

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 IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE CONCERNING THE SEXUAL NATURE.

Girls are probably told some of the miseries of tight lacing, illustrated by an exaggerated picture of the Venus of Milo, and that of a poor creature with a network of tangled ribs. The greater harm of corset-wearing, aided largely by the constant pressure of the busks or steels, is entirely unmentioned. This pressure being persistent, pushes the abdominal parts down and back upon the womb, causing the most serious displacements.* Tight dressing also has the tendency to injure the breasts by compressing the nipples, so that mothers suffer extremely when trying to nurse their children. I have recently seen it stated, by several physicians, that, in some cases, the compression has even been so great that the child is altogether unable to use the nipple, and, at last, is deprived entirely of his best and natural food.†

From an artistic standpoint, corsets must be emphatically condemned. The full development of the body is hindered, and its graceful pliability is lost. The stiff, unnatural lines efface the noble attributes and capacities of motherhood.

In a paper read before the "Social Science Congress" at Cheltenham, England, P. H. Rathbone says:—

"I am prepared to maintain that it is necessary, for the future of English art and English morality, that the right of the nude to a place in our galleries should be boldly asserted; it must however, be the nude as represented by thoroughly trained artists, and with a pure and noble ethic purpose. The human form, male and female, is the type and standard of all beauty of form and proportion, and it is necessary to be thoroughly familiar with it in order to judge of all beauty, which consists of form and proportion. To women it is most necessary that they should become thoroughly imbued with the knowledge of the ideal female form, in order that they should recognize the perfection of it at once and without effort, and so far as possible avoid deviations from the ideal. Had this been the case in times past we should not have had to deplore the distortions

*I trust that every young woman who is earnestly trying to lead a healthy and useful life will read Mrs. Shepherd's special physiology "For Girls," to which I have already referred. In this book, the injuries which result to the reproductive organs, from wearing corsets, are shown in a most clear and irrefutable manner.

†Mrs. O. P. Flynt makes waists which are comfortable, hygienic, and artistic and which, being always made to order, are perfectly adapted to the individual figure. Mrs. Flynt makes a waist to be worn especially during pregnancy and while nursing, which has conveniences for enlargements, and direct openings to the breasts. By sending for "Manual," addressing to 319 Columbus avenue, Boston, Mass., full information can be obtained about prices, materials, how to order waists, etc.

Miss Bates, corner Tremont and Winter streets, Boston Mass., makes a united garment for waist and drawers, which fits closely, and is especially suitable to wear with the "Alpha" woolen undergarment; the body thus being clothed very simply, and the warmth being equally distributed. For "Alpha" garments address Alpha Manufacturing Company, Woburn, Mass.

effected by tight lacing, which destroyed the figure and ruined the health of so many in the last generations. Nor should we have had the scandalous dresses alike of society and the stage. The extreme development of the low dresses which obtained some years ago, when the stays crushed up the breasts into suggestive prominence, would surely have been checked had the eye of the public been properly educated by familiarity with the exquisite beauty of line of a well-shaped bust. I might show how thorough acquaintance with the ideal nude foot would probably have much modified the foot-torturing boots and high heels, which wring the foot out of all beauty of line, and throw the body forward into an awkward and ungainly attitude.

"It is argued that the effect of nude representations of women upon young men is unwholesome. But it would not be so if such works were admitted without question into our galleries, and became thoroughly familiar to them. On the contrary, it would do much to clear away from healthy-hearted lads one of their sorest trials—that prurient curiosity which is bred of prudish concealment. Where there is mystery there is the suggestion of evil, and to go to a theatre, where you have only to look at the stalls to see one-half of the female form, and to the stage to see the other half undraped, is far more pregnant with evil imaginings than the most objectionable of totally undraped figures. In French art there have been questionable nude figures exhibited; but the fault was not that they were nude, but that they were the portraits of ugly, immodest women."

In an ethical sense, it is almost impossible to overestimate the benefit of having positive standards early in life. What is the first essential element of true self-dependence? Is it not the understanding of one's self—the consciousness of reliable power? There can never be a pure and reliable moral sense until our morality is based upon a clear knowledge of the laws which govern the sexual nature. Until then our purity must remain conventional and artificial.

Young men and women in their social relations are constantly in need of definite information and of serious individual thought upon these subjects. Many young men, who have not received satisfactory instruction concerning their sexual nature, have a desire, more or less strong, conscious or unconscious, to test their sexual power. Girls should be deeply impressed with the terrible responsibility which falls upon them. They should be made to realize keenly all that their ignorance or thoughtlessness may arouse. Round dancing*, the slightest liberties with the person, everything in dress

*It has been acknowledged by young men, in thoroughly good and refined society, that round dancing does arouse sexual excitement. This undoubtedly varies with individuals, and is liable to be influenced by the manner or temperament of the partner.

or manner which tends, in the least, to excite passionate feeling should be most carefully avoided. The sexual feeling being strongly aroused through the frequent neglect of such simple precautions, together with the generally prevailing idea of "physical necessity," has made the road to the prostitute a short and easy one. Upon whom shall we throw the greater responsibility, the one who openly satisfies the demand or the one who thoughtlessly arouses it? The time has come when we need something more than vague religious maxims.

I can never forget the first time that I heard this subject definitely spoken of from the pulpit. It was in a quaint old church on Cambridge street, Boston. I can still hear the low, clear voice, and the solemn weight of each word: "The abuse of the natural feeling between man and woman digs the deepest pit of all."

The companionship of young men and women needs to be raised above merely superficial attraction and the ever conscious trifling with the fact of sex. What we must have are more joint interests of mind, a more common sharing of the work of actual life, and above all clear standards, based upon sound knowledge. Growing out of these will come a deeper and more practical appreciation of life, and a truer, more healthful understanding of sex.

III. Prostitution.

If we all thoroughly believed that the existence of prostitution is a terrible wrong to our individual womanhood and manhood, prostitution could not exist. If there is anything deserving of keen analysis among earnest and educated women, it is the quality of their purity. True delicacy is never the outgrowth of a prudish or timid reserve, but is always the refinement of strength. It is no wonder, however, that a sexual purity which rests on sexual ignorance, should result in prejudice, hard-heartedness and self-righteousness. This lack of education chokes that higher development of soul, which can hate sin and love the sinner.

*"The father teaching that marriage is a girl's only resource, the employer paying starvation wages, the man sacrificing a human soul to his brutal, selfish passion, the fine lady pushing a poor creature back to vice for support, by closing the door of an honest livelihood,—these all represent classes, and perhaps, in the long run, it will be found that they have more to answer for than the victims of their false and selfish systems."

The first measure to take towards the remedy of the social evil, is to change the direction of our minds concerning it. Instead of condemning results, let us investigate causes. Any one who will take up this task sincerely, and consider sexual vice in all its manifestations, both without and within marriage, must come to the conclusion that there is something wanting in our sexual standard.

†"Prostitution is either a vice, or it is not. If it is a vice, let us adopt means for annihilating it; if it is not a vice, let us erase from our statute-books all laws which prohibit it. If, as some assert, it provides for a physical necessity of men, then it is an honorable occupation; for any calling is honorable for which there is a natural need. It may be humble, but, if it is necessary, it is reputable. Then there should be no shame

connected with it; those who practice it should be respected, and not excluded from good society on account of their business, but welcomed as public benefactors; for they would relieve wives of the heavy burden of accidental and unwelcome pregnancies, and save them from the embraces of their husbands during gestation and illness. This is the only consistent way to look at it; but, of course, no one advocates it."

I solemnly believe that Prostitution is not a necessary evil. License is an abomination, and proves itself false."

"Let us gird up our loins for the work. Experience is at our side with a full horn of plenty. All things at the present day stand provided and prepared, and await the light. The ship is in the harbor, the sails are swelling; the east wind blows; let us weigh anchor and put forth to sea."†

Boldly setting aside all false modesty upon this subject, let us enter into the serious work of removing the social evil, by removing its causes. There is nothing in sexuality which forbids a fearless and open search for the highest truth concerning it. The real shame lies in neglecting this matter any longer—in apologizing for its presentation. It is a diseased state of mind which dreads the light, and we need never excuse a disease. Illness of body or soul is always the natural disgrace resulting from the violation of natural law.

Great consideration must be made for heredity and ignorance in judging all forms of sexual evil. We are all living so much in the dark, and so little from clear and deep convictions, that our protection against vice consists mostly in the walls of public opinion, or in the shelter of fortunate surroundings. Earnest and loving work can best be accomplished when we realize that the difference between the helpers and sufferers is one of circumstance and environment much more than of character.

The next important step is to open all possible avenues of well-paid work, and to do all we can to elevate the popular idea of labor.

As it would take much time and space to enumerate all the suitable and constantly increasing occupations for women, I will confine myself to the one which has been the most abused and the least understood. This field which is widest and most neglected is that of general housework. The giving of a new worth and dignity to domestic service depends almost entirely upon the views and conduct of employers. It will add a fresh and deeper meaning to the treatment of servants if we sincerely appreciate that in it lies the solving of one of the most serious social problems.

The establishment of good schools for the training of servants, which, after a thorough course, furnish the work-woman with a reliable certificate, is needed in every large city. This will prove a direct way to self-reliance, self-respect, good work, and good wages.

"The occupation is a healthy one, involving a large responsibility, and as a consequence surrounded with dignity, comfort, and independence. Once settled in this relation to some good family, a girl is fixed, if she so chooses, for life. A good and faithful cook never loses her place. The work is

*Read "Wrong and Right Methods of Treating the Social Evil," by Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell. Published by Brentano: New York and Washington, D. C.
 †"Duties of the Medical Profession, Concerning Prostitution and its Allied Vices." An oration delivered by Dr. F. H. Gerrish before the Maine Medical Association. To be had at office of Moral Education Society, Washington, D. C.

†Emanuel Swedenborg.

*Dio Lewis, M. D.—"Chastity."

†Frederic H. Gerrish, M. D.—"Duties of the Medical Profession, concerning Prostitution and its Allied Vices."

not hard, the whole household is dependent upon her; it is a position most desirable."*

"I have seen a young American woman, one of a large family of daughters, who some years since, migrated from her meagre country home to one of the Northern cities to gain her support. She soon became an expert seamstress, but finding the employment too confining she went boldly to work for others, to housekeep, cook, clean, etc. After trying several places she fell upon one where she was suited. She has told me that she finds nothing degrading in her position; it is not inconsistent with personal dignity, self-respect, and the respect of others. She confers benefits and receives them. She has good health, her presence itself is healthy and bracing, her character is unstained, she has made herself understood, and preserves her independence, and has been able to help her parents and to educate and get places for her sisters, and her course of life is not without opportunities for mental improvement and of much quiet, uncosting happiness and love."†

IV. Marriage.

I have at last reached the final and most vital phase of my subject. The need of knowledge concerning the sexual nature centers in marriage and in the preparation for parentage.

‡ "Seriously is it not an astonishing fact, that though on the treatment of offspring depend their lives or deaths, and their moral welfare or ruin; yet not a word of instruction on the treatment of offspring is ever given to those who will hereafter be parents. Is it not monstrous that the fate of a new generation should be left to the chances of unreasoning custom, impulse, fancy, joined with the suggestions of ignorant nurses and the prejudiced counsel of grandmothers? If a merchant commenced business without any knowledge of arithmetic and book-keeping, we should exclaim at his folly and look for disastrous consequences. Or, if before studying anatomy, a man set up as a surgical operator, we should wonder at his audacity and pity his patients. But that parents should begin the difficult task of rearing children without ever having given a thought to the principles—physical, moral or intellectual—which ought to guide them, excites neither surprise at the actors, nor pity for their victims. * * *

"Here are the indisputable facts: that the development of children in mind and body rigorously obeys certain laws; that unless conformed to by parents death is inevitable; that unless they are in a great degree conformed to there must result serious physical and mental defects, and that only when they are completely conformed to can a perfect maturity be reached. Judge, then, whether all who may one day be parents should not strive with some anxiety to learn what these laws are."

In regard to the education of the motherly instincts I would like to suggest the great use of studying the philosophy of the kindergarten. It opens a new world and is truly a part of what it claims to be—"the new education."

For any one who intends to teach little children, I think a good normal kindergarten course is a necessity, and for those who do not intend to become teachers by profession, I think the normal training invaluable in giving close and actual association with children. But apart from this there is always the time and opportunity for individual reading.¶ This study arouses a

deeper and clearer insight into child-life, and ennobles and inspires the life of woman. One of the direct uses of the kindergarten study is its song-play, and music is the natural and happiest language for the emotions. A recent book "Merry Songs and Plays,"* is a collection of most charming and instructive songs, which will surely help to awaken a sensitive and enthusiastic appreciation of nature. Many of these songs are especially intended for little babies. Even if the actual blessings of maternity are never realized, no woman can be so large-hearted, so thoroughly well-rounded, as the woman with an enlightened mother-nature.

I have read several pamphlets and books within the last year, written by prominent physicians, showing the great decrease of healthful maternity among American women, the "alarming and growing dislike to bear children," and, in consequence of this dislike, the horrible practice of abortion. Much is said about tight-lacing and "false education," and everything is laid upon the woman alone. I have not found the least intimation that men may have had something to do in bringing about this result, or the least suggestion concerning any duties that may devolve upon them.

‡ "We hear a good deal said about certain crimes against nature, such as pederasty and sodomy, and they meet with the indignant condemnation of all right-minded persons. But the query arises whether the use of the condom and defertilizing injections is not equally a crime against nature, and as worthy of our detestation and contempt. And further, when we consider the brute creation and see that they, guided by instinct, copulate only when the female is in proper physiological condition, and yields a willing consent, it may be suggested that congress between men and woman may, in certain circumstances, be a crime against nature, and one far worse in its results than the other. Is it probable that a child born of a connection to which the woman objects will possess that felicitous organization which every parent should earnestly desire and endeavor to bestow on offspring? * * * *These accidental pregnancies are the great cause of the enormously common crime of abortion.*"‡

We want vigorous men and women, women and men with strong passions, and a full and hearty appreciation of physical life, but we want also the superior control of an enlightened and consecrated will.

|| "That man, I think, has had a liberal education, who has been so trained in youth, that his body is the ready servant of his will, * * * whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of nature and the laws of her operations; one who, no stunted ascetic, is full of life and fire, but whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience; who has learned to love all beauty, whether of nature or of art, to hate all vileness and to respect others as himself."

§ His procreative energy would be to him a sacred trust, to be kept inviolate, and to be used only with the distinct and definite purpose of perpetuating his kind. His children would never be accidents, but, begotten intentionally at a time when both parents were in a good physical and mental condition."

* Dio Lewis, M. D.—"Chastity."

†Walt Whitman—from "Democratic Vistas," in "Specimen Days and Collected."

‡ Herbert Spencer—"Education."

¶ Barnard's "Kindergarten and Child-Culture" is the most comprehensive book for beginners.

*By Clara Beeson Hubbard, St. Louis, Mo.

†Dr. F. H. Gerrish.

‡Read chapter on "Fœticide," in "Chastity," by Dr. Lewis, M. D.

|| Huxley.

§ Dr. F. H. Gerrish.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE
MORAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF MASSA-
CHUSETTS.

READ AT THE THIRTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING, IN BOSTON,
MAY 29, 1884.

MR. PRESIDENT, MEMBERS AND FRIENDS: Without self-flattery we may fairly claim that the influence of our little association is becoming year by year more widely extended. To-day many follow our banner where ten years ago there were but few. It will not be out of place, therefore, for your secretary to briefly set forth our distinctive aims, for the benefit of the curious and doubtful as well as those of our own ranks whose interest needs a new awakening.

Quite a general impression prevails that the Moral Education Association stands for only one phase of moral education, namely, that of the relation of the sexes and the questions attendant thereupon. It is true that these are our most important themes, since they are almost universally neglected by all other organizations, and therefore appeal most strongly to us and need our first attention. It is our task to disseminate the knowledge of the laws of heredity, so that the children of the future shall be better than those of the present; to insist on the principle of mutual respect in the marriage relation, so that men may be purer and women more free; to condemn all legalization of the social evil, while also endeavoring to find some way to lessen it; and to investigate and try to remedy that other evil, scarcely less alarming in its extent and its results. Every phase of this main question we ought to fully discuss, for it lies at the root of most of the evils of modern life. It has been thought by some of us that of late these topics have been neglected for those less vital. If this is so it is not because the organization is less earnest in their advocacy, but for accidental reasons, one of which undoubtedly is the increasing public character of our meetings. It is harder to speak plain truths in a public hall than among a few in a small room. One does not know his audience so well, and what in a parlor seems a confidential talk, assumes on a platform much more startling proportions, and calls for more careful presentation. It would seem best, therefore, that one special topic should always be presented to our members, and their invited friends alone, and not to the general public. The special meetings of the two years preceding this, when members received tickets, and no public notice was given in any way, met this need and insured us both the right audience to hear and the courage to speak the needed truths. The public meetings of those years were occupied with one more general topic, introductory, so to speak, to the special ones. The suspension of these special meetings has resulted in the omission, to some extent, of our special topics, and thus may have given rise to the impression that we are not attending to our legitimate work; but this is not true. These questions, vital and important as they are, are not our Alpha and Omega; and while they might be with profit presented more frequently than during this present year, we must not fall into the opposite mistake of presenting none others. Our constitution states our objects to be to endeavor to educate the moral sense of the community and to disseminate

a knowledge of the laws that govern human life in all its relations; and whenever occasion demands to ask of our legislative and executive bodies, the enactment of such statutes as are needful, and the enforcement of such as exist, for the prevention of social vice and the promotion of social purity.

First, you see, "to endeavor to educate the moral sense of the community." This covers a much larger field than the one question and its attendant phases, which may be said to be our special, but not our only work. This object binds us to preach not only chastity, but also veracity, unselfishness, self-sacrifice, honesty, and to condemn not only personal impurity, but also selfishness, vanity, pride, egotism, unscrupulous ambition, dishonesty, false speaking, unkindness to others; in short, all the tendencies that cause us to fall short of the ideal towards which, consciously or unconsciously, we all are striving. It also leaves the way open for us to discuss every scientific, religious, ethical and philosophical problem to which the needs of to-day have given birth. Any subject, the discussion of which shall help the participants to meet more courageously the trials of life, comes within our scope. The only topics that can be held to be of no value to us are those which do not help us to better living. It is not enough if they do not harm. They must help, otherwise they are not suited to our platform.

In our small way, growing a little larger every year, we are helping to make a nobler and purer humanity, and we want the help of all of you in this our earnest endeavor.

The most prominent feature of our work is the holding of public or semi-public meetings, at which moral questions are presented and discussed.

During the past year a course of six lectures has been held in Wesleyan Hall, Boston, under the management of a committee, of which Mrs. Caroline Dupee is chairman. The speakers have been Rev. Luther T. Townsend, Mrs. H. R. Shattuck, Rev. J. W. Bashford, Rev. G. H. Young, Rev. Geo. L. Perin and Mrs. A. M. Diaz. A violent storm has accompanied all but the last of these meetings, which were, therefore, less fully attended than it was hoped. But considering the fact that when the meetings in Wesleyan Hall were first proposed, two years ago, there was no thought of attracting more than enough persons to fill the small retiring room; the audiences, though seemingly small, were after all relatively quite large. The discussions have been an interesting feature, and have been well sustained. Two of the topics touched upon one most special question, while the others were of a general nature.

Following the suggestion of a friend, that smaller meetings should be held in vestries in addition to this course, the Boston committee arranged a meeting, when Mrs. K. L. Stevenson was the speaker.

Meetings under the management of the out-of-town committee, Mrs. C. M. L. Frazar, chairman, have been held in Dedham, Mount Auburn, Charlestown, West Newton and Cambridgeport. An afternoon has also been secured in the regular course of the New England Women's Club, and one in the course of the Old and New Club of Malden. The speakers have been Mrs. C. Dupee, Mrs. A. M. Gannett, Dr. M. Louise Cummings, Mrs.

K. G. Wells, Mrs. E. M. Bruce, Dr. M. J. Safford and Miss N. W. Covell. This makes in all fourteen meetings, seven in Boston and seven out of town. The Association is always ready to send a speaker to any one who wishes to have a meeting in parlor or vestry. All that need be done is to notify the President or Secretary, and the matter will be attended to. This is a good way to help the dissemination of our ideas, for a meeting, however small, of persons gathered together to discuss moral topics, must give out an influence for good and must set to thinking some minds which have not before turned their attention to this direction. We, therefore, urge every lady in this audience to set apart one afternoon or evening in the year, to get a speaker, invite her friends, and to discuss moral education. It is very little trouble, and will do good. The idea of meetings in vestries and in club courses is a good one and should be more fully carried out. Our special topics might well be presented before the clubs, while in the vestries our general topics would be more suitable on account of the different character of the audiences. We often convert the most persons by gradual rather than by violent means, and the way of presenting a truth is as important as the truth itself.

Besides these meetings, where we try to mould public opinion in the direction of a higher morality, our organization has attempted work of a more practical nature. Two years ago, and again this year, attempts have been made to secure the presence of matrons in our station houses. Petitions were sent to the police commissioners and to the committee on police of the city council, and finally a hearing was had before the committee on prisons of the Massachusetts Legislature. The first of these authorities referred us to the second, and this and the third each gave us leave to withdraw. The police force is opposed to the innovation, their claim being that matrons are already in the station houses. These so-called matrons are women residing near by whom the police can call upon. This hardly meets our demand, which is for a regularly appointed matron who should be on the spot and attend to the needs of all women prisoners. It is hoped that enlightened public opinion will soon demand this needed reform. Another project, still in embryo, is that of providing some pleasant house where one or two young girls who find it hard to live, may be boarded, the Association helping to pay their board. A sum of money has been appropriated for this purpose, but as yet no suitable house has been found. This is not designed to be a work of reform. It is to assist worthy girls to continue to live honestly and purely, to help them to resist temptation—not to bring back those already fallen. It would be educational and preventative, and not reformatory, in accordance with the aims of our society, which are those of prevention rather than cure. We wish to lock the barn *before* the horse is stolen, or, in other words, by moral education to prevent the necessity for moral reform.

A committee has been formed to consult as to some means of promoting the introduction of moral education into our public schools. It is found that evil habits, alarming in their outcome, exist among very young as well as older children. With our present school system, the

crowded rooms and overworked teachers, it is almost impossible to prevent the spread of this vice, or to know how or where to begin. Some facts have been ascertained, and the committee hopes to find a way to reach this evil some time. Great hopes are entertained of help in this direction from the newly-formed committee on hygiene in the schools and the Massachusetts Emergency and Hygiene Association. Mothers who have children at school would better think on this question and arm their boys and girls with a little more definite moral training at home. Vague admonitions to "be good" are of little value here. The child must know what to avoid and why. He should be armed with knowledge, for therewith comes the power of self-defense.

Our library was thoroughly renovated last year and is now in the rooms of the New Church Union, 169 Tremont street. We have a good number of suitable books on moral education and reform, which we are glad to circulate, the lady at the rooms taking charge of their distribution.

We have always had on sale a number of tracts or pamphlets, setting forth various phases of our work. Some of the old ones have gone out of print but a few remain, and we can offer to-day in addition six new pamphlets, all excellent opponents of our teachings. Three of these we publish ourselves, one by Mrs. Anna Garlin Spencer on "Work and Character," and two by Dr. Safford, called "An Evil Habit" and "The Wages of Sin." Two have been bought of the society at Washington, "Black Sheep," by Dr. Caroline B. Winslow, and "The Relation of the Maternal Function to the Woman Intellect," by Mrs. Augusta Hooper Bristol. The sixth is the pamphlet by Dr. Gerrish, of Portland, on "The Duties of the Medical Profession Regarding Prostitution." This last is the most valuable essay on that subject that we have ever seen. Every one, and especially every doctor, ought to read and profit by its brave yet delicate words. We sell all these at cost, most of them being five, a few ten, and Dr. Gerrish's fifteen cents. Ladies at the door will supply them.

During the year a moral education association has been formed in Chicago, and some friends have formed what they call Social Purity Alliances, whereby they pledge themselves to live purely and to demand purity of their friends. These societies have our earnest God-speed.

Such is a year's outcome of the effect of a small body to do great work. Sometimes it seems as if we were working in the dark and accomplishing nothing, so few, unpalatable, and uncertain are the apparent results. We often get discouraged, leave one phase of endeavor to try another that seems more feasible, and then perhaps find that one impracticable or useless. There is so much to do and so few to do it. But when we view our work in the broader and more universal light, and especially when we remember that it is not expected of us to do *all* the work of the world, we feel more encouraged to continue doing our little part. Among other duties, not the least important is this—the holding ourselves *ready*, a solid, organized body of workers, to op-

pose every attempt of society or state to make sin easier or vice more safe. Our lamps are trimmed and burning, and remorselessly shall we oppose every attempt to legalize vice or to lower moral standards.

Our grandchildren and great-grandchildren will be old and grey before our ideals will become realities. But we must none the less strive towards these ideals; for we know that the possibilities of the human race are infinite, and that its progress is ever upward towards their realization. The reality of one generation or one race was the unrealized ideal of a former generation or a former race. The minority is perpetually showing the majority higher and higher ideals, and drawing them upward and upward until these ideals become the accepted guide and rule of the whole. Just as the real of the present was the ideal of the past, so will the ideal of the present be the living reality of the future. And if we may not be permitted to have more than a glimpse of this glorious future, we may at least do what we can to hasten it. In so doing we may find the way ourselves at least, and may be able to echo reverently the words of one of our spiritual teachers: "There is a fountain of infinite truth, and I have had a little sip of it."

HARRIETTE R. SHATTUCK.

WOMAN'S EDUCATION.

After reading in the May number of THE ALPHA something on "Co-Education," and what we should educate our girls to be, the subject anew suggests itself. The importance of woman discovering her wants independent of educational bias. The improvement and growth of woman for the sake of womanhood. It has been the thought so long that woman was merely made for man, that it is a hard matter for her to feel that she really belongs to herself as much as man belongs to himself. Being physically so much weaker, and as the world has so long been ruled by physical strength and intellectual power, woman has taken the place of a kind of parasite, and secondary in the scale of human existence. But when she realizes the responsibility of the position she is called to fill, and the influence she is capable of wielding over the whole human family, she is ready to grow to the full stature of womanhood. In this growth, no sudden, miraculous change need be looked for. Woman will still be woman. The "weaker vessel will still be weak." But latent native powers will find their way to the surface, and she will be strangely strong. Like the little roots of a shrub, that sends its fibres into the crevice of a rock, silently gaining their way, till the great mass is rent in twain.

Woman's intuition, or spiritual perception, will always be her balancing power, though in her transition period in finding her own position, it may not be at all strange should she turn a little giddy. The mazy paths which she is impelled to tread are new to her, and may seem hazardous, still she dare not turn back, in the face of the workings of that Providence which governs her and hers. Her motives may be contracted to the good only of her children, but in taking upon herself a more enlarged sphere of usefulness, she gains strength of character, and compels improvement. Although the moving

cause of her exertion is that of her little ones and her family ties, yet humanity needs the perfected womanhood that could come in no other way. Legislation, or the power to legislate, cannot meet all the demands that the perfected woman requires for a wider range of action and influence. This range of thought depends upon the soul-growth of woman, fed and nourished by the consciousness of her own duties and relation to the workings of a Divine Providence, an insight into the laws that govern life, the family, and the whole human family. This forms a large portion of feminine education, or true education. For woman to possess this, our daughters should be educated side by side along with our sons in all branches of science, where they are brought in close acquaintance with natural law.

It is pleaded by some that woman is conservative and does not care to have the education of her brothers. She does not want to surmount the obstacles often thrown in her way. She shrinks from ridicule by choosing a profession, or going outside the beaten track, and shrinks from the effect of crude, evil surmisings. Her ignorance of the world and of the perversion of human nature is sometimes a godsend, and gives a freedom to the zest which her mental activities seek, elevating her above the influence of caste or the surrounding circumstances. But such instances are the exception, and she shrinks from passing remarks and censure of—(shall it be said) *of men*.

The greatest obstacle to a more wholesome education for woman is the lack of appreciation in men of the woman standard of morals. The pleasant, sunny smiles, her genial, loving nature, is interpreted falsely by the crude and baser portions of the human family.

It would seem that one of two things must take place to help us out of the dilemma, and that is this: either woman must *love less*, or men must *elevate* their standard of morals.

Surely all the love that is in the world is needed, and more too, to bring things to a proper balance in every direction. So that it remains for a higher masculine standard of morals and of sentiment to be established before the equal education of the sexes can be agreeably acquired. Both girls and boys, men and women, need the influence and assistance of each other. Each seeking their counterpart in each other even in childhood, the difference of character have their attraction. The predominance of the mental, and the predominance of the spiritual, attract; the intellect depending on the spiritual for its foundation and structure, like the mathematical rules for the solution of problems. The truth, or principle, the spirit of the rule *exists*, before it is shaped into form or language, the one an accompaniment of the other. So with woman and man. She the existence, he the demonstration of that existence. If the demonstration be not in accordance with the existence nothing remains but disorder and confusion. The rule will not have the true result. At the present have we evidence that the demonstration is a perfect one? Far from it. What is the matter? Surely not the spiritual, or truth, can be at fault. It must be the *demonstration*. The lesson is before us, the principle, the Divine truth. Let the rule be made perfect to correspond. This may be a

simple thing, one man and woman are in unison when the translation of the feminine element is in accordance with the grand moving mystery that conceals the revelation of the union of spirit and matter.

Men jocosely say they cannot understand woman, but when they earnestly say so their redemption is at hand, and woman's power for good is felt through every niche and crevice of the structure of human society whenever woman is truly woman: for she is only waiting her appreciation that she may the more cleft the rock that weighs with its heavy burden on the tender vines and roses that creep beneath to twine a leafy crest.

RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA.

D. S. H.

MARRIAGE VERSUS CONTINENCE.

Dr. Foote returned the following article to the writer, requesting the scriptural portion to be dropped out, for fear it would create a religious controversy, which the *Health Monthly* has no room for, but was willing THE ALPHA should publish it with this explanation:

I thought I had written all I ever should write for the *Health Monthly* on the much-discussed question of "physical necessity;" but, seeing an article like the one headed "Marriage versus Continence" in the May number, repents me that I made any such resolution.

As I have often remarked, the editors of the *Health Monthly* seem to me as really and thoroughly liberal as any one I know, and I do not wish to take ungenerous advantage of their liberality. Neither do I wish to say anything harsh or rude, and if aught I say seems so, let it not be attributed to any personal unkindness on my part, but rather to an earnest wish to do all in my power to warn the young of the dangers of believing that they must choose between health and chastity; for I insist that a marriage contracted from necessity is a most unchaste thing.

I read the other day of an Irishman in court who offered evidence which was rejected, whereupon he exclaimed, "Yer Honor, I have other evidence equally conclusive."

The editorial alluded to above reminded me of this anecdote, inasmuch as what it offers in evidence—so it seems to me—as has been shown by different writers in the *Health Monthly*, does not prove what it claims to prove.

1st. We have for witness John Christien, "a man who has spent thirty years in reclaiming prostitutes," who says "he would have all young folks bound together in wedlock if it would be done decently and legally before they were out of their teens."

In the name of justice and purity, I ask if all the world must be judged by prostitutes? Evidently they are John Christien's standard, and he views marriage solely as a license for sexual intercourse. If that is what marriage means, wherein is it better than prostitution?

2d. Dr. Joseph W. Howe, of New York, has written a book in which occurs this striking sentence: "Every man with a healthy organization should be married before the age of twenty-four." This sentence does not seem "striking" to me. I have read similar statements so many times that they seem very commonplace. The

only exceptional thing about it is the modification of "healthy." One feels some curiosity to know what Dr. Howe would have the young men do who have an unhealthy organization. But, admitting him to be good authority, I do not see that his advice can in any way be used to count against continence. Perhaps the reason he would have men with healthy organizations marry early is that they may have large families and so help people the world with healthy men and women.

The third and last testimony offered as to the evils of continence relates to two widows who suffered great "pelvic distress." One committed suicide, the other got married, and probably went to house-keeping, so had something to take up her mind, and got well.

If we were to hunt up these widows I should expect to find that they were idle, novel-reading women. Had they been busy, self-supporting, healthfully-dressed women, I think some less desperate remedy than suicide or marriage might have alleviated their distress. While I do not wish to underrate the influence of the sexual organism on the general system, it does seem to me that our medical brethren are much inclined to draw attention to it unduly, and thereby make it a disease center. It has been said that "you can think a pain into any part of the body by putting the mind intently on it," and I am inclined to believe it. This fact kept in mind along with the question of physical necessity will help in its solution.

So let us "lift up our eyes unto the hills from whence cometh our help," and not allow our thoughts to dwell so constantly on any portion of the body as to make it susceptible to disease.

There is help in the Lord Jesus. Let us heed his words. He told us that "faith would remove mountains," meaning that all things are possible to him that believeth. And John, the beloved disciple, wrote: "This is the victory that overcometh the world ever your faith."

Which shall we believe? These hopeful, inspiring words or those which tell us that the human will must ever be subject to its sexual lust? I insist that this discussion cannot fairly be confined to its simply animal phase. Granted that we are animals. We have powers of thought and volition that the others give no evidence of, and we are responsible for their use. Let us see to it that we use them for our good and the good of others.

CELIA B. WHITEHEAD.

WHAT IS DEATH?

O, what is death? 'Tis a fleeting breath—
A simple but blessed change—
'Tis rending a chain, that the soul may gain,
A higher and broader range.
Unbounded space is its dwelling-place,
Where no human foot has trod,
But everywhere doth it feel the care
And the changeless love of God.

O, then, though you weep when your loved ones sleep,
When the rose on the cheek grows pale,
Yet their forms of light, just concealed from sight,
Are only behind the veil.
With their faces fair, and their shining hair,
With blossoms of beauty crowned,
They will also stand, with a helping hand,
When you shall be Outward Bound,

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

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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.

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ADVICES from Madras, India, headquarters of Theosophical Society, have by a rule appointed Mr. William B. Shelly, president, and Mrs. Josephine W. Cables, secretary, (both of Rochester, N. Y.,) and Mr. Geo. F. Parson, New York City, members of the General Council, with general direction of the theosophic movement in this part of the world, with power to admit and initiate applicants, and by consent of a majority grant temporary charters for new branches without preliminary references to headquarters.

THE Cleveland M. E. S., at its closing meeting for the reason, discussed the life and character of Lucretia Mott. It was a very interesting meeting. Many expressions of reverent love and appreciation of her strong, brave character were expressed. A tribute was given to the moral steadfastness of Quakers, Mrs. A. L. Pettingill was elected secretary *pro tem*. The society ordered fifty copies of the July special number of ALPHA. Adjourned to September 30. Annual meeting on the last Tuesday in October; they expect to make it very nice affair.

THE closing exercises of our schools have been unusually interesting this season, especially our kindergarten. The Free Minor Kindergarten, under the direction of Z. L. Ford, shows great proficiency. What a civilizer and hu-

manizer this plan of instruction has proven to these little waifs. From rude, untaught, sullen-tempered children, as some of them were one and a half years ago, they have become happy, bright, well behaved and intelligent children, a real pleasure to look upon and listen to. Mrs. Ogden's normal class was very fine. We are thankful for every teacher that is trained in this system. Mrs. Louisa and Susie Pollock have prepared an interesting report of the Seventh Annual Commencement Exercises of the Washington Normal Institute, which occurred June 11, at the North Presbyterian Church. We wish we had room for more than a synopsis. The graduates were seven in number, and each read an interesting and instructive essay. By a happy coincidence Mrs. Kate Smith Wiggins, San Francisco's most successful kindergartener, was present and made some very happy remarks. Surely our little ones will start on the journey of life under happier instructions than their parents. To whom much is given, much is expected.

OUR POSITION, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

It is but courteous to notice the wishes, suggestions, and criticisms of our friends and well-wishers as well as our foes. (We are beginning to feel those that oppose us *secretly* and openly are numerous.)

Some good friends think we ignore love altogether in enforcing the hard doctrine of continence; others that THE ALPHA would be more readable if it was more "ideal;" others that the Church might feel the power of our argument if there were not sometimes expressions used that look to them as anti-Christian; others think we are altogether orthodox; others again that we ignore spiritual aid and are insincere, &c., &c.

For all of these expressions of opinion we are truly grateful. Every suggestion helps an editor to determine the course to be pursued, even though none of them seem to be right.

THE ALPHA was born for a specific work in the field of reform. One thing was aimed at in its inception and one only. It would not be wise to multiply its aims. It is not intended to be an exponent of any church or religious sect, but as an exponent of the laws of life and health, the purest morals through self-control and self-denial, the means of attaining the best health and the highest happiness; the improvement of the human race by the wise use of all our endowments, and the blessing of good uses for all our appetites. It is not what we like or dislike that leads to the best life, it is a matter of duty. Now, plainly, it is our duty to tell the people the unvarnished truth, a very disagreeable duty. To shrink from it would be no crime, but much to be deplored when a great good could be done by tell-

ing it. That we irritate our foes and alienate our friends is very painful also, but as the work is well begun the latch has been lifted, it will not do to let it fall again. There is nothing left for us to do then but to go bravely, courageously, and fearlessly forward to the desired goal, to splinter and scatter all the old notions about sexual ethics into fragments until a new order be established. The book of life lies wide open. Nature never errs. Man alone makes mistakes. Unknown generations must find a healthy growth from the treasure-house of obedience to the laws of health. Grandly will the portals of the temple of life roll open. All life will become sacred. Pollution shall no longer have a name. Deify the human being in truth, for does not all life come from the Deity? Is not all life divine? See to it that all the young be instructed in ways that lead to self-abnegation. When we obey the laws of health we are happy. Knowledge must lead to obedience. Ignorance is the mother of sin, *not* disinclination to right doing. So, dear friends and opponents, put in your oar and help forward this great work of physical redemption. Encourage, praise, sympathize, criticise, condemn, if you will, but keep up the agitation, for "the agitation of thought is the beginning of wisdom." Activity is life, inertia is death. Out of the free discussion of these hitherto hidden and ignored topics must come a new life better health, nobler purposes, and a higher order of humanity. Then lend a helping hand. Some have money, which is a mighty lever. Some have thoughts bright, clear, and sparkling. Others have influence with their fellows or with the youthful and unformed character, and others may silently and patiently work out their own physical salvation and become beacon lights to those not so well informed. Even grumblers and fault-finders are useful in their way, although of the order of the hair shirt, THE ALPHA is humanity's paper, everybody needs it. Then let all come up to the good work and help on the millennial day that is to crown the earth with glory.—Ed.

THE electrifying sunlight; the sweet fresh air; the blue of the firmament; the whiteness of the clouds; the transparency of the streams; the verdure of the mat of grass; the friendly groups of trees; the peaceful fields, all breathe that purity which is nature's eternal council to man.—Victor Hugo.

ALL reforms are too late which wait until the tide turns. All reforms which save from revolution must not be with, but against the stream.

MANY unspoken tragedies are shut up in handsome houses.

"A CANDLE lights others and consumes itself."

TO THE GIRLS WHO WILL SOME DAY BE WIVES AND MOTHERS.

DEAR GIRLS: It is very much the fashion to give advice to girls and women. Not that they really need it so much as their brothers, but, perhaps, they are more patient under its infliction.

Woman, it is said, is made expressly to be wife and mother, and should be taught those things that are necessary to her in that condition, among which are usually enumerated, first and highest of all, the art of cookery; and from that all the other duties and labors pertaining to the household, though when she was originally made it is doubtful whether or not a household had existence. Certainly she ought to know everything, for her husband usually comes to her ignorant of the very first principles of the duties of a husband and father, which it has never yet been supposed necessary for him to know; though why this should be so one could hardly say, for it must be almost as important a knowledge to a man as that of wife and mother to a woman. Nevertheless, the advice is always to the girls and women, never to the boys and men; therefore, in writing to you I but follow this time-honored custom.

I have been told, by one who knows, that your bad habits are the cause of the wonderful diminishing and deterioration of American stock. That your tight-dressing has more to do with this than the tobacco, whisky, licentiousness, &c., of your brothers. That the small waists you seek, and which your young male friends so particularly admire, are more immoral than those other bad habits we have always supposed to be at the root of the mischief. Are you astonished? Can it be that we have always been mistaken, and that the woman, as Adam said, is the one to blame?

Let the case be as it may, if we have faults of so great importance, it is our business to correct them, and it is surely a woman's fault if she compress her waist to less than its appointed limits, thereby displacing the most important organs in this wonderful body. It is not, perhaps, well to say that the methods of our grandmothers and our great-grandmothers were more effectual in this matter than are those of the great-granddaughters and granddaughters of to-day, and that from them has come the injury; it is better to accept the situation and do our best in the way of remedy. Discard the corset and loosen the buttons, and thus shall we not only have done our duty to ourselves, but posterity will thank us by renewed vigor.

But while I think of you as wives and mothers, dear girls, in the present benighted condition of those who are to be your husbands and the fathers of your children, a thick mist comes between us. Can it be that my eyes are dimmed with the dew of weeping? You take your innocence, your youth, your ignorance, and lay them on the altar of sacrifice, and you find at the end your idols shattered, your hopes overthrown, your dream of life vanished. Is it not then better that you should have knowledge rather than ignorance? That your innocence should be the outcome of wisdom? Your youth made strong by its teachings?

Study to know life's realities. Study the problem you have to solve. Learn the path your feet must

tread. Do not enter blindfold into a marriage even with the one you love. Try to learn his nature, his habits, his temper, and if he is fit to be a husband and father; but be you always sure, also, that you are fitted to be wife and mother. Is a woman fit for that sacred position if she smokes, or drinks intoxicating drinks, or frequents vile places? Then neither is a man fit for his duties if he is guilty of these things; especially is the frequenter of vile places unfit. You may ask me how you are to know his habits in that respect. It is a difficult question to answer, a puzzling problem to solve, yet more important to you, and indeed to him, than any problem in mathematics can possibly be, for in its solution your whole future lives are involved.

To whom shall you go for instruction? How are you to know whether love or passion rules your lover? It is, and must be, mostly a matter of instinct, yet, though a man 'in love,' as he calls it, is naturally wary, and careful to present himself in his best aspect to the loved one—as she to him—there are many little trifles by which his real self may be discovered by a wise woman, and I would have you wise. You have, hitherto, purposely been educated (?) to be ignorant. It is so sweet and charming to know nothing of human nature except what your husband may teach you, or you may learn by experience after marriage. The down must not be brushed from the peach, the bloom taken from the plum. This is the old theory of a girl's education. But to-day the world has made progress, and it is now considered sensible and right to know. Read wise books and gather to yourselves knowledge on this most important subject. An admirable little essay by Gertrude Hitz, which I should like you all to read, has just been published by the Washington Society for Moral Education. Read also Mrs. Shepherd's special physiology "For Girls."

Perhaps some day I may write to you again. For the present, and until then, I give you that blessed word, "Farewell."
E. A. W.

AN OPEN LETTER.

DEAR MADAM: Though personally we are strangers I believe we are, or may be, more or less interested in the same subject. I refer to the supremely important and comprehensive one of social and domestic purity. Its underlying principles and reformatory measures might be stated somewhat as follows:

A standard of social purity for men as high as that for women; a spirit of charity and helpfulness toward the fallen but repentant woman; the installment of women as matrons, teachers, physicians, managers, wardens, inspectors, trustees, and other officers, in all penal, reformatory, or charitable institutions in which women are confined; social and legal penalties for masculine unchastity; eternal vigilance against the legalizing of prostitution; a suppression of all low plays, books, pictures, and every other object and appliance which rouses and pampers the lower passions; a suppression of the liquor and tobacco vices, both of which directly feed and foster lust.

As regards the marriage state we would submit the following principles:

Mutual fitness, mutual respect, and mutual love, are the only proper conditions for an honorable marriage. Every woman should demand absolute purity of life and habits from the man who sues to be her husband and the father of her children. A husband should ever make his gratification subservient to the highest welfare and happiness of his wife and her offspring. It is the supreme right and solemn duty of every wife at all times to possess and control her own person, and, for her own sake and her children's, to hold it sacred from every violation of moral and physical laws. "It is the right of every child to be well-born,"—that is, to be welcome to this world—to be born of such parents and under such circumstances as to secure its physical, mental, and moral health. It is the duty of parents to see that their children are conceived and born and educated in such a way that their tendencies shall be toward all that is pure and good. Further, it is the duty of parents to educate and enlighten both their sons and daughters, so that if they enter the marriage state they may go into it wisely, reverently, purely and unselfishly, and make of it the blessed and beautiful consummation a loving Father designed.

So far from these ideas being realized in the present state of society, we are cursed with horrible and almost hopeless evils, all having their origin in that Hydra-headed, Proteus-shaped, Briareus-armed monster, Lust. A fall from virtue is social ruin to woman, but is easily condoned in a man, if indeed it is not thought to add to his manly charms. Habitual defiance to the seventh commandment is held by the world to be a masculine necessity, to be provided for by the sacrifice of a sufficient number of our sister women. In very many of our prisons and other institutions the care of helpless and degraded women devolves upon men, and the result is that these places become pitfalls of ruin. Corrupting influences surround our youth on every side. Plays and pictures and tales which excite passion are unrebuked. Agents of evil are systematically and secretly supplying young people and children with the vilest literature. The habits prevalent in boys' schools, and, to some extent, among girls, are horrifying. Our boys are finding their way into sinks of iniquity, and are learning manhood's vices before their mothers suspect that they have left the innocent walks of childhood. Young men reeking with moral corruption come seeking to wed our innocent daughters. Our young people enter the marriage state in total ignorance of its moral and physical aspects. Books which might enlighten them are tabooed as indelicate, and, indeed, too many of them are thoroughly indecent and harmful, or they present but a one-sided idea of the subject, and hold up marriage as a legal and convenient channel for unbridled indulgence. These subjects are freely bandied about in loose and vulgar talk, but those who think and feel reverently are too delicate to speak. Thus it is that almost the only ideas prevalent are pernicious in the extreme.

The abuses of marriage cannot be spoken of here at length. Indeed it might seem hardly needful. Women know by sad experience far more than could be set down in a tract—they know, though they may never frame it in words even to themselves, that, in most cases, mar-

riage is a bondage in which the wife yields up her ownership and control of the most sacred rights of her person. It has, under the present distorted idea, proven to woman a physical wreck—so that, according to the best physicians, few are left of civilized women who are fit to perpetuate the race. Owing to abuses, ignorance of laws of health, and ruinous modes of dress, maternity is made a species of martyrdom. These are hard facts, set down with a shrinking hand, but proven true by too many household tragedies.

Children, called into life so recklessly, are but sad caricatures of a humanity made in the likeness of God. The natural instincts of parentage are so distorted by selfishness on the husband's side, enforced and unwelcome maternity on the wife's, and false ideas in both, that the revolting crime of infanticide has lost its horrors and become a common fashion. No misery, poverty, disease, deformity, or insanity—no degree of unfitness, unwillingness, or suffering, on the wife's part—no unfavorable circumstance or situation—nothing, nothing, nothing—seems to be thought any barrier to the indulgence of this all-consuming selfishness. The good of offspring seems to be the last consideration of married life. Children are looked upon, not as the desired fruition of a pure, wise, and loving union, but as the dreaded penalty of a darling pleasure. Conceived under the influence of baleful passions, the child inherits this ravening lust—perhaps in an intensified form, and hastens to repeat, in his young life, the sins and horrors of his ancestry.

Just here is the spring in which all this stream of evil takes its rise. The pre-natal history of the child, the influences which preside over its conception and birth, mould and color its whole life; and the wonderful laws of being place these in the mother's grasp. It is her hand which, if it is free, may sweeten the springs from which flow the life-tides of her posterity. This is why we urge our sister women to think on these things—to rise and shake off the bands which have held them blindfold and in bondage so long, and to seek that knowledge which will make them wise and honorable mothers of noble and happy children.

This, dear madam, is the reason I write to ask you if you cannot gather together a few in your community—wives, mothers, and other earnest women, who will meet to read and discuss these vital themes. These subjects must be discussed by women among themselves. The people are perishing for lack of knowledge; and this knowledge cannot be given them through the ordinary channels of literature, nor in promiscuous assemblies. Nothing will suffice but societies of women, bound together by an earnest purpose to obtain and diffuse light.

Such an organization should exist in every community. The simplest possible form of constitution could be used,—or a number of women could simply meet together informally. A few books and pamphlets vigorously circulated, and a quantity of cheap tracts for gratuitous distribution, would be all the outfit necessary.

I would recommend the books and pamphlets published and sold by the Boston and Washington Society for Moral Education, a list of which is advertised on the last page of each number of THE ALPHA. THE

ALPHA is devoted to the subjects of social purity, the responsibilities of parentage and the rights of children.

MARY L. GRIFFITH.

EDUCATION OF MOTHERS.

I have just finished reading that excellent article "The Importance of Knowledge Concerning Sexual Nature," in the June ALPHA, and, while giving it my unqualified approval, I cannot help remembering the utter incompetence of most mothers to answer the simple, guileless questions of the little child, without embarrassment, when the inquiries relate to the sexual nature, or anything kindred to it. Few, indeed, have the requisite knowledge to do it wisely. They will say, in a half-ashamed manner, "Why, I don't know what to say;" and, as a consequence, the little one is put off with almost anything for an answer, just to satisfy its curiosity, or else it is shamed or ridiculed for daring to ask such questions.

It is no wonder, when the facts are noticed, that people are ashamed to face the innocence of the little child and tell the truth about the origin of life. Their lives and practices and education place the whole subject outside of purity of that word and deed, and they cannot speak of it without a blush of shame. Begotten in darkness, as though to beget a child were an evil deed, by accident, and just to satisfy, generally, a lustful passion, without a thought of the sacredness or responsibility of the act, what marvel that the mother feels ashamed when the little daughter asks, seeing the baby, "Where did you get baby, mamma?"

Our women must be educated to know the sacredness of motherhood, and also to self-assertion in sexual rights. There is no greater profanity than the lustful invasion of the temple of life which each woman is the custodian, and she should see well to it that no unhallowed desires ever find expression in human form through any lack of determination on her part to self-protection. Children are the living embodiment of the thoughts, feelings and desires of both parents previous to conception, and of the mother during gestation, and the fruit of the unnatural, aye, profane sexual association is a race of sexual drunkards who, in their private lives, are a shame to the parents to whom they were born.

We must educate our young people and little children for the future, and our men and women for the present, and most especially the mothers and wives of the generation now in its prime and flush of maturity.

Few weeks pass by but I learn of some sexual outrage, of which the world never knew, confessed in private conversation, the woman's own life, or the life of some friend, which shows the crying need of the age to be light—light, and still more light on these most vital questions. I cannot too strongly urge the necessity of all who are interested in this matter doing all they can to scatter the knowledge they may have become possessed of wherever and whenever opportunity presents itself. "The fields are indeed white with the harvest, but the laborers are few."

RITA BELLE.

PAINESVILLE, O., June 8, 1884.

DOMESTIC CANT.

Among the most delusive forms of current cant may be named the cant of domesticity. Women who confine their interests, their efforts, and their charity to their own family circles, plead their domestic cares as an excuse for shirking all outside labors. Doubtless with many women, family cares are a valid excuse for declining to assume other cares. Women whom narrow circumstances and the inability to do any remunerative work, compelled to perform with their own hands all of the manual labors connected with housekeeping and child-rearing, do indeed find their hands sufficiently full without undertaking any philanthropic or reform work, and no sensible and honest-hearted woman will undertake such work at the expense of her own kitchen and nursery. A mother with young children about her who has the means to employ persons to do or assist her in doing the work connected with the physical care of her household, will find herself all the fresher and stronger for that spiritual and intellectual service in her family which can be delegated to no one else, if she give some thought, some time, to interests outside of her home. When one woman says to another, "Oh, my time is quite occupied with my own duties—with me home cares are first," etc., etc., it is equivalent to implying that the person addressed, or a third person of whom they are speaking, is accustomed to holding those divine duties subordinate to others. Generally speaking, the women most deeply interested in philanthropy and reform are the women with the largest brains and the warmest hearts, the women who, doing to perfection the domestic services belonging to their positions, have yet a surplus of thought, affection and energy to lavish upon those not of their own households. Any woman worthy the name does the duty that lies next her, as does every worthy man. But the women who have capacity enough to discharge the nearest duty without exhaustion, and who go on to the next and the next duties in order, have a right to resent the implication that they reach the outside duty only by neglect of the inside one. We do not doubt that the fifty homes of the fifty women, who on Wednesday attended the presbytery meeting at Danville, were on that day in as good condition, they and their inmates, as the homes and families of any fifty women in the State who make a point of saying with an air: "I've no time for outside work; my domestic duties take all my time."

That a woman's first duty is to keep her house and care for her family, is as much an axiom as that a man's first duty is to earn a subsistence for his wife and children. Every man must do this; but it is a matter for regret if he can do no more; if his cares as a breadwinner are so absorbing as to leave him no margin of time to consider public and impersonal interests. Also, it is no occasion for boasting if a woman's home duties completely absorb, monopolize, and exhaust her. It seems to us that in a perfect society a woman, a well-bred woman, would no more think of saying: "With me, home duties are first," than "As for me, I love my husband better than other men." No woman, true to domestic obligations need indulge in domestic cant.

MAY WRIGHT SEWALL.

OURS IF WE REALLY DESIRE IT.

A correspondent says: "I do not think friendship and the higher love you preach up will ever satisfy the amative and passionate of either sex. The warm-hearted and loving young couple will always expect and want more than this."

Of course it will take long years of training before we can lift humanity up on this higher plane of life. We aim to bring the sexes on a perfect equality. We want boys and girls to be educated together and to mix and mingle in all the walks of life. We want them to work, play, and live together as brothers, sisters, and friends. We want them taught the laws of heredity and generation. Once the young people learn the real and beautiful uses and the awful and wicked abuses of sex, they will naturally desire the one and reject the other. The man who habitually drinks beer and other alcoholic liquors is never "satisfied" with pure water or good milk. He expects something else and craves something else, because he has cultivated an appetite for something else.

Now, here are Willie and Minnie. They have been schoolmates and companions from childhood. They have been taught by their respective parents the law of physiology and hygiene, and they understand all about the sexual relations of flowers, animals and human beings. They have been taught to admire the wonderful adaptation of means and the end desired, and they instinctively despise all that lowers and degrades. They love each other passionately and entirely. The presence of the one in the room fills it with radiance and glory for the other. The lightest word dropping from the beloved lips thrills and charms. The glance of the eye, the smile, the touch of the hand, or any personal contact is heaven itself. This goes on for years, and is fully satisfactory to them both. They finally marry, but do not at once desire children. Think you, if they choose it, that to such a couple continence would be any great cross? Think you it would be more difficult to abide by, than to see thousands of other things around them that are unattainable? It is the false training and the expectancy that is usually in the way.

Continence is like all other forms of temperance. Once convinced it is best and right, and determine your will live by it, and there is little danger of yielding to temptation. Few like liquor or wine better than I do, but I became convinced they were injurious to physical and mental health, and have abjured them for nearly twenty years.

The difficulty lies in convincing people that coition is really injurious to them. Millions will not believe it, just as they refuse to believe rum, tobacco, and strong coffee injurious, because now and then one can use them with seeming impunity.

Continual perseverance is rousing the world at last to the evils of intoxicants and opiates. A wave of reform is rolling over the land and sweeping away these evils from our midst. But it will take many a year yet to complete the well-begun work.

The work for sexual temperance has hardly commenced. There are hundreds of thousands of people who never heard the expression, and do not dream of

what it means. This great reform is only in its merest infancy.

When we consider the immensity of the work that is yet to be done we almost falter in our efforts, because we feel we can accomplish so little—we feel that we must labor and sacrifice so much for such small returns. So many say: "Oh, let it alone. You can't do any good." But we *know* we are doing good, and we hope friends on every side will take hold and help; then we shall see blossoming fields where now there is only a barren waste with here and there a tiny blade of grass.

E. D. SLENKER.

YOUR MISSION.

"If you want a field of labor,
You can find it anywhere."

Yes, anywhere. You need not go out of the daily round of necessary duties to find a field of labor. All you need is the spirit for it. Be ready for work and the work will come to you; just such work as is suited to your ability. It may be but to hold yourself quiet while the billows of tempestuous life passes over you; it may be only to relieve the need of some poor, dumb creature whom some one else has neglected; it may be merely to comfort a child who has broken a plaything; but it will be work for humanity, and not a single effort will be lost.

The mission of all of us is self-culture—at least one part of our work. Perhaps you came into the world with some bad inheritance; a bad temper; a disposition to look on the dark side of everything; or, you may have been an unwelcome child, and feel that in all the world there is no place for you; but, be it what it may, there is the imperfection to be out-grown, to be chiseled away, by your own hand, mainly, if you would aspire to real worth, or to realize your highest idea.

Your mission may be a very quiet one. The world may never hear of it; your name may never be known among the world's workers, or outside of your own circle of friends, but if you do what you have to do in the best way you can do it, with a loving spirit, the world will be the better for your living in it.

Each individual is adapted for some things—some one thing, it may be—just a little better than any one else. Each has a work that no other can do, and that it may seem but small, may be only as one grain of sand composing the stones on which the structure is reared, yet that one grain of sand has its place, and so with our life-work.

You desire to benefit others, perhaps; well, if you can do no more keep your soul above all trifling vexations, and carry a cheerful look ever on your face, so that wherever you go the influence you carry with you will be cheering and inspiring; so that those who merely pass by you will not be oppressed by the shadows in your face. We do not need many words to do our work with—silent influences are most powerful.

To do good in the most effectual way one must be good, and the rest will take care of itself.

RITA BELLE.

PAINESVILLE, April 26, 1884.

THE WHITE CROSS.

The year 1883 witnessed the organization of two societies in England that are destined, like the Church of England Temperance Society, to do much good. The first of the two societies referred to is "The Church of England Purity Society," and the second is "The White Cross Army." The former grew out of an association established at St. Peter's, Eaton Square, London, by Canon Wilkinson, now Bishop of Truro, in connection with the Church Congress at Derby. These two bodies deputed a joint committee to form an organization, and, with the cordial approval of the Archbishop of Canterbury, a public meeting was held at Lambeth Palace Library, on May 25, 1883, when the plan of organization was approved, and the society established under the joint presidency of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York.

Early in the same year the White Cross Army was instituted by the Bishop of Durham, in his diocese at Bishop-Auckland.

While the scope of the Purity Society is comprehensive, and aims, among other agencies, at legislation, the work of the White Cross Army is mainly personal.

On the card of membership of the White Cross Army will be found these works: "I promise by the help of God: 1. To treat all women with respect, and endeavor to protect them from wrong and degradation. 2. To endeavor to put down all indecent language and coarse jests. 3. To maintain the law of purity as equally binding upon men and women. 4. To use every possible means to fulfil the command 'Keep thyself pure.' 5. To endeavor to spread these principles among my companions, and to try and help my younger brothers."

These five heads include the work proposed by the society, which has spread with great rapidity, and necessitated a literature of its own. The favor with which the work of this society has been received by very many of the wisest and best men and women in the Church of England has led a number of the clergy and laity in this country to inquire into its merits, and, as a result of their examination, they feel an earnest desire to see the White Cross Army established in connection with the Church in America.

As an argument in opposition to the proposed movement, it might be said that we have a great many societies already, and perhaps too many. Yet in reply it may be said that while a large number of organizations already exist, we have thus far drawn out scarcely more than a tithe of our working power. Our young men especially need more work.

Again it might be said that every Christian man is already pledged by his baptismal vow to observe the five rules. This is perfectly true, and for baptised persons the promise made is viewed simply as a recognition of the baptismal vow. But, unfortunately, especially in this country, thousands upon thousands are not baptised, and live without any recognition of their duty towards God or man. The society aims, therefore, to reach this class and draw them by degrees to obey, not only the laws of morality and self-respect, but the obligations of Christian manhood. To accomplish this result, however, it will be necessary to secure co-operation.

The rules for the organization of parochial societies, which alone are contemplated at present are very simple. The following may serve as a model :

RULES.

1. This association shall be called the —Branch of the White Cross Army.
2. The object of this branch shall be the elevation of public opinion regarding the law of personal purity, and the maintenance of the same standard for men and women.
3. The management of the branch shall be entrusted to a committee of not more than ten members, including the president, vice-president, recording secretary, corresponding secretary and treasurer, all of whom shall be elected annually by the members. Any vacancy occurring may be filled by an election at the next following meeting.
4. The branch shall consist of "members" not less than eighteen years of age, and "associates" not less than sixteen years of age. The latter shall be admitted to such meetings only as the committee shall deem advisable.
5. The members and associates shall be admitted after being proposed in writing by a member of the branch and approved by the committee. Every person so admitted on signing his name shall receive a copy of the rules and resolutions of the White Cross Army and card of membership.
6. The committee shall have full power to suspend or dismiss from the branch any member or associate for reasons which shall appear to them to be sufficient, and to erase his name from the books.
7. The general work of the branch shall be carried on under the guidance of the central association when formed.
8. All expenses shall be defrayed by voluntary contribution.
9. The general meetings shall be held quarterly, and special meetings may be at such other times as may be deemed expedient by the committee.
10. All meetings held in connection with this association shall be opened and closed with prayer.

One of the first needs of such an organization will be a suitable literature for distribution, as the work of the society must be accomplished mainly by personal effort. To supply this need it is proposed to republish a portion, if not all, of the already well-known series of White Cross Tracts, the larger number of which have been written by Miss Ellice Hopkins, who has worked with such wonderful success in promoting the objects of the White Cross Army. The writings of this gifted and devoted woman have met with an almost unprecedented sale, and have accomplished untold good. Miss Hopkins will revise those of her White Cross Tracts that may need revision, to avoid purely local references, and adapt them to the new field in America. The tracts of the Bishop of Durham and others it is proposed to use by an arrangement with their respective authors, and every effort will be made to put these publications at the lowest possible rates and in an attractive form.—*The Churchman*.

VISION OF THE INCOMING REPUBLIC.

Of an honored sister who has in each stage of her existence embodied the principles of the regenerate life over sixty years, will be eighty-three next November, is a deep, philosophical thinker, a reformer; has not used medicine for forty years, nor applied to physicians. She, knowing my views, thought it would interest me to communicate her transfiguration of the future republic. "Away from the material I beheld the noble daughters of the republic convened for legislation, instituting laws for a new republic. Firstly, they would ignore

men who used narcotics or any kind of intoxicating liquors for companions. Would not accept marriage from men who had lived in self-abuse, sensual indulgence of passion, or sexual congress before marriage. We will reject all those who touch wines, home-made or foreign, as unsuitable companions for the royal daughters of the new republic." This associated, noble band, pledged to execute the new laws and be pioneers in the God image reform, like Deborah of old, lead off with music and triumph to higher conditions. This infinite feminine capacity has been trodden under the feet and trailed in the gutter of the most sensual iniquities. Ruled by man's tyranny and libidinous passion, stained by his unclean desires and images of impurity, robbing a woman of that element of continence and innocence, emanating from the Eternal Motherhood, feminine in Deity! The unfolding of Wisdom, which has been so long hidden (feminine power and essence) in man's veil of selfish and base desires, man, with all his towering intellect, cannot fathom. A manifest reason, he never possessed this talent. Creative intelligence did not endow him with this gift; hence, could not impart a capacity exclusively feminine. Chaste, gentle, charming, loving, tender, sympathetic. The atmosphere seemed permeated with an ethereal element, silky and satin like; refined like gold from all dross; where love ineffable reigns supreme, and the wheels of progress move by harmony and good-will. These noble daughters did not pause to solicit man, to proffer their claims to feminine leadership, but moved with indomitable persistency for the goal of restoration. Heavenly magnets, with Wisdom's power to make whole.

O. CHANDLER.

You would not say that a garden which this year had borne luscious fruits would be much replenished by sowing in it vile weeds the next season, even though the garden should be filled full of them; so, evidently it was God's primary design that innocence, purity, perfection should—could—replenish the earth. Simply filling the world full of people is not replenishing it; is not obeying the command.

WHEN vice can be seen in full dress stalking abroad at mid-day, who shall say that the work of THE ALPHA is untimely, or speak disparagingly of any who has the strength of mind to face the public with the bold truths uttered through its columns. Often we see the need of this very teaching, but to even hint at such things would put one in any position but at their ease. 'Tis true we never know how ignorant we are till we begin to learn and see how much there is of which we know nothing.

P. M. V.

PURITY is oneness. It is the nucleus around which centres all good. It is the magnet of the human soul, and holds our thoughts as one centred upon the source of all purity, God.—*Dowd*.

OPPORTUNITY has hair in front; behind she is bald. If you seize her by the forelock you may hold her; but if suffered to escape not Jupiter himself can catch her again.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WARREN, O., June 10th, 1884.

Mrs. C. B. WINSLOW, *Editor The Alpha*:

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND: I was happy to receive your little epistle to-day and I hasten to answer and speak a word of encouragement to you, though I am only a young man of 23, and what I say may be of unsound judgment, still my heart is with you, as it is in every good cause, but THE ALPHA fills a place in the progression of the world that is like the first glimmer of daylight but as the light grows stronger it spreads over the whole world. Now in many ways progression is as slow it is sure. The law of progression and advancement is as inevitable as the law of attraction.

As far as my observation extends in my business travels, I continually realize that the minds of all men are slowly changing, or rather improving. I am continually sending a copy of THE ALPHA, after reading it, to some friend; only yesterday I received a letter from one in Eau Clair, Wis., saying she was greatly pleased with it and would send for it.

I would suggest that you ask all of its friends to send you the address of their friends who might appreciate it, and that you send sample copies to the names received, with the paragraph marked asking for their subscription.

We are doing a good work through THE ALPHA, and the little paper stands all alone in the field it has chosen, but its foundation is a mountain, and we must keep the light burning. We must not hope for vigorous outbursts. Though they come sometimes, still they are uncertain, but each grain of truth and knowledge that is sown is never lost, though we may not see the harvest.

It would be a sad moment to me should I hear of THE ALPHA having died. You may count on my hearty support as long as I live, and I expect to live and labor in the cause of love and goodness for many a long decade.

I will send you some more subscriptions in a few weeks.

THE ALPHA strikes at the root of much of our human misery. Your reward will surely reach you, though it may be in the life to come.

CHAS. L. HYDE.

MOUNT MORRIS LIVINGSTON CO., NEW YORK.

DEAR MRS. WINSLOW: Some dear soul has been sending me THE ALPHA for the last few months. Sometimes my spirit feels it is your dear self. Whoever it is I never read the paper without thanking them over and over again. It is a wonderful paper, truly the beginning of a new and sweet life to our sensual world. I truly believe that man must be born again, and yet I fully agree with Beecher, I think it was, who said, "The first birth is more important than the second." This we know, that if the first is right the second will surely follow, and as the world advances to the omega, may not be needed. Then, Mrs. Winslow, you are such a brave, grand woman, fighting such a holy fight and waging a war against the subtle things of darkness. When you are done with the things of time, and have joined "the immortals" the unborn children will thank you that you have lifted from them the curse of intemperance, insanity and kindred vices. If the old orthodoxy believed that Eve tempted man, surely it should now rejoice that a stronger woman is trying to bring him back to a true life and the old Eden. The effects are being attacked; thank God that you have the courage to go to the foundation—the cause. I cannot tell you how you drew me to you while in your city. It seemed to me in some other life I had known and loved you, and the feeling still follows me. How strange that remembrance of a former existence that comes and goes like a passing shadow. You never came near me without giving me a great desire to put my arms around you and tell you how dearly I loved you. I should have done it surely had I dared and known that you are the one grand woman of America that is digging deeper than the rest. I shall do all I can to get subscribers to your paper. Please send me ten copies. I send you much love. May you have great strength to go on with this grand work for God and humanity.

MARY SEYMOUR HOWELL.

BROOKLYN, June 10th.

MY DEAR MRS. WINSLOW: Mrs. Neyman has been spending a day with me and has spoken of you, your views and work, in a manner that enables me to apprehend the scope of your reformatory movement. I believe you are working in the right direction, and that the doctrine of conservation of energy in the economy of the individual should be preached as one of the higher laws of nature, and applicable to the age on which we

are entering. Step by step, stage by stage, these higher laws of the new age are being disclosed, and when they are grouped together into a harmonious whole it will be seen that a distinct, or, as the Swedenborgians phrase it, discrete degree of development separates the new age from the old. I enclose my check for \$1 for yearly subscription to THE ALPHA, and am

Sincerely yours,

IMOGENE C. FALES.

CALIFORNIA, May, 1884.

DEAR ALPHA: It may do your readers good to know that your wholesome doctrine has been voiced and sent vibrating "in the air" on the Pacific coast.

A grand, complete lecture on the subject of "Sexual Holiness; or, What is Right in Sex Relations" was given by Brother N. E. Boyd, of San Francisco, at Riverside. The audience was attentive and appreciative, among whom were two of the most intelligent ministers of the place who not only gave their presence, but their hearty approval of the lecture.

Is not the cause of moral education strong enough to send out at least one lecturer on salary to spread the doctrine broadcast over the continent? Among the many "fund bureaus" can there not be one for that purpose? Mr. Boyd is ready, competent, and no doubt willing if the time has come for the work. He is ready.

D. S. H.

CHICAGO, June 19, 1884.

MY DEAR MRS. WINSLOW: Enclosed find \$1, which I see should have been sent long ago. If THE ALPHA has been stopped please begin where you left off.

The true relation of the sexes, the complete emancipation of the mothers from priest and husband, so far as the demands of either conflict with her own rights and duties as understood by herself, will save the race. It is the enslavement of woman to superstition and lust that enfeebles her children mentally, morally and physically, that has destroyed humanity in the past.

The Roman confessional, the priest as God, the marriage, the husband as God has robbed woman of her conscience and of herself, and made her a machine. The result is she has given birth to machines and very poor machines at that.

The Protestant, as well as the Roman Catholic, gospel, to her is obedience to priest and husband as unto the Lord. How can a slave mother give birth to anything but slavish children?

Woman has relied on man for salvation, and her faith has been rewarded by destruction. There is no salvation for woman or man but growth; no growth but by obedience; no obedience but conformity to the fixed laws of our being—physical, moral, spiritual.

This lesson the ALPHA teaches well. I know of its being enforced intelligently in no other quarter in any public print. In the beginning should be the word of life—will be, must be, if the word of life is spoken. If not in the beginning, there can be no true word or true life.

Yours,

A. J. GROVER.

CEDAR POINT, May 14, 1884.

Last week a man, his wife, and two children came—a little boy, just beginning to talk, and a baby. The boy started for the rest house, when his mother said, "Don't go there, the man will put you in the big hole." I said, "Don't frighten him." She said she could not govern him any other way, and I thought one of these ALPHAS might help her. The man was outside, and the boy went to him, then started for the pond, when his father said, "Don't go there, a big dog will catch you." My husband heard him, and said to him, "Never tell your child an untruth; it will teach him to distrust you, and learn to tell stories himself." He said, "I never thought of that." So we wished we had some more ALPHAS, as ours only went to one, but we send word to pass it on. There is a family living in the station; the man works for us; they have four children; have lived there since last fall, and we have never heard them cry or quarrel. He says they never do; and their mother says she never had to correct them. She says: "Mamma says you must not do it" and they quit. What a difference there is in bringing up children. A day of this and a day of that and day of the other for a ribbon-bed; dusty millers for the center; dark maroon, red and green for the others. I like to wait on some people and some I do not, but must treat all well. Now I hear some one cry "stop," and I might as well give you my love and best wishes.

Yours truly as ever,

ELLEN E. BELLVILLE.

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