

Supplement to St. Croix Avis, No. 163, 17th July 1920.

The Creole arrived helast evening, bringing a small mail from St. Thomas forwhere she sails with the outgoing mail by 10 o'clock this forenoon.

The S. S. Korona which had been expected to arrive in Frederiksted today, is now reported as being looked for in St. Thomas today, and, here tomorrow.

No news of the Virginia up to 8.30 this morning.

Correspondence On Divorce.

(Continued V)

"The good home is the unit of the good government. The hearthstone is the corner-stone of civilization. Society is not interested in the preservation of hateful homes, of homes where husbands and wives are selfish, cold, and cruel. It is not to the interest of society that good women should be enslaved, that they should live in fear, or that they should become mothers by husbands whom they hate. Homes should be filled with kind and generous fathers, with true and loving mothers; and when they are so filled, the world will be civilized. Intelligence will rock the cradle; justice will sit in the courts; wisdom in the legislative halls; and above all and over all, like the dome of heaven, will be the spirit of liberty.

Although marriage is the most important and the most sacred contract that human beings can make, still when that contract has been violated, courts should have the power to declare it null and void upon such conditions as may be just. As a rule the woman dowers the husband with her youth, her beauty, her love—with all she has; and from this contract certainly the husband should never be released, unless the wife has broken the conditions of that contract. Divorces should be granted publicly, precisely as the marriage should be solemnized. Every marriage should be known, and there should be witnesses, to the end that the character of the contract entered into should be understood; the record should be open and public. And the same is true of divorces. The conditions should be determined, the property should be divided by a court of equity, and the custody of the children given under regulations prescribed.

Men and women are not virtuous by law. Law does not of itself create virtue, nor is it the foundation or fountain of love. Law should protect virtue, and law should protect the wife, if she has kept her contract, and the husband, if he has fulfilled his. But the death of love is the end of marriage. Love is natural. Back of all ceremony burns and will forever burn the sacred flame. There has been no time in the world's history when that torch was extinguished. In all ages, in all climes, among

all people, there has been true, pure, and unselfish love. Long before a ceremony was thought of, long before a priest existed, there were true and perfect marriages. Back of public opinion is natural modesty, the affections of the heart; and in spite of all law, there is and forever will be the realm of choice. Wherever love is, it is pure; and every where, and at all times, the ceremony of marriage testifies to that which has happened within the temple of the human heart.

OUGHT DIVORCED PEOPLE TO BE ALLOWED TO MARRY UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES?

This depends upon whether marriage is a crime. If it is not a crime, why should any penalty be attached? Can any one conceive of any reason why a woman obtaining a divorce without fault on her part, should be compelled as a punishment to remain forever single? Why should she be punished for the dishonesty or brutality of another? Why should a man who faithfully kept his contract of marriage, and who was deserted by an unfaithful wife, be punished for the benefit of society? Why should he be doomed to live without a home?

There is still another view. We must remember that human passions are the same after as before divorce. To prevent remarriage is to give excuse for vice.

WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE UPON THE INTEGRITY OF THE FAMILY?

The real marriage is back of the ceremony, and the real divorce is back of the decree. When love is dead, when husband and wife abhor each other, they are divorced. The decree records in a judicial way what has really taken place, just as the ceremony of marriage attests a contract already made.

The true family is the result of the true marriage, and the institution of the family should above all things be preserved. What becomes of the sacredness of the home, if the law compels those who abhor each other to sit at the same hearth? This lowers the standard, and changes the happy haven of home into the prison-cell. If we wish to preserve the integrity of the family, we must preserve the democracy of the fireside, the republicanism of the home, the absolute and perfect equality of husband and wife. There must be no exhibition of force, no spectre of fear. The mother must not remain through an order of court, or the command of a priest, or by virtue of the tyranny of society; she must sit in absolute freedom, the queen of herself, the sovereign of her own soul and her own body. Real homes can never be preserved through force, through slavery, or superstition. Nothing can be more sacred than a home, no altar purer than the hearth."

(To be concluded)

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