

WOMAN'S EXTRAVAGANCE RUINING NATION

Mrs. John A. Logan Makes an Amazing Arrangement of Her Sex to Edward Marshall—Waste of Their Husband's Money on Dress, on Automobiles, and in Countless Other Ways, Is Wrecking the Character of the Sex, Destroying the Chances of Its Sons and Daughters, and Ruining Woman's Health.

By Edward Marshall.

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HERE is a talk on women, by a woman, which should be read carefully. Every man is sure to.

"Women are far more responsible for the morals and immorality of the nation than men can ever be. If either really goes wrong, the fault is really woman's."

Mrs. John A. Logan said this, and Mrs. John A. Logan is one of the most interesting of the sex she criticizes.

As children are brought up, so goes the nation. This is woman's work, and the women of today are wrecking it. This was another of the trenchant things she said to me, and as she said it, she said it with a head. That head is one of the most remarkable I have ever seen. I can well believe the statements that when she was a girl she was the reigning belle in her part of Kentucky, where and when to be a reigning belle meant something. She frankly states that she was born in 1835—one cannot think of her as otherwise than frank in any statement—and, of course, her hair is white. I doubt if it could possibly have been as beautiful when it was dark and she was young.

What she had to say, that evening, is very much worth reading, for it is the output of a well trained mind, wonderfully stored by such a wide experience as few if any other women in America have had. A Miss Logan by birth, educated in a convent in Kentucky, married when she was 17 to a man who afterwards proved a mighty figure in the nation's politics as well as on its battlefields, a woman of unique experience in Washington, New York and European social centers, a writer of renown, she occupies an extraordinary place in American life. Add to these concrete claims to eminence, the fact that, weeping, but without protest, she saw her only son (I know, for she told me) die in the trenches of the world war, and everybody loved her, and she had died in gallant action while fighting for the flag, and she is not to have a very actual sentimental claim well. All the United States must honor Mrs. Logan. The readers of this newspaper can scarcely fail to give this record of her notable opinions respect and more than ordinary interest.

There may be some among the women who will read it, who will shrink a little—even much—from the plain truths she speaks, but a far greater number, probably, will stop and think and wonder at her logic and her courage and her plain social center, a writer of renown, she occupies an extraordinary place in American life. Add to these concrete claims to eminence, the fact that, weeping, but without protest, she saw her only son (I know, for she told me) die in the trenches of the world war, and everybody loved her, and she had died in gallant action while fighting for the flag, and she is not to have a very actual sentimental claim well. All the United States must honor Mrs. Logan. The readers of this newspaper can scarcely fail to give this record of her notable opinions respect and more than ordinary interest.

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Mrs. John A. Logan.

advantages, and may be said to sin through ignorance. The women in America who do essentially the same thing—the women I referred to—have no ignorance to excuse them. Working women do it in this country, possibly; but there are ladies, here, who do it, too.

"There is something wrong with the American woman of this generation, and the fault is growing. Women don't appreciate their opportunities, and the proper effort is not being made to teach them how to do so. American boarding-schools do not teach girls how to become good wives and mothers; their own mothers do not teach them the great lessons of responsibility. The American girl of now does not get right instruction in the schools or in her home. If she does not, in some measure, make a failure of life, it is because of innate goodness, and that innate goodness will become less likely as time passes if correction is not made in some directions. Family life, in the United States, is failing, and it is the women's fault. If the men are showing a strong tendency to put their wives out of their actual lives, the women must accept the crime."

"Where the husband's fault lies. I was married when I was seventeen and my husband, from the first made me an actual part of his career. I had had an education when I married him, but I was very ignorant. Many educated girls are pitifully ignorant. While my husband lived he taught me something every day, and I've learned nothing since he died which he had not first taught me. We shared everything. He did not hesitate to let me take my part of the responsibilities of life; I think I did not shrink it. One thing which has been in the deterioration of our women is that their husbands have perhaps shown an increasing tendency to shut them from participation in a large part of their lives; but there again at base, I fancy it is very largely the wife's fault. If they showed the proper interest in what their husbands' lives are filled with, they would not be shut out from participation."

"Women do not realize in these days their power for good; if they know it, then they pitifully lack courage. When Mr. Hayes was in the White House she was a real power in the land. She would not yield her principles, although, when she refused to have wine served at diplomatic dinners, she was very widely criticized. That woman really did good. No one ever went to her for help for any worthy cause who did not get it; knowingly she never contumacious otherwise than worthy. She was a president's wife who left behind her almost as great a reputation as her husband and Mrs. Taft, who forbids good service to the country."

"Extravagance of Women. And there are other ways in which the modern woman is becoming weak, becoming far less capable, in the country, than the women of past generations. Her undoubted tendency toward liquor and tobacco are by no means all she may be indicted for. There is, for instance, her astonishing, her deplorable extravagance. Women are responsible for half the business failures, probably; they drag their men to ruin by their sinful waste, the mad rapacity of their demands for more, more, more. They must have gowns, they must have costly furniture, they must have this, they must have that, whether or not their husbands have the money for the purchases. If they've not the money, let them go in debt; that matter is debi to a mill-stone, but a man's pocket? The wife must have her silly luxuries, in spite of that—in spite of everything. Fashion! The modern woman is pursuing fashion to the very brink of ruin—and beyond. Her school gowns should be absolutely cheap and simple. If cheap and simple frocks were mandatory in all boarding schools, those schools would turn out better women, better fitted to be wives than those who now are graduating from them. They would turn out girls with better dispositions, too. One of the chief reasons for heart-burnings would be done away with, and heart-burnings often sour sweet natures. We have schools for boys in which the pupils are made to wear uniforms. Our military schools do not turn out a crop of foot-lambs. Why not uniform in girls' schools, too? In the convent,

school in which I had most of my education we were not permitted to wear jewelry. Those girls who brought much gewgaw with them, in their trunks, saw them neatly packed up by the faculty and sent back home. They had no chance to wear them at that school, and the result was much less jealousy and much less vanity than usually exists in most girls' schools today. Some of the schools today teach foolishness far more effectively than they teach wisdom. In effect their most important course is silliness and most of their girl graduates stand high in it upon commencement day."

"The Mad Girl of This Period. Even in my youth they used to talk about the 'Girl of the Period' with amusement. She used to wear some dreadfully exaggerated costumes—her fashions, some of them, were quite insane—but the worst of them were mild and modest by comparison with the extreme vogues of today. I gasp with real astonishment. I sometimes blush with shame, when I go upon the streets of a large city, nowadays, and observe the manner in which women park themselves. Some of the fashions of the year of nineteen-ten are not only hideous but viciously indecent. Oh, yes; I mean quite that—indecent! The only lack, this season, which show real intelligence in their design, are the poke-bonnets of some sensible automobilists. The modish dresses are an outrage upon the modesty of womanhood. Any lady who gowns herself in the extreme fashion of today and has her picture taken, will, if she looks at it, and stops to think, blush at the thought that she, on her grandchildren may see it. If the fashions of today were actual signs of the times, the thoughtful person would be forced to make admission that they were very sorry signs of very sorry times. It has been many years since we have had a line of women's fashions so objectionable as are those which rule the mode today. The women promenading upon Broadway or Fifth avenue, in New York, or in the shopping districts of any of our other cities, form, to me, at least, a shocking spectacle—a very shocking spectacle and a very melancholy spectacle. I may be foolishly old-fashioned—I sometimes think that plain morality and common human decency are getting nowadays, to be old-fashioned—but to me the fashions of today seem incompatible with proper womanly modesty. It is a fact that if I were the mother of young girls I should, today, endeavor to prevent them from walking much, or fashionable highways in fine weather. I think the exhibition which such streets afford is really demoralizing. When I see a woman in a dress which is a broad, serious sin, anything which diminishes the modesty of woman, I have a bad thing for the human race, and the fashions of today diminish, if they do not, sometimes, utterly destroy, the modesty of woman. The present fashion of women, by anything approaching womanly reserve, true feminine delicacy. The styles which one sees constantly exemplified upon the streets, upon the cars, at theatres, hotels and in the private residences of the prosperous, the styles which are so silly—they are definitely vicious and demoralizing. They harm seriously the women who submit to them, the men who know those women, and, more notably, the children of this generation. I have seen, within the last week, in New York city, costumes on the streets, which should have made their wearers subject to official interference. "Nothing could be more absurd or harmful than the present system governing women's costumes. Styles change very definitely twice a year, and old styles never come back into popularity. It's a pure matter of commerce. Women do not realize how utterly they are befuddled and made to serve commercial purposes, by men who furnish their living out of the supply of the demand which changing styles create for labor and material."

"Women Exploited by Commercialists. By frequent changes of the styles a mighty false demand is annually created for new, costly, new ornaments, new everything. The changing styles are not to be charged up, at all, to woman's love of beauty. Most of them are very far from beautiful. They are due to woman's willingness to be led either, and then, you double and treble, by commercialists who prey on her. The spectacle would be amusing if it were not very, very melancholy. But it is so melancholy that it makes one shudder for the safety of the future of the race. I hope and know it is, along with the fashion of the day, one of the most shameful of her submission to the mandates of the smart commercialists who dupe her and induce her to waste money, dress her like a man, or like a make woman who are good at heart, so fainting on the streets in costume which would have made a wicked woman blush, in other years, no increase of intelligence is indicated. Far from it."

"There is an opportunity in this for women who are filled with the desire to 'reform' something. I do not decry, at all, the honest efforts of any woman along any line which, honestly, she thinks, reformatory. Women cannot think and act as much as they should, the betterment of any of the world's conditions; but charity begins at home and there is a great opportunity for earnest women to commence the labor of reforming the insane extravagance of their own, and their husbands', and in the exhibitions which they make of their own selves, from time to time, in meeting fashion's latest 'whim.' 'Whim! These are no whims that make the whole sex dress itself like simpletons or sinners.' They are the bane of every manufacturer and cynical modistes who wish to force upon the sex the purchase of new outfits, periodically, which are not in the least necessary."

"The Hobbie Skirt Industry. I cannot see why women of plain sense should not and do not have their dresses together to put down such distressingly recurrent manias. Sensible women are not rare, they could do this if they would; by doing it they would be wondrously advancing their own comfort, their own dignity and the moral welfare of the race. Why could they more utterly absurd, and, worse, more harmful, in a dozen ways, than the hobbie skirt of 1910? I've seen in New York City women dressed in hobbie skirts who not only made them silly and immoral exhibitions, but they were wholly miserable, as well. Most of the extremes of fashion hurt the health in one way or another, but these hobbie skirts distinctly hamper ordinary ease of locomotion. I've seen women, and this is not at all an exaggerated statement, who could not get on a streetcar because their feet were bound too closely to make the step-up from the pavement to the platform step a possibility. I will not comment further on the morals of the costume. It has none. But what an idiotic thing to so restrict one's movements that she cannot get on a streetcar because their feet were bound too closely to make the step-up from the pavement to the platform step a possibility. I will not comment further on the morals of the costume. It has none. But what an idiotic thing to so restrict one's movements that she cannot get on a streetcar because their feet were bound too closely to make the step-up from the pavement to the platform step a possibility. I will not comment further on the morals of the costume. It has none. But what an idiotic thing to so restrict one's movements that she cannot get on a streetcar because their feet were bound too closely to make the step-up from the pavement to the platform step a possibility. I will not comment further on the morals of the costume. It has none. 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