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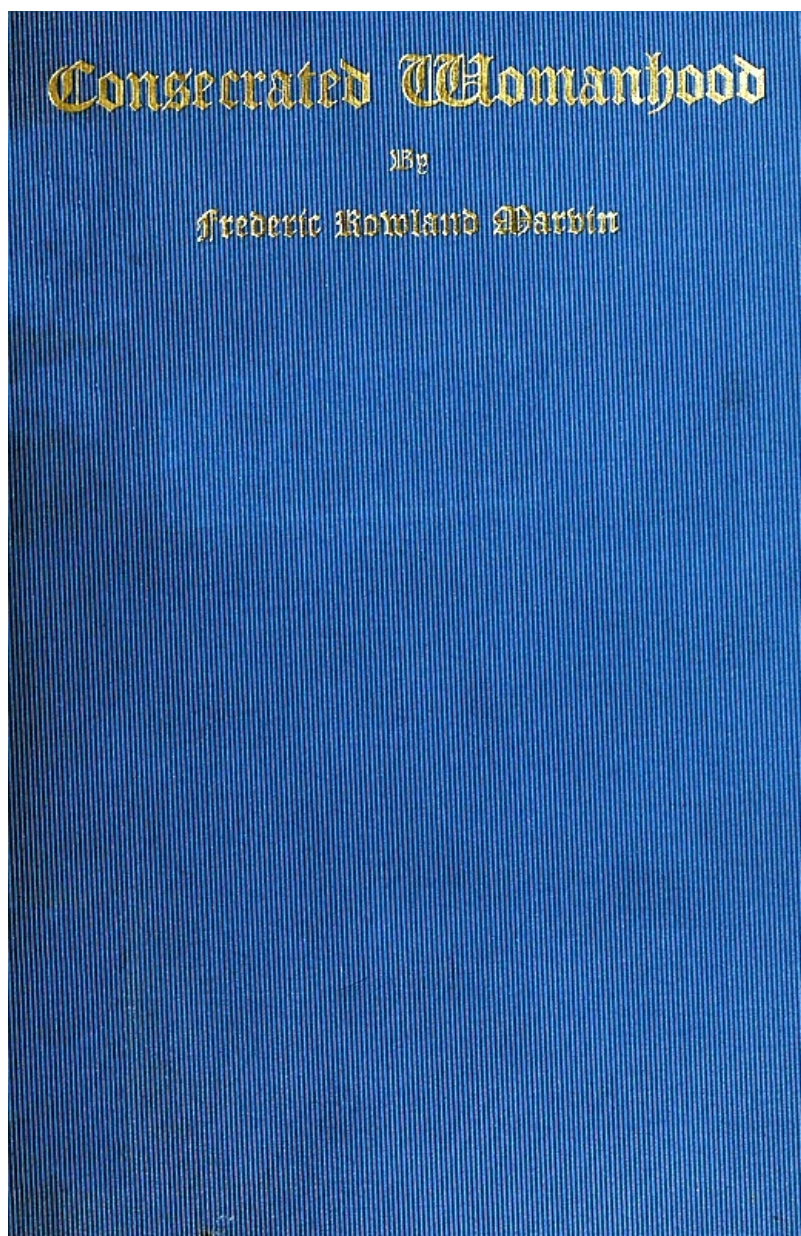
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK CONSECRATED WOMANHOOD ***

Transcriber's Note: Spelling has been harmonized, punctuation and printer errors corrected.

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*Five hundred copies of this
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of August, 1903
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Consecrated Womanhood

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Consecrated Womanhood

A Sermon

PREACHED IN

The First Congregational Church

PORTLAND, OREGON

BY

FREDERIC ROWLAND MARVIN

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

BY

FRANCES POWER COBBE



NEW YORK

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Introductory Notice

Those who have long lamented the prevailing tendency in Christian churches to deny to women the honors and responsibilities of sacred offices and duties, such a sermon as "Consecrated Womanhood," written by an American clergyman is like a breadth of fresh air in Neapolitan church-buildings that have never known the beauty of sunlight, and the atmospheres of which have grown heavy through the centuries with the oppressive weight of suffocating incense.

The preacher opens his discourse with the statement that "the Bible honored woman when every other book was blind to the true dignity of her character." Scholars differ, and little is certain when we go back far enough in the ancient writings of our race. But I think there can be no doubt that in all the earliest literatures of which we have knowledge, the thought of the world was more favorable to the development of womanly independence, than in later compositions, especially such as have come from patristic and monastic sources. Certainly we find the great Greek tragedians unfolding their noblest ideals in the character of an Alcestis, and expressing through the lips of an Antigone their loftiest conceptions of virtue, and their purest and bravest ethical teachings. The Jews did not stand alone, as this eloquent sermon clearly shows, in honoring woman; but the Old Testament is devoid, as its most careless reader cannot but see, of all that wretched admiration for feminine feebleness of mind and body which seems to have sprung from masculine vanity, and has been fostered by centuries of priestly instruction and popular superstition. As the most illustrious Jewess now living, Lady Battersea, wrote in her admirable book some years ago, when she was Miss Constance de Rothschild, "The ideal woman of the ancient Israelite was always strong and fearless—a Miriam, a Deborah, a Judith, an Esther. Not a word in that older Bible denies to woman the right to exercise every power of speech or action granted her by Jehovah."

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Nothing assuredly can be more broadminded or more generous than Dr. Marvin's whole treatment of the claims of women, whether in politics, in the religious life, or in the domestic circle. In my humble opinion it would do infinite service in awakening thought and dispelling prejudice, could the sermon on "Consecrated Womanhood" be preached in every church and chapel in England. The good Quakers alone, so far as I know, have no need for its admonition.

FRANCES POWER COBBE.

Hengwrt,
Dolgelly, North Wales,
June 21, 1903.

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Consecrated Womanhood

"She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth out her hands to the needy. Strength and honor are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness."—*Proverbs*.

IT is the peculiarity of the Bible that it honored woman when every other book was blind to the true dignity of her character and the royal possibilities of her nature. The old Testament exalted her not only as wife and mother, but as citizen and ruler, and some of the most stirring songs and daring deeds of patriotism are recorded in the Bible to the honor of woman. Her inspired pen is immortalized in the Word of God, and if it be not meet that her voice sound from the halls of Congress, it is a fact of history that it was heard on the field of battle and in the chamber of justice more than three thousand years ago, when, by the mouth of Deborah and the hand of Jael, the Lord delivered Israel from the power of the spoiler. She may not be thought competent to have part in framing the laws of a State, but she was competent to judge the chosen people and to mould the character of the world's Redeemer.

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The conservative who would obstruct the wheels of progress endeavors to accomplish his end by an appeal to the Bible. Sacred Scriptures were represented as the friend of slavery; they are now cited in defense of Papal idolatry and Mormon impurity; and how often we hear them quoted against the emancipation of woman. But the Bible is the most radical book in all the world, and its maxims of wisdom and virtue are in advance of every age. Whatever has been accomplished for the improvement of woman's lot may be traced to its hallowed influence. "It found her the slave of man's appetite in the East, the servant of his cupidity in the West, and the victim of his cruelty in the South," and it broke the chain that bound her soul in darkness and the social fetters that linked her womanhood with dishonor.

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We have in the Bible pictures of womanly tenderness and nobleness, and also of womanly debasement unequalled in secular literature. I know how exalted are the women of Homer—"The Heroes' Battle-Prize," "The Heavenly-Minded," "The Sought-For," "The Sister of Heroes," "The Widely-Praised," "Ruling by Beauty," "The Far-Thoughted," "The Hospitable," "The Ship-Guider," and "The Web-Raveler"—names that indicate the queenly beauty of the women who bore them; but I search Iliad and Odyssey in vain for one trace of that glorified character, sublime self-sacrifice and unwavering faith which "crowned the daughters of Israel and made them daughters of Jehovah." On the other hand, Shakspeare's "Lady Macbeth" is weakness itself when compared with Jezebel, who from the harem of Ahab mounted with blood-stained feet the throne of God's chosen people, and there defied the majesty of heaven. How cold, cruel, implacable and lost to all that is human was that accursed daughter of murder, whose crimes were far greater in number and turpitude than those of her infamous father Ethbaal. We hear from her lips no cry,

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"Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here;
And fill me, from crown to the toe, top-full
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood,
Stop up the access and passage to remorse
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose!"

Her entire nature was not only unsexed, but dehumanized. In her "woman's breasts" the milk was turned to gall.

Lord Lytton, the elegant and shallow trifler, tells us, "A woman's noblest station is retreat," but "retreat" is a word forever unpopular with the women of the Bible. Miriam, Huldah, Deborah and Anna were not of Lord Lytton's opinion. They joined in one temperament silk and steel, and added to the sweetness of womanhood the strength of manhood. Keen and flexible as the Damascus blade, they were not wanting in the gentleness and modesty which are a woman's crown of honor. I open Exodus and read a song from Miriam, the prophetess, that is older than the most ancient pagan lyric, and that will continue when English literature is forgotten. And there is Deborah, the nurse of Rebecca; how tenderly the Bible records her humble but faithful service. In ancient times and in the East nurses were held in greater esteem than now with us. Homer sang their praise; Virgil celebrated their virtues; and Ovid extolled their wisdom and kindness. It is no trivial office to guide and direct the development of a child's life. The nurse is second mother, and her influence is sometimes, perhaps often, deathless as the soul she instructs. The Bible teaches respect and consideration for those who are socially beneath us as servants, nurses, and dependent children of humble toil. The true lady takes her politeness into the kitchen; it is her ability to do so that makes her the lady she is. Not fine manners in the ball-room, but a genuine and gracious dignity seasoned with womanly kindness, creates the true lady. Few think of the Bible as a book of social and domestic etiquette, and yet such it is. Let a man follow its precepts, and he shall become not only a good man, but a *gentleman*; and whatever woman will conform to the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount shall find her life steadily developing into all that makes a beautiful character and fine address.

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And there is the other Deborah, a prophetess and judge in Israel—the woman divinely illuminated. I turn to the fifth chapter of Judges, and read a song she wrote long before the gods of Greece held sacred counsel upon snowy Olympus—centuries before the lyric muse took up her abode beneath the shadow of the Parthenon. To what glorious victory she led the hosts of the Lord when the enemies of Israel perished among the "oaks of the wanderers."

"After the days of Shamgar, son of Anath,
After the Helper's days,
The highways were deserted,
The traveler went in winding ways.
Deserted were Israel's hamlets, deserted,
Till I Deborah rose up—rose up a mother in Israel."

What a lovely poem is that of Ruth, and who does not linger with delight over the story of Esther, so royal and so simple, so queenly and so modest?

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Turn to the New Testament and see how honored is Mary, the mother of Jesus. Hear the angelic salutation:

Hail, thou art highly favored, the Lord is with thee. Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever: and of his kingdom there shall be no end. (Luke i:28, 30-33, Revised Version.)

Is it surprising that the name "Mary" is the most popular in all the world, and that nearly a third of the women of France bear it in one form or another? What noble service was rendered to the early churches by the four daughters of Philip the Evangelist, Priscilla who instructed Apollos, Phœbe, Persis, Tryphosa and Tryphena.

The opinion prevails that Providence intended woman to occupy a place of humble dependence; that she is inferior in the composition of her mind and fragile in physical constitution; that she is called of God to lead a life of entire self-abnegation; that she was created as an everlasting sacrifice to man's pleasure and ambition; and that it is her peculiar mission to be wife and mother to an extent to which it is not man's mission to be husband and father. Lord Lytton's dictum is widely received—"A woman's noblest station is retreat." It prevails in the State, robbing her of civil rights, debarring her from the exercise of popular suffrage, and closing against her the door of public office. It permeates society, circumscribing her influence, dispossessing her of individuality, and preventing her from the full and free exercise of whatever taste, talent or genius God has given her. It is in the church, forbidding her to enter the pulpit, restraining her from the important offices of deacon and trustee, and, in some churches, denying her even a voice in the ordinary government of the society.

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Men who advocate the subjection of women plant themselves upon the Bible and say to us, "You radicals want to turn things upside down. You have no respect for the settled order of society. You would destroy the divine harmony Heaven has established. You set aside the teaching of the great Apostle who said, 'I suffer not a woman to usurp authority.'" But the Bible is always on the side of progress. Jesus and his immediate followers were innovators, agitators and leaders of public thought and morals. The Jews quoted the Old Testament against them as Southern preachers quoted the New Testament against us when we demanded the abolition of slavery. We must remember that it is the mission of the Bible to lead men and not to follow them. The age that shall overtake the New Testament will be right in discarding it. Open the Bible—what does it teach? "The genuine perfection of humanity, instead of being the forced obedience of one-half to the other half, is the spontaneous obedience of both halves to the law of God. The incomplete statement of Paul, 'I suffer not a woman to usurp authority,' is supplemented by the far deeper words of Jesus, 'Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant.' (Matthew xx.:25-27, Revised Version.) *That is the ideal of the future.*" Neither man nor woman shall usurp authority, but both, in mutual helpfulness, shall yield willing obedience to the perfect law of God. A consecrated womanhood is a womanhood of surrender, not to social prejudices and superstitions, nor yet to political disability, but to Heaven. It is a surrender without defeat and a victory without conquest. A woman may dance a ballet or sing in an opera, but the moment she enters the pulpit to preach a sermon, steps upon a platform to deliver a lecture, or goes to the polls to vote, society rises in indignation and disgust. If a woman may tend as a nurse, why may she not practice as a physician? If a woman has a calling to medicine, divinity, law, literature, art, mechanics, instruction or trade, what law of God prohibits? But is it wise to open our colleges and schools of science to women? Why not? Are they not capable of receiving a liberal education? The part woman has played in ancient and modern history, in the arts and sciences, as well as in political life, constitutes not only an answer to the question, but a positive demand for admission to every department of knowledge and industry. Open all the doors and remove every barrier. Subject girls to the same requirements you exact of boys in colleges, but in all justice and fairness set before them the same rewards. The best educators tell us that some of the finest mathematical students are girls. They read Virgil and Cicero, Xenophon and Homer as well in every way as do young gentlemen. In mixed schools you will find, as a general rule, more girls than boys, and they are found in examination to carry off the greatest proportion of prizes. Wherever co-education has been honestly and competently tried, girls have shown themselves the intellectual peers of their brothers. They have more than held their own. There have been women every whit as well educated as the most learned men of their day, and much better educated than the majority of men in any age. When Elizabeth was Queen of England the languages were an essential element of a lady's education. The daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke, to whom was committed the instruction of the young Edward VI., were thoroughly trained in both ancient and modern languages, and in the literatures of many lands and ages. One of those gifted women wrote Latin verses of great beauty; another was, according

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to Roger Ascham, one of the best Greek scholars of the age, with the single exception of Lady Jane Grey; still another was an accomplished theologian who corresponded in Greek with Bishop Jewell. The distinguished Reiske affixed his wife's portrait to his excellent and famous edition of "The Greek Orators." And in the preface to that work he acknowledged his great indebtedness to her learning and industry. So well acquainted was she with the language and literature of ancient Greece, that she shared with her husband his most profound investigations, and read for him, correcting as she read, the proof-sheets of his book as they came from the press. There is nothing in the constitution of a woman's mind nor in the anatomy of her body to prevent her from following the same studies that occupy the time and attention of young men in an ordinary college course. On the contrary, the duties of the class-room are often far less fatiguing than those of household labor.^[A] I believe in co-education. Boys and girls should be brought up together so far as possible. The influence they exert over each other is in itself a great civilizer. The separation of the sexes in church, state, family and school has always been productive of evil, and of evil only.

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"The woman's cause is man's; they rise or sink
Together, dwarfed or God-like, bond or free."

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Miss Sophia Jex Blake, whose opinion in all questions connected with the education of women is of great weight, has thus expressed herself touching the subject of co-education: "That society is most happy which conforms most strictly to the order of nature as indicated in the family relation, where brother and sister mutually elevate and sustain each other.... A school for young men becomes a community in itself, with its own standard of morality and its laws of honor; but in a college for both sexes the student will find a public sentiment not so lenient as that of a community of associates needing the same indulgence."

Miss Blake elsewhere answers, it seems to me with reason and justice, the oft-repeated objection to co-education, founded upon the imaginary danger of a too early romance and a hasty attachment, followed by an unwise and to-be-repent-ed-of marriage:

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"There is something in the association of every-day life which appeals to the judgment rather than to the fancy, and weeks and months of steady labor over the same problems, or at the same sciences, will not be more likely to create romances than casual meetings at fêtes and balls."

But I turn from the secular and civil aspect of the subject to inquire what service woman may render the church, and here I am confronted by another question it would be difficult to answer: What service has she not rendered? Our churches, most of them, will not ordain her to the ministry, and yet do they not derive their spiritual life from her influence? Could they exist without her effort and faithful service? Who preached the first Christian sermon, and proclaimed to an unbelieving world, "He is risen from the dead!" if not the women who ran with great joy from the empty sepulcher, bearing with them a license to preach from the Christ himself, given through the Angel of the Resurrection, who said, "Go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead, and behold he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him?" That was a very short sermon and had no text, but no pulpit rhetoric and no Sunday oratory will ever eclipse its sublime eloquence. If priests received their commission to preach from the Apostles, the Apostles received theirs from the women who mourned at the sepulcher and found it empty. Women can better afford to remain out of the pulpit than the pulpit can afford to exclude them. When the Christ shall return and His kingdom be established forever, the nations shall hear once more the old Easter sermon first preached by a woman, "He is risen from the dead!" The most tender and faithful friendship our Saviour ever found in his weary and painful pilgrimage upon earth burned in the heart and shone in the life of a noble and consecrated woman.

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"Not she with trait'rous kiss her Master stung,
Not she denied him with unfaithful tongue;
She, when Apostles fled, could danger brave—
Last at his cross, and earliest at his grave."

And if the church was cradled in the arms of Mary, have not the daughters of Mary been singing to the child Jesus all along the ages? It was Charlotte Elliott who wrote, "Just as I am without one plea," and Mrs. Adams who gave the church that immortal hymn, "Nearer, my God, to Thee." "Fade, fade, each earthly joy," "I need Thee every hour," "Lord, I hear of showers of blessing," "I think when I read that sweet story of old," "I love to tell the story," and "How blest the righteous when he dies"—all these were written by women. What sweet singers chant cradle hymns to the child Jesus—Felicia D. Hemans, Joanna Baillie, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Eliza Cook, Mrs. Baxter, Mrs. Codver, Mrs. Bonar, Mrs. Barbauld and the Cary sisters. If wise men came from the East with gold, frankincense and myrrh for the infant Redeemer, wise women are coming every day from all parts of the earth with gifts of heavenly song.

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The success of every church depends in large measure upon the consecration of its women. I never knew a church in which there were not more women than men; they constitute the majority in every religious meeting; and it would seem as if fifty women go to heaven for every man who makes even a moderate effort to get there. It was the service of faithful and active women that saved Israel in the hour of national peril. "When the men of Israel," to employ the language of another, "bowed in helplessness before Pharaoh, two women spurned his edicts and refused his behests. A father made no effort to save the infant Moses, but a mother's care hid him while concealment was possible, and a sister watched over his preservation when exposed on the river's brink. To woman was intrusted the charge of providing for the perils and wants of the wilderness; and in the hour of triumph woman's voice was loudest in the acclaim of joy that ascended to heaven from an emancipated nation." The same womanly courage, patience, love, tact and wisdom must be the hope and strength of modern Israel.

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The men who have accomplished most owe much to woman's influence. From her counsel the hero derived his courage, and in her approving smile received his reward. The great poems of the world are, many of them, from her inspiration. Blanche of Lancaster lives in the antique English of Chaucer, Laura in the sonnets of Petrarch, and Beatrice in the Divina Commedia of Dante; and who can look upon the marbles of Michel Angelo and not behold the influence of Vittoria Colonna? In all literature there is not a nobler sonnet addressed by man to woman than this which Michel Angelo laid with bowed heart and reverent hand at the feet of Vittoria Colonna:

"The might of one fair face sublimed my love,
 For it hath weaned my heart from low desires;
 Nor death I heed, nor purgatorial fires.
 Thy beauty, antepast of joys above,
 Instructs me in the bliss that saints approve;
 For, oh! how good, how beautiful, must be
 The God that made so good a thing as thee,
 So fair an image of the heavenly dove.
 Forgive me if I cannot turn away
 From those sweet eyes that are my earthly heaven;
 For they are guiding stars, benignly given
 To tempt my footsteps to the upward way;
 And if I dwell too fondly in thy sight,
 I live and love in God's peculiar light."

John Stuart Mill, dedicating his immortal "Essay on Liberty" to the memory of his beloved wife whose earthly frame he had laid to rest beneath the shades of beautiful Avignon, described her as "the inspirer, and in part the author, of all that was best in his writings." The three "guardian angels" whom Comte associated with his secret thoughts, and whom he enshrined in his innermost heart as the sacred judges of his every wish and achievement, were his mother Rosalie Boyer, his friend Clotilde de Vaux, and his servant Sophie Bliot. Of Madame de Vaux he wrote six years after her death: "Adieu, my unchangeable companion! Adieu, my holy Clotilde, who art to me at once wife, sister, and daughter! Adieu, my dear pupil, and my fit colleague. Thy celestial inspiration will dominate the remainder of my life, public as well as private, and preside over my progress towards perfection, purifying my sentiments, ennobling my thoughts, and elevating my conduct. Perhaps, as the principal reward of the grand tasks yet left to me to complete under thy powerful invocation, I shall inseparably write thy name with my own, in the latest remembrances of a grateful humanity." The Taj Mahal which the poet Heber describes as "a dream in marble, designed by Titans and finished by jewellers," is a tribute of love raised over the tomb of Moomtaza Mahul by her husband, the great Mogul, Shah Jehan. She died in giving birth to a daughter, and her last request was that her husband would hallow in his heart her love as the solitary and immortal sanctity of his life. The Taj holds directly under the centre dome, "gleaming like a silver bubble at the edge of the sky, almost as transparent in appearance as the azure itself," the tombs of Shah Jehan and his beloved wife. There the "married lovers" rest, encased in jasper from Punjab, turquoises from Thibet, agate from Yeman, garnets from Bundelkund, and onyx, amethyst and lapis lazuli; and over them a single stone is inscribed with the ninety-nine names of God. To this day fresh flowers are placed upon the marble sarcophagi, and above them is to be seen the ostrich egg, symbol of the all-encircling Divine Providence. "The most exquisite building on the globe" is a memorial of the love a noble and beautiful woman inspired in the heart of a devoted husband. Who shall measure the power and authority of woman in the worlds of art, literature and social life? And yet, great as is her influence in these, it is even greater in spiritual matters. Woman turns through a natural instinct to the field of religious usefulness, and Renan is not mistaken when he tells us that she has a special tendency to "long after the infinite." Of this Frances Power Cobbe gives us a forcible illustration in a foot-note to her able essay on "The Fitness of Women for the Ministry of Religion." The illustration is taken from Mrs. Kemble's autobiography, and runs as follows: "She describes the late Lady Byron as often expressing envy of her (Mrs. Kemble's) public readings, and her longing to have similar crowds in sympathy with her own impressions. 'I made her laugh,' says Mrs. Kemble, 'by telling her that more than once when looking from my reading-desk over the sea of faces uplifted toward me, a sudden feeling had seized me that I must say something *from myself* to all these human beings whose attention I felt at that moment entirely at my command, and between whom and myself a sense of sympathy thrilled powerfully and strangely through my heart as I looked steadfastly at them before opening my lips; but that on wondering afterwards what I might, could, would or should have said to them from myself, I never could think of anything but two words—'Be good!'" Miss Cobbe writes: "I believe that nine women out of ten of the better sort would, if they had the choice, oftener speak of duty and religion than of any other theme." Is not Goëthe right?

"The eternal womanly
 Draws us upward and onward."

Great is the power of consecrated womanhood in domestic life. It has been shown by able writers that boys who have sisters, and grow up in their society, are more likely to develop into strong and noble men than boys who are deprived of woman's influence. Whatever separates man from woman separates both from God. The great objection urged against social clubs is that they destroy domestic life by isolating the sexes; they furnish an amusement for the husband in which the wife cannot participate. Open the social club to both sexes, and its evil tendency is removed.

Then there is the marriage relation. How many wedded lives come to failure through ignorance. Men and women assume the most sacred responsibilities without preparation, and with no knowledge of themselves nor of each other. We say in the marriage service, "What God hath joined together let not man put asunder;" but when God does not join, is there anything to

sunder? Passion dies, novelty disappears, youth fades, and unless love be founded upon an intelligent and mutual esteem, shall it not also crumble? It has been said, "one cannot be at once lover and friend," but you may be sure one will not long remain the former who is not as well the latter. We need to cultivate friendship. Passion will come and go like the shadows of clouds over the smooth surface of a lake, and no love is abiding without friendship. He was right who exclaimed, "They who are joined by love without friendship, walk on gunpowder with lighted torches in their hands!" They who build love upon the foundation of mutual esteem—

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"Make life, death, and that vast forever
One grand, sweet song."

How shall we strengthen love that it may endure when the fires of youth and passion are cold? Only by the cultivation of those noble virtues which like bands of steel weld together in one life and faith honest and pure hearts. How shall two hearts grow old together? Only by the persistent cultivation of those qualities which are ever young and which age not with declining years. The young man will not be guilty of an act tainted with meanness or baseness lest the maiden he loves blot his image from the pure heaven of her heart; let the young husband and wife cherish the same fear and honor, and they shall grow nearer and dearer as the years silver their brows. The happiness of marriage depends upon the very highest and most delicate of reserves, the most noble and careful speech, the best and most honorable perception; upon a kindness greater than that of a mother to her child.

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The supreme glory of consecrated womanhood lies in the consecration itself. The love of God makes every other love immortal. What love through Him we give to others is forever. Only as we consecrate our lives to the Divine Love can we hope to become heavenly-minded; and they only consecrate themselves to the Divine Love who, in imitation of our Saviour, give heart and hand to the service of mankind. There is a fable that four young ladies, disputing as to the beauty of their hands, called upon an aged woman who had solicited alms, for a settlement of the dispute. The three whose hands were white and faultless had refused her appeal, while she whose fingers were brown and rough had given in charity. Then the aged beggar said: "Beautiful are these six uplifted hands, soft as velvet and snowy as the lily: but more beautiful are the two darker hands that have given charity to the poor." Learn the lesson of consecrated womanhood. In olden times, when the children of Israel prepared the Tabernacle in the wilderness, "all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, both of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine linen. And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun goats' hair." The wise-hearted women of to-day are the daughters of modern Israel who from the love of God serve faithfully the great family of mankind.

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FOOTNOTE:

- [A] It may be a matter of interest to some who read this sermon to know who was the first woman to graduate from an American college. In an article on "The First Female College" (the Georgia Female College), in the "Century" for May, 1890, Mr. H. S. Edwards states that he has been unable to obtain the name of any woman who graduated at Oberlin in 1838. An Oberlin College catalogue, however, gives the name of Miss Zeruah Porter (afterwards Mrs. Tweed) as the graduate of 1838, and therefore the first graduate of an American college. Miss Porter graduated in the so-called literary course, which did not include Greek. In 1841, Miss Mary Hosford, Miss Elizabeth S. Prall, and Miss Mary C. Rudd took the degree of A. B. at Oberlin.

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