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January 2020

Powers of Frances Willard

William Kennedy Brown

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Repository Citation

Brown , W. K. (2020). *Powers of Frances Willard*. .

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Editor Press; Philadelphia, Pa.

Of all the editorial reviews of Miss. Frances Willard's powers which have reached my desk that of the Press is eminently clear. There was a manifest ability to build the forces of discipleship around her personality.

Asked what was the secret of their fealty, the disciples ^{might} ~~would~~ answer, 'friendship; an eminent friendliness to every one', and those who felt Miss. Willard's kindness believed it to be universal. Others ^{might} ~~would~~ answer, 'love' and those who basked in its glow could not believe there were any valleys, not lit up by this sun's rays.

And thus their fealty to their Chieftan was like the Knight Errantry of the fifteenth century. The new education of women in the last half century is doubtless responsible for the restless 'desire to do something', which ¹ ~~is~~ your editorial observed as a condition, in which ^{Miss Willard} ~~the dictator~~ found them. These women were awaked from indifference to social and political contingencies by a sense of higher responsibility—the imperative of intelligence.

The organization of the W.C.T.U. was planned after the political map of the state reaching down into every precinct of the restless women who longed for a field of activity,—and they regarded the convention where Miss. Willard spoke, as the Mecca of their unshriven souls. The following became a secular religion very much like that which enslaved the masses of men to a certain political policy, prior to the civil war; and which entranced a greater number to an opposite policy after the war.

They have their priesthood. A Poline or a Bryan.

Women have thus proven that loyalty is as strong an attribute in them as in men. Miss. Willard bore about with her the sacred Ark of the Covenant, to which every woman was pledged when she entered the ranks of the enthusiastic 'white ribboers'.

This discipleship differed from that of Mary A. Livermore, as ^{heart} ~~emotions~~ differs from intellect. Mrs. Livermore's following, both men and women are a clientelle of purely intellectual admirers. And if she had an organization, the multitude of ^{followers} ~~admirers~~ would ^{be guided by} ~~follow~~ her star to its setting in eternity. Audiences never failed her.

Susan B. Anthony's following is of a still different variety. It is hero worship, pur and simple. She has dared and suffered and lived for her principle of good to the weak, the helpless, the unfortunate women of her country. She is a hero, and the world has risen to acknowledge the fact.

These differences are also found among leaders of men. General McClellan was a diplomat among his men, whose official skill, genial presence and prestige of person—elled defied all rivalry in the hearts of his followers. He was supreme in his position. His men were all ardent lovers.

General Grant was admired for his cool, deliberate, uncompromising purpose. There was no sentiment about it. The admiration was clear cut unintellectual decision.

His mastership will hold to the stroke of doom.

The public admiration of Abraham Lincoln is the worship of a hero. It partakes of all the elements of intellect and heart. The pathos of his life and the victory of his death have crowned him a hero of all time.

Standing at the summit of a great century which has yet settled but one question of human interest, - that of slavery; it shall be enough for American womanhood if Miss Willard's name shall stand for the advancement of woman to a place where she may aid in the solution of problems yet pending.