

The Woman Crisis and the Woman's College

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The Woman Crisis and the Woman's College.

By PRESIDENT F. H. GAINES, D.D., LL.D.

I wish to show—

- I. That there is a Woman Crisis.
- II. That this Crisis affects the Vital Interests of Mankind.
- III. That the Mission of the Christian College for Women, under God, is to meet this Crisis.

I

There IS a Woman Crisis.

Proof.

1. The Unrest Among Women.

That unrest does exist every one who reads the newspapers and magazines knows. Witness the many gatherings of women, conventions, associations, boards, etc. Witness again the various agitations in behalf of different causes promoted by women. This unrest is well nigh world-wide. How many have thought to inquire the significance of this unrest? Does it not mean breaking with the past? Does it not also mean reaching out after something new?

Herein is the crisis. Such world-wide unrest, clearly indicating change, can mean nothing less than a crisis.

2. Changes in Modern Times Affecting Woman's Work and Woman's Condition.

There have been great economic changes. Formerly woman provided, largely with her own hands, the clothing of the family. Not very long ago she filled her store-room with winter supplies of food. Now the factory does all this. Clothing is purchased ready-to-wear. The family lives directly from the grocery store. These changes have left woman to a large degree with empty hands. Her former employment has gone, permanently gone. This is, of itself, critical.

There has been a great change in woman's education. Not so very long ago it was actually called in question whether or not woman was capable of taking the higher education. The institutions for women were confined to the "Seminary" and the "Finishing School." If a girl did not finish school by the time she was eighteen her mother thought it was a calamity.

Now I can name a dozen colleges for women in the United States fully equal in every respect to any dozen colleges for men. The great universities are nearly all open to women. Thousands of women have taken college degrees, the B.A. degree, the M.A. degree, and the Ph. D. degree. There are many more girls in the high schools than boys, and thousands of them are looking forward to college.

All vocations are open to women. Dean Talbott of the University of Chicago tells us there are over three hundred vocations, and all are open to women—nay more, women are found in them all. Truly in the matter of education and vocation of women there has been a great change.

Moreover, from the confinement and shelter of the home woman has become a citizen of the world.

Not so very long ago it was considered important for a woman traveling to be attended by her father, husband, brother, or some gentleman. Now she goes alone to the ends of the earth.

Such are some of the great changes which have taken place in modern times. And herein is the Woman Crisis.

3. Great Woman Movements.

IN EDUCATION. Not only is there a great movement of young women *toward* the higher education, but there is also a strong movement of women *in* education. There are 432,730 women teaching in our common schools or 79.1% of the total number of teachers. In four year high schools in the United States there are 28,199 women teachers against 19,589 men. Besides, many are teaching in institutions of higher learning. This movement is growing both *toward* college and university and *in* the field of education.

IN PHILANTHROPY. Under this head I place the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, one half million strong, Social Settlement Work, and much of the work of Associated Charities.

FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS. This is a great and growing movement both national and international. According to the International Year Book (1913) there are three classes of members having the following numbers in each:

Direct members	120,522
Indirect members	659,840
Affiliated members	597,327

Total 1,377,689

This organization is working systematically for such things as make for human betterment.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE. The New York World of February 5 ('15) contains a statement showing how the Suffrage Movement in the United States stands today—namely:

In eleven (11) States women have equal suffrage.

It is pending in seven (7) States.

They have partial suffrage in thirty-three (33) States.

With such momentum it is not difficult to predict the future of the movement. Any statement made today must be revised tomorrow.

IN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITIES. More than one half of all the missionaries sent out to heathen lands by the Protestant Churches of the world are women. The Woman Foreign and Home Missionary Boards of all the Churches are a great power in advancing the Kingdom.

The Young Woman's Christian Association is both National and International. In America, there are 280,000 members, and in the world over half a million. The organization is doing a splendid work in colleges for women, in cities, in rural districts, and in foreign fields.

All of these movements are organized, progressive and under able leadership. While diverse in character they are all indicative of the spirit of the age. In a certain sense these woman movements unite in the world organization called "The International Council of Women." This Council held its last Convention in Rome, Italy, last June. Twenty-four countries were represented, among them the greatest and most enlightened in the world. The

constituency is estimated at six millions. Review of Reviews, July, 1914.

What shall be the effect of these movements? Herein is the crisis.

4. The Unsettling of Ideals.

What is an ideal? It is my highest conception of what is right and true and good. Yea, it is that conception crystalized into conviction. Hence it is the dominant, controlling power in my soul and life. It is the standard of my aspiration and conduct and the inspiration of my life. I think the wise man meant ideal when he said, "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he."

Now it is a fact woman today has ideals very different from her grandmother. Her aspirations are different, her views of propriety are different, her standards of life and of conduct are different.

Had you thought of the significance of the unsettling of ideals of woman? I can conceive of nothing which could create a graver crisis. It is the unsettling of the very foundations of life. Shall it be for better or worse? Herein is the crisis.

5. The Growth of Wealth.

Within the last quarter of a century the increase of wealth in our country has been marvelous. History clearly shows this is a menace to both Church and State. And while it affects man it is specially dangerous to woman. It makes it possible for her to lead an idle, self-indulgent life. It leads her to seek pleasure and amusement in all sorts of questionable and enervating diversions. It alienates her largely from the church and from spirituality. It changes her ideals. It turns her

away from a life of self-denying service and consecration. Of course to this rule there are exceptions. Hence the peril to her, to the home, to society and to the church.

Yes, there is a woman crisis! The unrest of woman; the condition and work of woman; the great woman movements; the unsettling of ideals; the growth of wealth—all of these proclaim a woman crisis—a crisis of unspeakable importance and gravity.

II.

This Crisis Affects the Most Vital Interests of Mankind.

1. It Necessarily Affects WOMAN Herself.

It must affect her ideals, her life, her work, her happiness, her influence. But whatever affects woman affects the most vital interests of the race. She sets the standards of civilization. No nation can rise higher in civilization than the standard set by its women. She sets the social standards. She is the recognized queen of the social world. She very largely sets the standards in morals and religion, as we shall presently see. Whatever then vitally affects woman thereby vitally affects the whole world.

2. This Crisis Affects the Home.

Woman alone can make home. And what is the importance of the home? No words can adequately express it. Suppose it should be authoritatively announced that all the homes in a certain city would be closed in ten days. Could you imagine a greater calamity? What would become of the children? What would become of men and women? What would happen to the stores, the banks, to

real estate? Home is the very foundation of society and the seat and center of the greatest human happiness and influence. But whatever affects woman necessarily affects the home.

3. This Crisis Must Affect the Future Ideals of the Race.

One of the most vitally important things woman does is to form and conserve the ideals of mankind. It is the mission and duty of the mother to be the child's first and greatest teacher. She makes the first and most lasting impression upon the heart and character of the child. As trainer of the young she has peculiar responsibility at the present time. Modern business conditions take the vast majority of men out of the home. They leave home early in the morning and return at nightfall. Vast numbers of them are employed on railroads or as commercial travelers, who only see their homes occasionally for a short time. However much we may regret it, our men today are taken out of home by conditions over which they have no control. It, therefore, devolves almost solely upon woman to form the ideals and mould the characters of the children. Hence her condition, her work, her ideals, will necessarily affect the future ideals of the race. What the next generation is going to be, what their social, moral and religious standards are to be will determine what the world will be.

Still further 79% of the teachers in our common schools are women. They have the children at a very impressionable age. And this army of nearly half a million of women will have much to do in forming the ideals of the race. But these teachers are under the spell of the modern woman movement and will transmit such ideals as they themselves have.

Oh, the far reaching effect of this woman crisis!

4. This Woman Crisis Necessarily Affects the Future of the Kingdom.

There are two sides to the progress of Christianity—a Divine side and a human side. From the point of view of God His Kingdom is absolutely sure. His great plan concerning the redemption of the world will surely prevail. But He works through means. Had you considered the importance of woman as a means of advancing the Kingdom of God? Think of her unique and unequalled power in the home as wife and mother. Think of her place in Sabbath school and Church. Think of her influence in society and in school. Think of her work in the various Church Boards. Think of the Ladies' Societies. Think of her work in the foreign field and in all kinds of Christian activity. Altogether is she not the most potent factor in advancing the Kingdom of God in the world?

Now the question is, what effect will this crisis have upon woman's work in the Kingdom? Will it make it wider and deeper and more effective or the reverse? But it will necessarily affect it.

Is it not then true that the woman crisis will necessarily affect the most vital interest of the race? For it will affect Woman, Home, Future Ideals, and the Kingdom of God. Can you think of more vital interests than these?

III.

The Mission of the Christian College for Women, Under God, Is to Meet This Crisis.

Let me preface what I have to say under this head by this statement: *Woman alone can meet this crisis.* Man can not meet it for her. Now let me mention what she needs and must have in order to meet the crisis.

1. She Needs and Must Have the Best Mental Training.

The woman crisis has created entirely new conditions. In the not distant past when woman's activities were fewer and simpler, when our civilization was less complex, the "Finishing School" or "Seminary" was thought sufficient; but now great problems confront her, now new responsibilities have been placed upon her, now varied and difficult work has been given her to do. To meet these demands the very best mental training is necessary.

And who knoweth whether the Christian College for Women has not arisen for such a time as this?

It is its peculiar mission to give the best mental training, to make problem solvers.

2. She Needs and Must Have Vision.

And what is Vision? Surely not a purely physical function of the organ of sight. The seat of Vision is in the mind. What one sees depends upon the development, training, and furnishing of the soul. Two different pairs of eyes look through a telescope into the heavens. One is the trained eye of the astronomer, the other an untrained eye. What a difference between what they see! Again Vision may be applied to seeing the relation between cause and effect, to seeing possibilities, to forecasting the future, to laying and executing great plans.

Now woman in the present crisis must have Vision, far, clear, accurate, sane.

And who knoweth whether the Christian College for Women has not arisen for such a time as this?

It is adapted to give, it has given, it does give Vision.

3. Woman Needs and Must Have Poise in Order to Meet the Crisis.

And what is Poise? It is the ability to be calm, judicial, steady under all circumstances. It is that balance which results from a consciousness of being equal to any emergency, from a trained, well furnished mind, and high character. It is the calmness which results from power to command one's resources always. It is the ability to meet conditions, difficulties, dangers, trials, problems, without fright, or emotion, or hesitation.

And who knoweth whether the Christian College for Women has not arisen for such a time as this?

For it is adapted to give, has given, and does give Poise.

4. Woman Needs and Must Have an Adequate Faith in Order to Meet This Crisis.

Adequate faith! What is that? The faith of a child, humble, reverent, unquestioning, obedient, is adequate for childhood. In many respects it is a pattern for true faith throughout life. But in college the student begins to think and to ask *why*. In history, in science, in philosophy puzzling questions arise. If the childhood faith is to stand it must be developed, strengthened, clarified, step by step with the college course. The educated man or woman must see that neither history, nor philosophy, nor science raises any question which can shake an intelligent, well developed faith. It is no longer the faith of a child, but the faith of a full grown man or woman, and yet still humble, reverent, obedient. A faith which stands unabashed and unafraid in the presence of the infidel philosopher. A faith which stands firm and clear in face of scientific discoveries and research. A faith which

fears no attack and no foe. A faith which gives quietness and peace amid criticism.

Such a faith is needed in order to face this crisis. For this crisis must be met in the strength of God and by the light and guidance of His truth. If there ever was a time when the college woman needed an adequate faith it is now.

And who knoweth whether the Christian College for Women has not arisen for such a time as this?

For the main feature of the Christian College which distinguishes it from other colleges is that *it is Christian*, that the Bible is a text-book. Christ is enthroned and Christian influences dominate.

5. She Needs and Must Have Preparation for the Highest and Best Leadership or for Intelligent Co-operation With Such Leadership.

For such leadership she must have a disciplined mind, intelligence, vision, poise, and an adequate faith. Never has such leadership been more necessary than in this crisis. Nor is leadership alone needed, but also intelligent, staunch, effective co-operation.

And who knoweth whether the Christian College for Women has not arisen for such a time as this?

Such preparation it is adapted to give, has given, and is giving today.

What a mission! Under God to meet a great world crisis unparalleled in history. To meet a great peril and turn it into a victory! To make this crisis a great step in the progress of the race! To make it the means of advancing the Kingdom of God! The situation is by no means hopeless.

By the blessing of God this crisis may be made the turning point for vast good. And yet it is fraught with danger. Which result shall follow?

Now if it is the mission of the Christian college for women to turn the tide for the welfare of mankind and the glory of God, one all important question remains to be answered, namely: *What kind of a college must it be?*

1. IT MUST BE EDUCATIONALLY THE VERY BEST. It must have the finest faculty, the best equipment, the highest standard, and do the very best grade of work. No institution which is college only in name can do it. It must be a *real* college, commanding the respect and confidence of the educational world and attracting to it the most capable and ambitious students.

2. IT MUST EMPHASIZE TRUE WOMANLINESS. The power and glory of woman is in her womanhood. Womanliness? This means gentleness, refinement, but also strength and courage. A womanly woman all the world admires as much as a manly man.

3. IT MUST BE POSITIVELY CHRISTIAN. This is the *sine-qua-non* of the college to meet the crisis. The Bible must be acknowledged and honored as the inspired word of God, Jesus Christ as very God, and all the fundamentals of our Christianity exalted. The teachers must be Christian and all the influences spiritual. The glory of God must be the supreme end.

Such a college will have vast power in deciding aright this great woman crisis.

By means of the Student Loan Fund the Presbyterian Church in the United States is helping scores of her choicest girls to secure a higher education in our Presbyterian Colleges.

Several Memorial Scholarship Funds of four hundred each have been given, or provided for in wills, and others are greatly needed.

For any further information address the Secretary of Education, Rev. Henry H. Sweets, D.D., 122 South Fourth Avenue, Louisville. Ky.