911, and Mar. 15th, 1906) expresses the growing revolution in the Churches thus:—"We now know that in many of the qualities of effective oratory women are superior to men. Shall this great gift lie unused? Is it not eminently needed in the Christian Church? This development will grow, for it is of God:" "Will not the time come when, as between husband and wife, the words obedience and command, subjection and mastery, will be viewed as strange relics of barbarism?" Churches are in existence officered and composed solely of women.

statement which has only to be made, to be rejected.

(2) It is said that the word means 'chatter,' and refers only to thoughtless or flippant interruption. But the word is used twenty-four times in this very chapter, *and never once in the sense of "chatter" or "interrupt":* it is used throughout of prophecies and inspired utterances: and once (ver. 21) of God's own utterance. The Greek word exactly corresponds to our English word "speak," covering all utterance, dignified or undignified. Moreover, the Holy Spirit has already said,—"Let the women *keep silence*": the injunction is thus wholly unmistakable, for it is affirmed both positively and negatively.[1]

(3) It is said that this is a restriction belonging to the Law of Moses, from which the Gospel has freed women. But Paul says,—"Let them be in subjection, *as also saith the law*"; that is, on this point, according to the Apostle, the Law and the Gospel are identical. Woman's ministry in synagogue and temple was wholly unknown and forbidden; though, as nothing to that effect is explicitly recorded in the Mosaic Law, *the restriction has actually advanced in definiteness under the Gospel.*

(4) It is said that the regulation was for Corinthian women, accustomed to loose habits, and educated in a lawless atmosphere. But the Epistle is addressed (i. 2) "to *all* who call upon the name of the Lord *in every place*": "let the women keep silence"; and not, in the Church at Corinth, but—"*in the churches.*" Timothy receives identical instructions (1 Tim. ii. 12) to rule church order wherever he might be located.

(5) It is said that these are rules confined to the miraculously gifted of the Apostolic Church, and are not applicable, therefore, in our uninspired era. But is it possible that women, through whom the Holy Ghost is

[1] "Some writers in England have even supposed that in chap. xiv. Paul simply means to forbid women to indulge in the whisperings and private conversations which would break the stillness of worship. But it is impossible so to restrict the meaning of the word to 'speak,' applied as it is in these chapters to all the forms of public speaking. Besides, the prohibition, if it had one of these meanings, should have been addressed to men as well as to women. What the passage forbids to women is not ill-speaking or ill-timed speaking, it is *speaking*; and what Paul contrasts with the term 'speaking' is 'keeping silence' or 'asking at home'" (Godet).

directly speaking, miraculously gifted, are to be silent while *un*inspired women may speak freely? The fact, *admitted by the objection,* that the *inspired* are to be silent, overwhelmingly silences the uninspired; it is obviously women *as women* that are to be silent, whether inspired or not.

(6) It is said that Paul elsewhere (1 Cor. xi. 5) allows the woman to pray and prophesy, if covered. Obviously the gift of prophecy is for both sexes; but there is no New Testament example of a woman's *public* prayer or prophecy: Elizabeth's (Luke i. 42) and Mary's (Luke i. 46) were private. Paul in the immediate context has been regulating the use of the *prophetic* gift and then says,—"Let the women keep silence *in the churches*"—that is, in *public* ministrations.[1] Even to Nature it is an act improper and unbecoming, and, in the eyes of God a disgrace—"for it is *a shame* for a woman to speak in the church"; and that which is a shame in God's sight now, cannot be other than a shame at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

(7) It is said that God has set His seal of approval on woman's ministry, at least in evangelism, by granting conversions under her words. But nothing that can occur, not even conversions, can unsay what the Holy Spirit has said: only a rescinding order from the Spirit Himself, verbally expressed, can authorize disobedience. The kindred fact that conversions can occur under an unregenerate preacher is no Divine authorization of an

[1] Does the regulation cover public prayer also? It would seem so. This very chapter regulates prayer in the assemblies,—"If I *pray* in a tongue, my spirit *prayeth*" (ver. 14): and then the Spirit says,—"Let the woman keep silence." Is not audible prayer a breach of silence? and is it not an assumption of some degree of authority in leading an assembly to the Throne? In 1 Tim. ii. 4, 5, the word for 'men' is man *inclusive* of woman: "God willeth that all *men* [all human beings] should be saved"; but in ver. 8 it is man as *distinct* from woman; "let the *males* pray everywhere." So, moreover, Alford:—"The English Version [*A.V.*], by omitting the article, has entirely obscured this passage for its English readers, not one in a hundred of whom ever dreams of a distinction of the sexes being here intended." Even questions, which are no assumption of authority, are (ver. 35) forbidden. Collective singing (Col. iii. 16) is commanded.

unconverted ministry, but merely demonstrates that the life is in the Seed, not in the hand that sows it. The Word of God is liable to convert from any mouth. Moses may strike the rock, "rebelling against the word of the Lord," yet the waters flow (Num. xx., 11-24)—for the Holy Spirit will flow forth to parched lips from the smitten Christ even when disobediently invoked.[1]

(8) Finally—(and this exhausts the objections known to me; objections, I may add, never advanced, so far as I am aware, by front-rank commentators)—it is said that exceptional women have been raised by God above this rule. The answer is obvious. God is sovereign, and may make what exceptions to His own rules that He chooses: *but I may not make them.* And is it certain that there have been any such exceptions in this dispensation as will stand the searchlight of the Judgment Seat of Christ? There is a Deborah in the Old Testament: there is no Deborah in the New. No female pastor, apostle, ruler, or evangelist,—no head or teacher in any church *except Jezebel* (Rev. ii. 20)—is named throughout the New Testament.

But God has not left us to human reasoning, however loyal, or to human scholarship, however careful and competent: it is most startling to observe that He has made obedience to this rule one discriminating test between Heaven and Hell, Himself assuming full and final responsibility for the decree. For the Apostle, foreseeing the strongest opposition, challenges the Church at Corinth,—"Are you the authors and primitive fountain of the Christian Faith, so that you can initiate new rules for the Universal Church? or are you the sole depository of the Faith, so that you can override the customs of all the Churches?" "What? was it *from you* that the Word of God went forth? or came it unto you *alone?*" The

[1] One purpose of prophecy was the conviction of unbelievers (1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25): nevertheless prophets, never prophetesses, are here named throughout; and women, whether prophetesses or not, are enjoined to silence. Whoever believes sane, catholic-hearted Paul guilty of sex-prejudice, a sex-prejudice which he has embedded deeply in Holy Scripture, not only tramples underfoot the doctrine of inspiration, but is spiritually incompetent to comprehend the Apostle.

universal rule, made by the Spirit for all churches, is the only rule for a local church: *a local assembly has no power to authorize its women to speak.* So, on the parallel regulation of the headship of the man, Paul says,—"If any man seemeth to be contentious, we have no such custom, *neither the churches of God*" (1 Cor. xi. 16). But not only are they not the authors of church law, but they have forgotten Who *is.* After this rebuke to their pride in their own judgment, the Apostle, conscious of his Divine authority, deliberately lets fall a challenge of almost unexampled gravity. "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or inspired [cp. 1 Cor. xii. 1], *let him acknowledge* of the things which I write unto you"—the regulations I am now making (Alford)—"THAT THEY ARE THE COMMANDMENT OF THE LORD"; that it is not I, Paul, whose words you read. but direct requirements and commands of the Son of God. Paul suddenly disappears, and Christ looms forth: this decree is not an apostle's judgment, or the collective wisdom of the Churches, or even the decision of all apostles and prophets: it is the personal command of the Head of the Church, and therefore is to be enforced on the consciences of all the saints with the full authority of God. It is an exceedingly impressive proof of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the universal Church that such an acknowledgment has always been made. "This rule," says Bishop Ellicott, "was carefully maintained in the early Church; its infringement had a far graver import than might appear on the surface, and, as we well know, expanded afterwards into very grave evils"; and for eighteen hundred years the Church Catholic, with hardly a dissentient voice, enforced this commandment as of the Lord.

But the matter is graver still. *The attitude of all inspired persons on this church regulation infallibly reveals the source of their inspiration.* "If any man thinketh himself to be a *prophet* or *inspired*, LET HIM ACKNOWLEDGE"—as a test of the source of his inspiration—"that they are the commandment of the Lord." It is most remarkable that the prophets and the inspired at Corinth, in spite of the deep church disorders, did acknowledge that this commandment was from Christ; for in his Second Epistle

(i. 13) Paul says,—" We write none other things unto you, than what ye read *or even acknowledge.*" There are sisters true and devout, who now say—" The Spirit leads me to speak in public." [1] *A* spirit, perhaps, or more probably her own ; *the* Spirit never : for the Spirit cannot contradict Himself, and what He means on this subject He has already said : the Spirit will always endorse the Spirit. *No supernatural or woman movement since the Apostles has acknowledged these regulations as binding upon itself.* Montanists, Camisards, and early Quaker Prophets ; Theosophists, Spiritualists, Christian Scientists, and the Tongues Movement :—all have revealed their source (so far as they are supernatural, and so far as the supernatural in them is concerned) by maintaining that these Regulations of the Holy Ghost, for one reason or another, are not to be obeyed. It is one test whereby we can distinguish the Satan-gifted from the God-gifted : the status of woman is a fundamental barrier between Heaven and Hell.[2]

[1] Christian women need to realize the fearful perils of the spirit world. The sole exception to the man's authority lies in her control of her head-covering. " The woman [was created] for the man : *for this cause* "—i.e., because she was made for man and for no other race of beings—" ought the woman to have authority *over* "—see, for parallels to the Greek expression, John xvii., 2, Rom. ix., 21, Rev. ii. 26, vi. 8, etc.—" her head, *because of the angels* " (1 Cor. xi. 10). The Nephilim (Gen. vi. 1–4) are again in the world. " Christian Scientists," says an ex-Scientist, (*My Experience of Christian Science,* by a student of the Moody Bible Institute), " claim that marriage is not necessary for reproduction, *and I have heard of at least three children that have been born without athers.*" Even in private prayer the woman is to be covered in the presence of God : " is it seemly that a woman pray UNTO GOD unveiled ? " and no husband or father has the power to forbid her this veil. " The seeming contradiction between the passages [1 Cor. xi., 5, and 1 Cor. xiv. 34] disappears if we take into account that in Chapter xiv. it is the public assembly of the congregation—the whole Church—that is spoken of (verses 4, 5, 12, 16, 19, 23, 26, 33). *There is no sign of such being the case in* 1 Cor. xi. 5 " (H. Meyer). Spirits are as surely silent witnesses of private as of public worship.

[2] The French Revolution, in the person of Condorcet, gave birth to the Woman Movement, which later took shape in the ' Ligue des Droit des Femmes ' in 1867, and now encircles the globe,—perhaps of all movements thus far the most symptomatic of the revolt from primal law. Theosophists largely officer the Movement ; and it is the *Perfect Way* (p. 154), a masterpiece of Theosophic deceit claiming supernatural inspiration, which lays down this Theosophic fundamental :—" The curse will be removed, Paradise regained, and the second Sabbath of the Golden Age achieved, *only when woman is again invested with her rightful supremacy over man.*"

The Apostle closes with a word of practical counsel. Foreseeing an opposition which no reasoning or Scripture can silence, and which no authority can overawe, he says, " If any man is *ignorant* "—professes his inability to pronounce whether these regulations are from God or not—" *let him be ignorant.*" State the truth ; obey the truth ; within our sphere, enforce the truth : then, if the opposing disciple remains obdurate, be silent ; and leave him to the wise, tender, and righteous judgment of his Lord. So again, " if "—after the statement of Old Testament facts, and the Holy Spirit's New Testament exposition of the facts—" any man seemeth to be *contentious* "—if any arises who appears to dispute the matter, who seems not satisfied with the reasons given by Paul, but is still disputatious (Alford)—" we "—we Apostles, whose authority is final—" HAVE NO SUCH CUSTOM "—enough has been said to satisfy all wise and good men—" neither the churches of God " (1 Cor. xi. 16), *including the holiest women of nineteen hundred years.* Pictures in the Catacombs reveal the man always with shortened hair, and the woman with the palla, a handkerchief falling over the shoulders ; and the fact that the Church has never varied in this attitude for nearly two millenniums is an extraordinary proof of the truth, and of the control of the Church by the Holy Ghost.[1]

The related question of Divorce is a question which, in one way or another, touches us all, for it brings us into

[1] It is difficult to understand how a heart loyal to Scripture can reach any other conclusion on the whole subject. " No other legislation, human or divine, has such a mass of sanction from nature, reason, revelation, argument and sentiment in its behalf " (Nathaniel West, D.D.). " Though the distinction of the sexes is abolished in Christ (Gal. iii., 28), as far as the offer of and standing in grace is concerned, yet for practical purposes, and for order and seemliness, it subsists and must be observed " (Dean Alford). " The wit of man cannot really devise a passage through these barriers which the Holy Ghost has thrown up. All public speaking of Christian women where men are present is naked disobedience to the Spirit of God " (R. Govett).

direct contact with the State as a matter of law; it goes to the roots of family and national life; it may involve a grave collision, as it has in past ages, between State law and Church law; and above all, it is a question on which our Lord has spoken with extraordinary clearness, and laid down one of the most profound and far-reaching of all His commandments that bind the Church.

The Jews put the testing question to Christ: "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife *for every cause?*" (Matt. xix. 3)—for any cause whatever? May a man dissolve his marriage simply as he would a private terminable contract? Our Lord, in answer, goes back behind the Law of Moses, and even behind the patriarchs among whom polygamy was first practised, to the root design of creation. "Have ye not *read*"—for Holy Scripture is the sole and constant source of all spiritual knowledge—"that He Which made them, *from the beginning made them* a male and a female"—one male and one female; thus excluding both polygamy and divorce: a creative design of God extraordinarily maintained in nature by the practical equality of the sexes ever since. "And *said*"—for marriage is not only an institution of nature, but also a law of revelation—"For this cause shall a man *leave* his father and mother"—abandoning one relationship for another as holy, and far more binding and exclusive—"and shall cleave to his wife, and the twain shall become one flesh. *So that*"—as a consequence of both creation and revelation—"they are no more twain, but *one flesh*": not necessarily one in spirit; but merged into one, so long as they are 'in the flesh.' So our Lord, in His answer, goes back to creative bedrock. As the woman was not a separate creation, but was taken *from* the man, so by marriage they merge back into one again: "what *therefore*"—for the unity is now a "what," a single pair—"*God* hath joined together"—for every marriage is a God-made union, not a private contract—"let no man"—no earthly tribunal whatsoever—"put asunder." That is, the binding nature of marriage does not depend on the will, or the general conduct, of the married, but on God's creation of marriage, and His re-uniting, in every wedding, what He separated when He took Eve from Adam. God

designed single pairs; God designed the lifelong faithfulness of the single pairs; God so designed marriage as to leave no holy reason for divorce. In creation God severed the one into two; in marriage He reunites the two into one.[1]

The Jews now press the Lord Jesus with a further probing question. "Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorcement?" Our Lord answers: "Moses, for your hardness of heart"—choosing the lesser of two evils, and saving the wife from possible murder—"suffered you"—he never *commanded* it—"to put away your wives: but from the beginning IT WAS NOT SO"—*divorce never entered into the design of God.* Here is an absolute abrogation of the Law of Moses: here is our LORD obviously legislating for His new and heavenly people, the Church: here is the mightier Lawgiver rescinding, even for the whole world, all exceptions and exemptions of God's primal law of marriage. For what is our Lord's tremendous new enunciation? "*I* say unto you"—both believer and unbeliever, both Church and world, were gathered before Him—"WHOSOEVER"—of all men everywhere, but much more of those within the Church of Christ—"shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, *committeth adultery*"—will appear before the bar of God, whatever civil or ecclesiastical law may have sanctioned the divorce, as ADULTERERS. So the Holy Spirit also through Paul:—"If, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an ADULTERESS" (Rom. vii. 3). Since marriage is a God-created union, "what God hath joined together," only God can dissolve; and on two grounds only does God dissolve marriage—fornication and death; for in both of these the fleshly union is dissolved, and the marriage ceases. So our Lord makes one exception: "Whosoever shall put away his wife, *except for fornication*, committeth adultery": other sins may be very grave, but they do not destroy the marriage itself: fornication is not so much a ground of divorce, as it is divorce itself—a dissolution of the

[1] This in no way affects, for those whose "gift" it is, the Spirit's dispensational counsel of celibacy, in either sex, for fuller devotion to Christ as the supreme ideal (1 Cor. vii. 26).

marriage tie, a death of the bond, a separation as complete as the marriage was a union.

So, therefore, we arrive at the Divine Law for the Church, binding us for ever. Let us summarize. What exactly do we mean by ' divorce ' ? Not merely separation ; but separation with the legal right to marry again : divorce is lawful re-marriage in the lifetime of the former husband or wife. Now separation, if adequate reasons are forthcoming, is not forbidden. " If the unbelieving [husband or wife] depart, *let him depart:* the brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases " : but this is separation only : " if she depart, *let her remain unmarried,* or else be reconciled to her husband " (1 Cor. vii. ii, 15). But does our Lord allow the innocent party in a righteous divorce—for example, a man whose wife has been divorced as an adulteress—to marry again ? (Among obedient Jews this question could not arise, for adulterers and adulteresses were put to death.) The Roman and Anglican Churches answer, No ; the Greek and Reformed Churches answer, Yes : it is probable that the Greek and Reformed Churches are right. For if marriage was a union in spirit, death would not, and could not, dissolve it ; and therefore re-marriage after the death of one would be adultery ; so, therefore, as death releases for re-marriage, so also must a divorce granted on God's one marriage-dissolving ground. It is, moreover, the natural inference from our LORD'S words : " Whosoever shall put away his wife, *except for fornication,* and shall marry another, *committeth adultery* " : therefore whosoever shall put away his wife *for* fornication, and shall marry another, doth *not* commit adultery ; that is, he is free to marry again. But this is not the grave situation with which we have to grapple : the situation which we have to face is much simpler—may people marry again who have separated on any ground *less* than fornication ? May they agree to separate for three years, and then be at liberty to marry elsewhere ? Our Lord answers with tremendous force : " WHAT GOD HATH JOINED TOGETHER, LET NOT MAN "—no parliament, no emperor, no church, no pope—" PUT ASUNDER : " for " whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, COMMITTETH ADULTERY " :

and therefore will appear—if a believer, at the Judgment Seat ; if an unbeliever, at the Great White Throne—an *adulterer.* No Scriptural minister could conduct a service, or invoke the Divine blessing, on a union which our LORD declares to be adultery ; no Scriptural Church in which a member has contracted such a marriage, since it is pronounced fornication by Christ, can have any option but to excommunicate (1 Cor. v. 11).

For before Whom is it that we bow ? Our Lord, with extraordinary wisdom, solves a problem of great difficulty, and silences His extremely subtle critics, by laying bare God's creative design ; and then—without a moment's hesitation, and with all His habitual calm and ease—revokes Jehovah's law, with an authority superior to Moses, and equal to God. " The *Law* and the prophets were *until John* " : what, then, is the new law ? " Every one that putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, *committeth adultery* " (Luke xvi. 16, 18). The Lord Jesus never had to go up into a mountain, like Moses, to fetch the Law—He simply spoke it : He never had to prostrate Himself on the dead, like Elisha—He simply said, Come forth : He never had to consult the Urim and Thummim, like Aaron—never baffled, never making a mistake, He simply uttered words God-thought, God-created, and God-expressed. For " the Word was with God, AND THE WORD WAS GOD " (John i. 1).

Exquisitely does the Apostle sum up the entire relationship of the sexes. " Howbeit neither is the woman without the man, nor the man without the man, *in the Lord* " ; the Christian Faith requires both, two halves of one whole, in which one is chief, joint-heirs of the grace of life (1 Pet. iii. 7) : " for as the woman is *of* the man [in creation], so also is the man *by* the woman [in birth] " ; " but all things are of God "—all their relations and interdependences come from God as from their true causal fountain and origin (Ellicott). The woman was dependent upon the man for her creation, but the man is dependent for his very life upon the woman ; they have been redeemed at an equal cost, and may attain an equal blessedness : God made humanity to be one throbbing whole of sympathy and grace and love.