That terrible question, or, A few thoughts on love and marriage/by Moses Hull


PREFACE.

A book worthy of going before the public does not need an apology; we have none to offer. We have written, not under the promptings of a Cacoethes scribendi, but because we regarded the subject as important. Many difficulties which we have spoken of, we frankly confess we are not able in the present state of our knowledge to meet. That is no reason why we should not tell what we know, “and testify to what we have witnessed.” Believing that all demand proceeds from a fountain of supply demanding a chance to do its work, we are sure that “there is a balm in Gilead.”

The first thought on reading such a pamphlet as this, is that it originated in domestic inharmony. We can assure our readers that in this instance it is not true.

If the whole world were unmarried to-day, perhaps eight out of every ten would use no more discretion in marrying than they have in the past; yet the world will learn by the things which it suffers. Assuring our readers that these thoughts are only a prelude to what we have in store for them, and hoping that others who wield a more nimble pen than ourself may be induced to work in this field, we commend these pages to your candid perusal. M. H.

Hobart, Lake Co., Ind., Aug., 1868.

LOVE AND MARRIAGE.

“Ye who guide the fates and furies, Give, oh, give me, I implore, From the myriad hosts of nations, From the countless constellations, One pure spirit that can love me, One that I, too, can adore.”—Poe.

No more important subject can claim the attention of the Lecturer, Essayist or Author than that of Love and Matrimony. According to the Bible God saw, when the foundations of the earth were laid, and “The morning stars sang together,” that it was not good for man to be alone. So it is yet. God says of every man or woman, it is not good for him or her to be alone. Marriage is a Heaven-
appointed institution. The greatest blessing conferred upon the human race, one without which all other blessings were but curses. Yet it must be acknowledge that what is called marriage is as often the bane of humanity as it is a blessing. The marriage bed is as often made of thorns as of roses. The bonds of marriage often prove to be more galling than those which bind the slave to his master. When the key which should fasten two souls in wedlock only manacles human bodies, where the spirits are not united, the dark cell in which persons are held is so horrible that Libby Prison and Fort Anderson become palaces compared with it. The tongue of an angel could not tell, nor could the pen of inspiration itself draw a picture as dark as the pall drawn around false marriage.

The task of writing upon this subject is by no means a pleasant one, for the very good reason that we cannot write upon it without departing from the “old paths,” yet, having thoroughly weighed the pros and cons, we have decided that we had rather have the approbation of the next generation than that of the present, and feeling fully conscious that every position we take can be maintained and will be sustained by the next generation, we will venture to get out of the old “cart rut” and tell a few truths which will sooner or later be acknowledged. A friend once said to us, “These things are true, but the world is not ready for them; had you not better wait until the world is prepared to receive such truths?”

“When,” we ventured to ask, “will the world be prepared to receive the truth?” Does not the proclamation of the truth prepare the world for its reception? And who can the world spare as a martyr on account of unpopular truth better than ourselves? So, here goes.

Let us venture a few words as prophet. When we commenced talking against the enslavement of the African race, sixteen years since, we predicted that war would be the result of slavery, and that not a score of summers and winters would pass before the sweat which was oozing out of every pore of the bondmen would be repaid, not only by sweat, but by the very best blood of the North. When we looked at it as a means of accomplishing the great work of abolishing slavery, and establishing the principle that slavery and freedom could not exist in the same territory at the same time, we said, “Let the war rage; let blood flow to the horses’ bridles; let slavery cease, though it be at a cost of half of the purest blood of the nation.” Yet when we looked at it merely as a cruel war, without contemplating the result, we prayed, “O, God! stay the tide.”

Now, with no other ken that of human sagacity, we look not a score of years into the future, and see a rebellion, a war before which the commotion through which our nation has just passed, sinks into comparative insignificance. Not a war of flesh and blood. No, blood is not pure and precious enough to purchase the results of the coming war; and element as such more pure than blood as spirit is finer than matter, will be the price with which redemption from marital slavery will be
bought. Think not, dear reader, that we are overdrawing the picture—it can not be done. Whoever sees the opening of the twentieth century will say that the picture was not half drawn. It is said that “Conceit is as good for a fool as an emetic.” So it is for any one. Whether there are wrongs in the marriage relation or not, people are very generally getting the idea that it is so. The idea is proving contagious, and when the American mind gets started, who can tell where it will stop? Nothing short of a revolution—of anarchy—of an opposite extreme, even to the total annulling of the marital tie will be the result. Then it will be, that the conservatives on the one hand and the radicals on the other, will become rational, and men and women will not dare to enter the marriage relation without first having investigated the “Whys” and “wherefores.” It will then take more than the ipse dixit of a priest to make Miss A. the wife of Mr. B. There will be a holier relation than human laws recognize. Men and women will be bound by their honor and love; they will have learned that they themselves are the loosers by deception. Men and women will then see each other as they are. Then and not till then will all be prepared to use the language of Robert Burns: “The bridal tour is through the spheres, Eternity the honey-moon.”

When we look at the commotion ahead merely as a revolution, we pray, “O, God! stay the elements;” but when we look at it as being the work of disintegration, the preparatory work for the soul-union, the true marriage that shall follow, we say, “Let the battle rage, and if necessary put us in the front.” The result will be cheap enough.

Enough of this. If we continue, our readers will say, “he has turned prophet.” Not so; we only judge of “coming events” by the “shadows cast before,” and where are there not shadows? Where are there not evidences of dissatisfaction in the marriage bond? One only has to pick up the daily papers to find the history of the infidelity of husbands. Read the records of the suits for divorce, the elopements, prostitution, lewdness, and almost every other imaginable crime, which can be traced directly to the inharmonies of the matrimonial relations of the parties. Such things can do no less than result in a conflagration. It is said that during the year 1867 alone, there were in the United States one hundred and twenty-five thousand divorces granted! What a story this tells. Does it not prove that marriage, like other institutions, has written on it in letters so legible that “he that runs may read,” “Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.” Let its fires purify the institution; nay, let it consume the institution and give us the true marriage in its stead. We now enter directly upon the question, WHAT IS LOVE?

We answer: words cannot define it. No dictionary can make the soul which has not tasted it comprehend its meaning. It is nothing more or less than the desire, the appetite, which one soul
feels for needed elements which belong to another. Mark, love is not the element that a person or thing possesses, but it is the desire caused by the need of that element. To illustrate: Pure water possesses the same elements at one time that it does at another, yet no one loves it except the thirsty soul; hence, it is thirst that makes man love water—indeed, thirst is the love for water. So the hungering and thirsting which one soul feels for elements which belong to another is love. The above being true, it is possible for one person to appreciate, esteem and even like another, and yet not love that person. There are persons in the world with whom it would be hard to find a fault, that we cannot love. Who has not said of certain persons, “They are good, good looking, good dispositioned, intellectual, spiritual, and I esteem them highly; I wish I could love them, but I can't.” Why is this? To every philosopher the reason is obvious. They do not possess the elements needed by the soul who cannot love them. If the above position be true, love is not free; it cannot go where it chooses; it can only go where the needs of the soul send it, and 9 there it will go. No will-power, no philosophy, no passion will stay it. Love is the strongest passion of the human soul; and hence, instead of being in subjection to other passions, leads all the rest. The philosopher looks upon love as a natural consequence of a certain combination of elements in the lover and the loved. Hence, he is neither ashamed or afraid to talk of his love for certain ones; as well be ashamed of his appetite for certain kinds of food as of the fact that he loves certain elements in an individual, or that there are elements in an individual he cannot love, though she may be the legal companion of his bosom. His mistake is not in loving the wrong one, or failing to love one who fails to render herself lovely to him; but in marrying the wrong one, one he does not love. We are aware of the disputes on this question, yet there is no opposite theory that will stand the test of a single glance. We once knew a lady and gentleman, wife and husband, who differed as to what love was, and its cause—she contending that no other lady had a right to love him because he was her husband. The husband contended that, that which rendered him lovely to her, would render him equally so to others, whose needs were the same as hers. Finally, said he, “Why do you love me?”

Wife. “I love you because you are the father of my children.”

Hus. “Did you not love me before I was the father of your children?”

Wife. “Yes, I loved you because you was my husband.”

Hus. “Did you not love me before I was your husband.”

Wife. “Yes, I loved you because you was going to be my husband.”
Hus. “I did not understand it so. I supposed that I was going to be your husband because you loved me.”

Wife. “Well, my dear, I loved you because I couldn't help it.”

Hus. “That's it. Now, suppose others can't help but love me, are they to blame more than you, who did precisely the same thing?”

Wife. But, my dear husband, you are mine.”

Hus. “ True, I am yours and you are mine; but as you see purity and nobleness in me, why blame others for loving that which you call lovely?”

Sure enough; why not let others see the same loveliness which she saw? How beautiful! to want to see others appreciate that which we regard as worthy of appreciation.

“But,” says the objector, “that will lead to bad results.” Not at all, kind reader. Do you love your sister? and what will that love do? will it lead to a protection or destruction of the chastity and virtue of that sister? Now, apply that same love to all, and what is the result? Ah! it is the opposite of love that destroys virtue. Then we say, let love be free; let hatred, malice and envy be bound with chains; but whoever heard of a person who had too much love in his or her nature? “Love worketh no ill to his neighbor.” God loved the world. “Let love be without dissimulation.”

Marriage has been regarded as a contract between two parties, where one sells her body and soul to the other, the other agreeing to take the entire charge of the one thus sold, support, protect, defend, and even sometimes chastise. One party deeds herself away; the other holds the deed—has it recorded; and beside, has the testimony of the minister that God has made one of “the twain,” and in six cases out of ten, that one is the husband. Such a view of marriage—which by the way, is the popular one—has given rise to more misery than any other one cause we can now call to mind.

True marriage, as we have before intimidated, is a union of spirits. Where the spirits are truly united, there is marriage; nowhere else. Such God has joined together, “let no man put them asunder.” No man can put them asunder. They may be bound in legal wedlock with some other one. The lady may have been so unfortunate as to have been made, by the law, the slave of some rich “Lord and Master;” and the man legally tied to the apron strings of a woman his inferior 12 by one hundred per cent; the Atlantic may roll its boisterous waves between them, and yet they are joined together—spiritually united. “Their hopes, their fears, their aims are one, Their comforts and their cares.”
There is in such cases a spirit union which pen cannot describe—a soul communion which only they who feel it know.

How unfortunate the circumstance for a person to know that only the body of his companion is in his possession, while the spirit is really off with another. Can such things be prevented in the future? We believe they can. The youth can be so educated as to know who their real companions are; hence, who their legal partners should be.

In order to present this more lucidly before our young readers we will undertake a

**CLASSIFICATION OF THE SEXES.**

How many classes there are we do not know, nor will we undertake to determine how large each class may be. But to illustrate our ideas, we will suppose there are twenty-four classes of ladies and as many corresponding classes of gentlemen. These classes we will name after the twenty-four letters of the alphabet, A., B., C., etc.; now any gentleman of class A. would make a suitable husband for any lady of the same class, 13 and *vice versa*. God made the universe in pairs, and members of either class will find the other half of themselves in members of the corresponding class among the other sex.

Now suppose a member of class A. marries one of class B. Neither have found the other half of themselves, neither have been perfectly mated. They will get along well together as they are, according to our illustration, twenty-three points of similarity and only one point of dissimilarity. But suppose A. and S. get married, there are twelve points where they agree and twelve where they disagree, and what is the result? Why, nothing very bad; they will quarrel about one-half of the time, have children who will either be sickly, wicked, idiotic or insane; will render themselves and all connected with them miserable, entail misery upon at least four generations of their posterity, who will, perhaps, mis-mate and continue the misery for several succeeding generations. Now, suppose this lady of class A. who is tied by the matrimonial cord to a gentleman of class G., S. or Z., meets with a gentleman of her own class. She will love him, as sure as the world; and so will he love her; and almost as sure as they get a chance they will express that love for each other; it is uppermost in their hearts, and “of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” They will also be nearly as sure to talk of how sadly they are mis-mated 14 The gentleman will, perhaps, say, “My wife is good; she is intelligent and handsome. She is true to me; no woman could do more than my wife does for me, and yet I can't love her as a husband should love a wife. I am sorry, but it is so.” The lady responds, “Never was there a better man than my husband *in his way*; he provides well, furnishes me
good clothes, and all I want to eat; but there is something about my wedlock, O, so revolting! What is it? I can't tell. If I were to marry a thousand times, I never should get a better man than my husband; yet I know I could be happier with some one else.” So she would. The canary bird could not be happy with a pelican for its matrimonial companion; and yet the pelican is as good in its place as the canary in its sphere; but we consider the marriage of canaries with pelicans a woeful mis-mating of each.

Let the gentleman or lady, above mentioned, dare to be frank enough to tell the above contraband talk to others, and how soon the “fat is all in the fire.” The legal Lord of the lady is in a perfect rage, even driven to insanity. He swears he will have the life of the one who is guilty of loving his wife. Strange that he cannot permit others to admire that which renders his wife lovely to himself. But we deny that others love his wife—the truth is, he belongs to another class, and is living with a woman whom God has joined to somebody else. True, the law of man says she is his wife, but there is a higher law which will *eventually* bring all things to rights. That law sends her spirit to the husband whom God made for her; while the other, man-made law, fastens the lady to, and sometimes compels her to have children by, a man whom her soul cannot help but detest. Is there no remedy? “Is there no balm in Gilead, no physician there?” Yes, there is a remedy; not so easily attained by those already fastened, but a prevention, which permit us to recommend to the unmarried. It is simply this: educate yourselves; know yourselves and what you want, then know the person you make your companion.

**MARRY WHERE THERE IS A PERFECT ADAPTATION.**

A few questions will explain our meaning. You want to get married; what do you want of a wife? Do you simply want a house-keeper? Do you want some one to wash your clothes and do your drudgery? Or, do you want some one to sing and play the piano for you? Do you want some one to sleep with? Or, do you want a COMPANION? Find out your own wants, then find the companion fully adapted to meet those wants; at the same time assure yourself that you can as fully meet every want of her nature. Do not let the fact that she sings and plays nicely, that she is handsome or intelligent, blind you to your other wants, and cause you to make a companion of one who will fail to supply the demands of your nature. Were you going out to look for a farm upon which you were to spend the remainder of your days, you would say, “Now, I want a good home, and I will have just such a one as I want. 1st, The climate must be mild. 2d, The soil must be rich and black. 3d, It must be well watered with pure running water. 4th, It must have plenty of good tall timber. 5th, It must be in a good neighborhood.” Suppose you travel until you find a farm having two or three out of the five qualities you desire, but deficient in the other two or three, could you be contented on such a farm?
We apprehend not. Neither will you be contented with a companion who does not perfectly fill the bill that your Ideal made, especially if you know of others who do.

Our present system of courtship is one of hypocrisy and deception from beginning to end. Very few husbands and wives form each others acquaintance until, alas! it is too late. We have heard young men boast of deceiving the very persons whom they intended to make their bosom companion for life.

The wife hunter visits the young lady under the most favorable circumstances. He must put on his best “Sunday-go-to-meeting” suit and put the best foot foremost. His idea is to captivate the lady if possible. He talks the smoothest 17 things and uses every stratagem to appears to the best advantage.

The lady, of course, is going to have a beau. She must get all of her fixings on and turn the best side out, so that he never shall know her real every-day character until the nuptial vows have been legalized. But suppose they do get acquainted, the gentleman says, “I must have a wife, and though Miss A. does not quite suit me in very particular, I know of none who would suit me better. I am getting along in years, and by and by will have lost some of my charms. I had better marry her than to live without a wife, so I will propose marriage.” He does so; the lady, of course, wishes a little time to consider so important a matter, and so promises him an answer soon. Could we be a mouse and place ourself in some unobserved spot and hear the thoughts flitting through her mind, we would find them running about as follows: “Mr. A. has proposed matrimony to me; he is good and true, yet is not just what I want; he has this, that and the other peculiarity that I do not like. Mr. B. would suit me much better, but he never thinks of me, and probably I shall never get another so good an offer. I had better marry him than to be what every lady detests, ‘an old maid.’ More than that, in this country, where women are held down by the law, I never could be anybody anyhow, or perhaps not even support myself if I were not 18 married. If I marry Mr. A. he will furnish me a good home, and plenty to eat and wear. He undoubtely loves me, and will do a good part by me. So I will pardon his peculiarities and marry him.” Here each decide that the other is not just the one, but they will marry for fear that they will never either of them be able to do better. As sure as the world, the trait in each which was not liked by the other becomes the bane of their lives. Perhaps neither of them will ever express it, but if you could read the thoughts of either you would read “there is something about my wedlock, oh! so revolting,” Says the intellectual, spiritual woman, “My husband is good; he feeds me well. So he does his horses and hogs, but he is not adapted to me. He thinks and talks of nothing but cattle, horses, sheep and hogs; if he takes a paper it is more for the market reports than for any news or anything of a literary character there may be in it. He works hard all day, and when he comes home at night he is either so cross or treats everything with such cold reserve that
I hardly dare unburden my heart and talk to him of deep feelings burning within my breast. He is entire stranger to anything of the kind, and hence cannot appreciate me.”

Perhaps the husband goes on, only stopping occasionally to wonder the wife takes no more interest in his cattle, sheep and hogs. She actually invited him to go with her to hear a lecture on Chemistry or some other scientific subject one evening when his horses and hogs demanded his attention. Could he listen to so dry a subject as that? Not while there were horses in the stable or hogs in the pen. No, he would stay at home and read the market report and calculate the chances of making a few thousand on the rise in stocks. The poor woman went to the lecture alone, wishing that her husband was as deeply interested in such things as some other husbands with whom she was acquainted.

The above case only illustrates the smallest imaginable difference between husband and wife—how easily it could be magnified. Suppose the husband or wife tries to make the other over, how soon the party passing through the renovating process becomes restive. The garment made by the would-be-renovate do not fit, and the resulting is the one for whom they are made becomes sensitive, and perhaps a family quarrel ensues. Let those about entering wedlock know that a radical change cannot be made in a intended partner. Better try to change the spots on a leopard or the skin of an Ethiopian. Hence, we cannot too strongly urge you to know who and what the one is with whom you are about forming a copartnership for life. As soon as the sensitive partner finds that he or she has been disappointed—that the companion was wrongly generated on the start and cannot be regenerated the feeling of disappointment together with the continual trial occasioned by the singularities of wife or husband, is such a source of trouble that the result is disease, resulting in insanity or death. How many there are now in the Lunatic Asylums who need nothing but finding the other half of themselves to restore them to sanity. Pick up almost any daily paper and read the obituaries.

“Died of consumption at the residence of her husband in ____, on ____. The decreased was an amiable lady—a respectable member of such a church.” Sure enough, the doctor’s skill is baffled and the children are left motherless. All the medicine in the world could not save her; consumptions was not her disease. She died of wedlock—of being compelled to administer to the passions of a man whom she could not love. Reader, this is no fancy sketch. It is true of fifty per cent of the deaths caused by what is called consumption, liver complaint, dyspepsia, heart disease, etc. But we are ahead of our subject. It may not be amiss for us, under a separate heading to enumerate some of

THE RESULTS OF BAD MARRIAGES.
We cannot, of course, give all the results of bad marriages. Marriage, we have before said, when true, is designed to be the **weal** of humanity. True marriage makes home the most desirable of all places. It makes it, indeed, a heaven. Where marriage is false, the farther companions can keep apart the better for all concerned. Certainly it is an evidence of progress to see persons, when they cannot live peaceably and happily together, live apart. Solomon, whose experience aided him to decide correctly on this question at least, has truthfully said, “It is better to dwell in the corner of a house-top than in a wide house with a brawling woman.” Again, “It is better to dwell in a wilderness than with a contentions and angry woman.”

The dwelling of two persons in one house who were not made to dwell together, leads first to **discontentment**, the evils of which can only be understood by those who know that “a contented mind is a continual feast.” They are both unhappy, each feeling that his or her life is measurably a failure. They were designed for some great end, and there are in them latent powers which only need to be match to call them out. The truth is, every power belonging to the human soul is **conate**. We mean by that, that it is not innate, that one-half of it inheres in one person and the other half in another. Now, let one person be united with another who has in his or her nature that which is calculated to call out the latent faculties of the soul, and will they not be apt to be more contented than though they were joined in wedlock with one whose office it would be to pour cold water on the otherwise flaming faculties and powers of the soul? We leave the thinking reader to decide. **Disease** may be given as a result of mis-marriage. Upon this point no argument is needed. Every one knows that were no other cause, discontent may result in disease. Let trouble only come, whether imaginary or real, and disease is the result. But, aside from that, what doctor does not know of dozens of females who are laboring under diseases caused by being compelled to gratify the passions of men whom they cannot love. While the works of quarreling and begetting children are intermingled, disease to the present and future generations must be the result. We are aware that this is plain talk, but the case demands it. The people have been in ignorance and regarded these subjects as too sacred for investigation long enough, let this be understood, and it will be the means of bringing the long looked for millennium.

**Insanity.** —What is so well calculated to produce insanity as the development of only a part of the organs? Let a person be compelled to live with another who fails to supply the elements that their nature demands, but, instead, draws continually from them, and the result is that the system is thrown out of balance. This, with the discontentment and disease occasioned by the knowledge of the fact that the ends of their existence have been thwarted, will be calculated to drive the sensitive mind of the refined organism to insanity. We know the gross, coarse animal will neither appreciate nor believe this, yet facts demonstrate it. Persons when truly married exercise not only a refining, purifying and elevating, but a quickening influence over each other—a balancing influence,
one calculated to call out equally all the powers of the organism, and hence marriage is an antidote to insanity.

Bad and Idiotic Children. —Upon this point no argument is needed. It is conceded on all hands, inasmuch that States have found it necessary to legislate against the marriage of blood relations. Children, to be perfectly harmonious in their natures should be begotten and born under the most favorable circumstances. Who has not noticed a difference in children as soon as they were born? Reader, did you ever realize that that difference was caused by the mother during the period of gestation? Let children be begotten in love, and harmonious and lovely conditions surround the mother till their birth, ad there is nothing to hinder their having as favorable an organism as did Jesus, the Judean Reformer. But let the mother feel oppressed, and that she is not loved—let her feel that she is not appreciated and understood, and she will as surely give birth to a sour, ugly-dispositioned child.

Premature Death winds up the list of evils growing out of a wrong marriage connection. “Winds up,” did we say? No, would that the matter ended there; such persons enter, under the most unfavorable conditions into the other world. They realize that the object of their life had not been attained. The world is peopled with an angular posterity, who in their turn will throw a block in the way of the wheels of progress. We do feel that our readers who have investigated this subject will bear us out in saying that false marriage is the cause of nearly every evil there is in the world. Would you abolish war, slavery, rum, and all their attendant evils from the land; strike at their roots by correcting the marriage relation. The fountain is bitter, how can the stream be sweet?

The limits of little tract will not permit us to enter into an examination of objections. At a future time we shall consider this subject; also, give some advice to the mis-mated, instructions on the marriage ceremony, and what it does for man. This subject is great, and demands more than a small tract. Our determination to bring the subject within the space occupied in an evening lecture, has rendered it somewhat inobscure. With the full belief that upon the marriage relations turns all the vital relations of humanity—that true marriage is born in heaven, and that false marriage is the greatest curse that ever fell upon humanity, we commit these few thoughts to the public; promising that through the Spiritual Rostrum they shall again hear from us upon this subject.

THE SOCIAL EVIL.

This question continues to arbitraté a consideration at the hands of the enlightened masses, notwithstanding the tendency of many to ignore it. Despite the restraints of secular law, the ecclesiastical thunders of the pulpít, and the persuasive voice of philanthropy, it stands out in bold
relief and defies the ineffectual schemes adopted for its eradication. Shall lovers of virtue and truth abandon all hope of banishing social depravity from our midst? Shall the humanitarian be compelled to forsake his fondly-cherished desires for the annihilation of this hideous evil, and the redemption of its hapless victims from the lowest depths of shame and misery? When will the loathsome face of the woman-degrading, man-defraiding libertine cease to pollute the gaze of innocence and virtue on every corner of the streets? When will the fairest daughters of our heaven-blest land cease to walk with reckless step the polluted road to degradation, misery and death? These questions cannot be ignored so long as the Social Evil is devouring the purity and happiness of mankind. To confess that there is no remedy for this and kindred evils in society, is to deny the wisdom and goodness of the divine economy, and fasten upon the race the fatality of degradation, and its consequent misery.

But how shall we successfully grapple with this monster, that ever devours the honor of man, and despoils woman of her virtue and innocence? Many of the so-called reformatory schemes heretofore advocated, have not only been wanting in every element of practical efficiency, but have also been devoid of every principle of truth and equity. “Fallen” women have ever been treated as exclusively criminal, and a great, blind, black hearted public opinion has only withheld from them the charity ever due the unfortunate, but has also denied to them the benefits of simple justice.

The Church, whose professed mission is to the last instead of bending in pity over these children of sorrow, shame and misery, and extending to them encouragement and aid in the hour of need, has grounded itself on the theory, that “I am holier than thou;” and has hurled its unsparing anathemas at this class of unfortunates, who, in nine cases out of ten, are driven to the haunts of shame by a train of necessities over which they have no control.

The over-discreet Rev. Dr. Boynton, D.D., who, by princely salaries wrested from Church and State, is far removed from pecuniary want and its consequent temptations, has, in a recent sermon, defined the position of the Church on this question. He would not remove the odium from fallen women, but increase it—would sink her still deeper in infamy (truly Christ-like). He thought the plan of heaping on woman all the shame and disgrace, and rendering man exempt therefrom, was as it should be; for all the important reason that her position is one of power and good. This is the reason, justice, and charity of the church as exemplified by one of its petted and pampered priests. The child of poverty will find far greater chances of relief among harlots and sinners, than among those heartless bigots who roll in wealth they never earned, and shut their stony hearts to all sympathy for the so-called low and depraved.


That terrible question, or, A few thoughts on love and marriage/by Moses Hull http://www.loc.gov/resource/rbnawsa.n8312
In the year 1858 a destitute widow and her little girl stood on the wharf at San Francisco. She had just arrived on board a New York steamer, having lost her husband by Panama fever on the voyage, and was now homeless, friendless and helpless. She found her way to a third class hotel where she told her story, and begged for the necessary aid to enable her to return to the Eastern Coast by the next vessel sailing. An appeal was made in her behalf to a fashionable congregation, but as she was not a member of the church in good standing, her appeal was rejected, and the “man of god” took special pains to warn his flock against “imposters”—utterly ignoring that charity, that “suffereth long, is kind and thinketh no evil.” From the Church the application was carried to a celebrated “Hurdy Gurdy House,” where three hundred prostitutes were whirling in the giddy dance, and that too on Sunday. In this rendezvous of vice, an appeal was made in behalf of the sufferer in question, accompanied by a child-like statement of facts. The music and dance ceased, and the Magdelens, with tearful eyes, listened to the story of a sister in want. No questions were asked about “membership in good standing” no hints of imposition were indulged in; but from a disinterested spirit of charity, these so-called fallen women did for a fellow being in want, what the cold, uncharitable members of the Church refused to do—ungrudgingly contributed the necessary means to restore a destitute sister to her home and friends. The difference is plain, for Christ has drawn a distinct line of demarkation between these two classes. In the “Last Day” the cold hearted bigot will say: “Lord have we not in thy name cast out devils, and in my name done many wonderful works,” but with a deep sense of loathing and disgust he will answer them: “Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you: To the harlots and sinners (his comfortors and associates when on earth) he will say: “as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me, enter into the joy of thy lord.”

What means this cry of the Boyntons of our day? Is it not the cry of “stop thief” to save themselves from accusation? Is this sweeping denunciation of our unfortunate sisters by these self-righteous bigots a sign of their own innocence? Observation has convinced me that in ninety-nine cases out every hundred, the scoffer of woman's virtue is a polluted libertine, be he priest, preacher, layman or sinner. Who were they that so much desired to have the erring woman of Christ's time stoned for the crime of adultery? Guilty to the last man of the very same offence! These men and women who ever prate of virtue, are only sepulchres, white-washed by wealth and social position, which, if once removed from them, would, in a majority of cases, leave them on a level or below those whom they so freely condemn.

In Centreville, Indiana, within my own recollection, lived two beautiful little girls, who were as innocent and gentle as the sporting lambs, and joyous as the sunshine. At an early age they were bereft of father and mother, and were reduced to a state of orphanage, without the means of support. These sacred proteges of society, on arriving at an age bordering on womanhood,
hearkened to the bland words and fair promises of the tempter, and were dragged down from their plane of virgin innocence, to that of common prostitution. Robbed of their fair names, virtue and innocence, these hapless victims of man's perfidy and lust were compelled to live on the wages of their own shame. This so shocked the extreme moral sensibilities of the town, that a committee of four sanctimonious citizens were appointed to notify, and if necessary, compel these children of misfortune to leave the “corporate limits” at once; and be it known, that three out of four of the persons constituting this committee, were personally instrumental in degrading these girls, whose presence their own lust had rendered odious. Reader, this is not an isolated case, but is simply a representative of thousands transpiring in our midst. It is quite common for committees to be formed to eject disreputable women from a town of village; but who ever head of a committee being appointed to compel the disease-stricken, filthy-souled, pestilential libertine to vacate the limits of any town or neighborhood? The despoilers of woman's innocence, with the unmistakeable signs of a hundred midnight debaucheries imprinted on their faces, shamelessly stand upon the corners of the streets and prate about woman's want of virtue. If justice is the foundation of God's throne, this infernal wrong, grounded on the laws instituted by old woman and child-murdering Moses, will yet fall more heavily on society than now. Justice can not—will no slumber forever! Already are we reaping the fearful consequences. To-day the house of infamy is the abode of our best and fairest daughters. Yes, the *best!* But very few of our fallen sisters ever enter the abodes of shame from choice. The seducer's wiles—solemn pledges of love; fair promises of marriage and a beautiful home, followed by a loss of innocence and its consequent desertion, is the oft told tale of those whom society has driven to a life of sin. What class of women does the lecher choose for his victim? Is it the cold and heartless prude whose frozen nature chills even the hot blood coursing the lecher's veins? We answer, No! Such women are unconfiding, and will suffer no familiarity at the tempter's hand, and hence are safe. But not so with our more confiding sisters. The innocent, affectionate and kind heated girls, whom nature has qualified to be happy mates and loving mothers, constitutes the class from which the lecherous villain chooses his victims, and with earnest expressions of love and fair promises, gains their confidence and works their ruin. Seduction is one of the supporting causes of the social evil, and yearly consigns untold number of man's fairest daughters to the depths of hopeless infamy: Yes! utterly hopeless! for when a young woman, through weakness or over temptation, makes one false step, her hopes of restoration are gone forever! Society closes all avenues of return. One kind word—one hand stretched forth in love to save, in most instances, would check the erring one in her downward career! But that word is left unspoken, and no saving hand is offered to the unhappy and doomed victim of man's perfidy. With a father's bitter curse, and a mother's piteous wail ringing in her ears, she leaves, forever, the home around which cluster the fond remembrances of childhood's sunny hours, and finds rest in a pauper's grave, of refuge in a house of shame and sorrow. Such is the fate society visits on the unfortunate victim of the seducer's wiles; but what measure does it mete out to him, who, for one moment's sordid gratification,
despoiled the innocence, and blighted the hope and happiness of one of its defenceless charges. It simply winks at the offence. The robber of female virtue loses nothing in point of business or social reputation. He moves in respectable circles, and ladies smile on him as winningly as before, when at the same time his wronged and ruined victim languishes in a den of shame. Where is the justice of this heartless custom. Does man possess some magician power to steep himself in lust, and yet preserve his soul unstained? And is woman so full-gorged with sin, that one false step in an unguarded hour, plunges her far beneath the reach of love's redeeming power. Oh Christianity where is thy charity! Oh Infidelity where is thy boasted philanthropy, that a sister who errs but once, must thus so fearfully suffer; while he who works her ruin and is old in crime, goes free? One-half the forbearance extended to criminal man would redeem erring woman from disgrace and misery. Loneliness is insufferable, and begets desperation, for the soul is so constituted that it must have association of some kind; hence, prostitution is based on the unerring law of cause and effect.

There is none in this cold world to soothe the torn heart, To bid the sin-promptings of anguish depart; To bid you hope on, and with love's earnest tone, To assure you, though fallen, you are not alone.

Even while we write the Magdalens of this city are being arrested by scores for the offence of keeping houses of ill fame, whilst the men who patronize and support these institutions are allowed to go free. This is the result of men-made laws. When the law-making power is once in the hands of men and women, we will have no distinct difference in the treatment of offenders. There never was a guilty woman but that a man was the instigator and sharer of her crime. Man is the positive and woman the passive offender, in all stages of prostitution. We admit that many women are criminal and depraved, but the perfidy and venality of depraved men has made them so.

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Effects are ever true to causes, and in our efforts to remedy the unfavorable phases of human existence, we must understand and remove the causes underlying them, and thus destroy the effect.

To those who have already accepted a life of shame and have become callous under its soul-dwarfing influence, we must apply a remedy different from those usually resorted to in such cases; and one in which harshness should be prescribed, and fraternal kindness instituted in its stead. Prostitution is a legitimate effect of existing conditions in society. The pious Boystons may threaten the forelorn off-cast with hell and the vengeance of their grim-visaged God, and recommend the state blood of their suffering Christ as a remedy, yet all to no purpose. What the erring children of sin most need, is mild persuasion, not dire threats, and the milk of human kindness instead of
the blood of a murdered God. The souls of the lowest, long for sympathy and love, and the most hardened can be won to virtue by their influence.

From the Christian who is deluded with the idea of being a king and a priest, and desires to sway a sceptre, we can expect but little aid in our unpopular work of practical redemption. Such would disdain to stain their whitened robes by contact with sinners and publicans. To eradicate this evil we want no whining sycophants or theoretical moralists, but a band of practical workers who are willing to make sacrifices for the good of humanity.

We want men and women in this work who are willing to be hated and despised on account of their unpopular labors; and who can stand unmoved by the mutterings of ecclesiastical thunders, and the vile invectives hurled at them by the evil genii of a god-defaming and man-degrading Church: a band of brothers and sisters who, fired by a love of the race, can fearlessly stand up and act out their highest conceptions of rights, regardless of consequences; and who, like the Son of Mary, are willing to fraternize even with harlots and sinners. There need be no fear of contamination. To the pure in heart all things are pure; and he or she who is armed with pure motives, can move in the midst of depravity, and receive no stain.

A reform movement that looks to the eradication of The Social Evil, to be effectual, must extend the fraternal hand and heart to the lowest of earth's children, and by familiar association lead them from the haunts of crime to the shining paths of virtue. And we must go still farther. We must open honorable avenues of support to those who are willing to forsake the paths of vice. Thousands are forced to expose their innocence for sale at the lecher's mart for want of bread. How harrowing the thought! A widow, with two children, can not pay her weekly bills at a second class boarding-house in this city with the entire wages she may honorably earn. What is left for such but sin, or starvation for themselves and little ones! How oft has it been said by a sad hearted child of want and disappointment, “I have sought work in vain, and I am now for sale!”

Millionaires bequeath untold wealth to erect gilded temples to God, in which the wily priests of a popular superstition perform senseless ceremonies, and their deluded devotees sit in cushioned pews and listen to silly mummeries, whilst the poor without beg for bread. If this worse than uselessly squandered wealth was applied to the erection of asylums where the famished poor could live and labor, and receive the sympathy the hungry soul so much craves, how glorious would be the results, and what spiritual wealth it would bring to the soul of the giver. It might be said: We have asylums for the poor—workhouses for paupers. This we admit, but degradation is the price of admission, and an inmate may be thrust into a cell and be left to starve, or be beaten to death, to satisfy the cruel whims of some heartless overseer, with no means of redness. In the name of outraged justice we deny the right of society to punish the criminals, and neglect the paupers which
it has manufactured. Thank heaven there is a future, in which the doomed victims of false *generation* and false *education* will be judged by the *need* of their nature, and not by the unfeeling and relentless standard of man!

The Social Evil can alone be eradicated through and by the emancipation of woman from the unfavorable necessities and dwarfing restraints society has thrown around her. Let her be placed on a perfect equality with man, occupationally, educationally and politically and socially, Woman is taught from her girlhood, in the Sunday school and from the pulpit, that she is the “weaker vessel,” whilst man is a lord of creations with the God-endowed right to rule over her. Convinced of her weakness and inferiority, she places herself graciously in the care and keeping of man, who is ever wont to immolate her innocence on the black alter of his depraved passions.

Woman must be taught the necessity of self-reliance, and that she possesses the inherent power to carve out for herself high destiny, *independent of the aid of man*. Open wide to her the road to wealth and distinction, and invite her to step forward and complete for the reward of true merit; place in her hand the ballot, that 11 by its power she may secure for herself the boon of a decent father, husband, brother and son, instead of the whisky-sucking, tobacco-eating animals that now pollute the very atmosphere of our streets with their loathsome filthy habit and pestilential emanations. Down with the damnable heresy that man may hold property in woman and lord it over her natural affections; and that woman's sphere is that of an ornament in the parlor, or a slave in the kitchen!

Mankind can alone be elevated through the elevation of woman, the mother of the races! Woman once raised above the petty slavery and humiliating necessities now so unsparingly visited upon her, will experience an unfoldment of her powers unknown before, will rise in the dignity of true womanhood, and through the laws of generation and education will stamp health of body, and strength and harmony of mind, on coming generations. Then will the millennial dawn break in upon the dark night of oppression and wrong; then will prostitution and drunkenness skulk away and hide themselves in the tombs of the past; and peace, innocence and love prevail where now strife, hate and jealousy hold high carnival. Who is not willing to work for the consummation of a result so glorious! The name of the humble worker for the true and right may never be inscribed on the pillar of fame; no laurel wreath may crown his head, or trumpet blast herald his coming and going; but a consciousness of right will ever cheer him, and when his earthly career is ended, the reformed drunkard and harlot will stand around the green mound that covers him, and say: Here lies the friend of humanity, and one that feared not to espouse the cause of the low and *depraved*!

We know the pious devotees of church superstitition 12 will scoff at the sentiment contained in these pages; but we heed them not. We reverence not, nor fear, their God; we loathe their religion, and never wish to enter their heaven. We expect to give free utterance to our highest conceptions of
truth, and accept an approving conscience for our reward. The foregoing simple pages were written
for the good of the race, and how far they may secure this result, we leave eternity to prove. “Abou
Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!) Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace, And saw, within
the moonlight in his room, Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom, An angel writing in a book of gold,
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold, And to the Presence in the room he said: ‘What writest
thou?’ The Vislon rais'd it's head, And with a look made of all sweet accord, Answered, ‘The names of
those who love the Lord.’ ‘And in mine one? said Abou. ‘Nay, not so.’ Replied the angel. Abou spoke
more low, But cheerily still; and said, ‘I pray thee, then, Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.’ The
angel wrote and vanished. The next night It came again with a great wakening light, And show'd the
names whom love of God had bless'd, And, lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.