

The proceedings of the Woman's Rights Convention, held at Akron, Ohio, May 28 and 29, 1851

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION, HELD AT AKRON, OHIO, MAY 28 AND 29, 1851.

CINCINNATI: BEN FRANKLIN BOOK AND JOB OFFICE, WALNUT STREET, ABOVE PEARL.

1851.

PROCEEDINGS.

Pursuant to a call issued, in accordance with a resolution of the "Ohio Women's Convention," held in Salem, 1850, a Convention met at the Stone Church, Akron, Summit Co., Ohio, May 28th, 1851, to consider the Rights, Duties and Relations of Women.

On motion of Emily Robinson, of Marlboro', the Convention was organized by appointing Mrs. M. A. W. Johnson, of New York, President *pro tem.* and Mrs. H. M. Little, of McConnelsville, Secretary, *pro tem.*

On Motion, a Committee of Mrs. Mary Corner, of McConnelsville, Mrs. Martha J. Tilden, of Akron, Dr. K. G. Thomas, of Marlboro', Jacob Heaton and Miss Caroline Stanton, of Salem, was appointed to nominate permanent officers for the Convention.

The call was then read by the President.

The nominating committee reported the following officers:

PRESIDENT, Mrs. Frances D. Gage, of McConnelsville.

VICE PRESIDENTS, Mr. L. A. Hine, of Cincinnati, Mrs. A. Akley, of Akron, Mrs. Sarah F. Swift, of Akron, Mrs. C. C. Burr, of New York, Miss— Webb, of Akron, Mrs. Mary Corner, of the McConnelsville, Mrs. T. C. Severance, of Cleveland, and Mrs. Mary Whiting, of Canton.

Secretaries. —Mrs. H. M. Tracy, of Columbus, Mr. Marius R. Robinson, of Marlboro', and Mrs. Sallie B. Gove, of Salem.

Business Committee. —Mrs. Mary A. W. Johnson, New York, Mrs. E. R. Coe, Michigan, Rev. D. L. Webster, Ravenna, Mrs. Jane G. Swisshelm, Pittsburgh, Pa., Mr. Jacob, Salem, Mrs. F. M. Baker, Akron, Mrs. E. B. Townsend, Akron, Dr. K. G. Thomas, Marlboro', Mr. L. A. Hine, Cincinnati, Miss Maria L. Giddings, Jefferson, Mrs. E. Robinson, Marlboro', Mrs. Mary Gilbert, Alwater. Mrs. Betsey M. Cowles, Canton, Mr. James W. Walker, New Lyme, Mrs. Cordelia D. Smalley, Randolph, Mrs. M. H. Stanton, Akron, and Dr. A. Brooke, Oakland.

The report was accepted, and the persons named elected officers of the Convention.

Upon taking the Chair, Mrs. Frances D. Gage delivered the following.

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ADDRESS.

I am at a loss, kind friends, to know whether to return you thanks or not, for the honor conferred upon me. And when I tell you that I have never in my life attended a regular business meeting, and am entirely inexperienced in the forms and ceremonies of a deliberative body, you will not be surprised that I do not feel remarkably grateful for my present position. For though you have conferred an honor upon me, I very much fear I shall not be able to reflect it back. I will try.

When our forefathers left the old and beaten paths of New England, and struck out for themselves in a new and unexplored country, they went forth with a slow and cautious step, but with firm and resolute hearts. The land of their fathers had become too small for their children. Its soil answered not their wants. The parents shook their heads, and said with doubtful and foreboding faces, "Stand still, stay at home." This has sufficed for us—we have lived and enjoyed ourselves here. True, our mountains are high, and our soil is rugged and cold; but you won't find a better; change, and trial, and toil, will meet you at every step. Stay, tarry with us, and go not forth to the wilderness.

But the children answered, Let us go. This land has sufficed for you, but the one beyond the mountains is better. We know there is trial, toil and danger; but for the sake of children, and our children, we are willing to meet all.

They went forth, and pitched their tents in the wilderness. An herculean task was before them—the rich and fertile soil was shadowed by a mighty forest, and giant trees were to be felled. The Indian roamed the wild, wide hunting-grounds, and claimed them as his own. He must be met and

subdued. The savage beasts howled defiance from every hill top and in every glen. They must be destroyed.

Did the hearts of our fathers fail? No, they entered upon their new life, their new world, with a strong faith and a mighty will. For they saw in the prospection a great and incalculable good. It was not the work of an hour, nor of a day—not of weeks or months—but of long struggling, toiling, painful years.

If they failed at one point, they took hold at another. If their paths through the wilderness were at first crooked, rough and dangerous, by little and little they improved them. The forest faded away, the savage disappeared, the wild beasts were destroyed, and the hopes and prophetic visions of their far-seeing powers in the new and untried country, were more than realized.

Permit me to draw a comparison between the situation of our forefathers in the wilderness, without even so much as a bridle path through its dark depths and our present position.

The old land, of moral, social and political privilege, seems too narrow for our wants—its soil answers not to our growing—and we feel that we see clearly a better country that we might inhabit. But there are mountains of established law and custom to overcome; a wilderness of prejudice to be subdued; a powerful foe of selfishness and self-interest to overthrow; wild beasts of pride, envy, malice and hate to destroy. But for the sake of our children, and our children's children, we have entered upon the work, hoping and praying that we may be guided by wisdom, sustained by love, and let and cheered by the earnest hope of doing good.

I shall enter into no labored argument to prove that woman does not occupy the position in society to which her capacity justly entitles her. The rights of mankind emanate from their natural wants and emotions. Are not the natural wants and emotions of humanity common too, and shared equally by both sexes? Does man hunger and thirst, suffer cold and heat more than woman? Does he love and hate, hope and fear, joy and sorrow more than woman? Does his heart thrill with a deeper pleasure in doing good? Can his soul writhe in more bitter agony under the consciousness of evil or wrong? Is the sunshine more glorious, the air more quiet, the sounds of harmony more soothing, the perfume of flowers more exquisite, or forms of beauty more soul-satisfying to his senses than to hers. To all these interrogatories every one will answer, No!

Where then did man get the authority that he now claims over one-half of humanity? From what power, the vested right to place woman—his partner, his companion, his help-meet in life—in an inferior position? Came it from nature? Nature made woman his superior when she made her his mother—his equal when she fitted her to hold the sacred position of wife. Does he draw his authority from God—from the language of holy writ? No! For it says that “Male and Female created

he them, and gave them dominion." Does he claim under the law of the land? Did woman meet with him in council, and voluntarily give up all her claim to be her own law-maker? Or did the majesty of might, place this power in his hands?—the power of the strong over the weak?—make man the matter? Yes, there, and there only he gains his authority!

In the dark ages of the past—when ignorance, superstition and bigotry held rule in the world, might made the law. But the undertone—the still small voice of Justice Love and Mercy, have ever been heard, pleading the cause of humanity, pleading for truth and right; and their low soft tones of harmony have softened the lion heart of might, and by little and little he has yielded as the centuries rolled on; and man as well as woman has been the gainer by every concession.

We will ask him to yield still—to allow the voice of woman to be heard—to let her take the position which her wants and emotions seem to require, to enjoy her natural rights. Do not answer, that woman's position is now all her natural wants and emotions require. Our meeting here together this day, proves the contrary; proves that we have aspirations that are not met. Will it be answered that we are factious, discontented spirits, striving to disturb the public order, and tear up the old fastnesses of society. So it was said of Jesus Christ and his followers, when they taught peace on earth and good will to 6 man. So it was said of our forefathers, in the great struggle for freedom. So it has been said of every reformer that has ever started out the car of progress on a new and untried track.

We fear not man as an enemy. He is our friend, or brother. Let woman speak for herself, and she will be heard. Let her claim with a calm and determined, yet loving spirit, her place, and it will be given her.

I pour out no harsh invective against the present order of rights—against our fathers, husbands and brothers; they do as they have been taught; they feel as society bids them; they act as the *law* requires. Woman must act for herself.

Oh, if all women could be impressed with the importance of their own, and with one united voice speak out in their own behalf, in behalf of humanity, they could create a revolution without armies, without bloodshed, that would do more to ameliorate the condition of mankind, to purify, elevate and enoble humanity, than all that has been done by reformers in the last century.

Letters addressed to the Convention were read from Mrs. E. J. H. Nichols, Mrs. L. J. Pierson, Mrs. L. N. Fowler, M. D., and a communication from the Half Yearly Meeting of Congregational Friends, held in Logan Co., Ohio.

The Business Committee reported a series of Resolutions, which were accepted.

On motion, the Convention adjourned, to meet at 2 o'clock, P. M.

Afternoon Session.

The Convention met according to adjournment.

The President in the Chair.

Prayer by Rev. Mr. Howels, of Pittsburgh.

The Hutchinsons were introduced to the audience, and sung the song "Coming Right Along."

Miss Sarah Coates delivered an address on the relations of the sexes.

On motion, the Resolutions were taken up, and discussed by Mrs. Swisshelm, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Heaton, Mr. Barker and Mrs. Coe.

Adjourned to meet at half-past 7 o'clock, P. M.

Evening Session.

Convened at half-past 7 o'clock, P. M.

The President in the Chair.

The resolutions were again brought up and discussed by Mr. Howels, Mr. Walker, Mrs. Coe and Mrs. Swisshelm.

Singing by the Hutchinsons.

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On motion of Mrs. Tracy, the resolutions before the Convention were laid upon the table, to be taken up at the convenience of the Convention, and Mrs. Swisshelm was requested to read a series of resolutions which she had prepared in her individual capacity. After some remarks by Dr. Brooke, the motion was carried.

Mrs. Swisshelm then read her resolutions, and made some remarks in connection with them, when the Convention voted to receive and lay them on the table, to be called up at some future time.

The Hutchinsons sung their song of Ohio, by request, after which the Convention adjourned, to meet at 9 o'clock, A. M.

Morning Session, (second day.)

According to adjournment, the Convention met at 9 o'clock. The exercises were opened by prayer by Rev. George Schlosser.

Mrs. M. A. W. Johnson reported and read a letter from Mrs. Paulina W. Davis, of Rhode Island.

The Reports of the Standing Committee appointed at the Ohio Women's Convention, held at Salem, April 19th, 1850, were then called for, and Mrs. Emily Robinson read a Report on the subject of Female Education. After remarks by Mrs. Coe and Mrs. Tracy, the Report was adopted by the Convention.

Remarks upon the subject of Education were made by Mrs. Coe, Sojourner Truth, Rev. George Schlosser and Miss Sarah Coates.

On motion, a Committee of Finance was appointed to provide for defraying the expenses of publishing the Minutes, &c., consisting of Jacob Heaton, Dr. A. Brooke and Mr. Barker.

Miss L. Maria Giddings then reported upon the subject of Common Law.

Some explanatory and supplementary remarks were made by Mrs. Tracy, Mr. Barker, Mrs. Clarke, Mrs. Coe, Mrs. Swisshelm, M. R. Robinson and Mr. Pease. The Report was accepted.

The Secretary then read a poem from the pen of Geo. W. Putnam.

The Hutchinsons were called upon and responded in an appropriate song, after some remarks from Jesse, expressing his earnest sympathy in the cause.

On motion of Mrs. Swisshelm, the resolutions reported by the Business Committee were referred back to them for reconsideration.

Adjourned to 2 o'clock, P. M.

Afternoon Session.

Convention called to order by the President.

By request, Mrs. Burr, one of the Vice Presidents, took the Chair.

On motion, Mr. Samuel Brooke was added to the Finance Committee.

The Business Committee reported that letters were received from the following individuals: Gerrit Smith, Lucy Stone, Samuel Ryly, Mrs. J. Martine, 8 Susan Ormsby, Sarah Kellogg, Joseph Treat, Mrs. Bloomer, O. S. Fowler, Elsy M. Young and H. C. Wright.

The time of the Convention being so far spent, it was moved that they be referred to a committee to prepare and publish the proceedings of the Convention. The motion was adopted.

The Business Committee reported back the original series of Resolutions unaltered, adding several new ones.

On motion of Mrs. Swisshelm, the resolutions were taken up separately for consideration.

After discussion by Mrs. Swisshelm, Mrs. Burr, Heaton, Mr. Barker, Mrs. Corner, Mr. Pease, Mrs. Hambleton, Mr. Walker, Rev. Messrs, Schlosser and Webster, the Preamble and Resolutions were amended and finally adopted.

A Report on the subject of Labor and its compensation, was read by Miss Betsey M. Cowles, of Canton, Ohio, and adopted.

Mrs. Tracy made some interesting statements concerning the compensation of women holding stations in our Public Institution, &c.

Resolutions were then offered by Mrs. Coe, Samuel Brooks and L. A. Hine, and adopted.

Resolved, That the sincere thanks of this Convention be tendered to the citizens of Akron for their hospitality in receiving the delegates into their families and proving so kindly for their entertainment

—also for furnishing them so commodious a house of meeting, and for so kindly and respectfully attending upon their deliberations.

A vote of earnest thanks was also tendered to the Hutchinsons for their kindness in adding to the pleasure and interest of the Convention.

Remarks were made by L. A. Hine, Mrs. Coe, Mrs. Swisshelm, Mrs. Burr and Mrs. Clarke.

The minutes of the meeting were read and approved.

On Motion, it was voted to adjourn, *sins die*.

RESOLUTIONS.

Inasmuch as it is self-evident that Woman has been created with as high intellectual and moral endowments, and subjected to similar necessities as Man, it is also self-evident that she is possessed naturally of a perfect equality with him in her legal, political, pecuniary, ecclesiastical and social rights: therefore

1. *Resolved*, That the inequalities which manifestly exist in the privileges of the sexes as bestowed or allowed by institutions or customs, demonstrate in their creation and perpetuation the practice of criminal injustice on the part of man, and in her unresisting toleration a reprehensible submissiveness on the part of Woman.
2. *Resolved*, That as the unjust distinction between the sexes which vitiate all known civil and ecclesiastical institutions, and so large a proportion of legislative 9 statutes and social usages, have received an apparent consecration in the opinions of a large majority of mankind by their antiquity and the blinding influence of custom, we can rely alone for their correction upon such means as will enlighten public sentiment and improve public morals; and this we can only hope to achieve in a gradual manner, though in a constantly increasing ratio.
3. *Resolved*, That as the religious instructors of the people exercise a most potent influence in moulding public sentiment, we call upon them, as they desire to promote a religion which is pure and undefiled, to afford special instruction in those principles of natural justice and equity on which alone all true religion rests, and to point out the violation of them in those oppressions which are endured by the female sex.

4. *Resolved*, That as the periodical press possesses an equal if not superior influence with the pulpit, in giving shape to that public sentiment which sustains all our political, ecclesiastical and educational relations, and general usages, we ask the conductors thereof not only to tolerate but to promote and urge through their columns the investigation of this subject.

5. *Resolved*, That as the main hope of beneficial change and effectual reform of public evils depends upon the direction given to the mind of the rising generation, we urge upon all teachers, upon all parents, and especially upon mothers, the duty of training the mind of every child to a complete comprehension of those principles of natural justice which should govern the whole subject of Human Rights, and, of course, Woman's rights, and to an accurate perception of those departures from them in human institutions and laws, which necessarily oppress woman primarily, and thereby injure man as well as woman ultimately.

6. *Resolved*, That we demand an immediate modification or repeal of all constitutional provisions and legislative enactments which create a difference in the privileges of individuals in consequence of a difference in sex.

7. *Resolved*, That Labor is physical and moral necessity, binding upon all of both sexes; but as many females—especially the seamstresses—might improve their condition by the formation of Labor Partnerships, in which each can obtain all that her labor can command in the markets of the world, we earnestly invite their attention to this subject and solicit on their behalf the sympathy, encouragement and patronage of the public.

8. *Resolved*, That as in the pecuniary oppressions to which woman is subjected are to be found the principal reasons for any deficiency of feminine purity and virtue, we call upon the philanthropic among mankind to unite in the effort to give woman the same opportunities to labor which men possess, and the same reward for its performance.

9. *Resolved*, That all avocations and pursuits which in their nature are honorable and conducive to the happiness and welfare of man, should be open to woman, if her capacity qualify her for the various duties, and her attractions impel her to enter them.

10. *Resolved*, That the Standing Committee appoint some individual to inquire, whether the monopoly of capital, or in other words, the control of the means of living, is not the primary cause of the wrongs woman suffers in regard to compensation for labor.

11. *Resolved*, That seven persons, with power to add to their number, be appointed as a Standing Committee, whose duties shall be to take charge of all matters pertaining to the interest of this issue, during the interval of the Convention, and make arrangements for the next meeting.

12. *Resolved*, That this Convention deem it of imminent importance to collect all facts relating to Woman and her position, and for this purpose authorize the Standing Committee to select suitable persons to report upon the number of attendants upon select Schools and Colleges, their adequacy and amount of funds, common schools and general education, industrial avocations and compensations, civil and political functions, social relations, common law and statutory law, and report at our next Convention.

13. *Resolved*, That we recommend the formation of District Societies throughout the State for discussion and action, in reference to the rights, duties, responsibilities and relation of the sexes.

14. *Resolved*, That we will not withhold the means of honest livelihood from those females who have lost their reputation for chastity.

15. *Resolved*, That the Standing Committee consist of Emily Robinson of Marlboro', Cordelia L. Smalley, of Randolph, Martha J. Tilden, of Akron, K. G. Thomas, M. D., of Marlboro', Sarah N. M'Millan, of Salem, Lydia Irish, of New Lisbon, Betsey M. Cowles, of Canton.

Note. —The Publishing Committee regret that they are unable to give reports of the many interesting speeches made during the deliberations. For want of room, they are also reluctantly compelled to give but extracts from some of the letter, and entirely omit many valuable communications to the Convention.

REPORTS. - REPORT ON THE COMMON LAW. BY MISS MARIA L. GIDDINGS.

The Committee appointed to examine and present to the Convention the oppressions to which woman is subjected by the Common Law, beg leave to report: That a common law unmarried females may acquire, hold and dispose of property, and make the same legal contracts, as males. Women are considered as arriving at maturity some three years earlier than males. The female attains her majority at eighteen, the male at twenty-one. Yet at common law she cannot share the inheritance of her father's lands or tenements. They go to the brothers, except under some particular customs. This is said to result from the doctrines of feudal times, that the tenant is bound to defend the soil in time of war, and as the female is considered incompetent to the task of cutting

throats, she shall not inherit the estate of her father. This absurdity is, however, discarded by the people of the United States—here, by statute in some of the States, and by peculiar construction of the common law in others, she is permitted to inherit lands.

Under the common law of England, woman is, however, permitted to inherit the highest office of the realm. At this time, crown of that mighty kingdom rests on a female brow, to HER *Majesty*, dukes, lords and statesman, do homage, while not another female in the kingdom is appointed to any office whatever. This isolated fact places in a strong light the inconsistency of the common law. Yet apparent as it is, English statesmen, jurists and philosophers, raise no voice in its condemnation, but silently give their approval. In our own country, there are some innovations upon the principle that forbids woman to hold office. A number of women have been appointed to the office of deputy postmaster, and in every instance, I think, have discharged its duties with propriety. This fact is a severe commentary upon the inconsistency of the common-law custom of holding females incapable of discharging the duties of civil life. It must be an irreconcilable contradiction to say that woman may take charge of the duties pertaining to a postoffice, keep an account of the arrival and departure of mails—make up her quarterly returns, and transact all the complicated duties of the office, and yet be incapable of voting for another person to fill offices of trust far inferior to the one which she occupies.

The disabilities of females under the common law consist, 1st. In their general exclusion from all participation in the administration of civil government. 12 2d. In taxing their property for its support in the same manner and to the same extent as that of males. Woman contributes to the pecuniary support of all officers, yet has no voice in their selection. She is taxed for the support of persons appointed to office, without reference to her opinions in relation to their qualifications: in direct violation of the great principles for which our revolutionary fathers contended with so much ardor. The Committee would not occupy time by examining this point in detail: yet they cannot refrain from asking our statesmen and legislators, why is woman placed under this disability? Is it because of defects in her education? Does she not possess sufficient intelligence? The degraded, vicious man, who scarcely knows his right hand from his left, is permitted to vote, while females of the most elevated intelligence are entirely excluded, thus evincing that virtue and intelligence are *not* the tests by which persons in this country are admitted to the right of participating in the affairs of government.

Your Committee are aware of the unique, the undefined and undefinable objection, that it would be *indelicate* for females to exercise the right of suffrage, to make their influences felt in the election of officers and in the enactment of laws by which they are themselves to be governed. This objection is not easily met, inasmuch as it is based upon no argument, no principle of logic or of common

sense. If a woman offends against the law, these advocates of female delicacy make no objection to arraigning her at the bar of our courts, with lawyers, judges, jurors, and a vulgar throng, to gaze at her. They see no impropriety, no indelicacy, in compelling her to submit to be tried by laws in the making of which she could have no voice, before officers for whom she was not permitted to vote. They appear entirely unconscious of any indelicacy in sending her to the penitentiary or the gallows, but insist that it would be indelicate for her to be allowed to vote for officers on whose judgment our property, reputation or life, may depend: or that her voice should be heard for the amelioration of the laws under which she is to suffer the severest penalties. She is held civilly amenable to those laws. She is held liable to be sued. Her property is subjected to excution and sold from her, while the sheriff, in reply to her complaints of injustice, will say, delicacy forbids that woman should have any voice in the making of laws.

Such is the force of custom, of education, of habit, that some females, forgetting the true dignity of their sex, and unmindful of the palpable injustice of these laws, appear willing to surrender their just rights to an unmeaning prejudice, to the absurd notions of an ignorant and barbarous age, and to sanction the objection to which we have alluded.

It is therefore to the women that our appeal should be made. For the sake of their own happiness, in the name of all that is good, true and just, we ask them to take counsel of reason and judgment, rather than adopt the unmeaning prejudice of barbarous men who lived in a barbarous age. If our united influence could be brought to bear in favor of elevating women to her proper station, she would soon cease to be the heartless, frivolous being we so often find her, She would become the equal, the friend, the counsellor of man—a being to bless the world, and to enjoy its blessings in return.

It is in the married state that woman labors under the greatest legal disabilities. At the moment of marriage, the law disrobes woman first of her name. ¹³ In the language of commentators, her legal existence is suspended during coverture. In the language of Lord Eldon, “the husband and wife become one person, and that person is the husband. He is the substantive; she the adjective.” In a word, there is scarcely a legal act of any description which she is competent to perform. The reason commonly assigned for this legal extinction of the woman's existence, is that there may be an indissoluble union of interest between the parties. In other words, lest the wife should sometimes be tempted to assert her rights in opposition to the husband's will, the law humanely divests her of all rights. She is said to be under the protection and influence of her husband, baron or lord. She is incapable of making a contract; her name, her person, her property, are not her own. Like the slave, she can acquire nothing, nor possess anything of her own. If her reputation be assailed, she can bring no action for redness, except in her husband's name and with his concurrence. Neither

can she be sued, except her husband be also made a defendant. In criminal prosecutions, she may be indicted and punished, unless there be evidence of coercion, from the fact that the offense was committed in the presence and by the command of the husband. The only case in which her individuality is acknowledged by the law, is in her punishment. At the marriage, the entire property in possession of the wife, except her jewels and legal paraphernalia, become the property of her husband. Her control and interest in it ceases from that moment, and thenceforth the interest and power of the husband is absolute. At the husband's death, it goes to his administrator to the payment of her husband's debts, and she retains no part of it except by statute law. Debts due to the wife at the time of her marriage, may be collected by the husband, and when reduced into his possession become his property absolutely. If personal property be left her by will, it becomes the husband's, as soon as it is received into possession by the wife; or if property be given her by a relative or friend, such gift enures to the husband's benefit and becomes his. At her death, her lands descend to her heir, subject to the husband's right of courtesy. He is entitled to the rents and profits which, when received, become his property.

The fallacy of the arguments used against granting to woman the right of holding and disposing of her own property, cannot be more triumphantly refuted than by reference to a practical illustration. In the State of Louisiana, the female, whether married or not, enjoys all these rights and privileges. The wife there manages her own property—makes her own contracts, carries on business in her own name. These laws have long been in force there, and with them all seem satisfied. Yet our northern statesmen hesitate and refuse to follow so noble an example.

To remedy these evils, we must awaken an interest in the subject. We must expose the injustice, the inconsistency of our position under the common law. We must seize upon the pillars of the temple in which its worshippers do homage to time-sanctioned errors. They must be overthrown.

In this age of improvement, of advances in the arts and sciences, of intelligence and morals; while our race is going forward and upward to its ultimate destiny; when errors, originating in ignorance, sanctioned by time, protected by prejudice, and defended by superstition, are fast yielding before the stern demands of reason and judgment, let not woman and the disabilities under which she labors be forgotten. All history bears evidence to the fact that, as nations advance in civilization and refinement, the condition of woman has been elevated, the sphere of her rights enlarged, and her influence acknowledged. She has been brought nearer and nearer to an equality with the other sex. This principle, founded upon enduring justice and eternal truth, still exists, and will prevail. This law of the human mind cannot be repealed. Its force and power must be more and more felt, as the public mind shall become better informed. Let us, then, with an unwavering confidence in the power of truth, apply our energies to the work before us.

REPORT ON LABOR. BY MISS BETSY M. COWLES.

“The rights of woman”—what are they? “The right to labor and to pray; “The right to watch while others sleep. “The right to tread the path of patience under wrong. “Such are woman's rights.”

That the right to suffer and to labor has been fully granted to woman, no person whose vision is not bounded by the limits of his or her own domestic circle, town or county, will attempt to deny. That this right has been given to woman, history fully affirms. No nation in the past has stood too high or too low in the scale of civilization, to deny to woman the right to labor. The present as well as the past, extends to her the same code of rights, enough to satisfy every wish, every demand.

Turn our eyes wherever we may, and we find this assertion verified in the condition of woman in all nations.

The Hindoo, who may be lent, sold or gambled away, for the support of her husband; the Chinese, who drags the plow with the infant tied to her back, while her husband holds it; the Tartar, who tends upon the cattle, and tans the leather, besides attending to the household avocations; the Siberian, upon whom devolves the labor of building, packing sledges, harnessing the rein-deer, weaving, tanning hides and fishing, in addition to the usual occupations of women; the Moor, whose business is to pound the rice, make the oil, and do all the drudgery; the poor African, whose condition through life is so fitly symbolized by the mortar and pestle on the grave; the Russian, paying the streets; the Finn in snow water tugging at boats and sledges; the Flanders girl, with a heavy basket of coal strapped to her back, trudging on to market; the Indian, following her husband for the purpose of carrying the game, and planting the corn. These, with numberless examples of more civilized nations, most clearly show that this right, the right to labor, is fully possessed.

Could we to-day but look upon the patient plier of the needle, who works on for eighteen or twenty hours of the twenty-four; could the metropolis of that nation, which in the scale of civilization and christianity claims to look down upon all other nations, but pour forth in one congregated mass its 30,000 seamstresses, with their toil-worn visages; could the metropolis of our own enlightened nation join her twenty or forty thousand; these, by their haggard countenances, 15 tell us, in language unmistakable, that “the right to watch while others sleep” is truly woman's.

But it may be said, what have we to do with the laboring women of Europe and other parts of the world? In reply to this, acknowledging as we do the unity of the human family,—“the world is our country”—neither boundaries or distance can isolate individuals or communities. The same causes

which have produced the suffering and degradation of laboring classes in the old world, will produce—have already produced—like results in the new.

The facts here presented are collected from reports on labor in the two nations claiming to stand highest in the scale of civilization and christianity, and if they are the true—which no intelligent person will deny—what is the comment?

The following, taken from the governmental report of Great Britain on population, furnishes the nearest approximation to the number of seamstresses in London. Including all the trades, there are over 35,000, of whom more than 28,000 are under twenty years of age. Of this number, a fraction over 2,000 are in business for themselves, leaving as operatives upwards of 33,000. It is estimated that among these, 13,000 are engaged in slop-work, making for large establishments vests, shirts, pantaloons, &c. Of these 13,000 all but about 2,000 are under twenty years of age. Some little idea of the condition of these 33,000 seamstresses may be formed, by the presentation of a few individual cases.

After great research, Mr. Mayhew succeeded in finding two, from whom he obtained a correct account of their earnings and expenditures. One of these was an old maiden woman, the other a widow; both of whom had seen better days, but who had then worked together seven years.

Says Mr. Mayhew, the very fact of their keeping an account, stamps them as above the ordinary run of needle-women: moreover, they were engaged at a class of work, bonnet making, which is better paid than either trousers or shirt work. It was *possible* for them, by sitting up three nights in the week, to earn \$2.50; but when this better class work was not to be obtained, they resorted to “trowsers work” as a means of living. Hence their income, low as it is, is above that of ordinary needle-women. They are sober, honest, industrious persons, working frequently their twenty hours a day in summer, often all night, and never (when work can be had) less than eighteen hours a day. Mr. M. gives a table of the earnings of these two women, from which it is seen, that after paying their rent, all they had left to purchase food and clothing throughout the year 1846, was four pence, or eight cents a day; during 1847, seven cents a day; and throughout the years '48 and '49, it was five cents. To obtain this pittance, let it be remembered that *they had to work from eighteen to twenty hours every day*, Sundays not excepted. Their room is an attic seven feet square, without fire-place, and several panes gone from the window, and is furnished with a bed and one chair.

The first winter they lived three months without tasting a particle of food, save oat-meal. They *never* have a fire, even in the dead of winter. This is the experience of women more industrious and

prudent than the mass of their fellow laborers. Mr. M. has made thorough inquiry, and can vouch for the truth of the above statements.

Among many other cases given by the same person, is that of a girl who was supporting herself and aged mother by making trousers at eight and ten cents 16 a pair. By working from six in the morning till ten at night, she could make two pairs a day, clearing upon an average, after paying rent, three shillings a week; upon this, herself and mother must be fed and clothed. That was impossible, and the result was, she sold herself, as thousands engaged in the same employments do, to gain for herself and mother a bare subsistence. Of the 13,000 engaged in slop-work, a virtuous one is rare; they are driven into the streets for a miserable subsistence. So much for the condition of London seamstresses.

In the "Wrongs of Woman," by Charlotte Elizabeth, we find the following statements. There are at this moment in London alone, not less than 15,000 young women employed in the millinery and dress-making establishments of 1500 employers. An experienced physician, who for twenty years has had much practice among this branch of laborers, says, in no trade or manufactory whatever, is the labor to be compared to that of the young dress-maker: no men work so long. It would be impossible for any animal to work so continuously with so little rest. During the two seasons in town, it is not uncommon to begin at six and even five in the morning, and to go on until two or three in the morning; sometimes from four in the morning until twelve at night. Some witnesses state that they have for three months successively worked twenty hours in the twenty-four. From ten to twenty minutes are allowed for meals. But the work rooms and dormitories are crowded, and no efficient means of ventilation provided. Journeywomen received very poor wages, and are often thrown out of employment, and then are soon driven to swell the tide of moral pollution which sweeps through towns and cities. Among hundreds of workers in seven factories in England, not ten men can be found, because women work harder and for less than men; hence written contracts made by husbands hiring their wives for months or years are not uncommon. Such contracts are legal both in England and America.

The lace-runners are in a most miserable condition; in winter, working thirteen or fourteen hours a day, earning two, three, or five shillings a week; the most skillful, seven.

The exquisite embroidery which so beautifully ornaments, and commands such prices in the princely establishments on Broadway. New York, is much of it obtained by paying European prices, that is, from ten to twenty and twenty-five cents a day.

But leaving Europe and coming to the land most highly favored under heaven, where as yet comparatively the hand of oppression rests lightly (save on the doomed race,) we find women

engaged in needle-work, braiding straw, making artificial flowers, book-folding; in one department of shoe-making; millinery; huckstering, domestic service; only one of which, as will be seen, affords more than a mere pittance, barely sufficient to support life. The following statistics were originally published in the New York Tribune:

First Seamstresses: There are more than 10,000 who exist on what they can earn by the needle. The following are the prices for which they are compelled to work, such as are paid by the large depots for clothing in Chatham street and elsewhere:

For making common white and checked shirts and flannel under shirts, \$0.06

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Good cotton shirts, with stitched linen bosoms, 25

Fine linen shirts, with pleated bosoms, 50

Trousers and overalls, from 8 to 10

Drawers and undershirts, 8

Sattinet, cassimere and broadcloth pants, lined, from 18 to 30

Vests, from 25 to 50

Thin coats, from 25 to 37 ½

Heavy cloth coats, 1.00

Cloth roundabouts and pea-jackets, from 25 to 50

By working from fifteen to eighteen hours a day, these employed in these establishments can earn from 75c to \$1.50 a week.

A large majority of these women are American born, many of whom have once been in comfortable and even in affluent circumstances, and have been reduced, by the death or bankruptcy of husbands and relatives, and other causes, to such straits. Others are the widows of mechanics and poor men, and have children, aged mothers and fathers, to support by their needle.

These women generally “keep house,” that is, they generally rent a room in the upper story of some poor, ill-constructed, unventilated house, in a filthy street, breathing a most sickly and deadly atmosphere, which deposits seeds of debility and disease with every inspiration.

For these rooms the tenants never pay less than three to four and a half dollars per month, and pay they must and do. Some of the very worst single garrets, perhaps lighted by a single hole in the roof, rent as low as two dollars a month. Of course, every cent of their earnings are exhausted every week, and when winter comes, they have nothing with which to add to their scanty wardrobe, and nothing with which to purchase an ounce of fuel. Their work, too, at this season, is frequently cut off-leaving no resource but the alms-house or a pauper ticket for bread and coal.

The straw braiders, a large and ill-paid class of working females, begin work at seven in the morning, and continue until seven in the evening, with no intermission save to swallow a hasty morsel. They earn when in full employ, from \$2 to 2.50 a week. Out of this, they pay for board and washing; and for the poorest accommodations must pay from \$1.50 to \$2.00 a week.

The artificial flower makers presents a greater variety. Girls who have served a five years' apprenticeship can earn \$3.50 a week. But most of the work is done by young girls who are serving apprenticeships, or who are paid 75c a week for their labor. As soon as they acquire skill sufficient to demand higher wages, they are pushed off and fresh ones obtained. Many a five-dollar wreath has been wrought into beauty by these little fingers, for perhaps 25 or 50 cents. There are about 2,000 engaged in this department in New York.

There are about 2,000 cap makers, who on an average earn about two shillings a day, although there are many who do not earn 18 cents a day. They are thrust into a dark room on an upper story, thirty or forty together, and work from sunrise to sundown. There is too often a human being who has the slightest care or responsibility over the morals, manners, or comforts, of these unfortunate girls. If they become degraded and brutalized, who can wonder? These facts and remarks apply with equal force to the hundreds and thousands of shoe-binders, type-ruffers, and other girls employed in those departments of labor.

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Dress making is divided into several distinct branches. There are the large expensive establishments, in which the principal does the patching up of broken promises, and engages the work, employing a foreman at a salary of \$5.00 or \$7.00 a week, whose business it is to fit and measure. The patrons of such establishments (who perhaps would beat down a little bare-footed girl in the price of a box of matches, or withhold a penny change for “economy,”) pay enormous prices for work, and the proprietors of such establishments realize great profits. But the work is done by those who are

employed by the week, receiving sometimes \$2.50, often \$2.00 and in some cases \$1.50; often too, laboring fourteen and sixteen hours in the twenty-four, and on special occasions nearly the whole night. Few of them are healthy looking. Another class work by the day in families, and this is the most profitable; but as skill is necessary to success, comparatively few are competent to engage in it. The apprentice system is as bad in this as in other business.

The huckster women as a class seem more independent and realize more profit from their labor, than any other laboring women. These can and do accumulate, though their appearance is anything but comfortable. There are perhaps 13,000 who spend their days and nights in about the various markets in the city.

Thus we have London representing the old world, and New York the new. These exhibit on a large scale, what is found on a less in almost or quite every densely populated town or city. Statistics published in relation to seamstresses in Cleveland the last winter, show that "'tis woman's right to labor" and "to watch while others sleep."

Domestic servitude is about the same in all cities and towns, east or west, North or South. There are in New York from 10,000 to 12,000. The average prices paid in all sections, are from \$4.00 to \$8.00 per month—usually \$6.00 is the average. The physical wants of the servant are generally better supplied, than those of any other class of working women. There is, too, a greater degree of independence than in any other class, though this independence is often exercised injudiciously, and is perpetually creating difficulties. It is easy to see that these disruptions originate in the want of sympathy between the employed and the employer, and the total absence of real interest felt by one for the other. Instance,, however, are to be met, where the real goodness of human nature shows itself under all disadvantages. But of the intellectual and moral advantages of servant girls, nothing favorable can be said. The family circle, the school, the library, the fireside talk, often even the family, yet apart from forbidden to the inmates of the kitchen. They are of the family, yet apart from it. This separation of interests among members of the same family, is the bane of private life. Evil passions are it inevitable consequences, and under its malign influences, what wonder is it, that servants become what they are generally and unhesitatingly denounced, even in their very presence, "pests and curses?" The aggregate of these laboring women in a single city, is—

Seamstresses, 10,000

Flower-makers, 2,000

Cap Makers, 2,000

Binders, 3,000

Huckster 13,000

Domestics, 12,000

19 Amounting to 42,000; and to these add the dress-makers and those engaged in millinery, the sum of nearly 50,000 would not be an over-estimate of the number of women, the majority of whom only half breathe, (to say nothing of living,) by the prices paid for labor, which upon an average employs them from twelve to fourteen hours a day, and when labor cannot be had even for that price, must starve, beg die, or worse.

Seventy-five years ago, it was quite if not entirely out of woman's sphere to engage professionally in teaching. Time, in effecting his magic changes, has wrought a wonderful revolution, and now "it is her *peculiar* province to teach, for this she seems expressly adapted by nature;" so omnipotent is public sentiment.

There are now in the State of Ohio, according to statistics obtained in 1849, 4,374 female teachers, receiving upon an average \$21.49 a year, or in proportion of half as much as is paid to the same number of male teachers.

Report from Ashtabula county for the year 1850, gives the average wages of teachers per month—

Of Males, \$16 50

" Females, 6 85

Of the teachers employed in that county, two-thirds are females. The reason given for this, is that well qualified females can be obtained at half the expense necessary to obtain male teachers with equal qualifications, while the schools can be managed as well by the former as by the latter.

The sum paid to the principals of public schools in Cincinnati is—

Males, per month, \$65 00

To Females, do. 35 00

To Male Assistants, from \$35 to 45 00

" Female do. do 16 to 18 00

And in one or two instances, 25 00

In the city of Boston, the three grades of male teachers receive—

Principal, \$15 00

First Assistant, 12 00

Second do. 8 00

Females, 3 00

In Connecticut, the average rate paid—

Male teachers per month in summer, \$20 00

Do. do. do. in winter, 17 50

Female do. do. do. 8 69

Do. do. do. in summer, 6 50

This is the average and the difference in the wages, and may be considered a fair specimen of the East and the West. Yet, says Gov. Slade, "if there is in woman any one adaptation of mind and heart distinguished above all others, it is the capacity to teach and govern children; not little children merely, but the young in all stages of progress to manhood." Others are equally lavish with their laudations.

This difference in price is not confined to teaching; the same exists in all branches of manual labor. The same amount of labor, equally well performed, if done by women, receives half compensation. This is the case where women labor in the corn or hay-field, performing an equal amount with men. Thus it 20 is at manual labor schools, where the sexes are received on equality as to studies and expenses; yet when men wash floors, or are engaged in the washing department, or in the domestic department, performing the *same kind* of labor, they received double the amount paid to females.

The facts are before us, and now comes the query as to the cause of the existing state of things? Every one who looks at the subject, must be convinced that the condition of the laboring classes 'en masse,' arises from causes which lie *deeper* than the surface; but with thousands to be employed,

and only one, two, three or four occupations in which it is "*womanly*" to be engaged, is it a wonder that there is an overplus in the market?

But what can we do? What can woman do, is often asked? If we cannot tell what she can do, we can what she can cease doing. She can cease the low jeering which in her ignorance she aims at those who earnestly seek the amelioration of the condition of woman. We say *ignorance*, knowing that her humanity would forbid it, would she but look at the reality.

She can not only help, but herself create a public sentiment which will administer justice and right. She can herself learn to administer those, and thus help to redeem this sin-racked world, and to restore that good which is lost by the long continued fall of our race.

"We do not work our wonders with the sword, Nor claim ought on such a plea; With mother and with children on their knee, With patient thought, and Love that can afford To suffer, and by suffering record His power to achieve all victory. With these, and with whatever else may be Gentlest, and with the power of the Word, We work our wonders, which none can gainsay. Unfailing, as from the grass the flower, The seed divine we scatter by the way Shall spring and ripen in its destined hour."

REPORT ON EDUCATION. BY MRS. E. ROBINSON.

The most popular objection to enlarging woman's sphere of action is her lack of educational attainment. Her meager scholarship is sneered at, and her lack of reasoning power is talked of as coolly and complacently as though her means of developing and using that faculty had been in every respect equal to man's. But of intellectual superiority or inferiority, man had better not vaunt or woman claim too much. It is a problem that cannot be solved until woman shall have enjoyed equal opportunities with man in cultivating the intellect. It is true that we find man and woman endowed with the same attributes of humanity, neither possessing a faculty of mind not common to the other, each alike responsible to God, to the present generation and to posterity, for the right use of these faculties—subjects of the same natural laws, the punishment for their violation not less harsh on woman—both possessing like aspiration for the perfection of their being—with the law of eternal progress no more visibly written on man's brow than woman's. Hence our claims to all the privileges of society and immunities of life. In yielding to man all he claims on the score of intellectual attainment, we make no unworthy concession, for, from time immemorial he has monopolized the higher institutions of learning, and those avocations most calculated to strengthen the intellect and give force to character, and thus predestined woman's inferiority.

We are told that woman has never excelled in philosophy or any of the branches of mathematics—there are no female Fergusons, Newtons or Euclids. Is it wonderful? The Universities and Colleges of the world where these sciences are taught, and the passion for their culture is originated and cherished, forbid her all access to the facilities they offer; and the aristocracy of learning they have created has prescribed the knowledge of the primary rules of arithmetic, as the infinitesimal segment constituting all that is necessary in this department of woman's sphere. We are told that we have no distinguished linguists among females—none who can stand as interpreters for the languages of this babel world. True; but under existing circumstances, this fact will not be taken as proof of inability. In after years, in the “good time coming,” when woman shall enjoy equal opportunity for intellectual acquisition, the argument will be confirmed or refuted, and not till then. In time past, that woman quite overstepped her sphere who studied the grammar of her own vernacular.

Countless millions of dollars have been expended in the erection of colleges and universities, in procuring philosophical apparatus and elucidation of facts by experiment; but woman has had no part in this, unless to contribute of her means to their support, or to attend in gaping wonder upon the astonishing experiments of some sophomoric exhibition.

The time-honored and far-famed Institutions of Oxford and Cambridge, in England, have sent out annually many hundred graduates—their preferments and benefits have ever been sacred to those who, from stronger natural endowment, needed them all the less! The female seminaries of England, like those of our land, are got up on the principle of milk for babes. True, the more favored can avail themselves of private instruction, but they are thus denied the stimulus of competition and association, thought so necessary to insure success to the student. The same may be said of the same class of institutions of other countries, whose customs and usages have influenced, to a greater or less extent, those of our own country and times.

What has been done for the exclusive benefit of man in the United States, may be inferred from the following brief statistic in reference to a few of the one hundred and thirty colleges;

The available property of Cambridge College is now between seven and eight hundred thousand dollars.

The State of New York, previous to 1832, appropriated in cash for the benefit of Columbia College, in her metropolis, \$86,225—of Union College, \$389,250—of Hamilton, \$106,800—besides lands, value unknown; and these large sums, amounting to \$582,275, were granted not to give incipient existence to, but to enlarge and help forward those institutions.

In 1821, a bill passed the Assembly of Georgia, appropriating \$25,000 for the erection of a new edifice for the Georgia University, and a permanent annual endowment of \$8,000 for the support of the Institution.

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The University of Alabama went into operation with a productive fund of half a million.

Washington founded a College at Lexington, and endowed it with an income of \$3,000. It afterwards received a legacy of an estate valued at \$100,000.

The University of Virginia, the achievement of Jefferson, is entitled to a perpetual annuity of \$15,000. Twenty years ago, a half million of dollars had been expended on its buildings and various furniture.

South Carolina College has received an annual grant from the Legislature of \$15,000. Its buildings, library, apparatus, &c., were all furnished by the State.

William and Mary College, in Virginia, in time past, had productive funds to the amount of \$120,000. I do not know that they have more or less at the present time.

Amherst has lately had donations to the amount of \$50,000, and Williams to a much larger amount from private individuals. Williams has received a late legislative grant.

The State of Michigan donated seventy-two sections of her best wild land, and loaned *one hundred thousand dollars* to give existence to her State University. The buildings, apparatus, &c., cost about eighty-five thousand dollars. The loan is nearly paid by the interest of the sale of land. There remains about two hundred thousand dollars as a permanent fund.

I do not know that there is a provision in the Constitutions or charters of one of these Colleges that prohibits women from entering them. But I do know, and everybody knows, such was not the design.

The Military Academy at West Point, has cost the nation over four millions of dollars.

And what corresponding provision has been made for woman? Who ever heard of legislative grants to science, in the benefits of which she was permitted to participate, except so far as our common schools are concerned. Government, it is true, just so far as it has made provision for common schools, gives common opportunities to all white subjects. Female Seminaries have indeed been established by private munificence and the efforts of communities. But rarely indeed have they been endowed with libraries and apparatus, and the other means of prosecuting the higher branches of science, or the acquisition of those languages which have heretofore been deemed necessary to

the accomplished scholar. I do not disparage all schools for females. I know that there are some where girls are sensibly educated. But I repeat what I know will not be denied, that fashionable schools for females are got up on the principle of milk for babes, and as such ought to be rejected by every true woman. Self-respect, fealty to God, obligation to her children, alike demand that she should turn away from them, and seek for her daughter, not an education better fitted to her sphere, but the best that the wisdom of the age can devise. She may, she ought to demand that the barriers to every instrument and source of knowledge should be removed. She may demand this, because she has, in common with her brother, faculties that designate her for intelligence and responsibility, and because each faculty should have free scope for development; because knowledge promotes happiness, increases productive power, is a bond of union in the human family, a source of enjoyment that the common vicissitudes of life can neither modify nor take away, and because it enables its possessor to reason, to discriminate and judge correctly, and thus becomes the best safeguard to the rights of humanity. A monopoly of knowledge is as much to be deprecated as a monopoly of wealth; both confer privilege and power on the few at the expense of the many.

The education received from a judicious course of scholastic training, cannot be overrated in its expanding and genial influence on character. But no matter how high an estimate you place upon it, there is another branch of education of far transcending importance on human destiny. It is that which we receive in social and domestic life. It commences in the cradle, and ceases only when the character can neither be changed nor modified by the pressure of outward circumstances. It has external and internal manifestations, or an upper and under current, as its operations influence our present or future actions. We are all teachers or pupils in turn, as we impart or receive ideas or impressions from each other. The customs and habits of society educate its members; and perhaps one reason why we make such slow progress in reform, is that we have so few good teachers in this department, so few that are qualified by having all the faculties of the mind harmoniously developed. In this department of education, the girl's first lesson is on the circumference of her sphere. Out-door amusements and athletic exercises are forbidden, lest she grow too stout, too much like a boy; her chest may expand too much, her waist grow too large, and thus give too much room and strength to the vital energies, and then too much trouble must be incurred in bringing back the mind to harmonious proportions of weakness and delicacy. A whip and top for master, and a doll and needle for miss, typifies their future relations. Their education is progressing. He is early enquired of what he will *do* or what he will be when he comes to manhood, and listens with much interest to the plans of his friends to secure him honors or independence, or both, according to their highest views of the ends of life. He learns, too, that though poor he may be, there is not a college in the land to which he cannot have access, and that there is not a post of honor or profit but what he may fill. The girl learns early enough that little effort will be needed to attain all that lies within the limits of her sphere. The ladder of ambition is easily climbed, its rounds being composed

of quiet submission. She is early taught, by precept and example, that her highest duty in society is to please and obey man; and this is so faithfully and perseveringly illustrated and enforced, that by the time she attains womanhood the impression generally is quite indelible. Too successful has been the social teaching that the more effeminate woman becomes, the nearer she lives out the purposes of her being. That her education terminates at that age when the most important part of man's commences—the disproportional reward for the same kind and amount of labor when performed by woman—that if she must leave the paternal roof to seek the means of living, she must choose between teacher, seemstress or household drudge, are important social lessons. Too early she learns that the wealth of the world is in man's hands, and he controls it—that whatever the married woman or minor enjoys beside a subsistence, they enjoy by sufferance, as man makes all the laws and obeys them to the letter when he can't help it—enforces them in all their rigor, letter and spirit upon her;—turn which way she will to make comparisons, she finds unjust and invidious distinctions.

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These are some of the social influences that educate woman—the appliances for developing her intellect. A marvel that her moral nature has not been dwarfed under their operation. These influences it is, (not divine appointment,) that have created that “natural law of social subordination of woman to man.”

We hear much said about woman's moral influences. The world as yet knows not of its power. True, she does exert a moral influence—an educational influence; but it is necessarily restricted to those who respect her individuality, for, who will learn of slaves, however elevating the doctrine they teach? In the present relation of the sexes, neither can exert their appropriate educational control over the other. Man loses his power to educate woman aright, for who, man or woman, does not detest even the words of truth, if they fall from the lips of a master.

The injustice that has been practiced on woman in cramping the powers of her mind, re-acts like a withering scourge on all the race. Among the mass of the people, the earlier and most impressible years of childhood are spent beneath the eye of the mother. How much suffering and sorrow, mental and physical, might be prevented if she understood and appreciated the principles of justice, the rights of humanity, and the laws of our physical being. No matter how wise and judicious a father may be, he cannot train up a child in the way it should go, without the help of a judicious mother. How many that now expiate crime on the gallows or in the dungeon, might have filled places of usefulness and respectability, if intelligence had been the lot of the mother! If these criminals had been trained up in the way they should go, when they were old they would not have departed from it.

It is objected that women take narrow views of the relations of life, and have small appreciation of its responsibilities. Here we have a repetition of that injustice which demands results without means—effects without causes. In all humiliation we grant that women do generally take narrow views of life; but the history of the administration of the affairs of the world proves at least that woman is not singular in this respect. She cannot rise above the special influence that has been cast about her any more than water can ascend above the level of the fountain. Politics, law, science, theology, have been and are now proscribed woman by public sentiment; and though the wide universe surround her, and its immense and infinitely varied relations connect with her, the social tyranny of the past has allotted to her as her exclusive sphere the drawing-room, the nursery and the kitchen, as embracing the whole circle of her relations and responsibilities. It is not the law of nature to afford supplies where there is no deemed. Surround her with the means of acquiring knowledge as a substitute for the circumstances which now necessarily generate ignorance and prejudice, cast upon her an appropriate share of all the burdens and responsibilities of life, and she will feel the pressure of its obligations and take larger views of its relations. Extend to her hope and her aspirations, all the emoluments, intellectual and pecuniary, which attach to those responsibilities, and no narrow views of life's relations will control her or her offspring. No longer will her children be “started upon the paths of life surrounded with ignorance, prejudice, moral weakness and false associations.”

It can be nothing an educational prejudice that creates opposition to woman assuming higher responsibilities. It is nothing but educational prejudice 25 that objects to exercising the elective franchise. Think you it would cause the mother to forget her babe? or the wife, daughter or sister to neglect the duties pertaining to those sacred relations? Did the fathers of the revolution make any worse citizens for the acknowledgment of their independence? Does history record that the relations of private life were held less sacred, and are our moral natures so unlike, that you would expect different results? But however desirable an acknowledgment of political rights may be to woman, right relations in social life are still more important, for they will ultimately secure just legislation. The revolutions that have benefitted men, have not often been the fruits of legislation, or great and immediate efforts at reform, but the quiet, imperceptible effect of social education. The spirit of exterminating hostility which once prevailed in England between the Normans and Britons, ceased, the nation knew not when or how. Slavery, which one existed there, ceased, but no legislative enactment marked the point where chattelism ceased or freedom began. No historian has or can mark the time of this important event in the world's history. It was wrought by social influences. The principles in the Declaration of Independence, that “all men are created free and equal,” and that “governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed,” and the efforts of men to incorporate them into government, and to make practical application of them to themselves, and the efforts of philanthropists to apply them to African Slavery, are the influences above all others, that have educate *woman* into the belief that they are of *universal* application and

adaptation, and that the acknowledgment of her right to self-government will benefit the whole race—that it is her duty to demand it;—and until this acknowledgment is made and has practical effect, until ye have seen this habinger, in vain will ye look and wait and watch and pray for the coming of the millennium.

ABSTRACT OF SPEECHES- Speech of Mrs. Coe.

While the position of woman was under discussion, Mrs. Coe remarked among other things:

That the condition of woman had frequently been compared with that of the slave, and she thought with considerable justice. She found a very striking analogy in many instances. The master exacts the labor of the slave, so the husband has the right to exact the labor of his wife. The master may chastise the slave, so may the husband chastise his wife. The master may restrain the liberty of the slave, so may the husband that of the wife, in cases of gross misdemeanor—while he may visit the house of shame, the gaming table, and the drunkard's haunt, and over his conduct the law allows her to exercise no other than moral restraint.

But there is one species of restraint which she can exercise, and that is to insist upon accompanying him on these missions. If it be right for him to go, it is right for her to assist him in that righteousness.

The slave has no right under the law to his own earnings, neither has the wife to her's. The husband may take the hard earnings of his wife which are necessary to buy bread for the children, and lavish them upon the harlot who has robbed her of his affections. The wife has no legal control over her children; the husband may hind them out without even consulting her. The husband, while the wife lives with him, is compelled to furnish her with the necessaries of life, but he is not obliged to do any thing more for her, and has authority to compel her to live where and move when he directs. In one sense, the wife is considered the property of the husband. He is entitled to her services and earnings, can sue for an injury done her the same as though done to his horses, cattle, &c., and put the collected damages in his own pocket. But she has no claim on his property, while he lives, except for necessary support, and has no right of action for an injury done to him, though she lose his society, protection, and support by the means. Her reputation may be injured, and yet, without the consent of her husband she cannot appeal to the law, and *with* that consent he again pockets the damages.

Should he leave her for the space of three years without providing for 28 her necessities, the law will grant her a divorce. And if, during that period of neglect, she obtain claims for services performed by her own hands, he may collect it at his pleasure and pocket the money.

And yet these laws, says Blackstone, are for the most part, intended for the protection and benefit of woman—so great a favorite is the female sex in the laws of England, (Great laughter.)

It is true the wife if permitted to enjoy, during her life, one-third of the income of her husband's estate after his death, and certain articles of household necessity are set off to the widow. Very lately, too through the labors of the Land Reformers, the Homestead Exemption has begun to improve her condition in some States.

After the reading of the report on Education, Mrs. Coe rose to correct a slight mistake which she believed had been a mere oversight in her friend. After setting forth the liberal benefactions bestowed upon colleges and other institutions endowed for men, to the utter neglect of women, in the higher departments of learning, the writer goes on to say: "And all, or the most that women has to do with those Institution is to occasionally attend an exhibition of the senior class, or some grand display gotten up for the benefit of the students."

Now, I would respectfully ask—is this all that woman has to do in the matter? Is she not compelled to take a most active part when she least expects it? Is not woman taxed to support these institutions? Who furnishes these rich endowments? Woman pay her full share toward it. No matter whether raised by direct taxation, by grants from your Legislature, or by appeals to the patriotic benevolence of your citizens. Now, man is guilty a of two-fold act of injustice toward her, first crippling the energies of her mind by depriving her of the benefits to be derived from these seminaries, and then sneering at the imbecility of character she afterwards exhibits. Is not this grinding with the heel, and then spurning with the hand the crushed being? What first tax her for the endowments of thos institutions, and then forbid her to enter their halls to gather the fruits of knowledge! Deprive her—the weak, as you will have it—of the very means deemed most necessary to the advancement and maturing of the strong! Is not the was of the Scripture upon us for this and similar oppressions of woman in the form of the feeble, pusillanimous being you call wife and sister and I will not add daughter, for with them there is yet an opportunity to apply the remedy; but so sure as you fail to do this, and continue to cut off their advancement, either positively or negative, so sure will the evil continue to react upon you in the form of weak imbecile, puerile, inconstant, and inefficient women!—for there is no more certain way of producing and keeping up a stagnation in any department of life, than by cutting off the motives and spring of action by forbidding that human beings enter the

legitimate channels of industry, enterprise, and activity. To this rule woman is no exception; to say that she is would be to deny her humanity.

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I know that there are female Seminaries springing up all over the land; but who are to be the teachers in these seminaries? From what class of females in these United States—nay, in the whole civilized world—are we to look for teachers that can compete in erudition with the Professors in your colleges? Woman is, perhaps, doing the very best she can do under the circumstances, but until she is herself prepared, how can she be expected to properly guide her sister's mind through the winding labyrinths of science? We do not deem it the business of a Republican to establish an aristocracy of letters any more than an aristocracy of any other kind, but to diffuse education throughout the masses, and to place them as nearly on a footing of equality as is possible in reference to all the great interests of life. The presumed mental inferiority of women, therefore, furnishes one of the strongest arguments in favor of a superior instead of an inferior education; since she must depend on culture instead of native strength of mind, while man being born with superior wit and wisdom, as is argued, has less need of cultivation, Nor can I perceive how any person living under a Democratic form of Government, and professing to be imbued with Democratic principles, can arrive at any other conclusion than that the education of woman should be fully equal, if not a little superior to that of man.

Yet, while for him Colleges, Academies, Lyceums, and Universities are baring their gorgeous and palace-like heads throughout the civilized world, Woman is still circumscribed, still dwarfed.

Yet will the dastardly cry of inferiority come up from generous bosoms and noble hearts, whose wives, whose mothers, whose sisters and daughters, are languishing in spiritual neglect, deprived of even the common advantages of the free negro and the wild Indian who are permitted to enter scholastic halls from which she is excluded although she must have paid her full share of their endowment, while not compensating provision is made for her. If this is not caste of the strictest and most despotic kind I know not what it is.

Something has been said of the different spheres in which the sexes are to move, and I am glad for once to hear an attempt made in the resolutions of Mrs. S. to limit that of man. I have always heard that he had a sphere, but no one before, I believe, has ever thought of prescribing bounds to it. His sphere has hitherto been all over creation, and if by any Yankee invention he could contrive means to get out of it, it would be perfectly legitimate. [Laughter.] He may not only engage in the most noble—but wherever there is a copper to be turned—may descend to the most common and ignoble pursuits, without encroaching the least on the boundaries of the sphere of any other being.

He may not only study and practice the professions, engage in extensive manufactories and mercantile enterprises, but it is considered perfectly legitimate for him to descend to the minutest details of a lady's toilet. He 30 may sell hair-pins, combs, brushes, thread, needles, breast-pins, ear and finger rings, doll-babies, with all the *et ceteras* of a child's play-house, gingerbread, beer by the glass, and even sugar candy by the penny's worth, if there is any money to be made from it; [Laughter] and it has not been inaptly said of him, that if he were to have a life's lease of heaven, on condition of being perfectly contented with it, and should hear a sixpence drop on the floor of hell, he would feel an itching palm until he had contrived some means to slip down and pick it up. [Applause and laughter.] The creed written on his young heart from the moment he leaves his mother's apron strings, is "Go get you gold, no matter how, No questions asked of the rich I trow; Steal by night, and steal by day, Doing it all in a legal way, Be hypocrite, liar, knave or fool, But don't be poor, (remember the rule:) Dimes and dollars, and dollars and dimes, An empty pocket is the worst of crimes."

Speech of Mrs. Tracy.

Mrs. Tracy, when the report on the subject of Education was under discussion, remarked:

That so far as she was informed, Ohio was the only State where women found a Collegiate Institution that admitted them to the same scholastic discipline as that prescribed for men. But thanks to the expansive spirit of this glorious State, here was to be found one Institution not afraid to try the experiment, whether woman's mind is capable of grasping and comprehending the abstruse sciences. But even this generous provision must be somewhat abridged. They must not share equal rhetorical privileges with the other sex. Their exercises must be confined to writing, and reading their productions, while their class-mates of the opposite sex, were trained to declaim, and to debate, thus giving fluency and accuracy to expression.

In view of these facts, we could not now reason at all upon the question of the absolute equality of the sexes in point of mental power; for such a character as a thoroughly educated woman was not, in the present condition of things, to be found. We could not pronounce whether she would be superior or inferior. If the minds was naturally inferior, then there was evident demand for higher cultivation, instead of the meager portion, so generally allotted.

But the question of woman's right to an equal position with man in all his relations, did not rest upon this at all. It lay at the foundation of all our natural relations, and was itself instituted by the Creator. The great question then must be, did God create them equal at the beginning? If he did, and

if woman's position for six thousand years has been the result 31 of sin, then it must be in violation of the divine harmony, and as such, should be at once rejected. If Jesus Christ came into the world to restore all things, to re-create, to become the second Adam, then is woman's equality to be sought for, and attained through the Gospel Dispensation. And not one iota would she claim that did not find its full sanction, either from the direct words of Christ, or from the comprehensive principles that he taught. The Bible had been misinterpreted often through false conceptions, and we should not turn from it as not in harmony with the highest laws of our being, till we had pondered it well. Then we should find that there was no false distinction—that Jesus never spurned nor rebuked the offices of women, but every where treated her with a consideration that proved, that truly in him, there was no recognition of male or female, but all were essentially one.

The necessity for wider scope to her energies, and more adequate compensation for labors that could be accurately estimated and compared with the productions of men, was too flagrant a violation of the golden rule to be met, with even an apology. There could be no right, no humanity, in subjecting woman to a position that induced degrading dependence, wretchedness, and crime. No thorough student of christian truth would dare say that this was in accordance with either the provisions of nature or grace, and the result must be characters but half developed, and spirits out of tune with the high harmony of creation. Man suffered to quite as fearful an extent by this unnatural condition as woman, and the consequence must be evil and only evil.

These were among the reasons why it was a solemn duty to extend to woman the means of true intellectual and social elevation.

LETTERS.- Letter from Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

Seneca Falls, May 16th, 1851.

Dear Friends:— * * * * *

It is often said to us tauntingly, "well, you have held Conventions, you have written letters and theorized, you have speechified and resolved, protested and appealed, declared and petitioned, and now what next? why do you not do something? I have as often heard the reply, "we know not what to do." Having for some years rehearsed to the unjust judge our grievances, our legal and political disabilities and social wrongs, let us at this time just glance at what we may do—at the various rights of which we may even now quietly take possession. True, our right to vote we cannot exercise until our State Constitutions are remodeled; but we can petition our legislators every session, and plead our cause before them. We can make a manifestation by going in procession to the polls at

each returning election, bearing banners, with inscription thereon of glorious sentiments handed down to us by our fathers, such as “no taxation without Representation,” “no just government can be formed without the consent of the governed,” &c., &c. We can refuse to pay taxes, and like the English dissenters suffer our good to be seized and sold, if must be. Such manifestations would arouse a class of minds that take no note for our Conventions, or their proceedings—who never dream even, that woman thinks herself defrauded of a single right. The trades and professions are all open to us; let us quietly enter and make ourselves, if not rich and famous, at least independent and respectable. Many of them, are quite proper to woman, and some peculiarly so. As merchants, postmasters, silversmiths, teachers, preachers and physicians, woman has already proved herself fully competent. Who so well fitted to fill the pulpits of our day as woman; for all admit her superior to man in the affections, high moral sentiments, and religious enthusiasm; and so long as our popular theology and reason are at loggerheads, we have no need of acute metaphysicians or skillful logicians; those who can make the most effective appeals to our imagination, our hopes and fears, are most desirable for the duties of this high office.

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Again, as Physicians; how necessary to have educated women in this profession. Give woman knowledge commensurate, with her natural qualifications, and there is no position she could assume that would be so permanently useful to her race at large and her own sex in particular, as that of ministering angel to the sick and afflicted,—net an angel capable of sympathizing with suffering merely, but with the power to relieve it. The science of obstetrics is a branch of the profession which should be wholly monopolized by women. It is an outrage on common decency which nothing but the tyrant custom can excuse, for man to practice in this branch of the professions. “It is now in this country and in England almost exclusively in the hands of the male practitioner, though from the earliest history down to 1663, it was practiced by women. The distinguished individual first to make the innovation on the ancient, time-sanctified custom, was no less a personage than a court prostitute, the Duchess of Villiers, a favorite mistress of Louis XIV, of France.” This is a formidable evil, and productive of much immorality, misery and crime. Now that some medical colleges are open to women, and one has been established in Philadelphia exclusively for our sex, I hope this custom may be abolished as speedily as possible. It seems to me its existence argues a much greater want of delicacy and refinement in woman, than would the practice of the profession by her, in all its various branches.

But the great work before us is the proper education of those just coming on the stage. Begin with girls of this day, and in twenty years we can revolutionize this nation. The childhood of woman must be free and untrammelled; the girl must be allowed to romp and play, climb, skate and swim,—her clothing must be more like that of the boy; strong, loose-fitting garments, thick boots &c., that she

may be out in all seasons, and enter freely into all kinds of sports. Teach the girls to go alone, by night and, day—if need be on the lonely highway or through the busy streets of the metropolis. The manner in which all courage and self-reliance is early educated out of the girl—her path portrayed with danger and difficulties that never exist, is melancholy indeed. Better, far, suffer, occasional insults, or die outright, than live the life of a coward, or never more without a protector. The best protection that any woman can have, one that will serve her at all times and in all places, is *courage*, and this she must get by experience, and experience comes by exposure. Let the girl be thoroughly developed in body and soul,—not moulded like a piece of clay after some artificial specimen of humanity, with a body after some plate in Godey's book of fashion, and a mind after the type of Father Gregory's pattern daughters, loaded down with the traditions, proprieties and sentimentalies of generations of silly mothers and grandmothers, but left free to be, to grow, to feel, to think and to act. Development in one thing—that system of cramping, restraining, torturing, perverting and mystifying, called education, is quite another. We have had women enough befouled under the one system; pray let us try the other. The girl must early be impressed with the idea that she is to be a “hand and not a mouth”—a worker and not a drone, in the great hive of human action. She must be taught to look forward to a life of self-dependence, and like the boy, prepare herself for some lucrative trade or profession.

Woman has relied, heretofore, too entirely on her needle for support; that one-eyed demon of destruction, that evil genius of our sex which slays its thousands annually, and in spite of all our devotion, will never make us healthy or wise. The girl must be taught that it is no part of her life to cater to the prejudices of those around her; make her independent of public sentiment, by showing her how worthless and rotten a thing it is. It is a settled axiom with me that public sentiment is utterly false on every subject. I know not one in which it is not in direct violation of all the holiest, and noblest aspirations of our nature, and yet what a tyrant it is over us all, over woman especially, who is so educated that it is her very life to please, her highest ambition to be approved. But one outrage this tyrant, place yourself beyond his jurisdiction, taste the joy of free thought and action, and how powerless is his rule over you!—his sceptre lies broken at your feet—his very bubblings of condemnation are sweet music in your ears!—his darkening frown is sunshine to your heart! for they tell of your triumph and his discomfit. Think you, women thus educated, would be the frail, dependent beings we now find them? By no means. Depend upon it, they would soon settle this whole question of woman's rights. As educated capitalists and skillful laborers, they would not be long in finding their true level in political and social life.

Yours sincerely, E. C. STANTON.

Letter from Mrs. Bloomer.

Seneca Falls, N. Y., May 9th, 1851:

Ladies: * * * I am deeply impressed with a sense of the great wrong done to woman in every branch of her education, and I hail with pleasurable feelings every movement which has for its object her emancipation from ignorance and bondage.

It was from contemplating the condition of the oppressed and downtrodden of my own sex, who are victims to the cruelties of the liquor traffic, that I was first led to see upon how wrong a basis society at present rests. We see many a woman who has been cradled in luxury, and reared with tenderness, who is now spurned from the society of the good and respectable, as a thing too low to receive even respectful kindness. Her feelings are as tender now as ever—her heart as pure, but alas! she has been unfortunate in wedding one whom the laws of this enlightened land have made a *drunkard*. No matter how highly educated, no matter how wealthy, no matter in how high a circle she moved previous to the time when her 36 identity was merged in his, she is now a *drunkard's wife*, and no words can express more of sorrow, degradation and wretchedness, than implied in those two words,—a *drunkard's wife*. We see her now, poor, dejected and forlorn, toiling early and late to earn a subsistence, and then often compelled by fear and brutal force, to yield up the pittance she has earned, to an idle and dissolute being whom the law calls her husband, that he may with it imbrute soul still deeper in infamy. She is outraged in her every feeling, her affections trampled upon, her person subjected to the most violent abuse, her children corrupted and destroyed, or left to starve before her eyes. She has been deprived of every right, stripped of every comfort, and compelled to toil like a very slave to earn the necessaries of life, and at last driven forth to beg or starve,—or what is equally degrading, to end her days in a poor house or brothel. All this, and *more*, has woman suffered from the legalized traffic in strong drinks, while they who have caused it all, have been respected of men, and shielded by *law* from the punishment and scorn they so richly deserve.

It is surprising that women have so long submitted to these indignities, instead of rising *en masse* and demanding relief and protection. And yet what could they do? They have ever been taught that they were weak and powerless, and that the will of their masters must be their law; hence we see them silently submitting to man's dictates, and bending their backs to the burthen he has heaped upon them. They have been taught that God created them inferior, and designed them to occupy an inferior and subordinate position, and to rebel against man's rule was to rebel against God. Many minds are so impressed with this belief, that notwithstanding the hardness of their fate, they feel that they must meekly bow their necks to the yoke which the Great Master has laid upon them.

They never stop to ask if or why this is so, or to inquire whether a just and holy God can with justice require so much at their hands.

Those who dare to speak out against this injustice, and come in earnest before the people, claiming that the rights which have been wrested from them shall be restored, are met with ridicule, scoffs and abuse. They may beg, they may plead, they may pray,—it avails them not. Their laws makers turn a deaf ear, and the rum-seller spurns them from his presence. They may endure every hardship, labor in the most menial employments exposed themselves to the gaze of licentious men upon the theatrical stage, become a paupers or public prostitutes, and nobody cares; “they are within their sphere.” But let them come forth like true women, pleading in the name of God and humanity, that their wrongs may be redressed, and their rights restored, and they are at once condemned. They have outstepped their sphere and become “manish.”

Man claims the right to represent us, and to legislate for us, but alas! we have had too much of his legislation. We have never been faithfully represented—we have never been consulted as to our opinions and wishes. Man has made laws to suit his own views and interests, and then exacted 37 obedience from us. Methinks if woman had a voice in making the laws, she would guard her own interests better than they have ever yet been guarded. She knows better than man *can* know what her interest are, and he has no right to exclude her from a participation in framing the laws by which she is to be governed.

* * * * * But woman is herself aroused to a sense of her wrongs, and sees the necessity of action on her part, if she would have justice done her. A brighter day has dawned for her; a spirit of inquiry has awakened in her bosom, which neither ridicule or taunts can quench. Henceforth her course is upward and onward! Her mind is capable of grasping things hitherto thought beyond her reach, and she will not weary of the chase, till she has reached the topmost round in the ladder of science! She will yet prove conclusively that she possesses the same God-given faculties which belong to man, and that she is endowed with powers of mind and body suitable for any emergency in which she may be placed.

But I will conclude with the prayer, that the blessing of God may rest upon and guide you in your deliberations.

Yours, in every good cause, AMELIA BLOOMER.

Letter from Lydia Jane Pierson.

Liberty, May 15, 1851.

Mrs. Sally B. Gove:

Dear Madam: * * * * * It is time for woman to arise, and not merely assert but *prove* her God-given right to walk by the side of him who has so long kept her a chained vassal at his feet. Woman's condition is almost that of a chattel slave. When her bonds are woven of silk or twisted of flowers (keep away the thorny *roses*,) she may smile and daily with them, deeming them ornaments, defences even; but when those bonds are heavy chains of cold, hard iron, or braided thorns, with have and there a flower, what sophistry can persuade her that they are pleasant and beautiful?

How many women are there who have married young, and to poor young men, who have toiled and economised, till after years of patient and devoted industry, a little property has been accumulated—property of which they do not own a dollar, getting but a living from day to day,—liberal or meagre, as their masters please! How many possessing property have married and been beggared by their husbands, who by drunkenness, gambling and other vices, have squandered all! And she is called an “*angle woman*,” who will continue to dwell with drunken man,—the lowest, filthiest and worst creature of which we can form any estimate—meekly enduring his outrageous abuse, and more detestable fits of fondness—rearing up heirs of his poverty, vices and diseases—enduring a life-long 38 long martyrdom in expectation of a heavenly reward! But since heaven may be attained by more pleasant paths, who can choose a road so full of torture? Talk of woman's love and constancy, they are all but infinite; but once break the barrier of public opinion; take away the stigma of separation, and many a tyrant and inebriate would find himself minus a patient wife and prudent house-keeper; and perchance in such times, men who have had real regard for their wives, would be a little cautions of venting all their ill-humor on such “*devoted helpless heads*.”

* * * Understand me. I am no advocate for disunion, domestic or national. Nothing short of the certainty of misery and wretchedness, so long as the marriage relation exists, can justify and husband or wife in repudiating these relations. Yet no woman ought to feel bound to live with a drunkard. It ought rather to be deemed a disgrace for her to do so; a mark of a mean, weak spirit to associate with such infamy. * * *

I said it is time for woman to prove her right to equality with man. But to attain a true position relative to each other, man no less than women needs to be elevated. Sorry should I be to see woman sunk to his level. It is man whose domestic education is neglected, who is suffered to be tyrannical, rebellious, willful, passionate and immodest, “*because he is a boy*.” While man is what he is, I pray that woman may never be *elevated* to his level!

But when a just system of education shall have made man purer, and woman stronger, then let people talk of equality between the sexes. Such equality will then exist, and no one will presume to deny its existence, or controvert its fitness. But the sword must be broken up, the land put in order, the seed sown, and the young plants nurtured, before the harvest can appear; so must old customs and prejudices be broken through, and good germ sown and cultivated, before Justice, Liberty and Equality, will become existing realities upon earth. At present they are only by-words for tyrants and demagogues.

To exterminate evil, we must begin at the root. To build a structure, we must commence at the foundation; and it will require no small amount of patience and persevering industry to root up old prejudice, and by a persevering system of right education lay the foundation of universal and equal happiness. But we must remember that no real good can flow from any other source than goodness, and that the fountain of all goodness is the Christian's God. Let us attempt nothing on which we are not free to ask his blessing.

With respect, your fellow-laborer, LYDIA JANE PIERSON.

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Letter from Mrs. C. M. Steele, PRINCIPAL OF THE BLACK ROCK FEMALE SEMINARY.

Dear Sister in Reform: * * * * Those who enter the field after successful competition has encouraged hope, cannot be rewarded with laurels, but may have the satisfaction of having shouted applause to the visitors. In this humble relation, I follow you. Isolated from the theatre of your action, I have been ready to cry out, what are the wrongs which oppress us? Are we not cherished objects of love and affection? Do we not have all our wants supplied ere we utter them? Are we not dandled upon the knees of caressing fathers, and receiving the especial attention of devoted brothers? Yes, and to all these succeed the sighing adulation of despairing lovers! until we instinctively imbibe the idea that we are born *divinities*, at whose shrine the man *world* worships. Thus have we fallen into the silken fetters of our own vanity, and become the *pets* of man and not his help-mate. * * * * Like some aspect of slavery, to which it is allied, it wears the semblance of pleasure rather than of pain.

To us who have laid in the dust the loved heads of fathers, brothers and husbands, the beauty of this system of independence has departed. We look around us in vain for a refuge from dismay. We begin, then, to understand the new-coined phrase "the rights of women," and wonder at our obtuseness in not discovering it before, while investigating the subject of human rights; and we seek a subterfuge in the genial circumstances which have surrounded us, unhappily now our no longer.

Thrown upon the scanty resources of such an education, we recoil instinctively, from a contest with a bleak and pitiless world, which has no heart to receive us as was wont, and the eye of tender endearment look from its sainted abode upon the withered flower fallen from the bosom of its love, cast forth and trodden under foot of men. Hence the infusion from the high source of that spirit of reform which now broods over the effulgent age of improvement, confining not its labors to one class or a few classes of the species, but bestowing them upon all who bear the image of their Maker.

Oppression supposes an oppressor; and man who shows himself a guardian angel, or our *chevalier*, and who would upon the first note of alarm rush to our aid, to succour us and to redress any wrongs of which we might complain, is surprised to be considered the oppressor. The system is one interwoven into the fabric of our common nature, and has become subsidiary to our domestic relations, that the less should submit to the greater. To subvert the natural order that man should lead and woman follow, is deemed insane.

The ability of woman you will not, in all becoming modesty, pretend to] discuss in your convention, but rather her responsibility. What is the basis of woman's rights and responsibilities? That of society imposing its regulations and binding its members in a social compact. It gives and expects 40 to receive. Hence its duties and obligations. In view of this, the question will often recur, what do I owe and what is the measure of my obligations? What answer can I make in view of the evils of slavery, of war, and oppression of every grade arising from the multiform images of war and intemperance, which stalk unheeded and uncared-for in our midst? Ought we to remain listless and inactive while having the head, heart and hand, to cope successfully with them? Union of effort in a good cause has the promise of success. How would every mother and daughter's heart leap for joy, if by her right of suffrage she could arrest the tide of moral desolation, which threatens to engulf in one common ruin or country, famed otherwise for exemplified prosperity!

With the Christian chart and compass to govern you in all your deliberations, I heartily bid you God speed, confident of your entire success, and happy at all times to lend you my humble aid.

Yours, in the cause of reform, C. M. STEELE.

Letter from Mrs. Elizabeth Wilson.

Cadiz, Ohio, May 1st, 1851.

*Much Esteemed Friends and Fellow Laborers: * * * **

I will here notice some remarks of Mr. Andrews, of Cuyahoga, upon the Report of the Committee, on the elective franchise made in the Constitutional Convention. He was in favor of colored men exercising the right of suffrage, but *opposed to women* enjoying that right. When speaking with reference to colored men, he denied that the right of suffrage was one of mere expediency—it was a matter of right, that a man who is the subject of government and shares its burthens, has a right to participate in its administration. That taxation and representation go together. Now, are not women the subjects of government? and is not the property of many unmarried women taxed for its support? From his logic, the elective franchise belongs to *woman as a right*. He says, He does not understand the right of suffrage to be a *natural* or an inalienable right, nor resting on any general declaration of the natural equality of men, and that a majority of the people have a right to restrict it, when circumstances demand. He says, “It is on this principle alone, that the elective franchise is withheld from females.” “A majority of the people” but women are not people!! We hold the right of suffrage to be a *natural* and *inalienable right*, and so thought our revolutionary fathers. They say, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

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What rights are governments instituted to secure? These *natural* and *inalienable rights*, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. And what gives government its just power? “The consent of the governed,” a voice in its administration. It is God that gives our rights. Government is the *offspring of rights, not the parent*. Sex has nothing to do with rights. Human rights *originate* in the mental and moral constitution of man.

According to the *principles* of the United States Constitution, women are entitled to vote, nor is there any thing in the letter to exclude them. That women have never been permitted to vote, only goes to show men's inconsistencies. That we ought to have a voice in all human laws which govern our actions is plain, from our individual accountability. We must see to it, that man's law does not contravene the “higher law.”

Mr. Andrews says, “We exclude females from representation in the State, upon considerations of public policy, that look to their position—their happiness—the effect of marriage on their legal rights—and, more than all, to the peace and harmony of the Domestic Relation.” “Considerations of public policy, that look to their position!!” Here we are left in the dark. We suppose he means, it is the policy of the strong arm of power to reduce women to *slavery in kind*, and to constitute them servile, dependent vassals, to secure the authority in the hands of the male sex. “Their happiness.”

Certainly, this is very compassionate, but we would prefer to judge of our own pursuit of happiness. "The effect of marriage on their legal rights." It is certainly a little funny, we had almost said, silly, to hear men, when they speak of woman's rights, always fleeing to the marriage relation, just as if every woman was a wife! Thousands of women have no husbands, and some are very extensive property holders. Or in case they are married, will the husband take the wife's place in a State prison? or on the gallows? "And more than all, the peace and harmony of the domestic relation? Here again every woman is considered a wife! More bitter contentions have never arisen in the world, than those which have grown out of religious principles. Would it not be as well to give the husband all the thinking for the wife in religious matters, to "promote the peace and harmony of the domestic relation?" We have a better opinion of a majority of husbands, than to think they would be so tyrannical as to "disturb the peace and harmony of the domestic relation," because their wives would vote for the candidates of their choice. As it is a *natural right*, women are entitled to it, *and must have it*, and the God of nature will take care of the consequence. She must be a constituent part of the sovereignty, as God requires of her, political duties: "Queens shall be your nursing mothers." Is. 49, 23.

The friends of this reform have great reason to "thank God and take courage." The question is growing fast in interest, and it only needs to be examined to be favorably received. Dear brothers and sisters, I will no longer trespass on your time and patience. My God direct your deliberations. 42 Yours affectionately, in the bonds of the entire brotherhood of the whole human family, ELIZABETH WILSON.

Letter from Mrs. C. J. H. Nichols.

Brattleboro, May 19, 1851.

Sisters, Brothers! —God bless your deliberations! Womanhood, crushed and despairing, has heard your call and suspended the sigh of despair to nurse a hope full of the beatitude of love. And womanhood, that has forced itself up into the bracing atmosphere of its God-ordained responsibilities, and grown strong and affluent in their discharge, responds joyfully to a movement that promises to emancipate and elevate the race, by opening to it the mother-fountains of humanity.

As a result of the publicity given to the objects of the movers in behalf of Woman's Rights, I have the unspeakable satisfaction to refer to the improved tone of the newspaper press of the country, on topics involved in the subject of woman's rights and responsibilities. But improved as is the tone of the Press, I am happy to say that, in my more immediate circle of observation, the masses of

the people are in advance of the Press. I am also happy to perceive that every attempt to throw opprobrium upon the subject has signally failed, except to create distrust of those who resort to such means of opposition.

The action of our State Legislatures has, with few exceptions, given evidence of a growing interest in behalf of woman's rights, and, in some instances, a decided advance has been taken in her favor. If the principle of legal dependence has not been discarded, we may well take courage from the unmistakable evidences, that our legislators are becoming subject to compunctions, visitings of shame, for past selfishness. And while I would not undervalue the efficiency of petition and remonstrance, as involving extended notoriety of the wrongs and rights of woman, I am constrained to believe that each point gained by the sex, in a free and more efficient development of their energies, tells more *effectually* on "the good time coming."

In conclusion, if I were to say which of all the means resorted to, is in my judgment accomplishing most for woman's social and civil advancement, I would give the preference to the presentation of her responsibilities as growing out of God-created, fixed relations; because, in their discussion they furnish the most powerful lever that can be brought to bear in changing that popular opinion in which the laws, so unjust to woman, have had their origin.

We may learn a lesson of wisdom from the odious Fugitive Slave Law; a lesson teaching that laws, either behind or in advance of public sentiment, are comparatively powerless for their objects. Let us then labor with all earnestness to suit the times to the laws we ask—to fashion public opinion to give, what were but half possessed if compelled.

I remain, dear friends, yours for God and humanity, C. J. H. NICHOLS.

Editor Windham County, V. T. Democrat.

Letter from Miss Eliza M. Young.

Oquaba, Henderson, Co., Illinois, May, 15, 1851.

We desire to add a word of encouragement to those of our native State who are exerting their influence in favor of Women's Rights. Women as well as men may differ with regard to the position she *should* occupy in society, but that a reformation is needed, both intellectually and legally, none will deny. Many of the evils of which we complain have no doubt escaped the notice of our law-makers because they were not immediately interested; but upon us who have suffered, they press

with a weight too grievous to be borne. Let us be so paid for our labor that we need not work from the rising of the sun till long after he has sunk behind the western hills, to procure the necessaries of life. Give us time to procure food for the mind as well as the body; give us equal facilities for an education, with men; give woman a position above dependence upon the charities of those whom she has spent the best years of her life in training from infancy to manhood; show by your manner and conversation that you think her capable of something more elevating than discussing the fashion of a bonnet or the style of a dress, or the vulgar gossip of a neighborhood; make it more honorable for her understand the laws of her country, and the principles on which they are founded, than to spend her time in reading foolish love stories; let the standard of morality be the same in one sex as the other, do not crush women for that which is winked at in men; make licentiousness equally degrading in man as in women. And when woman attains her true position in society, if it is thought unfit for her to fill offices of government, and take seats in Congress, she will at least be better prepared to train her sons to fill them with dignity and honor. Sincerely hoping that your efforts may be the means of bringing about a better state of things, we say to you press onward and upward, and may the Giver of every good and perfect gift, grant you wisdom in your deliberations.

In behalf of the Oquaba Union of Daughters of Temperance, ELIZA M. YOUNG

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Letter from Henry C. Wright.

Flushing, Long Island, May 20, 1851.

To the Woman's Rights Convention.

Dear Friends: —* * * * The effort being made by yourselves and others to secure to woman her rights as a human being, and her true position in reference to the customs and institutions of society, ought to be, and ere long will be, regarded as one of the most important movements of the age. It involves all that is pure, elevating and endearing in domestic life; all that is lovely, good and great in social life; all that is useful and enduring in religious and social institutions. The abolition of intemperance, war, slavery, and all the individual and social wrongs of mankind, and the regeneration and redemption of the race from the physical, intellectual, social and moral evils that now crush it, must be associated with this movement. I see not how any being, whose destiny is linked with that of human-kind, can treat this subject lightly, or remain indifferent to it.

Man and Woman cannot be separated in their destiny. Where woman goes, man must go; where man goes, woman must go; as the one rises or sinks in intelligence, in wisdom and virtue, so must

the other rise or fall. * * * * * Man cannot be saved without the aid of woman; woman cannot be saved without the aid of man. United in love, in counsel and effort, progress in wisdom and goodness, towards the heavenly and divine; is certain; disunited in affection, in interest, in plans or in their execution, degradation and ruin must follow. This should be settled as a fixed fact in the minds of all who take part in this movement.

* * * * * Whatever right of property or person, of government or religion; in the family, in the market, in the church, the court, the cabinet, legislative hall, or in the public assembly, belongs to man, belongs also to woman. In arranging and conducting the affairs of life in regard to our domestic, pecuniary, social, religious and civil concerns, this fact is denied or disregarded. To enlighten the understanding and consciences of men, and to arouse their moral nature in regard to this great law of our being, should be one great aim of all who are interested in this enterprise. In asserting your Humanity, you assert the fact that whatever right belongs to one human being, belongs to each and every one, without regard to sex, complexion, condition, caste or country. Woman is a human being; and it is a self-evident truth that whatever right belongs to man by virtue of his membership in the human family, belongs to her by the same tenure. This truth is not to be reasoned about; it is self-evident. No power in the universe can have the right to put woman in a position of subjection to man, or man in subjection to woman. As regards their relations to each other, they are equals; and neither can justly be held responsible, as subject to any power but the Divine. It is not right or expedient to submit this question to the contingency of a discussion, for you could not submit 45 to it if the decision were against you. Why appeal to a tribunal at all, whose decision, in this matter you have determined not to abide by, if it is against you? To do so would be neither dignified nor honest.

Dear friends, permit me to remind you not to be disheartened though few join you. There are tens of thousands interested in this movement who have not courage to become a part of it. Be more anxious to plant yourselves on the rock of eternal truth, and to abide there, than to increase your numbers. Truth goes not by numbers, but is instinct with divine life, and it must triumph.

* * * May truth, in regard to the rights and position of woman, and to her connexion with the true development and destiny of our nature, be your aim, and uncompromising fidelity to that truth, your endeavor.

Yours truly, HENRY C. WRIGHT.

Letter from Mrs. Paulina W. Davis.

Providence, April 26, 1851.

Mrs. McMillan:

Dear Madam: * * * * * I have few apprehensions for your Convention, for I have great faith in woman, in her instincts, her delicacy and truth, and I have the greater faith in those who have but recently began to work. There is always power in the first awakenings of enthusiasm; there is also a hopefulness that leads the actors to believe well of others; and in a struggle of this kind it is essential that we look with charity upon the wrong doers; in fact, so involved are we all in the sin, that we cannot shift it all upon our brothers' shoulders; indeed I am sometimes half disposed to consider woman the more guilty one.

I know the answer is that man educates her and makes her what she is. But how have the duties of the mother been performed, that the son should go out from her influence without a just sense of the rights of her who bore him. In one family you will find mother and sister toiling like southern slaves, early and late, for a son who sleeps on the downiest couch, wears the finest linen, and spends his hundreds of dollars in a wild college life. How should he not feel that women were made purposely to minister to his happiness? On the other hand, a son is forced to labor, without stint or measure, for a sister's support who leads an idle, aimless life. Has not a foul wrong been done them both? To one, she is the drudging, patient slave; to the other, a toy to amuse in an idle hour, to be petted and flattered; but not the less is she a slave. Whose is the fault? Would not a wise mother have given to each an aim in life? Would she not have sought from their very infancy to prevent antagonisms of interest. While our relations in life are all so false, man is not more free than woman.

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"Can man be free if woman be a slave? Chain one who lives and breathes this boundless air To the Corruption of a closed grave! Can they whose mates are beats, condemned to bear Scorn heavier far than toil or anguish, dare To trample their oppressors?"

The happiness and truth of the marriage relation absolutely pivots itself on this very movement. In that relation woman must give the law, and redeem it from its present sensual and mental pollutions. She must not be taught to feel from her very girlhood, but man is so wholly unlike herself, governed not only by stronger passions, but of a character that it would be shameful for her to share, or even comprehend; and that when she marries, she must not presume that she has the right to the control of her own person, because, forsooth, indulgence is essential to the health of her husband, nay, even his very life is involved. Excessive maternity follows for a few years, then exhaustion, weariness and death comes to close the drama. A sad winding up of a sad false theory and practice. Morally and physiologically false, as all know who are sufficiently unperverted to look at

it calmly. I know this is a delicate question to probe, but it is not the less necessary. The mother has the teaching on all these questions; and I would here remark that if she has physiological knowledge, which is the positive root of all these other outgrowths of reform, she will find no difficulty in giving the requisite instruction to her sons as well as her daughters.

Woman is ideally annihilated in the marriage relation, and to all intents and purpose enslaved; so inwrought into the very textures and tissues of man's nature, even the noblest among them, is this subtle principle, that it has its influence upon them. Old ideas and old habitudes of mind long survive the causes which produced them. The shadows of night linger in the sheltered nooks and deep dells, till the sun is waning. So it will be the work of a whole creation day, to remove all the darkness that now obscures the light.

We ask that the thousands of strong young men who are crowding behind the counters, selling ribbons and laces, shall with a true manly spirit go forth and cultivate the broad, glorious prairies of the west, dam the rivers, fell the forests, "and make the wilderness to bud and blossom as the rose." Then he can with safety ask to share his home, a woman that has a pecuniary independence, for she will enter the holy relation from a natural attraction, and not as she does now, rushing with desperation from one false position to another, and performing its duties as slaves always do, with caution, cunning, fear, duplicity and management. * * * * In such false relations, neither man nor woman can be symmetrically developed, nor can they inherit lofty and pure organizations.

Yours, very truly, P. W. DAVIS.

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The following letter from Dr. Buchanan, was sent to the Convention, but delayed by the mail until its adjournment.

THE SPHERE OF WOMAN.

A Convention of the friends of woman's rights and woman's elevation was held at Akron, Ohio, on the 28th of May. An invitation from a committee of the ladies engaged in the movement, elicited the following expression of sentiment, which I take the liberty of laying before the readers of the Journal of Man, believing from their liberal spirit of philanthropic reform, that they would feel a lively interest in this department of humanitarian progress:

To the officers and members of the Woman's Rights Convention, at Akron.

To noble and interesting struggle in which you are engaged for the elevation of women, should command the approbation of every intelligent being.

When you propose to enlarge or elevate the sphere of woman's existence, you are met by the objection that her present sphere is sufficiently enlarged and elevated for the development of the best qualities of her character, and that when we remove existing restriction so as to give her equality of opportunities with man, we but tempt her to enter a career in which her true womanhood will be sacrificed, her distinctive virtues lost, and all the vices of man assumed. If this were true, no such reform in woman's relations would be desirable, but believing it untrue, I propose to show, by the evidence of science, what is the proper sphere of woman.

The most important fact in the history of woman, is that she is the mother of all future generations of the human race, and that they are blessed or cursed by her influence, in proportion as she has been well or ill qualified for the duties of maternity.

Upon her depends, whether the incalculable millions of all coming time shall be a pallid, scrofulous, feeble and consumptive race, or shall be hardy, healthy and powerful—whether they shall be gluttonous, intemperate, passionate, murderous and knavish, or honorable, philanthropic, temperate and holy—whether they shall move right on through science, to harmony and happiness, or shall still struggle through ignorance and crime—through pauperism, strife and war, inflicting incalculable misery upon each other.

All this depends upon the character which woman transmits to her offspring, and *that* depends upon the character which she achieves for herself, as it is beyond a doubt that whatever exists in herself, is, in a greater or less degree, reproduced in her offspring.

Hence the great question in determining the proper sphere of woman, is, what is the sphere of life in which she may best develop her whole nature. What is the sphere of life in which she can obtain and store up for posterity the greatest amount of health and happiness—of intellectual and moral development.

If we ascertain such a sphere, it is our duty to place her in it—and he who would surround her with restraints to prevent her obtaining such a position, becomes guilty of all the direful consequences inflicted upon the future millions, as well as upon the present generation.

48

There is not in the nature of things any reason why the world should not be filled with every human excellence. There is no reason why men should not be invulnerable in health, incorruptible in morals,

gigantic in stature, and god-like in intellect, knowledge and virtue. According to the laws of nature, it is not more difficult or mysterious to fill the world with the strength of Hercules, or the beauty of Apollo, than to cover it with scrofulous misery and baboon-like deformity. In accordance with the general laws of human improvement and hereditary descent, one result is just as intelligible and as accessible as the other.

Which of these results shall be attained, depends mainly upon the sphere of woman. Whether the future of this world shall be bright or dark—whether it shall be painted with the hues of Heaven or of Hell, depends upon the sphere which we now give to woman. For as the future is ever imbedded in the present, and angelic beings read in present facts all future facts, the future of humanity lies in the present generation, and more especially in woman, who is the connecting link of the past and the future.

If, then, the sphere of woman is a sphere of happiness, the same bright sky which overhangs her head, surrounds the future world of humanity. If her sphere is a sphere of knowledge and intellectual power, then science and wisdom are the future destiny of mankind. If her sphere is that of good and great deeds, then goodness and greatness are the future destiny of the world.

If women are trained like Spartan mothers, their offspring will be warriors—if degraded like the North American squaws, their offspring will be savages—if trained like the females of the present civilized races, in every conceivable variety of subordinate situation, their offspring will present every conceivable variety of deformity and beauty, of vice and virtue, of disease and health, of intelligence and ignorance; but we shall vainly look for great and enlightened men, with perfect bodies, powerful minds, and souls filled with justice, with love and with truth. Such men are now rare and astonishing phenomena, and they must continue to be strange and marvelous exceptions to the usual course of Nature, until woman is lifted up out of her petty sphere of brainless drudgery, of frivolous idleness, of luxurious indolence, of harrassing care, and of physical debility and disease.

We deprive the greater portion of woman-kind of the best influences of life. All women are more or less subjected to some of the following evils:

They are deprived of liberal education, and if, in a few rare instances, such an education is given, they are deprived of all the opportunities of enjoying its benefits by giving their acquired talents and knowledge a proper sphere of operation.

They are either deprived of healthy physical exercise and development to the destruction of their constitutions, or they are overpowered by domestic drudgery, of a fatiguing and harrassing character—or, in many cases, they are subject to both of these misfortunes in succession.

They are deprived of all personal pecuniary independence—enslaved by the inadequate wages of their toil—compelled to be dependent upon men, and deprived, by their restricted mode of life, even of the privilege of looking abroad sufficiently to make a judicious choice of the husband to whom they entrust their fate, and vow eternal submission in accordance with law and usage.

All heroic impulse, all large thought and great action are forbidden by tyrannical public opinion, while littleness, helplessness and dependence are honored as virtues.

Thus do we skillfully combine around woman all the influences which may be-little, crush and degrade her nature, and, through her, the future billions of mankind. Is it then strange that civilized nations, although able to produce three times the wealth that is needed for the comfort of all, still wallow in a wide-spread pauperism? Is it strange that the millions of Europe allow themselves to be governed by hereditary robbers and pirates? Is it strange that a republic is still deemed almost everywhere impracticable? Is it strange that even in this republic, the principles of just legislation and social harmony are not yet understood? Is it strange that science crawls with tardy steps, and that thousands of gross delusions still pervade all countries? Is it strange that 49 the very first principles of reason and justice, on this and many other subjects, are generally repudiated? In short, is it strange that our present comparatively ignorant, diseased, ugly, scrofulous and brutish race cannot see farther than an arm's length before them, and still flounder on in this great quagmire of despotism, pauperism, ignorance, crime, "war, pestilence and famine," without perceiving that on the right hand of their hopeless road lies the high table-land of universal justice, peace, liberty, knowledge and health?

Is it strange that such blind imbecility rules the councils of the world, when our whole aim is to place woman in the very focus of imbecility, and through her we thus cripple and crush effectually that God-like power of mind which would, in a single century, were it left free, lift man from his present social hell to social heaven.

It is obvious, then, that in doing justice or injustice to woman, we are doing justice or injustice to all future generations—and as the proper development of woman should be the great question with far-sighted philanthropists, let us enquire whether her present limited and peculiar sphere is the best for her rightful development.

I can hardly conceive that any rational man should regard woman's present position as the best for her full development. Who will deny that a large portion of the female half of the race are miserably defective in strength, in muscular energy, and in general stamina and health? Who will deny that a majority of females are deplorably ignorant, not only of the wide range of science and literature, but

of a large amount of knowledge which is necessary to fit them for the duties of life, and especially for the duties of mothers? Who will deny that women generally are deprived of that industrial education, and those opportunities for a fair reward of their labor, which are necessary to their living a life of comfort, or escaping from poverty, drudgery and anxiety? Who will deny that thousands of females, with natural capacities to be leaders or teachers of mankind, are kept at present in a limited sphere of usefulness, unconscious of their own power? In short, who will deny that our present social institutions cramp and repress all female greatness? The advocate of the present order can only claim that it develops modesty and the affections at the expense of all the other excellencies of character.

But even this claim is fallacious, for the love and modesty of a half-developed woman are far inferior to the same qualities in a great fully-developed being, who would love nobly and wisely—not with sickly, sentimental, hysterical or jealous fondness, but with a strength, intelligence and joyousness, which would diffuse sunshine on all near her winning presence. The modesty of an ignorant, childish or superstitious woman, is as far inferior to the modesty of an intellectual and educated woman—accustomed to commune with Nature in all her diversity—as the flowers of a milliner are to the flowers of Nature.

But it is contended that this high development of woman is impracticable—that when we give her any wider sphere than the present, we destroy all the peculiar charms of her present character, and substitute therefor the coarse masculine vices of the other sex.

This is contrary to the indications of extensive experience. Men deprived of female society are inclined to adopt coarse and vicious habits, and women deprived of male society are not thereby improved. Bring the sexes together and mutual benefits results—man is refined—woman is stimulated and inspired with a higher, nobler ambition. Each sex contributes to elevate and develop the other. In accordance with the universal wisdom of creation, the sexes were ordained to react on each other, not for evil but for good. It is the misfortune of society at present that this influence is too much restrained. The separation of the sexes is unnatural and demoralizing in its tendency. Let the influence and the presence of woman be seen and felt everywhere, and that influence will be altogether benignant. It will improve the tone of our education, of our society, of our business, of our professional life—even of our politics and government.

There is one view especially which assures us that woman should occupy the largest possible sphere in the affairs of this world. Of the immense reforms which are to be effected in almost all our relations, how small is the amount that can be accomplished by violence or blood-shed? How little can be done 50 even by indignant denunciation, and how often does simple argument totally fail to reach the convictions or to change the conduct! But on the other hand, how efficient, how

irresistible, is a kind and loving spirit! The tender hand of woman can parry the bayonet more effectually than the mailed arm of the soldier—the bosom of the mother will repel the sword more certainly than the shield or cuirass of the warrior. There nothing like female ministrations to reclaim the drunkard or the criminal. Woman is ever ready to interfere between angry combatants to prevent blood-shed, and if the influence of woman had heretofore been rightly recognized by governments, the savage butchery of war would long since have ended.

The world is still cursed with standing armies—with tyrannies of many forms—with social, ecclesiastic, pecuniary, political and military despotism. Violence cannot relieve us. We may war against old abuses with all the power of the north wind, and we may cause them, like the traveller's cloak, to be held more firmly against us. But the mild influence of persuasion, kindness, love, or sympathy, as displayed by woman, operates like the warm sunshine in relaxing the stubborn attachment to every social incumbrance.

Man may denounce abuses, but the gentle ministry of reconciliation and reform is best in the hands of woman. Let us give her a just position in the world's government as in the government of the family, and we shall have no more sanguinary punishments, no more military rulers, no more standing armies of hireling soldiers, no more myriads of unwashed, uneducated, suffering, vagabond children, to swell the armies of thieves and felons, to fill our prisons and to pollute the moral atmosphere of the world.

In the infancy of human beings, the tender, forgiving love and watchfulness of woman are indispensable; without them there could be but a poor prospect for the morals, the health, or even the life of the little helpless beings who possess the rudiments of all in them. In like manner, we may say, that in the infancy of the race, the harsh hand of military power is not the proper influence for its progress and health. In the present condition of the race, full of childish impulse and passion, waywardness and selfishness—but full also of a glorious promise for its manhood, woman only can guide it happily through the struggles and sufferings of infancy to the splendid realities of its future maturity. Let us, then, introduce as much as possible of female influence into all the affairs of life—in education, in industrial pursuits, in society and in government.

Woman has never yet been injured by introducing her respectfully into the presence of man. Man has never failed to be benefitted by the association. As the presence of woman converts the vulgarity of a drunken frolic into the refinement of the ball-room, so will her honorable introduction into the great world of science, literature, industry, education, and government, tend to refine the manners, purify the morals, increase the benevolence, diminish the violence and coarseness, elevate and enlarge the sphere of scientific thought, by directing it to humanitarian ends, and in a *thousand*

nameless ways promote, as no other influence can, the reign of *universal harmony* and the onward progress of mankind toward the kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

Such are a few of the more obvious considerations, which I had thought of illustrating by reference to the unquestionable physiological laws of the human constitution, but the length of this communication already forbids an elaborate scientific analysis of the law of female development, which at some future period I shall take pleasure in laying before the philanthropists of our country.

Indeed, I feel but little occasion for writing at present, since I have observed the large amount of clear, strong, benevolently-inspired intellect already enlisted in the good cause, with which I claim the privilege of fraternally uniting, and to which I tender the homage of my profound respect and ardent admiration.

JOS. R. BUCHANAN.

To Emily Robinson and Others, *Com.*

A POEM.

WRITTEN FOR THE WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION, BY GEORGE W. PUTNAM.

God made equal, guilty man Hath placed his foot on Woman's neck, And bade her tremble 'neath his ban And follow at his beck. To-day on European ground She lives, companion of the beast With hardened hands and brow sun-browned, First, at toil's never ceasing round, And latest at the feast. Among the countless tribes that roam, In Christian temple—Arab tent, In Russian hut or wigwam home, Her neck unto the yoke is bent; Man with his ruthless foot hath trod Careless upon the treasure given, Annulled the equal law of God The good decree of Heaven.

For this we summon here to-day Amid the scorner's taunts and mirth, The best of Freedom's bright array, The purest, warmest hearts of Earth. Come ye to us with spotless hands, With thoughts of flame, with fearless tongues; Speak the stern words which truth demands Of Woman's rights and wrongs.

Come from New England's rocky shore Where the Pilgrim mothers stood; Come from the settler's cabin door Beneath the western wood; Come forth from out the rich man's mill, Where Want's poor daughters toil for bread, Where Life hath lost its power to thrill The sickened heart and aching head;

Where avarice freely may despoil All that God's mercy deigned to give, Where Woman liveth but to toil
And toileth but to live;

Ye spirits of the wearied bands, Come from your spectre dwellings forth And point with pale and shadowy hands
To the full grave yards of the North, Where lay the forms uncounted yet, 52 Poor murdered victims of the Loom,
Whose sun in early morning set Between the Factory and the tomb. Speak for our sisters sad, who now
In city garrets, dark and dim, With trembling hands and pallid brow, Weary heart and aching limb,
Are toiling for their scanty bread With horror's midnight hanging o'er them, Or hasting the dark path to tread
Of guilt and shame before them. In pity let us seek each den Where Sin its foulest work hath wrought
The sad and guilty Magdalen Like Jesus Christ forgetting not And pray the mercy of high Heaven
On guilt before *Starvation* driven!

Hark! from the slave land cometh up The cry of sisters bruised and chained, Whose lips still drain the bitter cup
Of wrongs, tongue hath not named. God heal their wounds! let their poor hands Take hold on Mercy's garment hem.
Our souls are heavy with their bands, O Heart of hearts, remember them! Often to base Ambition's call
The arm of Power hath torn away Husbands and children, brothers— all That lighted up life's wintry day,
And battle ground and foaming flood Been crimsoned with their priceless blood. The prowling wolf and vulture fed
Sweetly upon the butchered dead. The surface of the sunlit earth Is whitened with their bleaching bones,
And children weep beside the hearth, And starve in desolated homes. E'en now the widowed mother's cry
Upon the air is passing by.

O! all ye sad and broken-hearted, Who wither 'neath the tyrant's frown; O! all ye souls of the departed;
O! blighted, wronged and trodden down— Bear ye your witness here to-day. To God we make our stern appeal
Against Oppression's boundless sway And Mammon's heart of steel!

Yet courage! though mid shadows going The world moves darkly on its way. On the far hills a light is glowing,
Bright herald of a better day. We trust in Truth, and yet shall see Proud Wrong into Oblivion hurled,
The human race shall *all* be free. War's bloody banner shall be furled, Where sorrow dwelt there shall be light,
The Earth like Heaven shall know no night, And God shall rule the world!