

The Alpha.

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Human Rights before all Laws and Constitutions.—Gerrit Smith.
The Divine Right of Every Child to be Well Born.

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THE DUTY WE OWE OURSELVES.

"If," says Goethe, "we do but our duty to our own minds, we shall soon come to do it to the world."

That is a very comforting saying for women to lay to heart. The very last thing we women, as a rule, trouble ourselves about is our minds. And yet how anxious we are to do our duty to the world! Certainly the world often means to us our own family circle, and our own family circle only. Charity begins at home, we say. What, if we must begin our charity nearer home than we suspected? What, if Tommy's little shirts and Sarah's Sunday pinafores are very much out of doors; indeed, when compared to the inner circle of our conscientious life and activity, whose workings we so carelessly neglect? And yet, if we only listened to the admonitions of our secret friend, how much better it would be for us. When we *feel* that a thing is right and true, how often we allow our instinct to be silenced by other people's reasons. If we could learn to be true to ourselves, as Shakespeare tells us, "to thine ownself be true; and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man." But I think Goethe means something more than this listening to the inner voice of the spiritual man—essential as that is to the progress of the world—I think he would urge us to active cultivation of the powers of the intellect, feeling that knowledge must precede virtue, for "virtue is ignorant, lurketh like a robber armed, and wise men fear his footsteps." It is ignorance that the great German would warn us against when he urges us to do but our duty to our own minds." And is not the truth being forced daily home to all students of sociology that more evil is wrought by ignorance than by wickedness? That wickedness is very often the child of ignorance? We have long since acknowledged that disease and death are the offspring of ignorance of natural law in the physical world, and very grave impressions are arising that ignorance, rather than human depravity, is at the root of moral evil. And when this fact is fairly faced and freely acknowledged, wilful ignorance becomes in itself a crime against the individual and against society. This is perceived dimly by the body corporate, and we pay taxes and provide schools for our children. But it has not yet become a vital truth to the individual. Ignorance is not branded as a crime. Indeed, in very decent society, many a woman would rather be found in want of ordinary knowledge of the laws of her own country than in want of embroidery for her under linen. Yet the former want may have had no little share in breaking many hearts and blasting many lives, while

the white skins and delicate form have been no whit the worse for the latter. If we women had but done our duty to our own minds, should we, in this year of grace eighteen hundred and eighty-five, find ourselves classed with idiots and criminals on the statute books of nations calling themselves civilized? Should we find our poorer sisters left without organization, without leaders, without trades-unions, at the mercy of the employers of labor, ground down to starvation wages, forced to eke out a pitiful subsistence by the desecration of their womanhood? Should we find ourselves the slaves of fashions, which destroy our health, cramp our limbs, injure our tempers, weaken our nerves, and make us inclined to agree with George Eliot's school-master—"There isn't a thing under the sun that needs to be done at all, but what a man can do better than a woman, unless it's bearing children, and they do that in a poor make-shift way; it had better ha' been left to the men; it had better ha' been left to the men."

Should we find ourselves, for the most part, ignorant of those facts of physiology upon which our own and our husband's and our children's welfare depends?

While we take to heart Goethe's admonition, we cannot escape from the bitter humiliation and woe which comes over us as we look around and note the havoc made in fair young lives by our most culpable neglect of those powers which have been intrusted to us, not only for our own use, guidance, and enjoyment, but for the service of mankind, and especially for the protection of the young and helpless beings who have been given into our keeping. We have sinned, and we are eating the fruit of sin.

Will it be any consolation to us when we are bending over the bed of sickness—it may be the bed of death of some dearly-beloved child—that the disease that is stealing our treasure was caused by want of knowledge? When the tired and suffering mother lies useless on her couch and sees her little neglected ones clustering around her, will it console her, in the hour of helpless impotence and self-embarrassment, that the health and strength that she has thrown away were destroyed in ignorance of nature's undeviating law? When law is broken punishment follows—follows to mercy, to teach us the better way. In inflicting punishment nature does her part. She draws our attention to error committed. Why it has been committed it is man's business to discover if he would escape the rod. Fortunately the discipline will be repeated with ever-increasing severity till her obdurate senses are fully aroused to the gravity of the case.

Woman's neglect of her mind is being pressed upon her attention through unjust laws, through infant mortality, through adult immorality. It is being pressed upon the attention of the world by lavish expenditure for dress and household inutilities. By what Milton called the "weak ostentation of wealth;" by vapid lives and unlamented deaths; by crowds of "social failures;" for, if a God-created being can ever be a failure, surely the term is rightly applied to those who pass through the busy world in idleness, feeding their useless bodies on the fruits of others' labor.

By one and all these signs the wise may read the lesson of the effects of unused brains.

But there is yet another way in which we may fail to do our duty to our own minds. We may know and fail to apply our knowledge. I think we women must plead guilty to this vicious mental characteristic but too often. We do not care, as a rule, for clear-seeing and straight thinking. We are apt to accept a new theory without first looking all round and seeing whether it accounts for well-known facts; then should its failure in this particular be at length forced home to us we abandon it, and accept another explanation, which may or may not be more satisfactory when carefully examined. Now I do not wish for a moment to insinuate that we women are more prone to this careless habit than our husbands and brothers, but I am quite willing to leave men in full possession of their much boasted superiority, so that I may win the ear of my own sex and persuade them that they are gifted with far greater powers of mind than they bring into play.

Let us do *justice* to our own minds, and when they tell us a thing is true let us *examine* carefully, and be prepared to give the reasons for the truth which is in us. Thousands of women have had an instinctive belief that morality was as binding upon men as upon women. Certain writers, who have allowed the wish to be father to the thought, have busily prepared a contrary doctrine, declaring that what was heinous in one sex was venial in the other, whereupon, to save wear and tear of brain tissue, the fair reasoners have declared the matter not worth arguing about, affirmed they really could not tell what was the truth of the matter, and wavered, with every breath of doctrine, between the two opinions. I am not concerned on this occasion with the question at issue, but merely with the attitude of mind. Let us be true to our own minds. If we have opinions let us be sure they have a good basis in fact, and then let us stand by our color and the death. It is fortunately not necessary to have opinions about every matter under the sun. We can well afford to do without opinions upon subjects of which we know, and can know, nothing, but upon those subjects of which we can judge let us do it honestly, industriously, and with painstaking earnestness. If we think it is a matter of vital importance to us to feel that justice and love rules the world let us practice "straight thinking" in a few problems with which ALPHA teaching will have rendered us familiar.

The man of to-day—slave of an uncontrolled instinct—stands face to face in this love-ruled world, with worn-out wives, with infanticide, with enforced

celibacy, with sickening disease, with overpopulation, and with prostitution. The man of the future—not like the drunkard, unable to slack the thirst himself has created by his own excesses, judged by reason, obedient to physical, which is one with moral law, the arbiter of his own destiny, the image of his Creator—will find himself able to control population, enjoy the companionship of his life's partner, free from the thousand and one miseries which arise from an over-burdened physical frame; will find himself able to educate his children in thoughtful leisure, which will go a long way towards the eradication of crime; his self-control will insure a labor-market for all men and women, which will banish the temptation to infanticide and prostitution. Briefly stated, there stands the matter between the advocates of the rational use of the procreative function and the masses habituated to the indulgence of appetite unrestrained by reason. And reason in this instance can scarcely be brought to bear from the thick darkness of ignorance which enwraps the whole of this most important subject. What grander use can we make of our intellectual faculties than setting them to unravel the mystery which surrounds the beginning of life. What greater duty do we owe to ourselves, to our contemporaries, and to posterity than this of having a true knowledge of that with which the weal or woe of the whole human family is bound up?

Let us, then, lay to heart Goethe's teaching, and do our duty to our own minds, that we may be able to do it to the world.

ELIZABETH KINGSBURY.

THE THOUGHT WORLD.

Thought is a something akin to substance and realized as such by some organizations. It seems capable of motion, permeating and radiating, so that the waves of thought on the same subject are recognized by different individuals at the same time. In times past important discoveries in astronomy and philosophy were made by different students at the same time, both claiming originality. At present it is no new occurrence for the same subjects of thought to be entertained and even written upon by some, while the same process has been going on with others, as new publications coming to hand demonstrated. Thought would seem to be indigenous, like vegetation. Strange as it may seem ideas, already formulated, seem to pierce the brain and take possession, making their individuality decidedly felt. This is what, no doubt, when it was less common and understood, led the human family upward to higher laws and better lives. Now, as it is becoming more common, this phenomenon, considered superficially, is named impression, satisfying most minds as the rattle does the child, but meanwhile a deeper recognition shows that the avenues of the brain are opening to receive the light of inspiration, and that a new development is dawning upon the human family, the feminine element being evolved and recognized.

The intellect draws inferences, analyzes and binds, but the material with which to work must be supplied. In the world of thought this is furnished by the feminine element. Here the law of sex is reversed, the feminine furnishing the ideals, or the pabulum for thought.

She being the last link in the organized change of existence, is consequently nearest the plane of causation; in fact forms the floor to mental causation, where the intuitive and perceptive sight arrives at results independent of plodding calculation. The ideals of truth are feminine, and come through the channel giving vitality, while intellect shapes, molds, and perfects. In accordance with the workings of the laws of Providence, the feminine has been sleeping in the human family, and that, too, on the very ground of the material plane, where the dust of the ages has accumulated. Why this, the eternities may in future reveal to us; if not, the law is the same, and to that we bow assent. The old teaching, "As a man thinketh, so is he" may give some clue to the mystery. It is scarcely dreamed that mind is responsible for the quality of thought, whether it be good or evil. "We can't help our thoughts" is sometimes given as an apology for evil thought, as though the better nature was powerless over the lower, and the will was dormant. The thought of man has been meager, crooked, pompous and tyrannical. It is said that "when man sits down to talk in a knowing way the angels are silent." While this is going on we may infer that the angel portion of humanity is busily musing as to the importance of clean, clear thought for the body and soul—the will brought into subjection, and stationed sentinel over mind and thought. It is a matter of pure education, whatever the process may be, and is attainable by the most common mind. Teach a child to be clean and honest of heart, always true to the right that is taught it, and it will form a character above the wiles of temptation, a blessing to home, friends and to humanity.

The thought that we are all evil, and must necessarily be so, is degrading and damaging to the character, and the doctrine does not belong to the feminine element. As native human goodness is strengthened and encouraged by the responsibility of honest, true thinking, the volume of thought will increase, and the adjustment of human affairs will fall in line as naturally as the planets move in their orbits.

Already the day and generation stands witness to a stirring up of the old and the new, and the rattling din awakens the feminine in the world of thought, and the beams of light and life glow anew. New publications are started and scattered through the world as regularly and as increasing in light as the crescent moon. No subject escapes the scrutiny of the inquiring mind. Earnestly and honestly the enlightenment of the human family is at heart; thought is becoming more and more active, peering into the byways, climbing among the rocks, clinging to the niches with pick and plummet, making the rough smooth and the crooked straight. Yet the work looms up through the expansion of thought, and the spirit of prayer bends low to the Divine effort by the development of human thought. D. S. H.

RIVERSIDE, CAL.

PARENTS, TAKE NOTICE!

Only \$150.00 per year will pay for board and tuition of your children at the Wendell Phillips Memorial Industrial School, which opens September 21st.

For circular address, E. L. Bush, Belvidere, New Jersey.

HOW SHALL WOMEN DRESS?

(Concluded.)

Dr. Hammond attacks shoulder straps because "they hinder the movements of the chest, make those who wear them round shouldered, and cannot be worn with low-necked dresses." Of the wearing of these latter with short sleeves, he says: "It is doubtful if this leads to any ill consequences. It has been continued for generations without apparent injury."

There is an air of complacent simplicity in this statement that makes one wonder how far the author is accustomed to trace cause from effect. This wonder increases when we read farther that "the wearing of trousers is not a question into which sanitation enters." If he had to walk a few miles with petticoat sails resisting a strong wind and tangling themselves around his legs, or in a snow storm and find his skirts taking the wet from his heels at every step and putting it on his ankles; or if he sat all day in a store, factory, school room or counting-room, with those same damp skirts on—for he must remember that skirts cannot be tucked inside high boots or leggins, as trousers can—or even if he had the care, weight, and impediment of those skirts forever about him, wherever he walked, I believe that even in the fairest weather he would take back the absurd statement that "the wearing of trousers is not a question into which sanitation enters."

Dr. Hammond's paper abounds in surprises. When I read that women "endure cold weather as well as men because their flowing robes retain a stratum of air which prevents a rapid cooling of the surface," I had to wonder, again, if the doctor had stopped to think how much more men are exposed to the cold than women are and how he could account for the chronic joke about wives warming their cold feet on their husbands.

The statement that "the differences now existing between the dress of men and women have been mainly caused by the revolt of man from the inconvenience of long skirts, and the assumption by him of a separate covering for each leg," is one for which I feel grateful to Dr. Hammond, even if he does later on say that "what they have gained in point of convenience, or the facility to do certain things, they have lost in grace and elegance."

Since I stated that Dr. Hammond's essay abounds in surprises, I may be pardoned for wondering whether he fully considered how much men have really gained by their "revolt." If he will for one month wear long skirts and then assure us what he has gained "in grace and elegance" more than he has lost in convenience and "facility to do many things which his occupation requires of him," I will be one of the first to accept his statement as true. But theory, unsupported by experiment, we should be very cautious about accepting in a matter where so much is involved, as in this case.

For one, I do not yet concede that grace and convenience in dress are incompatible. If they are we must decide which of the two is the more desirable and act accordingly. But let us not be rash in our judgment. Let us consider that prejudice and the education of the eye have much to do with our ideas of what is graceful, and earnestly strive to devise a dress that shall

be neither ungraceful nor inconvenient. Failing in this let no one presume to say to another "I choose the convenient dress and it is your duty to wear the graceful one." "It is not good for man to be alone," even in the wearing of a convenient dress.

Lucien V. Pinney, editor of the *Winsted (Conn.) Press*, writing on this subject, says of women: "They disregard health and they do not value freedom. If they loved health and freedom * * * a roaring protest against petticoats would sweep over the land." Having given this matter much investigation, extending through many years, I confidently hope and predict that the day is not far distant when women will come to open and general "revolt from the inconvenience of long skirts," and send a "roaring protest" against them sweeping through the land, though Mr. Warner's article in the *North American Review* does not point in that direction. If I could know how much he means for irony and how much for sober earnest, perhaps my idea of it would change; but since he voices the sentiment of a very large class, when taken literally, I shall not depart from that sense in my treatment of his statements. So, being told that "the sudden, continuous, and extreme changes in woman's dress are related to no physiological fact," we would remind Mr. Warner that the same is true of the dress itself.

Mr. Warner says, "It is much to be desired that this subject be put upon a physiological basis. Perhaps the barren results in this direction hitherto have been due to the fact that students have given their attention to the dress itself and not to the nature of the woman who is confessedly the most puzzling problem in creation. At least something would be gained if we could discover the principle that in the nature of things ought to govern the apparel of woman."

If Mr. Warner has read the whole of the symposium to which he contributed he must have discovered that principles are laid down by Mrs. King and Dr. Jackson "that, in the nature of things, ought to govern the apparel of women." Especially do I commend to his study "The Requirements of Perfect Dress," as laid down by Mrs. King.

But, Mr. Warner, if you will consider one little item that I am about to jot down, which you and nearly all men overlook, and which women themselves have, till recently, paid little heed to, it will help you in the study of "the most perplexing problem in creation." It is this: please note it attentively, for I do assure you that after you have duly considered it, you will begin to see why the study of woman and her dress have hitherto been so "barren of results." You will find it a key to unlock many mysteries—a bright light on a dark subject. I have been thus particular in calling attention to and emphasizing this fact for fear that without due preparation you might contradict it. The statement I so carefully prefaced is that, taking one hundred parts as the whole, *women are ninety-nine parts human*. Do not dispute this, for I can bring undeniable proofs of its verity. I am painfully aware that women do not present a human appearance; but all the same my statement regarding them is a fact, and a most important one—one without which "the most perplexing problem in crea-

tion" can never be solved. If men would seek to understand themselves before spending so much thought on the study of women it might be better.

A child brings a strange blossom to a botanist and asks what it is. The botanist says, "you must bring me the whole plant—root, stem, leaf, and seed-pod—before I can tell you, certainly, what it is." But that child, in bringing the blossom alone, has not left out as many essentials to the knowledge of the plant as are almost universally left out of the study of woman.

Nowhere is this omission more apparent than when her dress is under consideration. See how completely Mr. Warner sinks the ninety-nine parts human and raises to prominence the female in the following words: "I should predict certain failure in any dress reform that attempts in any degree to make the dress of women like that of men. If relief is needed"—as if there would be any doubt on the subject—"it lies entirely in lies entirely in the opposite direction. It lies in greater conformity to the woman's anatomy and her peculiar functions in our ordained life."

If this is not playing fast and loose with words and ideas, I do not know what is. Does Mr. Warner not see that "the opposite direction" and "greater conformity to her anatomy" are contradictions that cannot be harmonized? If he will duly consider "woman's anatomy" he cannot fail to see that conformity to it would make her dress a good deal more like man's than at present. If men were not "in any degree" like women this proposition would be sensible; but, considering that the general outline of men and women is the same, it is most preposterous and paradoxical to talk of dressing woman "in conformity to her anatomy," and at the same time not have her clothing "in any degree" like that of men. To thus ignore generalities and act only on details is not true science, art or common sense. It is a style of treating subjects of which women have been much accused, and for which, perhaps, justly, much contempt has been put upon them.

Doubtless a woman's "peculiar functions" are excellent things, but they ought never to have been used as an excuse for keeping her in swaddling clothes, both literally and figuratively, after humanity had become sufficiently skilled to substitute for fig leaf and blanket something that approximates the human contour. Treating women almost entirely on the sex plane, so little on that of the common human, in matters of dress and nearly everything, is a stronghold of sensuality of the most debased kind. Where is the need of it? Sex has always shown itself fully able to maintain its rights, while often and often humanity lies bleeding in the dust. A nearer approach to the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom Paul says "there is neither male nor female," will, instead of exalting and enlarging sexual differences, so broaden and elevate the divine human, that sex shall not, as now, be an offensive intruder, continually thrusting itself into our notice with its imperious demands, but the obedient servant of the human, coming forward only when called.

However pure the motives of those who urge that the dress needed for women is as unlike as possible to that needed for men, and who "expect the highest and most desirable development for women on the lines of her own peculiar physiological and mental nature," I can see in

the civilization of this ideal nothing but disaster, dismay and defeat for all who are working for purer social and sexual relations. There is not in the differences of anatomy and physiology between men and women any cause, or excuse even, for the vast difference exhibited in their apparel; such difference, therefore, being based on the untrue, cannot fail to exercise an influence on the side of the false and bad. That it does have just this effect on the relation of men and women to each other seems so plain to me that I marvel that any one who thinks at all on the subject fails to see it.

There is observable in both Dr. Hammond and Mr. Warner a complacency with regard to the present condition of things that is very depressing. For example: "Any radical change in the costume of women such as discontinuing the sweeping, graceful lines of the long skirt indoors is exceedingly improbable and undesirable." Probably Mr. Warner does not intend this as a plan for keeping women indoors, but if I were asked to devise means to accomplish that purpose, I should at once say: Have them wear in the house a kind of clothing unsuitable for outdoor exercise. Under our present civilization the vast majority of women cannot afford the clothing for two styles of dress, nor the time and strength to always change from outdoor to indoor wear.

Perhaps Mr. Warner's belief that "beauty is a duty women owe to society" is correct, and perhaps that is their whole duty. I search his paragraphs in vain for a hint of any other or any indication that they should ever be allowed to equip themselves for any other. If they must perform this one by wearing "long, sweeping, graceful skirts" it is about all that ought to be asked of them. Nevertheless, I flush with hot indignation when I think of the great army of wives, mothers, and other working women breaking down under the burdens they are bearing in attempting to do what seems to them like their "duty," in their present inconvenient and burdensome dress. If they could only know that their whole, or chief duty is to be beautiful, they might array themselves in their long skirts, sit quietly down—and starve.

Apparently Mr. Warner is satisfied with our civilization, its progress and tendencies. He says: "In frontier and pioneer life of civilized races, where there is always a tendency to degeneration, a woman may often be seen in a man's hat and coat," and "in a fair view of the historical field the higher the civilization, the more marked the distinction in the dress of the two sexes." The "degeneration" spoken of may be "degeneration," or it may be a wholesome revolt of the natural against the artificial. If degeneration, it is not the kind that make sickly women and effeminate men. It is not the kind that brought the downfall of Rome and other old world nations, whose fate we are fast following with our luxury and pauperism. Our boasted "higher civilization" seems to many a complex and cruel barbarism; and such do not doubt that its "progress" will show an increased divergence in the dress of the two sexes. If we did not hope for a new and better civilization, we should also despair of a dress for women which would leave them as free as men from care and incumbrance.

Dr. Hammond and Mr. Warner seem desirous not to

have women so change their dress as to cease to be "attractive." Do they fear that God has so constituted man and woman that the physical attraction of one to the other, can become less than it ought?

When men "revolted against the inconvenience of long skirts," how much and how long—we can never tell—did the wise men and women of those times date the question of whether men without skirts would be "attractive" and "desirable" as husbands? Let us trust the change was not made without due deliberation on this important point.

Do the opposers of a change in women's dress ever think to ask themselves whether women gain anything by "womanly attractiveness" and "the subtle charm of femininity" that is really worth having? In the past women have believed that through these things they had all to gain and naught to lose, but a good many are now pondering this and similar questions, and are coming to think that woman has too long "taken feminine existence at a masculine estimate." It would be well for men to reconsider their estimates and make sure they are correct before thrusting them on the attention of women.

My liberal quotations from the two men who contributed to the symposium on women's dress may give a discouraging view of the case. This will be removed by reading the contributions from the women. I expect women will have to do their own dress reforming, but if men will hereafter have the good sense and taste to say nothing about it when they have nothing serious to say, and leave space to those who are interested and informed regarding the matter, we will, with the humility common to our sex, gratefully consider it a help.

While agreeing with Dr. Hammond and Mrs. King, that skirts hung from the shoulders do great harm, I quite as heartily indorse Dr. Jackson's decision that skirts must not rest on the hips. If this leaves any doubts as to my views on the subject, I will gladly remove them at request.

I have quoted much from Dr. Hammond which I did not approve, and I now give myself the pleasure of quoting one sentence which I do approve—with a modification: "Even if trousers should come into general use for women, it would be better that they should be kept up by the support of the hips than by suspenders passing over the shoulders." My modification would be this: Suspenders, so called, when worn with trousers such as Americans wear, are not suspenders. To suspend is to hang. Skirts hang and swing. That trousers do not hang is evident to all. Dr. Holland bears testimony to the fact that trousers are supported by the hips, when he speaks of the shock felt by a romantic young wife who sees her husband for the first time with his face covered with lather and "his suspenders dangling at his heels." The straps over the shoulders are of use on special occasions, such as drawing the pants back in place when they have been drawn down by bending over or by any unusual exertion or position. For these uses I think they should be retained. Without them the tendency is—and this I have often noticed in boys without shoulder straps—to draw in the waist, as soon as the trousers loosen somewhat about the hips by wear

and strain, which cannot be safely done by man, woman or child. Have trousers fitted snugly about the hips; thus shoulders and waist will be left free—the shoulders to bear the weight of their own clothing, and the waist to expand with every inspiration of the free air of heaven.

Though I fear having already exceeded the bounds of modesty and propriety by taking so much space in the valuable columns of THE ALPHA, I cannot close without an allusion to one more sentence.

It pains me, always, to put myself in antagonism to any one who seriously and conscientiously advocates dress reform. I do it in this instance with less hesitancy because my reference is not to principle, but method. Dr. Jackson says, through the *North American Review*, "how to dress in accordance with principles of health, comfort and true art without undergoing social martyrdom, is the practical question."

With this position I must take square issue, because I do not believe any great reform was ever effected without martyrdom of some kind. In this case it would naturally be social. If I believed we had passed the age of martyrs, I should believe we had passed the age of reforms. To my mind the practical question is, where can we find the martyrs? Or how can we so educate ourselves and others, so fill ourselves and others with a sense of humanity's needs in this direction that "social martyrdom" shall seem to us a crown of glory and not a cross of pain.

Already we have a few such. Mrs. E. M. King and Miss Nellie Glenn, of London; Mrs. Mary E. Tillotson, of Vineland, N. J.; Dr. Mary Walker, of Washington, D. C.; Dr. Lydia Sayre Hasbrouk, Dr. Abbie Knapp, of Dowagiac, Mich., and several Western ladies whose names I cannot now recall, at home and abroad steadfastly carry with them in sight of all a protest against the bondage of petticoats. This is practical work, and to mind the "practical question" is the raising up of more women with the strength, courage and devotion to do likewise.

CELIA B. WHITEHEAD.

POSTAL RIGHTS OF INMATES OF INSANE ASYLUMS.

PREPARED FOR THE TWELFTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CHARITIES AND CORRECTION, HELD AT WASHINGTON, D. C., JUNE, 1885.

BY MRS. E. P. W. PACKARD.

[Conclusion.]

MY DELIVERANCE.

The imperious demands of public sentiment that justice be done me, as exhibited in threats of violence unless something be done, compelled Dr. McFarland's unwilling committal of my person into the hands of my husband, and I subsequently became his prisoner for six weeks in my nursery.

One day Providence revealed to me the nefarious plot then maturing by these two great conspirators against my personal liberty—Dr. McFarland and my husband—by some letters he accidentally left upon my table, one of which was from Dr. McFarland, where he notified Mr. Packard that he must remove me forthwith, or the

institution might suffer violence by the mobs on my account. "But," he added, "since she is a sane woman, and an educated woman, you must keep her in an insane asylum for life, or we shall both be exposed by her. For this purpose I will give you a certificate, under oath, that she is hopelessly insane, and this will serve as her only passport into an asylum of incurables for life!"

Another letter from Dr. Prince, of Northampton, Mass., showed that a negotiation was already completed, on this basis with the incurable institution under this Dr. Prince's management, wherein he said, "This certificate is all-sufficient for her reception, and as I, like all other superintendents, have the censorship over all letters, I will do as you request, viz.: send no letters of hers notifying the public of her sanity, or of her place of concealment." Thus I found that in two days I was to be buried for life, without trial, among gibbering idiots and raving, howling maniacs, with no hope of a resurrection from this living tomb.

Again, I ask, can you blame me, looking at this subject from my standpoint, for resolving then and there to be the champion of this class, by securing to them their post-office rights in every asylum, public and private, in the United States, while I do believe, ladies and gentlemen, there are hundreds of American citizens now in the insane asylums of the United States who, at this moment, need this remedy as much as I then did, and who ought to have it promptly extended to them?

And it is in accordance with this vow that I have come to this Conference to ask your aid, as philanthropists, to help me to secure this object.

Finally, a letter proved to be the very pivot on which my personal liberty for life was suspended, namely:

I wrote a note revealing the discovery contained in these manuscripts, and pushed it down through where the windows come together into the hands of a stranger, who was passing through our yard, and he delivered it into the hands of Mrs. Haslett, to whom I directed it, and she took it to Judge Starr, of Kankakee City, and begged of him to rescue me before two days, or I should be beyond the reach of all human help for this world.

"Now," said Judge Starr, "I have the letter I have been trying three years to get from this insane asylum prisoner, but could not on account of the censorship over all the correspondence of the inmates, and now I will do as I have promised."

He accordingly issued the *habeas corpus*, and summoned Mr. Packard to bring me before him and show a justifiable cause for imprisoning me. This he failed to do for want of any evidence to bring before the jury that I then was, or ever had been insane.

After a trial of five days the jury pronounced me sane, finding that it was simply the *use* of my reason, rather than the *loss* of my reason, which had instigated this persecution, and that my accusers had used the term of "insanity" instead of "heresy" in order to moderate the persecution of "heretics." On their present basis insane asylums are a terror to reformers, and a shield to the wicked.

Before the trial closed Mr. Packard fled his country, in the night, to avoid the dangers of a mob retribution. He took with him all our property and minor

children, leaving me homeless, penniless, and childless.

I now appealed to the laws for protection as a married woman, when, alas! I found I had no laws to appeal to.

My commission, thus chartered by Providential events, I have accepted, and have already devoted twenty years of constant labor to this work of securing laws to meet the emergencies my experiences have disclosed.

I have already visited twenty-nine legislatures, and have secured the passage of nineteen bills, which have relieved hundreds from false imprisonment.

I am a self-appointed and self-supporting agent. I work under no organization or party. I receive no remuneration for services rendered from any organization or individual. I "work without money and without price," and bear my own expenses, which I defray by the sale of my books. And the only restitution I ask of my government is, that it now do enact such laws as will henceforth render such an outrage upon any other American woman a legal impossibility.

In closing, I will simply add, if there is a "doubting Thomas" in this National Conference, to him I would say, that the statements I have here made are simply facts—unvarnished facts—without the slightest fictitious drapery attached to them, as the testimony of many of the judges of the Supreme Court has conclusively corroborated as to the legal points stated, and as the "Report of Illinois Legislative Investigating Committees," who were appointed for the express purpose of ascertaining the validity of my statement, have fully substantiated their truth.

They not only found them all to be true—true historic facts—but they pronounced it to be so foul a blot upon their State escutcheon that the honor of the State demanded prompt and efficient action on the part of their legislature in relation to it. Dr. McFarland, the superintendent, was accordingly removed, and the "Personal Liberty Bill" passed, demanding a trial by jury of every person, before committal, and also the bill granted a jury trial to every inmate then in the insane asylum to see whether there were any *sane* inmates there. The result was one hundred and forty-eight married women were found to have been imprisoned there, with no legal evidence of insanity, put there by the simple *ipse dixit* of their subjective husbands, as I had been!

And my books of twenty years' circulation, while unveiling the inhuman treatment of patients there, as a blot upon the escutcheon of any civilized country, have as yet to receive their first refutation! And I have sad reason for believing that this was *then* but a type of many other insane asylums. But thanks to the Christian philanthropy evolved within the last twenty years, their number is now much reduced.

No! Christian philanthropists of this National Conference, you cannot shirk the moral responsibility a knowledge of these facts has thrown upon you, by denying their validity, for by so doing you not only deny the truth of God's Providential events, but you also enroll yourselves among the class of my persecutors for truth's sake. You may as well seek to obliterate the sun from the firmament, by denying its existence, as to attempt to obliterate this statement, by denying its validity!

Again, I ask this Convention, will you help a single-handed worker in this mission of mercy to the unfortunate, or will your record say, "Ye did it not," through unbelief?

Very respectfully submitted to this National Conference in behalf of the unfortunate by

MRS. E. P. W. PACKARD, *Chicago, Ill.*

WASHINGTON, D. C., *June, 1885.*

CALLING THE ANGELS IN.

I.

We mean to do it. Some day, some day,
We mean to slacken this fevered rush
That is wearing our very souls away,
And grant to our goaded hearts a hush
That is holy enough to let them hear
The footstep of angels drawing near.

II.

We mean to do it. Oh, never doubt,
When the burden of daytime droil is o'er,
We'll sit and muse, while the stars come out,
As the Patriarch sat at the open door
Of his tent, with a heavenward gazing eye,
To watch for the angels passing by.

III.

We've seen them afar at high noontide,
When fiercely the world's hot flashings beat;
Yet never have bidden them turn aside,
And tarry awhile in converse sweet;
Nor prayed them to hallow the cheer we spread,
To drink of our wine, and break our bread.

IV.

We promised our hearts, that when the stress
Of the life-work reaches the longed-for close—
When the weight that we groan with, hinders less,
We'll loosen our thoughts to such repose
As banishes care's disturbing din,
And then—we will call the angels in.

V.

The day that we dreamed of, comes at length,
When tired of every mocking quest,
And broken in spirit and shorn of strength,
We drop, indeed, at the door of rest,
And wait and watch as the day wanes on;
But the angels we meant to call, are gone!

—Margaret J. Preston.

Don't hang a dismal picture on the wall, and do not daub with sables and glooms in your conversation. Don't be a cynic and disconsolate preacher. Don't bewail and bemoan. Omit the negative propositions. Nerve us with incessant affirmatives. Don't waste yourself in rejection, nor bark against the bad, but chant the beauty of the good. When that is spoken which has a right to be spoken, the chatter and the criticism will stop. Set down nothing that will not help somebody.—Emerson.

IS NOT THIS PAPER NEEDED? WON'T YOU TAKE IT
AND CIRCULATE IT?

Subscription and Advertising Rates.

Subscriptions:

The Alpha is published on the first day of each month, by the Moral Education Society of Washington, D. C., and can be obtained of newsdealers, or will be sent at the following rates:

One year	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$1.00
Six months,	-	-	-	-	-	-	50 cents.

Advertisements

The Alpha having a large circulation, and being of a suitable size for binding, is a good medium for advertisements, which will be inserted at the following rates:

One square, (space equal to six lines nonpareil,) first insertion one dollar; each subsequent insertion, fifty cents.

Correspondence:

Letters consisting of personal opinions should be not more than half column in length. Letters containing important facts or interesting matter may sometimes be longer.

All communications, books for review, &c., should be addressed to Caroline B. Winslow, Editor of "The Alpha," No. 1 Grant Place, Washington, D. C.

PAID FOR.

We send THE ALPHA to no one unless it is paid for, and we discontinue it at the expiration of the time for which payment has been made. Persons receiving it who have not subscribed for it *may be sure* that it has been sent and paid for by a friend, or neighbor, and that *no bill* will ever be presented for it.

THE ALPHA.

VOL. X.

AUGUST 1, 1885

No. 12.

Just as we go to press the mail brings us a package addressed in the handwriting of a London friend, of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, containing the whole dreadful revelation. We have only time to glance at some of Mr. Stead's editorials; but they seem to be directed by a spirit of holy and fiery zeal, and in an earnestness of spirit and fearless resolution which shows that he is backed by those intrepid reformers known as the C. D. A. Federation, as well as a strong moral conviction that the time is ripe for out-spoken protest against, as well as exposure of, this underground cesspool to the blessed sunlight and the purifying air of heaven. God bless, strengthen and protect this moral hero—Editor Stead.

MRS. E. P. W. PACKARD's argument for postal rights of inmates of insane asylums, in the July ALPHA, is attracting much attention from our readers, as our correspondents declare. All see the justness of the demand and acknowledge the clearness of the statement of the case. It is the result of Mrs. Packard's painful experience, which experience, we fear, is not exceptional. No man or class of men should have the power to incarcerate in a living tomb any person, no matter how much their minds may be diseased. Every one of these

unfortunates should know they have the means of communication with their friends in the outer world any time they may choose.

As superintendents and keepers are but men, they should not be invested with irresponsible power. Few men that have ever lived are strong enough to bear bravely and well power and authority unless responsible for its use to other fellow-men as well as to their Maker. We conclude Mrs. P.'s article in this present issue of THE ALPHA, and hope United States postal boxes may by act of Congress be placed in each ward of all our lunatic asylums.

The new journal devoted to psychometric researches of all mental development and phenomena, known as "Mind in Nature," has reached its fifth number, and in its growth is developing with each issue more and more of value, of interest and usefulness. Its pages are enriched by contributions from the pens of divines, physicians, philosophers and scientists, and are proving that of all the intellectual pursuits of this age of mental activity there is no study so important, so absorbing and profitable as man. It is printed with beautiful type, on fine, heavy paper, and in every respect, with its aesthetic cover, is a most attractive and richly executed periodical. It is published by the Cosmic Publishing Co., No. 171 West Washington street, Chicago. They prove they are reaching out after the highest truth and the highest development by their appreciation of the objects and aims of THE ALPHA. The July number of "Mind in Nature" has the following fearless and truthful notice of us, and contains a tribute to the correctness of our position and our imperative claims on the attention and support of our fellow-citizens:

Have you subscribed for THE ALPHA? If not, do so, and read it. You won't like it. Neither did the slaveowner like *The Liberator*, but it would have been far better for him and for us if he had read it instead of burning it. And so this new gospel of purity, as taught by THE ALPHA, will have to be heeded, whether we like it or not. If the young men of this nation would accept it, we should soon have no more of the conflict of evil. The liquor question would adjust itself without a prohibitory law, and Christ's sermon on the Mount could be accepted and practiced literally. We may jeer at it—or swear at it, if you prefer—but humanity will have to accept it some time, and then work our way back to the Garden of Eden.

The present number closes the tenth volume of the tenth year of the life of THE ALPHA. Some of our friends will be interested in knowing that we have been sustained so long, and some will ask *how* we have lived, which is a gratifying manifestation of sympathy; but we often wonder if the majority of our readers have the most remote conception of what it costs of labor, time and money to keep a reform paper running a whole decade without a break or omission of one issue. If they could we would more frequently receive a subscrip-

ing, accompanying the good wish and the God bless you for your brave words, not sentences like the following: "Yours is a noble and much-needed work, but we take so many papers and the times are so hard we do not need THE ALPHA, because we believe in the truths it teaches, so please discontinue," as though a struggling cause could ever be sustained without the effort and sacrifice of those that believe. And some that have struck mighty blows at social evils and had clear vision of the glory of a better life, have become inactive, and reply, "We have said our say, we cannot keep on saying, we have done." Well, we thank them for good work so well done, but the world is not saved; we must keep repeating the truth, "in season and out of season," "here a little and there a little," till from frequent listening and familiarity with the truth the world turns and follows the ways of wisdom. We have hoped by now that we should have had a firmer financial foundation and a larger circulation—partly from the merit of faithfulness, but mostly through the *needs of suffering humanity*; we have likewise a vague hope that the moral mission—the *cauldron of woe*—lately uncovered by the *Pal Mail Gazette*, will so effectually break the "conspiracy of silence," in our country as well as in England, that a more courageous moral tone may hereafter prevail, which will search diligently for a knowledge of a *war* and a *prevention* of these awful crimes, which will necessitate a greater knowledge of physiology and the laws of life, and with a desire to sustain a journal that will treat social and mental science fearlessly, but clearly and purely from the highest moral standpoint. It may be we are too sanguine for the near future. It may be the triumph of moral courage and the love of purity will not encompass the earth while we are still clothed with flesh, but come it must, and come it will, we are as sure as that God lives and rules in justice, love and patience. Ah! *patience* is the hardest lesson of all to learn; it must be a Divine attribute, for how great and long-suffering is our Heavenly Father's patience with us—His *erring and blinded children*—who prefer darkness to light and call evil good.

THE ALPHA never was more needed than at the present time: why should it languish for support? Why should the paper still be hidden from so many sorrowing hearts that need its guidance? Why should so many that recognize its mission hide its face as though it was in itself a shameful thing, instead of the shame it belongs to the sin it rebukes? We have reason to believe this paper has more readers than pretensions—such is the unhealthy habit of our present civilization to reveal in secret as what to human perversion is considered a delight, and to *lose* the enlightenment of igno-

rance with sin and ignorance itself; but we will not recall past painful journalistic experiences, we will look towards a better future and bravely press on and toil on and pray while we stand and wait for the dawning of a better day.—Ed.

A NEW DEPARTURE.

We print the following announcement entire as offering quite a unique and comprehensive programme. The Misses Bush have been principals of Belvidere Seminary for eighteen years and long ago adopted co-education. They still further extend their enlarged usefulness in proposing to open The Wendell Phillips Memorial School. May they be sustained in their noble undertaking by grace and patronage. It is a noble effort, recognizing that there is positively no limit to human development:

THE WENDELL PHILLIPS MEMORIAL INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

The dead need no monuments, the living need homes, schools and temples of industry.

The Misses Bush, principals of Belvidere Seminary, respectfully inform their friends and the public generally that the plan of an industrial school sent by them to the widow of Wendell Phillips has received her approval and permission to name the school, when founded, The Wendell Phillips Memorial Industrial School. This plan embraces the following objects:

1. The adoption of more natural and practical methods of teaching.
2. The equal and harmonious cultivation of the physical, mental and moral powers of the young.
3. A more careful study and observance on the part of teachers and pupils of the laws of life and the sacred principles of justice, which, recognizing the right of every child to be well born and provided with the conditions necessary to health and happiness, will lead them to seek a wise knowledge of their duties and responsibility as individuals, and as founders of households, societies and governments.
4. The acquisition on the part of students during school-life of such practical knowledge of some one or more pursuits or occupations as will enable them to become self-sustaining, useful and order-loving members of society.

To aid in the accomplishment of the above objects, the Misses Bush propose to enlarge the institution now in their charge by connecting with it the following new departments:

1. A kindergarten, which shall combine the pleasing and useful occupations of the school-room and garden, and which shall be conducted in the loving spirit of the wise Froebel, who said, "Come, let us live with the children."
2. A department for pupils leaving the kindergarten will be grouped in companies, under the care of watchful guardians and teachers, who will daily instruct them in habits of industry, economy, order, temperance, and kindness to one another.
3. A literary, scientific and commercial department, the studies in each division to be effective, and experimental as far as possible.
4. A school of art and design, including music, painting, illustrating, modelling and the ceramic art.
5. A department of printing and journalism, in which the theory and practice of the literary art and the best methods of dealing with all public questions may be thoroughly mastered.
6. A school of equity for the consideration of all moral, social, and religious matters of interest as affecting the welfare of individuals and nations.
7. A department for the study and practice of various agricultural and mechanical pursuits comprising the necessary implements and workshops, with a temple of industry, containing spacious halls for the exhibition and sale of the best products of each department.

These departments, it is expected, will, in a year or two, become self-sustaining, and then remunerative, in which case the net proceeds will be placed to the credit of the producers as so much stock, or shared in equity, as the majority shall decide. To these departments it is proposed to add:

A health department and an arbitration bureau, so that invalids may visit this beautiful place and enjoy its scenery and natural advantages for promoting health, at moderate expense for board and medical advice.

The arbitration bureau is a step in reform that must become universal in all *Christian* countries, where the *principles* of Christianity are *practiced*, and will take the place of law courts, at a nominal expense, and, it is hoped, will secure more justice to parties in dispute than can usually be obtained in the courts. Justice is a science as exact as mathematics. All disputed questions, whether between individuals or families, merchants, manufacturers, corporations, States or nations, should be referred to the science of justice by arbitration, thereby avoiding delay by expensive and vexatious law-suits, and cruel and expensive wars.

The writer knows of cases that have been in the courts scores of years, that could have been arbitrated in as many days or weeks, at a great saving of time, expense and angry feelings, so detrimental to the health and prosperity of the contestants.

In view of the magnitude of the work and their earnest desire to render through it appropriate homage to one whom they hold in loving reverence as the *greatest moral hero* of the age, the originators of the above plan respectfully solicit such aid and influence in its behalf as the friends of Wendell Phillips may be pleased to offer. They will confer personally or by letter with any one interested in this enterprise, and will very gratefully receive donations, in large or small amounts of money, books, stationery, pictures, chemicals and philosophical apparatus, charts and specimens needed in the study of the natural sciences. All parties responding in any way substantially to this call will be recorded as founders of the institution.

To obtain additional capital a stock company has been organized to enable those friends who desire to aid our institution financially to take some of the stock; said stock will be transferable and redeemable for education and accepted as cash in payment for anything due the company, and for cottage lots on the premises, if any should be offered for sale. Shares of stock, \$10.00 each.

Friends willing to give their names, influence, and money to a special department, as is frequently done in other educational institutions, can do so.

For further information, please address one of the undersigned, Belvidere Seminary, Warren County, New Jersey.

B. FRANKLIN CLARK, M. D., Pres.

E. L. BUSH, Treas.

BELLE BUSH, Sec'y.

PERSONALLY we have a strong prejudice against advertising for correspondence with a view to marriage. It seems too much like making merchandise of the kingdom of heaven. Marriage is too sacred and too holy an institution to be in any sense subjected to worldly traffic—depending more upon mutual attraction and spontaneity than a regularly calculated plan. But there is logic in our young friend's argument; we publish his letter to call out expressions of opinion from our readers; but this is certainly a new departure for THE ALPHA. So many young men and women of marriageable age are unwilling to wait for the fulness of time when their mates come to them by the force of attraction. A vast majority of mankind are utterly unconscious of any such provision in the economies of the universe. Then, as in this case, the best material cannot always be developed in one's own neighborhood, or within the lines prescribed by conventionality; and many young men have an exceedingly limited circle of acquaintances. Certainly much disappointment and many disastrous failures have resulted from accepting the first one that offers or the most convenient person

without any assurance of special fitness or congeniality or even a prospect to harmonizing their lives to each other's best interest or to the interest of posterity.

Then, again, two persons raised in widely-apart sections of the country, with different environments, hereditary and education, may be the exact complement of each other and form a happy union; but such contracts should be made with great caution. The glamour of romance is very blinding to common sense, and in no event of life do we need the guiding hand of reason and Divine wisdom as in the selection of life partners. In this instance we judge from the frankness of our correspondent on former occasions, his truthfulness and trustfulness, that this is an honest effort to find a congenial helpmate. Believing this to be so, we let our friend be heard.

DR. WINSLOW.

DEAR FRIEND: My prospects are very much brighter than at last writing. You will remember I was looking for a young man to help me keep rooms and study and do a good many other things, and could not find one to my liking.

I must have a partner—it is so hard for me to accomplish anything alone—and I know that a woman's help would be worth infinitely more to me than a man's; have known it all along, for that matter, but circumstances have prevented me from thinking much about a wife. Now, I have resolved to marry as soon as I find a suitable young lady who will join me in living and laboring for better things; but to find her—this, I fear, will be the greatest difficulty of all. Among all the fair ones I know and know of there is not the right one. I believe there are young women who have the qualities I desire in a wife—believe there are many of them—but I have neither time nor means to travel all over the land and make acquaintances, and I would not be at all sure of finding one of them were I to do so. The only way to reach them that I know of is by advertising, and I propose to advertise.

To digress a moment, I think the subject of matrimonial advertising ought to be more frequently discussed by social reform writers and others who have influence as leaders of thought.

The selection of a helpmeet is a most momentous consideration, and the candidate for conjugal felicity should not be restricted in his choosing to his own immediate neighborhood. The whole country is small enough in which to find a partner who may bring lasting joy or life-long unhappiness as his investment.

Red glass makes everything look red, doesn't it? A depraved and dishonest society says that only the vicious advertise, and very few are plucky enough to brave public opinion, even though despising it.

Anything that will tend to remove the common prejudice against advertising for a husband or wife will help to decrease the number of those who are married but not mated.

You told me to write to you whenever I thought you could be of assistance to me. Will you help me to find

a wife by allowing me to advertise in your paper? I want to use THE ALPHA because I must have an ALPHA wife.

Those who might respond to my advertisement in an ordinary newspaper I would know nothing about at first, of course. But if a young woman were to write that she was a reader of THE ALPHA I would think I knew considerably about her at once; would feel pretty safe in assuming that she was a person of good sense and education, and one likely to have advanced ideas and independent views of marriage, etc.

Will you please insert the following or something like it in THE ALPHA for me?

TO ALPHA DAUGHTERS.

I believe that most if not all readers of THE ALPHA are honest and sincere, and willing to accord honesty to others, and when I take this means of making known that I want a partner for life I do not think I will be considered altogether depraved.

I am twenty-seven, of good education and ALPHA principles. Would like to correspond with a young lady who is educated and has some originality and a great deal of independence.

Address: "Cawan," office of THE ALPHA, No. 1, Grant Place, Washington, D. C.

RESPECTABLE CRIMINALS.

The awful revelations of London depravity and crime—stripped of the guise of respectability—made by the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* in its daily issue of one week, has startled the whole civilized world from its apathy concerning social sin. May we never relapse into silence or indifference again till this awful cancer is extirpated or cured, for the people can no longer plead ignorance. May we be ashamed of a cowardice that will not protect little children and defenseless women from the ravages of the hoary debauchee and demoniac sensualist!

Awful and shocking as the whole story is, we feel like honoring Mr. Stead for his fearless exposure of respectable crime. In this long array of charges against princes, noblemen, bishops, judges, physicians, and all other classes—which has burst upon us like a moral volcano—we recognized an illustration of what THE ALPHA has urged on the attention of parents for years, that the ranks of shame and crime are not filled exclusively from what are called the lower, vicious classes of society; but the ranks of this *increasing army* are recruited from respectable, well-to-do families—persons that have been tenderly raised and carefully educated in all departments of culture (except the most essential of all knowledge); sons and daughters of old, honored and titled pedigree—who *should be leaders* of the masses in all that patriotism, philanthropy, and true pride of character could suggest. If parents could interpret the band-writing on the wall of this Belshazzar temple would it not suggest self-condemnation and a consciousness of personal responsibility, inasmuch as they had not guarded their infants from inception from inherited sensuality and further neglected to furnish the safeguard

of instruction on the most vital of topics? This is a hard lesson; but it must be suffered till acknowledged and repented of. When children are born with pure blood and pure minds, out of the battle of self-conquest waged by fathers and mothers, they will not lack the strength to walk through the fiery furnace of temptation and no smell of fire be found upon their garments. We still hope that Mr. Stead, after taking a step that has called forth so much moral courage, will, ere he closes the crusade he has inaugurated, recognize our standpoint and make a strong appeal to parents to raise their own lives to the highest standard, and not be content with his present announcement that he "is not meddling with the vices of men, only unearthing crime," for without *vice* there could be no crime.

Passion and appetite are so perverted from long ages of abuse that they master the human family and have become a veritable Pandora box wide open, sending forth an army of plagues, that while devastating our lives, have come to be considered *necessities* from which there is no escape; whereas by regulating our appetites to their legitimate and normal use, allowing no dominating power, only health and joy would result.

Every one knows without telling that if our food was always simple, nutritious, and unstimulating and our drink that so abundantly furnished by nature, taken to satisfy hunger and thirst, and not because of its fine flavor, there would be no dyspeptics or hypochondriacs, so if the procreative act was ultimated only for desired offspring, nervous irritability, backache, and other suffering would diminish, and suicides, idiots, lunatics, and prostitute men and women would in time cease to be, while its attendant, accursed disease would be driven from the face of the earth.

A LETTER FROM INDIA

To the Editor of the Alpha:

Thanking you heartily for finding space for my letter in your esteemed journal, THE ALPHA, of the 1st of April last, I would ask leave of you to draw your attention to a few points of the observation you added to my correspondence. They are of vital importance, for, I believe, your notes about the Indian people are calculated to convey a totally wrong impression to many an honest mind, and will, I am afraid, ultimately impede the good philanthropic work you have in view.

It is a great puzzle to me how could you pass such a sweeping condemnation over the whole races of Indian women when unquestionably the translated paper have the picture of a part of them, viz., of the Mahomedan women of the present times. Even to avoid all possible risks of falling into like errors, I had beforehand, in clear terms, stated that the Mahomedans are but a section of the whole Indian community, and have hardly

anything in common with the other races, which every student of history knows to be fully true.

The glorious name of Chand Bibi, Tara Bai, Lilavati, &c., of old, which are engraved in imperishable letters of fame on the pages of history, are abundantly sufficient to convince you of the futility and hollowness of your remarks, you were at so much pains to pass over the whole of the women of India of all ages in such vile language as "incubating machines, drudges to the appetites of men," &c. Even now, there are living examples of Indian women among us who have earned for themselves a world-wide renown for high, moral, and intellectual elevation, and who are wielding the sceptre of power in their kingdoms with as much consummate skill, polished tastes, virtue, and strength of character, in fact with all that constituted the perfect education of the head and heart alike as would do no small honor to kings and sovereigns of foreign mighty nations to make patterns of. And how, in the teeth of such uncontested facts, you could have parted from truth and showered such degrading and unjust remarks on innocent heads, is past all thought, unless, indeed, they were conceived in a moment of evil spirit or under the impulse of the overzealous care for the cause of reformation you so loudly preach.

That the present social position of Indian women is far lower down in the scale of degradation, as compared with that of the ancient times, cannot be gainsaid for a moment, but to argue that the Indian women, with all the varied races, have in ages undergone a "systematic degradation" is illogical and dishonorable beyond measure, and betrays a sad want of knowledge of Indian history.

Again, your strictures about the "moral responsibilities" of Indian women, about the religion and philosophy of ancient India, are wholly unfounded. Eminent philosophers and talented scientists of Germany, France, and England, and, in fact, all those who have devoted themselves to the study of the religion and philosophy of India with the earnestness and fairness they demand, have one and all wondered at and acknowledged the height of sublimity and perfection the ancient Indians had carried their religion and philosophy. The sacred Shastras of the Hindoos have opened to them a rich vein of mine where pure gold is laid down in inexhaustible quantity. Philologists are agreed to what important part Sanskrit plays among the languages of the world; and if am permitted to indulge in a little prophecy, the date is not too far when the world will admit in one voice that the Sanskrit and other Oriental literature covers an amount of discovery of truth—religious, philosophical, and scientific—unsurpassed and unapproached, even by the so-called western civilization of 1885. The simple daily life of Hindoo women, though not so intellectually great as of yore, is full of rituals and ceremonies prescribed by the doctrines of the religious and philosophical schools of ancient India, but which, sad to say, many a foreign inquirer and "honest investigator" are prone to pass over and look down upon as superstitious; but I believe, if they are studied with right discrimination and unbiassed frame of mind, they will be found to have an intrinsic value of their

own—the magnificence and validity of which are patent to those who can bring themselves to bear the hard task of looking beyond what their physical and grosser senses lead to.

Lastly: As for the lively interest the Western world have begun to take in the researches of the East, which you censure as the "present craze for Eastern lore;" it is, I believe, a necessity of the times. The world-periods demand it. That associations have sprung up in so short a time all over the Western world in search of the wisdom of the East may be urged as a proof of it. Man's mind is always hankering after true knowledge, as a comparative study of the different philosophies conclusively proves. There have appeared on the face of the earth philosophies after philosophies in succession from the days history has put in record, who have enriched the world in their appointed times with their sublime and abstruse thoughts and progress toward the supreme knowledge. Thus the idea to realize the highest truth on earth has always been fed on, and researches in this direction have been increasing; and is it, then, a great wonder that thoughtful minds from your hemisphere should now look to the far East and slake their thirst after knowledge at the fountain-head of Truth? For, is it not in the literature of the Orientals and the Indians, whom you call a "motherless race," that the solution of the grandest problems of life can be found, and have they not pushed their investigations into yet unknown and unexplored fields? This may sound strange to many ears unaccustomed to hear any but the ordinary low notes of a common-place life. But truth is stranger than fiction.

Trusting you will find a corner for my answer in your paper,

I remain yours faithfully, RAJ COOMAS ROY.
JAMALPUR, BENGAL,
INDIA, May 8, 1885.

JULY 10, 1885.

RAJ COOMAS ROY—

MY DEAR FRIEND: We are grieved more than we can tell that our comments on the status of the women of India in May ALPHA should have injured your feelings. We disclaim all intention of doing so, or in any way misrepresenting the institutions of your country. But, my friend, my remarks were not addressed to you or the few readers we have in India. They were meant as a check to the present craze that has seized so many of our own people for occult science and Eastern lore. You would be surprised how extensively this class of reading has sped over our country.

Yes, you are right; we are ignorant of the details of your country's history. We know only the outlines, and we failed to discriminate between Mahomedan and Bramin women—a discrimination we ought to have made. The picture drawn by your countrywomen was not attractive, and brought very forcibly to mind much that we had heard of the social condition of the masses in India.

We doubt not you have many excellent women in your country—some that are educated and talented, like the four sisters Bose, of Calcutta—that have lately distinguished themselves by their courage and perseverance in acquiring professions and competing successfully with male students in the same college. But what of the millions that are in abject ignorance and subjugation? True, we have many ignorant women in our country. It could not be otherwise with such a large annual emigrant population. But the proportions, according to population, must be much less than with you. Much that reaches us about domestic relations is often the line of thought that was in my mind while writing.

Moozendah, that refined, learned, and talented Bramin that came to us on a mission to bring what he called "a new religion" to us, Samaj said in one of his lectures, "What shall we do with our women? Shall we put her upon a tricycle or force her upon the rostrum?" As though he was shocked with the freedom of speech and action of Western women, and then added, "Would we not rather take to the new Christ?"

If it is fair to quote fiction, Miss Crawford represents Mr. Isaacs with a plurality of wives and children. The quarrels and disagreements of these wives destroy the comfort of their husband; the husband never thought of loving any one of them, and was absolutely ignorant of a true sentiment till he met the young English girl.

A returned missionary told me, while making a railroad journey in India with his wife, a high Bramin entered their compartments, and a servant brought in his baggage. Among other things, a sack which he laid at the feet of his master. By-and-by the sack moved. The master put his foot firmly upon it, and explained that the bag contained one of his wives. The missionary demanded that she be released from such ignominious confinement and be seated beside her husband, as an act of humanity. When the guard came and lifted her up, opening the mouth of the sack, she was closely veiled beside. These are only some of the incidents that have caused us to believe that Hindoo women are not allowed any personal freedom, any choice in life, either as wife or mother, and, consequently, they cannot, in this depressed condition, be true mothers, nor transmit their own possibilities; and we marveled that you should send us a new religion or teach us, as a people, and that our most intelligent men and women should be so eager and impetuous in their desire for Theosophy and occult science. But now that Madam Blavatsky and her colleagues have burst the bubble of Theosophy, and that society has reorganized, and are to turn their researches from

Theosophic phenomena to the student of ancient books and Sanskrit, may we not hope for a more rational understanding of India, its religion, and its customs, for the phenomena of occult science formed with us two-thirds of the furore about your country.

May we not hope to understand each other better under these new conditions? Yet you will never *learn* us till you come and see for yourself, and then you will not wonder that we feel India couldn't give us a new religion or a new interpretation of Christ.

Will the above explanation exonerate us from the appearance of evil intent toward your people, or the charge of being controlled by "evil spirits?" We hope so, for we have for you personally a most profound respect, and would not wound your feelings. We value your contributions to THE ALPHA and *Herald of Health*, and hope you will continue to favor us.

Sincerely,

C. B. W.

OUR GERMAN CORRESPONDENT.

HEIDELBERG, GERMANY, June 10, 1885.

To the Editor of the Alpha:

Permit me to bring to the attention of the readers of THE ALPHA a translation just made by Dr. Adams Walther (a woman medical graduate of one of the Swiss universities) of August Bebel's work in one volume upon "Woman in the Past, Present and Future." This little book is published by the Modern Press, 19 Paternoster Row, London, and may be had of any American bookseller. It treats the subject in the following order: Woman in the past, woman in the present; sexual impulse; marriage, obstacles and preventions to marriage; the numeric proportion of the sexes, causes and results; prostitution; the commercial position of woman, her mental faculties; Darwinism and the social condition of the community; the legalization of woman; her relation to politics. Then follows an excellent series of chapters upon "Woman in the Future." The especial value of the book lies, however, in the development of the fundamental idea of the author that the woman's question must be considered as a whole and with constant reference to the close relation of our industrial conditions to our sexual morality.

I venture to make some extracts in the hope that the readers of THE ALPHA may care to make a closer acquaintance with the book as a whole. It will be seen that in the question of education and of marriage the author represents the standpoint of THE ALPHA. Thus on page 44 he tells us: "It follows as a natural consequence that an acquaintance with the physical properties of the sexual organs is as necessary as an acquaintance with the physical basis of mental activity, and that the same care must be bestowed upon the development of the one as on that of the other. Every person must understand that organs and instincts which are common to all, which constitute a very essential part of his being, and even, at certain periods of his life, usurp the em-

pire over all other impulses, are not a fit subject for the affectation of mystery, for false shame and gross ignorance. It follows further that an acquaintance with the physiology and anatomy of the sexual organs ought to be as widely spread among both sexes as any other branch of information. If we possessed knowledge of our physical nature we should regard many vital questions from quite a different standpoint to our present one. We should find ourselves face to face with the question how to remedy evils which modern society passes over in silence, but which nevertheless force the recognition of their unwelcome presence on well-nigh every family in the land. In all other departments knowledge is regarded as a virtue, as the best and most desirable end of human endeavor. The only exception is made in those things which stand in the most intimate relation to the character and health of the individual as well as to the foundations of all social development."

And on page 48 *et seq* :

"According to the doctrine of Kant man and woman together form an entire human being. The healthy development of the race depends upon the normal union of the sexes. The natural exercise of the sexual functions is a necessity for the healthy development of the individual whether man or woman. But as man is not an animal only, but also a human being, his strongest and most vehement impulse cannot be fully satisfied by merely physical gratification; he feels the need of mental affinity to the being with whom he unites himself. When this is absent sexual intercourse becomes purely mechanical, and is rightly stigmatized as immoral. Such intercourse cannot fulfil the requirements of a higher humanity that seeks to ennoble a relationship based upon purely physical laws by the mutual personal attraction of two human beings. The man of finer mould demands that this mutual attraction should outlive the consummation of the sexual act, and extend its elevating influence to the beings called into existence by that act."

"It is therefore consideration for the offspring, duties towards it, and pleasure in it, which, under the most various social forms, first causes the amatory relationship of two persons to become permanent. Every couple which desires to unite in sexual intercourse should ask itself whether its reciprocal bodily and mental qualities are capable of advantageous intermingling. The reply can be an unbiassed one only under two conditions, viz: First, the removal of every interest foreign to the proper purpose of the union, namely, gratification of the natural instincts, and the perpetuation of the individual in the propagation of the race; and second, a measure of discernment sufficient to bridle the blindness of passion. As both these conditions of society are more frequently absent than present it follows, as a matter of course, that our modern marriage is very far from fulfilling its purpose, and has, therefore, no claim to be regarded as either sacred or moral."

"It is impossible to prove statistically how large a number of marriages are concluded in the present day on a basis the reverse of that described above. It is in the interest of those concerned to let their union appear

to the world other than that which it really is. Nor has the modern state, as the representative of society, any occasion to instigate researches which might throw a curious light upon its own proceedings."

"He agreed that the matrimonial union should only be entered upon by two persons inspired by mutual love, for the purpose of exercising their natural functions. This motive is rarely pure and unalloyed. On the contrary, marriage is regarded by most women as a kind of almshouse into which they must obtain admittance at all cost, while the man, for his part, generally counts up the pecuniary advantages of marriage with the greatest exactitude. And even in those marriages in which low and egotistic motives have had no place, the stern reality of life introduces so many elements of disturbance and dissolution that they but rarely fulfil the hopes of youthful enthusiasm and passion."

"And, very naturally, for if married life is to afford satisfaction to both husband and wife, not only mutual love and respect must be present, but also the certainty of possessing that measure of the necessities and agreeables of life which they consider indispensable for themselves and their children. Gnawing anxiety, the hard struggle for existence, are the first nails in the coffin of matrimonial happiness and content. And the more fruitful the union is, the more the natural purpose of marriage is accomplished, the more pressing does the anxiety become. The peasant who congratulates himself on the birth of every calf, who counts with complacency the litter of young pigs, and reports the number smilingly to his neighbor, this same peasant listens gloomily when told that his wife has brought him an addition to the small number of children that he hopes to be able to rear, and all the more gloomily if the newborn child has the misfortune to be a girl."

"The simple fact that the birth of a human being, the image of God, as the religious people say, is in so many cases regarded as of very much less importance than that of a domestic animal, proves the degraded condition in which we live. And here again it is chiefly the female sex which suffers. In many respects there is little difference between our vices and those of ancient and modern barbarians. The barbarians put their superfluous girls to death, and most girls were superfluous in times when wars of extermination were the order of the day. We are too civilized to kill our daughters, but we mostly treat them as pariahs in society and in the family. * * * One so often hears the remark: 'The best standard for the civilization of a nation is the position of its women. We agree to this standard, but its application will show us that our own civilization is far from being what we fondly imagine it to be.' * * *

"We must inquire whether modern life has not introduced into matrimony factors which tend to undermine it more than any which existed before. Doubtless in all ages when women were possessed of property marriages were far oftener determined by pecuniary considerations than by love or affection, but proofs are wanting to show that marriage was formerly made an object of speculation and exchange in the open market with anything like the effrontery as to-day. In our times, among the propertied classes—the poor have no need of

it—marriage barter is carried on with a shamelessness which makes the phrases about the sacredness of marriage that some people never tire of repeating sound like the emptiest mockery. This has its reasons, like everything else. In no period has it been so difficult as at present for the great majority to attain what is generally regarded as prosperity, and in no period has the perfectly justifiable desire for the amenities and enjoyments of life been so universally disseminated as now. And the failure to attain these things is felt more acutely because all believe they possess an equal claim to gratification. Theoretically there is no distinction between ranks and classes. The conception of a democratic equality in enjoyment has roused in all the longing to translate this conception into reality. But the majority do not realize that equality in enjoyment is only possible in company with equality in the social conditions of existence; moreover, public opinion and the example of the upper classes prompt the individual to resort to any measures which, without compromising him, will, as he believes, lead to the end in view. Thus speculation on a wealthy marriage has become one of the chief means of rising in life. On the one side is the thirst for money—for as much money as possible; on the other, the desire for rank, title, and distinction. These desires, especially in the so-called better classes of society, provide for each other's mental gratification. In these classes marriage is mostly regarded as a mere business transaction—it is a purely conventional tie which both parties outwardly respect, while each acts privately as his feelings may direct. We need only allude to political marriage in the highest circles for the sake of completeness."

The discussion of sexual morality in and out of marriage is carried out into the minutest detail in the spirit of the foregoing passages, and merits the careful attention of all the readers of THE ALPHA. F. K. W.

"MODERN BABYLON."

Since the issue of our last number the *Pall Mall Gazette* has sounded a cry which bids London sleep no more, for lust has murdered sleep.

But the shame and horror of the awakening has not been for the criminals, case-hardened by long intimacy with and immunity in guilt. It has been for those guiltless of deeper wrong than the selfish indifference and cowardly indolence which has allowed them to rest contented with the external whitening of the sepulchres in our midst, for those who did not ignore but were ignorant of the depths of the iniquity by which they were surrounded, and even for those who have struggled in vain against that iniquity.

In treating of a subject of such tremendous gravity as the sexual crimes recently forced upon the attention of a public whose notions of morality have been limited to the observance of outward decorum by wealthy sinners, and to the hounding of poor sinners out of sight, we are not greatly concerned to defend the *Pall Mall Gazette* from the charges brought by certain legislators and journalists, who appear to consider wrong-doing a lesser evil than plain speaking. We are glad to note that few such moralists have arisen to disgrace the man-

hood of England. For our own part we have too much faith in the essentially purifying effects of light to shrink from its rays, even though they reveal the horror close at hand which darkness had concealed. We have so much reverence for truth that we are willing to welcome her, and to trust to the ultimate value of her teachings, no matter in how terrible a guise she comes before us. Unhappily, the vast majority of the press, even in the face of the revelation of crimes that have thrilled all right-thinking men and women with rage and indignation, have thought only of maintaining that conspiracy of silence as to sexual crime which is moral complicity in guilt. Even of the few that have spoken in time the majority have done so in tones that remind one of Tartuffe imploring concealment of sin in the name of its attractiveness to his own unstable virtue.

The sole question of real import to the moralist is whether the ghastly picture so daringly unveiled by the *Pall Mall Gazette* is true; not how it is painted. We feel bound to declare our conviction that, in spite of certain defects of method and possible exaggerations of detail, the picture is true.

The existence of the hidden cancer which is consuming the vitals of London and of other great centres of modern "civilization" is no novelty to those who, like ourselves, have long devoted themselves to the endeavor to repeal the shameless laws that sanction and pander to the sexual vices of the rich in violation of the dearest rights and liberties of the poor.

The appeal which we should feel disposed to make would be that, if indeed among our ruling classes—among those who even now are sheltered by a baleful secrecy which is a grievous injury and wrong against society—criminals such as those described in the *Pall Mall Gazette* are daring to sit in judgment upon the legal methods by which it is proposed to deal with such as they—if indeed these men can be brought before the bar of public opinion, and branded, for what they are, let it be done.

The system exposed by the *Pall Mall Gazette* is the organization of rape. Those who declare this to be the case, should, we think, lead the demand for a full and complete investigation of the charges made, and the evidence upon which they are made. The crimes related are worse than murder, and no true man or woman would shrink from tracking a murderer from fear of staining hand or garment with his victim's blood. The denunciation of crime is the protection of innocence, and it would be sad indeed if the employment of an official class for this purpose were to blunt our sense of the obvious duty of every citizen, man or woman, to aid in the suppression and prevention of practices which are destructive alike of human rights and human dignity.—*The Shield*.

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