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THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION,

HELD AT SYRACUSE,

SEPTEMBER 8th, 9th & 10th, 1852.

SYRACUSE:
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PREFACE.

Before Woman's Rights Conventions were held, the way for the movement was prepared, by petitions from women and men of several different States, asking for a recognition by the State, of her civil rights. At length the Legislature of Rhode Island essentially modified its statutes relative to the right of married women, to hold and control property. New York, after fourteen years petitioning, has done the same, and more recently Indiana also.

The first Conventions on the subject were held at Seneca Falls, and Rochester, N. Y., in the summer of 1848. They based their claims on the Declaration of Independence: demanded equal rights; published their sentiments over their own names; at the head of the list stood the name of Lucretia Mott.

A similar Convention was held at Salem, Ohio, in May, 1850, an able report of which was published, and widely circulated.

The first National Convention was held at Worcester, Mass., Oct. 1850,—the call for which was as follows:

A CONVENTION

Will be held at WORCESTER, Mass., on the 23d and 24th of October next, (agreeably to the appointment of a preliminary meeting held at Boston, on the 30th of May last,) to consider the question of Woman's Rights, Duties, and Relations; and the Men and Women of our country, who feel sufficient interest in the great subject to give an earnest thought and effective effort to its rightful adjustment, are invited to meet each other in free conference, at the time and place appointed.

The upward-tending spirit of the age, busy in a hundred forms of effort for the world's redemption from the sins and sufferings which oppress it, has brought this one, which yields to none in importance and urgency, into distinguished prominence. One half of the race are its immediate objects, and the other half are as deeply involved, by that absolute unity of interest and destiny which nature has established between them.

The neighbor is near enough to involve every human being in a general equality of rights and community of interests; but, Men and Women, in their reciprocities of love and duty, are one flesh and one blood—mother, wife, sister and daughter come so near the heart and mind of every man, that they must be either his blessing or his bane. Where there is such mutuality of interests, such an interlinking of life, there can be no real antagonism of position and action. The sexes should not, for any reason, or by any chance, take hostile attitudes toward each other, either in the apprehension or amendment of the wrongs which exist in their necessary relations; but they should harmonize in opinion and co-operate in effort, for the reason that they must unite in the ultimate achievement of the desired reformation.

Of the many points now under discussion and demanding a just settlement, the general question of Woman's Rights and Relations comprehends such as: Her EDUCATION, *Literary*, *Scientific*, and *Artistic*;—Her AVOCATIONS, *Industrial*, *Commercial*, and *Professional*;—Her INTERESTS, *Pecuniary*, *Civil*, and *Political*; in a word—her RIGHTS as an *Individual*, and her FUNCTIONS as a *Citizen*.

No one will pretend that all these interests, embracing, as they do, all that is not merely animal in a human life, are rightly understood or justly provided for in the existing social order. Nor is it any more true that the constitutional differences of the sexes, which should determine, define and limit the resulting differences of office and duty, are adequately comprehended and practically observed.

Woman has been condemned, from her greater delicacy of physical organization, to inferiority of intellectual and moral culture, and to the forfeiture of great social, civil and religious privileges. In the relation of marriage, she has been ideally annihilated, and actually enslaved in all that concerns her personal and pecuniary rights; and even in widowhood and single life, she is oppressed with such limitation and degradation of labor and avocation as clearly and cruelly mark the condition of a disabled caste. But, by the inspiration of the Almighty, the beneficent spirit of reform is roused to the redress of these wrongs. The tyranny which degrades and crushes wives and mothers, sits no longer lightly on the world's conscience—the heart's home-worship feels the stain of stooping at a dishonored altar—Manhood begins to feel the shame of muddying the springs from which it draws its highest life; and, Womanhood is everywhere awakening to assert its divinely chartered rights, and to fulfil

its noblest duties. It is the spirit of reviving truth and righteousness which has moved upon the great deep of the public heart, and aroused its redressing justice; and, through it, the Providence of God is vindicating the order and appointments of his creation.

The signs are encouraging; the time is opportune. Come, then, to this Convention. It is your duty, if you are worthy of your age and country. Give the help of your best thought to separate the light from the darkness. Wisely give the protection of your name and the benefit of your efforts to the great work of settling the principles, devising the method, and achieving the success of this high and holy movement.

MASSACHUSETTS.

Lucy Stone,	B. S. Treanor,	Dr. —— Rogers,
Wm. H. Channing,	Mary M. Brooks,	Eliza F. Taft,
Harriet K. Hunt,	T. W Higginson,	Dr. A. C. Taft,
A. Bronson Alcott,	Mary E. Higginson,	Charles K. Whipple,
Nathaniel Barney,	Emily Winslow,	Mary Bullard,
Eliza Barney,	R. Waldo Emerson,	Emma C. Goodwin,
Wendell Phillips,	Wm. L. Garrison,	Abby Price,
Ann Greene Phillips,	Helen E. Garrison,	Thankful Southwick,
Adin Ballou,	Charles F. Hovey,	Eliza J. Kenney,
Anna Q. T. Parsons,	Sarah Earle,	Louisa M. Sewall,
Mary H. L. Cabot,	Abby K. Foster,	Sarah Southwick,

RHODE ISLAND.

Sarah H. Whitman,	Sarah Brown,	George Clarke,
Thomas Davis,	Elizabeth Chase,	Mary Adams,
Paulina W. Davis,	Mary Clarke,	George Adams,
Joseph A. Barker,	John L. Clarke,	

NEW YORK.

Gerrit Smith,	Charlotte G. Coffin,	Joseph Savage,
Nancy Smith,	Mary G. Taber,	L. N. Fowler,
Elizabeth C. Stanton,	Elizabeth S. Miller,	Lydia Fowler,
Catharine Wilkinson,	Elizabeth Russell,	Sarah Smith,
Samuel J. May,	Stephen Smith,	Charles D. Miller,
Charlotte C. May,	Rosa Smith,	

PENNSYLVANIA.

William Elder,	Jane G. Swisshelm,	Myra Townsend,
Sarah Elder,	Charlotte Darlington,	Mary Grew,
Sarah Tyndale,	Simon Barnard,	Sarah Lewis,
Warner Justice,	Lucretia Mott,	Sarah Pugh,

Huldah Justice,	James Mott,	Hannah Darlington,
William Swisshelm,	W. S. Pierce,	Sarah D. Barnard.

MARYLAND.

Mrs. Eliza Stewart.

OHIO.

Elizabeth Wilson,	Mary Cowles,	Benjamin S. Jones,
Mary A. Johnson,	Maria L. Giddings,	Lucius A. Hine,
Oliver Johnson,	Jane Elizabeth Jones,	Sylvia Cornell.

The Report of this Convention had the honor of eliciting the able article in the Westminster Review for July, 1851. State Conventions have been since held in Pennsylvania, Indiana, and Ohio. In the last named, a State Woman's Rights Society has been formed —the first and only one yet in existence. Another National Convention was held in Massachusets, October, 1851. The third at Syracuse.

PROCEEDINGS.

WEDNESDAY, Sept. 8th, 1852.

MORNING SESSION.

Pursuant to a call of the Central Committee, the Convention assembled at the City Hall.

PAULINA W. DAVIS, President of the Central Committee, called the meeting to order. Prayer was offered for the success of the cause, by Rev. S. J. MAY, of Syracuse. Lucy Stone, Secretary *pro tem.*, read the call:

THE NATIONAL WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION,

HELD IN WORCESTER, OCT. 22D AND 23D, 1851, ADJOURNED TO MEET IN SYRACUSE, N. Y., SEPT. 8TH, 9TH AND 10TH, 1852.

The friends of equality, justice and truth, are earnestly invited to assemble there, at that time, to discuss the important question of reform, technically termed Woman's Rights.

We propose not only to review the past, and consider the present, but to mark out new and broader paths for the opening future.

The time has come, not only for the examination and discussion of Woman's social, civil and religious Rights, but also for a thorough and efficient organization—a well-digested plan of operation, whereby these social rights, for which our fathers fought, bled and died, may be secured, and enjoyed by us. Let woman no longer supinely endure the evils she may escape, but with her own right hand carve out for herself a higher, nobler destiny than has heretofore been hers.

Inasmuch as, through the folly and imbecility of woman, the race is what it is, dwarfed in mind and body, and as, through her alone, it can yet be redeemed, all are equally interested in the objects of this Convention.

We therefore solemnly urge those men and women who desire, and look for, the development and elevation of the race, to be present at the coming Convention, and aid us by the wisdom of their counsels. Our platform will, as ever, be free to all who are capable of discussing the subject with seriousness, candor and truth.

On behalf of the Central Committee,

ELIZABETH C. STANTON,
PAULINA W. DAVIS,
WILLIAM H. CHANNING,
LUCY STONE,
SAMUEL J. MAY.

In commenting on this document, Lucy Stone hoped all present would have something to say—even if adverse to the movement. Some women's voices were never heard beyond the fireside, and for this reason they did not speak out as they ought: the voice, like everything else, would improve by practice. Especially should they be heard when votes are taken.

The following Committee, announced by the President, as agreed on at a preliminary meeting, was appointed to nominate officers for the Convention.:

Ernestine L. Rose, James Mott, Griffith M. Cooper, Clarina H. I. Nichols, Lucretia Mott, Rev. Samuel J. May, Lydia P. Savage, Pliny Sexton, Sarah Hallock, Amy Post, Susan B. Anthony.

The President read the following letter from Mr. G. W. Jonson, of Buffalo, Chairman of the N. Y. State Central Committee of the Liberty Party:

To the National Woman's Rights Convention, Syracuse:—

I send you ten dollars, and the following sentiments:

1. Woman—Hers—equally with man—the inalienable Right to Education, Suffrage, Office, Property, Professions, Titles, and Honors—to Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.

2. False to our sex, as well as to her own, and false to herself and to God, is the woman who approves, or who submits, without resistance or protest, to the social and political wrongs imposed upon her, in common with the rest of her sex throughout the world.

Respectfully,
G. W. JONSON.

Buffalo, Sept. 7, 1852.

Also one from Horace Greeley:—

New-York, Sept. 1st, 1852.

My Friend:—I have once or twice been urged to attend a Convention of the advocates of Woman's Rights; and, though compliance has never been within my power, I have a right to infer that some friends of the cause desire suggestions from me with regard to the best means of advancing it. I therefore venture to submit some thoughts on that subject.

To my mind, the Bread problem lies at the base of all the desirable and practical reforms which our age meditates. Not that Bread is intrinsically more important to man than Temperance, Intelligence, Morality and Religion; but, that it is essential to the just appreciation and healthful acquisition of all these. Vainly do we preach the blessings of Temperance to human beings cradled in hunger, and suffering at intervals the agonies of famine; idly do we commend Intellectual culture to those whose minds are daily racked with the dark problem, "How shall we procure food for the morrow?" Morality, Religion, are but words to him who fishes in gutters for the means of sustaining life, and crouches behind barrels in the street, for shelter from the cutting blasts of a winter's night.

Before all questions of Intellectual Training, or Political Franchises for Women—not to speak of such a trifle as costume—do I place the question of enlarged opportunities for work—of a more extended and diversified field of employment. The Silk Culture and Manufacture, firmly established and thriftily prosecuted to the extent of our Home demand for Silk—would be worth everything to American Women. Our now feeble and infantile Schools of Design should be encouraged with the same view. A wider and more prosperous development of our Manufacturing Industry will increase the demand for female labor, thus enhancing its average reward and elevating

the social position of Woman. I trust the future has therefore much good in store for the less muscular half of the Human Race.

But the reform here anticipated should be inaugurated in our several homes. I know how idle is the expectation of any general and permanent enhancement of the wages of any class or condition above the level of equation of Supply and Demand; yet, it seems to me that the friends of Woman's Rights may wisely and worthily set the example of paying juster prices, for female assistance in their households, than those now current. If they would but resolve never to pay a capable, efficient woman less than two-thirds the wages paid to a vigorous, effective man employed in some corresponding vocation, they would very essentially aid the movement now in progress for the general recognition and concession of Equal Rights to Woman. Society is clearly unjust to Woman in according her but four to eight dollars per month, for labor equally repugnant with, and more protracted than that of men of equal intelligence and relative efficiency, whose services command from ten to twenty dollars per month. If, then, the friends of Woman's Rights could set the world an example of paying for female service, not the lowest pittance which stern Necessity may compel the defenceless to accept, but an approximately fair and liberal compensation for the work actually done, as determined by a careful comparison with the recompense of other labor, I believe they would give their cause an impulse which could not be permanently resisted.

With profound esteem, Yours,

HORACE GREELEY.

Mrs. PAULINA W. DAVIS, Providence, R. I.

And the following from Mrs. HUGO REID, of England; the author of an able work on Woman, with a preface by Mrs. C. M. KIRKLAND, in which she takes high and true ground.

36, DERBY ROAD, NOTTINGHAM.

Mrs. PAULINA W. DAVIS.

My Dear Madam:—I have been very much gratified by the perusal of the Report of the Woman's Rights Convention of October, 1851, a copy of which has been forwarded to me in your name, by my friend Miss FINCH. I have long watched with the greatest interest, the faint indications of progress, which appear in this country,

in the important subject which occupies the attention of your Convention, and was therefore much pleased to see the interesting account of your proceedings on a previous meeting, which had appeared in the Westminster Review, and doubly pleased with your kind attention in sending me the Report of the last meeting. In this country opinion progresses slowly, and is long being matured into action, but everything appears to grow with rapidity in yours; certainly, since the commencement of your agitation, you seem to have made very wonderful advances, in arousing attention and disarming opposition. I hope you will continue to direct great efforts to the obtaining of a full and complete opening up of all educational advantages for women—this, and the giving education a practical turn, as it always has with the other sex, would be an immense advantage for women; it is also one which it seems most unjust to deny, and which is therefore least likely to encounter strong opposition. The Women of America occupy much better ground, from which to extend their sphere of action into the wide world, than those of any European country, and it is therefore only proper that they should lead the van in this noble cause. The American Women, at least in the Northern States, are the only persons of mature age who are liable to exclusions; whereas, in this country, and, I believe, in all the other countries of Europe, the disabilities of the women are shared by an immense majority of their countrymen. This, while it renders less striking the present inequality between the sexes, renders the condition of women more hopeless, for it requires great enthusiasm in women to demand for themselves a fulness of liberty not yet accorded to the whole of their brethren. It is then, for the women of a country whose men are *all* citizens, and who all stand equal before the law, to make a partial assertion of their desire to be placed on the same fair and equal basis. I see with great pleasure that some of your speakers advise those interested in this cause, to press on women the performance of present duty; it is very certain that if we, who have the charge of the rising generation during its most impressible years, would manage to rear a generation of true, just, upright men and women, women would soon be placed in the position which justice demands; and the nearer we approach perfection in the discharge of this duty, the greater progress must our cause make. I myself having done what little I could to forward this cause, and meeting only an apathy too great for me to overcome,

have surrounded myself now with other duties, which leave me little time to do more than welcome, with warm interest, such tidings as those you have recently sent us across the ocean. * * * *

Believe me, dear Madam,

Yours most truly,

MARION REID.

In the absence of the Nominating Committee, LUCY STONE briefly alluded to that portion of Mrs. REID's Letter which speaks of the advantages possessed by the women of America over those of England, where a large part of the men are disfranchised, as well as women. She said, that if the men of this country were denied the right of suffrage, they would make common cause with woman against a common enemy. Whereas, now, instead of the earnest co-operation that a deep personal interest would give, we have, with a few noble exceptions, only their sympathy.

She gave way for the Nominating Committee, who reported the following as permanent officers of the Convention :

PRESIDENT.

LUCRETIA MOTT, of Philadelphia.

VICE PRESIDENTS.

PAULINA W. DAVIS, of Rhode Island.
E. OAKES SMITH, of New York.
CLARINA H. I. NICHOLS, of Vermont.
GERRIT SMITH, of New York.
SARAH MILLER, of Pennsylvania.

SECRETARIES.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY.
MARTHA C. WRIGHT.
SAMUEL J. MAY.
LYDIA F. FOWLER.

As the question on the adoption of the report was about being put, Mrs. MOTT arose and stated, that as there might be objections to her appointment, she desired that the vote on each officer might be taken separately. The Chairman (Mrs. DAVIS) put the question accordingly, and the entire audience, with the exception of her husband, voted that Mrs. MOTT should preside.

The President and other officers, who also were unanimously elected, having taken their seats, the President remarked, that she was unpractised in parliamentary proceedings, shrinking ever from such positions, and was therefore quite unprepared for anything like a suitable speech. She invoked, however, great and heartfelt attention to the business before them, dispensing with all egotism or self-display. She referred also to the success that had attended this movement in the past—to the respect with which the press had spoken of our proceedings—and the favor of the public generally. She suggested some things, relative to the proprieties of the present meeting—its business, &c. She said, let it not be supposed, because certain preliminaries had been entered into, that therefore the entire responsibility rested upon a few—but enjoined upon all to take their liberty, and each to feel free to act as moved by his, or her, present convictions.

On motion of ERNESTINE L. ROSE, a business committee was appointed, viz :

E. OAKES SMITH,	SARAH L. MILLER,
LUCY STONE,	JAMES MOTT,
C. M. SEVERANCE,	ERNESTINE L. ROSE,
PAULINA W. DAVIS,	ELIZABETH W. PHILLIPS,
HARRIET K. HUNT,	PLINY SEXTON,
GERRIT SMITH,	BENJAMIN S. JONES,
JANE ELIZABETH JONES.	

The President invited all present to participate in the discussion, whether in favor or opposed—members of the Convention only, beting entitled to a vote.

Mr. MAY read the following letter from WM. H. CHANNING, of Boston :

My Dear Sir :—Thanks for your cordial and earnest call to the Convention next week. Up to the very last moment, I have hoped

to be present; and have for months proposed to take a more efficient part in that movement, than I have heretofore been able to do. But now, greatly to my regret, I see that there is no probability of my being able to leave home. For three weeks past, my youngest child has been lying at the brink of the grave. And, though within a day or two, our physician encourages us, I have myself but feeble hope of her recovery. At any rate, it seems impossible for her to be well enough, for me to feel any freedom of heart or will to leave her and her exhausted mother, next week. If I can find a few minutes to write you more fully my views, I shall certainly do so; for I feel it to be a solemn duty, never for a moment to appear lukewarm in that cause, so long as it is misunderstood and scoffed at.—But if no letter comes from me, you will please to understand, that silence is owing to fatigue and absorbing cares.

Yours faithfully,

W. H. CHANNING.

Rev. S. J. May.

The President proposed, in the absence of the Business Committee, the reading of the Declaration of Sentiments, by Ann Preston, adopted at the West Chester Convention, and printed by that Convention in tract form. The Address was then read by Martha C. Wright, one of the Secretaries.

C. H. I. Nichols read a sentiment from the Address, and remarked with great pathos and earnestness: There *is* no limit to personal responsibility. Our duties are as wide as the world, and as far reaching as the bonds of human endeavor. Woman and Man must act together—she, *his* helper. She has no sphere peculiar to herself, because she could not then be his helper. She spoke at length, upon the mutual dependence of the sexes, and of the nature of these obligations. She spoke of the need of woman's elevation, for the sake of the race, urging her to seek influence, to seek independence, to seek representation, in order to use all for the good and the advancement of human elevation. When men would kindly set aside woman from the National Councils, they say the moral field belongs to her; and this is the reason why we should seek a more elevated position, because her moral susceptibilities are greater than those of man.

Mrs. Mott thought differently from Mrs. N., that woman's moral feelings were more elevated than man's. She thought that with the same opportunities for development, there would probably be about an equal manifestation of virtue.

Mrs. Nichols further remarked, that representation was necessary for free government, and taxation without it is tyranny. But this principle was violated in regard to woman, though their fathers had fought and bled for it, so many years ago. Woman was permitted to vote in Banks and Railroad corporations, because her money could not be got, in any other way, therefore, a right womanly way was found for her to vote.

E. Oakes Smith, from the Business Committee, reported the following resolutions:

Inasmuch as many of the Institutions handed down to us from the past, like heir-looms, are felt to be (though time-honored) hindrances to human progress, or to the spread of that Divine Truth which gives light to the world; therefore,

Resolved, That it is our duty to examine these Institutions, and to ascertain which of them are still worthy of our honor and support—which we should seek to reform, and which wholly to cast aside.

Resolved, That it is the right of every woman holding property, and as a citizen also of this Republic, to resist taxation, till such time as she is fully represented at the Ballot Box.

Mrs Rose suggested that the Resolutions be discussed separately.

Lucy Stone proposed that all the resolutions be laid on the table, till toward the close of the Convention, so as to allow free range of discussion, which should be subject only to the law of benevolence.

After some remarks from Samuel J. May, in favor of the suggestion, the Convention adjourned.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The President took the Chair at 2 o'clock. The Hall was rapidly filling. The greatest interest was manifested, not only by those present, but by many throughout the city. The movement was spoken of, in terms of respect, by those who had been wont to ridicule the cause.

Lydia F. Fowler read the minutes of the morning session.

Gerrit Smith, from the Business Committee, reported the following Resolutions:

aspire—they say we are unfit for legislators, and therefore we must not vote, while the squalid emigrant, who can neither read nor write, is admitted to a privilege denied to the American matron. Because women cannot all of them do that which only the wisest of men are capable of doing, must we therefore do nothing? Because we have n't the heads of gladiators and pugilists, must we be denied the use of what little brain we do happen to possess? This reminds me of an anecdote of a poor Scotch woman who was telling about the rising in the North, for Prince Charles, in which a certain Highland Lord lost his head: "to be sure," she added, "it was nae much of a head, but ye ken it was all the world to the puir mon."

I trust this will not be a mere talking Convention. We have talked long enough. For years brave women have talked and have appealed to us who are younger in the work, and have encountered nothing but contempt and odium. We are stronger now. I have been to the North and the West, and must go to the South, and find thousands ready to respond, if they knew what to do. Again, I say, let us have done with so much talk, and let us act. Let us take our right.

It was a great point gained in our humanity, when woman felt herself able to speak at all, and make her grief known. Of all the miracles of Jesus, that in which he rebuked the *dumb* devil, is the one most to our mind. But too much talking, buries the subject under the weight of words. The Lacon is brief, pithy, and home to the purpose. Your great talkers are poor actors—their enthusiasm evaporates in words; they grow charmed with their own eloquence, and let occasion slip by.

I hope this Convention will be an acting Convention. * * *

Let us pledge ourselves to the support of a paper in which our views shall be fairly presented to the world. At our last Convention, in Worcester, I presented a Prospectus for such paper, which I will request hereafter to be read here. We can do little or nothing without such an organ. We have no opportunity now to repel slander, and are restricted in disseminating truth, from the want of such an organ. The Tribune, and some other papers in the country, have treated us generously; but a paper to represent us, must be sustained by ourselves. We must look to our own resources.—We must *work out our own* salvation, and God grant it be not with fear and trembling. Woman must henceforth be the redeemer, the

regenerator of the world. We plead not for ourselves alone, but for Humanity. We must place woman upon a higher platform, and she will raise the race to her side. We must have no more outcasts—no more judicial murders—no more Helots in the land. Frail, miserable women, and murderous men, must disappear before the pure Gospel of divine love which we design to preach. The newspaper and the lecture room have become greater than the pulpit—more effective in stirring up human hearts to great movements. Let us pledge ourselves to the support of these, in the work in which we are engaged. We must work more diligently than in times past, that our sons may be fitted to nobler humanitarian purposes. We must help to cleanse the venality of the ballot-box, and help also to free our Legislative Halls, not only from injustice, but rowdyism. Yes, we have looked to the pulpit, but in vain; and now, in spite of St. Paul, we must ourselves preach. We have looked to Legislation, and now, despite our Solons, we must vote.

Do not mind the pratings about woman's sphere. Our Brothers know woman makes any sphere she chooses to fill, lovely. The maiden may be fair; the mother holy and tender; but the mature woman, grand in her serene wisdom, giving the law, not only to her household, but to the country also, is more than this—she is beautiful, august.

Again, I say, let us not talk, but act. We should have a literature of our own, a printing press and publishing house, and tract writers, and tract distributors, as well as Lecturers and Conventions. We must show to the world that we are in earnest; and yet I say this to a race of beggars, for women have no pecuniary resources. Well, then, we must work, we must hold property, and claim the consequent right to representation, or refuse to be taxed.

Our aim is nothing less than an overthrow of our present partial Legislation, that every American Citizen, whether man or woman, may have a voice in the laws by which we are governed. We do not aim at any idle destruction, but while we would *pull down* our present *out-worn* and *imperfect* structure of human institutions, we will help to reconstruct it, upon a new and broader base, which shall hereafter show a perfect and harmonious Temple.

Mr. Howlett, of Syracuse, called up the resolution in favor of resisting taxation, and advocated it.

Resolved, That the demand of woman is not for privileges, nor favor, nor employments, nor honors, but for *Rights*.

Resolved, That the right of human beings to their own persons, their own earnings and property, and to participate in the choice of their civil rulers, are rights which belong as naturally, absolutely and fully to woman as to man.

Resolved, That we beseech woman never to consent to hold any of these sacred rights in abeyance, and never to consent to exchange any of them for bribes and privileges, or favors, or flatteries, however alluring or seductive.

E. Oakes Smith then addressed the Convention as follows:

My Friends, do we realize for what purpose we are convened? Do we fully understand that we aim at nothing less than an entire subversion of the existing order of society, a dissolution of the whole existing social compact? Do we see that it is not an error of to-day, nor of yesterday, against which we are lifting up the voice of dissent; but it is against hoary-headed error of all times; error borne onward from the first footprints of the first pair ejected from Paradise—intermingled in every aspect of civilization, down to our own times. In view of this, it does seem to me, that we should each and all feel as if anointed, sanctified, set apart as to a great mission. It seems to me, that we who struggle to restore the divine human to the world, should feel as if under the very eye of the Eternal Searcher of all hearts, who will reject any sacrifice other than a pure offering.

We are said to be a few, disaffected, embittered women, met for the purpose of giving vent to petty personal spleen, and domestic discontent. We repel the charge—and I call upon every woman here to repel the charge. If we have personal wrongs—here is not the place for redress. If we have private griefs, (and what human heart, in a large sense, is without them,) we do not come here to recount them. The grave will lay its cold honors over the hearts of all here present, before the good we ask for our kind, will be realized to the world. We shall pass onward to other spheres of existence, but we trust the seed we shall here plant, will ripen to a glorious harvest. We "see the end from the beginning," and rejoice in spirit. We care not, that we shall not reach the fruits of our toil, for we know in times to come, it will be seen to be a glorious work.

Bitterness is the child of wrong; if any one of our number has become embittered, (which God forbid,) it is because social wrong has so penetrated to the inner life, that we are crucified thereby, and

taste the gall and vinegar, with the Divine Master. All who take their stand against false institutions are in some sense embittered. The conviction of wrong has wrought mightily in them. Their large hearts took in the whole sense of human woe, and bled for those who had become brutalized by its weight, and they spoke as never man spake in his own individualism, but as the embodied race will speak, when the full time shall come. Thus Huss and Wickliffe, and Luther spoke, and the men of '76.

No woman has come here to talk over her private griefs, and detail the small coin of personal anecdote; and yet did woman speak of the wrongs, which unjust legislation—the wrongs, which corrupt public opinion—the wrongs, which false social aspects have fastened upon us—wrongs which she hides beneath smiles, and conceals with womanly endurance—did she give voice to all this, her smiles would seem so hollow, and her endurance so divine, that her brow would be encircled with the halo of a Saint.

But we are not here from a petty personal motive. We have not left our firesides for any purpose inconsistent with its sanctities.—Were we ambitious, we should seek a field less obnoxious to public opinion—did we desire notoriety, as is so often said of us, in a bad sense, this is not the field in which to win it, for here the one is lost in the many. No, it is only a deep, holy sense of good to be done for our kind, that has compelled us from the sanctities of home, that we may here say what our pulpits dare not utter, God's truth altho' it is; and that we may challenge our Legislators to an account of their stewardship.

We are but a handful, it is true, to resist the combined forces of prejudice and oppression; and we now say, if any one of our number dreads the contest, let him, or her, go out from amongst us *now*, for we that remain are prepared to stand like the band at Thermopylæ of old. Let this Syracuse, already known as the watchword of Freedom, be *our* Thermopylæ, and here let us enter our solemn Protest, and prepare to bide the issue. Let us protest against Law in which we have no voice; against Legislation in which we are not represented; against a Democracy in which half of the people are denied the rights of Citizenship. I call upon every woman here to enter her solemn protest against a country claiming to be free, and yet denying to her the rights of a citizen.

Men gravely tell us we are unfit for the positions to which we

aspire—they say we are unfit for legislators, and therefore we must not vote, while the squalid emigrant, who can neither read nor write, is admitted to a privilege denied to the American matron. Because women cannot all of them do that which only the wisest of men are capable of doing, must we therefore do nothing? Because we have n't the heads of gladiators and pugilists, must we be denied the use of what little brain we do happen to possess? This reminds me of an anecdote of a poor Scotch woman who was telling about the rising in the North, for Prince Charles, in which a certain Highland Lord lost his head: "to be sure," she added, "it was nae much of a head, but ye ken it was all the world to the puir mon."

I trust this will not be a mere talking Convention. We have talked long enough. For years brave women have talked and have appealed to us who are younger in the work, and have encountered nothing but contempt and odium. We are stronger now. I have been to the North and the West, and must go to the South, and find thousands ready to respond, if they knew what to do. Again, I say, let us have done with so much talk, and let us act. Let us take our right.

It was a great point gained in our humanity, when woman felt herself able to speak at all, and make her grief known. Of all the miracles of Jesus, that in which he rebuked the *dumb* devil, is the one most to our mind. But too much talking, buries the subject under the weight of words. The Lacon is brief, pithy, and home to the purpose. Your great talkers are poor actors—their enthusiasm evaporates in words; they grow charmed with their own eloquence, and let occasion slip by.

I hope this Convention will be an acting Convention. * * *

Let us pledge ourselves to the support of a paper in which our views shall be fairly presented to the world. At our last Convention, in Worcester, I presented a Prospectus for such paper, which I will request hereafter to be read here. We can do little or nothing without such an organ. We have no opportunity now to repel slander, and are restricted in disseminating truth, from the want of such an organ. The Tribune, and some other papers in the country, have treated us generously; but a paper to represent us, must be sustained by ourselves. We must look to our own resources.—We must *work out our own* salvation, and God grant it be not with fear and trembling. Woman must henceforth be the redeemer, the

regenerator of the world. We plead not for ourselves alone, but for Humanity. We must place woman upon a higher platform, and she will raise the race to her side. We must have no more outcasts—no more judicial murders—no more Helots in the land. Frail, miserable women, and murderous men, must disappear before the pure Gospel of divine love which we design to preach. The newspaper and the lecture room have become greater than the pulpit—more effective in stirring up human hearts to great movements. Let us pledge ourselves to the support of these, in the work in which we are engaged. We must work more diligently than in times past, that our sons may be fitted to nobler humanitarian purposes. We must help to cleanse the venality of the ballot-box, and help also to free our Legislative Halls, not only from injustice, but rowdyism. Yes, we have looked to the pulpit, but in vain; and now, in spite of St. Paul, we must ourselves preach. We have looked to Legislation, and now, despite our Solons, we must vote.

Do not mind the pratings about woman's sphere. Our Brothers know woman makes any sphere she chooses to fill, lovely. The maiden may be fair; the mother holy and tender; but the mature woman, grand in her serene wisdom, giving the law, not only to her household, but to the country also, is more than this—she is beautiful, august.

Again, I say, let us not talk, but act. We should have a literature of our own, a printing press and publishing house, and tract writers, and tract distributors, as well as Lecturers and Conventions. We must show to the world that we are in earnest; and yet I say this to a race of beggars, for women have no pecuniary resources. Well, then, we must work, we must hold property, and claim the consequent right to representation, or refuse to be taxed.

Our aim is nothing less than an overthrow of our present partial Legislation, that every American Citizen, whether man or woman, may have a voice in the laws by which we are governed. We do not aim at any idle destruction, but while we would *pull down* our present *out-worn* and *imperfect* structure of human institutions, we will help to reconstruct it, upon a new and broader base, which shall hereafter show a perfect and harmonious Temple.

Mr. Howlett, of Syracuse, called up the resolution in favor of resisting taxation, and advocated it.

Lucy Stone moved that it be laid on the table, and that the three last introduced be taken up for discussion. She said they were the point of the whole question. They provided that women should vote; a proposition new, and opposed by men and women. What we want is reason, and we pledge ourselves to abide by the conclusions of reason. She invited those that were opposed to express their views.

The motion was carried, and the reading called for.

Lucy Stone next addressed the Convention.

It seems to me, that the claims we make at these Conventions are self-evident truths. The second resolution affirms the right of human beings to their persons and earnings. Is not that self-evident? Yet the common law which regulates the relation of husband and wife, and which is modified only in a very few instances where there are statutes to the contrary, gives the "custody" of the wife's person to her husband, so that he has a right to her, even against herself. It gives him her earnings, no matter with what weariness they have been acquired, or how greatly she may need them for herself and children. It gives him the right to her personal property, which he may will entirely from her—also the use of her real estate—and in some of the States, married women, insane persons, and idiots, are ranked together as not fit to make a will. So that she is left with only one right, which she enjoys in common with the pauper, viz: the right of maintenance. Indeed, when she has taken the sacred marriage vow, her legal existence ceases. We are asked to trust our husbands, fathers and brothers still, when, having trusted them, they have made such havoc of our rights.

And what is our position politically? Why, the foreigner, who can't speak his mother tongue correctly—the negro, who to our shame we regard as fit only for a boot-black, and whose dead even, we bury by themselves—and the drunkard, all are entrusted with the ballot—all placed by men, politically higher than their own mothers, sisters, wives and daughters. The woman who, seeing and feeling all this, dare not maintain her rights, is the woman to hang her head and blnsh. We ask only for justice, and equal rights—the right to vote—the right to our earnings—equality before the laws. These are the Gibralter of our cause.

Antoinette L. Brown, of N. Y., claimed that man cannot represent woman. They differ in their natures and relations. The law

is wholly masculine: it is created and executed by our type or class of the man nature. The framers of all legal compacts are thus restricted to the masculine stand-point of observation—to the thoughts, feelings, and biases of men. The law, then, could give us no representation as women, and therefore, no impartial justice, even if the present law-makers were honestly intent upon this; for we can be represented only by our peers.

It is to be expected, then, under the present administration, that woman should be the legal subject of man, legally reduced to pecuniary dependence upon him; that the mother should have lower legal claims upon her children than the father, and that, in short, woman should be in all respects the legal inferior of man, though entitled to full equality. Here is the fact, and its cause.

When woman is tried for crime, her jury, her judges, her advocates, are all men; and yet there may have been temptations and various palliating circumstances connected with her peculiar nature, as woman, such as man cannot appreciate. Common justice must demand, then, that a part of the law-makers and law executors should be of her own sex. In questions of marriage and divorce, affecting interests dearer than life, both parties in the compact are entitled to an equal voice. Then the influences which arise from the relations of the sexes, when left to be exerted in our halls of justice, would at least cause decency, and propriety of conduct to be maintained there; but now, low minded men are encouraged to jest openly in Court, over the most sacred and most delicate subjects. *From the nature of things*, the guilty woman cannot now have justice done her at the professed tribunals of justice; and the innocent but wronged woman is constrained to suffer on in silence, rather than ask for redress.

E. L. Rose, of New York, maintained that they were at work a well for the benefit of man as woman. Miss Brown truly represented the injustice done woman. Whether man or woman differ mentally, or not, in either case, is she not entitled to Equal Rights? She argued this point at considerable length, and with much spirit. She demanded that justice be done woman. Do away with injustice, and the work is done. Give woman her right to vote, and all the rest follows.

Antoinette L. Brown admitted that if we regard the natures of men and women as exactly identical, this is virtually asserting their equality in rights. All the rights of a common humanity should be

claimed on that ground. But the world recognizes a difference in the mental as well as physical characteristics of the sexes. Our social and civil relations are many of them based almost entirely upon these differences. In so far then as they do exist, one sex cannot represent the other, and injustice must be done to the unrepresented class.

Woman has a right to go into any or every department of public life, because this is a human right. She is needed in every department, because she is woman, and man cannot perform her work.—Let her go there, and be true to her own nature. God recognized at the creation the fact that the two great classes of mind are needed to work together. they are both necessary in every department of human effort. Neither can be discarded without results fatal both to justice and to morality. The *civil* and *political* departments are fair illustrations of these results.

Clarina I. H. Nichols, of Vermont, Editor of the Windham County Democrat, said:

There is one peculiarity in the laws affecting women's property rights which, as it has not, to my knowledge, been presented for the consideration of the public, except by myself, to a limited extent, in private conversations and otherwise, I wish to present here. It is the unconstitutionality of laws cutting off the wife's right of dower. It is a provision of our National and State Constitutions, that property rights shall not be confiscated for political, or other offences against the laws. Yet in all the States, if I am rightly informed, the wife forfeits her right of dower, in case of divorce for infidelity to the marriage vow. In Massachusetts, and several other States, if the wife desert her husband for any cause, and he procure a divorce on the ground of her desertion, she forfeits her right of dower. But it is worthy of remark, that in no case is the right of the husband to possess and control the estate which is their joint accumulation, set aside; no, not even when the wife procures a divorce for the most aggravated abuse and infidelity combined. She, the innocent party, goes out childless and portionless, by the decree of law; and he, the criminal, retains home, and children, by the favor of the same law. I claim, friends, that the laws which cut off the wife's right of dower, in any case, do confiscate property rights, and hence are *unconstitutional*.

The property laws compel the wife to seek divorce, in order to protect her earnings for the support of her children. A rum-drinker took his wife's clothing to pay his rum bill, and the Justice decided that the clothing could be held, because the wife belonged to him.

She then offered the following—

Resolved, That equally involved as they are in the Natural Relations which lie at the base of all society, the sexes are equally entitled to all the rights necessary to the discharge of the duties of those relations.

She went on to say, only under the common law of England has woman been deprived of her natural rights. Instances are common where the husband's aged parents are supported, and the wife's parents left paupers, and the wife's earnings thus employed. She had asked judges why the personal property was not allotted to the widow, and had been informed that it was because if she should marry again, the second husband would obtain that property. A second wrong to remedy the first one perpetrated! A man had told her that his wife was feeble, and had not earned the property, and was not justly entitled to an equal share. He remarked that she had had nine children! Which is of the most importance, the children a woman bears, or the bread and butter they eat? This is a delicate question, and I appeal to the women here to sustain me.

Mrs. N.'s remarks were continued in this strain, to the great satisfaction of the mass of the audience, who frequently manifested applause.

E. L. Rose inquired if it would be in order to move the adoption of the resolutions, but it was decided best to lay them over until tomorrow.

E. O. Smith presented the following Resolution, offered by Lucretia Mott:

Resolved, That as the imbruted slave, who is content with his own lot, and would not be free if he could, if any such there be, only gives evidence of the depth of his degradation—so the woman who is satisfied with her inferior condition, averring that she has all the rights that she wants, does but exhibit the enervating effects of the wrongs to which she is subjected.

The above was laid on the table, for further consideration.

E. Oakes Smith offered the following—

Whereas, modern society is such that human freedom, in its best sense, can only be secured by pecuniary independence,
Therefore—

Resolved, That every woman should engage herself in Literature, the Fine Arts, Professions, Agriculture, Commerce, or whatever

honorable occupation best adapted to her capabilities, that she may thus remove the stain from labor, and work out her own emancipation.

This resolution was laid on the table, till after those having precedence should be disposed of.

The President declared the session closed.

EVENING SESSION.

The Convention met at a quarter before seven. House crowded. President in the Chair.

Lydia F. Fowler read the minutes of the afternoon session.

Susan B. Anthony read the Resolutions.

Elizabeth Oakes Smith read the following letter from John Neal, Esq., of Portland:

Portland, July 28, 1852.

My Dear Friend:—

* * * * * * Mothers are not only the earliest, but the best teachers of man. What children are, when their mothers have done with them, and passed them over to their fathers, *that will their country be*, after a few years. Before the influence of a father is felt, the foundations of character are laid for life. The temper is formed—the habits are begun—the affections are in flower. Happen what may, chance or change, evil or good, it is the mother's milk, and not the father's fire—the mother's love, and not the father's reason, that shapes the child.

But how is a mother to lay the foundations of political knowledge, in a country like ours—a deep, safe and lasting knowledge, in her sons, the future Law-givers and President-makers of their day, unless the great principle for which our fathers bled, with all its consequences, that taxation and representation must go together, be *understood* by her, as well as *acknowledged?*

And what is that mother good for, as the Teacher of a self-governing generation, who does not see in the crafty, though affronting declaration, that all "*men* are created equal"—and that citizens are "free white *males*," of a certain age—whereby one-half of our whole population are disfranchised forever, either an outrage or a blunder? —falsehood, or foolishness?

Are not men, women and children, if "created" at all, in the sense of such a declaration—in other words, all *reasonable* and accountable creatures — are they not "created," or born *equal* in their political rights and privileges? in the right of governing themselves? If the language employed does not mean this—what does it mean? There is no other equality at birth: nor can there be any other. In no other sense were any two persons ever equal, since the creation of the world.

And yet, after all this, look at the condition of woman, as a political share-holder, as a citizen of this "the freest Country on earth"—a country where woman is outwardly more venerated, and more nearly worshipped, than any where else upon the face of the earth. She is taxed, without being represented: She is never her own mistress: She could not, until this great reformation began, receive or transmit property, after marriage, as men do, nor even educate her children. Nor could she acquire property by the labor of her hands—all she could earn belonged to her master, and the creditors of her master—that master among whites, being her *husband*. By the "law, and the men of the law"—the great champions of woman's rights, and of what they call knightly courtesy, a married woman was and still is, classed with infants, idiots, lunatics, and persons beyond sea, in all our legislation. And worse than all, she was made to believe—the simpleton!—that these were her *privileges*, and her *protection!* Just as the free blacks, in the Free States, are *privileged* from serving on juries, training in the militia, and holding office; and just as the Hindoo mother is *privileged* to drown her children, or throw them to the crocodiles, or set fire to herself on the funeral pyre of a scoundrel tyrant she never cared a snap for; and just as the women of China are *privileged* from gadding, by being crippled for life. And wo to him that may try to undeceive them! I have been laboring over twenty years in their behalf, and to this hour, the bitterest things that are ever said, or thought of me, are by the women whom I have been trying to raise up from the condition of bond-slaves, contented with their task-masters and their fetters, to a state of entire equality and companionship with man; to the condition of friends, helpers, and "pleasant counsellors" in the blessed co-partnership of marriage—blessed, if equal—cursed, if otherwise.

And here, speaking of law, just suppose that women made the

laws, and that men were dealt with, and disqualified as they are—how would the men stomach it! Run a parallel here.

* * * * * * *

But, whatever else may be done, or not done, at your Convention, there is one thing you must endeavor to do, at all hazards. With it, you will have accomplished everything—without it, nothing.

You must oblige men to pay women better wages.

But how? There is only one way. Give her the right of suffrage—in other words, the right of meddling with elections; and up go her wages, with the wages of other laboring people: in other words, give to every female, as to every male, at the age of twenty-one, the sacred right of citizenship. Why should not a *free white female*, be allowed to help govern herself, and choose her own masters, as well as every free white *male?*

Admitting that she has less bodily power—that she is more liable to disqualifying sickness—that she has not so much strength of understanding—are these to be urged against women when they are never even thought of, as objections to the citizenship of a *man?* *

* * * "And, if they take the privileges, they must bear the burthens of citizenship."

Agreed. The heaviest burthens of citizenship, they already bear. Being the mothers of all who claim to be citizens, from the mightiest to the lowliest, and having done that for them, which their fathers never could, nor would do, one would suppose that only degenerate sons would be willing to disqualify them.

But stop; what are the duties, which a woman, admitted to all the rights of citizenship, would not be able to discharge?

"She could not enter the militia." I deny this; for women are found in all the armies of the earth—shamefully disguised, to be sure, and acting as men; not only in the ranks, but as leaders. But, if it were true — what then? Substitutes are allowed. The aged, the wealthy, the learned, and the weak and sickly, among men, are all excused from serving in the militia; and, if not within certain ages, and *able bodied*, they are not even required to furnish a substitute.

If men may escape themselves, why not exempt women, for correspondent reasons?

"But they could not hold office, nor serve on juries, nor sit in our legislative assembly, without many inconveniences to the public." Indeed! But who shall be judge! Will you not trust the people?

If a woman were elected to office—and such things have happened—and should prove to be wholly unfit, or should become disqualified—who is in fault? and where is the remedy?

You do not gage the understandings, nor the health and strength of *male* candidates for office; you do not interfere with electors in their choice; nor disqualify men of doubtful characters, or questionable understandings, or inferior bodily strength. You acknowledge it to be none of your business, and allow the people to judge for themselves.

But if women legislate, or hold office, that will lead to the neglect of their families.

And if it did, the proper answer would be—that is none of your business.

Would you dare to urge a similar objection to any man the people had taken up, that he would neglect his family? Was such a thing ever heard of?

Why, if all the offices of the country, from the highest to the lowest: and all the legislation of the country, were in the hands of women, it would amount to only a small per centage of the whole; not more than *one per cent.* And yet men—these men—argue as if all our nurseries would have to be abandoned, all our little ones left to shift for themselves, and our whole country depopulated, if the voters of both sexes were *allowed to choose* women for law-givers, or judges, constables, or *jurymen!* When, if permission were given to-morrow, the probabilities are, that not a married woman would be thought of, under a certain age; nor one single mother in a thousand, be required to leave her family, even for sorting or distributing letters in the post office: nor *so much as one, without her own consent*, and the consent of her husband.

* * * Mark my words: If you do not uphold the dignity of labor—and this you cannot do, where wages are low—you, and yours, and all the women of the world, must continue to stitch, stitch, stitch, to the end of time.

Think you, if women had *votes*, that we should have thirty or forty thousand *men*, sorting and distributing letters; or copying manuscripts, as recording officers—mere copying machines—and at least one hundred thousand retailing pins and needles, or peddling laces and ribbons; candies, cakes and sweetmeats; gloves and stockings; bobbins, toys and trumpery, at three times the wages that are ever

paid to women, for correspondent services? I say no. And I say it is a fact, capable of demonstration, that the right of suffrage is worth about fifty cents a day to the common laborer of our country, and would be worth more, upon the average, to all the women of our country, if a part of them were allowed to distribute letters, copy papers, or hold office, and receive for the same labor, the same pay as men. *And why should they not?*

Let me urge upon you, and upon all the strong-hearted women you are associated with, who do not regard it as a compliment to be called masculine of understanding, any more than a robust man would the being called womanly, to look well at this great question.

Be not deterred, nor frightened, nor fooled, by all the outcry about being "*hustled*" at caucuses, or elections, or mobs. Women are not obliged to go to such places; and if they were, it would be wholesome for all parties. The first time they ever took the field, even so far as to become *listeners*, at political gatherings, was in the great Harrison campaign; and what were the consequences? Every-where throughout the whole country, their influence was felt and acknowledged. Violence and ribaldry were rebuked, and men were ashamed to be less than gentlemen, in the presence of women.

* * * One word more. Among the Teachers we have had upon Earth, I remember but one, who appeared to have understood the true character of woman. And that was our Lord and Master, the blessed Savior himself. He, of all the men that have labored for the elevation of mankind, acknowledged by solemn adjudication, the equality of woman; holding her to be no more guilty than her brother, if she went astray. * * * * *

Look up to Him, if you would not go astray. Claim for yourselves, and your daughters, and *their* daughters, what He never denied to you, entire equality with man, with all the correspondent privileges, obligations, and liabilities; and you will triumph at last, as surely as you put your trust in Him. * * * *

Farewell,

J. N.

The President announced Gerrit Smith, who was received with cheers.

Mr. Smith said that the men had been complained of to-day, as taking great liberties with the rights of women. They had been taking as great liberty with his rights. They were determined to

have a speech out of him. He objected to Mr. Neal's compliments to woman, as though she were an angel. She is not an angel! (Cheers.) She is a woman. I do not believe in getting her to heaven before her time.

Mr. S. read the first resolution. The women who are engaged in this movement, are ridiculed as aspiring to be doctors, lawyers, clergymen, sea captains, Generals, Presidents, &c. For the sake of the argument, I admit that this is true, and that they are totally unfit for these places. He went on at large, to insist on the perfect equality in intellect and judgment, of the two sexes. The concession he had made, was a large one, even for the sake of the argument. The silly aspirations of these silly women—if the objector pleases, is no part of the issue. These women complain that they have been robbed of great and essential rights. They do not ask favors; they DEMAND RIGHTS: the right to themselves; to their earnings; to a vote. Suppose I were to go to vote, and a man should push me back, and say, "you want to be Governor, don't you?" "No," I reply; "I want to exercise a God-given right to vote." Such a taunt as this, would be no more insulting, than those now cast at the women, by men unutterably mean and base. Why do women make reference to their exclusion from places of honor and emolument? Simply to show how their rights are cloven down. Let her have her rights; and then if she fails to secure a proper position, I shall not be the one to weep over her failure. I ask no favor, no grace, for woman; nothing but her rights. I make no claim that woman is fit to be a member of Congress, or President; all I ask for her, is what I ask for the negro — a fair field. All will admit that woman has a right to herself, and to her earnings. You admit these two rights. But you are not prepared to admit that she has the right to the ballot. But the other rights must be held by a very precarious tenure, if she does not exercise this right. If the men who make and administer the laws, see that females are their constituents, they will not be very likely to fail to pay due regard to the rights of women. This is the great Right, which guaranties all other rights.

[Mr. S. sat down, amid the applause of the Convention.]

The President then announced that a letter had been received from Elizabeth C. Stanton, of Seneca Falls; which was read by Susan B. Anthony, and from which the following extracts are given:

SENECA FALLS, Sept. 6th.

My Dear Friends:—As I cannot be present with you, I wish to suggest three points, for your serious and earnest consideration.

1st. Should not all women, living in States where woman has a right to hold property, refuse to pay taxes, so long as she is unrepresented in the government of that State?

Such a movement, if simultaneous, would no doubt produce a great deal of confusion, litigation and suffering, on the part of woman; but shall we fear to suffer for the maintenance of the same glorious principles, for which our fore-fathers fought, and bled, and died. Shall we deny the faith of the old revolutionary heroes, and purchase for ourselves a false peace, and ignoble ease, by declaring in action, that taxation without representation is just? Ah! no; like the English Dissenters, and high-souled Quakers, of our own land, let us suffer our property to be seized and sold—but let us never pay another tax, until our existence as citizens, our civil and political rights, be fully recognized. * * * * * *

The poor, crushed slave, but yesterday toiling on the rice plantation in Georgia, a beast, a chattel, a thing, is to-day, in the Empire State, if he own a bit of land, and a shed to cover him, a person, and may enjoy the proud honor of paying into the hand of the complaisant tax-gatherer the sum of seventy-five cents—even so with the white woman: the satellite of the dinner-pot; the presiding genius of the wash-tub; the seamstress; the teacher; the gay butterfly of fashion; the femme covert of the law. Man takes no note of her through all these changing scenes. But lo! to-day, by the fruits of her industry, she becomes the owner of a house and lot, and now her existence is remembered and recognized, and she too may have the privilege of contributing to the support of this mighty Republic—for the "white male citizen" claims of her one dollar and seventy-five cents a year—because, under the glorious institutions of this free and happy land, she has been able, at the age of fifty years, to possess herself of a property worth the enormous sum of three hundred dollars. It is natural to suppose, she will answer this demand on her, joyously and promptly; for she must, in view of all her rights and privileges, so long enjoyed, consider it a great favor, to be permitted to contribute thus largely to the governmental treasury.

One thing is certain, this course will necessarily involve a good deal of litigation, and we shall need lawyers of our own sex, whose

intellects, sharpened by their interests, shall be quick to discover the loop-holes of retreat. Laws are capable of many and various constructions; we find among men, that as they have new wants, as they develope into more enlarged views of justice, the laws are susceptible of more generous interpretation, or are changed altogether; that is, all laws touching their own interests: for while man has abolished hanging for theft, imprisonment for debt, and secured universal suffrage for himself, a married woman, in most of the States of the Union, remains a non-entity in law — can own nothing; can be whipped and locked up by her lord; can be worked without wages; be robbed of her inheritance, stripped of her children, and left alone, and penniless—and all this, they say, according to law. Now, it is quite time that we have these laws revised, by our own sex—for man does not yet feel, that what is unjust for himself, is also unjust for woman. Yes, we must have our own lawyers, as well as our physicians and priests. Some of our women should go at once into this profession, and see if there is no way by which we may shuffle off our shackles, and assume our civil and political rights. We cannot accept man's interpretation of the law. * * * *

2d. Do not sound philosophy, and long experience teach us, that man and woman should be educated together?

This isolation of the sexes, in all departments, in the business and pleasure of life, is an evil greatly to be deplored. We see its bad effects on all sides. Look at our National Councils. Would man, as a statesman, ever have enacted such scenes, as the capitol of our country has witnessed, had the feminine element been fairly represented in their midst? Are all the duties of husband and father to be made subservient to those of statesman and politician? How many of these husbands return to their homes as happy and contented—as pure and loving, as when they left? Not one in ten. *

* * * Experience has taught us, that man has discovered the most profitable branches of industry, and we demand a place by his side. Inasmuch, therefore, as we have the same objects in life, namely, the full development of all our powers, and should, to some extent, have the same employments, we need precisely the same education; and we therefore claim that the best colleges of our country be open to us. * * * This point, the education of boys and girls together, is a question of the day; it was prominent at the late Educational Convention, in Newark; and it is fitting that in our Con-

vention it should be fully discussed. My ground is, that the boy and the girl, the man and the woman, should be always together, in the business and pleasures of life: sharing alike its joys and sorrows, its distinction and fame; nor will they ever be harmoniously developed, until they are educated together, physically, intellectually, and morally.

She hoped, therefore, that in the proposed People's College, some place would be provided, where women could be educated side by side with men.

There is no better test of the spirituality of a man, than is found in his idea of the true woman. Men, having separated themselves from woman, in the business of life, and thus made their natures coarse, by contact with their own sex exclusively, now demand separate pleasures too; and, in lieu of the cheerful family circle, its books, games, music, and pleasant conversation, they congregate in clubs, to discuss politics, to gamble, drink, etc., in those costly, splendid establishments, got up for such as cannot find sufficient excitement, in their own parlor or studios. It seems never to enter the heads of these fashionable husbands, that the hours drag as heavily with their fashionable wives, as they sit alone, night after night, in their solitary elegance, wholly given over to their own cheerless reflections: for what subjects of thought have they? Gossip and fashion will do for talk, but not for thought. Their Theology is too gloomy and shadowy, to afford them much pleasure in contemplation; their Religion is a thing of form, and not of life, so it brings them no joy or satisfaction. As to the Reforms of the day, they are too genteel to feel much interest in them. There is no class more pitiable, than the unoccupied woman of fashion, thrown wholly upon herself. * *

* * * Does not the present abuse of the religious element in woman demand our earnest attention and investigation?

Priestcraft did not end with the beginning of the reign of Protestantism. Woman has always been the greatest dupe, because the sentiments act blindly, and they alone have been educated in her.

Her veneration, not guided by an enlightened intellect, leads her as readily to the worship of saints, pictures, holy days, and inspired men and books, as to the living God, and the everlasting principles of Justice, Mercy, and Truth. * * * *

There is the Education Society, in which women who can barely read and write, and speak their own language correctly, form so ing

societies, and beg funds to educate a class of lazy, inefficient young men for the ministry, who, starting in life on the false principle that it is a blessing to escape physical labor, begin at once to live on their piety. What is the result? Why, after going through College, Theological Seminaries, and a brief struggle at fitting up skeleton sermons, got up by older heads, for the benefit of beginners, and after preaching them for a season to those who hunger and thirst for light and truth, they sink down into utter insignificance, too inefficient to keep a place, and too lazy to earn the salt to their porridge—whilst the women work on, to educate more, for the same noble destiny. Look at the long line of benevolent societies, all filled with these male agents, living, like so many leeches, on the religious element in our natures. Most of them, from the ranks of the clergy, who, unable to build up, or keep a church, have taken refuge in some of these theological asylums for the intellectually maimed, halt, and blind, of this profession.

Woman really thinks she is doing God service, when she casts her mite into their treasury, when in fact, not one tenth of all the funds raised, ever reach the ultimate object.

Among the clergy, we find our most violent enemies—those most opposed to any change in woman's position; yet no sooner does one of these find himself out of place and pocket, than, if all the places in the various benevolent societies chance to be occupied, he takes a kind of philanthropic survey of the whole habitable globe, and forthwith forms a Female Benevolent Society, for the conversion of the Jews, perchance, or for sending the gospel to the Feejee Islands—and he is, in himself, the law for the one, and the gospel for the other. Now, the question is not whether the Jews are converted, or whether the gospel ever reaches the Islands; but does the agent flourish? Is his post profitable? And does woman beg and stitch faithfully for his support, and for the promotion of his *glorious mission?*

Now, I ask woman, with all seriousness, considering that we have little to give, had we not better bestow our own charities with our own hands? And, instead of sending our benevolent outgushings, in steamers, to parts unknown, had we not better let them flow in streams whose length and breadth we can survey at pleasure, knowing their source, and where they empty themselves?

* * * Thus woman, in her present ignorance, is made to rest in the most distorted view of God and the Bible, and the laws of her being; and, like the poor slave, "Uncle Tom," her religion, instead of making her noble and free, and impelling her to flee from all gross surroundings, by the false lessons of her spiritual teachers—by the wrong application of great principles of right and justice, has made her bondage but more certain and lasting — her degradation more hopeless and complete.

ELIZABETH C. STANTON.

Matilda E. J. Gage, of Manlius, offered the following resolution:

Whereas, the peace of society depends on the promotion of justice; and the happiness of mankind on the enjoyment of their rights; and, whereas, the absolute rights and natural equality of both sexes are self-evident, and cannot be given by favor, but eternally exist, therefore,

Resolved, That it is the imperative obligation of every woman, to enter into the discharge of the duties arising from her natural rights, and to direct her most strenuous efforts to the acquiring of those rights, now forcibly withheld.

Lucy Stone next addressed the Convention.

She urged upon woman, the duty of resisting taxation, so long as she is not represented. It may involve the loss of friends, as it surely will that of property. But let them all go: friends, house, garden-spot, all. The principle at issue requires the sacrifice. Resist; let the case be tried in the courts; be your own lawyers; base your cause on the admitted, self-evident truth, that "taxation and representation are inseparable." One such resistance, by the agitation that would grow out of it, will do more to set this question right, than all the Conventions in the world. There are fifteen millions of taxable property, owned by women of Boston, who have no voice, either in the use or imposition of the tax. So that, however they may revolt, and abhor the atrocious deed, they are compelled to aid in returning Thomas Sims to slavery, who in his life's young prime, and yearning for liberty, had sought refuge in their city; and so also for any other atrocious deed the government may perpetrate.

We want, that our men friends, who are so justly proud of their "Declaration of Independence," should make their practice consistent with it. But if they will not do that, then let them blot from its

page, the grandest truths their Fathers ever uttered—truths that the crushed soul of humanity, the wide world round, has leaped to hear. But, sisters, the right of suffrage will be secured to us, *when we ourselves are willing to incur the odium, and loss of property*, which resistance to this outrage on our rights will surely bring with it.

Mr. J. B. Brigham, a school teacher, said he wished to say a few words, in reply to the arguments used. He said, the "feminine element" which women possessed, in opposition to the masculine element in men, showed that their spheres were not the same, and that woman was only truly lovely and happy, when in her own sphere and her own element. He was very happy to hear the phrase "feminine element," for if they understood this it would guide them in everything. In the very animals the difference was manifest. He thought women ought to be keepers at home, and mind domestic concerns; and he had no doubt that the true object of this Convention, was not so much to acquire any real or supposed rights, as to make the speakers and actors conspicuous. He wished to urge upon those engaged in this Convention to claim nothing masculine for women.

Gerrit Smith said, if his esteemed friend would allow him, he would hand him over to Lucretia Mott, as he wanted him to feel the power of a woman. Mr. S. then alluded to the stone which a woman cast from the wall, in a siege by Abimelech, and when it fell on his head, he commanded his armor-bearer to thrust him through, that he might not be slain by a woman. He would not leave his friend that privilege. He would hand him over to a woman, to slay him.

Lucretia Mott took the stand, and spoke at considerable length. She cited several examples to prove that women were equal in strength to men, and superior in industry.

It was impossible, she said, for one man to have arbitrary power over another, without becoming despotic. She did not expect our friend to see how woman is robbed. Women were to feel it. Slave-owners did not perceive themselves oppressors, but slaves did. Gerrit Smith alluded to one woman, whom our friend would call out of her sphere. If he believes in the Bible, he must acknowledge that Deborah, a mother in Israel, arose by divine command and led the armies of Israel. She also referred to the wife of Heber, the Kenite, who drove the nail into the head of the Canaanite General.

and was celebrated therefor in the songs of Israel. She thought female preaching in harmony with the doctrine of Paul. She referred to Paul's directions to women how to preach, and his exhortations to them to qualify themselves for this function, and not to pin their faith on ministers' sleeves.

She cited Willis' Unwritten Philosophy, and advised Mr. BRIGHAM not to stake his wisdom against the allotment of the Almighty.

Our schools were opened at last to women, and they had now sent out teachers. Colleges were now opened, and LUCY STONE and ANTOINETTE BROWN had entered, and obtained there diplomas, and now went out and pleaded the cause of the slave, and of their own sex, with an eloquence almost equal to that of our young friend, here.

The medical world was now open to woman, and noble examples had been set by talented females. Woman's sphere had been enlarging and widening, till it is now filling, not only the whole earth, but also heaven.

Mr. BRIGHAM could not appreciate the propriety of Mr. SMITH'S mode of logic. He himself had not the eloquence of Miss STONE, or Miss BROWN, for he had not the "feminine element." He did not object to woman's voice being heard. He would have them visit this city, and seek out the breathing-holes of perdition. He remarked, that women had less voice than men.

MRS. MOTT asked whether her young friend had sent a protest to old England, against Victoria's proroguing Parliament. In the yearly meetings of the Friends, documents read by the men, had been read by the women's clerk, that they might be better understood.

She closed by saying, that LUCY STONE and ANTOINETTE BROWN wanted to treat this subject more at length, to-morrow, and she hoped her young friend, BRIGHAM, would be present and discuss the question farther.

Mr. PRYNE made some remarks, and was followed by Mr. HOWLETT.

LUCY STONE said, Mr. BRIGHAM lacked faith in God. That woman's nature was stamped and sealed by her Creator, and there was no danger of her unsexing herself, so long as He was on the Throne, or His eye watched her.

The meeting then adjourned until nine o'clock Thursday morning.

THURSDAY MORNING SESSION.

Convention called to order at nine o'clock, by the President. The attendance large; all the seats in the Hall occupied—the greater number women, but a respectable representation of men. The greatest interest prevailed.

The minutes of yesterday were read by LYDIA F. FOWLER, and approved.

A proposition for a Finance Committee having been made, by Rev. Mr. MAY, and it being suggested that WENDELL PHILLIPS, the Treasurer, is the proper person to whom to send the money, a discussion was raised upon the manner in which the Convention is constituted.

B. S. JONES, of Ohio, wanted to know whether the officers were elected for one year, for life, or good behavior. When he saw the call of this Convention—as a national one—it was new to him, and to the friends of Woman's Rights, in the West.

PAULINA W. DAVIS said, the first Convention was called by correspondence with the friends of Woman's Rights, in every part of the country; and it was attended by delegates from more States than the present Convention, which is the third. The former Conventions, held at Worcester, elected their Central Committee for the year. It would be impossible to get up a Convention without a Committee. Is that satisfactory, Mr. JONES?

Mr. JONES — It is satisfactory, so far as Mrs. DAVIS herself understands it.

The President said, this was not, as yet, a permanent organization, but only a Convention for the time being. Perhaps it would be deemed advisable to form an organization, and then standing Committees could be appointed, and all the usual machinery. She thought it would be premature to send the funds to WENDELL PHILLIPS, the Treasurer of the last Convention, unless no other Treasurer were appointed.

It was then proposed, by Rev. Mr. MAY, that all those who had purchased tickets of admission, (and they numbered five hundred,) should write their names and residences on the backs of the cards, and hand them in, on the last day of the Convention, that the officers might communicate with them, in reference to the next Convention.

LUCY STONE said, none need give their names who were not willing to co-operate in the future, with us.

It was then agreed that a Committee of Finance should be appointed, and Rev. Mr. MAY being nominated, declined, and named Mrs. STEPHEN SMITH, of Syracuse.

PRESIDENT—Woman's Rights women do not like to be called by their husbands' names, but their own.

Mr. MAY—Then, ROSA SMITH.

This lady was elected; also, ELIZABETH W. PHILLIPS, JOSEPH SAVAGE, and CAROLINE M. SEVERENCE, of Ohio.

E. L. ROSE, from the Nominating Committee, reported the name of CAROLINE M. SEVERENCE, of Ohio, as a Vice President, and she was unanimously confirmed as such by the Convention.

MATILDA E. J. GAGE, of Manlius, next addressed the Convention:

* * * * * This Convention has assembled to discuss the subject of Woman's Rights, and form some settled plan of action for the future. Let Syracuse sustain her name for radicalism. While so much is said of the inferior intellect of woman, it is by a strange absurdity conceded that very many eminent men owe their station in life to their mothers. Women are now in the situation of the mass of mankind, a few years since, when science and learning were in the hands of the priests, and property was held by vassalage; the Pope and the priests claimed to be, not only the teachers, but the guides of the people; the laity were not permitted to examine for themselves; education was held to be unfit for the masses, while the tenure of their landed property was such as kept them in a continual state of dependence on their feudal lord.

* * * It is but a short time, since the most common rudiments of education were deemed sufficient for any woman; could she but read tolerably, and write her own name, it was enough.

* * * Trammeled as women have been, by might and custom, there are still many shining examples, which serve as beacon lights of what may be attained by genius, labor, energy, and perseverance combined. "The longer I live in the world," says Goethe, "the more I am certain, that the great difference between the great, and insignificant, is energy, invincible determination, an honest purpose once fixed, and then victory." Sir Isaac Newton said of himself, "that if ever he had been able to do anything, he had effected it by patient thinking only"; and we are all familiar with the anecdote which narrates the starting occasion of that train of thought. Ik Marvel, in his Dream Life, says, "there is no genius in life, like the

genius of energy and industry; that all the traditions, so current among young men, that certain great characters have wrought their greatness by inspiration, as it were, grow out of a sad mistake; and that there are no rivals so formidable, as those earnest, determined minds, which reckon the value of every hour, and which achieve eminence by persistent application."

Although so much is said against the unfitness of woman for public life, it can be seen, from Semiramis to Victoria, that she has a peculiar fitness for governing. In poetry, Sappho was honored by the title of the tenth Muse. Helena Lucretio Corano, a Venetian lady, who lived in the seventeenth century, was a woman of such rare scientific attainments, that the most illustrious persons, in passing through Venice, were more anxious to see her than all the curiosities of the city. She devoted herself, with intense perseverance, to literary pursuits; was made a Doctor, and received the title of Unalterable; and, with all, combined an unostentatious humility. She was but thirty-eight, when she died. Mary Cunitz, a native of Silesia, was one of the greatest geniuses of the sixteenth century. She understood many languages, was skilled in history, poetry, painting, music, and medicine; and these were but amusements. She particularly applied herself to Mathematics, and especially to Astronomy. She was ranked as one of the most able astronomers of her time, and formed astronomical tables, that acquired for her a great reputation. Another lady of the seventeenth century, Anne Maria Schureman, succeeded admirably in sculpture, engraving, and music. She was also learned in various languages; but in miniature painting she particularly excelled.

Constantia Grierson, an Irish girl, of poor parentage, was celebrated for her literary attainments, although she died at the early age of twenty-seven.

With the learning, energy, and perseverance of Lady Jane Grey, Mary, and Elizabeth, all are familiar. Mrs. Montague is spoken of by Cowper, as standing at the head of all that is called learned, and, that every critic veiled his bonnet at her superior judgment. Joannie Baillie has been termed the female Shakspeare. Miss Caroline Herschell shares the fame of her brother, as an astronomer, having herself discovered planets and comets. The greatest triumphs of the present age, in the drama, music, and literature, have been achieved by females, among whom may be mentioned Miss Cushman, Jenny

Lind, Miss Chesebro, Miss Carey, Miss Fennimore Cooper, Grace Greenwood, Mrs. Stowe, and Margaret Fuller Ossoli. Mrs. Somerville's renown has long been spread over both hemispheres, as one of the first astronomers of the present age. With this, she combines various literary acquirements; and to those who think them incompatible with feminine duties, it can be shown that she discharged, in an eminent degree, every social and family requirement.

To those who say women do not desire their rights, or think they have them already, I would say, converse with any intelligent woman on the subject, and you will not find them indifferent. Woman feels deeply, keenly, her degradation, but is bound by the iron hand of custom which so long has exercised tyrant rule over her. An ignorant woman is nominally in the same condition as the peasant who thinks it right that a king shall rule over him; and to keep him content, he is made to believe it would be blasphemy and treason in him to call in question this right.

* * * I honor those noble women, who have been willing to pioneer in the path of duty and right, and bear the obloquy which always has, and always will, follow the first promulgation of unaccustomed truths: so suffered the martyrs of old; so suffers Kossuth. Obloquy is said to be a necessary ingredient of all true glory; it might be said to be a necessary concomitant of all great truths.

* * * The question is, how can this mental and moral lethargy, which now binds the generality of women, be shaken off? They are educated to a state of entire dependence; taught before marriage, to expect a support from their fathers, and after, from their husbands; to suppress their convictions, if contrary to those of their fathers, brothers and husbands, and to allow others to act for them. This state of listlessness follows as a natural consequence.

Self-reliance is one of the first lessons to be taught our daughters; they should be educated with our sons, and equally with them taught to look forward to some independent means of support—either to one of the professions, or the business best fitted to exercise their talents. Marriage has been looked to as the acme of hope, by women; and why? Because all lucrative and honorable means of support have been seized by men, and women have been driven to marriage, as a necessity. To what more fertile cause can be attributed the uncongeniality frequently existing between married parties? Women have been instructed in showy accomplishments, while literature

has been nearly cast aside, as unnecessary; men have been educated not to expect companionship in their wives. At the proposition of equal education and rights, man starts up and says, if women are admitted as equals, you ruin domestic harmony. If a woman is permitted to think for herself, forsooth, she may disagree in her views with her husband, and family peace be destroyed. A fig for such reasoning! Were refined, intelligent conversation in the home circle appreciated, club-rooms, secret societies, taverns, and stores, where man's leisure is generally spent, would be less frequented; for where all are educated, it is a disgrace to be ignorant, and time now wasted, would be spent in improvement.

* * * Being placcd in a position compelling them to act, has caused many persons to discover talents in themselves they were before unaware of possessing. Great emergencies produce great leaders, seemingly fitted by Providence, while it is but the arousing some energy, hitherto dormant.

* * * Those who fear woman's incapacity to cope with the trials of life, should consider what is *now* actually thrust upon her, by existing customs. Thousands of women are driven to a life of pollution, by the insufficiency of wages in those departments of labor which she is legitimately permitted to enter. Let any who doubt, read the statistics of London, New York, or any other great city—or the confessions of the poor creatures themselves! One, (in a report, a while since, on the London seamstresses,) says, "*if I was never allowed to speak more, it was the meager pay I received by labor, that led me to go astray.* I struggled very hard to keep myself chaste, but found I could not get food and clothing for myself and mother. Could I honestly have earned enough to have subsisted upon—to feed and clothe myself, I should have remained virtuous." * * * Nor is the condition of this class much better in our own country. In the reports of those missionaries who have recently directed their efforts of reform to the vilest sinks of infamy in New York, we perceive the cause which operates to keep the ranks of iniquity filled. Earning but a scanty subsistence, totally inadequate to provide the commonest necessaries of life, these women have, as constant accompaniments, want, labor unceasing, broken rest, and in the end a chance of starvation. With nothing to cheer, nothing to encourage, and driven by task-masters as merciless as those of Pharaoh, or of the Southern cotton and rice plantations; while opposed to this, is

offered a life of ease, plenty, society, and amusement. Instead of the damp, dark, confined, noisome room, occupied by the sewing girl, are presented to her imagination, large, high, airy, and commodious dwellings, adorned with flowers, and enlivened by music; and is it strange she falls?

* * * Custom has been, and is now, the mistress who plants her foot on the too willing neck of prostrate womanhood. Of custom, which has been termed unwritten law, "it is our first duty," says Blackstone, "to make enquiries as to its legality; for if it is not a good custom, it ought no longer to be used." In all governments, it would be the dictate of policy, for the governed to submit to what the governors decree, provided they decree nothing inconsistent with their natural rights; but as soon as any government stretches its powers so far as to destroy the natural rights, to which the members of a community are entitled, these last are justified, by all the laws of God and man, in opposing such a government. We claim, as a natural right, the same privilege of acting as we think best, which is accorded to the other half of mankind—a right bestowed upon us by God, when he created man in his own image, after his own likeness, both male and female, and gave *them* equal dominion: Genesis, 1st chap., 26th, 27th, and 28th verses.

* * * Although our country makes great professions in regard to general liberty, yet the right to particular liberty, natural equality, and personal independence, of two great portions of this country, is treated, from custom, with the greatest contempt; and color in the one instance, and sex in the other, are brought as reasons why they should be so derided; and the mere mention of such, natural rights is frowned upon, as tending to promote sedition and anarchy.

* * * Let us look at the rights it is boasted women now possess. After marriage, the husband and wife are considered as one person in law, which I hold to be false, from the very laws applicable to married parties. Were it so, the act of one would be as binding as the acts of the other, and wise legislators would not meet to enact statutes defining the peculiar rights of each; were it so, a woman could not legally be a man's inferior. Such a thing would be a veritable impossibility. One half of a person can not be under the protection or direction of the other half. Blackstone says, "a woman may indeed be attorney for her husband, for that implies no separation from, but rather a representation of her lord. And a husband may also bequeath any thing to his wife, by will; for it can not take effect, till the coverture is determined by his death." After stating at considerable length, the reasons showing their unity, the learned commentator proceeds to cut the knot, and show they are not one, but are considered as two persons, one superior, and one inferior—and not only so, but the inferior, in the eye of the law, as acting from compulsion. A wife can not, by will, devise lands to her husband; for at the time of such act, she is supposed to be under his coercion, and therefore all deeds executed, and acts done by her, during her coverture, are void, except it be those where she is solely and directly examined, to learn if her act be voluntary! How degrading! how humiliating! and carrying on the face of it, crying injustice, is the position woman is compelled to assume, when thus taken aside, by the magistrate, and asked, "Do you sign this deed of your own free will and accord, and not by fear and compulsion of your husband?" Out upon it! Why the very stones would cry out, should woman longer hold her peace.

Every father has a right to bind, or give away, any of his children, while minors, without the consent, or even knowledge of the mother; and when he dies, she is not considered a competent guardian for the child, and the father can, by Part 2d, Title 3, Sec. 1st, of Vol. 2d, Revised Statutes, in his will, or deed, exclude the mother from participation in such guardianship; for though called one, the father alone has legal power over the children. A mother, as such, is entitled to no power over her own children.

A woman's personal property, by marriage becomes absolutely her husband's, which, at his death, he may give away from her; while at her death she has no such power, or any power, of disposing of his personal property. The law very kindly allows a woman her wearing apparel, as well as jewels and ornaments, provided the latter were not disposed of by her husband, previous to his death; and provided the children do not live with her, she is allowed one bed, bedstead, and bedding.

* * * Man may not only bid her stand aside from all that is lucrative, but when, by patient industry, she has accumulated a sustenance, he seizes the control of the whole. Even now, a case arises to mind, of a woman who, by daily washing, had earned enough to buy a house for herself and dissipated husband. A short time since,

the husband was taken sick, and not being expected to live, bequeathed the whole to his brother; and all the wife could get, was the interest of one third, during her natural life. And where was her redress? She had none. A *shame* on such laws! a SHAME on such men. A woman not only (till recently) lost all right of holding property by marriage, but she lost her personal identity. In this act, she becomes absorbed in another. At the death of her husband, she is left a queen, or a beggar, as the option of her lord dictates; while, should she die first, she has no right to the disposition of any of the property accumulated by the united industry; for by Title 1st, Part 2d, Sec. 1st, 2d Vol. Revised Statutes, of this State, Idiots, persons of unsound mind, married women, and infants, are declared incompetent to devise real estate. *Well classed, truly!*

The present laws are deleterious to the moral sensibilities of both husband and wife. Woman has no inducement to prudence and industry, and she is obliged seemingly to acquiesce in the wishes of her husband, however repugnant to her, as the only means of obtaining, in even a small degree, her own; or she is allowed to follow her own plans and views as a favor, and not from the lack of power to compel her to do otherwise.

* * * In the present posture of our national affairs, when the instruments of power, although professedly in the hands of the people, are, in reality, lodged in the hands of a moiety, thereby forming an Aristocracy, rather than a Republic—what are we to expect, but that one portion of the nation will be sunk in ignorance and grovelling submission.

* * * We are invited to acquire a knowledge of government, not only by many immediate benefits, but by a multitude of future ones; and who can say it will not end in the full maturity of public happiness? Nothing is a stronger proof how natural the love of liberty is to mankind, than the efforts made to attain it. Let wives cast aside the thought that their highest duty consists in gratifying their husbands palates, by some delicacy; or listening with smiling countenance, to what he may please to relate of the day's occurrences, while placidly darning his stocking, with no higher ambition than to have it *well* done. I do not, by any means depreciate these necessary employments, in their proper place; but they should not be the chief business of their lives. The duty to please, devolves equally on both parties. Remember your duty to God, and your own sex, as well as

to man. Let us make such use of our talent, as to receive the plaudit of our Maker, of well done, good and faithful servant.

To mothers we look, especially to young mothers, for the instruction of their children in the principles of justice and right, and to see that equal justice is granted to both; not giving one every advantage, and according none to the other.

* * * We need not expect the concessions demanded by women will be peaceably granted; there will be a long moral warfare, before the citadel yields; in the meantime, let us take possession of the outposts. The public must be aroused to a full sense of the justice of our claims. Beside the duty of educating our children, so as to make the path of right, easy to their feet, is that of discussion, newspaper articles, petitions: all great reforms are gradual. Fear not any attempt to frown down the revolution already commenced; nothing is a more fertile aid of reform, than an attempt to check it; work on!

"Work sows the seed:
Even the *rock* may yield its flower:
No lot so hard, but human power,
Exerted to one end and aim,
May conquer fate, and capture fame!
Press on!

Pause not in fear:
Preach no desponding, servile view—
What e'er thou will'st thy WILL may do.

Work on, and win!
Shall light from nature's depth arise,
And *thou*, whose mind can grasp the skies,
Sit down with fate, and idly rail?—
No—ONWARD! Let the Truth prevail!"

J. ELIZABETH JONES, of Ohio, then addressed the Convention:

She was glad to mingle with the free spirits in that hall. This was a time of progress, and man might sooner arrest the progress of the lightning, or the clouds, or stay the waves of the sea, than stay the onward march of Truth, with her hand on her sword, and her banner unfurled. She was not in the habit of talking much about women's

rights—she was one of those who, instead of talking about rights, took them, without saying anything about it.

She occupied pulpits, all over the country, five days out of seven, in lecturing on science, and she did not find any objection. She was not sufficiently versed in the subject, to know what all the women wanted; but she knew what she wanted herself, and she wanted what the men were most unwilling to grant—the right to vote. That included all other rights. She wanted to go into the Legislative Hall, sit on the Judicial Bench, and fill the Chair of the Executive. Now do you understand us? This we claim on the ground of humanity; and on the ground that taxation and representation go together. The whole question resolves itself into this. There has been no attempt to dispute this. No man in this hall, or who may come into it, will venture to deny the right of woman to vote. You may make many arguments against the expediency of exercising it, but the right is ours. But while we are deprived of political rights, there are other rights in connection, and which no law prevents. We can take our rights as merchants, and in other avocations, by investing our capital in them. But we stand back, and wait till it is popular for us to become merchants, doctors, lecturers, or practitioners of the mechanic arts. I know girls, who have mechanical genius sufficient, perhaps, to become Arkwrights and Fultons, but their mothers would not apprentice them. Which of the women of this Convention have sent their daughters as apprentices to a watchmaker? There is no law against this?

The PRESIDENT — The Church and public opinion are stronger than law.

L. A. JENKINS, of Waterloo, N. Y., wanted to ask the lady, whether there was any law to prevent women voting, in this State? The statute states white male citizens may vote, but does not say that white female citizens cannot.

J. E. JONES said she was not sufficiently acquainted with the law, to answer—but she held, that whether the statute book was in favor, or against the right, women had a natural right to vote, which no human laws could abrogate.

ANTOINETTE L. BROWN said she knew instances of colored persons voting, under the same circumstances, and their votes being allowed, by the legal authorities; there being no express provision forbidding them to vote. She had been just informed, by some person, that J. A. Dix declared the proceedings of a school meeting void, because two women voted at it. But this proved nothing, except the individual opinion of Mr. Dix.

Mr. JONES said he supposed Miss BROWN referred to Ohio, where cases of that kind had come before the courts; but it was a splitting of hairs, between black and white blood; and the judges decided in favor of the right to vote, because there was fifty per cent of white blood in the persons in question. He thought that the permission to white males to vote, excluded all others.

Mrs. DAVIS said, when the Rhode Island Convention to alter the Constitution, was sitting, in the draft they said, "all citizens;" but they discovered afterwards that the word male, was not inserted, and they immediately put it in, intending, of course, to exclude women. Mrs. D. then proceeded to read a letter of Rev. A. D. MAYO, of Gloucester, Mass., remarking that it was supposed the clergy were opposed, yet here was a distinguished clergyman in their favor.

GLOUCESTER, Mass., August 24, 1852.

TO MRS. PAULINA W. DAVIS:

Dear Madam:— * * * I have never questioned what I understand to be the central principle of the reform in which you are engaged. I believe that every mature soul is responsible directly to God, not only for its faith and opinions, but for the details of its life in the world. In every crisis of duty, there can be consultation, at last, only between one spirit and its Creator. The assertion that woman is responsible to man for her belief or conduct, in any other sense than man is responsible to woman, I reject, not as a believer in any theory of "Woman's Rights," but as a believer in that religion which knows neither male nor female, in its imperative demand upon the individual conscience.

This being true, I know not by what logic the obligation of woman to form her own ideal of life, and pursue the career which her reason and conscience dictate, can be denied. The sphere of activity in which any person will shine is always an open question until answered by experience. I may admire the wisdom of the mind which has discovered that half the people in the world are incompetent to act beyond one circle of duty; but until the fact has been established by the universal failure of your sex, every where outside that fatal line, I must admire rather than believe. Every real position in soci-

ety is achieved by conquest. I must convince my people that I am a true minister of the Gospel, before I can claim their respect and support. And when a woman, in the possession of the powers and opportunities given her by God, tells me she must trade, or instruct the young, or heal the sick, or paint, or sing, or act upon the stage, or call sinners to repentance, I *can* say but one thing—just what I must say to the man who affirms the same — "My friend, show your *ability* to serve society in this way, and all creation cannot deprive you of the right. If you *can do* this, to which you aspire; can do it well, then you and every body will be the gainers. And whoever says you have forfeited any essential grace or virtue of womanhood by your act, betrays, by the accusation, an utter incompetency to judge upon questions of human responsibility and obligation."

* * * I therefore believe the method of this Reform, is that declared by God, when he said to Adam: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." There is no "royal road" to womanhood, as there is certainly none to manhood. *You* must achieve what you desire.

* * * Woman must do much, before man can help her. I suppose the sexes are about equally culpable; and I make no peculiar charge, when I say that until I can see more individual consecration, more clearness of perception and firmness of conduct, in regions outside the walls of the household, among the mass of women, than now, I shall not cherish extravagant hopes of the great immediate success of your noble object.

* * * Your movement is a part of the great onward march of society, and must be exposed to the reverses from outward hostility, and inward faithlessness, that have always hindered the progress of the race.

* * * This reform will be a sword of division, and you will not be surprised when those who have entered it from any motive less exalted than consecration to duty, fall away in weariness and disgust. Yet all the more honorable will it be to those who are content to remain, and abide the fatal conditions of sincere human effort. You are not very near your journey's end; but you are doing much for your sex, in a mode which will "tell" inevitably upon society. I often encounter a new spirit of self respect and honorable independence; a new hope, and works corresponding to it, among young women, which I can trace back to these Conventions. I believe cultivated men in all professions, are becoming ashamed to treat your arguments with open ridicule or quiet contempt, and occupy a position, at least, of fair minded neutrality, to a greater degree than ever before; while the popular sympathies are every year more enlisted in your success.

* * * With great respect, I remain your friend and fellow laborer in the cause of truth,

A. D. MAYO.

Samuel J. May read letters from Wm. Lloyd Garrison, of Boston, and Margaret H. Andrews, of Newburyport, extracts from which follow:

"Much, very much, do I regret that I cannot be at the Woman's Rights Convention, which is to assemble to-morrow in Syracuse; but circumstances prevent. I shall be there in spirit, from its organization to its dissolution. It has as noble an object in view, ay, and as Christian a one, too, as was ever advocated beneath the sun. Heaven bless all its proceedings.

Yours for all Human Rights,

WM. LLOYD GARRISON."

Rev. S. J. May.

"I wish to express my deep sympathy, to those brave women who are struggling against ancient prejudices and modern folly, and who will eventually elevate our sex to a position which will command the respect of those who now regard them with derision and contempt; and my gratitude to the noble minded men who are extending a helping hand to those who have hitherto been considered the weak and dependant portion of society, and are endeavoring to raise them to *their* stand, instead of trying to establish their superiority over them. Such conduct shows true greatness and dignity of character.

I wish to bear my share of the reproach and contumely which will be liberally bestowed upon this movement, by many who ought to know and to do better — this is indeed the actuating motive which impels me to write.

With regard to the counsel which has been requested of all interested, I find little left me to say. If there be any one subject which has not been sufficiently insisted on, it is the aimless life which young women generally lead, after they have left school. A large portion

are occupied in forming matrimonial plans, when they are wholly unfit to enter into that sacred state. Dr. Johnson makes his Nekayah say of young ladies with whom she associated, "Some imagined they were in love, when they were only idle." If young ladies directed their attention to some definite employment, this evil would be remedied.

I am, dear Sir, very truly yours,
MARGARET H. ANDREWS.

B. S. Jones moved that Gerrit Smith's three resolutions should be taken up this afternoon. He objected to the resolutions' lying so long on the table, not acted upon; it was unparliamentary, and would lead to confusion.

Mr. May said Lucy Stone had proposed that the speaking should take this course. She had good reasons, and could explain them for herself.

The President thought this Convention as orderly, regular and parliamentary, as those of men.

Lucy Stone thought our course the best. She did not care a fig for precedents of other Conventions. She thought B. S. Jones tithed mint, and anise and cummin, in his adherence to parliamentary usage.

Let us make our own rules. The interest manifested in the Convention, shows that the cause is being well served. We need not, then, be troubled about the form.

She alluded to Elizabeth Jones' idea of silently taking rights. It could not be done. In Massachusetts women had apprenticed themselves as printers, and were expelled, because men would not set type if women were allowed to. Harriet K. Hunt applied to attend medical lectures, at Harvard College, but the students declared that if she was admitted, they would leave—and so she was sacrificed.

Harriet K. Hunt—No; I am here.

Lucy Stone—Our President says she was only suspended.

So too, when the sisters Grimke, and Abby Kelley, began publicly to plead the cause of the slave, they were assailed, both by pulpit and press, and every species of abuse was heaped upon them. But they persevered—proved their capacity to do it, and now we meet in quietude, and our right to speak in public is not questioned. So it will be. The woman who first departs from the routine in which

society allows her to move, must suffer. Let her bravely bear, for the sake of the good that will result; and when the world sees that she can do well what she has undertaken, it will acknowledge her right to do it. But we must be true to each other. We must stand by the woman whose work of hand or head removes her from her customary sphere — employ the woman physician, phrenologist, artist, rather than a man of the same calling. Be true to woman, and in time all professions and avocations will be as free to us, as to our brothers.

J. Elizabeth Jones said, the real cause of the abuse of the Grimkes and Abby Kelley, was not because they took their right of speaking, but because they attacked the positions of others. She (Mrs. Jones) was pelted from head to foot with eggs, because of her attacking the pro-slavery clergy in their position. The clergy were very friendly to the female missionaries, on their return from abroad, and opened their doors to them.

The Convention then adjourned till the afternoon.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The Hall was crowded to excess, long before the time for calling the Convention to order had arrived.

The President called the meeting to order, and one of the Secretaries read the proceedings of the forenoon session.

The President declared the question before the Convention on the adoption of the three resolutions introduced by Gerrit Smith. They were adopted without further discussion.

Catharine Stebbins suggested that speakers be restricted to thirty minutes.

Mr. May thought this would embarrass us. We had better not make any restriction; but if any speaker was tedious, we should be honest enough to say so.

The President hoped the suggestion of Mrs. Stebbins would answer the purpose, without the adoption of any resolutions.

C. I. H. Nichols said she was a great talker, but she would be brief as possible. She said the papers had represented her to be the editor of a Pierce and King paper. She believed that she was a liv-

ing witness that when women acted out their free will, they would never be found advocating principles opposed to their honest convictions. She declared that she was editing a paper devoted to the cause of "Free Democracy." The publishers had agreed to set her right; but she deemed it due to the audience, especially as she had declared herself a political woman, yesterday, and had neglected to define her position. She was also happy to say that she was *not a widow*, but had the co-operation and encouragement of her husband in the advocacy of Freedom and Woman's Rights.

She followed this personal explanation with a lengthy address upon the condition of females. Her address was peculiarly able and argumentative.

Abby Price, of Hopedale, read an Address, from which extracts are given.

I shall, in my remarks, very briefly consider Woman's religious position—her relation to the Church—and endeavor to show that by its restrictions and inferiority she has herself suffered; and that from the same cause man and society generally, have suffered.

Without going largely into detail, to prove that woman has been religiously oppressed, any one in the least acquainted with history may know, that in the past, as in the present, the world over, the Church has proscribed and restricted her; suffering her to exercise her inalienable Human Rights, only by *permission*.

* * * "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."—*Gallatians*, 3d chap., 28th verse.

Notwithstanding the explicit declaration contained in the above, so entirely in accordance with natural justice, and reason, as well as with the general tone and spirit of the New Testament, woman is, in nearly all the Churches, denied *free speech*. From St. Paul down to the present priesthood, it is said very gravely, "It is not permitted unto woman to speak; if she would learn any thing, let her ask her husband, at home"! Deliberations have been entered into, by some denominations, whether she should be allowed to respond, Amen; and some have thought even this improper!

Allow me here to state, that the whole arrangement of nature, in her beautiful and wise manifestations to us, evince that the Divine Order is for the sexes to mingle their different and peculiar characteristics in every relation of life. In Christ Jesus our Lord, the masculine and the feminine were blended harmoniously. The different characteristics in his own person were distinctly and plainly seen. The masculine, when he fixed his eye in stern rebuke, and made the hypocrite and the Pharisee tremble; and the feminine gleamed often through his tears of affection and pity, and shone ever a glorious halo of patience and love around him, in the midst of suffering the most wasting and intense. The Church, his Representative, should also exhibit these peculiarities in as full and as glorious harmony.

* * * Very few of the sects allow woman to assume responsibility as religious *teachers*. However great she may feel the duty to be upon her, and however well qualified she may be, all ecclesiastical authorities with one accord begin to make excuses, whenever a woman presents herself to be properly authorized, according to the popular usage of that Church, to preach the Gospel to a people, one half of whom are her own sex.

Again: *Woman is denied a representation in all Ecclesiastical Assemblies.*

The male portion of the Church assemble in delegation from the different bodies with which they are connected, to legislate in behalf of the Churches; but woman has no representation in these councils. Her opinion of what is best to promote the interest of religion, is not respected. Her right to representation being denied, her claim to just recognition is solemnly mocked. The Church places its hand on woman's lips, and says to her, "you shall not *speak*—you shall not be represented: You are not eligible to office, because you *are a Woman!*" Is not this crucifying, with a strange presumption, the soul of Christ?—treating with contempt the feminine of the Christian character?—trampling upon *Human Rights?* And yet woman patiently bears this contumely and scorn. The poor young men that she often educates, by toil, early and late—labor, arduous and half-paid, teach her, when properly prepared, that this absurd tyranny is supported by the Word of God!

* * * Woman may speak when the themes are only trivial; when assembles the thoughtless crowd in the halls of fashion, with no aim but amusement, then may she speak freely, and loudly. She may meet with these same ministers, and reply to the hollow compliment, addressed to her vanity, with smile and bow. She may make any display of eloquence and wit when dress and personal charms are all combined to amuse, and attract admiration. In such

assemblies there is no restriction, no fear for woman's delicacy, no effort to preserve the diffidence and timidity of her character, no wish for her to keep *silence*. But when the gathering is presumed to be from high and noble motives — to consider the truest and most important interests of the soul—when humility should clothe each spirit, and all should seek but to learn the will of the common Father, then, alas! there is thought to be danger to the womanly character to *speak!* *She* must keep silence in the churches! Call it a *religious* meeting, if there are only six persons present, and woman may not ask God's blessing to rest there; nor presume, should *one* man be present, to give utterance to her religious aspirations!

* * * *Every class of society, and especially each sex, need religious teachers of the same class and sex with themselves, having the same experience, the same hopes, aims and relations.*

Human minds are so constituted as to need not merely intellectual instruction, but the strength imparted by an earnest sympathy, born of a like experience.

In order rightly to appreciate the wants of others, we must know and realize the trials of their situation, the struggles they may encounter, the burthens, the toils, the temptations that beset their different relations. These should be apprehended to some extent, and the more the better, by the person who is qualified to speak to the spiritual wants of *all*. Each relation, therefore, needs its teacher, its peculiar ministry. No one can demonstrate by College lore, the weight of a mother's responsibility. No *man*, not even the kindest father, can fully apprehend the wearisome cares, and anxious solicitude for children, of her who bore them. The tremblings of a mother's soul, none save a mother can feel. Man may prepare sound and logical discourses; he may clearly define a mother's duty; he may talk eloquently about her responsibility; he may urge upon her strong motives to faithfulness in the discharge of her maternal duties; he may tell her what her children should be, in all life's varied aspects. She hears the good instruction and advice always with more or less of this feeling: *You* cannot *know* of what you are talking.

* * * The Church needs a varied ministry. Not alone is the power of mind needed, but the zeal and inspiration of the inner life. The unction of love, and faith, and courage produced by a struggle amid life's realities. Not the dreamer, but the toiler, can best affect the lives of others through their hearts.

In this ministry, the sexes must blend harmoniously their ministrations to others from their own lives and experiences. This must be the Divine order. Reason teaches it to the calm observer. Our souls respond to this truth, from their deepest chambers.

Not only does woman need the teachings of her own sex—the sexes need the ministry of each other. Man also suffers a loss from an exclusive ministry. He needs different influences at different times. Under the continual and unvaried preaching of his own sex, he becomes cold, stern, apathetic. Is woman's voice pleasant and salutary to him at home, by the fireside and in the drawing-room? and would it not be equally so, at the altar of social religious worship? Then, when his nature is the most softened, the most reverent, should he receive the impress of mercy, gentleness, patience, and trust. These are woman's peculiar nature, and man needs their sweet, religious influence. He needs to see on the altar of God the garnered treasures of the wife's and mother's rich experiences; and she needs fully to realize how steadfastly, and resolutely, and calmly he stands, under the responsibilities that rest upon him.

* * * Man thinks to make ample amends for this injustice, by fulsome flattery, and affected care for her "angel refinement and delicacy." Alas! this is poor atonement for the injustice done. Infringe in one respect upon my inherent rights, and it is *tyranny*. No matter under what pretence the wrong is done.

* * * Doomed, as girls are, to a frivolous, objectless existence, how can we expect to see any where flourishing the sterling qualities of a true and aspiring womanhood? We know that our religious nature must be injured, for especially does the religious element need freedom of action.

* * * Aid us, then, husbands, brothers, fathers, to achieve this our noble destiny. Give us, as you yourselves possess, the full possession of *all* Human Rights. Give us a chance to exercise all our varied capabilities. Allow our peculiar characters to blend with yours, socially, civilly, and religiously, for mutual benefit. Not for the sake of emolument, or power; but that true harmony, and Divine order, may be exhibited beautifully in human life. Doom woman no longer to banishment from the hallowed ground of Church and State. She has too long been but as the Pariah of the desert. Welcome and receive her ministrations, reverently to her human nature, kindly to her present weakness, encouragingly to her hopes; receiving her

counsels with respect and confidence, so far as worthy such respect; and be assured that a better day will begin to dawn. The birth of a new spiritual life will be given to this new marriage, and melody as from the harps of angels, will be breathed from the circles of earth.

Extracts from Mrs. PAULINA W. DAVIS' Address to the Convention.

* * * We commence life where our fathers left it. We have their mistakes and their achievements. We attempt to walk in the paths they trod, and wear the garments left by them; but they are all too short and narrow for us; they deform and cramp our energies: for they demand the Procrustean process, to conform the enlarged natures of the present to the past. Institutions, laws, creeds, and forms, are unchanging, while the human soul never rests, but seeks ever to rise; to become like the Infinite in wisdom and love. * I am fully aware that at the very threshold of these inquiries, we shall be met with the cry that our examination tends to disturb the order and harmony of society. That the cherished customs of ages will be overthrown, if these institutions, considered so sacred, are opened to investigation. The "chaos of old night" will return upon us. The trembling, fearful cry proves their worthlessness: for all things founded in immutable truth, grow only the stronger by every trial. Conscious of the want of adaptation to their human needs, of forms and ceremonies, they still worship in them; "and like the crested wave, as it breaks on the shore," they grow more beautiful to their worshipers as the hour of their dissolution approaches. The shell is accepted for the kernel; the shadow for the substance; the form for the spirit.

* * * Our movement, known popularly as the Woman's Rights, is clearly the great humanitary movement of the age. It strikes deep its roots, and spreads its branches "wide o'er all the earth." Its aim cannot be for one sex alone, nor for one object, as is frequently asserted, viz: that of gaining the elective franchise:— for were woman's legal disabilities removed to-day—were she called upon during the present Presidential canvass and election, to stand

side by side with man, to vote and compete for office, still the work would be very far from its completion — for it has higher aims and nobler purposes. It seeks to elevate humanity, and bring society into that harmonious state which has been predicted, when they shall "beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks." That we may comprehend the evils into which society has fallen, and propose a remedy, it must be our concern to look at man and woman inductively, and thus ascertain what are their relative capabilities of development, intellectually, morally and socially, and to decide whether there be a limit set to woman's progress, short of man's highest attainment; whether there be a limit to the progress of either sex, out of themselves — one that may rightly bound and restrain their faculties.

The sacred traditions of both Jew and Gentile, agree in ascribing to woman a primary agency in the introduction of human evils. In the Greek Mythology, she is indeed not the first offender; but she is the bearer of the box that contained all the crimes and diseases which have punished our world for the abuse of liberty. It is worthy of remark, that Pandora, who is the Eve of the Grecian system, being, like her Hebrew correspondent, created for special purposes, was the joint work of all the Gods. Venus gave her beauty, Minerva wisdom, Apollo the art of music, Mercury eloquence, and the rest the perfection and completeness of all her divine accomplishments. Her name signifies gifts from all—

> "A combination and a form indeed
> Where every God did seem to set his seal
> To give the world assurance of a paragon,"

Prometheus made the first man of clay, and animated him with fire stolen from Heaven; and Jupiter is represented as attaching the terrible consequences of a rational and responsible vitality, thus conferred upon a creation of earth, by sending this wonderfully gifted woman into the world, loaded with all the evils which it was fated to endure. It was her destiny to be the occasion of the fall; the instrument of doom; but her fortunes are linked to the resurection and life, as well as the suffering and death, of the race. Among the gifts of Pandora, which had otherwise been fatal, she brought hope, which lay concealed, after all the others had flown abroad on their missions of mischief. In our sacred story, this point in the parable has a clear explanation — "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's

head." If she brought death into the world, she brought forth a Son who "taketh away the sins of the world." These myths, whether received as simple facts, or as poetic fiction, whose oracles always reveal the deepest signification of facts, alike indicate the eminent agency of woman in the fall and rising again of the human image of the divine upon earth. These mythical representations are worthy of very grave consideration; for the facts of history and the lessons of experience, are both so cramped and crippled by the slaveries of human systems, and the distortions of circumstances, that it is safest to turn from their perversions and partialisms, and seek the truth of our subject in the inspired revelations given by Infinite Love. History is but a copy of surfaces, the report of hearsays, the imprint of accidents which make up the monstrous meagreness of our prison life, in this world of falseness and empty forms. But the deeper intuitions of the soul penetrate the truth, and give it to us in varied form and figures, but essential agreement. The heart of the Scripture statement, and the innermost meaning of the Pagan myth, are doubtless the true rendering of the real enigma which we are considering. Woman is the occasion and the instrument, if you please, even the agent of the evils of this life; and of all the possibilities of its highest happiness, its glory. This is true of her, whether considered as a substantive existence, or as the symbol of the passional and affectional nature of humanity, which she particularly manifests. We have seen the woes incident to her life; we look for the hope and redemption which she brings into its prophecy. The fall of man inverted the order of human things: woman became the victim of suffering and bondage—man became her master, and swallowed up her existence in his. The derangement continues, and every where and always marks the degree of the curse by the measure in which it is found. From the barbarous degradation in which she is governed with stripes, and sold like a commodity in the open markets of trade, to the refined disfranchisement in which her noble life is extinguished by tenderness, and when she can be but once bought and sold during the lifetime of her master, she still lies under the primal curse; and it still remains for her to work out her ransom in dishonor and pain. But the clouds are breaking that have so long lowered over her head, and a ray of hope shines through, which promises ere long to glorify her mission, and enlighten the world. I have said the order of life was inverted by the fall; for evil, in its very nature is a falseness of things and

inversion is its form. It is so in all things: Power which is properly only the servant of Goodness, is every where its master. Love, the holiest and highest of the passions, is the basest and lowest. Vice rules, and virtue is in chains. The Messiah, the Prince of Peace, took the form of a servant, in his minority to an evil world; and womanhood, which is chosen to characterize the Church made perfect, as the "bride of the lamb," follows the rule, and is every where in a state of degradation corresponding inversely to the glory which is yet to be revealed in her. Such are the facts, and such the philosophy which we may deduce from them. The wrong suggests the remedy. But to reach it, we must leave prospects and abstractions, which we have to deal with, and address ourselves to the real conditions, to the actualities of the work before us.

* * * The teachings of nature, to the extent which her lessons are permitted to go, have surely some instruction for us, and however limited and partial they are made by our interference, still, for a state of things manifestly wrong, some hints may be gleaned for criticism, if not for direction. Boys and girls of the same home circle, or the same neighborhood, who are educated together, and who have proper physical and moral training, and favorable outward surroundings, are gay, guileless and pure. Their joyous laugh and light play together, defy the fear of public eye or ear; its cold mockery is nothing to them. Nature has never separated the sexes; but artificial and false customs have come in and divorced what God created to be conjoined. No form of society can be in harmony, which wholly disregards the first form given, that of the family. The union of the sexes in schools, stimulates to exertion, and imposes wholesome moral restraints; and were it but continued, instead of being rudely broken in upon, it would prevent many unhappy marriages, for it would tend to moderate that inconsiderate passion which is often awakened by distance and imposed restraints.

In the midst of this joyful existence of childhood, the girl is caught up and sent for a year to a girl's boarding school, to finish her education, and womanhood is now thrust upon her. Here, in this new stage of existence, the lesson most assiduously taught is one of self-consciousness.

* * * Surrounded by those in the full maturity of life, the frost of conventionalisms soon hangs its brilliants upon her; she lives to glitter and dazzle. She no longer enjoys as a child, for her whole

nature is over stimulated; she lives in a fever of excitement; sleeping and waking, her dream is of love and marriage, for she is taught that this is the end and aim of woman's life. If from this state of things she is ever developed as a woman, it will be through pain and suffering. Affliction will be her educator, and sorrow her discipline, if her life shall ever bloom, as the bud promised, in strength and beauty.

* * * From the marriage hour woman is presented only in a series of dissolving views. First view, she stands beside her husband radiant in girlish beauty. She worships. One side of the lesson is well learned, that of entire dependence. Not once has she dreamed that there must be mutual dependence, and separate fountains of reciprocal life. It may be that neither of them have looked upon marriage as a holy sacrament, into which no worldly motive or root of bitterness should enter. The husband invested her with his ideal of womanhood, while she was yet a child. The illusion served for the period of courtship, but the trials of life disclose the mistake, and he is forced to lower his tone of reverence and pride, to that of pity, apology, and patronage. The immolated child saw not, in the ornamental bracelets, the vestige of the handcuff, and the sign of continuing spiritual slavery. She had no clue to the riddle of the ring, the ear ornaments and the necklace, as the gilded yoke and sign of property. The husband, too, has an idea that strength and usefulness are masculine and coarse. No wonder that he mistakes ignorance for innocence, and helpless dependence for graceful devotion; hence, while placing upon her the symbols of his proprietorship, he is happy in his new possession, but soon wakens painfully to the conviction that after all, a slave is not a wife, and a helpless dependent can be no friend in the hour of need. The canvass darkens; the bride disappears in her golden handcuffs.

* * * In the next scene, the child wife appears withering away from life, as from the heart she is not large or noble enough to fill—pining in the darkness of her home-life, made only the deeper by her inactivity, ignorance and despair. The occupation of business, ambition, and the ennobling pursuits of life, are forbidden her by general consent. These, it is true, could not supply, but they could cover and blunt disappointment. Henceforth her internal and external life bear no analogy, each to the other.

* * * In a new view, she has passed the season of despair, and appears as the heartless votary of fashion, a flirt, or that most to be dreaded, most to be despised being—a married coquette; at once seductive, heartless, and basely unprincipled; or as beauty of person has faded away, she may be found turning from these lighter styles of toys, to a quiet kind of handmaiden piety and philanthropy. Is deeply interested for poor, benighted Africa, for the Fejee Islands, or Chinese. This is what the exclusive masterdom in religion has left to woman. There is still one last view, ere the canvass is withdrawn, and its images are forgotten.

Look deeply into that soul-full eye, now that all fear is passing away before the angel of death, who has called the spirit to freedom. It says clearly there is falseness and wrong that must be removed. Marriage, as it now exists, is only a name, a form without a soul, a bondage, legal and therefore honorable. Make it felt that only equals may enter this relation. * * * The mature man is not in effect wedded to the child. Give her strength, power and ability to stand alone, ere you demand of her duties from which an angel might shrink. Make marriage what it should be, a union of soul with soul, a blending of two in one, without masterdom or helpless dependence, and it is then what God designed it to be. Let only such marriages be consummated as are based upon the highest love. A love noble and generous in its nature, which founds itself on pure and ardent friendship, an exalted respect, and an implicit confidence in its object.

* * * Man assumes the right to control, and more in the political world, than in the social circle. He is responsible for withdrawing the child from her companions, and thrusting womanhood upon her. He is responsible for closing the professions in which woman might obtain a competence and find scope for a laudable ambition. He is responsible for monopolizing all the lighter kinds of commerce and trade, and thus compelling women to marry. I do not say, for I do not know, that men are conscious how entirely they govern. Among nearly all classes of women, the first question is, what will the gentlemen say of such or such a thing? and their opinion is the standard of action, from the cut of a dress to the highest moral act. * * * I have alluded to but one evil in marriage, and that is, inequality in years and development, which soon wears out the most fervent love. But there are others, from various motives,

such as ambition, interest, convenience and accident. In all these, neither party inquires whether there is correspondence of faith, hope, and above all, of religious principle. There may be, alas! too much of truth in the bitterness of Byron's words, when he says:

> "Few more find what they love, or could have loved;
> Though accident, blind contact, and the strong
> Necessity of loving have removed
> Antipathies—but to recur ere long,
> Envenomed with irrevocable wrong;
> And circumstance, that unspiritual God
> And miscreator, makes and helps along
> Our cunning evils with a crutch-like rod
> Whose touch turns hope to dust."

Our work, so true to humanity, re-creates hope from the dust, by elevating woman — by demanding for her education, equal in all respects to man, and by opening new avenues to independence of life, that when she marries, it may be from a true, high love. Man may secure the gratitude of woman by conferring favors upon her, by giving her food and shelter, but this is a weak band. It will not serve to make life harmonious at its center. The domestic hearth will not be the pivot about which all other movements can circle. Did the evils of such unions cease with the parties concerned, it would not so much matter that there should be a skeleton in every house. But it does not; it is one of those sins visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation: hence those inharmonious organizations that pain the eye and wound the higher nature, rendering sacrifice and atonement continually needful. It is on those who have found out the secret of home happiness, that this glorious work, so full of justice and right, rests. It cannot be trusted to those who are in conflict either with God or man. They cannot be the true alchymists to transmute the base metal into pure gold, for their judgments will be perverted, and their eyes be clouded, through the false medium of self-observation. Their own lacerated feelings, which are at best but poor philosophers, will usurp the control of reason and judgment, and thus the grand object be delayed.

* * * I will close my remarks with the following resolution:

Inasmuch as the Family is the central and supreme institution among human societies, so that all other organizations, whether of Church or State, depend upon it for their character and action, its evils being the source of all evil, and its good the fountain of all good,

involved in the destiny of the race — and inasmuch as MARRIAGE, the bond of this primary and principal of human associations, was the only institution given by the Creator in the innocence of Eden, and is the chosen symbol of relation for the union of the Church with her Redeemer, in the Paradise to come — we are thereby taught as much as we can yet comprehend of the deep significance of its idea, and the boundless beneficence of its office in the economy of human existence:

Resolved, therefore, That the correction of its abuses is the starting point of all the reforms which the world needs, and that woman, by every fact of her natural constitution, and every circumstance of her actual position, is the fitting minister of its redeeming agency, and that answering to the duties of her great mission and acting within her appropriate sphere, she is authorized to demand the emancipation of her sex from all the slaveries of law and custom which hitherto have made and kept her incapable of her heaven-appointed office. And that woman may perform her duties, and fulfil her destiny, we demand for her, moral, social, pecuniary and political freedom. We demand that her proper individuality be held sacred; her rational independence respected; her faculties all educated, with their aims and objects freely opened to her aspirations; her physical and mental health justly regarded, and all her natural strength elicited, without limit or restraint, reward or penalty, other than the laws of her own nature and of general harmony impose, in order that with enlightened conscience and untrammeled energies she may do her proper work, and contribute the peculiar elements of the new era of civilization now opening upon the world, in which love shall overrule force, and equal liberty and justice shall replace the degradation of castes and the oppression of individuals.

It was decided by the Convention that the Publishing Committee have discretionary power to merge those resolutions which may be similar, in publishing the proceedings.

ERNESTINE L. ROSE, being introduced as a Polish lady, and educated in the Jewish faith, said—

It is of very little importance in what geographical position a person is born, but it is important whether his ideas are based upon facts that can stand the test of reason, and his acts are conducive to the happiness of society. Yet, being a foreigner, I hope you will have some charity on account of speaking in a foreign language. Yes, I am an example of the universality of our claims; for not American women only, but a daughter of poor, crushed Poland, and the down-trodden and persecuted people called the Jews, "a child of Israel," pleads for the equal rights of her sex. I perfectly agree with

the resolution, that if woman is insensible to her wrongs, it proves the depth of her degradation. It is a melancholy fact, that woman has worn her chains so long that they have almost become necessary to her nature — like the poor inebriate, whose system is so diseased that he cannot do without the intoxicating draft, or those who are guilty of the pernicious and ungentlemanly practice of using tobacco until they cannot dispense with the injurious stimulant. Woman is in a torpid condition, whose nerves have become so paralyzed that she knows not she is sick, she feels no pain, and if this proves the depth of her degradation, it also proves the great wrong and violence done to her nature. * * *

Woman is a slave, from the cradle to the grave. Father, guardian, husband—master still. One conveys her, like a piece of property, over to the other. She is said to have been created only for man's benefit, not for her own. This falsehood is the main cause of her inferior education and position. Man has arrogated to himself the right to her person, her property, and her children; and so vitiated is public opinion, that if a husband is rational and just enough to acknowledge the influence of his wife, he is called "hen-pecked." The term is not very elegant, but it is not of my coining; it is yours, and I suppose you know what it means; I dont. But it is high time these irrationalities are done away, for the whole race suffers by it. In claiming our rights, we claim the rights of humanity: it is not for the interest of woman only, but for the interest of all. The interest of the sexes cannot be separated—together they must enjoy or suffer —both are one in the race. * * *

E. O. Smith, one of the Vice Presidents, took the Chair, while Lucretia Mott addressed the Convention in favor of agitation.

She said, allusion had been made by the last speaker to the condition of France. A petition was presented, during the Provisional Government, before the last uprising of the people in that country, for the rights of woman. Some of the greatest philosophers there present, saw that women were right in their claim; they saw in it a new future for woman. The reason of the failure of the Revolution of 1789, was that they failed to be represented by one half of the intelligence of France — intelligence different but not inferior, and for that very difference essential to form a complete Republic. Woman had long suffered under a nightmare of oppression, without the power to state the cause of her suffering. Those only shunned or hated

discussion, who, being in the wrong, feared the light. The common remark in the social circle is, "what do you want?" *Women* would not ask that question, if they were not stupified with the gilded pill of flattery, in place of rights.

It was said this morning, that woman could take her rights in a quiet way, without making so much talk about it; this is not the case, as is shown in the efforts already made. In all reforms we have the assertion that agitation is not best; that God in his own good time will bring about the desired end; it had often been said, in the meetings of which she was a member, that if Friends would keep still, and not mix in the excitements of the day, Providence would bring about all reforms. She was a believer in agitation—in the wisdom of *not* keeping still. Jesus was an agitator; he told the Scribes and Pharisees they made the law of God of no effect, by their traditions; and urged the practical carrying out of the law of righteousness. She added, that the wife was degraded in the marriage relation, in the false vow of obedience to her husband. Blackstone defines the law of marriage to be that the husband and wife are one person, and that person, the husband. Thus women are degraded by law, by the monopoly of the Church, and all the circumstances with which she is surrounded. She must therefore boldly affirm her rights. Lucy Stone, whom they all delighted to honor, had to do battle for her rights, even in that college (Oberlin) which was the first to open its portals for the equal education of women with men. Antoinette Brown, also a student in that seminary, had to meet the prejudices against women's preaching, and to show that no Apostolic or other Scriptural prohibition could be found. Women must go on, in the exercise of their talents and powers. The first efforts were feeble, but they would gain strength. Some women had resolved to study Law. We had already successful practitioners of Medicine. The salaries of female Teachers are now from five hundred to one thousand dollars per year The teacher of Grammar in the Girard College, a woman, is acknowledged superior to most men. The number of female Editors is constantly increasing. Schools of Design, and other branches of the Fine Arts, are offering employment to women. The U. S. Mint employs three to four hundred women. Persevere then, until no woman shall confess her own degradation, by saying she has all the rights she wants.

Mrs. Mott's resolution was then adopted. Adjourned.

THURSDAY EVENING SESSION.

The Hall was crowded still more than on the previous evening.

The President called to order at a quarter to seven.

Harriet K. Hunt, M. D., said, that unseen spirits have been with us in this Convention—the spirits of our Shaker sisters. Untold sorrows have driven many of them to these societies, the Convents of our country.

Lucy Stone read an address from Mr. Brigham, who thought justice had not been done him. She proceeded to comment on his letter, she thought their differences were more in terms than ideas; that capacity, not sex, should limit sphere; that when woman had a genius for sculpture, or the other fine arts, she should not be confined to the kitchen.

She went on further eloquently to discuss the question.

Some discussion arose between Mr. Brigham, Martha C. Wright, Eliza A. Aldrich, of Cincinati, Ohio, (Editor of the Genius of Liberty,) C. I. H. Nichols, and Harriet K. Hunt, as to the peculiar relations of woman as wife and mother.

Mrs. Palmiter, replying to Mr. B., said she had been fifteen years a preacher of the Gospel, and had gone here and there preaching a risen Savior. A preacher told her the female sex was the wickedest. She preached the next Sabbath, and referred to this circumstance. She said that a rib was taken from man's side, and formed into woman. Man accepted her, "bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh." Now if one rib was so wicked as that, what a mass of wickedness the whole of him must be.

Antoinette L. Brown took up the Bible argument, prefacing it with this resolution:

Resolved, That the Bible recognizes the rights, duties and privileges of Woman as a public teacher, as every way equal with those of man; that it enjoins upon her no subjection that is not enjoined upon him; and that it truly and practically recognizes neither male nor female in Christ Jesus.

God created the first human pair equals in rights, possessions and authority. He bequeathed the earth to them as a joint inheritance; gave them joint dominion over the irrational creation; but

none over each other.—(Gen., 1, 28.) They sinned. God announced to them the results of sin. One of these results was the *rule* which man would exercise over woman—(Gen. 3, 16.) This *rule* was no more approved, endorsed, or sanctioned by God, than was the twin-born prophecy, "thou (Satan) shalt bruise his (Christ's) heel." God could not, from His nature, command Satan to injure Christ, or any other of the seed of the woman. What particle of evidence is there then for supposing that in the parallel announcement he commanded man to rule over woman. Both passages should have been translated *will*, instead of *shall*. Either auxiliary is used indifferently according to the sense, in rendering that form of the Hebrew verb into English.

Because thou hast done this, is God's preface to the announcement. The results are the effects of sin. Can woman then receive evil from this rule, and man receive good? Man should be blessed in exercising this power, if he is divinely appointed to do so; but the two who are one flesh have an identity of interests, therefore if it is a curse or evil to woman, it must be so to man also. We mock God, when we make Him approve of man's thus cursing himself and woman.

The submission enjoined upon the wife, in the New Testament, is not the unrighteous rule predicted in the Old. It is a christian submission due from man towards man, and from man towards woman: "Yea, all of you be subject one to another"—(1 Pet., 5, 5. Eph., 5, 21; Rom. 12, 10, &c.) In 1 Cor. 16, 16, the disciples are besought to submit themselves "to every one that helpeth with us and laboreth." The same Apostle says, "help those women which labored with me in the Gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-laborers."

Man is the head of the woman. True, but only in the sense in which Christ is represented as head of His body, the Church. In a different sense He is head of all things — of wicked men and devils. If man is woman's head in this sense, he may exercise over her all the prerogatives of God himself. This would be blasphemous. The *mystical* Head and Body, or Christ and His Church, symbolize oneness, union. Christ so loved the Church he gave himself for it, made it his own body, part and parcel of himself. So ought men to love their wives. Then the rule which grew out of sin, will cease with the sin.

It is said woman is commanded not to teach in the Church. There is no such command in the Bible. It is said, (1 Cor. 14, 34,) "Let

your women keep *silence* in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to *speak*." This injunction, taken out of its connection, forbids *singing* also; interpreted by its context, woman is merely told not to *talk* unless she does *teach*. On the same principle, one who has the gift of tongues is told not to use it in the Church, unless there is an interpreter. The rule enforced from the beginning to the end of the chapter is, "Let all things be done unto edifying." Their women, who had not been previously instructed like the men, were very naturally guilty of asking questions which did not edify the assembly. It was better that they should wait till they got home, for the desired information, rather than put an individual good before the good of the Church. Nothing else is forbidden. There is not a word here against woman's teaching. The Apostle says to the whole Church, woman included, "ye may all prophesy, one by one."

In 1 Tim. 2, 12, the writer forbids woman's teaching over man, or usurping authority over him; that is, he prohibits dogmatising, tutoring, teaching in a dictatorial spirit. This is prohibited both in public and private; but a proper kind of teaching is not prohibited. Verse 14—a reference to Eve, who, though created last, sinned first, is merely such a suggestion as we would make to a daughter whose mother had been in fault. The daughters are not blamed for the mother's sin, merely warned by it; and cautioned against self-confidence, which could make them presume to *teach over man*. The Bible tells us of many prophetesses approved of God. The Bible is truly democratic. Do as you would be done by, is its golden commandment, recognizing neither male nor female in Christ Jesus.

Ernestine L. Rose — If the able Theologian who has just spoken had been in Indiana when the Constitution was revised, she might have had a chance to give her definitions on the Bible argument, to some effect. At that Convention, Robert Dale Owen introduced a clause to give to a married woman the right to her property. The clause had passed, but by the influence of a minister was recalled; and by his appealing to the superstition of the members, and bringing the whole force of Bible argument to bear against the right of woman to her property, it was lost. Had Miss Brown been there, she might have beaten him with his own weapons. For my part, I see no need to appeal to any written authority, particularly when it is so obscure and indefinite as to admit of different interpretations. When the inhabitants of Boston converted their harbor into a tea-pot, rather than submit to unjust taxes, they did not go to the Bible for their authority; for if they had, they would have been told from the same authority, to "give unto Cesar what belonged to Cesar." Had the people, when they rose in the might of their right to throw off the British yoke, appealed to the Bible for authority, it would have answered them, "submit to the powers that be, for they are from God." No! on Human Rights and Freedom — on a subject that is as self-evident as that two and two make four, there is no need of any written authority. But this is not what I intended to speak upon. I wish to introduce a resolution, and leave it to the action of the Convention:

Resolved, That we ask not for our rights as a gift of charity, but as an act of justice. For it is in accordance with the principles of republicanism that, as woman has to pay taxes to maintain government, she has a right to participate in the formation and administration of it. That as she is amenable to the laws of her country, she is entitled to a voice in their enactment, and to all the protective advantages they can bestow; and as she is as liable as man to all the vicissitudes of life, she ought to enjoy the same social rights and privileges. And any difference, therefore, in political, civil and social rights, on account of sex, is in direct violation of the principles of justice and humanity, and as such ought to be held up to the contempt and derision of every lover of human freedom.

* * * But we call upon the law-makers and law-breakers of the nation, to defend themselves for violating the fundamental principles of the Republic, or disprove their validity. Yes! they stand arrayed before the bar, not only of injured womanhood, but before the bar of moral consistency; for this question is awakening an interest abroad, as well as at home. Wherever human rights are claimed for man, moral consistency points to the equal rights of woman; but statesmen dare not openly face the subject, knowing well they cannot confute it, and they have not moral courage enough to admit it; and hence, all they can do is to shelter themselves under a subterfuge which, though solidified by age, ignorance and prejudice, is transparent enough for the most benighted vision to penetrate. A strong evidence of this, is given in a reply of Mr. Roebuck, member of Parliament, at a meeting of electors, in Sheffield, England. Mr. R., who advocated the extension of the franchise to the occupants of five pound tenements, was asked whether he would favor the extension of the same to women who pay an equal amount of rent? That was a sim-

ple, straight-forward question of justice; one worthy to be asked even in our Republican Legislative Halls. But what was the honorable gentleman's reply? Did he meet it openly and fairly? Oh, no! but hear him, and I hope the ladies will pay particular attention,; for the greater part of the reply contains the draught, poor, deluded woman has been accustomed to swallow—FLATTERY: "There is no man who owes more than I do to woman. My education was formed by one whose very recollections at this moment make me tremble. There is nothing which, for the honor of the sex, I would not do—the happiness of my life is bound up with it—Mother, Wife, Daughter, Woman, to me have been the Oasis of the desert of life, and, I have to ask myself, would it conduce to the happiness of society to bring woman more distinctly than she now is brought, into the arena of politics? Honestly I confess to you I believe not. I will tell you why. All their influences, if I may so term it, are gentle influences. In the rude battle and business of life, we come home to find a nook and shelter of quiet comfort, after the hard and severe, and I may say, the sharp ire and the disputes of the House of Commons. I hie me home, knowing that I shall there find personal solicitude and anxiety. My head rests upon a bosom throbbing with emotion for me and our child; and I feel a more hearty man in the cause of my country, the next day, because of the perfect, soothing, gentle peace which a mind sullied by politics is unable to feel. Oh! I cannot rob myself of that inexpressible benefit, and therefore I say, NO."

Well, this is certainly a nice, little, romantic bit of Parliamentary declamation. What a pity that he should give up all these enjoyments, to give woman a vote. Poor man! his happiness must be balanced on the very verge of a precipice, when the simple act of depositing a vote by the hand of woman, would overthrow and destroy it forever. I don't doubt the Honorable gentleman meant what he said, particularly the last part of it, for such are the views of the unthinking, unreflecting mass of the public, here as well as there. But like a true politician, he commenced very patriotically, for the happiness of society, and finished by describing his own individual interests. His reply is a curious mixture of truth, political sophistry, false assumption and blind selfishness. But he was placed in a dilemma, and got himself out as he could. In advocating the franchise to five pound tenement-holders, it did not occur to him that woman may possess the same qualification that man has, and in justice, therefore,

ought to have the same rights; and when the simple question was put to him, (simple questions are very troublesome to statesmen,) having too much sense not to see the justness of it, and too little moral courage to admit it, he entered into quite an interesting account of what a delightful little creature woman is, provided only she is kept quietly at home, waiting for the arrival of her lord and master—ready to administer a dose of purification, "which his politically sullied mind is unable to feel." Well! I have no desire to dispute the necessity of it, nor that he owes to woman all that makes life desirable—comforts, happiness, aye, and common sense too, for it is a well-known fact, that smart mothers always have smart sons, unless they take after their father. But what of that? Are the benefits woman is capable of bestowing on man, reasons why she must pay the same amount of rent and taxes, without enjoying the same rights that man does. But the justice of the case was not considered. The Honorable gentleman was only concerned about the "happiness of society." Society? what does the term mean? As a foreigner, I understand by it a collection, or union of human beings: men, women, and children, under one general government, and for mutual interest. But Mr. Roebuck, being a native Briton and a member of Parliament, gave us a Parliamentary definition, namely: society means the male sex only; for in his solicitude to consult "the happiness of society," he enumerated the benefits man enjoys from keeping woman from her rights, without even dreaming that woman was at all considered in it; and this is the true Parliamentary definition, for statesmen never include woman in their solicitude for the happiness of society. Oh, no! she is not yet recognized as belonging to the honorable body, unless taxes are required for its benefit, or the penalties of the law have to be enforced for its security. Thus, being either unwilling or afraid to do woman justice, he first flattered her, then, in his ignorance of the true nature of woman, he assumed, that if she has her rights equal with man, she would cease to be woman—forsake the partner of her existence, the child of her bosom, dry up her sympathies, stifle her affections, turn recreant to her own nature. Then his blind selfishness took the alarm, lest, if woman were more independent, she might not be willing to be the obedient, servile tool, implicitly to obey and minister to the passions and follies of man; "and as he could not rob himself of these inexpressible benefits, therefore he said, No."

Such are the lofty views of statesmen on woman, that equality of rights, the only and sure means to enlighten and elevate man, would degrade and corrupt woman. The genial rays of the sun of freedom, that vivify, cheer and ennoble him, would chill the heart and destroy the affections in her, and therefore it is inexpedient to give her her rights, "to bring her more distinctly into the political arena." Oh, yes! the Turk deems it inexpedient (for the happiness of society,) to give woman any personal freedom, therefore he encloses her in a harem. It is a well-known characteristic of tyrants and cowards, when they dare not face a question of right, to shelter themselves under expediency. It was inexpedient for Nicholas of Russia to allow Hungary to free herself from Austrian oppression, therefore he sent his infernal machines to prevent it. It was expedient for Louis Napoleon to destroy the Roman Republic, and inexpedient to await the issue of another election, and therefore he violated his oath, and, with bayonet in one hand and musket in the other, compelled his re-election. The bright and noble spirits of France were inexpedient to his treachery, so he incarcerated them, or banished them from the country—all these are measures of expediency. Thus in the more despotic countries of Europe, it is expedient for the rulers to deprive the people of every vestige of freedom. In constitutional England, it is already expedient to advocate (and I hope they soon will obtain it) the extension of the elective franchise to every man who pays five pounds rent, but it is yet inexpedient to give woman the same privilege. And here, in this glorious land of freedom, a Republic that has proclaimed equality of rights—that has written on its banners universal suffrage—even here it is yet deemed by the wiseacres of the nation, expedient to exclude half of its population from that universality. And do you know, my friends, the reasons given for all these measures of tyranny and oppression? Why, the happiness of society. But the question we ask, is not whether woman shall forsake her household, like man, to intrigue in politics, fight at elections, marshal armies, or direct navies. The question at issue is whether woman, as a being amenable to the laws under which she lives, shall have a voice in their enactment—as a member of the social compact, shall participate and control those institutions to which she is made subject? Or shall man, in his assumption of power, continue to deprive her of her natural and inalienable rights, prescribe her sphere of action within the least possible limits, restrict her education, and the development of her powers to the lowest degree, cripple her physical, mental and moral energies, that he may have a docile, obedient slave to do his bidding? These are questions not of expediency, but of right; not of charity, but of justice. And yet, though we might well leave the issue of our cause on its own merits, I would be perfectly willing to meet the opposers of our claims on their own grounds, and convince them that even on the question of expediency they have not an atom of ground to stand upon. The greatest objection I have yet heard, in public or private, against woman's political rights, is the corruption of the present state of party politics. It is represented to be in so low and degraded a condition, that no one can enter the political arena without contamination, and therefore woman must be kept from its very atmosphere. Now, without disputing the validity of the testimony, as humiliating confessions come mostly from gentlemen belonging to these honorable bodies, I would ask, what is to be done? Leave forever our Legislative Halls, the Stygian pools, as the honorable Horace Mann calls them, that they now are? For what rational hope have we that they will ever become purified unless woman takes them in hand, seeing that man has had the exclusive possession of them so long, and they only seem to grow worse. No! no! something must be done. Expediency, "the benefit of society," calls for woman's "purifying influence," for "the perfect, soothing, gentle peace which the politically sullied minds" of our legislators, seeing how they fight in Congress, "are unable to feel." Let woman then, be with him wherever duty calls her, and she will soon cleanse the Legislative Halls, as she has cleansed and purified the festive board of the excess that existed there.

"'Tis not well for man to be alone"—Mother, Sister, Wife, Daughter, woman must be with him, to keep him in his proper sphere. Do you doubt it? Then look at exclusive assemblies of men, and even among the best you will perceive the rude, uncultivated nature of Adam, before mother Eve civilized him, by making him partake of the Tree of Knowledge. Expediency, therefore, as well as justice, demands that woman should have her political, civil and social rights, that she may be better able to "soothe, quiet," and aid man, abroad as well as at home. And the beneficial effects to society will soon be apparent; for as she will be better educated, have all her powers developed, her judgment expanded, she will be more competent to fulfil the various duties devolving upon her — as mother, to train her

sons (aye, and her daughters, too,) in the way they should go, from which, when they grow old, they will not depart; as wife, more truly affectionate, so that when the husband's head will rest on her throbing bosom, she would be able to give him counsel and courage, as well as rest; and though at the marriage ceremony she might not be willing to say "Obey," she will substitute the far better word, Assist. As a companion, she would be more interesting and instructive, and as a member of society, more useful, honorable and happy.

Lydia A. Jenkins—Tyranny always strives to hamper the tongue from free utterance, and all hampering of the tongue is tyranny. The thoughts of Jesus of Nazareth, once uttered, had come down to us, borne upon the waves of nineteen centuries. The truths he uttered were above his time. Men are not now fit to receive them. He is a craven who will not allow truths to be uttered because men are not prepared to hear them. When carriages rival the eagle's speed, when the fire of heaven conveys intelligence, when a Crystal Palace is reared, with progress depicted in every department, and nations are shaking hands, when education is receiving a new impetus, and religion is disbanding itself from ties which bind it to earth, is it wonderful that woman shonld endeavor to lay aside some of the bands which confine her? Ah, no! * * *

E. S. Rose's resolution was then adopted.

The question of organization, or continued Conventions, and the adoption of resolutions, were laid on the table, to be taken up at the morning session.

Adjourned to nine o'clock, Friday morning.

FRIDAY MORNING SESSION.

President in the Chair. Hall crowded. Minutes of the last evening were read.

A letter was read by Martha C. Wright, Secretary, from Sarah D. Fish, of Rochester. The following are extracts:

* * * When we shall have the bright sunlight of truth beaming on our pathway, we shall hear no more about its being exclusively the mother's business to train her children—thus lulling to rest the mental and spiritual energies of the father—but there will be a mutual responsibility.

* * * It will no longer be considered as belonging solely to woman to make home happy; that it is her province alone to create a halo of love in the family circle; but father and mother, brother and sister, will feel alike inspired by all the holy affections, conjugal, parental, fraternal, and filial, to make home beautiful, attractive and happy.

* * * In such an assemblage of philanthropy and talent, as will convene at your different sessions, I feel that the many obstacles in our path, civil, social and political, will be considered, and clearly held up to the view of all; and knowing faithful laborers, in this work, are daily added to our numbers, I consider it impossible for all the powers of darkness to prevent our onward course: therefore, let us continue earnestly persevering for the holy boon of freedom. Success is surely ours.

Your Friend,
In the cause of Freedom,
SARAH D. FISH.

Rochester, September 6th, 1852.

Lydia F. Fowler, (Secretary,) said, she would give her speech in the form of resolutions, or Homœopathically:

Whereas, We see in the human body, that, though each organ selects from the same life-founts the nourishment requisite for its growth, nutrition and assimilation, yet that each, from the highest to the lowest function, has an individual of its own, independent of all the others; therefore, in order to follow out the analogy of nature, let us—

Resolve, That in the great body politic, or in the great social body, each one, irrespective of sex, talent, or capability for a higher or lower mission, fulfil the great ends of his or her being.

Resolved, That, as it is said by many, that the race has become dwarfed in body and mind, through the folly and imbecility of woman, and that it is chiefly by her instrumentality that it can be redeemed: Therefore—

Resolved, That all women be recommended, yea, earnestly entreated, to understand thoroughly the human organism in its physiological and anatomical relations, that there may be a more harmonious development, and that the curse of physical weakness and deterioration be in a measure removed from the race.

Resolved, That the Convention appoint a General Committee from different parts of the country, who shall find out the wants of those who seek to enter professions, to give them a word of encouragement, and to recommend them to the patronage of the public in the different cities and villages.

Resolved, That mothers be urged to carve out for their children a high and noble destiny; to study their idiosyncracies and adaptations to different employments, and develope them so that each son and daughter will be qualified to earn his or her livelihood, and hence not outrage nature through the influence of the pocket nerve.

Resolved, That as it is universally acknowledged, that when a truly great work is performed, it proves the right of the performer to do it; therefore, let each woman here assembled, determine that during the coming year, she will labor to accomplish some great and useful end, either in the bosom of her own family, in perfecting her own "God-inspired self-hood"—in living out the full tide of her emotions and aspirations, or fulfilling the instincts of her genius, whether as a poet, artist, physician or minister.

It was suggested to the President, that a member present felt called to offer prayer.

Lucretia Mott said, she knew that prayer was customary on such occasions, at the opening of meetings, but that she could not conscientiously call for it; it was due, however, that opportunity should be given when asked.

Antoinette L. Brown then offered prayer.

A session of the Business Committee was called, at noon.

James Mott suggested that all resolutions be handed to the Business Committee, to be reported on.

E. Oakes Smith, thought individuals might better read or offer their own resolutions, and then refer them to the Business Committee.

Mr. C. A. Hammond, of the State Committee of the Liberty Party, offered the following resolutions, which were referred to the Business Committee:

Resolved, That if a woman has a right to the ballot-box, and to the other rights of a common humanity, then it is the duty of those who thus believe, to act consistently with this truth when they vote for civil rulers, or use their influence in their choice.

Resolved, That neither the Whig party, the servile or the Free Democracy, take this ground, therefore we cannot vote for their candidates; and as the Liberty party does take it, that we commend that party and its candidates as being trustworthy in that respect.

No action was taken on the above resolutions.

Harriet K. Hunt, M. D., of Boston, offered the followiug resolutions:

1. *Resolved*, That if, in the present state of society, man prescribes as Physician for woman, in her sick chamber, he must also be prepared to meet her in the Lecture Room; otherwise, an unwillingness to meet her *there*, may argue a low state of morality in our Medical Colleges.

2. *Resolved*, That the present low standard of morals exhibited through the papers, calls loudly upon woman to lend a helping hand to amend these abuses.

3. *Resolved*, That inasmuch as our Editors are, in *one* aspect, our Public Teachers, and help to give tone to Public opinion: therefore, we regard their practice of *inserting in their Journals*, (for the sake of lucre,) *vitiating and demoralizing advertisements*, as in the highest degree reprehensible, and as indicating the need of a new medical infusion, through the woman element.

They were, with others, referred to the Business Committee.

S. B. Anthony then read the following resolutions, from E. C. Stanton, sent with her letter:

1. *Resolved*, That it is the duty of the women of those States, in which woman has now by law a right to the property she inherits, to refuse to pay taxes, so long as she is unrepresented in the government.

2. *Resolved*, That the highest interests of the race demand that man and woman be educated together. This isolation of the sexes, in all places of business and pleasure, is crippling to the intellect of woman, and destructive of the best affections of man.

3. *Resolved*, That while we rejoice in the fact, that we now have physicians of both soul and body, from our own sex, we still feel the need of woman in the legal profession, whose intellect, sharpened by her own interests, may suggest more liberal interpretations of our present laws, or show the necessity of a new Code, far better and higher, more wise and just, than that which now disgraces our statute books.

4. *Resolved*, That justice requires that the property of woman should not be taxed throughout this State, to build and endow the People's College now proposed, unless woman be freely admitted to share equally with man in all its rights and privileges.

5. *Resolved*, That we rejoice in the recent temperance movement of the women of this State, and also at the treatment their delegates received from our clerical brethren, at the late annual meeting of the State Society. A few such encounters, will open the eyes of woman to the true character of the Priests and Levites of our day.

6. *Resolved*, That our present laws on marriage should be so remoddled, that the wife and children of the beastly drunkard and gross libertine, may more easily escape from such degrading associations.

S. B. Anthony said, that she stood here as an agent of the Woman's Temperance Soiciety. She thought that Society was an off-

spring of this movement, and she believed it entitled to the encouragement of this Convention. She said, that whenever the newspapers edited by women were established, the principles of women's rights were sure to progress. She desired to obtain the names of subscribers to the Temperance Society, and concluded by recommending the support of papers edited by women, and offered the following resolution:

Whereas, The Press is the most efficient means of enlightening and elevating public sentiment; and, whereas, there already exist in several of the States, excellent Journals, edited by women, for the promotion of these objects: therefore—

Resolved, That we will sustain these, rather than establish others.

C. I. H. Nichols, thought many papers edited by men, were spreading their principles into the family circle, and other places, where women's papers could never reach.

B. S. Jones said, that the paper of Mrs. Swisshelm was opposed to Woman's Rights, and was doing more harm than good, for that cause.

C. Stebbins, was opposed to the introduction of the subject, because the State Temperance Society excluded men from becoming officers, or controlling the funds of the Society. She thought such a Society not in accordance with the principles of this Convention.

The President stated, that it was understood that the subject of organization should be taken up this morning, at an early hour; and at her suggestion, Mr. May read the following letter from Angelina Grimke Weld:

To the Convention of Women, to be held at Syracuse:

Not knowing, My Dear Friends, whether it will be possible for me to attend your Convention, I wish to say a few words to you on the subject of Organization, which I understand is to come up for discussion. It strikes me as very important that this topic should be thoroughly canvassed at the present sitting, and principles laid down which will serve as guides to our future course.

Organization is two-fold, Natural and Artificial, Divine and Human. Natural Organizations are based on the principle of Progression. Thus, the Solar System is governed by Laws which anticipate, provide for, and control a ceaseless round of changes. In obedience to these laws, by very slow degrees, the embryotic planet condenses into earth and rocks, and becomes fitted to sustain vegetable and

animal existence, first in their lower and then in their higher forms, ever providing for the untrammeled play of that Eternal Law of *Change*, which gives birth to, and nourishes the imperfect, only that it may bring it to perfection, and adorn it with that beauty which crowns the full maturity of every Natural and Divine Organization.

How *Change*, Change seems the Omnipresent Stereotype of Nature. Look at the tree. At one time, nothing but an unsightly trunk and naked branches. Soon enrobed with verdure, it decks itself with blossoms, then casts them in frolic to the wind, and begins to push out the swelling fruit, which gradually ripens into ruddy maturity. This too it casts to the ground, and even its beauteous robe of green soon fades and falls: And, there it stands again, a bare, unsightly thing.

Look at the changes through which man passes, from infancy to childhood, to youth, to manhood; and then from maturity to the feebleness of age, until, at last, the spirit, absorbing into itself all the quickening power which once filled the body with life and activity, sunders the tie which bound them together, and rises into a higher life, a purer sphere.

Innumerable and intimate are the analogies between the inner and the outer—the Physical and the Spiritual world. Fixed laws govern the world of matter, organic and inorganic, the rock, the clod, the lofty tree, the exquisite and complex machinery of the human form—all are based upon the principle of decomposition and reorganization—a principle which contemplates and provides for continual *changes*. Hence these changes in structure do no violence to preceding states, but follow on as the legitimate results, the natural consequences of previous conditions—all are welcomed in their turn.

But Human or Artificial Organizations are not so. They are built upon the principle of *crystallization*—they *fix* the conditions of society—they seek to daguerreotype themselves, not on the present age only, but on future generations. They are to society what arsenic is to the body, *fixing* the condition of the stomach, it preserves it, but *destroys life*—stopping off all natural action in that organ, and forestalling all those changes which the welfare of the whole living fabric requires, it annihilates the vital principle itself. Hence the lifelessness of all organizations, as soon as the spirit of the age has died out of them, and re-organized itself in other forms, more befitting the requisitions of a new born era.

The world has witnessed a continued series of Revolutions and violent resistance to the insane effort to force upon men institutions which they had outgrown; when, if these Human Organizations had provided for that change of opinions—that birth of new ideas, which inevitably follows in the course of man's development, the natural unfolding of his perceptions, the bursting into bud, and blossom, and fruit, of the locked up energies of his intellectual and moral nature—how different would have been the result. A safety-valve would have been provided. Instead of the volcanic eruptions of human passion, which have deluged the world in blood; instead of Religious sects fighting down, with the faggot and the sword, the new forms of opinion which, in different ages, have grown upon the trunk and branches of Humanity, as naturally as the leaves and blossoms, and fruit appear upon the tree, at different stages of its development, the old ideas would have dropped off from mind, as quietly as the blossom gives place to the fruit, and the leaf shrivels and falls when the sap, at the approach of winter, recedes from the outer integument to solidify the woody fibre, and garners itself in the root, to prepare for the fresh efflorescence of another spring.

Human organizations are based upon *external* laws. Hence they fetter and distort expanding mind. Those only are at home in them who are dwarfed and shriveled by them. The free, growing spirit feels the fetter, and often with a maddening sense of bondage spurns the chain.

This natural law of *change*, the element of all Progress, is paralysed by that *crystallization* to which artificial organizations ever tend. Such organizations, instead of providing for these changes, which necessarily occur in the progress of mind, do but limit development, and cast the character in a fixed mold.

Having glanced at the distinction between Natural and Artificial Organizations, I will suggest some objections to the latter on the ground of their practical working.

1. Every Organization has its Shibboleth, its boundary line, its tests of membership. All are too narrow for Humanity.

2. The tendency of Organization is to kill out the spirit which gave it birth, through its struggle to preserve itself from those changes by which the increasing light of every age modifies the institutions of the past.

3. Organizations do not protect the sacredness of the individual. Their legitimate tendency is to sink the individual in the mass, to sacrifice his rights, and immolate him upon the altar of some fancied good.

4. Freedom of thought is not nurtured and strengthened by Organization. Its office is to think for the masses, and cast public opinion in its own mold. It builds walls around itself for its own protection, thus enfeebling its members, by shutting out that natural and healthful collision with outside influences, which would quicken their own energy.

It is not to Organization that I object, but to an *Artificial one* only: one that must prove a burden, a clog, an incumbrance, rather than a help. Such an Organization as now actually exists among the women of America, I hail with heartfelt joy. We are bound together by the natural ties of a spiritual affinity; we are drawn to each other because we are attracted toward one common centre, the good of humanity. We need no external bonds to bind us together, no cumbrous machinery to keep our minds and hearts in unity of purpose and effort. We are not the lifeless staves of a barrel, which can be held together only by the iron hoops of an Artificial Organization. All we need, and all we ask, is freedom to think our own thoughts, and act out the promptings of our own inner being. Even as the vital principle continually re-creates the different organs of the human body, and presides over the harmonious co-operation of that seven-fold system of bones, muscles, nerves, arteries, veins, tissues and lacteal and lymphatic vessels which constitute one grand and perfect organism, so let the invisible power of Truth within us, re-create and enlarge our moral and mental organs for the reception of that new tide from the Ocean of Truth, which is now swelling around us to nourish the body of Humanity. So may it bear each of us onward in our daily life, assigning us our proper places, and appropriate functions, widely different, it may be, but still moving in perfect harmony, and co-operating with wise unanimity to accomplish the only legitimate end of any organization, the perfection of the Race, through the preaching and living of the Truth.

The present aspect of Organizations, whether in Church or State, or society at large, foretokens dissolution. The wrinkles and totterings of age are on them. And why is it so? God is determined to pull down what man has built up. Ichabod, is written upon all—

all of them, and deaf is he, who hears not the ominous whispering within the walls of this Babel, saying, "Let us remove hence—Let us remove hence."

When the human mind was as yet too undeveloped to comprehend the sacredness of the Individual, the vast importance of exalting this above every thing else, and providing for the growth and unfolding of the spirit, *then* Human *Institutions* were exalted above *Humanity*, and the car of a State and Church Juggernaut rolled over prostrate victims, who, ignorant of their own inborn divinity, gave to *it* that honor which was due only to their own nature. The power of Organization has been deemed necessary only because the power of Truth has not been appreciated, and, just in proportion as we reverence the Individual, and trust the unaided potency of Truth, we shall find it useless. What Organization, in the world's history, has not encumbered the unfettered action of those who created it? if indeed it has not been used as an engine of oppression.

The progress of Humanity may be likened to the building of a great Temple, and Human organizations to the scaffolding erected around it. Do I hear you then say, "well, as no house can be built without a scaffolding, let us set up another tier, in order to do the higher work of the present age, and, if need be, it can be torn down by our children." But, my friends, houses are artificial, hence artificial means must be used to build them. Men have chiseled the rock, and baked the clay, and sawed the beautiful trees of the forest, to erect themselves houses and temples of worship: hence the necessity for the scaffolding and the ladder. But Natural Organizations need no Artificial arrangements. The Baobab builds its massive trunk, of ninety feet in circumference, the Pine of Oregon lifts its pinnacle of pride two hundred and fifty feet, crowned with never-fading verdure, without the aid of scaffolding or ladder. By degrees, the vital principle within adds one circle after another, in the construction of its body, and pushes out in every direction the tender shoots, which by gradual accretions become strong and spreading branches, and in their turn serve as the basis of other boughs. Even so the great tree of Humanity needs no scaffolding of Artificial Organization in building up itself in symmetry of strength. Let each individual be true to those natural laws which were designed by God to preside over our growth and development, and, in noiseless beauty would the new ideas of one age grow out of the old branches of another, even as the

blossoms push themselves out in spring, and silently give place to the swelling fruit, and this in its turn quietly drops as soon as it ripens into maturity—each and all in obedience to that Law of ceaseless change, in the world of Matter and the world of Mind.

The importance of this question of Organization can hardly be unduly magnified. How few Organizations have ever had the power which this is destined to wield! The prayers and sympathies of the ripest and richest minds will be ours. Vast is the influence which true-hearted women will exert in the coming age. O, that this influence may all pour itself through *natural* channels! As the rills flow from the mountains to the valleys, clothing them in verdure, and mingling their waters with kindred streams, so may our hearts well out with love, mingling their sympathies together, and under the guidance of spiritual affinity fertilizing all the valley of life. Not that woman's sphere is the contracted one of home only—far from it. In whatever sphere it is right that man should move, there woman may move also. No place is too high, and none too low, for her to occupy, if duty calls her into it. The Rostrum, the Pulpit, the Bar, the Bench, the Halls of Legislation, the Presidential Chair, the Throne—none are too high for her powers or her worth, if her mind be allowed free play and true development.

The world has yet to write and read the record of woman's deeds. As Mother, Wife, Daughter, Sister, her history is known by heart: and along the lower walks of life, and the hidden paths of sorrow, her noiseless step has left the footprints of blood. Man has promulgated the doctrine, that Office sanctifies the incumbent, and consecrates the deed; but Truth is the only sanctifier, fitness for Office the only annointing oil. Thank God, this is being fully understood, before the Political Rights of women are acknowledged. Office has been sought hitherto, mainly from motives of low ambition and pecuniary profit. The exaltation of self has been preferred to the rights and the good of the many.

Well has it been for woman, that she has *not* been permitted to mingle in the low strife, and base intrigues of political life. God be praised, that He has hidden us in the hollow of His hand, until this semi-barbarism is about to pass away.

The human mind is now being developed up to a true appreciation of rights, around the entire circle of human relations. When these are fully comprehended, the high places of power will be graded

down, and the low places of oppression will be filled up, by the aid of this new spirit level. Hitherto men have *courted* Office — they have cringed and fawned and knuckled and licked the dust, to obtain it; often buying it by the basest surrender of principle and manhood. The time is coming when Office shall cast these unworthy ones headlong, and shall court the true Nobility of Earth.

May we not rejoice in the conviction, that, when the eligibility of woman to Office is acknowledged, she will not be false to the trusts committed to her, but will enter upon it in the dignity of uncontaminated womanhood, and sanctify it by a wise and loving discharge of its high responsibilities.

It is well for woman that she has participated so little in the exercise of that power which has hitherto ruled the destinies of mankind. Well did the Prophet select its symbols from ferocious beasts of prey, whose nature is to rend in pieces, trample down and devour. The world's history is a record of oppression and wrong—her mighty deeds, the triumphs of brute violence. The Animal part only, in Man, has been developed up to the *reigning* point, hence woman, being the weaker, has always held a subordinate place, as necessarily as weaker nations have sunk in the scale of National Greatness. In past ages, when Might swayed the scepter, all weakness, whether National or Feminine, was overwhelmed by it; but now, that Man's Spiritual nature is unfolding under the rays of the Sun of Righteousness—now that he is beginning to apprehend that intellectual and moral power are the only legitimate Monarchs — now that the long looked for era is approaching, when the "Son of Man" is to reign, (the "Son of Man," a symbol of man's *spiritual*, just as the *wild beasts* are symbols of his *brutal* nature,) mere physical or mental weakness will no longer be oppressed, but will call into exercise the noblest faculties of human nature, developing the moral by the ministrations which are called for by the necessities of those who are in "low estate." Just as parents watch over and supply the wants of their offsring, providing for their moral and mental development, so will Governments minister to all the wants of *all* their subjects; even as the root of a tree sends out its sap to the *smallest* shoots, more abundantly than to the sturdy stock, so will Governments protect and nourish those who need it most. And as Physicians and Nurses watch over the sick, and aid in their recovery, so will Governments watch over the morally diseased, and aid in their recovery from degradation and crime.

It is a beautiful coincidence, that just as the old Epoch of Despotism and Slavery, Priestcraft and Political intrigue are dying out, just as the Spiritual part of Man is rising into the ascendency, Woman's Rights are being canvassed and conceded, so that when she becomes his partner in Office, higher and holier principles of action will form the basis of Governmental administration.

ANGELINA G. WELD.

August 25.

Mary Springstead moved that the Convention proceed to organize.

E. Oakes Smith thought we were already organized as a National Convention. She thought it would be well to form State Societies.

P. W. Davis did not like the idea of being bound by a Constitution longer than during the sessions of the Convention. It might be well, however, to recommend the formation of State Societies.

H. K. Hunt was opposed to the formation of Societies. She thought spontaneity was the great law of nature. She spoke as a Physician, and thought there was an attraction between those who believed in similar principles, sufficient to draw them together.

C. I. H. Nichols said that the duty of organization was to collect the fragmentary particles.

E. Oakes Smith was in favor of some organization. There was much to do, and much had been done, to bring the present Convention together. She had frequently been met by the inquiry, "what are you going to do?" and had frequently heard the hope and expectation expressed, that an organization would be formed.

E. L. Rose paid a high compliment to the communication of Mrs. Weld — said she agreed with Angelina, and her friend, the Doctor. Organizations were like Chinese bandages. In Political, Moral, and Religious bodies, they had hindered the growth of man. They were the incubus of our nature. The moment a man has intellectual life enough to strike out a new idea, he is branded as a heretic. It was true that men must sometimes combine, to effect great purposes; but she was decidedly opposed to organization. She would be pardoned for alluding to herself—she had never been guilty of doing so before, to the same extent. Circumstances must now plead her excuse. She was the same as every other human being born into a sect. She had cut herself loose from it, and she knew what it cost her, and having

bought that little freedom, for what was dearer to her than life itself, she prized it too highly ever to put herself in the same shackles again.

A Lady of Syracuse, whose name the reporter could not learn, said organization and order were necessary. They had all been kept in order, by their excellent President.

E. L. Rose—We all acted freely and spontaneously in that matter, and, because she had our confidence, we elected her unanimously. We have been brought together by the magnetism of the cause. If you have a permanent organization, you cannot be free. Even Lucretia Mott herself is not free, for she belongs to a sect.

Mr. Jones made an able speech in favor of organization. He was pleased to hear from Mrs. Weld, but did not think her letter touched the subject before the Convention. He believed the Convention had a right to organize whenever it was thought desirable. It was his opinion that the time for National organization had not yet arrived, but it would be proper to form State organizations.

E. Oakes Smith alluded to the organization of the Jesuits, which she insinuated had worked much mischief to the world. She thought we might organize, and take the ground from the Jesuits, and work for good.

C. I. H. Nichols favored organization, as being the means by which to collect and render operative, the fragmentary elements now favoring the cause.

Rev. Mr. Pryne, of Onondaga, in a speech of some length, advocated organization.

On call of Mrs. Davis, persons were found to be in attendance from the States of New York, Massachusetts, Vermont, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Ohio, New Jersey, and from Canada.

Mrs. D. then presented the following resolution, and as a substitute to the resolution to form an organization:

Resolved, That this National Convention earnestly recommends to those, who are members of it from several States, and to those persons in any and all of our States, who are interested in this great Reform, that they call meetings of the States or the Counties, in which they live, certainly as often as once a year, that they may consider the principles of this Reform, and devise measures for their promulgation, and thus co-operate with all throughout this nation, and the world, for the elevation of woman to her proper place in the mental, moral, social, religious and political world.

Lucy Stone said, like a burnt child that dreads the fire, they had all been in permanent organizations, and thus dreaded them. She had enough of thumb screws, and soul screws, ever to wish to be placed under them again. But still organizations of some kind were necessary. The Anti-Slavery organization was not to last forever. When its object was accomplished, it would cease to exist: and so with Woman's Rights organizations. They outgrew the good that was good for their fathers. They did not want such an organization as would turn them into a petrefaction, or leave them as specimens of "fossil remains." But she thought the time had not yet come to form an organization. When the idea became incarnate, then they might seek to construct a platform. She did not feel they were ready to organize. All they could do now, was to agitate the public mind. They could not put timbers together, and build a goodly structure, till they knew what materials they had.

Rev. Mr. May — It seems to me that the resolution proposed by Mrs. Davis, covers the whole ground that we need to occupy. What we want is a system of action, and co-operation. Meetings should be held—County meetings, State and National Conventions, to bring the friends of this great reform to know each other, and to make provision for the support of the instruments by which this reform is to be effected. Able and eloquent lecturers should be sent throughout the country, appealing with the living voice to the common sense and conscience of the people. Elementary tracts are to be prepared and published, in countless numbers. The admirable reports of the Conventions held last year, and the year before, are very useful in their way; and, I trust, we have been creating here, the past three days, materials for a similar publication, that will be read with interest and profit. But we need something not so voluminous — short, elementary tracts, adapted to those who are beginning to inquire on the subject. There is probably not one woman in a thousand, perhaps not one in ten thousand, who has well considered the disabilities—literary, pecuniary, social, political disabilities, under which she labors. We must, then, have tracts, an abundance of them, upon all these topics, that may be scattered broad-cast over the community. These shall fall as good seed—some of them, no doubt, on stony places, where there is not much earth to quicken them, or amongst thorns, where they will be soon choked; but others, no doubt, will fall into good ground, where they will spring up, and

bring forth fruit, some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold. We only need co-operation enough to set these instruments at work, and keep them a going, and the fallow ground will be broken up, and the seed sown, and then the harvest, which we so much desire, may be confidently looked for. The rights of women will be recognized; ample provision will be made for their education, education as liberal and thorough as that which is provided for the other sex; and a free access will be allowed them to any departments of business or labor, to which they may be inclined, as a means of self-support, and for which they may see fit to qualify themselves. I hope Mrs. Davis' resolution will be passed.

Lucy Stone — I abhor woman schools, and negro pews, and for the same reason. There are Colleges already built and endowed, with excellent apparatus and Professors, and they have room for more students. It would be a foolish outlay to build others, so long as these are not full. What we want, is to gain admittance to these.

The substitute was then unanimously adopted.

President.—National Conventions are to be called as heretofore.

The resolution on the Bible argument was then called up.

Thomas M'Clintock hoped it would not pass. It rested altogether on a historical basis, about which different opinions would always be entertained. To go back to any particular era for a standard of truth, is to adopt an imperfect standard, and impede the progress of truth and goodness. Truth is necessarily progressive, and all the means of its attainment which ever have existed in any age of the world, exist now, in the action of the perfect and unchangable laws of Deity, and are as accessible to us, as they have been to those of any period.

Antoinette L. Brown—The question is, whether the Bible does agree with nature. If it can be shown that the Bible harmonizes with truth, why should we not do so? Why should not the Convention do this, whatever may be its idea of the Bible?

Rev. Mr. Hatch, Congregational Minister—The question is, whether this Convention recognizes the paramount authority of the Bible. There is a contrary impression abroad, and from what has now taken place, there seems to be grounds for it, and it is likely to do this cause great injury.

President — That question is not before the Convention. We come to affirm great fundamental truths, and all we find in the Book

to corroborate these truths, we gladly receive. We have as good a right to use our ability in bringing Jesus and the Apostles to confirm our opinions, as the several Divines have to use their ingenuity to bring the Bible to bear on their peculiar views.

Rev. Mr. Hatch — That is not the question. What I wanted to know is, whether this Convention recognizes the Bible, or not?

President—This question has not been considered, and, therefore, is not decided.

C. I. H. Nichols—I have been a member of the Baptist Church, since I was eight years of age, and my faith is based on the Rock of Ages.

E. L. Rose—Acknowledging and claiming, as I do, perfect human freedom of thought and expression, from the fact and conviction that human belief does not depend on our voluntary inclination, I cannot have any objection to any one's interpreting the Bible as he or she thinks best; but I object that such interpretation go forth as the doctrine of this Convention, because it is a mere interpretation, and is not even the authority of the Book—it is the view of Miss Brown only, which is as good as that of any other minister, but that is all. For my part, I reject both interpretations. Here we claim human rights and freedom, based upon the laws of humanity, and require no written authority from Moses or Paul, because those laws and our claims are prior to even these two great men. The different interpretations of these books, have caused different sects, as the different interpretations of the Constitution have caused different political parties. Let us keep aloof alike from political and religious intrigues. Of all the pangs that ever tortured the human mind or body, those resulting from this cause have been the most horrible—mere differences of opinion, and differences of interpretation, not self-evident truths—every one claiming to grasp truth, but none having it.

The Convention then adjourned till the afternoon.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

President in the Chair at two o'clock. Minutes read by L. F. Fowler, Secretary.

Persons reported themselves in attendance from nine of the States.

Martha C. Wright, Secretary, read a letter from J. R. Johnson,

of Syracuse. He was necessarily absent from town, but was with the Convention in spirit. The letter concluded by offering three resolutions.*

E. Oakes Smith, from the Business Committee, reported several resolutions "recommended by the Committee to be published as the voice of this Convention." She said, that a multitude of resolutions had been presented, which would be published as the views of individual members. The Committee had selected from the number, those which they believed embodied the principles of this Convention.

She then read a series of resolutions, several of which have already been published and adopted.

B. S. Jones, the President, E. O. Smith, L. Stone, and Thomas M'Clintock, discussed the question at considerable length. They were finally accepted, and laid upon the table, and the Convention proceeded to the discussion of the resolution offered by Antoinette L. Brown.

Rev. Junius L. Hatch, of Mass., came forward, and made the only coarse and ribald speech of the Convention, which was received with marked disapprobation by the entire audience.

The President reminded the Convention that they should not compromise their dignity, because the speaker did his.

Rev. Mr. Hatch gave his idea of female loveliness. It consisted in that shrinking delicacy which, like the modest violet, hid itself until sought — that modesty which led women to blush, to cast down their eyes, when meeting men, or walking up the aisle of a church— to drop the veil, and *wear long skirts*, instead of imitating the sunflower, which lifted up its head, seeming to say, "come and admire me." He repeated the remarks made, near the door, on some of the speakers.

The President hoped he would keep in order, and not retail the vulgar conversation of his associates.

He went on further, in a similar strain, until the indignation of the audience became universal. The President said, he had so outraged the feelings of the Convention, that he could not be permitted to go on.

Antoinette L. Brown then proceeded in support of her resolution

* The Letter and Resolutions have not come into the hands of the Committee.

on the Bible: We have been asked what we mean by the Bible? We do not mean the Mahometan Bible, but the Book that commences with Moses, and ends with Revelations. Now, what construction are we to put on this Bible? Is it the infallible rule of faith and practice? I think it is. No member of the Convention is responsible for my views. One speaker said, this morning, that our cause was based on the law of right—the equality of humanity itself. It is true that if there were no God, or no Bible, the rights of woman would be the same; and, though we believe the Bible is in harmony with this idea, we do not base it upon the Bible. As a Convention, we do not commit ourselves to theological opinions. But still there must be some right interpretation of the Bible.

Ernestine L. Rose said, claiming, and granting, as I do, perfect freedom of thought and expression, I can have no objection whatever to Miss Brown's expression of her opinion on the Bible, provided only, I am not required to acquiesce in it, if I do not agree with it; and I do not. I object to the resolution, not that I do not think Miss Brown has not as good a right to her interpretation of the Bible, as any other Minister; but if we accept it, it is after all only her definition, and not the meaning of the text. But there is no time for such discussions; we have met here for nobler purposes than to discuss Theology. We need no such authority. Our claims are on the broad basis of Human Rights, irrespective of what Moses, Paul, or Peter, may say. Those who have nothing better to do, may dispute about these authorities. It has done mischief enough. All the hatred and persecutions between sect and sect, man and man, have arisen from the different interpretations of passages which can have no meaning in themselves, or there could be no doubt on the subject— each interpreter claiming to be the true Oracle — the Pope claiming to be the greatest, instituted an Inquisition against every other interpreter. A Book that is so ambiguous, as not to convey any definite idea, can furnish no authority to this Convention. I therefore move to lay the resolution on the table.

The President vacated the Chair, and spoke briefly in opposition to the resolution. In the early days of Anti-Slavery, great pains were taken to show that the Bible was against Slavery: opponents coming forward, the time of Conventions was too much occupied by the bandying of Scripture texts. Other occasions than those, were therefore judged best for such discussions. The advocates of Emancipa-

tion found their business was to affirm the inherent right of man to himself and to his earnings—that none had a right to imbrute him—that it was essentially sinful, and that slaveholders were men-stealers. These being self-evident truths, no argument or outward authority was needed to prove it. We already see the disadvantage of such discussions here. It is not to be supposed that all the advice given by the Apostles, to the women of their day, is applicable to our more intelligent age; nor is there any passage in Scripture, making those texts binding on us.

A gentleman then quoted: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable, etc." Does not this apply to the latest period?

Lucretia Mott said, in reply: If the speaker will turn to the passage, he will find that the word "*is*," being in italics, was inserted by the translators. She accepted it, as in the original, "All Scripture *given* by inspiration of God, is profitable, etc." She claimed some familiarity with the Scriptures, and should have no objection, at a suitable time, to discuss this question. She concluded by moving that the resolution be laid on the table. Unanimously carried.

L. Stone, from the Business Committee, reported the following:

Resolved, That this Convention invite the present Central Committee to retain their membership, and that at least one member be added from each State represented here, in person or by letter, that a general co-operation may be secured, for the promotion of the great object of this Convention, and the necessary measures be taken to procure another National Convention, in a suitable place, about a year from this time, with the understanding that no action of this Committee shall be considered as authorized, unless it have the sanction of at least two-thirds of the Committee.

In pursuance of resolution, the Central Committee was constituted as follows:

ELIZABETH OAKES SMITH, Brooklyn, N. Y., *President.*
PAULINA W. DAVIS, Providence, R. I., *Secretary.*
WENDELL PHILLIPS, Boston, Mass., *Treasurer.*
SARAH H. EARLE, Worcester, "
MARY A. W. JOHNSON, Philadelphia, Pa.
W. H. CHANNING, Rochester, N. Y.
GERRIT SMITH, Peterboro, "
J. G. FORMAN, Nantucket, Mass.

MARTHA H. MOWRY, Providence, R. I.
LUCY STONE, West Brookfield, Mass.
ABBY K. FOSTER, Worcester, Mass.
PLINY SEXTON, Palmyra, N. Y.
J. ELIZABETH JONES, Salem, Ohio.
WILLIAM STEDMAN, Randolph, Stark Co., Ohio.
EMILY ROBINSON, Marlborough, " "
ABBY H. PRICE, Hopedale, Mass.
WILLIAM L. GARRISON, Boston, Mass.
LUCRETIA MOTT, Philadelphia, Pa.
ERNESTINE L. ROSE, New York City.
EEIZABETH C. STANTON, Seneca Falls, N. Y.
ANGELINA GRIMKE WELD, Bellville, N. J.
ANTOINETTE L. BROWN, Henrietta, N. Y.
HARRIET K. HUNT, Boston, Mass.
MARTHA C. WRIGHT, Auburn, N. Y.
C. I. H. NICHOLS, Brattleboro, Vt.
CHARLES C. BURLEIGH, Plainfield, Conn.
ADIN BALLOU, Hopedale, Mass.
SARAH H. HALLOCK, Milton, N. Y.
JOSEPH A. DUGDALE, Kennett Square, Pa.
BETSEY FOSTER, Illinois.
JOHN NEAL, Portland, Maine.
C. M. SEVERANCE, Cleveland, Ohio.
MELISSA J. DIGGS, Pa.
O. S. WAIT, Rockwell, Bond Co., Illinois.
MRS. CHAPEL SMITH, Pa.
ELIZA STUART, Baltimore, Maryland.
SYBIL LAWRENCE, Michigan.
LYDIA P. SAVAGE, Syracuse, N. Y.
MOSES MARTIN, Pembroke, "
GEN. PAINE, Milwaukie, Wis.

The President proposed the designation of the place of holding the next annual Convention.

E. L. Rose proposed that it be held in New York City, being a central location, and easy of access from all parts of the Union. There would be better reports there, and she was sorry to say New York was very ignorant.

Mr. JONES proposed Cleveland. There was more liberality in the West, and there were one thousand inquirers there, for every one in New York.

MARTHA C. WRIGHT—If there is more liberality in the West, then New York needs such a Convention as this the more.

E. O. SMITH—Yes: for the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

C. I. H. NICHOLS, thought it was better to go where there were most hearers.

E. L. ROSE said, New York State was the first to give an instalment of Woman's Rights.

P. W. DAVIS—No: there are two States before her, Rhode Island and Louisiana.

LUCY STONE thought that they ought to go West. The people of Indiana and Illinois would come to Cleveland to meet them half way. Only a few years ago, a cause as holy as theirs could not find a room in New York.

It was finally resolved to hold the next meeting at Cleveland, the time to be fixed by the Central Committee.

The Convention then adjourned till evening.

EVENING SESSION.

Hall full to overflowing.

The PRESIDENT called to order.

The resolution last evening offered by E. L. ROSE, was unanimously adopted.

The resolutions offered by Dr. HARRIET K. HUNT, this forenoon, and which were then discussed, were unanimously adopted.

PAULINA W. DAVIS said, the reason why the Convention did not have a Phonogaphic Reporter, was, that they had no opporiunity to publish any more than they now report. The Tribune had been liberal: but it was a political paper, and gave the foreign news. We need an organ.

P. W. DAVIS then read a Prospectus for a Weekly Paper, at two dollars per year, to be published at New York, and edited by E. OAKES SMITH, and to be called THE EGERIA. She pressed the importance of a paper, in which they could explain their principles, and defend themselves from attacks.

C. I. H. NICHOLS spoke of the courage with which the cause had been defended by several country presses, at the cost of pecuniary sacrifice, in some cases. She made a strong appeal for vigorous support of the country press. She went on to say, that it was to a country press she owed the formation of a character for humanity, more than to any other single agency, except the Bible.

E. O. SMITH was in favor of a paper. She would withdraw her name as the proposed editor, and leave it to the Convention to name the editor.

Mr. MAY spoke strongly in favor of encouraging and aiding the local press, in the advocacy of the cause, by writing for them—ladies and gentlemen. He would be glad to see an organ; but care should be taken in reference to expense.

P. W. DAVIS said, articles had waited for weeks, and sometimes months, in the office of the Tribune, before publishing. The answer was, "Your articles can wait." This must be so. If Mrs. Smith can be persuaded to edit the paper, it will start with a high literary reputation. The Westminster Review says of Mrs. Smith's work, "Woman and Her Needs," that it is the ablest work that has been written on the subject.

E. L. ROSE said, the proportion of the press on the side of our cause, is at present small. But she feared a paper could not be sustained. Still, she would like to see one. Yet she thought it not well to have the Convention act. If every lady would have one silk dress less, a year, we should have a paper.

P. W. DAVIS said, if a stock company of two thousand dollars was formed, the paper could go on.

The PRESIDENT said, this ought to be done, and not leave the other undone. She was in favor of a newspaper devoted to this reform, and alluded to the value of the Anti-Slavery papers.

P. W. DAVIS said, five hundred dollars was already pledged. If they could get two thousand subscribers pledged, they could start. She asked for pledges to get twenty subscribers each.

Mr. JONES cautioned against expenses — they were always double what was expected.

Mr. MAY offered the following resolution, which was seconded and accepted:

Resolved, That this Convention regards with lively interest the proposal to establish a paper, that shall be an organ of the Woman's

Rights Reform, and commends it to the general and cordial patronage of all who are interested in this reform.

Lucy Stone said, we were misrepresented on almost all sides—and women are repelled from joining in a movement the most magnificent ever launched since Creation's morning. She made an eloquent and touching appeal, as to what truth, resolution, and energy, in a paper, would accomplish. It depended on the friends of the reform.

Mr. May's resolution was adopted. He announced that over two hundred and sixty dollars had been taken at the door.

The President called for the report on publication.

Mr. May was in favor of publishing in Syracuse, and reported the following Committee on Publication:

Lucy Stone, Susan B. Anthony, Lydia F. Fowler, W. L. Crandal.

The President had already appointed Rev. S. J. May, as Chairman. Mr. May said he was willing to work till the cause became popular, then he would go at something else.

The resolutions, by E. C. Stanton, were read.

Two objected to: the one in reference to the Woman's State Temperance Society, and the other, commencing with a reference to the fact, that there are now female physicians for both soul and body.

The other three were read.

Harriet K. Hunt made inquiry as to the People's College.

S. B. Anthony said, both sexes were to have equal advantages. The next meeting of the Society, for the adoption of the Constitution, will be at Seneca Falls, 13th of October. The payment of twenty-five cents, makes a person a voting member.

Mr. May spoke of the great success of the Schools in Massachusetts, where boys and girls were admitted.

The President spoke of a High School, for boys and girls, in Nantucket, which was eminently successful.

Dr. Cutcheon said, the McGrawville College was the only institution, of a high character in its range of studies, which gave equal privileges to females. He advocated this plan, at length.

All the resolutions presented by E. C. Stanton, except the one in reference to the New York State Temperance Society, were adopted.

E. L. Rose spoke to the following resolution:

Resolved, That the young women of our land be warned against the fallacies contained in Horace Mann's Lectures, delivered at various times and places, for their especial benefit; and that they be very cautious how they accept such sophistries for truth.

I am glad that such a resolution has been offered. I listened to those Lectures — aye! listened with saddened and oppressed spirit, that a man of his age and position, should stoop to such false assertions, and sophistries, for the sake of popularity. I would willingly have given him Twenty-Five Dollars, (though in this competitive State of ours, few have any money to throw away, and my husband is a mechanic, who works for all he gets,) could I have had an opportunity to answer him. But I could not get that opportunity, so I had to do the next best thing—write him a letter on the subject, and review his Lectures. His sentiments were unworthy of a Man—much more of Horace Mann. But, as, probably, few here have heard or read these Lectures, I will not urge the acceptance of the resolution, but move to lay it on the table.

It was announced that E. Oakes Smith would deliver a Lecture; but it was nine o'clock, and she declined.

Lucy Stone gave a glowing farewell address, thanking the audience for their attention, and the interest they had taken in the proceedings. [At the request of Miss Stone, the report of this speech is omitted.]

The President made a few appropriate remarks, which were received with deep interest.

Mr. Cutcheon offered the usual resolutions of thanks to the President.

The President had a word to say; she had no liking for these votes of thanks. We no doubt all felt thankful that the Convention had passed off so satisfactorily; and she was thankful that she had been able to perform her part better than she expected. Let that suffice.

The Doxology was sung to the tune of Old Hundred.

Whereupon, the Convention adjourned *sine die*..

Note.—The Publishing Committee regret that their limit of space does not permit the publication of all the Addresses and Speeches entire. It has been difficult to select from the multitude of gems placed in their hands. Large portions of written Addresses, well worthy of publication, they have been obliged

to omit — while, as there was no Phonographic Reporter, the extemporaneous speeches are mere fragments of the original.

They have done the best they could, under the circumstances, and comfort themselves with the thought, that the thousands who heard will not soon forget.

ADDRESS

ADOPTED BY THE

WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION,

HELD AT WEST CHESTER, PA.

June 2d and 3d, 1852.

PRESENTED BY

ANN PRESTON.

PHILADELPHIA:
MERRIHEW AND THOMPSON, PRINTERS,
No. 7 Carter's Alley.
1852.

ADDRESS.

The question is repeatedly asked by those who have thought but little upon the subject of woman's position in society, "What does woman want more than she possesses already? Is she not beloved, honored, guarded, cherished? Wherein are her rights infringed, or her liberties curtailed?"

Glowing pictures have been drawn of the fitness of the present relations of society, and of the beauty of woman's dependence upon the protecting love of man, and frightful visions have been evoked of the confusion and perversion of nature which would occur if the doctrine of the equal rights of man and woman was once admitted.

The idea seems to prevail that movements for the elevation of woman arise not from the legitimate wants of society, but from the vague restlessness of unquiet spirits; not from the serene dictates of wisdom, but from the headlong impulses of fanaticism.

We came not here to argue the question of the relative strength of intellect in man and woman, for the reform which we advocate depends not upon its settlement.

We place not the interests of woman in antagonism to those of her brother, for

> "The woman's cause is man's:
> They rise or sink together,
> Dwarfed or God-like, bond or free."

We maintain not that woman should lose any of that refinement and delicacy of spirit which, as a celestial halo, ever encircles the pure in heart.

We contend not that she shall become noisy and dictatorial, and abjure the quiet graces of life.

We claim not that she, any more than her brother, should engage in any vocation or appear in any situation to which her nature and abilities are not fitted.

But we ask for her, as for man, equality before the law, and freedom to exercise all her powers and faculties under the direction of her own judgment and volition.

When a woman dies, leaving behind her a husband and children, no appraisers come into the desolated home to examine the effects; the father is the guardian of his offspring; the family relation is not invaded by law. But when a man dies the case is entirely different; in the hour of the widow's deep distress strangers come into the house to take an inventory of the effects, strangers are appointed to be the guardians of her children, and she, their natural care-taker, thenceforth has no legal direction of their interests; strangers decide upon the propriety of the sale of the property—earned, perhaps, by her own and her husband's mutual efforts—and her interest in the estate is coolly designated as the "*widow's incumbrance!*"

In the extremity of her bereavement there is piled upon her, not only the dread of separation from her children, but that of being sent homeless from the spot where every object has been consecrated by her tenderest affections.

Nor is the practical working of this law better than its theory; all over the country there are widows who have been made doubly desolate by its provisions—widows separated from their children, who, if they had had the disposal of their own and their husband's mutual property, might have retrieved their circumstances, and kept the household band together.

We ask for such change in public sentiment as shall procure the repeal of this oppressive law.

We ask that woman shall have free access to vocations of profit and honor, the means of earning a livelihood and independence for herself! As a general rule, profitable employments are not considered open to woman, nor are her business capabilities encouraged and developed by systematic training. Gloomy must be the feelings of the father of a family of young daughters when he is about to bid farewell to the world, if he is leaving them without the means of pecuniary support. Their brothers may go out into society and gain position and competency; but for them there is but little choice of employment, and, too often, they are left with repressed and crippled energies to pine and chafe under the bitter sense of poverty and dependence.

Their pursuits are to be determined, not by their inclination, judgment, and ability, as are those of man, but by the popular estimate of what is proper and becoming. In Turkey public delicacy is outraged if a woman appears unveiled beyond the walls of the Harem; in America

a sentiment no less arbitrary presumes to mark out for her the precise boundaries of womanly propriety; and she who ventures to step beyond them, must do it at the peril of encountering low sneers, coarse allusions, and the withering imputation of want of feminine delicacy.

Even for the same services woman generally receives less than man. The whole tendency of our customs, habits and teaching, is to make her *dependent*—dependent in outward circumstances, dependent in spirit.

As a consequence of her fewer resources, marriage has been to her the great means of securing position in society. Thus it is that this relation —which should ever be a "holy sacrament"—the unbiased and generous election of the free and self-sustained being, too often is degraded into a mean acceptance of a shelter from neglect and poverty!

We ask that woman shall be trained to unfold her whole nature; to exercise all her powers and faculties.

It is said that the domestic circle is the peculiar province of woman: that "men are what mothers make them." But how can that woman who does not live for self-culture and self-development, who has herself no exalted objects in life, imbue her children with lofty aspirations, or train her sons to a free and glorious manhood?

She best can fulfil the duties of wife and mother, who is fitted for other and varied usefulness.

The being who lives for one relation only cannot possess the power and scope which are required for the highest excellence even in that one. If the whole body is left without exercise, one arm does not become strong; if the tree is stunted in its growth, one branch does not shoot into surpassing luxuriance.

That woman whose habits and mental training enable her to assist and sustain her husband in seasons of difficulty, and whose children rely on her as a wise counsellor, commands a life-long reverence far deeper and dearer than can be secured by transient accomplishments, or the most refined and delicate imbecility!

All women are not wives and mothers, but all have spirits needing development, powers that grow with their exercise.

Those who are best acquainted with the state of society know that there is, at this time, a vast amount of unhappiness among women for want of free outlets to their powers; that thousands are yearning for fuller development, and a wider field of usefulness. The same energies which in man find vent in the professions, and in the thousand forms of business and study, must find an ennobling channel in woman, else they will be frittered away in trifles, or turned into instruments to prey upon their possessor.

To follow the empty round of fashion, to retail gossip and scandal, to be an ornament in the parlor or a mere drudge in the kitchen, to live as an appendage to any human being, does not fill up nor satisfy the capacities of a soul awakened to a sense of its true wants, and the far-reaching and mighty interests which cluster around its existence.

We protest against the tyranny of that public sentiment which assigns any arbitrary sphere to woman.

God has made the happiness and development of His creatures to depend upon the free exercise of their powers and faculties. Freedom is the law of beauty, written by His fingers upon the human mind, and the only condition upon which it can attain to its full stature, and expand in its natural and beautiful proportions.

It is recognized, in reference to man, that his judgment, opportunities and abilities are the proper measure of his sphere. "The tools to him who can use them." But the same principles are not trusted in their application to woman, lest, forsooth, she should lose her feminine characteristics, and, like the lost Pleiad, forsake her native sphere!

It seems to be forgotten that the laws of nature will not be suspended: that the human mind, when released from pressure, like water, must find its own level; that woman cannot, if she would, cast away her nature and instincts; that it is only when we are left free to obey the inward attractions of our being that we fall into our natural places, and move in our God-appointed orbits.

We ask that none shall dare to come in between woman and her Maker, and with unhallowed hands attempt to plant their shallow posts and draw their flimsy cords around the Heaven-wide sphere of an immortal spirit!

We maintain that God has not so failed in his adaptations as to give powers to be wasted, talents to be wrapped in a napkin; and that the possession of faculties and capabilities is the warrant of nature, the command of the All-Wise for their culture and exercise.

We believe that the woman who is obeying the convictions of her own soul, and whose ability is commensurate with her employment, is ever in her own true sphere; whether in her quiet home she is training her children to nobleness and virtue, or is standing as a physician by the bed of sickness and sorrow,—whether with Elizabeth Fry she is preaching the gospel of glad tidings to the sad dwellers in prison, or like the Italian, Lauri Bassi, is filling a professor's chair and expounding philosophy to admiring and instructed listeners.

While we demand for woman a more complete physical, intellectual and moral education, as the means of strengthening and beautifying her

own nature, and of ennobling the whole race, we also ask for a more elevated standard of excellence and moral purity in *man:* and we maintain that if there is any place of resort or employment in society, which *necessarily* would sully the delicacy of woman's spirit, in that, man also must be contaminated and degraded.

Woman indeed should wear about her, wherever she moves, the protecting investment of innocence and purity; but not less is it requisite that he, who is the companion of her life, should guard his spirit with the same sacred and beautiful covering.

We believe that woman as an accountable being, cannot innocently merge her individuality in that of her brother, or accept from him the limitations of her sphere.

In all life's great extremities she also is thrown upon her inward resources, and stands alone. Man cannot step in between her and the "accusing angel" of her own conscience; alone in the solitude of her spirit she must wrestle with her own sorrows: none can walk for her "the valley of the shadow of death!" When her brother shall be able to settle for her accountabilities, and "give to God a ransom for her soul," then, and not till then, may she rightly commit to him the direction of her powers and activities.

We ask, in fine, for the application of the fundamental principles of Christianity and republicanism to this, as to all other questions of vital importance; and appealing to all who desire the progression and happiness of the whole race, we ask them, as magnanimous men and true women, to examine this subject in the spirit of a generous and candid investigation.

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But we ask for her, as for man, equality before the law, and freedom to exercise all her powers and faculties under the direction of her own judgment and volition.

When a woman dies, leaving behind her a husband and children, no appraisers come into the desolated home to examine the effects; the father is the guardian of his offspring; the family relation is not invaded by law. But when a man dies the case is entirely different; in the hour of the widow's deep distress strangers come into the house to take an inventory of the effects, strangers are appointed to be the guardians of her children, and she, their natural care-taker, thenceforth has no legal direction of their interests; strangers decide upon the propriety of the sale of the property—earned, perhaps, by her own and her husband's mutual efforts—and her interest in the estate is coolly designated as the "*widow's incumbrance!*"

In the extremity of her bereavement there is piled upon her, not only the dread of separation from her children, but that of being sent homeless from the spot where every object has been consecrated by her tenderest affections.

Nor is the practical working of this law better than its theory; all over the country there are widows who have been made doubly desolate by its provisions—widows separated from their children, who, if they had had the disposal of their own and their husband's mutual property, might have retrieved their circumstances, and kept the household band together.

We ask for such change in public sentiment as shall procure the repeal of this oppressive law.

We ask that woman shall have free access to vocations of profit and honor, the means of earning a livelihood and independence for herself! As a general rule, profitable employments are not considered open to woman, nor are her business capabilities encouraged and developed by systematic training. Gloomy must be the feelings of the father of a family of young daughters when he is about to bid farewell to the world, if he is leaving them without the means of pecuniary support. Their brothers may go out into society and gain position and competency; but for them there is but little choice of employment, and, too often, they are left with repressed and crippled energies to pine and chafe under the bitter sense of poverty and dependence.

Their pursuits are to be determined, not by their inclination, judgment, and ability, as are those of man, but by the popular estimate of what is proper and becoming. In Turkey public delicacy is outraged if a woman appears unveiled beyond the walls of the Harem; in America

a sentiment no less arbitrary presumes to mark out for her the precise boundaries of womanly propriety; and she who ventures to step beyond them, must do it at the peril of encountering low sneers, coarse allusions, and the withering imputation of want of feminine delicacy.

Even for the same services woman generally receives less than man. The whole tendency of our customs, habits and teaching, is to make her *dependent*—dependent in outward circumstances, dependent in spirit.

As a consequence of her fewer resources, marriage has been to her the great means of securing position in society. Thus it is that this relation —which should ever be a "holy sacrament"—the unbiased and generous election of the free and self-sustained being, too often is degraded into a mean acceptance of a shelter from neglect and poverty!

We ask that woman shall be trained to unfold her whole nature; to exercise all her powers and faculties.

It is said that the domestic circle is the peculiar province of woman: that "men are what mothers make them." But how can that woman who does not live for self-culture and self-development, who has herself no exalted objects in life, imbue her children with lofty aspirations, or train her sons to a free and glorious manhood?

She best can fulfil the duties of wife and mother, who is fitted for other and varied usefulness.

The being who lives for one relation only cannot possess the power and scope which are required for the highest excellence even in that one. If the whole body is left without exercise, one arm does not become strong; if the tree is stunted in its growth, one branch does not shoot into surpassing luxuriance.

That woman whose habits and mental training enable her to assist and sustain her husband in seasons of difficulty, and whose children rely on her as a wise counsellor, commands a life-long reverence far deeper and dearer than can be secured by transient accomplishments, or the most refined and delicate imbecility!

All women are not wives and mothers, but all have spirits needing development, powers that grow with their exercise.

Those who are best acquainted with the state of society know that there is, at this time, a vast amount of unhappiness among women for want of free outlets to their powers; that thousands are yearning for fuller development, and a wider field of usefulness. The same energies which in man find vent in the professions, and in the thousand forms of business and study, must find an ennobling channel in woman, else they will be frittered away in trifles, or turned into instruments to prey upon their possessor.

To follow the empty round of fashion, to retail gossip and scandal, to be an ornament in the parlor or a mere drudge in the kitchen, to live as an appendage to any human being, does not fill up nor satisfy the capacities of a soul awakened to a sense of its true wants, and the far-reaching and mighty interests which cluster around its existence.

We protest against the tyranny of that public sentiment which assigns any arbitrary sphere to woman.

God has made the happiness and development of His creatures to depend upon the free exercise of their powers and faculties. Freedom is the law of beauty, written by His fingers upon the human mind, and the only condition upon which it can attain to its full stature, and expand in its natural and beautiful proportions.

It is recognized, in reference to man, that his judgment, opportunities and abilities are the proper measure of his sphere. "The tools to him who can use them." But the same principles are not trusted in their application to woman, lest, forsooth, she should lose her feminine characteristics, and, like the lost Pleiad, forsake her native sphere!

It seems to be forgotten that the laws of nature will not be suspended: that the human mind, when released from pressure, like water, must find its own level; that woman cannot, if she would, cast away her nature and instincts; that it is only when we are left free to obey the inward attractions of our being that we fall into our natural places, and move in our God-appointed orbits.

We ask that none shall dare to come in between woman and her Maker, and with unhallowed hands attempt to plant their shallow posts and draw their flimsy cords around the Heaven-wide sphere of an immortal spirit!

We maintain that God has not so failed in his adaptations as to give powers to be wasted, talents to be wrapped in a napkin; and that the possession of faculties and capabilities is the warrant of nature, the command of the All-Wise for their culture and exercise.

We believe that the woman who is obeying the convictions of her own soul, and whose ability is commensurate with her employment, is ever in her own true sphere; whether in her quiet home she is training her children to nobleness and virtue, or is standing as a physician by the bed of sickness and sorrow,—whether with Elizabeth Fry she is preaching the gospel of glad tidings to the sad dwellers in prison, or like the Italian, Lauri Bassi, is filling a professor's chair and expounding philosophy to admiring and instructed listeners.

While we demand for woman a more complete physical, intellectual and moral education, as the means of strengthening and beautifying her

own nature, and of ennobling the whole race, we also ask for a more elevated standard of excellence and moral purity in *man:* and we maintain that if there is any place of resort or employment in society, which *necessarily* would sully the delicacy of woman's spirit, in that, man also must be contaminated and degraded.

Woman indeed should wear about her, wherever she moves, the protecting investment of innocence and purity; but not less is it requisite that he, who is the companion of her life, should guard his spirit with the same sacred and beautiful covering.

We believe that woman as an accountable being, cannot innocently merge her individuality in that of her brother, or accept from him the limitations of her sphere.

In all life's great extremities she also is thrown upon her inward resources, and stands alone. Man cannot step in between her and the "accusing angel" of her own conscience; alone in the solitude of her spirit she must wrestle with her own sorrows: none can walk for her "the valley of the shadow of death!" When her brother shall be able to settle for her accountabilities, and "give to God a ransom for her soul," then, and not till then, may she rightly commit to him the direction of her powers and activities.

We ask, in fine, for the application of the fundamental principles of Christianity and republicanism to this, as to all other questions of vital importance; and appealing to all who desire the progression and happiness of the whole race, we ask them, as magnanimous men and true women, to examine this subject in the spirit of a generous and candid investigation.

Antiquarian Society

W. H. Ashurst

WOMAN'S RIGHTS TRACTS,...No. 9.

SPEECH

OF

MRS. E. L. ROSE,

AT THE WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION,

Held at Syracuse, Sept. 1852.

* * * * If the able Theologian who has just spoke had been in Indiana when the Constitution was revised, she might have had a chance to give her definitions on the Bible argument, to some effect. At that Convention, Robert Dale Owen introduced a clause to give to a married woman the right to her property. The clause had passed, but by the influence of a minister was recalled; and by his appealing to the superstition of the members, and bringing the whole force of Bible argument to bear against the right of woman to her property, it was lost. Had Miss Brown been there, she might have beaten him with his own weapons. For my part, I see no need to appeal to any written authority, particularly when it is so obscure and indefinite as to admit of different interpretations. When the inhabitants of Boston converted their harbor into a tea-pot, rather than submit to unjust taxes, they did not go to the Bible for their authority; for if they had, they would have been told from the same authority, to "give unto Cesar what belonged to Cesar." Had the people, when they rose in the might of their right to throw off the British yoke, appealed to the Bible for authority, it would have answered them, "submit to the powers that be, for they are from God." No! on Human Rights and Freedom — on a subject that is as self-evident as that two and two make four, there is no need of any written authority. But this is not what I intended to speak upon. I wish to introduce a resolution, and leave it to the action of the Convention:

Resolved, That we ask not for our rights as a gift of charity, but as an act of justice. For it is in accordance with the principles of republicanism that, as woman has to pay taxes to maintain government, she has a right to participate in the formation and administration of it. That as she is amenable to the laws of her country, she is entitled to a voice in their enactment, and to all the protective advantages they can bestow; and as she is as liable as man to all the vicissitudes of life, she ought to enjoy the same social rights and privileges. And any difference, therefore, in political, civil and social rights, on account of sex, is in direct violation of the principles of justice and humanity, and as such ought to be held up to the contempt and derision of every lover of human freedom.

* * * But we call upon the law-makers and law-breakers of the nation, to defend themselves for violating the fundamental principles of the Republic, or disprove their validity. Yes! they stand arrayed before the bar, not only of injured womanhood, but before the bar of moral consistency; for this question is awakening an interest abroad, as well as at home. Wherever human rights are claimed for man, moral consistency points to the equal rights of woman; but statesmen dare not openly face the subject, knowing well they cannot confute it, and they have not moral courage enough to admit it; and hence, all they can do is to shelter themselves under a subterfuge which, though solidified by age, ignorance and prejudice, is transparent enough for the most benighted vision to penetrate. A strong evidence of this, is given in a reply of Mr. Roebuck, member of Parliament, at a meeting of electors, in Sheffield, England. Mr. R., who advocated the extension of the franchise to the occupants of five pound tenements, was asked whether he would favor the extension of the same to women who pay an equal amount of rent? That was a simple, straight-forward question of justice; one worthy to be asked even in our Republican Legislative Halls. But what was the honorable gentleman's reply? Did he meet it openly and fairly? Oh, no! but hear him, and I hope the ladies will pay particular attention,; for the greater part of the reply contains the draught, poor, deluded woman has been accustomed to swallow—FLATTERY: "There is no man who owes more than I do to woman. My education was formed by one whose very recollections at this moment make me tremble. There is nothing which, for the honor of the sex, I would not do—the happiness of my life is bound up with it—Mother, Wife, Daughter, Woman, to me have been the Oasis of the desert of life, and, I have to ask myself, would it conduce to the happiness of society to bring

woman more distinctly than she now is brought, into the arena of politics? Honestly I confess to you I believe not. I will tell you why. All their influences, if I may so term it, are gentle influences. In the rude battle and business of life, we come home to find a nook and shelter of quiet comfort, after the hard and severe, and I may say, the sharp ire and the disputes of the House of Commons. I hie me home, knowing that I shall there find personal solicitude and anxiety. My head rests upon a bosom throbbing with emotion for me and our child; and I feel a more hearty man in the cause of my country, the next day, because of the perfect, soothing, gentle peace which a mind sullied by politics is unable to feel. Oh! I cannot rob myself of that inexpressible benefit, and therefore I say, NO."

Well, this is certainly a nice, little, romantic bit of Parliamentary declamation. What a pity that he should give up all these enjoyments, to give woman a vote. Poor man! his happiness must be balanced on the very verge of a precipice, when the simple act of depositing a vote by the hand of woman, would overthrow and destroy it forever. I don't doubt the Honorable gentleman meant what he said, particularly the last part of it, for such are the views of the unthinking, unreflecting mass of the public, here as well as there. But like a true politician, he commenced very patriotically, for the happiness of society, and finished by describing his own individual interests. His reply is a curious mixture of truth, political sophistry, false assumption and blind selfishness. But he was placed in a dilemma, and got himself out as he could. In advocating the franchise to five pound tenement-holders, it did not occur to him that woman may possess the same qualification that man has, and in justice, therefore, ought to have the same rights; and when the simple question was put to him, (simple questions are very troublesome to statesmen,) having too much sense not to see the justness of it, and too little moral courage to admit it, he entered into quite an interesting account of what a delightful little creature woman is, provided only she is kept quietly at home, waiting for the arrival of her lord and master—ready to administer a dose of purification, "which his politically sullied mind is unable to feel." Well! I have no desire to dispute the necessity of it, nor that he owes to woman all that makes life desirable—comforts, happiness, aye, and common sense too, for it is a well-known fact, that smart mothers always have smart sons, unless they take after their father. But what of that? Are the benefits woman is capa-

ble of bestowing on man, reasons why she must pay the same amount of rent and taxes, without enjoying the same rights that man does. But the justice of the case was not considered. The Honorable gentleman was only concerned about the "happiness of society." Society? what does the term mean? As a foreigner, I understand by it a collection, or union of human beings: men, women, and children, under one general government, and for mutual interest. But Mr. Roebuck, being a native Briton and a member of Parliament, gave us a Parliamentary definition, namely: society means the male sex only; for in his solicitude to consult "the happiness of society," he enumerated the benefits man enjoys from keeping woman from her rights, without even dreaming that woman was at all considered in it; and this is the true Parliamentary definition, for statesmen never include woman in their solicitude for the happiness of society. Oh, no! she is not yet recognized as belonging to the honorable body, unless taxes are required for its benefit, or the penalties of the law have to be enforced for its security. Thus, being either unwilling or afraid to do woman justice, he first flattered her, then, in his ignorance of the true nature of woman, he assumed, that if she has her rights equal with man, she would cease to be woman—forsake the partner of her existence, the child of her bosom, dry up her sympathies, stifle her affections, turn recreant to her own nature. Then his blind selfishness took the alarm, lest, if woman were more independent, she might not be willing to be the obedient, servile tool, implicitly to obey and minister to the passions and follies of man; "and as he could not rob himself of these inexpressible benefits, therefore he said, No."

Such are the lofty views of statesmen on woman, that equality of rights, the only and sure means to enlighten and elevate man, would degrade and corrupt woman. The genial rays of the sun of freedom, that vivify, cheer and ennoble him, would chill the heart and destroy the affections in her, and therefore it is inexpedient to give her her rights, "to bring her more distinctly into the political arena." Oh, yes! the Turk deems it inexpedient (for the happiness of society,) to give woman any personal freedom, therefore he encloses her in a harem. It is a well-known characteristic of tyrants and cowards, when they dare not face a question of right, to shelter themselves under expediency. It was inexpedient for Nicholas of Russia to allow Hungary to free herself from Austrian oppression, therefore he sent his infernal machines to prevent it. It was expedient for Louis Napoleon to destroy the Roman Republic, and inexpedient to await the issue of another election, and therefore he violated his oath, and, with bayonet in one hand and musket in the other, compelled his re-election. The bright and noble spirits of France were inexpedient to his treachery, so he incarcerated them, or banished them from the country—all these are measures of expediency. Thus in the more despotic countries of Europe, it is expedient for the rulers to deprive the people of every vestige of freedom. In constitutional England, it is already expedient to advocate (and I hope they soon will obtain it) the extension of the elective franchise to every man who pays five pounds rent, but it is yet inexpedient to give woman the same privilege. And here, in this glorious land of freedom, a Republic that has proclaimed equality of rights—that has written on its banners universal suffrage—even here it is yet deemed by the wiseacres of the nation, expedient to exclude half of its population from that universality. And do you know, my friends, the reasons given for all these measures of tyranny and oppression? Why, "the happiness of society." But the question we ask, is not whether woman shall forsake her household, like man, to intrigue in politics, fight at elections, marshal armies, or direct navies. The question at issue is whether woman, as a being amenable to the laws under which she lives, shall have a voice in their enactment—as a member of the social compact, shall participate and control those institutions, to which she is made subject? Or shall man, in his assumption of power, continue to deprive her of her natural and inalienable rights, prescribe her sphere of action within the least possible limits, restrict her education, and the development of her powers to the lowest degree, cripple her physical, mental and moral energies, that he may have a docile, obedient slave to do his bidding? These are questions not of expediency, but of right; not of charity, but of justice. And yet, though we might well leave the issue of our cause on its own merits, I would be perfectly willing to meet the opposers of our claims on their own grounds, and convince them that even on the question of expediency they have not an atom of ground to stand upon. The greatest objection I have yet heard, in public or private, against woman's political rights, is the corruption of the present state of party politics. It is represented to be in so low and degraded a condition, that no one can enter the political arena without contamination, and therefore, woman must be kept from its very atmosphere. Now, without dis-

puting the validity of the testimony, as humiliating confessions come mostly from gentlemen belonging to these honorable bodies, I would ask, what is to be done? Leave forever our Legislative Halls, the Stygian pools, as the honorable Horace Mann calls them, that they now are? For what rational hope have we that they will ever become purified unless woman takes them in hand, seeing that man has had the exclusive possession of them so long, and they only seem to grow worse. No! no! something must be done. Expediency, "the benefit of society," calls for woman's "purifying influence," for "the perfect, soothing, gentle peace which the politically sullied minds" of our legislators, seeing how they fight in Congress, "are unable to feel." Let woman then, be with him wherever duty calls her, and she will soon cleanse the Legislative Halls, as she has cleansed and purified the festive board of the excess that existed there.

"'Tis not well for man to be alone"—Mother, Sister, Wife, Daughter, woman must be with him, to keep him in his proper sphere. Do you doubt it? Then look at exclusive assemblies of men, and even among the best you will perceive the rude, uncultivated nature of Adam, before mother Eve civilized him, by making him partake of the Tree of Knowledge. Expediency, therefore, as well as justice, demands that woman should have her political, civil and social rights, that she may be better able to "soothe, quiet," and aid man, abroad as well as at home. And the beneficial effects to society will soon be apparent; for as she will be better educated, have all her powers developed, her judgment expanded, she will be more competent to perform various duties devolving upon her — as mother, to train her sons (aye, and her daughters, too,) in the way they should go, from which, when they grow old, they will not depart; as wife, more truly affectionate, so that when the husband's head will rest on her throbing bosom, she would be able to give him counsel and courage, as well as rest; and though at the marriage ceremony she might not be willing to say "Obey," she will substitute the far better word, Assist. As a companion, she would be more interesting and instructive, and as a member of society, more useful, honorable and happy.

WOMAN'S RIGHTS TRACTS,....No. 1.

THE

RIGHTS AND CONDITION OF WOMEN;

A SERMON, PREACHED IN SYRACUSE, NOV., 1845,

BY SAMUEL J. MAY.

THIRD EDITION.

GENESIS, V: 1.—*In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him, male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam.*

GALATIANS, III: 28.—*There is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*

Allow me again to speak plainly to you of the rights and condition of Women. My thoughts were urgently drawn to this subject last Spring, by the fact that, at that time, the people of this State were called, in their primary capacity, to decide whether the sale of intoxicating drinks should be licensed—a question of the highest personal, domestic and social consequence—and yet more than half of the people, the women, were not only not expected, but not allowed to influence, directly, a decision in which they were so much interested.

About the same time, the *men* of our nation presumed to plunge us into the multiform calamities, crimes and expenditures of a war, without so much as consulting the women, who will have to share equally, if not to endure the larger part of the losses and sufferings, that are inevitable upon such a measure of folly and wickedness.

Again, during the past summer, a large Convention of delegates, elected by the people of this State, have been in session at the Capitol, framing a new Constitution, which is to affect as vitally the lives, liberties, properties, happiness of women as of men; and yet not a female was there to represent the interests of her sex; nor would one hardly

suspect, from the document they have spread before their fellow-citizens, that there were any women in the body politic. Nor is this all; but last Tuesday, when the constituents of that Convention were called upon to signify whether they would ratify the new Constitution, the women of New-York were not expected, nor would they have been permitted to say, by their votes, whether or not they were willing to live under such a frame of government.

Now this is all unequal, all unrighteous—this utter annihilation, politically considered, of more than one half of the whole community. It is a piece of assumption just as egregious as it would be for the females to call a Convention, frame a state government, and go on to administer it by officers of their own choosing, without any recognition of the rights, and hardly any of the existence even of our sex.*

This entire disfranchisement of females is as unjust as the disfranchisement of the males would be; for there is nothing in their moral, mental or physical nature, that disqualifies them to understand correctly the true interests of the community, or to act wisely in reference to them.

I will not now speak of the many illustrious women of ancient and modern times, who have enlightened and blessed the families and communities, with which they have been connected. I will only say, that several of the best writers, in our language, upon political economy, have been women. There was no one in his empire, of whom Bonaparte stood more in awe, (because of her discriminating judgment on the policy of his government) than Madame De Stael. Some of the ablest Sovereigns, that have ever worn crowns, either in ancient or modern times, have been women. We have, therefore, evidences enough that the female mind is competent to appreciate justly, and discharge ably the duties incumbent upon a member of the body politic; and for myself I am unable to see either justice or reason in that part of our civil Constitution which denies to women the right, if they see fit, to take part in the public counsels; and influence by their votes, if they please, public elections.

The Father of the human family, in his infinite wisdom, made man

* As some Geographers tell us, they formerly did in Metelin, an island off the coast of Asia Minor.—[Bell's Geography.

male and female. But he made us co-ordinate, equal in rank, alike rational and moral beings. God created woman to be the companion of man, not his slave, not his menial; not subservient to his will, any further than his will is in accordance with the will of the Divine Mind. He has not given one law to men, and another law to women, but the same law to both. The true interests of each, and the high purpose, for which life was given to each, are precisely the same. I am aware that this equality of the sexes has never been recognized, until since the Reformation of the 16th century, by the Quakers and a few smaller sects of Christians. But this is only one of many facts, which show, how benighted were the ages before that epoch; and how many clouds of error remain yet to be dispelled from the human mind. The doctrine that "the people" have a right to govern themselves is modern, and almost peculiar to America. It would be, at this day, scouted in Spain, Austria and Russia, as heartily as the doctrine I am advocating. And it is indeed deserving of no more respect. For if the people have the right of self-government, then I am unable to see why a half of the people have a right to govern the whole.

To prove, however, that woman was not intended to be the equal of man, the argument most frequently alleged is, that she is the weaker vessel—inferior in stature, and has much less physical strength. This physiological fact, of course, cannot be denied; although the disparity in these respects is very much increased by neglect or mismanagement. But allowing women generally to have less bodily power, why should this consign them to mental, moral or social dependence? Physical force is of special value only in a savage or barbarous community. It is the avowed intention and tendency of Christianity to give the ascendancy to man's *moral* nature; and the promises of God, with whom is all strength and wisdom, are to the upright, the pure, the good,—not to the strong, the valiant, or the crafty.

The more men receive of the lessons of Christianity—the more they learn to trust in God, in the might of the right and true—the less reliance will they put upon brute force. And as brute force declines in public estimation, the more will the feminine qualities of the human race rise in general regard and confidence; until the meek shall be seen to be better than the mighty, and the humble only be considered worthy of exaltation. Civilization implies the subordination of the

physical in man to the mental and moral; and the progress of the melioration of the condition of our race, has been everywhere marked by the elevation of the female sex.

But some would eagerly ask, should women be allowed to take part in the constructing and administering of our civil institutions? Allowed, do you say? The very form of the question is an assumption of the right to do them the wrong that has been done them. Allowed! why, pray tell me, is it from us their rights have been received? Have we the authority to accord to them just such prerogatives as we see fit, and withhold the rest? No; woman is not the creature, the dependant of man, but of God. We may, with no more propriety assume to govern women, than they might assume to govern us. And never will the nations of the earth be well governed, until both sexes, as well as all parties, are fairly represented, and have an influence, a voice, and, if they wish, a hand in the enactment and administration of the laws. One would think, the sad mismanagement of the affairs of our own country should, in all modesty, lead us men to doubt our own capacity for the task of governing a nation, or even a state, alone; and to apprehend that we need other qualities in our public councils—qualities that may be found in the female portion of our race. If woman be the complement of man, we may surely venture the intimation, that all our social transactions will be incomplete, or otherwise imperfect, unless they have been guided alike by the wisdom of each sex. The wise, virtuous, gentle mothers of a state or nation, (should their joint influence be allowed,) might contribute as much to the good order, the peace, the thrift of the body politic, as they severally do to the well being of their families, which for the most part, all know is more than the fathers do. Even for the restraint of the unruly, and the reformation of the vicious, women would be found to possess a power and a skill, which far transcend the force and coarse appliances, on which men are wont to rely. In support of this last supposition, I need only point you to Mrs. Fry, in England, and to Mrs. Farnham and Miss Dix, in our own country. These women have evinced a fortitude and courage, as well as a degree of sound sense, which very few men possess.

Undoubtedly some of you are ready to say to me, "pray, would you have women public instructors, lecturing upon moral and political

science, and haranguing the people upon their special duties as citizens?" Hear my reply. It is not for me, nor for us men, to prescribe the mode in which the women shall operate. Let us leave this to their own good sense, and taste. There is a great deal of lecturing and haranguing, that doth not profit. Would that neither men nor women should ever speak in public, unless they have somewhat to say worth hearing. But if a valuable thought is suggested to any one, I see not why that thought should be suppressed, because it was started in the mind of a female. And if she, to whom it has come, has power to utter it, and is moved so to do, I see not why she should be forbidden. To me, it is as grateful to hear words of wisdom and eloquence from a woman as a man; and quite as uninstructive and wearisome to listen to a vapid, inane discourse from the one as from the other. I know not why silly men should be encouraged to speak, more than silly women; nor why the wise of one sex should be forbidden, any more than the wise of the other, to communicate what they possess to those, who may need it, and in the manner they prefer. To whomsoever God has given the power to instruct and control others, by their learning, their eloquence or their wit, to them he has given the authority to do so. I have heard some women speak in a manner far more convincing and impressive than most men, that I have known, were able to; and so as amply to vindicate their right to stand up in the pulpit or the forum, as teachers of men.

"Ah," say some, "would you then have women engage in the acrimonious contests of the political parties, attend the angry meetings, witness the passion, hear the ribaldry and abuse, that are poured upon each other by the excited opponents; and be tempted, perhaps, to commit the same offences themselves? No; surely not. Neither would I have *men* guilty of such indecorum, folly and wickedness. If political meetings must needs be disgraced by such scenes, they ought not to be held; and those men who would attend them, show that they are careless of their own moral health. It were no more unseemly, no worse any way, for women to be thus defiled than for us men. We are called to be upright, pure and holy beings as well as they. Propriety of conduct, courtesy of manners, purity of speech, delicacy, refinement, gentleness, are just as becoming in one sex as the other. For one, I do not allow it to be a matter of course, that we men should be

rough, violent, passionate, abusive, profane, obscene. It is unworthy of any man to be so. He is as much bound as a woman can be, "to keep himself unspotted from the world," and to keep himself away from places where, and from persons by whom, he may be tempted to become thus vile. Is it not indeed a mortifying confession—one that we men ought to be ashamed to make, that political meetings are occasions, from which the delicate and pure would shrink, and yet that we attend them? Nay, more, friends, if it be true that they are such,—if our primary political gatherings, at which the people are called to consider their true interests and duties, and to exercise their high prerogatives as a self-governing community,—if these primary meetings are indeed such scenes, that our mothers, wives, sisters and daughters would be disgusted if not corrupted at them, may we not seriously apprehend, that our civil institutions are unsound, rotten at the very core? and anxiously look about us, for healing and purifying influences, from any quarter, to save us from the impending ruin?

The terms, in which the two sexes are generally spoken of, seem to imply that men must of course go forth, take part in the collisions of political party, pecuniary interest, or local concernment; get themselves care worn, perplexed, irritated, soured, angry; while women are to stay at home, and prepare themselves with all the blandishments of maternal, sisterly, conjugal or filial affection, to soothe our irritated tempers, mollify the bruises we have received in our conflicts with other men; and so prepare us to strive with renewed resolution, and bruise or get bruised again. Now this seems to me like a perfect caricature of the true business of life; and still more of the relation, in which God has placed man and woman.

To each sex, the true object of living is the same; and by each it is to be pursued under circumstances of trial, differing somewhat in kind perhaps, but not much if any in degree. If men meet with causes of perplexity and irritation abroad, women are not by any means exempt from them at home. Each, therefore, should learn to bear calmly their own trials, withstand heroically their own temptations; and at the same time prepare themselves to bear one another's burthens. Why should man always be spoken of as the moral patient, and woman as the nurse? Surely this is very inappropriate, if man be, as he claims to be, the stronger vessel. Either may have occasion to soothe, comfort, uphold

the other; therefore both man and woman should strive to acquire the same dispositions and graces, which adapt us to fulfill the various ministries of love. I can think of no excellence, that would be becoming and beautiful in a true woman, that would not be equally becoming and beautiful in a true man. Jesus of Nazareth, the perfect man, exhibited as much of the feminine, as he did of the masculine character. And doubtless every individual, of either sex, will approach the perfection to which we all are called, just so far as he or she combines in one the virtues and graces of both. Patience, tenderness, delicacy are as needful to complete the character of a man, as firmness, enterprize and moral courage are to complete the character of a woman.

If, therefore, there be any untoward influences in political, professional or mercantile transactions, *that cannot be withstood*, but necessarily harden the heart, blunt the moral sensibilities, and sour the temper, men ought to keep aloof from such intercourses, no less than women; for goodness of heart is as indispensable to the well being of the one, as of the other. The preservation and growth of godliness in us, should be, with all, the great objects of life. For the sake of this, the sacrifice of every thing else, if necessary, ought to be made. It may sometimes, aye often, be right that men and women should yield up their time, property, lives even, in the service of their country, much more in the cause of humanity. But it can never be required of either, under the moral government of God, to sacrifice their integrity, their purity—the health, the life of their souls. If, without this sacrifice, either men or women can render special service to the state, or the nation, by private or public speech or action, they may, they ought so to do.

Here the question comes—"would you have women leave their homes, neglecting their children and the duties of their households, that they may take part in the management of public affairs?" No; certainly not. No more would I encourage men to do this great wrong, as they too often do. The *family* is the most important institution upon earth. If the duties of father and mother were generally well discharged, there would be little of importance left for civil governments to take care of. The family, therefore, ought never to be neglected for the service of the state, by the father any more than the mother. Indeed, there is one reason why the father should be even more especially careful to make himself an object of reverence and

deep affection to his children. In the Sacred Scriptures, in the preaching and conversations which children hear, and the religious instructions they receive, God is represented as the *Father* of the human family. Now they must, of course, get their ideas of a father, from the character and the conduct of the earthly parent, who wears that name. If, therefore, he be not what the name imports, he will only obscure the divine being to the minds of his children. Whenever, therefore, public offices are incompatible with the faithful, kind and wise discharge of domestic duties, they ought to be declined by the father no less than by the mother. But where either men or women are without families; or where their children have come to years of discretion; or where they have such talent or tact, that they can fulfil well all their parental obligations, and have time, wisdom and strength to spare to the public use, they ought so to bestow them. It is as much the duty of women as of men to do this; and the institution or the custom of that community must be unwise, unnatural, unchristian, that would forbid them thus to contribute to the common weal.

In great emergencies, at those crises which have decided the fate of nations, women have been allowed, encouraged, nay summoned to lend their aid,—both in council, and on the field of battle. Now, I believe, if they were admitted to equal advantages of education, and permitted at all times to influence the counsels, and assist the administration of the affairs of state—I believe those terrible emergencies, which shake nations to their centres, would much less frequently, if ever, arise; and the redemption of the world would be sooner accomplished. No one can deny that the peace, good order and prosperity of families are much more frequently disturbed, thrown down by the male than by the female portions of them. So too, a large proportion of the disturbers of the public peace are males. Who will not gratefully own, that the wise and virtuous mother contributes as much, nay, often more than the father, to the well being of the family? In the biographies of great men, we generally find it attributed to the influence of their mothers, that they became what they were. Now the community, the nation ought to be as one great family. It is the intention, the tendency of Christianity so to make it. But how can it ever become so, until it shall have mothers, as well as fathers, to guide and control it? Hitherto the nations of the earth have subsisted in the condition of half-orphanage;

and they have acted (have they not?) much like rude boys, too early left to their own untoward guidance.

Much, that I have said may seem to you very unpoetical. Many even of my female hearers may turn away from me to-day, feeling that I have commended to them a course, that would be very ungraceful—very unlady-like. But, I submit, would it be unchristan? Nay, would it not be entirely accordant with the precepts, spirit, purpose of the Gospel? "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." How prominent a place do women occupy in the history of Jesus! They were not only his most ardent friends. They were his most courageous followers.

> "They, while Apostles shrank, could danger brave,
> Last at his cross, and earliest at his grave."

If Christianity bears any one decisive mark of superiority to all other religious systems, it is in its influence upon the condition of the female sex. Much, very much is yet to be done, before this portion of our race will be fully instated in their rights. Still, wherever Christianity has developed any of its power, it has elevated woman. It requires that she be treated not as the drudge, the slave of man, much less as the creature of his lust; but as his nearest friend, his equal companion, his second self. Jesus and his apostles would have us look at woman as an intellectual and moral, not merely as a physical being. Nothing is worthy of her, any more than of man, that does not breathe the spirit of true goodness, active benevolence, stern integrity, moral courage. She, no less than he, is called to be like the Son of God.

That sentimental, sensual poetry, which is still too much in favor, is borrowed from the East, where woman is but the minister of man's self-indulgence. Believe me, there is a higher, deeper strain on this theme, than has ever yet been sung; a strain that shall awaken not a sensual thought, but quicken only the divine in man; and incite both the sexes to a pure co-operation for the redemption of the race, a redemption which *must commence in the sanctification of connubial love.* Oh, what sordid, mercenary, or sensual motives too often prompt to marriage—a relation which should never be formed but by those of congenial spirits, whose mental, moral and physical constitutions are good; and who have the disposition, and the ability, to discharge well the momentous

duties of parents. But it shall not always be so. The tone of flattery, and fulsome adulation, in which women have been generally addressed, shall give place to truthful words, portraying all they might and ought to be. The duties which are devolved on them, shall yet be seen in all their high import, and be seen to call for every virtue, every grace, that can be unfolded in the human mind and heart. Form, complexion, feature will be held in less esteem; and qualities of mental, moral character alone shall kindle admiration. The rosy lip and sparkling eye will awaken less delight in a manly, Christian heart, than a mouth, from which proceed habitually words of good sense, of honest truth, of earnest interest in the welfare of mankind. A soft and lily, tapering hand will seem less graceful, than a hand well worn and hardened in ministries of mercy, or in honest toil for self-subsistence. And a frame cheated of half its growth, or distorted from those wise proportions, which God had given it, by subserviency to fashion, will be less pleasing than a frame made, by wholesome exercise, proper nourishment, and due obedience to the laws of health, to expand, develop its energies, and become able to endure the labors of love, the eager pursuit of literary or scientific attainment, and the wise discharge of all private or public duties, to which the claims of others may call, or the spirit within may urge it.

Women are coaxed, flattered, courted, but they are not respected by many men as they ought to be; neither do they respect themselves as they should. They are not regarded and treated as equals; nor do they claim to be. So long has this been the case, so long have they and we all been used to that organization of society, in which they are assigned to an inferior place, that most of us, and most too of themselves acquiesce in the wrong, as if it were right. But this does not make it so; nor avert the evil consequences, which are flowing through society, from the entire exclusion of the wisdom and virtue of half of mankind, from the councils of State, and the administrations of justice and mercy. The intellectual and moral powers of the female sex generally are not half developed, because no adequate demands are made upon them. Excluded as they are from all direct influence, in the decision of many of the greatest questions of social and national interest—they seldom take the trouble even to consider them; and so we lose the benefit we might derive from their perceptions of right, which are often

clearer than our own. When we see what has been done for the redemption of mankind, by the few women, who have broken through the enclosure, in which custom would keep them, and have thought, and spoken, and written freely in behalf of humanity, we cannot repress the apprehension, that states and nations are suffering immeasurably, from that waste of intellect and moral sense, which are expending themselves upon the inanities of fashion, and the follies of personal or household display.

Through the influence of Christianity, great improvements have been made in the condition of women. Still they are subjected to sundry disabilities; and may, no more than any other class of men, expect to have their wrongs fully redressed, *until they themselves have a voice, and a hand, in the enactment and administration of the laws.* Women are so often trifled with as if they were mere toys, or used as if they were only conveniences to man's estate, that there are not a few, who always sneer when their *rights* are spoken of. But deride it who will, there is as much truth and solemnity in the claim I have set up for them, as there was in the first assertion of the right *of men* to govern themselves, though monarchs affected to despise it, and lordlings trampled it under their feet.

Women are too dependent upon men. We have too much power over them; and they are often cruelly oppressed. See how pitifully their labors are requited. The disclosures that have been made of the incessant, wasting toils to which they are subjected, especially in or near large cities, for a compensation utterly insufficient to provide them amply with the bare necessaries of life; the degradation of their persons to which they are often driven by the pressure of absolute want; the ease with which the base, heartless seducer escapes the condemnation which his villany deserves; and the unforgiving censure, with which his victim is pursued—these disclosures alone are enough to show how unequal, how unfair is the dealing of our race with that portion, which, if either, should be treated with the greater leniency—enough to show how false, hypocritical is much of the adulation that is bestowed on women. Can those men feel any proper respect for females, who make them their drudges from morning to night,—or who are willing to pay them the miserable pittances which they do, for la-

bors that consume the live long day, and oft the sleepless night? *Yes, about as much as the slaveholders feel for their slaves.*

Again, as it respects education, that grand leveller as well as elevator of mankind,—how much more liberal are the provisions, which are made to give our sons than our daughters a generous culture, in all the arts and sciences, that open to the human soul perennial sources of high, pure satisfaction; and give to their possessor not only abilities for greater usefulness to others, but multiplied means of self-subsistence. I know the majority of female children are so much more disposed to study, and are so much quicker to learn than those of the other sex, that there may be found in the community a greater number of pretty well instructed women, than of men. But let their thirst for knowledge be ever so ardent, let their powers of acquisition be ever so good, females are nowhere admitted into the highest seminaries of learning.*

And even as it respects property, a due portion of which is in this life convenient for all, which the majority seem to regard as "the one thing needful," our being's end and aim, which therefore ought, in all fairness, to be made accessible to all—even as it respects property, women are nowhere allowed the same opportunities to acquire it; nor have the same securities for its preservation.

Furthermore, the current literature of the day—the fashionable novels, the poetry, and the newspapers, are inimical to the independence, and true welfare of women. These are continually intimating, that *marriage* is indispensable to the respectability and usefulness of females. Not only the silliest jokes, but often also the most cruel taunts are flung at "single" women. So that, in addition to the urgencies of pecuniary necessity, they are impelled, by the dread of ridicule, (of which strong and wise men often stand in awe) to rush into wedlock, on the first opportunity, consenting, it may be, to the most ill-assorted alliances, from which only sorrow and sin can flow.

These circumstances operate powerfully to depress, and oppress women—to make them too dependent—to leave them at the mercy of men; and I do not believe their condition will be essentially improved,

* I most gratefully acknowledge the liberality of the College at Oberlin, Ohio, the "New-York Central College," at McGrawville, and the Methodist College at Lima, New-York.

until their rights are recognized as equal every way; *nor until these are secured in the very frame-work of society.*

I hope and pray that what has now been said may not fall to the ground. I have alluded to our new Constitution, as furnishing one evidence of the great social wrong, against which I have now entered my earnest protest. That Constitution, however, I consider a great improvement upon the present one. It contains several important provisions for the melioration of our social state. I voted for its adoption. I hope it will be ratified. But its defects should be noted, and all good men and true should do what they may to obtain a still more perfect basis of our civil fabric, so soon as the people can be brought to feel the need of another revision. I fain would hope that, when next the people frame a Constitution for this State, the stupendous fact will not be overlooked, *that more than one-half of our population are females, to whom equal rights and equal privileges ought to be accorded, and secured by Constitutional and Statute law.*

SONG OF THE SHIRT.

With fingers weary and worn,
  With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
  Plying her needle and thread—
Stitch! stitch! stitch! stitch!
  In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
And still, with a voice of dolorous pitch,
  She sang the "Song of the Shirt!"

"Work! work! work!
  While the cock is crowing aloof!
And work—work—work!
  Till the stars shine through the roof!
It's oh! to be a slave
  Along with the barbarous Turk,
Where woman has never a soul to save
  If THIS is Christian work!

"Work—work—work!
  Till the brain begins to swim;
Work—work—work!
  Till the eyes are heavy and dim!
Seam, and gusset, and band,
  Band, and gusset, and seam,
Till over the buttons I fall asleep,
  And sew them on in my dream!

"Oh! men with sisters dear!
  Oh! men with mothers and wives!
It is not linen you're wearing out,
  But human creatures lives!

Stitch—stitch—stitch!
  In poverty, hunger and dirt,
Sewing at once, with a double thread,
  A SHROUD as well as a shirt!

"But why do I talk of death,
  That platform of grisly bone;
I hardly fear his terrible shape,
  It seems so like my own—
It seems so like my own,
  Because of the fast I keep;
Oh God! that bread should be so dear,
  And flesh and blood so cheap!

"Work—work—work!
  My labor never flags;
And what are its wages? A bed of straw,
  A crust of bread—and rags;
A shattered roof—and this naked floor—
  A table—a broken chair—
And a wall so blank my shadow I thank
  For sometimes falling there!

"Work—work—work!
  From weary chime to chime;
Work—work—work!
  As prisoners work, for crime!
Band, and gusset, and seam,
  Seam, and gusset, and band,
Till the heart is sick and the brain benumbed,
  As well as the weary hand!

"Work—work—work,
  In the dull December light;
And work—work—work!
  When the weather is warm and bright;

While underneath the eaves
The brooding swallows cling,
As if to show me their sunny backs,
And twit me with the Spring!

"Oh! but to breathe the breath
Of the cowslip and primrose sweet;
With the sky above my head,
And the grass beneath my feet;
For only one short hour
To feel as I used to feel,
Before I knew the woes of want,
And the walk that costs a meal!

"Oh! but for one short hour!
A respite, however brief!
No blessed leisure for love or hope,
But only time for grief!
A little weeping would ease my heart—
But in their briny bed
My tears must stop, for every drop
Hinders needle and thread!"

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread;
Stitch—stitch—stitch!
In poverty, hunger and dirt;
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch—
Would that its tone could reach the rich!
She sung this "Song of the Shirt!"

Lathrop's Print, Pine-Grove, Syracuse.

W. Haskell

WOMAN'S RIGHTS TRACTS,....No. 2.

SPEECH

OF

WENDELL PHILLIPS, Esq.,

AT THE

CONVENTION, HELD AT WORCESTER, OCT. 15 & 16, 1851.

The following resolutions were under consideration:

1. *Resolved*, That while we would not undervalue other methods, the Right of Suffrage for Women is, in our opinion, the corner-stone of this enterprise, since we do not seek to protect woman, but rather to place her in a position to protect herself.

2. *Resolved*, That it will be woman's fault, if, the ballot once in her hand, all the barbarous, demoralizing, and unequal laws, relating to marriage and property, do not speedily vanish from the statute-book; and while we acknowledge that the hope of a share in the higher professions and profitable employments of society is one of the strongest motives to intellectual culture, we know, also, that an interest in political questions is an equally powerful stimulus; and we see beside, that we do our best to insure education to an individual, when we put the ballot into his hands; it being so clearly the interest of the community that one, upon whose decisions depend its welfare and safety, should both have free access to the best means of education, and be urged to make use of them.

3. *Resolved*, That we do not feel called upon to assert or establish the equality of the sexes, in an intellectual or any other point of view; it is enough for our argument that natural and political justice, and the axioms of English and American liberty, alike determine that rights and burdens—taxation and representation—should be co-extensive: hence women, as individual citizens, liable to punishment for acts which the laws call criminal, or to be taxed in their labor and property for the support of Government, have a self-evident and indisputable right, identically the same right that men have, to a direct voice in the enactment of those laws and the formation of that government.

4. *Resolved*, That the Democrat, or Reformer, who denies suffrage to women, is a Democrat only because he was not born a noble, and one of those levelers who are willing to level only down to themselves.

5. *Resolved*, That while political and natural justice accord civil equality to woman; while great thinkers of every age, from Plato to Condorcet and Mill, have supported their claim; while voluntary associations, religious and secular, have been organized on this basis; still, it is a favorite argument against it, that no political community or nation ever existed in which women have not been in a state of political inferiority. But, in reply, we remind our opponents that the same fact has been alleged, with equal truth, in favor of slavery—has been urged against freedom of industry, freedom of conscience, and the freedom of the press—none of these liberties having been thought compatible with a well-ordered State, until they had proved their possibility by springing into existence as facts. Beside, there is no difficulty in understanding why the subjection of woman has been a *uniform custom*, when we recollect that we are just emerging from the ages in which *might* has been always right.

6. *Resolved*, That, so far from denying the overwhelming social and civil influence of women, we are fully aware of its vast extent; aware, with Demosthenes, that "measures which the Statesman has meditated a whole year, may be overturned in a day by a woman;" and for this very reason we proclaim it the very highest expediency to endow her with full civil rights, since only then will she

exercise this mighty influence under a just sense of her duty and responsibility; the history of all ages bearing witness that the only safe course for nations is to add open responsibility wherever there already exists unobserved power.

7. *Resolved*, That we deny the right of any portion of the species to decide for another portion, or of any individual, to decide for another individual, what is and what is not their "proper sphere;" that the proper sphere for all human beings is the largest and highest to which they are able to attain; what this is, cannot be ascertained without complete liberty of choice; woman, therefore, ought to choose for herself what sphere she will fill, what education she will seek, and what employment she will follow; and not be held bound to accept, in submission, the rights, the education, and the sphere which man thinks proper to allow her.

8. *Resolved*, That 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; and we charge that man with gross dishonesty or ignorance, who shall contend that "men," in the memorable document from which we quote, does not stand for the human race; that "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," are the "inalienable rights" of *half* only of the human species; and that, by "the governed," whose consent is affirmed to be the only source of just power, is meant that *half* of mankind only, who, in relation to the other, have hitherto assumed the character of *governors*.

9. *Resolved*, That we see no weight in the argument that it is necessary to exclude women from civil life because domestic cares and political engagements are incompatible; since we do not see the fact to be so in the case of man; and because, if the incompatibility be real, it will take care of itself, neither men nor women needing any law to exclude them from an occupation when they have undertaken another, incompatible with it: Second, we see nothing in the assertion that women, themselves, do not desire a change, since we assert that superstitious fears, and dread of losing men's regard, smother all frank expression on this point; and further, if it be their real wish to avoid civil life, laws to keep them out of it are absurd; no legislator having ever yet thought it necessary to compel people by law, to follow their own inclination.

10. *Resolved*, That it is as absurd to deny all women their civil rights because the cares of household and family take up all the time of some, as it would be to exclude the whole male sex from Congress, because some men are sailors, or soldiers, in active service, or merchants, whose business requires all their attention and energies.

Wendell Phillips, Esq., of Boston, on these Resolutions, spoke as follows:

I rejoice, my friends, to see so large an audience gathered to consider this momentous subject. It was well described by Mrs. Rose as the most magnificent reform that has yet been launched upon the world. It is the first organized protest against the injustice which has brooded over the character and the destiny of one half of the human race. Nowhere else, under any other circumstances, has a demand ever yet been made for the liberties of one whole half of our race. It is fitting that we should pause and consider so remarkable and significant a circumstance; that we should discuss the question involved, with the seriousness and deliberation suitable to such an enterprise. It strikes, indeed, a great and vital blow at the whole social fabric of every nation; but this, to my mind, is no

argument against it. The time has been when it was the duty of the reformer to show cause why he appeared to disturb the quiet of the world. But when so many reforms have been advocated, and have succeeded, one after another—freedom of the lower classes—freedom of food—freedom of the press—freedom of thought—reform in penal legislation and a thousand other matters—it seems to me it has been proved conclusively that government commenced in usurpation and oppression; that liberty and civilization, at present, are nothing else than the fragments of rights which the scaffold and the stake have wrung from the strong hands of the usurpers. You may trace every step of progress the world has made, from scaffold to scaffold, and from stake to stake. It would hardly be exaggeration to say, that all the great truths, relating to society and government, have been first heard in the solemn protests of martyred patriotism, or the loud cries of crushed and starving labor. The law has been always wrong. Government began in tyranny and force—began in the feudalism of the soldier and bigotry of the priest; and the ideas of justice and humanity have been fighting their way, like a thunder storm, against the organized selfishness of human nature. And this is the last great protest against the wrong of ages. It is no argument to my mind, therefore, that the old social fabric of the past is against us.

Neither do I feel called upon to show what woman's proper sphere is. In every great reform, the majority have always said to the claimant, no matter what he claimed, "You are not fit for such a privilege." Luther asked of the Pope liberty for the masses to read the Bible. The reply was, that it would not be safe to trust the common people with the Word of God. "Let them try!" said the great Reformer; and the history of three centuries of development and purity proclaims the result. They *have* tried; and look around you for the consequences. The lower classes in France claimed their civil rights—the right to vote, and a direct representation in the government; but the rich and lettered classes, the men of cultivated intellects, cried out—"You cannot be made fit." The answer was, "Let us try!" that France is not, as Spain, utterly crushed beneath

the weight of a thousand years of misgovernment, is the answer to those who doubt the ultimate success of this experiment.

Woman stands now at the same door. She says, "You tell me I have no intellect—give me a chance. You tell me I shall only embarrass politics—let me try!" The only reply is the same stale argument that said to the Jews of Europe, "You are fit only to make money; you are not fit for the ranks of the army or the halls of Parliament." How cogent the eloquent appeal of Macaulay—"What right have we to take this question for granted? Throw open the doors of that House of Commons, throw open the ranks of the Imperial army, before you deny eloquence to the countrymen of Isaiah, or valor to the descendants of the Maccabees." It is the same now with us. Throw open the doors of Congress, throw open those court-houses, throw wide open the doors of those colleges, and let the sisters of the De Staels and the Martineaus have offered them the same opportunities for culture as men, and let the result prove what their capacity and intellect really are. When, I say, woman has enjoyed, for as many centuries as we have, the aid of books, the discipline of life, and the stimulus of fame, it will be time to begin the discussion of these questions—"What is the intellect of woman?" "Is it equal to that of man?" Till then, all such discussion is mere beating of the air.

While it is doubtless true that great minds, in many cases, make a way for themselves spite of all obstacles; yet who knows how many Miltons have died, "mute and inglorious"? However splendid the natural endowment, the discipline of life, after all, completes the miracle. The ability of Napoleon—what was it? It grew out of the hope to be Cæsar or Marlborough, out of Austerlitz and Jena—out of his battle-fields, his throne, and all the great scenes of that eventful life. Open to woman the same scenes, immerse her in the same great interests and pursuits, and if twenty centuries shall not produce a woman Charlemagne or Napoleon, fair reasoning will then allow us to conclude that there is some distinctive peculiarity in the intellects of the sexes. Centuries alone can lay any fair basis for argument. I believe that, on this point, there is a shrinking consciousness of not being ready for the battle, on the part of

some of the stronger sex, as they call themselves—a tacit confession of risk to this imagined superiority, in consenting to meet their sisters in the lecture hall or the laboratory of science. My proof of it is this: that the mightiest intellects of the race, from Plato down to the present time—some of the rarest minds of Germany, France and England—have successively yielded their assent to the fact, that woman is, not perhaps identically, but equally endowed with man in all intellectual capabilities. 'Tis generally the second-rate men who doubt—doubt, perhaps, because they fear a fair field:—

> "He either fears his fate too much,
> Or his deserts are small,
> Who fears to put it to the touch,
> To gain or lose it all."

But I wish especially to direct your attention to the precise principle which this movement undertakes to urge upon the community. We do not attempt to settle what shall be the profession, education or employment of woman. We have not that presumption. What we ask is simply this—what all other classes have asked before: Leave it to woman to choose for herself her profession, her education, and her sphere. We deny to any portion of the species the right to prescribe to any other portion its sphere, its education, or its rights. We deny the right of any individual to prescribe to any other individual his amount of education, or his rights. The sphere of each man, of each woman, of each individual—is that sphere which he can, with the highest exercise of his powers, perfectly fill. The highest act which the human being can do, that is the act which God designed him to do. All that woman asks through this movement is, to be allowed to prove what she can do;—to prove it by liberty of choice, by liberty of action—the only means by which it can ever be settled how much and what she can do. She can reasonably say to us—"I have never fathomed the depths of science; you have taught that it was unwomanly, and have withdrawn from me the means of scientific culture. I have never equalled the eloquence of Demosthenes, but you have never quickened my energies by holding up before me the crown and robe of glory, and the gratitude which I was to win. The tools, now, to him or her who can use them. Welcome me,

henceforth, brother, to your arena; and let facts, not theories, settle my capacity, and therefore my sphere."

We are not here to-night to assert that woman will enter the lists and conquer, that she will certainly achieve all that man has achieved; but this we say, "Clear the lists, and let her try." Some reply, "It will be a great injury to feminine delicacy and refinement, for woman to mingle in business and politics." I am not careful to answer this objection. Of all such objections, on this and kindred subjects, Mrs. President, I love to dispose in some such way as this:—The ultimate consequences of any great social change, the broadest and most far-sighted intellect is utterly unable to foresee. Ask yourself, on all such occasions, if there be any element of right and wrong in the question, any principle of clear natural justice that turns the scale. If so, take your part with the perfect and abstract right, and trust God to see that it shall prove the expedient. The questions, then, for me, on this subject, are these:—Has God made woman capable, morally, intellectually and physically, of taking this part in human affairs? Then, what God made her able to do, it is a strong argument that he intended she should do. Does our sense of natural justice dictate that the being who is to suffer under laws shall first personally assent to them; that the being whose industry Government is to burden should have a voice in fixing the character and amount of that burden? Then, while woman is admitted to the gallows, the jail, and the tax-list, we have no right to debar her from the ballot-box. "But to go there will hurt that delicacy of character, which we have always thought peculiarly her grace." I cannot help that. Let Him who created her capable of politics, and made it just that she should have a share in them, see to it that these rights which He has conferred do not injure the being He created. Is it for any human being to trample on the laws of justice and liberty, on an alleged necessity of helping God govern what He has made? I cannot help God govern His world by telling lies, or doing what my conscience deems unjust. How absurd to deem it necessary that any one should do so! When Infinite Wisdom established the rules of right and honesty, He saw to it that justice should be always the highest expediency.

The evil, therefore, that some timid souls fear to the character of woman, from the exercise of her political rights, does not at all trouble me. "Let education form the rational and moral being, and nature will take care of the woman." Neither do I feel at all disturbed by those arguments addressed to us as to the capacity of woman. I know that the humblest man and the feeblest has the same rights, according to the theory of our institutions, as the godliest and most gifted intellect that walks our soil. It is never claimed that the humblest shall be denied his civil right, provided he be a man. No; intellect, even though it reach the Alpine height of a Parker—aye, setting aside the infamy of his conduct, and looking at him only as an instance of intellectual greatness, to the height of a Webster—gets no tittle of additional civil right, no one single claim to any greater civil privilege, than the humblest individual, who knows no more than the first elements of his alphabet, provided that being is a man. (I ought to say, a *white* man.) Grant, then, that woman is intellectually inferior to man—it settles nothing. She is still a responsible, tax-paying member of civil society. We rest our claim on the great, eternal principle, that taxation and representation must be co-extensive—that rights and burdens must correspond to each other; and he who undertakes to answer the argument of this Convention, must first answer the whole course of English and American history for the last hundred and fifty years. No single principle of liberty has been enunciated, from the year 1688 until now, that does not cover the claim of woman. The State has never laid the basis of right upon the distinction of sex; and no reason has ever been given, except a religious one—that there are in the records of our religion, commands obliging us to make her an exception to our civil theories, and deprive woman of that which those theories give her.

Suppose that woman is essentially inferior to man, she still has rights. Grant that Mrs. Norton never could be Byron—that Elizabeth Barrett never could have written Paradise Lost—that Mrs. Somerville never could be La Place, nor Sirani have painted the Transfiguration. What then? Does that prove they should be deprived of all civil rights? John Smith

never will be, never can be, DANIEL WEBSTER. Shall he, therefore, be put under guardianship and forbidden to vote?

Suppose woman, though equal, to differ essentially in her intellect from man, is that any ground for disfranchising her? Shall the FULTONS say to the RAPHAELS, "Because you cannot make steam-engines, therefore you shall not vote?" Shall the NAPOLEONS or the WASHINGTONS say to the WORDSWORTHS or the HERSCHELLS, "Because you cannot lead armies and govern States, therefore you shall have no civil rights"?

Grant that woman's intellect be essentially different, even inferior, if you choose: still while our civilization allows her to hold property, and to be the guardian of her children, she is entitled to such education and to such civil rights, voting among the rest, as will enable her to protect both her children and her estate. It is easy to indulge in *dilettanti* speculation as to woman's sphere and the female intellect; but leave dainty speculation, and come down to practical life. Here is a young widow; she has children and ability, if you will let her exercise it, to give them the best advantages of education, to secure thm rs chanh efteeatice of success in life: or she has property to keep for them, and no friend to rely on. Shall she leave them to sink in the unequal struggles of life? Shall she trust their all to any adviser money can buy, to gratify your taste, and give countenance to your nice theories,—or shall she use all the powers God has given her for those He has thrown upon her protection? If we consult common sense, and leave theories alone, there is but one answer. Such a one can rightfully claim of society all the civil privileges, and of fashion, all such liberty as will best enable her to discharge fully her duties as a mother.

But woman, it is said, may safely trust all to the watchful and generous care of man. She has been obliged to do so hitherto. With what result, let the unequal and unjust legislation of all nations answer. In Massachusetts, lately, a man married an heiress, worth $50,000. Dying, about a year after his marriage, he made this remarkably generous and manly will. He left these $50,000 to her so long as she should remain his widow! (Loud laughter.) These dollars, which he owed entirely to her,

which were fairly hers, he left to her, after twelve months' use, on this generous condition, that she should never marry again! Ought a husband to have such unlimited control over the property of his wife, or over the property which they have together acquired? Ought not woman to have a voice in determining what the law shall be in regard to the property of married persons? Often by her efforts, always by her economy, she contributes much to the stock of family wealth, and is entitled therefore to a voice in the control and disposal of it. Neither common sense, nor past experience, encourage her to trust the protection of that right to the votes of men. That

> "Mankind is ever weak,
> And little to be trusted;
> If self the wavering balance strike,
> It's rarely right adjusted"—

is true between the sexes, as much as between individuals.

Make the case our own. Is there any man here willing to resign his own right to vote, and trust his welfare and his earnings entirely to the votes of others? Suppose any class of men should condescendingly offer to settle, for us, our capacity or our calling, to vote for us, to choose our sphere for us? How ridiculously impertinent we should consider it. Yet few have the good sense to laugh at the consummate impertinence with which every bar-room brawler, every third-rate scribbler undertakes to settle the sphere of the Martineaus and the De Staels! With what gracious condescension little men continue to lecture and preach on "the female sphere" and "female duties"!

This Convention does not undertake the task of protecting woman. It contends that, in government, every individual should be endowed, as far as possible, with the means of protecting himself. This is far more the truth when we deal with classes. Every class should be endowed with the power to protect itself. Man has hitherto undertaken to settle what is best for woman, in the way of education and in the matter of property. He has settled it for her, that her duties and cares are too great to allow her any time to take care of her own earnings, or to take her otherwise legitimate share in the civil government of the country. He has not undertaken to say that the sailor or the soldier, in active service, when he returns from

his voyage or his camp, is not free to deposit his vote in the ballot-box. He has not undertaken to say that the manufacturer, whose factories cover whole townships, who is up early, and lies down late, who has to borrow the services of scores to help him in the management of his vast estate, he does not say that such a man cannot get time to study politics, and ought therefore to be deprived of his right to vote with his fellow-citizens. He has not undertaken to say that the lawyer may not vote, though his whole time is spent in the courts until he knows nothing of what is going on in the streets. Oh, no! But as for woman, her time *must* be all filled in taking care of her household—her cares must be so extensive that neither those of soldiers, nor sailors, nor merchants, can be equal to them; she has not a moment to qualify herself for politics! Woman cannot be spared long enough from the kitchen to put in a vote, though ABBOTT LAWRENCE can be spared from the counting-house, though General GAINES or SCOTT can be spared from the camp, though the LORINGS and the CHOATES can be spared from the courts. This is the argument: STEPHEN GIRARD cannot go to Congress, he is too busy; therefore, no *man* ever shall. Because General SCOTT has gone to Mexico, and cannot be President, therefore, no *man* shall be. Because A. B. is a sailor, gone on a whaling voyage, to be absent for three years, and cannot vote, therefore, no male inhabitant ever shall. Logic, how profound! reasoning, how conclusive! Yet this is the exact reasoning in the case of woman. Take up the newspapers. See the sneers at this movement. "Take care of the children," —"Make the clothes,"—"See that they are mended,"—"See that the parlors are properly arranged." Suppose we grant it all. Are there no women but house-keepers? no women but mothers? Oh, yes, many! Suppose we grant that the cares of a household are so heavy that they are greater than the cares of the President of a college—that he who has the charge of some hundreds of youths, is less oppressed with care than the woman with three rooms and two children—that though President SPARKS has time for politics, Mrs. BROWN has not. Grant that, and still we claim that you should be true to your theory, and grant to single women those rights which she, who is the mistress of a household and mother of a family, has no time to exercise.

It is, after all, of little use to argue these social questions. These prejudices never were reasoned up, and my word for it, they will never be reasoned down. The freedom of the press, the freedom of labor, the freedom of the race in its lowest classes, was never argued to success. The moment you can get woman to go out into the highway of life, and show by active valor, what God has created her for, that moment this question is settled, for ever. One solid fact of a woman making her fortune in trade, will teach the male sex what woman's capacity is. I say, therefore, to women, there are two paths before you in this reform. One is, take all the laws have left you, with a confident and determined hand. The other is, cheer and encourage by your sympathy and aid those noble women, who are willing to be the pioneers in this enterprise. See that you stand up the firm supporters of those bold and fearless ones, who undertake to lead their sisters in this movement. If ELIZABETH BLACKWELL, who, trampling under foot the sneers of the other sex, took her maiden reputation in her hand, and walked the hospitals of Europe, comes back the accomplished graduate of them, to offer her services to the women of America, and to prove that woman, equally with man, is qualified to do the duties and receive the honors and rewards of the healing art, see to it, women, that you greet her efforts with your smiles; that you hasten to her side, and open your households to her practice, and prove that you mean the experiment shall be fairly tried, before you admit that, in your sickness and in your dangers, woman may not stand as safely by your bedside as man. If you will but be true to each other, on some of these points, it is in the power of woman to settle, in a great measure, this question. Why ask aid from the other sex at all? Theories are but thin and unsubstantial air against the solid fact of woman mingling with honor and profit in the various professions and industrial pursuits of life. Would women be true to each other, by smoothing the pathway of each other's endeavors, it is in their power to settle one great aspect of this question, without any statute in such case made and provided. I say

TAKE your rights! There is no law to prevent it, in one half of the instances. If the prejudices of the other sex and the supineness of your own prevent it, there is no help for you in the statnte books. It is for you but to speak, and the doors of all Medical Hospitals are open for the women, by whom you make it known that you intend to be served. Let us have no separate, and therefore necessarily inferior, schools for women. Let us have no poor schools, feebly endowed, where woman must go to gather what help she may from second-rate professors, in one branch of a profession. No! Mothers, daughters, sisters! say to husband, father, brother, "If this life is dear to you, I intend to trust it, in my hour of danger, to a sister's hand. See to it, therefore, you who are the guides of society and heads of those institutions, if you love your mother, sister, wife, daughter, see to it that you provide these chosen assistants of mine the means to become disciplined and competent advisers, in that momentous hour, for I will have no other." When you shall say that, Harvard University, and every other University, and every Medical Institution, will open their doors gladly. You, who long for the admission of woman to professional life and the higher ranks of intellectual exertion, up, and throw into her scale this omnipotent weight of your determination to be served by her, and by no other! In this matter, what you decide is law.

There is one other light in which this subject is to be considered—the freedom of ballot—and with a few words upon that, I will close these desultory remarks. As there is no use in educating a human being for nothing, so the thing is an impossibility. HORACE MANN says, in the letter that has been read here, that he intends to write a lecture on Woman, and I doubt not that he will take the stand which he has always done, that she should be book-taught for rome dozen years, and then retire to domestic life. Would he give sixpence for a boy, who could only say that he had been shut up for those years in a school? The unfledged youth that comes from college—what is he? He is a man, and has been subjected to seven years' tutoring; but, man though he be, until he has walked up and down the paths of life, until he receives his education in the discipline of the world,

in the stimulus of motive, in the hope of gain, in the desire of honor, in the love of reputation, in nine cases out of ten, he has got no education at all. Profess to educate woman for her own amusement! Profess to educate her in science, that she may go home and take care of her cradle! Teach her the depths of statesmanship and political economy, that she may smile sweetly when her husband comes home! "It is not the education man gets from books," it was well said by your favorite statesman, "but the lessons he learns from life and society, that profit him most highly." "I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word." You give woman nothing but her books; you deprive her of all the lessons of practical out-door life; you deprive her of all the stimulus which the good and great of all nations, all societies, have enjoyed—the world's honors, its gold, and its fame; and then you coolly ask of her—"Why are you not as well disciplined as we are?" I know there are great souls who need no stimulus but love of truth and growth, whom mere love of labor allures to the profoundest investigations; but these are the exceptions, not the rule. We legislate—we arrange society for the masses, not the exceptions.

Responsibility is one instrument, a great instrument, of education, both moral and intellectual. It sharpens the faculties. It unfolds the moral nature. It makes the careless prudent, and turns recklessness into sobriety. Look at the young wife suddenly left a widow, with the care of her children's education and entrance into life thrown upon her. How prudent and sagacious she becomes! How fruitful in resources, and comprehensive in her views! How much intellect and character she surprises her old friends with! Look at the statesman bold and reckless in opposition;—how prudent, how thoughtful, how timid he becomes the moment he is in office, and feels that a nation's welfare hangs on his decisions! Woman can never study those great questions that interest and stir most deeply the human mind, until she studies them under the mingled stimulus and check of this responsibility. And until her intellect has been tested by such questions, studied under such influences, we shall never be able to decide what it is.

One great reason, then, besides its justice, why we would

claim the ballot for woman, is this—because the great school of this people is the jury-box and the ballot-box. De Tocqueville, after travelling in this country, went away with the conviction that, valuable as the jury trial was for the investigation of facts and defence of the citizen, its value in these respects even was no greater than as it was the school of civil education open to all the people. The education of the American citizen is found in his interest in the debates of Congress, the earnest, personal interest with which he seeks to fathom political questions. It is when the mind, profoundly stirred by the momentous stake at issue, rises to its most gigantic efforts; when the great crisis of some national convulsion is at hand; it is then that strong political excitement lifts the people up in advance of the age—heaves a whole nation on to a higher platform of intellect and morality. Great political questions stir the deepest nature of one half the nation, but they pass far above and over the heads of the other half. Yet, meanwhile, theorists wonder that the first have their whole nature unfolded, and the others will persevere in being dwarfed. Now, this great world-wide, practical, ever-present education, we claim for woman. Never, until it is granted her, can you decide what will be her ability. Deny statesmanship to woman? What! to the sisters of Elizabeth of England, Isabella of Spain, Maria Theresa of Austria; ay, let me add, of Elizabeth Heyrick, who, when the intellect of all England was at fault, and wandering in the desert of a false philosophy—when Brougham and Romilly, Clarkson and Wilberforce, and all the other great and philanthropic minds of England, were at fault and at a dead-lock with the West India question and negro slavery—with the statesman-like intellect of a Quaker woman, wrote out the simple yet potent charm which solved the problem, and gave freedom to a race—Immediate, unconditional emancipation. How noble the conduct of those men! With an alacrity which does honor to their statesmanship, and proves that they recognized the inspired voice when they heard it, they sat down at the feet of that woman statesman, and seven years, under her instruction, did more for the settlement of the greatest social question that had ever convulsed England, than had been done in a century, of more or

less effort, before. Oh no, you cannot read history, unless you read it upside down, without admitting that woman, cramped, fettered, excluded, degraded as she has been, has yet sometimes, with one ray of her instinctive genius, done more to settle great questions than all the cumbrous intellect of the other sex has achieved.

It is, therefore, on the ground of natural justice, and on the ground again of the highest expediency—and yet again, it is because woman, as an immortal and intellectual being, has a right to all the means of education—it is on these grounds that we claim for her the civil rights and privileges, which man enjoys.

I will not enlarge now on another most important aspect of this question—the value of the contemplated change in a physiological point of view. Our dainty notions have made woman such a hot-house plant, that one half the sex are invalids. The mothers of the next generation are invalids. Better that our women, like the German and Italian girls, should labor on the highway and share in the toil of harvest, than pine and sicken in the indoor and sedentary routine, to which our superstition condemns them. But I leave this sad topic for other hands.

One word more. We heard to-day a very profound, eloquent and high-spirited address as to the course which it is most expedient for woman to pursue, in regard to the inadequate remuneration extended to her sex. The woman of domestic life receives but about one fourth the amount paid to a man for similar or far lighter services. The woman of out-door labor has about the same. The best female employments are subject to a discount of some 40 or 50 per cent. on the wages paid to males. It is futile, if it were just, to blame individuals for this. We have all been burdened long by a common prejudice and a common ignorance. The remedy is not to demand that the manufacturer shall pay his workmen more; that the employer of domestics shall pay them more. It is not capitalists' fault. We inveigh against the wealthy capitalist, but it is not exclusively his fault. It is as much the fault of society itself. It is the fault of that pulpit which declares it indecorous in woman to labor, except in certain occupations, and thus crowds the

whole mass of working women into two or three employments, making them rivet each other's chains. Do you ask me the reason of the low wages paid for female labor? It is this:—There are about as many women as men obliged to rely for bread on their own toil. Man seeks employment anywhere and of any kind. No one forbids him. If he cannot make a living by one trade, he takes another; and the moment any trade becomes so crowded as to make wages fall, men leave it, and wages will rise again. Not so with woman. The whole mass of women must find employment in two or three occupations. The consequence is, there are more women in each of these than can be employed—they kill each other by competition. Suppose there is as much sewing required in a city as one thousand hands can do. If the tailors could find only five hundred women to sew, they would be obliged to pay them whatever they asked. But let the case be, as it usually is, that there are five thousand women waiting for that work—unable to turn to any other occupation, and doomed to starve if they fail to get a share of it: we see at once that their labor, being a drug in the market, must be poorly paid for. She cannot say, as man would, "Give me so much, or I'll seek another trade." She must accept whatever is offered, and often underbid her sister that she may secure a share. Any article sells cheap when there's too much of it in the market. Woman's labor is cheap because there is too much of it in the market. All women's trades are over-crowded because they have only two or three to choose from. But open to her now other occupations; open to her the studio of the artist—let her enter there; open to her the office practice at least of the lawyers—let her go there; open to her all indoor trades of society, to begin with, and let woman monopolize them. Draw off from the domestic service; draw off from the crowded ranks of the needle-women of New York—ay, leave but the requisite number in the shops of New York—and the consequence is, that like every other independent laborer, like their male brethren, they may make their own terms, and will be fairly paid for their labor. It is competition in too narrow lists that starves women in our cities; and those lists are drawn narrow by superstition and prejudice.

Woman is ground down, by the competition of her sisters, to the very point of starvation. Heavily taxed, ill paid, in degradation and misery, is it to be wondered at that she yields to the temptation of wealth? It is so with men; and so we recruit the ranks of vice by the prejudices of custom and society. We corrupt the whole social fabric, that woman may be confined to two or three employments. How much do we suffer through the tyranny of prejudice! When we penitently and gladly give to the energy, and the intellect, and the enterprise of woman their proper reward, their appropriate employment, this question of wages will settle itself; and it will never be settled at all until then.

This question is intimately connected with the great social problem—the vices of cities. You who hang your heads in terror and shame, in view of the advancing demoralization of modern civilized life, and turn away with horror-struck faces, look back now to these social prejudices, which have made you close the avenues of profitable employment in the face of woman, and reconsider the conclusions you have made! Look back, I say, and see whether you are surely right here. Come up with us, and argue the question, and say whether this most artificial delicacy, this odious prejudice, on whose Moloch altar you sacrifice the virtue of so many, is worthy the exalted worship you pay it. There is no other solution of this problem except what this movement offers you. It is, to leave woman to choose her own employments for herself, responsible, as we are, to the common Creator, and not to her fellow-man. I exhort you, therefore, to look at this question in the spirit in which I have endeavored to present it to you. It is no fanciful, no superficial movement, based on a few individual tastes, in morbid sympathy with tales of individual suffering. It is a great social protest against the very fabric of society. It is a question which goes down—we admit it, and are willing to meet the issue—goes down beneath the altar at which you worship; goes down beneath this social system in which you live. And it is true—no denying it—that if we are right, the doctrines preached from New England pulpits are wrong; it is true that all this affected horror at woman's deviation from her sphere is

a mistake—a mistake fraught with momentous consequences. Understand us. We blink no fair issue. We throw down the gauntlet. We have counted the cost—we know the yoke and burden we assume. We know the sneers, the lying frauds of misstatement and misrepresentation that await us. We have counted all; and it is but the dust in the balance and the small dust in the measure, compared with the inestimable blessing of doing justice to one half of the human species, of curing this otherwise immedicable wound, stopping this otherwise overflowing fountain of corruption, at the very source of civilized life. Truly, it is the great question of the age. It looks all others out of coun enance. It needs little aid from legislation. Specious objections, after all, are not arguments. We know we are right. We only ask an opportunity to argue the question, to set it full before the people, and then leave it to the intellects and the hearts of our country, confident that the institutions under which we live, and the education which other reforms have already given to both sexes, have created men and women capable of solving a problem even more difficult, and meeting a change even more radical than this.

EXTRACT FROM THE SPEECH OF MRS. COE.

It is said there must be but one head in the family, and therefore the wife must be in subjection to the husband; and an attempt is made to support this reasoning by the analogy of our civil institutions. But I would ask gentlemen, if they are willing to rest their claims for supremacy on just such grounds? If so, we have nothing more to say, except that you will give us too much advantage, more than we claim.

In our government, the President, the nominal head, is merely the executor of the laws which Congress sees fit to pass. He has no power independent of Congress. If the relation was that of husband and wife, it would be as though the wife made the laws, which the husband is bound to see executed. It is true, the President holds in his hands the

veto power, but at any time that power can be annulled by the will of two-thirds of the members of Congress. And by this analogy, if the will of the wife could, two-thirds of it, be brought to bear against the husband, he would at last be compelled to yield. (Laughter) So that the President holds no such relation to his family, the United States, as the husband legally holds to the domestic family. It is thus in all the minor institutions of our country. The President of a Bank has no more authority over the Directors, and no more claim upon their earnings, than they upon him or his, and has only an equal vote with them; and the same is true of our literary institutions. In short, there is no analogy between the laws regulating our family relations, and those of any civil institution, in the government or under it, except that of slavery. And here, whatever the practice may be, the principle is precisely the same.

I wonder in my soul, that a government so false, so shallow in its subtleties, so crushing to womanhood and independence, should have existed so long. But, God be praised, the days of its tyranny are numbered; and if these Conventions serve to throw any light on the hollowness of its professions, we have not met in vain.

A new era dawns upon us. Its approach is heralded by a thousand harbingers. The lightning coursing the telegraphic wires; the smoke-girt steeds rushing along our iron-rimmed ruts, are but embassies of a power whose will will yet place freedom upon something more than a theoretical basis, and give equality of privileges a being as well as a name. (Great cheering.)

We must agitate. Give woman knowledge—give mankind knowledge, and their rights must follow, or the flames of justice will burst in sunder the bands of social life. There is a moral grandeur in justice, sufficient, when the wronged one is once aroused, to overcome every obstacle interposed. Shut up thus still longer the pent-up fires of inquiry, and they will burst forth with such volcanic power as to dry up the fountains of sordidness in our midst, as the fire licked up the waters of old! Shut up, did I say? You might as well dam the Nile, as she is pouring the renovated fountains of her harvests through the magnificent valleys of Egypt! You might as well attempt to shut in the rays of yon pearly moon, as she goes winding over your hill-tops, peopling with shadowy images your mountains and rich valleys! (Cheers.) The spirit of inquiry, of free discussion, is abroad, and truth may now be-

come a more powerful weapon in the hands of the simple, beardless boy, than sophistry in the hands of the most profound metaphysician: so rapid, so sturdy are the strides of the giant Progress. So that, although we at present mourn the legal, the social, and the political oppressions of woman, we yet see in the brightening future the dawnings of hope. Hope, smiling seraph! the beacon-light of every benighted mind,—the rose that tinges every darkening cloud,—the mountain-rock for every incautious foothold,—the shelter from every portentous storm! Its cheering beams penetrate the miseries of life, and flood the soul with the raptures of gladdening anticipations!

Never, since the ushering in of time, has the heavy tread of Reform moved with such sure and steady celerity. The whole mass of mind is agitated, and the expiring sigh of Goethe, "Light, more light still!" has become the famishing cry of nature from man to the mollusca!

In this question, there is little room for rest on the isthmus of neutrality. He that is not for us boldly, takes ground against us. This is as it should be. The sharper the conflict, the sooner the evil is past. We want no coward foes, no craven antagonists; much less do we want hesitating faltering friends.

The question of Woman's Rights has been nobly put, and has thrilled throughout the veins of this young empire; and thousands of responses have been awakened in the bosoms of those inhabiting its remotest borbers as well as its more central territory. Many a heart to-day, keenly alive to the importance of this matter, sends up its aspirations before Jehovah's throne, for the success of this cause; and succeed it must, or convulse a world. If truth goeth onward, we may look with certainty for its ultimate triumph.

The world is emerging into day. It is putting on the shining robes of light! Continent is shaking hands with Continent. Aggressive war is no longer popular with the best portions of civilized nations. The strifes of the gladiator and the amphitheater have long since been banished therefrom. The blood of a brother is not now, as it once was, deemed necessary to establish the honor and prove the courage of the injured. And woman, too, is coming up. But if she lack courage to lay her hand on the young world as it is rising up before her, to enter into possession, to make it her own, to show that she has the authority of reason, that she has arrived at a knowledge of the right, if she doubt —resign herself, pass away. She shows that she has not faith in herself; it is needful that she pass into a living tomb, that others more suggestive in thought, more efficient in action, may possess her place.

SPEECH

OF

ABBY KELLY FOSTER,

Madam President: I rise this evening not to make a speech. I came here without any intention of even opening my mouth in this Convention. But I must utter one word of congratulation, that the cause which we have come here to aid has given such evidence this evening of its success. When genius, that could find ample field elsewhere, comes forward and lays itself on this altar, we have no reason for discouragement; and I am not without faith that the time is not far distant when our utmost desires shall be gratified, when our highest hopes shall be realized. I feel that the work is more than half accomplished.

I have an idea, thrown into the form of a short resolution, which I wish to present to this Convention, because no one else has brought it forward. I feel that behind, that underneath, that deeper down than we have yet gone, lies the great cause of the difficulties which we aim to remove. We complain that woman is inadequately rewarded for her labor. It is true. We complain that on the platform, in the forum, in the pulpit, in the office of teacher, and so on to the end of the list, she does not hold that place which she is qualified to fill; and what is the deep difficulty? I cannot, I will not charge it all upon man. I respond to the statement that it is chargeable upon us as well as upon others. It is an old, homely maxim, but yet there is great force in it, "Where there's a will, there's a way;" and the reason why woman is not found in the highest position which she is qualified to fill, is because she has not more than half the will. I therefore wish to present the resolution that I hold in my hand:

Resolved, That in regard to most points, woman lacks her rights because she does not feel the full weight of her responsibilities; that when she shall feel her responsibilities sufficiently to induce her to go forward and discharge them, she will inevitably obtain her rights; when she shall feel herself equally bound with her father, husband, brother and son to provide for the physical necessities and elegancies of life; when she shall feel as deep responsibility as they for the intellectual culture and the moral and religious elevation of the race, she will of necessity seek out and enter those paths of Physical, Intellectual, Moral and Religious labor which are necessary to the accomplishment of her object. Let her feel the full stimulus of motive, and she will soon achieve the means.

I believe that the idea embodied in this resolution, though not expressed so clearly as I fain would have had it, points to the great difficulty that lies in our way; and, therefore, I feel that it is necessary for us to inculcate, on the rising generation especially, (for it is to them that we must chiefly look,) it is necessary for us to inculcate on them particularly this feeling of responsibility. Let mothers take care to impress upon their daughters, that they are not to enter upon the marriage relation, until they are qualified to provide for the physical necessities of a family. Let our daughters feel that they must never attempt to enter upon the marriage relation until they shall be qualified to provide for the wants of a household, and then we shall see much, if not all, that difficulty which has been complained of here, removed. Women revolt at the idea of marrying for the sake of a home, for the sake of a support—of marrying the purse instead of the man. There is no woman here, who, if the question were put to her, would not say, Love is sufficient. She says it is sufficient, and she believes it; yet behind this lies something else, in more than one case in ten.

Let us, therefore, inculcate upon our daughters, that they should be able to provide for the wants of a family, and that they are unfit for that relation until they are qualified to do so. If we teach our daughters that they are as much bound to become independent as their brothers, and that they should not hang upon the skirts of a paternal home for support, but secure subsistence for themselves, will they not look out avenues to new employments? Why, we all feel it, we all know it; if women could be taught that the responsibilities devolved equally upon themselves and the other sex, they would seek out the means to fulfil those responsibilities. That is the duty we owe our daughters to-day; that is the duty each one owes to herself to-day, to see to it that we feel that we must enter into business, such as will bring in to the support of our families as much as the labor of our fathers, husbands and brothers does. Woman's labor is as intrinsically valuable as any other, and why is it not remunerated as well? Because, as has been shown here—because there is too much female labor in the market, compared with the work it is allowed to undertake. There are other means of support; there are other modes of acquiring wealth: let woman seek them out, and use them for her own interest, and this evil will in great part be done away.

Then, again, let every woman feel that she is equally responsible

with man for the immorality, for the crime that stalks abroad in our land, and will she not be up and doing, in order to put away that vice? Let every woman understand that it is for her to see that disease be not inflicted on the community; and will she not seek out means to do it away? If she feel that she is as competent to banish superstition, and prejudice, and bigotry from the world as her brother, will she not be up and doing? Here is the great barrier to woman's obtaining her rights. Mary Wolstonecraft was the first woman who wrote a book on "Woman's Rights;" but a few years later, she wrote another, entitled "Woman's Duty;" and when woman shall feel her duty, she will get her rights. We, who are young on this question of Woman's Rights, should entitle our next book "Woman's Duties." Impress on your daughters their duties; impress on your wives, your sisters, on your brothers, on your husbands, on the race, their duties, and we shall all have our rights.

Man is wronged, not in London, New York, or Boston alone. Look around you here in Worcester, and see him sitting amidst the dust of his counting-room, or behind the counter, his whole soul engaged in dollars and cents, until the Multiplication Table becomes his creed, his *pater noster*, and his Decalogue. Society says, keep your daughters, like dolls, in the parlor; they must not do anything to aid in supporting the family. But a certain appearance in society must be maintained. You must keep up the style of the household. You are in fault if your wife do not uphold the condition to which she was bred in her father's house. I put this before men. If we could look under and within the broadcloth and the velvet, we should find as many breaking hearts, and as many sighs and groans, and as much of mental anguish, as we find in the parlor, as we find in the nursery of any house in Worcester. But woman is vain and frivolous, and man is ignorant; and therefore he is what he is. Had his daughters, had his wife been educated to feel their responsibilities, they would have taken their rights, and he would have been a happy and contented man, and would not have been reduced to the mere machine for calculating and getting money he now is.

My friends, I feel that in throwing out this idea, I have done what was left for me to do. But I did not rise to make a speech—my life has been my speech. For fourteen years I have advocated this cause by my daily life. Bloody feet, sisters, have worn smooth the path by

which you have come up hither. (Great sensation.) You will not need to speak when you speak by your every-day life. Oh, how truly does Webster say, Action, action, is eloquence! Let us, then, when we go home, go not to complain, but to work. Do not go home to complain of the men, but go and make greater exertions than ever to discharge your every-day duties. Oh! it is easy to be lazy; it is comfortable indeed to be indolent; but it is hard, and a martyrdom, to take responsibilities. There are thousands of women in these United States working for a starving pittance, who know and feel that they are fitted for something better, and who tell me, when I talk to them, and urge them to open shops, and do business for themselves, "I do not want the responsibility of business—it is too much." Well, then, starve in your laziness!

Oh, Madam President, I feel that we have thrown too much blame on the other side. At any rate, we all deserve enough. We have been groping about in the dark. We are trying to feel our way, and oh! God give us light! But I am convinced that as we go forward and enter the path, it will grow brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

I will speak no longer. I speak throughout the year, and those of you who speak but once should take the platform. I hope, however, that you do not feel that I speak to you in anger. Oh, no; it is in the hope of inducing you to be willing to assume responsibilities, to be willing to have a sleepless night occasionally, and days of toil and trouble; for he that labors shall have his reward; he that sows shall reap. My teacher in childhood taught me a lesson, which I hope I never shall forget. She had appointed me a task, and when she asked me if I had learned it, I said, "No, it is too hard." "Well," said she, "go into the road and pick me up an apron full of pebbles." I did it. "It was easy to do it," said she. "Oh, yes," I replied. "Go out again," said she, "and pour them down, and bring me in an apron full of gold." It was impossible. "Yes," said my teacher, "you can get that only by earnest labor, by sacrifice, by weariness." I learned my lesson; I accomplished my task; and I would to God that every person had had similar instruction, and learned the necessity of toil—earnest, self-sacrificing toil. (Loud cheers.)

WOMAN'S RIGHTS TRACTS,....No. 3.

ON THE

EDUCATION OF FEMALES.

BY

MRS. PAULINA W. DAVIS.

Read at the Convention in Worcester, Mass., October 16th, 1851.

The Convention of last year, from which this Committee holds its appointment, *resolved*,

That Women should demand and secure EDUCATION in Primary and High Schools, Universities, Medical, Legal and Theological Institutions, as comprehensive and exact as their abilities prompt them to seek, and their capabilities fit them to receive.

The scheme of female education here proposed evidently looks to the ultimate employment of all the branches of knowledge which it embraces, in the various professions and avocations of actual life for which they are pursued and acquired by the sex that now monopolizes them; and, having like ends and objects in contemplation in the training of both sexes, of course, recommends a similar system of preparation for both.

The Convention, looking also at Education subjectively, and with reference only to its most effective policy, affirmed, in other resolutions, that the prospect of such variety of useful and honorable employments in after life as may arouse Woman's ambition and call forth her whole nature, is as essential and as indispensable to successful female study, as are the hopes and aims which incite the male student to strenuous effort and great achievement. It went even further, and declared, "that *every* effort to educate Woman, until you accord to her her rights, and arouse her conscience by the weight of her responsibilities, is futile, and a waste of labor."

According to these views, no distinctions whatever are recognized in the ends and uses of the education of the sexes, and, of consequence, none are allowed in the substance and method of it. Moreover, mixed schools in all varieties of study, preparatory, collegiate and professional, seem to be intended by the general tenor of the resolutions, though it

is nowhere formally expressed. In a word, equality of the sexes, in rights, faculties and offices, is assumed, and equal means, opportunities and liberties are demanded for them.

In the fair and proper meaning of these general propositions, your Committee concurs, but desires to guard the meaning of the terms and purport of the doctrines here employed from the current misconstructions of both friends and foes to the movement of female emancipation.

By Equality, we do not mean either identity or likeness, in general or in particulars, of the two sexes; but, equivalence of dignity, necessity and use; admitting all differences and modifications which shall not affect a just claim to equal liberty in development and action.

In the respective sexes, the faculties having the same general use, character, and name, may differ greatly in force or in acuteness, in some quality of substance or of action, without being thereby divorced from each other in their drift toward the same objects, and without affecting the whole method and movement of either of them, so as to throw it out of harmony with the other. Indeed, Nature seems never to repeat herself, and no individual is equal in fact and form with any other in the universe; and it is quite consonant with this principle of creation that sex should impress still a different *kind* of variety upon all faculties, feelings and vital forces, than those of measure and degree, simply. And if it be so. it should, rather than any other sort of difference, be exempted from the degradation of relative inferiority. The wise and the less wise, the strong and the weak of the same sex, may more justly be ranked and valued against each other; for they are sufficiently alike in texture, quality, and mode of action, to admit of comparison and relative estimate; but the essential difference of sex refuses any logical basis for measurement, as by weight and scale. There is no philosophy in balancing light against heat, love against knowledge, force against agility, or mathematics against imagination, and deriving thence a sort of feudal subordination among the subjects of the sciences of chemistry, mental philosophy, and social and civil government.

The differences which we admit are, on the contrary, reciprocal, and really adjust the sexes to each other, and establish mutuality where otherwise there would be but an aggregation of like to like, without relief to monotony or increase in efficiency. It is only in materialism that addition of similars adds to their value: a fool is no help to a wise man in thinking, nor a coward to a brave one in daring and enduring.

In physical life there is this broad provision, that all difference in kind is available, and not *less or more* only is the measure of increase, but all variety is riches. Differences in moral and intellectual things, if regarded as antagonism to the extent of the unlikeness, would render any consistent system of organization impossible. Thus: Woman, from her conceded superiority in the family affections, would be entitled to exclusive control in the domestic function; her higher and more susceptible religious constitution would give her the monopoly of the *priestly* office; and her eminent moral endowments fit her for the rule of *social life* and *manners*, including all those municipal laws which regulate the relations of men to each other in civil society. So that the professions of Law, Theology and Medicine, in nearly all its branches, would belong to her by right of special fitness, and men, by the same rule, would be wholly excluded. This principle of distribution would leave—what would it leave to the sole administration of men? Nothing but the ordering of those affairs, and the cultivation of those sciences, for which their ruder strength of muscle, greater bluntness of nerve, and firmer quality of logical reasoning, if they have all these, or either of them, qualify them. In general terms, the cultivation of those physical sciences which direct in the use of mechanical forces, and those coarser competitions and ruder conflicts of men, which foreign commerce and destructive wars require, would fall to the province of the sterner sex.

The ground and rule of this division of the sciences between the sexes, is the correspondence everywhere observed between internal powers and external instruments, that is, between the mental faculties and bodily structure; and therefore we strike the line of division among the mental qualifications for various uses, just where the eminent strength of the masculine structure requires it. For example, his greater physical energy demands superiority in those sciences which are concerned in mechanics; but the same principle denies his superiority in botany, chemistry and astronomy, unless to the extent that mathematics of the science of quantity, as it may be called, intervenes. But these points, be it noticed, are now made only in reference to the proposition which we are examining, and for the present purpose in hand.

From considerations like these, it must be obvious that the rule of reasoning by which the present order of things is directed, in the re-

spects alluded to, if pushed to its proper consequences, must end in overthrowing the very wrong which is built upon it, and, after that, in overthrowing itself, too, by its sheer absurdity. We put the whole subject, therefore, upon very different grounds. We deny that there is any natural conflict between the parties which the prevalent wrong has arrayed against each other, or any necessary gradation, rank, or subordination, founded in distinction of sex and its inherent differences of constitution; and, especially, we deny that either sex must needs be restrained, or crippled, or enslaved, to advance the welfare of either, or to maintain the good order of society, or to advance the destiny of the race.

On the contrary, it seems to us clear, above all controversy, that in the moral world the mere existence of a power or faculty is the divine warranty for its exercise, and necessarily implies its own right of full development and free use; and, consequently, that all questions of fitness and propriety must be determined by the simple fact of capability. A skillful mechanic never puts a wheel, or pully, or spring too many in his machine; nor wastes material or power in making them too great or strong for their intended use. Human nature is at least as well and wisely adjusted to its offices and relations; and the inference is irresistible, that whatever a woman can do at all she may do, and should learn to do as well as she can. It cannot be admitted that any power given her by her Creator was bestowed in mistake and must work mischief by its activities, and that such mistake requires correction by the superior wisdom of Man!

Further: When the argument for restraint is rested upon Woman's alleged *incapacities*, we might triumphantly answer, that where an actual and obvious incapability is seen and known among men, their eligibility is not therefore taken away, but that incapacity is found in itself a sufficient bar to great abuses, and a sufficient protection of the interests to be affected; at least, no other is adopted. Certain men, ay, multitudes of them, are unfit for lawyers, physicians, governors, and military officers; yet, the chance and hope are left freely open to all these as well as to the most capable without mischief, and the world gets along as well as it deserves, and as well as it wishes, notwithstanding. Incompetency, in all these cases, (and they are myriads) is not excluded from office, rank, and honorably remunerated service by legal impediments, or the force of custom and opinion, which are quite as

rigorous and absolute in their rule. Justice and consistency alike demand that the avenues of hope and life shall be opened as fairly and freely to the excluded sex as to the notoriously incompetent of the other, and there can be no doubt that it may be done in every department of human affairs as safely, to say the least. The common sense of the world will be as able to protect itself in the one case as in the other; and besides, the Providence of Heaven is responsible for the safe working of all the forces which He has provided for the conduct of human life. If women really cannot practice medicine, law, and theology, well and safely, the sick, the suitors, and the suffering sinners will discover the fact, and there is nothing specially put in danger by the trial except the illiberal opinion which refuses it. But this objection is in itself so weak and unwarranted, that it may be justly set down as merely arrogant and selfish. Medical schools, for instance, are really not closed against women because they *cannot* acquire the knowledge of the profession and practise it successfully, but because they *can* do both, and threaten very seriously to wrest the business from the hands which have so long usurped it. And, surely, there is no likelihood that the "weaker sex" would betray the science into greater confusion and disgrace than the dozen or twenty conflicting systems have done, which now divide and distract the world about their rival merits. No, no, gentlemen; theory and practice are not so well established in medicine as to prove the sole capability of the sex which has appropriated its authority and delivered its oracles for the last few centuries of modern history. The world has lost its respect for the pompous mystery of the craft, and the chaos you have created where we looked for light and certainty, disproves your proud pretension of exclusive fitness in the sex which bears the responsibility. Beards and wigs have gone so nearly into bankruptcy in this business, that they cannot refuse the fresh partners and increased capital that are wanting to repair their falling fortunes!

And is theology in any better condition? Are its hundred sects, with each its vital difference of opinion, ready to come into court and answer for the wisdom and worthiness of their stewardship, and defend their claim of superior fitness against the reserved abilities of the race?

Incompetency, indeed! Why, this is proved by positive failure, upon fair trial, against the usurping sex, and it does not lie gracefully in their mouths to make the objection against the excluded party. In the sober-

est earnest, there is nothing in the condition of the sciences which we have named, to warrant the presumptions on which women are barred out of them, nor anything to terrify even feminine mediocrity of talent with apprehension of contrasted unworthiness.

Law may be exceedingly difficult of achievement, and we are inclined to think it is so, when we observe that the individual that here and there in a nation, and once or twice in a century, distinguishes himself in the profession, is thereupon regarded as almost *superhuman;* but this, to our blunt way of thinking, only renders it every way more probable that fresh hearts and clear heads, which never could or would comprehend its subtleties, are the very agents which the abused world wants to clear away the incumbering rubbish, and replace it with a clearer and truer system. It is owing to the felt necessity of such change that the States of the Union, which have the idea of American progress, are all rapidly making their judges elective by the people, hoping thereby to get gradually rid of the dead weight of the dark ages in our system of jurisprudence. This is, in fact, another confession of incompetency, and a movement toward that freedom from absurd authority which will be complete only when woman's tact lightens man's drudgery in the administration of affairs.

This may seem over-bold and direct, and wanting in reverence, if not in sober earnestness; but it may as well be said here as elsewhere, that the best intelligence and integrity of the age, feel the faults we censure, and are almost hopeless of a thorough remedy, while the administration continues in the hands of those who are, by their education, made perpetual successors to the evil inheritance and devoted to its continuance. The democratic method, which is reversing as fast as it can, all the precedents of antiquity in this matter of office and civil and social trusts is nothing else than a protest against the claim of exclusive qualification by the old incumbents and their legitimate disciples. This rising idea *we* push forward to the full truth which there is in it. To the popular cry, *Admit the People* to the temples of their own religion, to the bench of their own Courts, to the halls of their own Legislatures, to the doctorate of the learned professions, and the throne of their own sovereignty, we add, *Admit the* WHOLE *People*, if ye would be true to your own idea, and worthy of your own liberty.

It is simply a matter of fact, and, therefore, of observation and not of argument, that a woman will reach the justice of a case by such

intellect as God has given her, helped by her fine intuitions and nice moral instincts, where the cramp logic of a mere lawyer shall utterly fail to find either a reason or a precedent. In great confidence we venture the assertion, now, that the science of law is destined to find its necessary regeneration at last in that special aptness for moral truth, which is the characteristic of the female mind. Boldly, but warily, we put these points in the conviction, which rests, woman-like, upon its own intrinsic clearness, and trusts itself to its self-evident proofs, that the several mischiefs of the learned professions we so freely criticise, arise out of the exclusion of that refining and correcting element which woman's mind alone can supply, in all the interests and uses which these professions are intended to subserve.

There is another pretense upon which the existing restraints are fastened, like handcuffs, upon womanhood, to wit: the indelicacy, indecorum, or impropriety of such greater range and freedom as we claim for her. To this, it is quite sufficient to reply, that the greater delicacy, purity, and sensitiveness of the sex, are the very things, of all others, that can best take care of themselves in such exposure, which, be it observed, is to be in all cases free and voluntary, and so a matter of taste and choice. And is it too much, or too severe to say, that women must be better fitted to settle all questions which concern their own delicacy, than the admitted obtuseness and coarseness of men, in these respects, supposes them to be? If they really are just what this notion ascribes to them, they are the best guardians of their peculiarity, by the natural rule that makes MICHAEL ANGELO the standard in Statuary, NEWTON in Astronomy, HANDEL in Music, and, in general, the divine right of fitness, by which the highest endowed in any gift or grace, gives the law which governs in its proper province. The officious interference of men, in such matters, proves the want of the qualifying modesty, and is simply impertinent, where it is not also arrogant and meanly tyrannical; and our answer to all such assumption is—Open the possibilities of active life to woman freely, and by her own instincts and fitnesses she will find her place, as certainly as the planets and their satelites find their orbits and movement by their own proper attractions and repulsions. Only do not legislate presumptuously and despotically in matters wherein sovereign Nature has already ordained the law, and can guard it well by adequate rewards and penalties, without the help of customs and conventions.

But let it suffice for this whole argument, that we do not claim for woman parallelism, equality, or superiority of constitution, capacity or

office, as against men, but we merely claim the freedom of her proper life, whatever that may prove to be, upon fair trial; we claim the privilege and the opportunity for unfolding all her powers, in the conditions and with the helps most favorable for the possibilities of growth, and the full play of all those hopes, incentives, and prospects, whose monopoly has developed man unto her master, and enslaved and degraded her, in the proportion that they have been withheld from her.

Esteeming this position as clear and secure, as it is reasonable and just, we pass now to notice, in very general statement, and in as brief terms, the policy of education, as it exists at present, in reference to the two sexes respectively.

There are in the United States, about one hundred and twenty Literary Colleges, forty-two Theological Seminaries, forty-seven Law Schools, and forty Medical Colleges. Of these two hundred and fifty public institutions of learning, in its higher grades and most valuable directions, not a half dozen admit women to their privileges! They are endowed by both public and private munificence, for Government has taken education into the care of the State, and made its support compulsory as any other duty of citizenship, upon the community. Scarcely a man of distinction in the nation but has received the State's bonus for accepting his education; he has been educated at the expense of the Public Treasury, and afterward rewarded with honors and offices, both public and private, for the improvement he has made of it. The graduates of Harvard receives, each, the sum of one thousand dollars over and above the amount he pays for the expenses of his tuition. This is the gratuity to graduates in the literary department only; but to the student of law, there is appropriated, beside, the sum of eighty-six dollars; to each medical student, twenty-seven dollars; and the divinity student takes about one thousand dollars.

This is a sample, a liberal one, perhaps, but it presents the case and exhibits the rule. And let it be understood that no exception is taken to this beneficent appropriation of the funds provided. Would it were ten times more, and proportionately more efficient for all the purposes which liberal education should answer in the world.

But how stands the other side of the account? Oberlin, in Ohio, and the Central College of New-York, are the only literary institutions of the higher grade which admit women to their advantages. Medical colleges are so numerous and so easily established, that we find three or four in Ohio, one or two in New-York, and one in Vermont, which raise no question of sex with their pupils.

Below this higher style of schools, and above the common elementary and grammar schools, there are the following establishments for women and girls, and none other, in the Union: A Normal school for young ladies in Massachusetts; two Normal Schools, for both sexes, in the same State; one for both sexes at Albany; and one for young ladies at Philadelphia. If there be another in the nation, it has escaped our search. These are, more or less, supported by public contributions, some of them wholly at the expense of the State or city, in which they are located. And we must add to the account, a School of Design for women, something more than two years old, in Philadelphia, established at first, and sustained alone, by Mrs. Sarah Peters, of that city, and now for some months under the able care of the Franklin Institute. In this institution, drawing, designing, wood-engraving, and lithographing are already taught with great success. The pupils number about sixty, and are of a class of women just such as are best fitted to make the experiment with—intelligent, respectable, and earnest in their purpose, and successful, beyond all expectation, in their first attempt. The example of this excellent institution has been followed, recently, in Boston, and bids fair to attain equally high results. The provision for the support of these two schools is as yet casual and temporary, but we cannot doubt that they will secure themselves in the public regard, and become as permanent and strong as they are beneficent. What a contrast in the two sides of this picture! On the one side, millions of money, one entire profession of talented men, and national and individual enthusiasm, all devoted to the development of the masculine mind in all directions which can give it strength and brightness, and win for it honor and wealth. On the other side, the late reluctant grace of a pittance, here and there vouchsafed, within the last year or two, to the importunity of appeals that were often scorned, even at the moment they were granted!

Not yet a law school, nor a theological, (for Oberlin does not ordain her pupils, though she instructs them,) nor any number of medical schools of note, have made our sex welcome to their privileges and benefits. And the Literary Colleges are but two, of one hundred and twenty, which admit them to equal favor with their happier brethren.

We present the startling facts to our brethren's faces—we spread them before the world, and ask its justice.

We say that Women are not proved incapable, but that they are kept in ignorance; first, by the denial of systematic education, ample and adequate; and next, by the withdrawal and withholding of all those

useful and honorable posts, places and functions, from them as a sex, which are the proper incentives to the successful pursuit of learning.

We do not go so far as to say that eminent attainment is, in *every* case, impossible while its due rewards are denied, for there are glorious examples of women whom the innate and irrepressible impulse of great capacity has sufficed, and who have surprised, while they have rebuked the world, by the energy of their spontaneous self development; but we do complain, that nothing less than that genius which can create its own occasions, and erect its own monuments, in the very face of besieging foes, may suffice to show a woman great and noble in word and deed. We complain, that a woman must unsex herself, in the world's judgment, if she would give outlet to the highest life within her; that she is shunned and mobbed if she dares to do anything that might be noticed in the newspaper; that she is required to starve either soul or body, or both, rather than endeavor for life and independence in any walk of business or work, however suitable it may be, if it has been hitherto forbidden to her. And we complain that the gallantry which flatters her as a menial, a toy, and an idiot, should mock, insult and crush her, so soon as she endeavors to be only a Woman.

It will not be required of us here to argue the benefits and blessings of appropriate culture of the rational and moral faculties of our common nature. That subject is at rest, with respect to the favored sex, and there can be no difficulty or hesitation about applying the general principle to all the cases which in any way come under it; but we have a suggestion to make, which every way concerns our argument, for the emancipation of Woman.

Hitherto restrained, as a general rule, to the duties and drudgeries of the domestic relations, and cultivated chiefly, when cultivated at all, for the delights of her affectional nature, the heart is disproportionately developed, and she is made a creature of pure feeling and passionate impulse. All aspiration, all heroism, all nobleness, all distinction, tolerated and encouraged in her, is in the direction of the passions and emotions only. Intellectual culture of any kind which might abate, or steady, or balance feeling, is held unwomanly; and the sex is enslaved by the disproportionate activity of its own distinguishing traits. We demand a due cultivation of her intellectual faculties of every kind, and in every department of business that invites; in order, mainly, that she may be delivered from the bondage imposed, through the over-strength of her heart, exaggerated by the weakness of her head.

Madness is a fixed idea. Monomania is the concentration of the

whole mental force in the actions of a single faculty. Due distribution of sensibility and of action is the health, as well of the mind as of the body. Symmetry, harmony, and balance are the conditions of beauty, energy, and integrity. Whatever accidental incapacity women may be charged with; whatever indifference they may exhibit to their own highest well-being, is owing to the monstrous wrongs of that system which has warped them into the weakness of feeling, unguarded and undirected by an equally developed understanding.

In the material world the various objects are put to the use in which they best serve the lord of the creation. This is right; for they have their whole existence for his uses. But *human* beings have a destiny of their own to fulfill, and it is a wanton desecration of their nature to cultivate and employ only its strongest points, because these best subserve a master's interests; and, with the same view, to crush out all the rest of the faculties of the immortal soul.

It is true that the gentler sex are loveliest of the two in the offices of affection, and the relations of the family and the home; but the argument of the oppressor is, that she should therefore be limited and restrained to the domestic sphere in all the aims and activities of her life. Would HE like the even application of the principle which would exclude him from the realm and the rule that he claims in the heart, because of his comparative inferiority? This would be equity; but it is not a balance of rights on which the usurpation builds itself. In plain terms, the virtues in which the feminine character is pre-eminent, are esteemed for their *use*, their value as a *commodity*, and a convenience and delight to her owner.

The tempter of mankind is represented as destroying his victims by using their passions to induce their ruin. This is *diabolical* only because of the malignity of its purpose. The abuse, the degradation and ruin of "the sex" is accomplished through the same agencies, but with kindlier intentions. It is, therefore, only *selfish* and *savage*, relieved by the mixture of tenderness which the lower instincts supply.

The peculiarities of her sex, its very excellences which are her charm, are, also, her bane. We demand education, therefore, in every direction that can give efficiency to the intellect, light to the feelings, and harmony and dignity to the whole character, for the sake of that moral and rational liberty which depends upon the integral development of the whole being together.

It would be in the drift of our present reflections, and greatly contribute to the completeness of our argument, to dwell in detail upon the differ-

ence in range, thoroughness and value of the branches of education taught to the male and female pupils under the prevailing system. In the well-established colleges for male students, instruction as thorough as the student can receive, is given in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, German, Spanish and French; Mathematics, comprehending Geometry and Algebra, plain and spherical Trigonometry, and analytical Geometry; Ancient and Modern History; Rhetoric, Psychology, Logic, Ethics, Political Economy, the Evidences of Religion, Chemistry, Botany, Physics, Mineralogy, Geology, Astronomy, and practice in Composition and Elocution. And after a course which, added to the preparatory term of study, covers seven or eight years, at the age of twenty or twenty-one the graduate commences another term of three or four in the study of his special profession.

The training of the girl—we say girl, for before the maturity of womanhood arrives, she is taken home to domestic duties—in all points of range, value and thoroughness, is so inconsiderable, compared to this scheme of masculine education, that it may well account for all the difference in useful attainment, with which she is reproached.

It would be a high service rendered to the cause of female education, to designate the branches which she should study as an average qualification for ultimate use and application; and to indicate the duration of the term, as well as all the other essential conditions of adequate mental cultivation. But it happens, that among the other well-grounded charges against the policy which excludes women from their fair share in this great interest, there lies, also, this additional blame, that the science and art of systematic education are by no means so well settled and adjusted, either in principles or details, that we can assume the utility of any known method, and claim it with or without accommodations to the peculiarities of the female mind and functions.

It is confessed that the school-books in use are not well adapted to the instruction of youth; and teachers differ upon the method of instruction, as much as they do in any other matters of opinion which divide men in judgment and practice.

We cannot be expected here to discuss systems of scholastic training, to analyze particular objects of study, and to indicate a scale and sequence of educational departments, as well as argue their fitness to the minds and offices of women.

The utmost that can be wisely and safely done in the present state of knowledge and experience, is to lay down the great outlines which principles warrant and require, and leave particulars to the discovery

of practice and experiment, conducted in the light which right and justice afford. The true system of education, for either man or woman, is yet only in expectancy; the proper subjects of study, during pupil-age, have not yet been brought regularly within reach; besides, the most available of all attainments, and the best adapted to the individual, are made in the actual business of life. This Committee will not, therefore, undertake to be specific or precise in the matter, method, apparatus, and specialities of that culture which ought to be provided for women; but must content ourselves with such general considerations as we have found time and space to urge, and submit this, the most important of all our inquiries, to the largest reflection and most earnest action of all its enlightened advocates.

Your Committee is clear in the justice and propriety of demanding for women—

Liberty and opportunity for the development of all their faculties by such methods of systematic education as may be best adapted to the end:

The entire range of studies required for their thorough training in every department of human knowledge:

Equal access with the male sex to *all* the provisions of public and private munificence for the advance of human learning:

And all unrestrained by any imagined difference of capacity or artificial difference of destiny, which must repress aspiration and paralyze effort; and leaving all accommodations due to expediency as well as to intrinsic necessity, to be determined by actual experiment, as it may result when the truth of nature is sought with honest purposes by the light of free principles.

Mrs. Davis concluded her report by offering the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, therefore, That we, as wives and mothers, will do our utmost to promote the highest education of our children at our colleges and institutions of learning, without distinction of sex, challenging the same privilege for our daughters as already accorded to our sons, making the public funds available to both, in the process of mental development.

LETTER FROM HARRIET MARTINEAU.

Read by Mrs. Coe, at the Convention held in Worcester, Oct. 16, 1851.

CROMER, England, Aug. 3, 1851.

MY DEAR MADAM:—I beg to thank you heartily for your kindness in sending me the Report of the Proceedings of your "Woman's Right's Convention." I had gathered what I cou'd from the newspapers concerning it, but I was gratified at being able to read, in a collected form, addr sses so full of earnestness and sound truth as I found most of the speeches to be. I hope you are aware of the interest excited in this country by that Convention; the strongest proof of which is, the appearance of an article on the subject, in *The Westminster Review*, (for July,) as thorough going as any of your own addresses, and from the pen (at least, as it is understood here,) of one of our first men, Mr. JOHN S. MILL. I am not without hope that this article will materially strengthen your hands, and I am sure it cannot but cheer your hearts.

As for me, my thought and best wishes will be with you when you meet in October. I cannot accept your hearty invitation to attend your Convention, as my home duties will not allow of my leaving my own country. But you may be assured of my warm and unrestricted sympathy. Ever since I became capable of thinking for myself, I have clearly seen—and I have said it till my listeners and readers are probably tired of hearing it—that there can be but one true method in the treatment of each human being, of either sex, of any color, and under any outward circumstances—to ascertain what are the powers of that being, to cultivate them to the utmost, and *then* to see what action they will find for themselves. This has probably never been done for men, unless in some rare individual cases. It has certainly never been done for women; and, till it is done, all debating about what woman's intellect is, all speculation, or laying down the law, as to what is woman's sphere, is a mere beating of the air. *A priori* conceptions have long been found worthless in physical science, and nothing was really effected till the experimental method was clearly made out and strictly applied in practice; and the same principle holds most certainly through the whole range of Moral Science. Whether we regard the physical fact of what women are able to do, or the moral fact of what women ought to do, it is equally necessary to abstain from making any decision prior

to experiment. We see plainly enough the waste of time and thought among the men who once talked of Nature abhorring a vacuum, or disputed at great length as to whether angels could go from end to end without passing through the middle; and the day will come when it will appear to be no less absurd to have argued, as men and women are arguing now, about what woman ought to do, before it was ascertained what woman can do. Let us once see a hundred women educated up to the highest point that education at present reaches—let them be supplied with such knowledge as their faculties are found to crave, and let them be free to use, apply and increase their knowledge as their faculties shall instigate, and it will presently appear what is the sphere of each of the hundred. One may be discovering comets, like Miss HERSCHEL; one may be laying open the mathematical structure of the universe, like Mrs. SOMERVILLE; another may be analyzing the chemical relations of Nature in the laboratory; another may be penetrating the mysteries of physiology; others may be applying Science in the healing of diseases; others may be investigating the laws of social relations, learning the great natural laws under which society, like everything else, proceeds; others, again, may be actively carrying out the social arrangements which have been formed under these laws; and others may be chiefly occupied in family business, in the duties of the wife and mother, and the ruler of a household. If, among the hundred women, a great diversity of powers should appear, (which I have no doubt would be the case,) there will always be plenty of scope and material for the greatest amount and variety of power that can be brought out. If not—if it should appear that women fall below men in all but the domestic functions—then it will be well that the experiment has been tried; and the trial had better go on for ever, that woman's sphere may for ever determine itself, to the satisfaction of everybody.

It is clear that Education, to be what I demand on behalf of women, must be intended to issue in active life. A man's medical education would be worth little, if it was not a preparation for practice. The astronomer and the chemist would put little force into their studies, if it was certain that they must leave off in four or five years, and do nothing for the rest of their lives; and no man could possibly feel much interest in political and social morals, if he knew that he must, all his life long, pay taxes, but neither speak nor move about public affairs. Women, like men, must be educated with a view to action, or their studies cannot be called Education, and no judgment can be formed of the scope of their faculties. The pursuit must be the life's business, or it

will be mere pastime or irksome task. This was always my point of difference with one who carefully cherished a reverence for woman—the late Dr. CHANNING. How much we spoke and wrote of the old controversy—INFLUENCE *vs.* OFFICE! He would have had any woman study anything that her faculties led her to, whether physical science, or law, government and political economy; but he would have her stop at the study. From the moment she entered the hospital as physician, and not nurse; from the moment she took her place in a court of justice in the jury-box, and not the witness-box; from the moment she brought her mind and her voice into the legislature, instead of discussing the principles of laws at home; from the moment she enounced and administered justice, instead of looking upon it from afar, as a thing with which she had no concern—she would, he feared, lose her influence as an observing intelligence, standing by in a state of purity, "unspotted from the world." My conviction always was, that an intelligence never carried out into action could not be worth much; and that, if all the action of human life was of a character so tainted as to be unfit for women, it could be no better for men, and we ought all to sit down together to let barbarism overtake us once more. My own conviction is, that the natural action of the whole human being occasions not only the most strength, but the highest elevation; not only the warmest sympathy, but the deepest purity. The highest and purest beings among women seem now to be those who, far from being idle, find among their restricted opportunities some means of strenuous action; and I cannot doubt that, if an active social career were open to all women, with due means of preparation for it, those who are high and holy now, would be high and holy then, and would be joined by an innumerable company of just spirits, from among those whose energies are now pining and fretting in enforced idleness or unworthy frivolity, or brought down into pursuits and aims which are anything but pure and peaceable. In regard to this old controversy—of Influence *vs.* Office—it appears to me that, if Influence is good and Office is bad for human morals and character, Man's present position is one of such hardship as it is almost profane to contemplate; and if, on the contrary, Office is good and a life of Influence is bad, Woman has an instant right to claim that her position be amended.

With every wish that your meeting may be a happy one, and your great cause a flourishing one, I am, dear Madam, yours, faithfully.

HARRIET MARTINEAU.

Lathrop's Print, Pine-Grove, Syracuse.

W Lathrop

WOMAN'S RIGHTS TRACTS,····No. 5.

SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE.

BY MRS. E. OAKES SMITH.

"Shall we say that God hath joined error, fraud, unfitness, wrath, contention, perpetual loneliness, perpetual discord, whatever lust, or wine, or witchery, threat or enticement, avarice or ambition hath joined together; faithful and unfaithful, hate with hate, or hate with love; *shall we say this is God's joining?*"—MILTON.

I have spoken of marriage as the Great Contract. In a true relation this holy and beautiful mystery of life would be a sacrament, whereas now it stands almost entirely as a civil or commercial co-partnership. In New-England, even, where it might be supposed that marriage would be less adulterated, it has become very much a household arrangement for thrift or economy, where a woman is selected for her domestic points, in the same manner that a housekeeper is secured. Now, a slight salary for one in the latter capacity, would oftentimes be in better taste than the taking of a wife. I even know of one woman, not by any means low in the scale of position, who proposed to do the labor of one of her servants, provided her penurious husband would pay her, a wife, the price of service, six dollars per month, which he was not ashamed to do. Now, will any one say that such a woman was a wife in the true sense—*one* with her lord and master, who paid her as he would pay a menial? Every married man, and every married woman, knows, either from experience or observation, that it is not an unfrequent thing for a man to refuse his wife the supply of money necessary to uphold her position in society, if she *fail to become in all things the subservient creature she is expected to be in the marriage relation.* "Surely we are bought with a price," a woman under such circumstances might quote, in the depths of her humiliation. It requires but little penetration to see that a husband who puts the contract upon so coarse and external a basis, offers himself the strongest temptation for

its violation. She is to him a slave, a menial, an appendage, but not a wife; that is, not one with him in soul and life—his inmost self—the completion of his being—the one divine element linking him to the spiritual; the friend, companion, and comforter, with whom he is to take sweet counsel and walk to the house of God in company; yea, into that divine tabernacle, that mansion into which no corrupt element finds a lodgment.

It may be that I claim too much of sanctity for marriage—that the common voice is against me, and therefore content to view it as a commercial relation, or one of social convenience only, and involving no questions of greater moment than those of legitimatizing offspring, and securing the transmission of property. Even in this point of view, it would be well that the *terms of contract should be such as to secure its inviolability, and therefore I claim that there should be equality of character in the contracting parties—legal equality, at the very least.*

There are social and domestic evils, so secret, so petty and annoying, that they can neither be reached by public opinion nor legal enactment; and a right organization of society would aim at the relief of these, as being harder to be borne than others obvious to inspection and comment. I would have the marriage relation so protected that as few of these evils should arise as possible. I would avoid the need of legislation, by securing the liberty of both parties equally, till each shall be fully competent to judge of the nature of the proposed position. I admit that a gentleman, in the true sense—a man of taste, of sentiment, genius, in in other words, one capable of feeling a *great sense of human justice*—will not abuse the confidence of a "Child-wife;" he will treat gently and most sacredly the trust of youth, inexperience, and beauty; but I do not write for these, but for those who discern the Truth "as through a glass darkly," who are blind leaders of the blind; wilfully ignorant, selfishly corrupt, or groping for Truth, and uncertain how to recognize her aspect.

It is a trite remark, when difficulties arise in the marriage relation, to say, there is "blame upon both sides;" one of those imbecile, inconsequential speeches, by which humanity is apt to relieve itself of its dullness. Two individuals are or are not adapted to each other; they are "yoke-fellows," or they are the ox and the ass, interdicted by the Jewish lawgiver, and unsuited to the same furrow; they are the diverse

seeds prohibited to be sown in the same field. If there be congeniality of qualities, harmony will be the result; if not, perpetual discontent, inward repinings, or open rebellions, grief, apathy, insanity, and death; or there will arise the long catalogue of petty evils, subterfuges, and evasions, by which a character is lowered in the scale of being, and led on to crime. In the one case, the two walk hand-in-hand, like Bunyan's Pilgrim, to the golden gate, each a help to the other in the divine life; or the one falls from the side of its companion, a disabled angel; or they keep the bad juxtaposition, to grow in aspect and heart like jarring imps from unhallowed regions. This is so much the case, that matrimonial discord has become a theme for jest rather than of sympathy, and one of the surest methods of evolving a laugh either to the wit or dramatist. The whole structure of society is lowered by this tendency, human sentiment distorted by it, and human sympathy carried astray.

We must look to the foundation of social evil very much here—where the issues of life are so much embittered; where children receive discordant elements with their very blood, and imbibe discontent with their milk, and catch

> "Their mother's trick of grief,
> And sigh among their playthings."

Now, let marriage be so guarded that a legal disqualification would be a barrier to entering into the relation, and one great step would be reached, and one great source of human suffering dried up. Then the woman who should flaunt her discontent, after assuming a position which must have been not only voluntary, but one of at least some degree of judgment, would be treated with well-deserved contempt. She should speak at the altar the solemn "Yes," from her heart, and "for ever after hold her peace." If unhappy, she should suffer in silence, for there is no remedy.

To me there is something appalling, when I see a mere girl promising at the altar to love, honor, and obey, "till death." Ten to one she does not know or care whether he will deserve to be honored; and, as to obedience, her own stomach, as was said of Queen Bess, may or may not be too proud to bear any will but her own. Then, what does she know of human emotion, of the depths of her own soul or that of another? For any one, even at mature age, to say this, is, in fact, blas-

phemous in the eyes of any one capable of realizing the arbitrary nature of human emotions, and how very uncertain they often become, even under the most careful training and the most exact habitude. This being the case—we are mere creatures in the hands of a being who regards us in mockery, or in the hands of one who knoweth our nature, and has established within us laws, which we as yet but imperfectly understand. It will be folly to say that there is no excuse for change; that a man or a woman is bad, who does not love as the laws have bound them to love—that he or she whose thoughts or feelings diverge to-day very far from what they were at any other given period must be in the wrong, for the whole history of the race is full of facts to prove that such things are, and that, too, among those very far from being oblique in principle; romance and poetry are kept alive by facts of this kind, and many of our laws have an existence only through them. Now, to say these things should not be, (I do not mean the outrages that spring out of them,) is to say that the human mind must be limited to a certain standard of development, and not beyond: that the human character must be enlarged only to a certain degree, and all beyond must necessarily be evil—a doctrine calculated to keep the race in perpetual bondage and pupilage, and which has done its full work in dwarfing the species.

When a man or a woman, however, has the courage to promise this, to love till death, they should be of years to realize the solemn import of the words, and willing to hazard the test. One should not be suffered to go forward and put his hand to the seal, clear in vision, cool in judgment, and responsible in law, while the other is blind, undiscerning, and irresponsible. I would say the contract is too momentous in its character to be lightly assumed; too sacred to be broken, and therefore should be well comprehended.

If my reader has followed me through the preceding chapters, he will perceive that in claiming a woman's right to be individual, and her right to the dignities of property, it was with the view that these might relieve her from the necessity of seeking in marriage that which society ought to award her as her right—that is, position, independent of her relation to one of the other sex; that she should be truly, nobly woman—marry or not marry, as her heart or her taste may dictate, and yet be honorable; she should *live* the truth in her own soul, even although that

truth might indispose her to the hackneyed lives of her neighbors, and yet be honorable; that she should relieve the sick, whether as medical adviser or nurse; visit the afflicted, whether as a messenger of the Prince of Peace or a Sister of Charity—and yet be honorable; in all things she should so comport herself that her best and truest womanhood should he developed, and she be honorable, and honored in it; and finally, that if in the maturity of her beauty and the clearness of her intellect she be disposed to carry all this affluence of nature into this divine relation of marriage, she should be still honorable, not as a reflex of another's glory, but as of herself, lending and receiving.

It appears to me we need less of legislation in regard to our sex, than of enlightened public opinion. Whether we wear this or that costume, or go to the polls or stay away, seems of less importance than a radical understanding of our true selves. Let us assert first the reverence due as a portion of the moral and intellectual type, and gradually we shall take that symmetrical position in human affairs which is for the best good of the world—certainly we shall have other and better influenco than we now have.

I am aware that the large class of the other sex, enraptured with the sensualities of Moore, and fit only to admire "bread and butter girls," will oppose this theory of Marriage. It is the style to prate of "sweet sixteen," and to talk of the loveliness of girlhood—and most lovely is it, and sacred should it be held; and therefore the woman should not be defrauded of the period; she should not be allowed to step from the baby-house to the marriage altar. It should be considered not only unwise to do so, but absolutely indelicate. It should affix odium to parents and guardians, if done by their instrumentality; or if by the will of the girl, be regarded as an *evidence of precocious development, as unchaste as it is unwise.*

It is a popular error, that our sex are earlier developed than the other, and therefore sooner adapted to marriage. This, however, is physiological ground, upon which I do not wish to digress; but the assertion that women decay earlier, especially in this country, where early marriages so much prevail, is unfortunately true, and a truth that ought not to apply to us, where the intellect is active, at least, if not profound. And this decay is unquestionably to be imputed to this source. Girls are married and perplexed with the cares of housekeeping, when the pretty

ordering of the "wee things" of the play-house would be in better keeping; they suffer the anxieties and sorrows of maternity at an age pitiful to contemplate, when they should be singing like the lark to Heaven's gate, in the very exuberance of youthful life and the joyousness of innocent emotion. Even admitting that some slight stirrings of the heart should remind her that she was a well-spring of happy affection, it does not follow that she should be put into bondage for the rest of her life to one whom the undeveloped girl may affect, but whom the woman may perhaps despise. A boy has, it may be, a dozen of "undying," "never to be forgotten" experiences of the kind, between the ages of fourteen and twenty-five, and yet shakes them off like "dew from the lion's mane," and looks up, after each trial, if there is to be any manhood in him, with a better and stronger humanity; but if a lovely, susceptible girl, always kept in ignorance of her own nature, responds in the slightest degree to the promptings of her heart, she must be married, as if her heart were an effervescing wine, good for nothing if a sparkle escape, and not rather a deep and holy fountain of calm waters and healthful springs, making glad the wilderness of life, refreshing the arid desert of hearts worn and hackneyed by the toil and heat of the day in the wayfaring of the world.

That a woman should be past all joy, and beauty, and hopefulness, at a period when the other sex are in the perfection of their powers, is a most lamentable fact, and one utterly at variance with the designs of nature, who did not create her for the one purpose of the family relation, but to share in that freedom of being and joyfulness of life which is his gift to all, and doubly so to one created with such exquisite perfection and affluence of susceptibility as her own organization involves. It is not unusual for girls to be married and become mothers at sixteen, at the expense of health, happiness, and all the appropriateness and dignity of life; and men seem quite proud of these baby-wives, when in truth they should blush at their selfishness, as they too often will repent over their lack of forecast. It is these early marriages that have produced so many crimes and outrages in society. I remember, a few years since, the public was aghast at the cruel murder of a wife and two children, by the husband and father, in the upper part of New-York. I do not recollect the name, but the state of mind which the confessions of the unhappy man implied, impressed me greatly. He

had been induced, when a boy of twenty or twenty-one, to marry a woman very much his senior, from motives of property; and finding the relation ungenial and repugnant to him, it so wrought upon his mind, year by year, that a species of insanity was undoubtedly the result, and in this state he made the resolve not only to kill her and her children, but also all who were instrumental in bringing about the ill-starred marriage.

The protracted and wearying grief resulting from ungenial relations, is a fruitful source of insanity; and these ungenial relations will be found, in almost all cases, to have been those formed when *one* of the parties was too young to fully comprehend the magnitude of interest involved. I remember, when a child, having a confused idea that to be murdered was one of the possible contingencies of marriage; and this impression was created solely by reading in the public prints the many atrocious catalogues of the kind. I remember, too, the story of a refined New-England woman, married to a man much older than herself, a hard, uncompromising, respectable man; upright in the eyes of the world, and an exact church member, who, while her husband was desecrating prayer, by pouring out those hackneyed platitudes in which so many indulge, arose suddenly from her knees and laid her hand upon his mouth, saying: "You hypocrite, how dare you mock God in this way?"

She was shortly after carried to a hospital, in which she still remains a hopeless lunatic. The friends were suitably shocked, and *pitied him for his misfortune*, but no one saw into the soul of things, where they might have learned of the years of suffering the wife must have endured from his selfishness and intangible falsehood.

Miss Dix must have a mass of material on this ground, and God bless her for her noble mission, one peculiarly adapted to the instinctive and beautiful perceptions of womanhood.* More than one story of suffering of this kind is fresh in my memory. Not far from Portland, Maine, the wife of a wealthy man was for years confined in a small room,

* It may not be known to all our readers, that this lady has been for many years engaged in visiting the hospitals for the Insane throughout the country, and inquiring into the condition of those afflicted in this way, but consigned to private management. In this humane and beautiful mission she has helped to relieve a large amount of suffering.

built up in the garden, and *chained*—condemned to hopeless solitude, and treated like a caged animal, in the very youth of her existence. I was but a child when I heard her story and had that spot pointed out to me. The relator finished the details by a remark often made, "That the insane always turn against their best friends, and that she could not endure to have her husband approach her; a word from him produced the most frightful paroxysm of her disease."

This was most significant, the fact of the story presenting a key to the whole mass of distress and misery. She had endured till her outraged nature could no longer bear, and the entire structure of her mind gave way like "sweet bells jangled out of tune." Illustrations might be accumulated to prove the evils resulting from these early and disproportioned marriages, but these may suffice to prove not only the folly of them, but the fearful amount of crime, suffering, and insanity to which they so often lead; evils wrought into the whole structure of society, and affecting interests that stretch into remote years.

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WOMAN'S RIGHTS TRACTS,..No. 6.

ON THE

RESPONSIBILITIES OF WOMAN.

A SPEECH BY MRS. C. I. H. NICHOLS,

WORCESTER, OCT. 15, 1851.

Mrs. C. I. H. NICHOLS, of Brattleboro', Vt., then came forward and spoke as follows:—

My friends, I have made no preparation to address you. I left home feeling that if I had anything to do here, I should have the grace given me to do it; or if there should be any branch of the subject not sufficiently presented, I would present it. And now, friends, in following so many speakers, who have so well occupied the ground, I will come as a gleaner, and be as a Ruth among my fellow-laborers.

I commenced life with the most refined notions of woman's sphere. My pride of womanhood lay within this nice sphere. I know not how it was—perhaps because I am of mountain growth—but I could, even then, see over the barriers of that sphere, and see that however easy it might be for me to keep within it, as a daughter, a great majority of women were outside its boundaries; driven thither by their own, or invited by the necessities and interests of those they loved. I saw our farmers' wives—women esteemed for every womanly virtue—impelled by unforeseen emergencies, helping their husbands in labors excluded from the modern woman's sphere. I was witness, on one occasion, to a wife's helping her husband—who was ill and of feeble strength, and too poor to hire—to pile the logs preparatory to clearing the ground that was to grow their daily bread; and my sympathies, which recognized in her act the self-sacrificing love of woman, forbade that I should judge her out of her sphere. For I felt in my heart that, if I were a wife and loved my husband, I too would help him when he needed help, even if it were to *roll a log;* and what true-hearted woman would not do the same?

But, friends, it is only since I have met the varied responsibilities of life, that I have comprehended woman's sphere; and I have come to regard it as lying within the whole circumference of humanity. If, as is claimed by the most ultra opponents of the wife's legal indivi-

uality—claimed as a conclusive argument in favor of her legal nonentity—the *interests of the parties are identical*, then I claim, as a legitimate conclusion, that their spheres are also identical. For interests determine duties, and duties are the landmarks of spheres. Wherever a man may *rightfully* go, it is proper that woman should go and share his responsibilities. Wherever my husband goes, thither would I follow him, if to the battle-field. No, I would not follow him *there*, I would hold him back by his coat-skirts, and say, "Husband, this is wrong. What will you gain by war? It will cost as much money to fight for a bag of gold, or a lot of land, as it will to pay the difference; and if you fight, our harvests are wasted, our hearths made desolate, our homes filled with sorrow, and vice and immorality roll back upon us from the fields of human slaughter." This is the way I would follow my husband where he could not rightfully go.

But I may not dwell longer on woman's *sphere*. I shall say very little of woman's *rights ;* but I would lay the axe at the root of the tree—I would impress upon you woman's *responsibilities*, and the means fitly to discharge them before Heaven. I have felt, my friends, too timid to speak in public heretofore. But I feel that I am right in bringing this subject before you, and therefore I have great courage to address you now.

I stand before you, a wife, a mother, a sister, a daughter—filling every relation that it is given to woman to fill. And by the token that I have a husband, a father and brothers, whom I revere for their manliness, and love for their tenderness, I may speak to you with confidence and say—I respect manhood. I love it when it aspires to the high destiny which God has opened to it. And it is because I have confidence in manhood, that I am here to press upon it the claims of womanhood. What we want for woman is the means of education, that she may understand and be able to meet her responsibilities.

We are told very much of "Woman's *Mission*." Well, every mission supposes a missionary. Every missionary whom God sends out, every being who is called of God to labor in the vineyard of humanity, recognizes his call before the world does. Not the world—not even God's chosen people—recognized the mission of his son, till he had proclaimed that mission and sealed it with his dying testimony. And the world has not yet fully recognized the saving power of the

mission of Jesus Christ. Now if woman has a mission, she must first feel the struggle of the missionary in her own soul, and reveal it to her brother man, before the world will comprehend her claims, and accept her mission. Let her, then, say to man, "Here, God has committed to me the little tender infant to be developed in *body* and *mind* to the maturity of manhood, womanhood, and I am ignorant of the means for accomplishing either. Give me knowledge, instruction, that I may develope its powers, prevent disease, and teach it the laws of its mental and physical organism." It is you, fathers, husbands, who are responsible for their instruction; your happiness is equally involved with ours. Yourselves must reap the harvest of our ignorance or knowledge. If we suffer, you suffer also; both must suffer or rejoice in our mutual offspring.

I have introduced this subject of woman's responsibilities, that I might, if possible, impress upon you a conviction of the expediency of yielding our right to the means that will enable us to be the helpers of men, in the true sense of helpers. A gentleman said to me not long since, "I like your woman's rights, since I find it is the right of women to be good for something and help their husbands." Now I do not understand the term helpmeet, as applied to woman, to imply all that has come to be regarded as within its signification. I do not understand that we are at liberty to help men to the devil. (Loud cheering.) I believe it is our mission to help him heavenward, to the full development and right enjoyment of his being.

I would say in reference to the rights of woman, it is apt to be forgotten that, as the mother of the race, her rights are the rights of men also—the rights of her *sons*. As a mother, I may speak to you, freemen, *fathers* of the rights of my sons—of every mother's sons—to the most perfect and vigorous development of their energies, which the mother can secure to them by the application, and through the use of *all* her God-given powers of body or of mind. It is in behalf of our sons, the future men of the Republic, as well as for our daughters, its future mothers, that we claim the full development of our energies by education, and legal protection in the control of all the issues and profits of ourselves, called *property*.

As a parent, I have educated myself with reference to the wants of my children, that if, by the bereavements of life, I am left their sole parent, I can train them to be good and useful citizens. Such bereavement *has* left me the sole parent of sons by a first marriage.

And how do the laws of the State protect the right of these sons to their mother's fostering care? The laws say that, having married again, I am a *legal nonentity* and cannot "*give bonds*" for the faithful discharge of my maternal duties; therefore I shall not be their guardian. Having, in the first instance, robbed me of the property qualification for giving bonds by alienating my right to the control of my own earnings, the State makes its own injustice the ground for defrauding myself and children of the mutual benefits of our God-ordained relations; and others, destitute of every qualification and motive which my mother's love insures to them, may "give bonds" and become the legal guardians of my children!

I address myself to you, *fathers*, I appeal to every man who has lived a half century, if the *mother* is not the most faithful guardian of her children's interests? If you were going on a long journey, to be absent for years, in the prosecution of business, or in the army or navy, would you exclude your wives from the care and guardianship of your children? Would you place them and the means for their support in any other hands than the mother's? If you would, *you have married beneath yourselves.* (Cheers.) Then I ask you, how it happens that when you die your estates are cut up, and your children and the means for their support consigned to others' guardianship by laws, which yourselves have made or sworn to defend? Do you reply that women are not qualified by education for the business transactions involved in such guardianship? It is for this I ask that they may be educated. Yourselves must educate your wives in the conduct of your business. My friends, *love* is the best teacher in the world. Fathers, husbands, you do not know how fast you can teach, nor what apt scholars you will find in your wives and daughters, if, with loving confidence, you call them to your aid and teach them those things in which they can aid you, and acquire the knowledge which is "power," to benefit those they love. Would it not soothe your sick bed, would it not pluck thorns from your dying pillow, to confide in your wife that she could conduct the business, on which your family relies for support, and in case of your death, keep your children together and educate them to go out into the world with habits of self-reliance and self-dependence? And do you know that, in withholding from your companions the knowledge and inducements which would fit them thus to share your cares and relieve you in the emergencies of business, you deny them the richest rewards of affection? for "it *is* more blessed to give than to receive." Do you know that they would only cling the closer to you in the stern conflicts of life, if they were thus taught that you do not undervalue their devotion and despise their ability? Call woman to your side, in the loving confidence of equal interests and equal responsibilities, and she will never fail you.

But I would return to woman's responsibilities and the laws that alienate her means to discharge them. And here let me call your attention to my position, that *the law which alienates the wife's right to the control of her own property, her own earnings, lies at the foundation of all her social and legal wrongs.* I have already shown you how the alienation of this right defrauds her of the legal guardianship of her children, in case of the father's death. I need not tell you, who see it every day in the wretched family of the drunkard, that it defrauds her of the means of discharging her responsibilities to her children and to society during the husband's life, when he proves recreant to his obligations, and consumes her earnings in the indulgence of idle and sinful habits. I know it is claimed by many, as a reason why this law should not be disturbed, that it is only the wives of reckless and improvident husbands who suffer under its operation.

But, friends, I stand here prepared to show that, as an unjust law of general application, it is even more fruitful of suffering to the wives of what are called *good* husbands; husbands who love and honor their wives while living, but, dying, leave them and their maternal sympathies to the dissecting knife of the law. I refer you to the legal provision for the widow. The law gives her the *use* only of one third of the estate, which they have accumulated by their joint industry. I speak of the real estate; for in the majority of estates, the personal property is expended in paying the debts and meeting the expenses of settlement. Now I appeal to any man here, whose estate is sufficient to support either or both in comfort, and give them Christian burial, and yet is so limited that the *use* of one third of it will support neither, whether his wife's interests are equally protected with his own, by the laws which "settle" his estate in the event of his dying first? Let me tell you a story to illustrate the "support" which, it is claimed, compensates the wife for the alienation of her earnings to the control of the husband. In my native town lived a single sister, of middle age. She had accumulated something, for she was capable in all the handicrafts pursued by women of her class.

She married a worthy man, poor in this world's goods, and whose children were all settled in homes of their own. She applied her means, and by the persevering use of her faculties, they secured a snug home, valued at some five hundred dollars, he doing what his feeble health permitted towards the common interest. In the course of years he died, and two thirds of that estate was divided among *his* grown-up children; one third remaining to her. No, she could only have the *use* of one third, and must keep it in good repair,—the *law* said so! The *use* of two hundred dollars in a homestead, on condition of "*keeping it in good repair*," was the *legal* pittance of this poor woman, to whom, with the infirmities of age, had come the desolation of utter bereavement! The old lady patched and toiled, beautiful in her scrupulous cleanliness. The neighbors remembered her, and many a choice bit found its way to her table. At length she was found in her bed paralyzed; and never to the day of her death—three years—could she lift her hand or make known the simplest want of her natnre; and yet her countenance was agonized with the appeals of a clear and sound intellect. And now, friends, how did the laws support and protect this poor widow? I will tell you: *They set her up at auction, and struck her off to the man who had a heart to keep her at the cheapest rate!* Three years she enjoyed the pauper's support, then died, and when the decent forms of a pauper's burial were over, *that third* was divided—as had been the other two thirds—among her husband's "well-to-do" children. (Great sensation.) And is it for *such* protection, that the love of fathers, brothers, husbands, "represents" woman in the Legislative Halls of the freest people on earth! Oh, release to us our own, that we may protect ourselves, and we will bless you! If this old lady had died first, the laws would have protected her husband in appropriating the entire estate to his comfort or his *pleasure!* I asked a man, learned and experienced in jurisprudence by a half century's discharge of the duties of Legislator, Administrator, Guardian, and Probate Judge, why the widow is denied absolute control of her third, their being no danger of creating "separate interests" when the husband is in his grave? He replied that it was to prevent a second husband from obtaining possession of the property of a first, to the defrauding of his children, which would be the result if the widow married again. Here the law giving the control of the wife's earnings to the husband, is made legal reason for cutting her off at his death with a pittance,

so paltry, that if too infirm to eke out a support by labor, she beeomes a *pauper!* For if the law did not give the wife's earnings to the control and possession of a *first* husband, it would have no such excuse for excluding the second husband, or for defrauding herself, and her children by a subsequent marriage, of her earnings in the estate of the first husband. But having legalized the husband's claim to the wife's earnings, by a law of universal application, our legislators have come to legislate for widows on the ground that they have *no property rights in the estates which have swallowed up their entire earnings!* They have come to give the preference of rights to the children of the husband; and *sons*, as well as daughters, are defrauded, legislated out of their interest in their mother's property. For, the estate not being divided when the *wife* dies, the earnings of a first wife are divided among the children of a second wife, to the prejudice of the children of the first wife. We ask for *equal* property rights, by the repeal of the laws which divert the earnings of the wife from *herself and her heirs.*

O men! in the enjoyment of well-secured property rights, you beautify your snug homesteads, and say within your hearts, "Here I may sit under my own vine and fig-tree; here have I made the home of my old age." And it never occurs to you that no such blissful feeling of security finds rest in the bosom of your wives. The wife of a small householder reflecis that if her husband should be taken from her by death, that home must be divided, and a corner in the kitchen, a corner in the garret, and a "*privilege*" in the cellar, be set off to her *use* as if she were a *rat!* (Great Sensation.) Or if she chooses the alternative of renting her fractional accommodations, and removing to other quarters, her sweet home associations—all that is left of her wedded love—are riven. The fireside that had been hallowed by family endearments, the chair vacant to other eyes, but to hers occupied by the loved husband still, all are desecrated by the law that drives her from the home which she had toiled and sacrificed to win for herself and loved ones, and she goes out to die under a vine and fig-tree strange to her affections; and it may be, as in the case before mentioned, to find them wither away like Jonah's gourd, in absolute pauperism!

But I well tell you a story illustrating how women view these things. It is not long since a gentleman of my acquaintance, who had often been heard to give his wife credit for having contributed equally to

his success in laying up a property, was admonished by disease of the propriety of making a "will." He called his wife to him and addressed her thus: "My dear, I have been thinking that the care of a third of my estate will be a burden to you, and that it will be better for you to have an annuity equal to your personal wants, and divide the rest among the children. The boys will supply you, if you should from any unforeseen circumstance need more. You can trust our boys to do what is right." "O yes, my dear," replied the wife, "we have excellent boys. You can intrust to them the care of *your* business; and I could let them act as *my* agents in the care of my thirds. And I think, husband, that will be better. For there is this to be considered: we have other children, and differences obtain in their circumstances. You have seen these things, and when one and another needed, you have opened your purse and given them help. When you are gone, there may still occur these opportunities for aiding them, and I should be glad to have it in my power to do as you have done. Besides, I have sometimes thought you had not done so well by the *girls*, and it would be very grateful to my feelings to make up the difference from my share of what our mutual efforts have accumulated."

Now, brothers, I appeal to you, whether you do not as much enjoy conferring benefits as receiving them? You have a wife whom you love. You present her with a dress, perhaps. And how rich you feel, that your love can give gifts! Women like to receive presents of dresses; I enjoy to have my husband give me dresses. (Laughter.) And women like to give presents to their husbands—a pair of slippers or something of that sort. But they have no money of their own, and their thought is, "If I give my husband this, he will say to himself, 'It's of no account; it all comes out of my pocket in the end!'" That is the feeling which rankles in the hearts of wives, whose provident husbands do not dream that they are not better content with gifts than their rights. We like, all of us, to give good gifts to those we love; but we do not want our husbands to *give* us something to give back to them. We wish to feel, and have *them* feel, that our own good right hands have won for them the gift prompted by our affection; and that we are conferring, from our own resources, the same pleasure and happiness which they confer on us by benefits given. (Great cheering.)

[Nay, my friends, I thank you for the expression of your sympathy; but I can read your approval in your countenances, and need no other tokens of your encouragement. I shall be satisfied if I do not see you running out.]

But I had not exhausted the wrongs growing out of this alienation of the wife's right to her earnings. There is a law in Vermont—and I think it obtains in its leading features in most, if not all the States of the Union—giving to the widow, whose husband dies childless, (she may or may not be the mother of children by a former marriage,) a certain portion of the estate, and the remaining portion to his heirs. Till the autumn of 1850, a Vermont widow, in such cases, had only one half the estate, however small; the other half was set off to her husband's heirs, if he had any; but if he had none, the *State put it in its own treasury*, leaving the widow to a pauper's fate, unless her own energies could eke out a living by economy and hard toil! A worthy woman in the circle of my acquaintance, whose property at marriage paid for a homestead worth five hundred dollars, saw this law divide a half of it to the brothers and sisters of her husband at his death, and herself is left in her old age, to subsist on the remaining half! In 1850, this law was so amended, that the widow can have the whole property, if it be not more than one thousand dollars, and the half of any sum over that amount; the other half going to the husband's family; or if he happen not to leave any fiftieth cousin Tom, Dick or Harry, in the Old World or the New, she may have it *all!* Our legislators tell us it is right to give the legal control of our earnings to the husband, because, "in law," he is held responsible for our support, and is obliged to pay our debts (?) and *must have our earnings to do it with!* Ah, I answer, but why don't the State give us some security for support during *our* life; or if it looses the husband from all obligation to see that we are supported after he is in his grave, why, like a just and shrewd business agent, does it not release to us the "*consideration*" of that support—our earnings in the property he leaves at his death?

I wish to speak still further on this point, if opportunity is given. I wish to show that the law taking from the wife the control of her earnings is a fruitful source of divorces. That to regain control of her earnings for the support of her children, many a woman feels compelled to sue for a *divorce*.

I would repeat that I am not here in my own behalf, but in the hope that I can say some thing for the benefit of those, who must suf-

suffer, because they cannot speak and show that they have wrongs to be redressed. It would ill become us, who are protected by love, or shielded by circumstances, to hold our peace, while our sisters and their dependent children are mutilated in their hopes and their entire powers of existence, by wrongs against which we can protest till the legislators of the land shall hear and heed.

I was speaking of woman's right to her self-created resources as necessary means for the discharge of her duties. Created free agents that we might render to God an acceptable and voluntary service, our Maker holds each human being accountable for the discharge of individual, personal responsibilities. Man cannot come up to the full measure of his own responsibilities; much less can he discharge his own and woman's too. Hence, in taking from woman any of the means which God has given her ability to acquire, he takes from her the means which God has given her for the discharge of her own duties, and thereby adds to the burthen of his own undischarged responsibilities. In taking from us our means of self-development, men expect us to discharge our duties, even as the Jews were expected to make brick without straw. If we are not fitted to be capable wives and mothers—as contended by a gentleman on the stand yesterday—if we make poor brick, it is because our brother man has stolen our straw. Give us back our straw, brothers—there is plenty of it—and we will make you *good* brick. Brick we must make—men say so—then *give* us our straw; we cannot *take* it. We are suffering; the race is suffering from the ill performance of our duties. We claim that man has proved himself incompetent to be the judge of our needs. His laws concerning our interests show that his intelligence fails to prescribe means for the discharge of our duties. We are the best judges of the duties as well as the qualifications appropriate to our own sphere, and should hold in our own hands, in our own right, means for acquiring the one and comprehending the other.

At the time of the morning adjournment, I had spoken of woman's legal disabilities as wife and mother; and adverted to the law, which diverts from the wife the control of her own earnings, as a fruitful source of divorces. Increasing facilities for divorce are regarded by a majority of Christian men as significant of increasing immorality, and tending to weaken the sanctity of the marriage relation. But an examination of legislative proceedings will show that sympathy for suffering woman is the real source of these increasing facilities;

and I am frank to say, that I consider man's growing consciousness of the wrongs to which wives and their helpless children are subject, by the laws which put it in the power of the husband and father to wrest from them the very necessaries of life, consuming their sole means of support—the earnings of the mother—as heralding a good time coming, when every woman, as well as every man, "may sit under her own vine." Let me illustrate by relating one, among many incidents of the kind, which have fallen under my observation.

In traveling, some eighteen years ago, across the Green Mountains from Albany, a gentleman requested my interest in behalf of a young woman, whose history he gave me before placing her under my care, as a fellow-passenger. Said he: She was born here: is an orphan and the mother of two young children, with no means of support bu her earnings. She was a capable girl, and has been an irreproachable wife. From a love of the social glass, her husband in a few years became a drunkard and a brute; neglected his business, and expended their entire living. She struggled bravely, but in vain. At length, just before the birth of her youngest child, he pawned the clothing which she had provided for herself and babes, sold her only bed, and drove her into the streets to seek from charity aid in her hour of trial. After her recovery she went to service, keeping her children with her. But he pursued her from place to place, annoying her employers, collecting her wages by process of law, and taking possession of every garment not on her own or children's persons. Under these circumstances, and by the help of friends who pitied her sorrows, she, with her hatless and shoeless children, was flying from their "*legal protector*," half clothed, to New Hampshire, where friends were waiting to give her employment in a factory till a year's residence should enable her to procure a divorce! Now, friends, if under New York laws this poor woman had enjoyed legal control of her own earnings, she might have retained her first home, supported her children, and, happy as a mother, endured hopefully the burden of unrequited affection, instead of flying to New Hampshire to regain possession of her alienated property rights, by the aid of "divorce facilities."

But, alas! not yet have I exhausted that fountain of wrongs growing out of the alienation of the wife's property rights. It gives to children *criminals* for guardians, at the same time that it severs what God hath joined together—the mother and her child! By the laws of all these United States, the father is in all cases the legal guardian

of the child, in preference to the mother; hence, in cases of divorce for the criminal conduct of the father, the children are confided, by the natural operation of th laws, to the guardianship of the criminal party. I have a friend who, not long since, procured a divorce from her husband—a libertine and a drunkard—and by the power of *law* he wrested from her their only child, a son of tender age. Think of this, fathers, mothers! It is a sad thing (?) to sever the marriage relation when it has become a curse—a demoralizing thing; but what is it to sever the relation between mother and child, when that relation is a blessing to both, and to society? What is it to commit the tender boy to the training of a drunken and licentious father? The State appoints guardians for children physically orphaned; and much more should it appoint guardians for children morally orphaned. When it uses its power to imprison and hang the *man*, it is surely responsible for the moral training of the *boy!* But to return: I have asked learned judges, why the State decrees that the father should retain the children, thus throwing upon the innocent mother the penalty which should fall upon the guilty party only? Say they, "It is because the father *has the property;* it would not be *just* (*?*) to burden the mother with the support of *his* children." O justice, how art thou perverted! Here again is the unrighteous alienation of the wife's earnings made the reason for robbing the suffering mother of all that is left to her of a miserable marriage—her children! I appeal to Christian men and women, who would preserve the marriage relation inviolate, by discouraging increased divorce facilities, if prevention of the necessity be not the better and more hopeful course?—prevention by releasing to the wife means for the independent discharge of her duties as a mother. And I appeal to all present, whether, sacred as they hold the marriage relation, Christian men have not proved to the world that there is a something regarded by them as even more sacred—the *loaf!* The most scrupulous piety cites Bible authority for severing the marriage tie; but when has piety or benevolence put forth its hand to divide to helpless and dependent woman an equal share of the estate which she has toiled for, suffered for, in behalf of her babes, as she would never have done for herself—only to be robbed of both? If the ground of the divorce be the *husband's* infidelity, the law allows him to retain the children and whole estate; it being optional with the court whether the wife shall receive (in answer to her prayer to that effect) a pittance called alimony, to keep starvation at bay. If the babe at her breast is decreed to her from its helplessness, it is at her request formally laid before the Court; and the Court has no power even to decree a corresponding pittance for its support. The law leaves her one hope of bread for her old age which should not be forgotten—if *he dies first* she is entitled to dower! But let the wife's infidelity be the ground of divorce, and the laws send her out into the world, childless, without alimony, and cut off from her right of dower! What a contrast! He, the brutal husband, sits in the criminal's bench to draw a premium, be rid of an incumbrance: for what cares he for the severing of a tie that had ceased to bind him to his wife, that perhaps divided between him and a more coveted companion! If we *are* the *weaker* sex, oh, give us, we pray you, equal protection with the stronger sex!

Now, my friends, you will bear me witness that I have said nothing about woman's right to vote, or make laws. I have great respect for manhood. I wish to be able to continue to respect it. And when I listen to Fourth of July orations and the loud cannon, and reflect that these are tributes of admiration paid to our fathers because they compelled freedom for themselves and sons from the hand of oppression and power, I look forward with greater admiration on their sons who, in the good time coming, will have won for themselves the unappropriated glory of having given justice to the physically weak—to those who could not, if they would, and would not, if they could, *compel* it from the hands of fathers, brothers, husbands, and sons! I labor in hope; for I have faith that when men come to value their own rights, as means of human happiness, rather than of paltry gain, they will feel themselves more honored in releasing, than in retaining the inalienable rights of woman.

Brothers, you ask us to accept the protection of your LOVE, and the law says that it is sufficient for us, whether it feeds or robs us of our bread. You admit that woman exceeds man in self-sacrificing love; her devotion to you has passed into a proverb. Yet for all this, you refuse to intrust your interests to her love. You do not feel safe in your interests without the protection of equal laws. You refuse to trust even the mother's love with the interests of her children! How, then, do you ask of us—you who will not trust your interests in the love of a mother, wife, daughter, or sister—why do you ask of

us to dispense with the protection of equal laws, and accept instead the protection of man's affection?

And now, I would offer in conclusion a few thoughts on education. I would say to my sisters, lest they be discouraged under existing disabilities from attempting it,—We can educate ourselves. It may be that you hesitate, from a supposed inferiority of intellect. Now I have never troubled myself to establish woman's intellectual equality. The inequality of educational facilities forbids us to sustain such a position by facts. But I have long since disposed of this question to my own satisfaction, and perhaps my conclusion will inspire you with confidence to attempt equal—I would hope *superior*—attainments, for man falls short of the intelligence within reach of his powers. We all believe that the Creator of us all is both omniscient and omnipotent—wise and able to adapt means to the ends he had in view. We hold ourselves created to sustain certain relations as intelligent beings, and that God has endowed us with capabilities equal to the discharge of the duties involved in these relations. Now let us survey woman's responsibilities within the narrowest sphere to which any common-sense man would limit her offices. As a mother, her powers mould and develope humanity, intellectual, moral, and physical. Next to God, woman is the creator of the race as it is, and as it shall be. I ask, then, has God created woman man's inferior? If so, He has been false to his wisdom, false to his power, in creating an inferior being for a superior work! But if it be true, as all admit, that woman's *responsibilities* are equal to man's, I claim that God has endowed her with *equal powers* for their discharge.

And how shall we develope these powers? My sisters, for your encouragement, I will refer to my own experience in this matter. I claim to be self-educated. Beyond a single year's instruction in a High School for young men and women, I have enjoyed no public educational facilities, but the Common School which our Green Mountain State opens to all her sons and daughters. Prevented by physical debility from longer availing myself of the severe discipline of a classical school, and nerved by faith in my ability to achieve equal attainments with my brother man, I resorted to books and the study of human nature, with direct reference to the practical application of my influence and my acquirements to my woman's work—the development of the immortal spirit for the accomplishment of human destiny. And my experience is, that the world in which we live and

act, and by which we are impressrd, is the best school for woman as well as man. Practical life furnishes the best discipline for our powers. It qualifies us to take life as we find it, and leave it better than we found it. I have been accustomed to look within my own heart to learn the springs of human action. By it I have read woman, read man; and the result has been a fixed resolution, an indomitable courage to do with my might what my hands find to do for God and humanity. And in *doing* I have best learned my ability to accomplish; my capacity to enjoy. In the light of experience, I would say to you, my sisters, the first thing is to apply ourselves to the intelligent discharge of present duties, diligently searching out and applying all knowledge that will qualify us for higher and extended usefulness. Be always *learners*, and don't forget to teach. As individuals, as mothers, we must first achieve a knowledge of the laws of our physical and mental organisms; for these are the material which we work upon and the instruments by which we work; and to do our work well we must understand and be able to apply both. Then we need to understand the tenure of our domestic and social relations,—the laws by which we are linked to our kind. But I cannot leave this subject without briefly calling your attention to another phase of education.

Yourselves can judge if I had not a personal interest in the matter—but early in life my attention was called to examine the value of beauty and accomplishments as permanent grounds of affection. I could not believe that God had created so many homely women, and suffered all to lose their beauty in the very maturity of their powers, and yet made it our duty to spend our best efforts in trying to look pretty. We all desire to be loved; and can it be that we have no more lasting claims to admiration, than that beauty and those accomplishments which serve us only in the springtime of life? Surely our days of dancing and musical performance are soon over, when musical instruments of sweeter tone cry, "Mother." (Loud cheers.) What, then, shall we do for admiration, when stricken in years? Has not God endowed us with some lasting hold upon the affections? My sisters, I can only find lasting charms in that thorough culture of the mind and heart, which will enable us to win upon man's higher and better nature. If you have beauty and accomplishments, these address themselves to man's lower nature—his passions; and when age has robbed you of the one, and him of the other, you are left

unloved and unlovely! Cultivate, then, your powers of mind and heart, that you may become necessary to his better and undying sympathies. Aid him in all the earnest work of life; and secure his aid in your self-development for noble purposes, by impressing upon him that you are in earnest. Sell your jewelry, abate your expenditures for show; and appropriate your means, and time spent in idle visiting, to the culture of your souls. Then will his *soul* respond to your worth, and the ties that bind you endure through time and make you companions in eternity!

Let the daughters be trained for their responsibilities; and though you may say, "We do not know whom they will marry, whether a lawyer, a doctor, or a farmer," if you educate them for practical life by giving them general useful knowledge, their husbands can teach them the details of their mutual business interests, as easily as the new responsibilities of maternity will teach them the ways and means of being qualified to discharge *its* duties.

Educate your daughters for practical life, and you have endowed them better than if you had given them fortunes. When a young girl of fourteen, I said to my father: Give me education, instead of a "setting out in the world," if you can give me but one. If I marry and am poor, I can educate my children myself. If my husband should be unfortunate, the sheriff can take his goods, but no creditor can attach the capital invested here — [Touching her forehead.] (Loud cheers.) And, friends, my education has been not only *bread*, but an inexhaustible fund of enjoyment, in all the past of my life.

SPEECH

OF

MRS. M. E. J. GAGE,

AT THE WOMEN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION,

Held at Syracuse, Sept. 1852.

* * * * * This Convention has assembled to discuss the subject of Woman's Rights, and form some settled plan of action for the future. Let Syracuse sustain her name for radicalism. While so much is said of the inferior intellect of woman, it is by a strange absurdity conceded that very many eminent men owe their station in life to their mothers. Women are now in the situation of the mass of mankind, a few years since, when science and learning were in the hands of the priests, and property was held by vassalage; the Pope and the priests claimed to be, not only the teachers, but the guides of the people; the laity were not permitted to examine for themselves; education was held to be unfit for the masses, while the tenure of their landed property was such as kept them in a continual state of dependence on their feudal lord.

* * * It is but a short time, since the most common rudiments of education were deemed sufficient for any woman; could she but read tolerably, and write her own name, it was enough.

* * * Trammeled as women have been, by might and custom, there are still many shining examples, which serve as beacon lights of what may be attained by genius, labor, energy, and perseverance combined. "The longer I live in the world," says Goethe, "the more I am certain, that the great difference between the great, and insignificant, is energy, invincible determination; an honest purpose once fixed, and then victory." Sir Isaac Newton said of himself, "that if ever he had been able to do anything, he had effected it by patient thinking only"; and we are all familiar with the anecdote

which narrates the starting occasion of that train of thought. Ik Marvel, in his Dream Life, says, "there is no genius in life, like the genius of energy and industry; that all the traditions, so current among young men, that certain great characters have wrought their greatness by inspiration, as it were, grow out of a sad mistake; and that there are no rivals so formidable, as those earnest, determined minds, which reckon the value of every hour, and which achieve eminence by persistent application."

Although so much is said against the unfitness of woman for public life, it can be seen, from Semiramis to Victoria, that she has a peculiar fitness for governing. In poetry, Sappho was honored by the title of the tenth Muse. Helena Lucretio Corano, a Venetian lady, who lived in the seventeenth century, was a woman of such rare scientific attainments, that the most illustrious persons, in passing through Venice, were more anxious to see her than all the curiosities of the city. She devoted herself, with intense perseverance, to literary pursuits; was made a Doctor, and received the title of Unalterable; and, with all, combined an unostentatious humility. She was but thirty-eight, when she died. Mary Cunitz, a native of Silesia, was one of the greatest geniuses of the sixteenth century. She understood many languages was skilled in history, poetry, painting, music, and medicine; and these were but amusements. She particularly applied herself to Mathematics, and especially to Astronomy. She was ranked as one of the most able astronomers of her time, and formed astronomical tables, that acquired for her a great reputation. Another lady of the seventeenth century, Anne Maria Schureman, succeeded admirably in sculpture, engraving, and music. She was also learned in various languages; but in miniature painting she particularly excelled.

Constantia Grierson, an Irish girl, of poor parentage, was celebrated for her literary attainments, although she died at the early age of twenty-seven.

With the learning, energy, and perseverance of Lady Jane Grey, Mary, and Elizabeth, all are familiar. Mrs. Montague is spoken of by Cowper, as standing at the head of all that is called learned, and, that every critic veiled his bonnet at her superior judgment. Joannie Baillie has been termed the female Shakspeare. Miss Caroline Herschell shares the fame of her brother, as an astronomer, having herself discovered planets and comets. The greatest triumphs of the present age, in the drama, music, and literature, have been achieved by females, among whom may be mentioned Miss Cushman, Jenny

Lind, Miss Chesebro, Miss Carey, Miss Fennimore Cooper, Grace Greenwood, Mrs. Stowe, and Margaret Fuller Ossoli. Mrs. Somerville's renown has long been spread over both hemispheres, as one of the first astronomers of the present age. With this, she combines various literary acquirements; and to those who think them incompatible with feminine duties, it can be shown that she discharged, in an eminent degree, every social and family requirement.

To those who say women do not desire their rights, or think they have them already, I would say, converse with any intelligent women on the subject, and you will not find them indifferent. Woman feels deeply, keenly, her degradation, but is bound by the iron hand of custom which so long has exercised tyrant rule over her. An ignorant woman is virtually in the same condition as the peasant who thinks it right that a king shall rule over him; and to keep him content, he is made to believe it would be blasphemy and treason in him to call in question this right.

* * * I honor those noble women, who have been willing to pioneer in the path of duty and right, and bear the obloquy which always has, and always will, follow the first promulgation of unaccustomed truths: so suffered the martyrs of old; so suffers Kossuth. Obloquy is said to be a necessary ingredient of all true glory; it might be said to be a necessary concomitant of all great truths.

* * * The question is, how can this mental and moral lethargy, which now binds the generality of women, be shaken off? They are educated to a state of entire dependence; taught before marriage, to expect a support from their fathers, and after, from their husbands; to suppress their convictions, if contrary to those of their fathers, brothers and husbands, and to allow others to act for them. This state of listlessness follows as a natural consequence.

Self-reliance is one of the first lessons to be taught our daughters; they should be educated with our sons, and equally with them taught to look forward to some independent means of support—either to one of the professions, or the business best fitted to exercise their talents. Marriage has been looked to as the acme of hope, by women; and why? Because all lucrative and honorable means of support have been seized by men, and women have been driven to marriage, as a necessity. To what more fertile cause can be attributed the uncongeniality frequently existing between married parties? Women have been instructed in showy accomplishments, while literature

has been nearly cast aside, as unnecessary; men have been educated not to expect companionship in their wives. At the proposition of equal education and rights, man starts up and says, if women are admitted as equals, you ruin domestic harmony. If a woman is permitted to think for herself, forsooth, she may disagree in her views with her husband, and family peace be destroyed. A fig for such reasoning! Were refined, intelligent conversation in the home circle appreciated, club-rooms, secret societies, taverns, and stores, where man's leisure is generally spent, would be less frequented; for where all are educated, it is a disgrace to be ignorant, and time now wasted, would be spent in improvement.

* * * Being placed in a position compelling them to act, has caused many persons to discover talents in themselves they were before unaware of possessing. Great emergencies produce great leaders, seemingly fitted by Providence, while it is but the arousing of some energy, hitherto dormant.

* * * Those who fear woman's incapacity to cope with the trials of life, should consider what is *now* actually thrust upon her, by existing customs. Thousands of women are driven to a life of pollution, by the insufficiency of wages in those departments of labor which she is legitimately permitted to enter. Let any who doubt, read the statistics of London, New York, or any other great city—or the confessions of the poor creatures themselves! One, (in a report, a while since, on the London seamstresses,) says, "*if I was never allowed to speak more, it was the meager pay I received by labor, that led me to go astray.* I struggled very hard to keep myself chaste but found I could not get food and clothing for myself and mother. Could I honestly have earned enough to have subsisted upon—to feed and clothe myself, I should have remained virtuous." * * * Nor is the condition of this class much better in our own country. In the reports of those missionaries who have recently directed their efforts of reform to the vilest sinks of infamy in New York, we perceive the cause which operates to keep the ranks of iniquity filled. Earning but a scanty subsistence, totally inadequate to provide the commonest necessaries of life, these women have, as constant accompaniments, want, labor unceasing, broken rest, and in the end a chance of starvation. With nothing to cheer, nothing to encourage, and driven by task-masters as merciless as those of Pharaoh, or of the Southern cotton and rice plantations; while opposed to this, is

offered a life of ease, plenty, society, and amusement. Instead of the damp, dark, confined, noisome room, occupied by the sewing girl, are presented to her imagination, large, high, airy, and commodious dwellings, adorned with flowers, and enlivened by music; and is it strange she falls?

* * * Custom has been, and is now, the mistress who plants her foot on the too willing neck of prostrate womanhood. Of custom, which has been termed unwritten law, "it is our first duty," says Blackstone, "to make enquiries as to its legality; for if it is not a good custom, it ought no longer to be used." In all governments, it would be the dictate of policy, for the governed to submit to what the governors decree, provided they decree nothing inconsistent with their natural rights; but as soon as any government stretches its powers so far as to destroy the natural rights, to which the members of a community are entitled, these last are justified, by all the laws of God and man, in opposing such a government. We claim, as a natural right, the same privilege of acting as we think best, which is accorded to the other half of mankind—a right bestowed upon us by God, when he created man in his own image, after his own likeness, both male and female, and gave *them* equal dominion: Genesis, 1st chap., 26th, 27th, and 28th verses.

* * * Although our country makes great professions in regard to general liberty, yet the right to particular liberty, natural equality, and personal independence, of two great portions of this country, is treated, from custom, with the greatest contempt; and color in the one instance, and sex in the other, are brought as reasons why they should be so derided; and the mere mention of such, natural rights is frowned upon, as tending to promote sedition and anarchy.

* * * Let us look at the rights it is boasted women now possess. After marriage, the husband and wife are considered as one person in law, which I hold to be false, from the very laws applicable to married parties. Were it so, the act of one would be as binding as the acts of the other, and wise legislators would not meet to enact statutes defining the peculiar rights of each; were it so, a woman could not legally be a man's inferior. Such a thing would be a veritable impossibility. One half of a person can not be under the protection or direction of the other half. Blackstone says, "a woman may indeed be attorney for her husband, for that implies no separa-

tion from, but rather a representation of her lord. And a husband may also bequeath any thing to his wife, by will; for it can not take effect, till the coverture is determined by his death." After stating at considerable length, the reasons showing their unity, the learned commentator proceeds to cut the knot, and show they are not one, but are considered as two persons, one superior, and one inferior—and not only so, but the inferior, in the eye of the law, as acting from compulsion. A wife can not, by will, devise lands to her husband; for at the time of such act, she is supposed to be under his coercion, and therefore all deeds executed, and acts done by her, during her coverture, are void, except it be those where she is solely and directly examined, to learn if her act be voluntary! How degrading! how humiliating! and carrying on the face of it, crying injustice, is the position woman is compelled to assume, when thus taken aside, by the magistrate, and asked, "Do you sign this deed of your own free will and accord, and not by fear and compulsion of your husband?" Out upon it! Why the very stones would cry out, should woman longer hold her peace.

Every father has a right to bind, or give away, any of his children, while minors, without the consent, or even knowledge of the mother; and when he dies, she is not considered a competent guardian for the child, and the father can, by Part 2d, Title 3, Sec. 1st, of Vol. 2d, Revised Statutes, in his will, or deed, exclude the mother from participation in such guardianship; for though called one, the father alone has legal power over the children. A mother, as such, is entitled to no power over her own children.

A woman's personal property, by marriage becomes absolutely her husband's, which, at his death, he may give away from her; while at her death she has no such power, or any power, of disposing of his personal property. The law very kindly allows a woman her wearing apparel, as well as jewels and ornaments, provided the latter were not disposed of by her husband, previous to his death; and provided the children do not live with her, she is allowed one bed, bedstead, and bedding.

* * * Man may not only bid her stand aside from all that is lucrative, but when, by patient industry, she has accumulated a sustenance, he seizes the control of the whole. Even now, a case arises to mind, of a woman who, by daily washing, had earned enough to buy a house for herself and dissipated husband. A short time since,

the husband was taken sick, and not being expected to live, bequeathed the whole to his brother; and all the wife could get, was the interest of one third, during her natural life. And where was her redress? She had none. A *shame* on such laws! a SHAME on such men. A woman not only (till recently) lost all right of holding property by marriage, but she lost her personal identity. In this act, she becomes absorbed in another. At the death of her husband, she is left a queen, or a beggar, as the option of her lord dictates; while, should she die first, she has no right to the disposition of any of the property accumulated by their united industry; for by Title 1st, Part 2d, Sec. 1st, 2d Vol. Revised Statutes, of this State, Idiots, persons of unsound mind, married women, and infants, are declared incompetent to devise real estate. *Well classed, truly!*

The present laws are deleterious to the moral sensibilities of both husband and wife. Woman has no inducement to prudence and industry, and she is obliged seemingly to acquiesce in the wishes of her husband, however repugnant to her, as the only means of obtaining, in even a small degree, her own; or she is allowed to follow her own plans and views as a favor, and not from the lack of power to compel her to do otherwise.

* * * In the present posture of our national affairs, when the instruments of power, although professedly in the hands of the people, are, in reality, lodged in the hands of a moiety, thereby forming an Aristocracy, rather than a Republic—what are we to expect, but that one portion of the nation will be sunk in ignorance and grovelling submission.

* * * We are invited to acquire a knowledge of government, not only by many immediate benefits, but by a multitude of future ones; and who can say it will not end in the full maturity of public happiness? Nothing is a stronger proof how natural the love of liberty is to mankind, than the efforts made to attain it. Let wives cast aside the thought that their highest duty consists in gratifying their husbands palates, by some delicacy; or listening with smiling countenance, to what he may please to relate of the day's occurrences, while placidly darning his stocking, with no higher ambition than to have it *well* done. I do not, by any means depreciate these necessary employments, in their proper place; but they should not be the chief business of their lives. The duty to please, devolves equally on both parties. Remember your duty to God, and your own sex, as well as

to man. Let us make such use of our talent, as to receive the plaudit of our Maker, of well done, good and faithful servant.

To mothers we look, especially to young mothers, for the instruction of their children in the principles of justice and right, and to see that equal justice is granted to both; not giving one every advantage, and according none to the other.

* * * We need not expect the concessions demanded by women will be peaceably granted; there will be a long moral warfare, before the citadel yields; in the meantime, let us take possession of the outposts. The public must be aroused to a full sense of the justice of our claims. Beside the duty of educating our children, so as to make the path of right, easy to their feet, is that of discussion, newspaper articles, petitions: all great reforms are gradual. Fear not any attempt to frown down the revolution already commenced; nothing is a more fertile aid of reform, than an attempt to check it; work on!

"Work sows the seed:
Even the *rock* may yield its flower:
No lot so hard, but human power,
Exerted to one end and aim,
May conquer fate, and capture fame!
Press on!

Pause not in fear:
Preach no despondıng, servile view—
What e'er thou will'st thy WILL may do.

Work on, and win!
Shall light from nature's depth arise,
And *thou*, whose mind can grasp the skies,
Sit down with fate, and idly rail?—
No—ONWARD! Let the Truth prevail!"

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W Bashurst

WOMAN'S RIGHTS TRACTS,...No. 8.

LETTER

FROM

ANGELINA GRIMKE WELD,

TO THE

WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION,

Held at Syracuse, Sept., 1852.

TO THE CONVENTION OF WOMEN, TO BE HELD AT SYRACUSE:

Not knowing, My Dear Friends, whether it will be possible for me to attend your Convention, I wish to say a few words to you on the subject of Organization, which I understand is to come up for discussion. It strikes me as very important that this topic should be thoroughly canvassed at the present sitting, and principles laid down which will serve as guides to our future course.

Organization is two-fold, Natural and Artificial, Divine and Human. Natural Organizations are based on the principle of Progression. Thus, the Solar System is governed by Laws which anticipate provide for, and control a ceaseless round of changes. In obedience to these laws, by very slow degrees, the embryotic planet condenses into earth and rocks, and becomes fitted to sustain vegetable and animal existence, first in their lower and then in their higher forms, ever providing for the untrammeled play of that Eternal Law of *Change*, which gives birth to, and nourishes the imperfect, only that it may bring it to perfection, and adorn it with that beauty which crowns the full maturity of every Natural and Divine Organization.

How *Change*, CHANGE seems the Omnipresent Stereotype of Nature. Look at the tree. At one time, nothing but an unsightly trunk and naked branches. Soon enrobed with verdure, it decks itself with blossoms, then casts them in frolic to the wind, and begins to push out the swelling fruit, which gradually ripens into ruddy maturity. This too it casts to the ground, and even its beauteous robe of green soon fades and falls: And, there it stands again, a bare, unsightly thing.

Look at the changes through which man passes, from infancy to childhood, to youth, to manhood; and then from maturity to the feebleness of age, until, at last, the spirit, absorbing into itself all the quickening power which once filled the body with life and activity, sunders the tie which bound them together, and rises into a higher life, a purer sphere.

Innumerable and intimate are the analogies between the inner and the outer—the Physical and the Spiritual world. Fixed laws govern the world of matter, organic and inorganic, the rock, the clod, the lofty tree, the exquisite and complex machinery of the human form—all are based upon the principle of decomposition and reorganization—a principle which contemplates and provides for continual *changes*. Hence these changes in structure do no violence to preceding states, but follow on as the legitimate results, the natural consequences of previous conditions—all are welcomed in their turn.

But Human or Artificial Organizations are not so. They are built upon the principle of *crystallization*—they *fix* the conditions of society—they seek to daguerreotype themselves, not on the present age only, but on future generations. They are to society what arsenic is to the body, *fixing* the condition of the stomach, it preserves it, but *destroys life*—stopping off all natural action in that organ, and forestalling all those changes which the welfare of the whole living fabric requires, it annihilates the vital principle itself. Hence the lifelessness of all organizations, as soon as the spirit of the age has died out of them, and re-organized itself in other forms, more befitting the requisitions of a new born era.

The world has witnessed a continued series of Revolutions and violent resistance to the insane effort to force upon men institutions which they had outgrown; when, if these Human Organizations had provided for that change of opinions—that birth of new ideas, which inevitably follows in the course of man's development, the natural unfolding of his perceptions, the bursting into bud, and blossom, and fruit, of the locked up energies of his intellectual and moral nature—how different would have been the result. A safety-valve would have been provided. Instead of the volcanic eruptions of human passion, which have deluged the world in blood; instead of Religious sects fighting down, with the faggot and the sword, the new forms of opinion which, in different ages, have grown upon the trunk and branches of Humanity, as naturally as the leaves and blossoms, and fruit appear upon the tree, at different stages of its development,

the old ideas would have dropped off from mind, as quietly as the blossom gives place to the fruit, and the leaf shrivels and falls when the sap, at the approach of winter, recedes from the outer integument to solidify the woody fibre, and garners itself in the root, to prepare for the fresh efflorescence of another spring.

Human organizations are based upon *external* laws. Hence they fetter and distort expanding mind. Those only are at home in them who are dwarfed and shriveled by them. The free, growing spirit feels the fetter, and often with a maddening sense of bondage spurns the chain.

This natural law of *change*, the element of all Progress, is paralysed by that *crystallization* to which artificial organizations ever tend. Such organizations, instead of providing for these changes, which necessarily occur in the progress of mind, do but limit development, and cast the character in a fixed mold.

Having glanced at the distinction between Natural and Artificial Organizations, I will suggest some objections to the latter on the ground of their practical working.

1. Every Organization has its Shibboleth, its boundary line, its tests of membership. All are too narrow for Humanity.

2. The tendency of Organization is to kill out the spirit which gave it birth, through its struggle to preserve itself from those changes by which the increasing light of every age modifies the institutions of the past.

3. Organizations do not protect the sacredness of the individual. Their legitimate tendency is to sink the individual in the mass, to sacrifice his rights, and immolate him upon the altar of some fancied good.

4. Freedom of thought is not nurtured and strengthened by Organization. Its office is to think for the masses, and cast public opinion in its own mold. It builds walls around itself for its own protection, thus enfeebling its members, by shutting out that natural and healthful collision with outside influences, which would quicken their own energy.

It is not to Organization that I object, but to an *Artificial one* only: one that must prove a burden, a clog, an incumbrance, rather than a help. Such an Organization as now actually exists among the women of America, I hail with heartfelt joy. We are bound together by the natural ties of a spiritual affinity; we are drawn to each other because we are attracted toward one common centre, the

good of humanity. We need no external bonds to bind us together, no cumbrous machinery to keep our minds and hearts in unity of purpose and effort. We are not the lifeless staves of a barrel, which can be held together only by the iron hoops of an Artificial Organization. All we need, and all we ask, is freedom to think our own thoughts, and act out the promptings of our own inner being. Even as the vital principle continually re-creates the different organs of the human body, and presides over the harmonious co-operation of that seven-fold system of bones, muscles, nerves, arteries, veins, tissues and lacteal and lymphatic vessels which constitute one grand and perfect organism, so let the invisible power of Truth within us, re-create and enlarge our moral and mental organs for the reception of that new tide from the Ocean of Truth, which is now swelling around us to nourish the body of Humanity. So may it bear each of us onward in our daily life, assigning us our proper places, and appropriate functions, widely different, it may be, but still moving in perfect harmony, and co-operating with wise unanimity to accomplish the only legitimate end of any organization, the perfection of the Race, through the preaching and living of the Truth.

The present aspect of Organizations, whether in Church or State, or society at large, foretokens dissolution. The wrinkles and totterings of age are on them. And why is it so? God is determined to pull down what man has built up. Ichabod, is written upon all—all of them, and deaf is he, who hears not the ominous whispering within the walls of this Babel, saying, "Let us remove hence—Let us remove hence."

When the human mind was as yet too undeveloped to comprehend the sacredness of the Individual, the vast importance of exalting this above every thing else, and providing for the growth and unfolding of the spirit, *then* Human *Institutions* were exalted above *Humanity*. and the car of a State and Church Juggernaut rolled over prostra victims, who, ignorant of their own inborn divinity, gave to *it* th honor which was due only to their own nature. The power of Or ganization has been deemed necessary only because the power o Truth has not been appreciated, and, just in proportion as we reverence the Individual, and trust the unaided potency of Truth, we shall find it useless. What Organization, in the world's history, has not encumbered the unfettered action of those who created it? if indeed it has not been used as an engine of oppression.

The progress of Humanity may be likened to the building of a great Temple, and Human organizations to the scaffolding erected around it. Do I hear you then say, "well, as no house can be built without a scaffolding, let us set up another tier, in order to do the higher work of the present age, and, if need be, it can be torn down by our children." But, my friends, houses are artificial, hence artificial means must be used to build them. Men have chiseled the rock, and baked the clay, and sawed the beautiful trees of the forest, to erect themselves houses and temples of worship: hence the necessity for the scaffolding and the ladder. But Natural Organizations need no Artificial arrangements. The Baobab builds its massive trunk, of ninety feet in circumference, the Pine of Oregon lifts its pinnacle of pride two hundred and fifty feet, crowned with never-fading verdure, without the aid of scaffolding or ladder. By degrees, the vital principle within adds one circle after another, in the construction of its body, and pushes out in every direction the tender shoots, which by gradual accretions become strong and spreading branches, and in their turn serve as the basis of other boughs. Even so the great tree of Humanity needs no scaffolding of Artificial Organization in building up itself in symmetry of strength. Let each individual be true to those natural laws which were designed by God to preside over our growth and development, and, in noiseless beauty would the new ideas of one age grow out of the old branches of another, even as the blossoms push themselves out in spring, and silently give place to the swelling fruit, and this in its turn quietly drops as soon as it ripens into maturity—each and all in obedience to that Law of ceaseless change, in the world of Matter and the world of Mind.

The importance of this question of Organization can hardly be unduly magnified. How few Organizations have ever had the power which this is destined to wield! The prayers and sympathies of the ripest and richest minds will be ours. Vast is the influence which true-hearted women will exert in the coming age. O, that this influence may all pour itself through *natural* channels! As the rills flow from the mountains to the valleys, clothing them in verdure, and mingling their waters with kindred streams, so may our hearts well out with love, mingling their sympathies together, and under the guidance of spiritual affinity fertilizing all the valley of life. Not that woman's sphere is the contracted one of home only—far from it. In whatever sphere it is right that man should move, there woman may move also. No place is too high, and none too low, for her to occupy, if duty calls her into it. The Rostrum, the Pulpit, the

Bar, the Bench, the Halls of Legislation, the Presidential Chair, the Throne—none are too high for her powers or her worth, if her mind be allowed free play and true development.

The world has yet to write and read the record of woman's deeds. As Mother, Wife, Daughter, Sister, her history is known by heart: and along the lower walks of life, and the hidden paths of sorrow, her noiseless step has left the footprints of blood. Man has promulgated the doctrine, that Office sanctifies the incumbent, and consecrates the deed; but Truth is the only sanctifier, fitness for Office the only annointing oil. Thank God, this is being fully understood, before the Political Rights of women are acknowledged. Office has been sought hitherto, mainly from motives of low ambition and pecuniary profit. The exaltation of self has been preferred to the rights and the good of the many.

Well has it been for woman, that she has *not* been permitted to mingle in the low strife, and base intrigues of political life. God be praised, that He has hidden us in the hollow of His hand, until this semi-barbarism is about to pass away.

The human mind is now being developed up to a true appreciation of rights, around the entire circle of human relations. When these are fully comprehended, the high places of power will be graded down, and the low places of oppression will be filled up, by the aid of this new spirit level. Hitherto men have *courted* Office — they have cringed and fawned and knuckled and licked the dust, to obtain it; often buying it by the basest surrender of principle and manhood. The time is coming when Office shall cast these unworthy ones headlong, and shall court the true Nobility of Earth.

May we not rejoice in the conviction, that, when the eligibility of woman to Office is acknowledged, she will not be false to the trusts committed to her, but will enter upon it in the dignity of uncontaminated womanhood, and sanctify it by a wise and loving discharge of its high responsibilities.

It is well for woman that she has participated so little in the exercise of that power which has hitherto ruled the destinies of mankind. Well did the Prophet select its symbols from ferocious beasts of prey, whose nature is to rend in pieces, trample down and devour. The world's history is a record of oppression and wrong—her mighty deeds, the triumphs of brute violence. The Animal part only, in Man, has been developed up to the *reigning* point, hence woman, being the weaker, has always held a subordinate place, as necessarily as

weaker nations have sunk in the scale of National Greatness. In past ages, when Might swayed the scepter, all weakness, whether National or Feminine, was overwhelmed by it; but now, that Man's Spiritual nature is unfolding under the rays of the Sun of Righteousness—now that he is beginning to apprehend that intellectual and moral power are the only legitimate Monarchs — now that the long looked for era is approaching, when the "Son of Man" is to reign, (the "Son of Man," a symbol of man's *spiritual*, just as the *wild beasts* are symbols of his *brutal* nature,) mere physical or mental weakness will no longer be oppressed, but will call into exercise the noblest faculties of human nature, developing the moral by the ministrations which are called for by the necessities of those who are in "low estate." Just as parents watch over and supply the wants of their offsring, providing for their moral and mental development, so will Governments minister to all the wants of *all* their subjects; even as the root of a tree sends out its sap to the *smallest* shoots, more abundantly than to the sturdy stock, so will Governments protect and nourish those who need it most. And as Physicians and Nurses watch over the sick, and aid in their recovery, so will Governments watch over the morally diseased, and aid in their recovery from degradation and crime.

It is a beautiful coincidence, that just as the old Epoch of Despotism and Slavery, Priestcraft and Political intrigue are dying out, just as the Spiritual part of Man is rising into the ascendency, Woman's Rights are being canvassed and conceded, so that when she becomes his partner in Office, higher and holier principles of action will form the basis of Governmental administration.

August 25. ANGELINA G. WELD.

LETTER FROM REV. SAMUEL J. MAY,

To the Woman's Rights Convention, held at Worecster, Mass., Oct., 1850.

SYRACUSE, Tuesday, Oct. 22, 1850.

MY DEAR FRIENDS:—I sincerely regret that I cannot be present at the Convention to-morrow and next day. It is a gathering to which I have looked forward with earnest expectation. But I am ill able, at any time, to afford the expense of long travel; and now all my spare funds are put in requisition to meet the demands that are almost every day made upon me, to aid the wretched men and women who are fleeing from this *tyrannical* Republic; or in some other way, to withstand the cruel despotism which glares upon us in the infernal Fugitive Law, recently enacted by our Government, which has become the supple tool of oppressors.

For years I have been contending, directly or indirectly, for the great objects your Convention has in view. Never will their rights be accorded to women

until the rights of Humanity are appreciated and respected. In the very beginning of the Anti-Slavery enterprise, I was lecturing in Providence. The earnest attention of a very intelligent woman of that city, Miss Ruth Olney, continually arrested my eye. So soon as I left the pulpit I went to speak with her. "I have listened to you," said she, "with an interest which only a woman can feel. I suspect that you do not apprehend how much your description of the helpless dependence of the Slaves applies equally well to the condition of the whole *female sex*." By a few rapid hints, she ran the parallel, and then first my eyes were opened to the *Wrongs of Women*. I promised Miss Olney that the subject should not be dismissed from my regard; and it never has been. I have seen, and rejoice to see, that whatever causes the rights of humanity to be respected, will tend more or less to improve the condition of women. But I have felt that their rights ought to be directly and *distinctively* urged, and have accordingly often spoken and preached, and published somewhat in their behalf.

Women have natural rights, no less than men; and because *natural* they are also inalienable, and can never be set at nought or disregarded with impunity. It will be good for man, no less than woman, when her rights are appreciated and secured. Their true welfare is one and inseparable. Humanity is *dual;* and yet when perfected it *is one*. The true relations of life can be established only in the union of both. Marriage is a divine ordination from the beginning; and just so far as the sexes are divorced from each other, by inequalities of condition or culture, do adulterous consequences follow. A perfect character in either a man or a woman, is a compound of the virtues and graces of each. The excellencies which each sex most needs are objective to it in the other sex. In Jesus, the dearly beloved of God, we see as much feminine as masculine grace.

Now, what we see to be perfect in the individual, would be likewise perfect in the community, that is, the entire union of male and female. The true family is the type of the true State. It is the absence of the feminine from the conduct of the Governments of earth, that makes them more or less savage. If there be any institutions, departments, or customs in the State, in which we see and feel it would be unbecoming for women to participate, then are those institutions, departments, or customs, only *half human*. The very acknowledgment we so often hear, that the machinery of the political parties is such that it would defile woman to touch it, is an acknowledgment that men, in the prosecution of their partisan purposes, are continually doing what *they ought to be ashamed of*. This surely is no reason why women should continue to be excluded from their rightful participation in the management of the State, as well as of the family. It is reasou enough why men should repent, be converted, and become more temperate, just, honorable, honest, in their politicai relations and conduct; that they may no longer be shocked at the idea of having their mothers and wives associated with them. The State now is in the condition of *half orphanage*. There are fathers of the public, but no mothers.

Yours truly,

SAMUEL J. MAY.

Masters' Print Malcolm Block, Syracuse.

Wm Lloyd Garrison

WOMAN'S RIGHTS TRACTS,..No. 10.

LETTER

FROM

MRS. ELIZABETH C. STANTON,

TO THE

WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION,

HELD AT WORCESTER, OCT., 1850.

SENECA FALLS, Sunday, Oct. 20, 1850.

My Dear Friend:—As you have handed over to me the case of those women, who have fears in regard to the propriety of woman's exercising her political rights, I would gladly embrace this opportunity to address them through your Convention.

No one denies our right to the elective franchise, unless we except those who go against all human governments, and the non-resistant, who condemns a government of force; though I think the latter might consistently contend for the right, even if she might not herself choose to exercise it. But to those who believe in having a government—to those who believe that no just government can be formed without the consent of the governed—to them would I appeal, and of them do I demand some good reason, why one half of the citizens of this Republic have no voice in the laws which govern them.

The *right* is one question, and the *propriety* of exercising it, quite another. The former is undeniable; and against the latter I have never heard one solid objection, that would not apply equally to man and woman.

Some tell us that if woman should interest herself in political affairs, it would destroy all domestic harmony. What, say they, would be the consequence, if husband and wife should not agree in their views of political economy? Because, forsooth, husband and wife may chance to differ in their theological sentiments, shall woman have no religion? Because she may not choose to worship at the same altar with her liege lord, must she of necessity do up all her worshipping in private, in her own closet? Because she might choose

to deposit her vote for righteous rulers — such as love justice, mercy, truth, and oppose a husband, father, or brother, who would, by their votes, place political power in the hands of unprincipled men, swearing, fighting, leaders of armies, rumsellers and drunkards, slaveholders and prating northern hypocrites, who would surrender the poor, panting fugitive from bondage into the hands of his blood-thirsty pursuers—shall she not vote at all? It is high time that men learned to tolerate independence of thought and opinion in the women of their household.

It would not make much difference in man's every day life, in his social enjoyments, whether his wife differed with him as to the locality of hell, the personality of the devil, or the comparitive altitude of the saintships of Peter and Paul; as to one's right to as much air, water, light, and land as he might need for his necessities; as to the justice of free trade, free schools, the inviolable homestead, and personal freedom—provided the husband had a great head and heart, and did not insist upon doing up all the thinking and talking in the establishment himself, or the wife was not a miserable formalist, like Mrs. Swisshelm's Deborah Elmsley. Much of this talk about domestic harmony is the sheerest humbug. Look around among your whole circle of friends, and tell me, you who know what transpires behind the curtain, how many truly harmonious households have we now. Quiet households we may have, but submission and harmony produce very different states of quietness. There is no true happiness where there is subjection — no harmony without freedom.

But, say some, would you have women vote? What, refined, delicate women at the polls, mingling in such scenes of violence and vulgarity! By all means, where there is so much to be feared for the pure, the innocent, the noble, the mother surely should be there to watch and guard her sons who are to encounter such stormy, dangerous scenes at the tender age of twenty-one. Much is said of woman's influence: might not her presence do much toward softening down this violence, refining this vulgarity? Depend upon it, that places which, by their impure atmosphere, are rendered unfit for woman, cannot but be dangerous to her sires and sons. But if woman claims all the rights of a citizen, will she buckle on her armor, and fight in defence of her country? Has not woman already often shown herself as courageous in the field, as wise and patriotic in counsel, as man? Have you not had the brave Jagello in your midst, and vied

with each other to touch but the hem of her garment? But for myself, I believe all war sinful; I believe in Christ; I believe that the command, "Resist not evil," is divine; I would not have man go to war; I can see no glory in fighting with such weapons as guns and swords, while man has in his possession the infinitely superior and more effective ones of righteousness and truth.

But if woman votes, would you have her hold office? Most certainly would we have woman hold office. We would have man and woman what God intended they should be, companions for each other, always together, in counsel, government, and every department of industry. If they have homes and children, we would have them stay there, educate their children, provide well for their physical wants, and share in each other's daily trials and cares. Children need the watchful care and wise teachings of fathers as well as of mothers. No man should give up a profitable business, leave his wife and children month after month, and year after year, and make his home desolate for any false ideas of patriotism, for any vain love of display or ambition, for fame and distinction. The highest, holiest duty of both father and mother is to their children and each other; and when they can show to the world a well-developed, wisely-governed family, then let the State profit by their experience. Having done their duty at home, let them together sit in our national councils. The violence, rowdyism, and vulgarity which now characterize our Congressional Halls, show us clearly that "it is not good for man to be alone." The purifying, elevating, softening influence of woman is a most healthful restraint on him at all times and in all places. We have many noble women in our land, free from all domestic incumbrances, who might grace a Senate chamber, and for whose services the country might gladly forego all the noise, bluster, and folly of one-half the male dolts, who now flourish there and pocket their eight dollars a day. The most casual observer can see that there is some essential element wanting in the political organization of our Republic. The voice of woman has been silenced, but man cannot fulfil his destiny alone—he cannot redeem his race unaided. There must be a great national heart, as well as head; and there are deep and tender chords of sympathy and love, that woman can touch more skillfully than man. The earth has never yet seen a truly great and virtuous nation, for woman has never yet stood the equal with man. As with nations, so with families. It is the wise mother who has the wise

son, and it requires but little thought to decide, that as long as the women of this nation remain but half developed in mind and body, so long shall we have a succession of men dwarfed in body and soul. So long as your women are mere slaves, you may throw your colleges to the wind — there is no material to work upon. It is in vain to look for silver and gold from mines of copper and brass. How seldom now is the father's pride gratified in the budding genius of his son? The wife is degraded, made the mere creature of his tyranny and caprice, and now the foolish son is heaviness to his heart. Truly are the sins of the father visited upon the children. God, in his wisdom, has so linked together the whole human family, that any violence done at one end of the chain, is felt throughout its length. Adieu.

Yours truly,

E. C. STANTON.

PAULINA W. DAVIS.

LETTER

FROM

MRS. ELIZABETH C. STANTON,

TO THE WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION

Held at Syracuse, Sept. 1852.

SENECA FALLS, Sept. 6th.

My Dear Friends:—As I cannot be present with you, I wish to suggest three points, for your serious and earnest consideration.

1st. Should not all women, living in States where woman has a right to hold property, refuse to pay taxes, so long as she is unrepresented in the government of that State?

Such a movement, if simultaneous, would no doubt produce a great deal of confusion, litigation and suffering, on the part of woman; but shall we fear to suffer for the maintenance of the same glorious principles, for which our fore-fathers fought, and bled, and died? Shall we deny the faith of the old revolutionary heroes, and purchase for ourselves a false peace, and ignoble ease, by declaring in action, that taxation without representation is just? Ah! no; like the English Dissenters, and high-souled Quakers, of our own land, let us suffer our property to be seized and sold—but let us never pay another tax, until our existence as citizens, our civil and political rights, be fully recognized. * * *

The poor, crushed slave, but yesterday toiling on the rice plantation in Georgia, a beast, a chattel, a thing, is to-day, in the Empire State, (if he own a bit of land, and a shed to cover him,) a person, and may enjoy the proud honor of paying into the hand of the complaisant tax-gatherer the sum of seventy-five cents. Even so with the white woman—the satellite of the dinner-pot—the presiding genius of the wash-tub—the seamstress—the teacher—the gay butterfly of fashion—the femme covert of the law. Man takes no note of her

through all these changing scenes. But lo! to-day, by the fruits of her industry, she becomes the owner of a house and lot, and now her existence is remembered and recognized, and she too may have the privilege of contributing to the support of this mighty Republic—for the "white male citizen" claims of her one dollar and seventy-five cents a year—because, under the glorious institutions of this free and happy land, she has been able, at the age of fifty years, to possess herself of a property worth the enormous sum of three hundred dollars. It is natural to suppose, she will answer this demand on her, joyously and promptly; for she must, in view of all her rights and privileges, so long enjoyed, consider it a great favor, to be permitted to contribute thus largely to the governmental treasury.

One thing is certain, this course will necessarily involve a good deal of litigation, and we shall need lawyers of our own sex, whose intellects, sharpened by their interests, shall be quick to discover the loop-holes of retreat. Laws are capable of many and various constructions; we find among men, that as they have new wants, as they develope into more enlarged views of justice, the laws are susceptible of more generous interpretation, or are changed altogether; that is, all laws touching their own interests: for while man has abolished hanging for theft, imprisonment for debt, and secured universal suffrage for himself, a married woman, in most of the States of the Union, remains a non-entity in law — can own nothing; can be whipped and locked up by her lord; can be worked without wages; be robbed of her inheritance, stripped of her children, and left alone, and penniless—and all this, they say, according to law. Now, it is quite time that we have these laws revised, by our own sex—for man does not yet feel, that what is unjust for himself, is also unjust for woman. Yes, we must have our own lawyers, as well as our physicians and priests. Some of our women should go at once into this profession, and see if there is no way by which we may shuffle off our shackles, and assume our civil and political rights. We cannot accept man's interpretation of the law. * * * *

2d. Do not sound philosophy, and long experience teach us, that man and woman should be educated together?

This isolation of the sexes, in all departments, in the business and pleasure of life, is an evil greatly to be deplored. We see its bad effects on all sides. Look at our National Councils. Would man, as a statesman, ever have enacted such scenes, as the capitol of our country has witnessed, had the feminine element been fairly represented in their midst? Are all the duties of husband and father to be made subservient to those of statesman and politician? How many of these husbands return to their homes as happy and contented—as pure and loving, as when they left? Not one in ten. *

* * * Experience has taught us, that man has discovered the most profitable branches of industry, and we demand a place by his side. Inasmuch, therefore, as we have the same objects in life, namely, the full development of all our powers, and should, to some extent, have the same employments, we need precisely the same education; and we therefore claim that the best colleges of our country be open to us. * * * This point, the education of boys and girls together, is a question of the day; it was prominent at the late Educational Convention, in Newark; and it is fitting that in our Convention it should be fully discussed. My ground is, that the boy and the girl, the man and the woman, should be always together, in the business and pleasures of life: sharing alike its joys and sorrows, its distinction and fame; nor will they ever be harmoniously developed, until they are educated together, physically, intellectually, and morally.

I hope, therefore, that in the proposed People's College, some place will be provided, where women can be educated side by side with men.

There is no better test of the spirituality of a man, than is found in his idea of the true woman. Men, having separated themselves from woman, in the business of life, and thus made their natures coarse, by contact with their own sex exclusively, now demand separate pleasures too; and, in lieu of the cheerful family circle, its books, games, music, and pleasant conversation, they congregate in clubs, to discuss politics, to gamble, drink, etc., in those costly, splendid establishments, got up for such as cannot find sufficient excitement, in their own parlors or studios. It seems never to enter the heads of these fashionable husbands, that the hours drag as heavily with their fashionable wives, as they sit alone, night after night, in their solitary elegance, wholly given over to their own cheerless reflections: for what subjects of thought have they? Gossip and fashion will do for talk, but not for thought. Their Theology is too gloomy and shadowy, to afford them much pleasure in contemplation; their Religion is a thing of form, and not of life, so it brings them no joy or satisfaction. As to the Reforms of the day, they are too genteel to feel much interest in them. There is no class more pitiable, than the unoccupied woman of fashion, thrown wholly upon herself.

* * * Does not the present abuse of the religious element in woman demand our earnest attention and investigation?

Priestcraft did not end with the beginning of the reign of Protestantism. Woman has always been the greatest dupe, because the sentiments act blindly, and they alone have been educated in her.

Her veneration, not guided by an enlightened intellect, leads her as readily to the worship of saints, pictures, holy days, and inspired men and books, as of the living God, and the everlasting principles of Justice, Mercy, and Truth. * * *

There is the Education Society, in which women who can barely read and write, and speak their own language correctly, form sewing societies, and beg funds to educate a class of lazy, inefficient young men for the ministry, who, starting in life on the false principle that it is a blessing to escape physical labor, begin at once to live on their

piety. What is the result? Why, after going through College, Theological Seminaries, and a brief struggle at fitting up skeleton sermons, got up by older heads, for the benefit of beginners, and after preaching them for a season to those who hunger and thirst for light and truth, they sink down into utter insignificance, too inefficient to keep a place, and too lazy to earn the salt to their porridge—whilst the women work on, to educate more, for the same noble destiny. Look at the long line of benevolent societies, all filled with these male agents, living, like so many leeches, on the religious element in our natures. Most of them, from the ranks of the clergy, who, unable to build up, or keep a church, have taken refuge in some of these theological asylums for the intellectually maimed, halt, and blind, of this profession.

Woman really thinks she is doing God service, when she casts her mite into their treasury, when in fact, not one tenth of all the funds raised, ever reach the ultimate object.

Among the clergy, we find our most violent enemies—those most opposed to any change in woman's position; yet no sooner does one of these find himself out of place and pocket, than, if all the places in the various benevolent societies chance to be occupied, he takes a kind of philanthropic survey of the whole habitable globe, and forthwith forms a Female Benevolent Society, for the conversion of the Jews, perchance, or for sending the gospel to the Feejee Islands—and he is, in himself, the law for the one, and the gospel for the other. Now, the question is not whether the Jews are converted, or whether the gospel ever reaches the Islands; but does the agent flourish? Is his post profitable? And does woman beg and stitch faithfully for his support, and for the promotion of his *glorious mission?*

Now, I ask woman, with all seriousness, considering that we have little to give, had we not better bestow our own charities with our own hands? And, instead of sending our benevolent outgushings, in steamers, to parts unknown, had we not better let them flow in streams whose length and breadth we can survey at pleasure, knowing their source, and where they empty themselves?

* * * Thus woman, in her present ignorance, is made to rest in the most distorted view of God and the Bible, and the laws of her being; and, like the poor slave, "Uncle Tom," her religion, instead of making her noble and free, and impelling her to flee from all gross surroundings, by the false lessons of her spiritual teachers—by the wrong application of great principles of right and justice, has made her bondage but more certain and lasting—her degradation more hopeless and complete.

ELIZABETH C. STANTON.

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