

SHE GIVES UP SOCIETY TO RECLAIM UNFORTUNATE GIRLS

Mrs. William Grant Brown Says She Has No Time for Social Functions When There Are So Many Erring Sisters to Aid

DETERMINED to devote herself to the reclamation of unfortunate girls, Mrs. William Grant Brown, past president of the Federation of Women's Clubs of New York, a leader in many philanthropic and civic enterprises in which women play the most prominent part and a member of one of New York's best families, has decided for the future to exclude herself from practically all functions of a purely social nature.

Mrs. Brown, who is president of the Women's Auxiliary to the Salvation Army Rescue Home, says she has found that institution the most fitting medium through which to carry on her humane work. In this enterprise she has associated with her Mrs. A. M. Palmer, Mrs. Robbins Lau, Miss Florence Guernsey, president of the Federation of Women's Clubs, and many other women prominent in social and club life in New York city.

Mrs. Brown will begin a crusade for the Salvation Army this month. She will go to Detroit, Buffalo, Cleveland, Cincinnati and other cities. At each place the club women will be called together and the mission which appears to them best will be presented. It is proposed to make the auxiliary nationwide in its operations and it is expected that it will cooperate with the World-wide League for the Protection of Women, an organization recently established by General and Mrs. Bramwell Booth.

There is nothing of the "crank" or fanatic in the character of Mrs. Brown. She is a quiet, self-possessed diplomatic woman who is quite convinced that she is in the world for the purpose of doing some real service for humanity.

"I have always contended that she who has the power to give real service and withhold it is committing a real sin," said Mrs. Brown. "Don't run away with the idea that I am disgusted with society or that I am going to make a renege of myself. On the contrary, I must confess a fond affection for society. But I realize that even the maximum of time allowed us is very short and I have determined to crowd into that time all the work I can for the betterment of members of my sex who are not as fortunate as myself.

"I still go to the theatre, but I do so because it affords a means of relaxation."

Mrs. Brown said that some years ago her attention was called to the rescue work of the Salvation Army, and after investigating it thoroughly she determined to heartily cooperate.

"My hours and days were filled with engagements which left me little time to give to what I believed to be the most beneficent and practical philanthropy ever established," said Mrs. Brown. "I found the women in charge of the home, from Brigadier Brown, the superintendent, to her most humble helper, sympathetic, devoted, kind, but intensely practical. They insisted that reconstruction and not merely relief was the object to be attained, and in that noble view I most heartily concurred."

To illustrate the practical character of the work done at the home at 1316

East Fifteenth street, Mrs. Brown told of a meeting of the auxiliary when a report was made regarding the disposition of a child who was born in the institution. The infant was adopted by a childless couple. A letter written by its foster mother was read to the assembled members of the organization. It was couched in the following terms:

"Helen has won our hearts completely. She says her prayers every night and plays with her dolls and toys with evident delight. She has been scolded three times for being naughty and has had two spankings."

At this point the reading was interrupted by cries of "Good, good. That woman has fine sense. Don't let us forget the spankings."

"And yet," said Mrs. Brown, "there was not a woman among us who did not love little Helen with all our hearts. She had been taught while at the home that penalties would be exacted for disobedience and breaches of discipline and the kind woman who adopted her determined that the discipline which ruled at the establishment should continue in her new abode."

Mrs. Brown said she observed a distinct and very encouraging tendency on the part of women of society to make the social power they possess serve some useful and humanitarian end.

"Much has been said of women's 'sphere' and men have cried vainly to define it," she said. "But I think the sphere of a woman is any place where she can accomplish some lasting good. In earlier times when men undertook to restrict women to certain functions and certain rather vaguely defined spheres of activity, or rather inactivity, it was generally understood that her only object in seeking association with her sisters was to arrange for some more or less inane social function.

"That time, however, has gone and forever. No matter how frivolous women may be individually, collectively they are impressed with the fact that they have something more to do than merely entertain. In every assemblage of my sex to-day there is some dominant or dominating idea which has for its ultimate aim the good of the community. Women of wealth and influence when their attention is called to the problems of the poor no longer shrug their shoulders and laconically remark: 'The poor ye have always with you.' They arise and prepare to wrestle with the problem. And they do it with that intensity and devotion so characteristic of aroused femininity. The improvement along these lines in recent years is remarkable. I attribute it to the fact that man has let down the bars and have either voluntarily or through moral force admitted women to a sort of equal companionship.

the very reason that she gives the world a child who is handicapped by its irregular birth she must give her whole heart to it. Scores of little 'redeemers' have been born in that home. They have warmed and brought back to life the cold and deadened hearts of their mothers."

Tears streamed down the cheeks of the speaker as she said this.

"Is not this worth while?" she said, with enthusiasm, her cheeks mantling and her eyes glistening. "I must confess that this mission of saving the girls has become an obsession with me, and in this I am not egotistical enough to say that I am alone among the members of my sex and class. Society of course has its attractions, but nothing in the whole whirl appeals to me as strongly as this duty of aiding the unfortunate."

Mrs. Brown was asked how the sale of virtue may be lessened. She said that she had a few ideas on the subject that may be regarded as old-fashioned.

"Give every girl an interest in life commensurate with her mental capacity and make what may be termed the menial employments attractive, then there will be few women on the streets," she said.

"What I mean is this," continued the club woman, "the woman who scientifically constructs a dress should have as high a value in the eyes of society as she who successfully defends a client. She who can prepare a good and wholesome meal should be as highly appreciated as the mathematician. Her value to society is even greater."

"Now, the cook who understands hygiene, knows proper food proportions and is able to skilfully adjust each meal to the needs of the consumer is performing a service to society of incalculable value. When she is shown that she is not only an indispensable factor in our civilization but one of the most important as well her pride in her work will be such as to make the money consideration a matter of little concern.

"As a scientific cook she would be president of the household cabinet. She would be the friend and confidante of her employer and the recognized and honored benefactor of every guest. Of course before this can be made to come to pass some readjustments will be necessary. The attitude of the employer of the cook must undergo a change and the popular conception of the 'menial' employments must be revised.

"As for the scientific dressmaker, the woman who can make a garment that will be comfortable while becoming and at the same time conduce to the health of the wearer, why, she deserves the everlasting gratitude of society. I am not so much in favor of women going into business.

"Then the girl who can keep house, make beds and do other 'menial' work in a home is a most valuable individual. She contributes more toward the comfort and happiness of society than the stenographer or saleswoman. The proper management of a home requires



Mrs. William Grant Brown.

infinitely more tact and intelligence than does the sale of a hat or the taking of dictation.

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some occupation. They should be fitted to the work and not the work fitted to them. In other words care should be taken to see that the girl is placed in a position most suited to her talents and inclinations. For this purpose vocational schools should be established everywhere.

"I think the theory that low wages are responsible for the misfortunes of the women of the street has been successfully exploded. This is an atrocious slander of hundreds of thousands of working girls. The good cook, when she is taught to take pride in her work, the housemaid, when she is ambitious to excel in her employment, or any girl who is fully occupied with work that is congenial will find little time or inclination to cultivate thoughts or desires which imperil her virtue.

"At the Rescue Home you will find devotion which money cannot purchase. And in another sense when a girl is devoted to her work money ceases to be more than a passing consideration. Of course this does not mean that I am satisfied with the money value placed on the services of New York women, but it does mean that when persons say working girls go astray essentially because of a monetary consideration they utter a foul slander on the humble members of my sex.

"I repeat. Give every woman something to do and fit her for that service, make it attractive and absorbing and then you will witness a surprising decline in vice."

Mrs. Brown claims that she is not a "new" woman, but an "old" woman.

"I believe in old-fashioned love, old-fashioned virtue, old-fashioned fidelity, and my observation of women in this community convinces me that these attributes are as much esteemed in these days as in any of the old days, the passing of which we are sometimes tempted to regret," said Mrs. Brown.

"I believe," continued Mrs. Brown, "that the time has come when every girl should be taught that in whatever useful work she is engaged she is doing a service that society appreciates. Teach her that she is not only a servant of society but an absolutely indispensable part of society. If this doctrine of truth is intelligently inculcated you will witness a surprising diminution of vice. The attitude of society toward the girl engaged in the so-called 'menial' avocations has been and is yet, to a large extent, grotesquely unjust and preposterously absurd.

"This does not mean that I favor the immediate elevation of persons who do not possess the necessary qualifications to social eminence. But I insist, and I think the enlightened justice and intelligence of the age supports me in this view, that there should be cooperation between the cook and her employer, be-

tween the housemaid and her mistress. In other words, the cook should be taught that she is actually, in a sense, the colleague of the family physician."

"She should be shown by selecting a proper dietary she assists in conserving the family health and saving it from dyspepsia, indigestion and the bad temper and other temperamental ailments which are the fruits of deranged stomachs. Dignify all sorts of useful work. This is not a new demand or a new doctrine, but I think the time has arrived when it may be reemphasized."

Mrs. Brown is one of the directors of the City Federation Hotel, one of the first homes built in New York for working girls. This work was taken up by a number of public spirited women who believed that the girls who receive scanty wages should be provided with quarters of a congenial character at the smallest possible cost. For some years the establishment was run at a loss, but it is now self-supporting.

In this home board and room are obtained at a surprisingly low cost to the girls. They are given every advantage and privilege which they would enjoy in their own homes.

"It is our desire to extend this work by cooperating with the Salvation Army," said Mrs. Brown. "We ought very soon arrange for a home on a very large scale where girls whose earnings are small can have accommodations at a figure which will enable them to save something out of their scanty wages. Of course I am as much interested in preventive as in rescue work and I believe these homes prevent girls from falling."

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"In other words, when we gave our money to the Rescue Home we were quite certain that it would be used there and nowhere else," said the speaker. "If our money and efforts were to be given to the Salvation Army as a whole we would have been unable to obtain any appreciable visible results, because there would have been a division among many departments. But such is the system of organization in the Salvation Army that if one gives a dollar to any department one knows that the money will be used in that department and nowhere else."

IDOL OF ALL RUSSIA IS A WOMAN OF THE MASSES

Matchless Enthusiasm Aroused by Vera Wialsewa, a Gypsy Singer, in St. Petersburg and Among the Soldiers in Manchuria During the War With Japan



ASK a Russian, no matter in what quarter of the earth you may meet him, if he knows Wialsewa, you are quite sure to get your answer in the light which comes into his eyes. His face will assume an expression of mingled longing and pleasure, and his voice will hum the weird strain of a gypsy song. If your Russian is rich, a soldier, and of a sentimental turn of mind, he would probably more than thank you if you could lead him to the presence of the woman you have mentioned.

Ten years ago Wialsewa was a servant on a country estate in the Province of Moscow. Nobody knows exactly who her parents were. She had grown up in the village without either mother or father and, when 16 years old, went to serve at the manor house. The inhabitants were old-fashioned ladies who used to teach the more capable village girls to sew. They took a fancy to Vera, as Wialsewa was then known, and liked her to sing to them in the evenings. She had a beautiful voice and sang the Russian folksongs.

One day a young officer came to see the ladies. His name was Wialsew and his regiment was in St. Petersburg. He fell in love with Vera and asked her if she would like to make a career as a singer in a gypsy chorus in St. Petersburg. The girl, who felt restless in the manor, agreed. They went to the capital together and Wialsew paid for her singing lessons. Then he got her into a gypsy chorus and asked a party of his friends to supper in a certain restaurant in the "Isles," a part of St. Petersburg given up to pleasure, where night is turned into day and fortunes are spent and made in a very short time.

When a fashionable young man wants to entertain his friends he invites them to a private room in one of the restaurants there and engages the services of a gypsy chorus. The best singer in the chorus, generally a woman, sings the solos and the others join in the refrain, playing on a special kind of guitar.

When Wialsew invited his guests, Vera was the principal singer. She was beautifully dressed in a gypsy costume and her dark hair was then undyed. People still speak of that evening with enthusiasm. Vera sang song after song, and still her listeners had not enough. They covered her plate with money and begged her to sing on.

The next evening all the frequenters of the "Isles" were clamoring to hear the new singer, and considerable sums were offered by rival supper givers to obtain her services. Before many

weeks were past Vera sang with her bodice covered with jewels. All St. Petersburg was at her feet.

In the midst of all this success the Russo-Japanese war broke out. The singer's husband was ordered to the front. For a few weeks she stayed behind in St. Petersburg, where the festivities of the "Isles" were as brilliant as ever. In spite of serious defeats of the Russian forces in Manchuria, Suddenly Vera Wialsewa disappeared.

She was on her way to the seat of war. Some of her admirers overtook her, ordered a magnificent train to be fitted up for her and declared they would accompany her. She travelled across Siberia with all the magnificence and homage that could be accorded an empress. At every town where she stopped she gave a concert. Rich Siberian merchants, who had been sighing for the joys of Moscow and St. Petersburg, lavished gifts of gold and jewels upon her with true Russian recklessness. Her train was besieged by crowds who wanted a word or a smile and would wait patiently for hours to catch a glimpse of her face.

Her arrival in Manchuria was hailed as if it were a victory over the Japanese. All the wealth she had gained on the way she immediately gave to be distributed among the sick and wounded soldiers. She went to the hospitals and sang to them there. Foreigners who did not know the ways of Russia used to ask on seeing her train arrive whom all the staff was going to meet and what member of the imperial family had arrived.

They were much surprised to hear that a gypsy singer from St. Petersburg was the cause of the bustle and enthusiasm. Generals said that her presence near a camp did more to raise the spirits of officers and men than a military success.

Wialsewa retained for herself but little if any of the gold that poured in on her. The bulk of it went to the soldiers, and she returned from the war far poorer than she started. The enthusiasm with which she was greeted on her return to Europe was as great as the joy with which they had hailed her in Manchuria. She went on giving concerts for the victims of the war and collected a fortune for this purpose.

Her husband died from the effects of a wound received in the war, and left her a large fortune. Wialsewa cannot, however, settle down. She goes from town to town, singing with the gypsy chorus or forming the chief attraction at some grand dual entertainment. She has dyed her hair in the fashionable color and wears dresses of golden tissue when she sings. But her charm is the same as when, dressed in gypsy costume, she astonished the supper party in the "Isles."

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ANSWERS AND PRIZE WINNERS OF MOTHER GOOSE PUZZLES, PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 1, 1914.



The accompanying diagram shows how the chef's big bird pie was cut into halves so that each piece contained a dozen birds.

Twice four plus twenty of course made twenty-eight blackbirds. Twenty-two were killed and remained, while of course the six unharmed flew away.

Winner:
RUTH C. KINGSLAND,
New Castle, Delaware.