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An Address On
P R O H I B I T I O N

By
V I D A M I L H O L L A N D

*Delivered from Station WHAP
New York City*

WOMAN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY CRUSADER

*Address delivered by Vida Milholland from Station
WHAP, New York City, March 26, 1926, at 8:45 p.m.
and repeated by request on Friday, April 16 at 7:30 p.m.*

H EADLINES in the newspapers show that once again a desperate drive is being made by the Wet forces, to nullify the Prohibition Law. The newspapers quote Wayne Wheeler, General Counsel for the Anti-Saloon League, as saying:—

Do the people want beer and wine? The majority does not . . . if they did they would not have put into the legislatures of forty-six states sweeping majorities in favor of full prohibition.

In other words, an attack is being made against one of the noblest steps ever taken in the line of human progress, the enactment of the 18th Amendment; made by a group of weaklings, in out of Congress, whose slavish appetites and ambition have taken away the stamina which makes men, whose perceptoin has become so darkened, that they have joined themselves to the active agents of America's arch-enemy, that evil power which uses alcohol as a means to corrupt and weaken mankind.

But at this proposed outrage, Woman cries, "HALT". From north, south, east, and west, the Spirit of Almighty God has penetrated the cloud of materiality, and in thunder tones His Voice is heard calling to the women throughout the land: "This is my beloved daughter, hear her." As in the Galilean days, some of the bystanders were uncertain concerning what they heard, "some saying that it thundered," while others admitted that it "was a Voice," so to-day, many of the sleeping ones are unable to discern the words. Nevertheless *the Voice has spoken*, and in response, woman arises to meet her high destiny. Purified, meek, but irresistible in spiritual might, she pleads. "Father glorify Thy daughter," and confidently she hears, "I have both glorified her and will glorify her again."

To the opponents of Prohibition, I give this warning: Beware how you touch the Temperance Cause, for in so doing you are treading upon holy ground, you are invading a sanctuary constructed and guarded by American women. It was in 1874, that this question of temperance took on the character of a Pentecostal Crusade, described by Frances Willard, as "That whirlwind of the Lord which in 50 days swept the liquor traffic out of 250 towns and villages." Many of us who have heard only the voice of men legislating for Prohibition, who have seen the Temperance Amendment named after a man, who have watched the duty of enforcement conferred upon men alone (with the exception of Assistant Attorney General Mabel Willebrandt and one or two other women), we do not realize that the conception, the burden, and the triumph of Prohibition are due to women, and that from first to last, Prohibition in all of its aspects is Woman's Cause, and she will defend it.

A description of those testing pioneer days will interest you Americans who love to see how truly "God governs in the affairs of men" (Benjamin Franklin). It was in 1794, that Congress took the first downward step, by recognizing and taxing the liquor traffic as a branch of Commerce. From that time on, protected and encouraged by the Government, which shared in its spoils, the traffic in intoxicating drinks increased rapidly. In her book entitled "The Woman's Crusade," Annie Whittemeyer writes:

"There was no redress anywhere for those who had been wronged and ruined by the liquor traffic, for the liquor oligarchy, *which was largely made up of foreigners*, had the Government by the throat and compelled her to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

The heart-rending agony that American Christian women suffered, in seeing their sons and brothers ruined by this fiery poison, finally reached the breaking point; they could and would endure it no longer. Mrs. Whittemeyer says: "Countless unspoken prayers went up to God. Women weeping and praying through the long night watches, appealed their cause, lost in so many of the courts of earth, to the Supreme Court of Heaven". The feminine conservative reserve was broken through, and the womanhood of America became the Avenging Angel of Prophecy.

An eye-witness describes the beginning of the national Temperance Crusade in this beautiful way:

Suddenly the world was startled by a flash of heavenly light. Hands of faith had touched the hem of power and a mighty spiritual swirl came down upon the people. Christian women, many of whom had never spoken or prayed in their own churches, under this Pentecostal baptism went into the streets and saloons, preaching the Gospel of Christ, and the people gathered by thousands to listen to the truth that fell from their lips.

The air seemed surcharged with spiritual forces. The Angel of the Lord that John the Revelator saw, was before the altar, and there was given him much incense that he should offer it with prayer, "and there were voices and thunderings and lightnings and earthquakes!" The whole nation was stirred. Never before had men so trembled under the power of prayer, or stood in such awe of the fierce lightnings of God's wrath. Never before had society been so shaken by a moral earthquake.

The women who kept step with God in His grand onward marchings were calm and serene. To them the thunder and lightning were but the roll and rumble of God's artillery turned against their enemies, and the earthquake the tread of their Captain (Christ) and his mighty hosts . . .

The Crusade then was God's method of arousing public sentiment and consolidating the moral forces of the land, and Women His chosen instruments for this important and unusual work.

Is it likely that a reform hallowed by such sacred beginnings can ever be lost? Never, indeed! The consecration of those sublime women will have its reward, and we moderns well know that the same glowing spirit is latent in the hearts of the people to-day, ready to burst forth into purifying flames, at God's command. Holy zeal for a cause is an American heritage. The Revolution was fought for the ideal of National Independence. The Civil War was the moral force of the nation battling to preserve the Union, and at the same time to abolish slavery from the land. The war against liquor was equally a war to do away with slavery, and just as Negro servitude was banished forever from America, so liquor can never regain a foothold in these United States. As for those criminals who break the law, their punishment must be upon their own head. The Psalmist says:

They were not estranged from their lust. But while their meat was yet in their mouths,

The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel. (Ps. ixviii.)

The story of those early Temperance women, touched with the flame of the Holy Ghost, has the same inspiration as the Biblical accounts of Pentecost. Those who took part, write of their experiences with a spiritual ardor that is thrilling. Here is an account of Mary Woodbridge's dedication to the Cause:

The Crusade came, came with the suddenness and the power of Pentecost; bringing also like it, a baptism of the Holy Ghost. In common with thousands of others of her sisters, Mary Woodbridge felt the moving of the Spirit. Her eyes were opened . . . She went to her closet, and there when alone with her God, heard the Divine Voice asking, "Whom shall I send?" She had the grace given to lay herself upon the altar in consecration with the prayer, "Here am I, I will be or do whatever pleaseth Thee."

Frances Willard, who as head of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union for so many years, led and directed the fight against the liquor interests, is a symbol of this great movement, and the nation's gratitude to her is fittingly expressed in having placed a marble statue of her in the rotunda of the Capitol at Washington. Wise, loving and deeply intelligent, she was possessed of a spiritual nature, which demanded that God be recognized in all the questions relating to human affairs. She perceived America's holy destiny when she exclaimed: "Oh! native land—the World's hope, the Gospel's triumph, the Millenium's dawn, are all with thee, are all with thee!" Her advice to her temperance army has a special value for the devoted Prohibitionists of our own time. Miss Willard writes:

Realizing that our cause is combatted by mighty and relentless forces, we will go forward in the strength of Him who is the Prince of Peace, meeting argument with argument, misjudgment with patience, and all of our difficulties and dangers with prayer.

Frances Willard had tested the moral fibre of women, and had found it unbreakable, consequently her tribute to American women is like a beautiful psalm, and it should encourage all women to live grandly.

"Oh", she exclaims, "there have never been such women as our White-Ribboners, so large-minded, so generous, such patriots, such Christians. We have had a great, beautiful part, and the people do not know it, they think we are fanatics. It has been a great fight, and they'll never know what we have been through. Oh! how I want our women to have a new concept of religion . . . a religion of love . . . tell them not to forget it is a religion of patriotism . . . Tell our White-Ribboners to study the New Testament. I love the New Testament. No human being has ever conceived, as he should, what the New Testament means by loyalty to Christ."

With prophetic insight, Miss Willard dismisses the belittling, the false sex-concept of women and speaks of the ideal woman, for whose coming her wonderful spiritual intuition prepared her. She understood the meaning of Paul's words, and quoted them continually, "There is neither male nor female in Christ Jesus." She writes:

Woman coming last in the order of creation stands highest of all . . . The Mother-heart of God will never be known to the world until translated into terms of speech by mother-hearted women . . . Verily, Devotion, thy name is woman.

When urging that women be admitted to the pulpit, Miss Willard wrote in 1888:

What loss of caste came to those fearless women (followers of Christ Jesus), who, breaking away from the customs of society and tradition of religion, dared to follow the greatest of Iconoclasts from city to village, with a publicity and a persistence nothing less than outrageous to the conservatives of the day.

"Not she with trait'rous kiss her Saviour stung,
Not she denied him with unholy tongue.
She, while apostles shrank, could danger brave,
Last at the Cross and earliest at his grave."

Women of America, do we realize what an overwhelming responsibility rests upon us? We are the army prepared by God for this hour. We have "come out of the great tribulation" of chatteldom, economic dependence and sex-slavery; we have awakened from the agony of the Eve dream to take our place in the world of affairs as responsible individuals. The battle-plan is drawn up, and an army of women must go forth to meet the hosts of the Philistines; which they did last Monday when the representatives of 18 million women stormed the Senate Committee, protesting against any change in the Prohibition Laws.

Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice ye careless daughters; give ear unto my speech . . .

Tremble ye women that are at ease; be troubled ye careless ones . . .

Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers; yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city . . .

Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field . . .

Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field . . . (Isaiah xxxii.)

Has it occurred to you that the position of women was fundamentally changed in that epoch-making meeting between Christ Jesus and Mary Magdalene, after he had come forth from the tomb? Mary, weighted with the cruel, age-old burden of sex, "stooped-down", but as the sun rose on that marvellous dawning, the old human longings fell away. Quickened by "that love which passeth understanding," she recognized the Christ, "he that liveth and was dead and behold he is alive for evermore;" and in that instant she reached the highest point attained, up to that time, by any of Christ's followers. *It was woman's sacred work first to greet, and acknowledge the mighty conqueror of death, and from that time woman's attitude towards birth and death have been revolutionized.* Convinced by the irresistible proofs which Christ Jesus gave her in coming out of the sealed tomb, that there "is no death," she began dimly to perceive another marvel, the marvel which would mean her own resurrection, namely that there "is no birth," for, if one is false, so is the other, and every thinker knows that *death is an illusion.*

Oh, beloved women, do we recognize the extent of our work as "Prohibitionists"? As Christ's soldiers, we must fight to establish the Kingdom of God "on earth as it is in heaven," which means that everything that is not of God shall be prohibited from this "place prepared" by Christ. To attain the long-for "liberty of the sons and daughters of God" we must prohibit in ourselves, as well as universally, those carnal qualities which have blinded us to the marvel of God's creation.

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air . . . and over all the earth.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them . . .

And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. (Genesis i.)

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