

THE AMERICAN ISRAELITE.

LET THERE יִהְיֶה BE LIGHT.

CINCINNATI, O., FEBRUARY 27, 1896.

LADIES' COLUMN.

ARE WOMEN COLLEGE-GRADUATES GOOD HOME-MAKERS?

A symposium on the above subject, contributed to, among others, by Mrs. Elizabeth Stuart Phelps-Ward, Mrs. Grace Livingston Hill, and Mrs. James L. Hill, appears in *The Golden Rule*, Boston. Mrs. Ward suggests that it is early yet in the long day of history to judge the homes of college women, and says that we must for a while yet regard as tentative the questions bearing upon their domestic life. She further says:

"The relation of college women to knowledge and to the power that comes of knowledge is developing hopefully and naturally. Few people any longer feel a doubt whether the intellects of women can bear the strain of earning a college diploma; or whether they are capable of using the mental discipline acquired in a college course as sensibly and usefully as their brothers.

"But the relation of the higher education to wifehood and motherhood is a subject still too new to be commanded by statistics. Oberlin and Vassar were more or less dubious myths to the girls of my day and class. Wellesley and Smith and the 'Annex,' Michigan and California, all the great co-educational experiments and achievements, have sprung up within what any but the young would call a few years. The girl that graduates and teaches and struggles, and tires of it, and wavers and loves and contends and yields and marries, has had hardly time yet to prove to us what kind of a home she makes. At least, no very large numbers of such wives can offer testimony fit to be decisive on so complicated a question; for it is conceded, I believe, by those who know, that, at all events, college women marry later in life than society women or others. Thus the whole great experiment is pushed farther along, and the results on any large scale will be slower in counting.

"We must remember that marriage is not a problem to be solved in a year or in a few years. It is a very long question; do not most divorces occur late in married life?"

Mrs. Ward's observation leads her to think that after two years is the first trying turn in married life; at the end of five years, the next and the more dangerous. She believes that if a man and a woman live happily together past

that time, they are liable to go on comfortably for a very long while. She suspects that the next perilous stage occurs quite late in life. In other words, she does not think that people but a short time married are capable of testifying whether their marriage is a success or not.

Mrs. Grace Livingston Hill believes that college-training is better than society-training. She writes:

"It is sometimes said that a college life gives a girl tastes that unfit her to be a home-maker, yet you do not hear it often urged that a society life does the same thing. Surely in society she will acquire tastes for being out late at night dancing, flirting with other women's husbands, spending her energies over bits of paste-board while the household accounts run riot, dropping her tears for the dressed-up children on the stage while her own little ones are crying at home for their mother. Why should not college graduates make as good home-makers as the graduates from a hundred other different courses of training in life, and better, too? Surely the girl that has had the earnest purpose, patience, and perseverance necessary to pass creditably through a college course will have formed habits of thinking and acting that will be most helpful to her in the strain and care of making a home. Surely a mother whose mind has been led to the higher realms of thought in the world of science and literature and history cannot but be better able to lead and train her little ones, that God has given her, for all higher and better things.

Mrs. James Hill under the caption of "No and Yes" says:—

Not if during a college course Madame becomes Adam." Not if the student ceases to be a lady and cannot quite be a gentleman. Not unless her mother has brought up a daughter to match some other mother's son. Not if she thinks a woman married is a woman marred. Not if she thinks that because she is educated she must sing bass. On the other hand "Yes," if with both hands she takes hold of the idea of comradeship in marriage. Yes, if she holds that good housekeeping is a virtue. Yes, if she rises high enough to see no woman is a good cook by reason of being only a woman. Yes, if in college she has learned to love home and not think herself above it.

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[READ A TRANSCRIPT OF THE ARTICLE ON THE NEXT PAGE]

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