

A SCHOOL OF MATRIMONY

Dorothy Dix Talks in Her Usually Artless and Charming Manner:—And Makes Some Suggestions Worthy of Being Seriously Considered

It is cheering news to learn that the state of Iowa is grappling with the divorce evil at the right end of the problem. In that enlightened commonwealth it is proposed to establish a school where young men and women contemplating entering into the holy estate of wedlock, may take a course of instruction and receive a diploma for proficiency in knowing how to keep domestic peace, and to this end a bill has been introduced into the legislature asking that the governor be empowered to appoint a "state director of marriage reform instruction."

This is the first practical plan that has yet been suggested for dealing with one of the great moral issues of our day. In married life an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of all-mony, and the only way to keep people from getting divorces is to keep them from wanting them. Preachers may preach and moralists may moralize, but as long as the bond that holds a couple together is a galling yoke and not a silken tie, just so long will they break it. The real cause of too much divorce is too much and too indiscriminate marrying.

Misery the Result of Ignorance.
Any observer can tell you that most of the domestic misery in the world is the result of ignorance, and not of premeditated malice. When we tread upon the sensibilities of our husbands and wives, when we rasp their nerves, and shock their tastes, we do not do it with a set purpose of aggravating them. We do it because we don't know any better. We haven't prepared ourselves for the

role we are trying to play, and the chief reason that marriage is so often a failure is because it is universally thought that the ability to be a good husband or wife is the result of inspiration and not intelligence—a sort of craft that any sort of a blundering amateur can pick up and dash off without study or apprenticeship.

It is this misconception that the school of matrimony proposes to combat. It will raise marriage to the level of one of the learned professions, instead of a jack leg trade that any idiot can practice, and thus will the first step be taken towards the abolition of divorce, and the ushering in of the domestic millennium. If you start two ships out to sail the seas, one of which is piloted by a skilled navigator, and the other by an ignorant landlubber who has never seen salt water before, the dullest person alive can tell which vessel will go to pieces on the rocks.

Leader Roll Leads to Divorce.
Just what the curriculum in the school of matrimony will embrace has not yet been made public, but the girls' course will undoubtedly begin with detailed instruction in how to cook and keep house. The first disillusion many—nay, most—husbands get is from the bad housekeeping of their wives. It is unromantic, but it is a truth, that you can drown love in muddy coffee, and choke it to death on tough steak, and slay it beyond the power of resurrection on soggy biscuit. Be sure that it is at a bad breakfast table that the young husband first begins to suspect that he has made a mistake in his choice

of a wife and has missed his affinity. "Exhibit A" in many a divorce case is a leaden roll.

There's no use in saying this is putting things on a low level. It's simply taking human nature as it is. Plain living and high thinking may be enough for a philosopher. Heroes in novels can live on sentiment alone, but in real life most of us don't get much above our surroundings. We are never critical of those who make us comfortable, but there's precious little love that can survive an ill kept home. The woman who understands the fine art of feeding us and making us comfortable doesn't have to sue for our love. She can command it.

This isn't all, however. A good table and a clean hearth are much, but they are not all, and inasmuch as all women are fairly intelligent, it does not seem like the school of matrimony might do missionary work in teaching them a branch of character study that would enable them to deal with acumen with the peculiarities of the man they marry. If women gave as much time to studying their husbands as to trying to understand them the world would be a cheerful place to live in.

Then somebody ought to endow a chair of "perpetual fascination." Cupid is always painted with wings. That is to show how easily love can fly away from us. Women never grasp the significance of this. They think because a man loves them once he will continue to do so. It is a cheering thought, and they work it for all it is worth. Many a man who marries a girl because of her daintiness and charm and amiability, never sees that side of her character again. She wears her dowdy clothes for him, she saves her amiability for others, and her wit for strangers. I humbly maintain that the man who pays a woman's bills has a right to the best she can give, and I have never yet known a wife who persisted in regarding her husband as company who was worth fixing up for and entertaining

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who had to complain of his defection from his own hearth tone.

Tact the Secret of Generalship.
A thorough and exhaustive course in the science of tact should also be included in the curriculum. Why can't wives be taught not to bump up against the angles in their husband's disposition? Why can't they learn to avoid bringing up subjects on which they know beforehand they are going to disagree? Why can't wives be instructed how to rub the fur the right way instead of the wrong way? Of course, men are often pig headed and unreasonable, but the art of the one thing is not to treat a crank as if he were sane, and when you find you have stirred up an ugly temper to give way for the time being without a fight. The secret of generalship is knowing when to attack and when to retreat.

The most important thing, though, that women can be taught is a respect for personal liberty, even for the liberty of husbands. The rock on which more domestic happiness is wrecked than any other is the theory that there must be a boss in every family. It makes the marriage tie the tie that binds and chafes, and the home a prison everybody wants to escape. There are women who marry men merely to reform them, and who think that a wife has a divine right to pick out her husband's friends, and neckties, and religion, and food for him. It never occurs to them that by the time a man is old enough to marry he has decided on the scheme of life he likes best, and that a woman interferes with that at her peril. It is worth while for women to remember that there is no authentic account of anybody ever having really loved their jailer.

But, happily, for marriage is a double team that no one person can drive, the school of matrimony is to be a co-educational institute, for there is just as much need of men learning how to make a happy home as there is of women. They, also, sin through ignorance. A man doesn't deliberately marry a woman to break her heart, and when he tramples all over the flowers in her soul it is just because he was so untaught he couldn't read the "keep off the grass" signs with which a woman's nature is hedged in. Every man contemplating matrimony should begin in a kindergarten

class in which it should be drilled into his mind that while you can run a courtship on hot air, it takes money to support a family. He should be taught to repeat "butcher bills, and grocery bills, and gas bills, and dry goods bills, and millinery bills, and doctor's bills," and all other bills and bills to which matrimony is heir, until he could say them backwards or forwards, or in his sleep. Then it would not come to him with such a shock of surprise when he found out that his wife couldn't work miracles, and that it wasn't cheaper for two to live than one, after all.

Men should also be grounded in the geography of woman's character so that they will learn that the girl who is bounded on the north by silliness, and on the south by ignorance, and on the east by extravagance, and on the west by selfishness and laziness, and whose chief characteristic is a volcanic temper in a constant state of eruption, is a no man's land from which a wise mariner will steer away. No man who is in love will believe it, but matrimony works no miracles in a woman. The latitude of her tongue and the longitude of her patience never change. Walking to the altar never yet converted a butterfly into a useful household grub or changed a snappish shrew into a meek Griselda.

Prospective husbands should also be taught that if flattery was useful before marriage it is an absolute necessity afterwards. Most men after the wedding let up on compliments and chocolate creams, as if marriage extracted a woman's sweet tooth. This is a mistake. It is strange, but a fact nevertheless, that words, and not deeds count with a woman, and that as long as her husband will hold one of her hands she is perfectly content to work the other one to the bone for him.

It would also add no little to domestic felicity if husbands could be taught when a hat is a confection and a bargain at \$50, when a skirt "sets" right, and when it is a subject for tears, and how to hook up a waist in the back without wiffing their collars and using language in which no gentleman should indulge in the presence of a woman. But perhaps this is asking too much. There can be no

absolute perfection in this world. At any rate, the school of matrimony has a great future before it, and the "state director of marriage reform instruction" is destined to be the solver of the divorce problem. May his tribe increase!

What Time Proves.
This thing of being sick and looking for a cure is a mighty serious business. People are not given to joking even at the first symptom of the approach of the Grim Destroyer. They do not want to be the subjects of experiment, but want medicine that has had the test of years behind it. A medicine that has been made and used for 20 years gives assurance of its worth, and can be taken with a faith that they have the very best cure the world affords. All this can be said about Dr. Gann's Improved Liver Pills as a remedy for sick-headache, dyspepsia, and indigestion, it begins right at the source of the trouble and removes the cause. Sold by all druggists for 25c. per box. One pill for a dose.

Real Estate Sales.
The Salem Iron Works were yesterday afternoon sold by A. Bush to A. F. Marcus et al for \$10,000.
R. B. Piowman of Boise, Idaho has sold to Coolidge and McClaine 158 acres of land on Howard Prairie for \$7,000.
Abraham Ibach has sold to G. S. Hange, 118 acres of land near Silverton for \$6,500.
B. P. Strand and wife have sold to Albert Olsen 32.11 acres in t. 6, r. 1 e for \$2250.00
J. O. A. Bowby, of Astoria, has sold to Alex Colchinn, lots 3 and 4 in block 26, Gervais \$175.00.
Amelia Managro has sold to J. B. Managro block 109 in town of St. Paul for \$1.00
T. A. Williams, clerk of the court at Billings, Mont., has disappeared with considerable money.

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EIGHTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY OF BLIND HYMN WRITER

Bridgeport, Conn., March 24—Miss Fanny Crosby, the famous blind hymn writer, today celebrated her eighty-fifth birthday in the full possession of all her faculties but the one denied her. Miss Crosby lives with her sister, Mrs. Carrie Rider, and in her old age is fully as active as in her youth.

Miss Crosby became blind in her infancy, owing to improper treatment for a fever. When she was 15 years old she entered the New York institution for the blind. She was so apt in her studies that she subsequently received an appointment as teacher of rhetoric, English grammar, Greek, American, English and Roman history in the institution.

While still a teacher she composed songs, which were set to music by George F. Root. Among the best-known are "Rosalie, the Prairie Flower," "Hazel Dell," "Good-by, Proud World, I'm Going Home," "The Rose-suckle Glen" and "There's Music in the Air." She also wrote the words for the cantatas, "The Flower Queen" and "The Pilgrim Father."

Miss Crosby, in 1864, took up hymn writing and since that time has written nearly three thousand of them, notable among which is "Safe in the Arms of Jesus." There is seldom a religious meeting at which one or more of Miss Crosby's hymns are not sung, and the deep religious pathos of her writings has been felt in many lands.

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