

Veritas

And he began to speak boldly in the Synagogue: whom when AQUILA and PRISCILLA had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.—ACTS, 18th Chapter, 26th Verse.

Reformation & Revolution, WHICH?

OR,

BEHIND THE POLITICAL SCENES.

A SPEECH DELIVERED IN

COOPER INSTITUTE

OCTOBER 17, 1873,

AND THROUGHOUT AMERICA.

BY

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL,

TO AN AUDIENCE OF 4,000 PEOPLE,

Filling to its utmost capacity the Hall, to which hundreds found it impossible to gain admission.

New York :
WOODHULL & CLAFLIN.

1873.

And he began [to speak boldly in the] Synagogue: whom when AQUILA and PRISCILLA had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.—ACTS, 18th Chapter, 26th Verse.

Reformation \approx Revolution, WHICH?

OR,

BEHIND THE POLITICAL SCENES.

A SPEECH DELIVERED IN

COOPER INSTITUTE

OCTOBER 17, 1873,

AND THROUGHOUT AMERICA.

BY

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL,

TO AN AUDIENCE OF 4,000 PEOPLE,

Filling to its utmost capacity the Hall, to which hundreds found it impossible to gain admission.

New York:

WOODHULL & CLAFLIN.

1873.

Soc 4830.5

Harvard College Library

Gift of

REV. EDWARD ABBOTT

9 May 1896.

PROSPECTUS.

WOODHULL & CLAPLIN'S WEEKLY.

[The only Paper in the World conducted, absolutely, upon the Principles of a Free Press.]

It advocates a new government in which the people will be their own legislators, and the officials the executors of their will.

It advocates, as parts of the new government—

1. A new political system in which all persons of adult age will participate.
2. A new land system in which every individual will be entitled to the free use of a proper proportion of the land.
3. A new industrial system, in which each individual will remain possessed of all his or her productions.
4. A new commercial system in which "cost," instead of "demand and supply," will determine the price of everything and abolish the system of profit-making.
5. A new financial system, in which the government will be the source, custodian and transmitter of all money, and in which usury will have no place.
6. A new sexual system, in which mutual consent, entirely free from money or any inducement other than love, shall be the governing law, individuals being left to make their own regulations; and in which society, when the individual shall fail, shall be responsible for the proper rearing of children.
7. A new educational system, in which all children born shall have the same advantages of physical, industrial, mental and moral culture, and thus be equally prepared at maturity to enter upon active, responsible and useful lives.

All of which will constitute the various parts of a new social order, in which all the human rights of the individual will be associated to form the harmonious organization of the peoples into the grand human family, of which every person in the world will be a member.

Criticism and objections specially invited.

Let us repeat that old story from Sufi:—There was a man who, for seven years did every act of charity, and at the end of seven years he mounted the steps to the gate of Heaven and knocked. A voice cried, "who is there?" "Thy servant, O Lord," and the gate was shut.

Seven other years he did every other good work, and again mounted the three steps to Heaven and knocked. The voice cried, "who is there?" He answered, "Thy slave, O God," and the gates were shut.

Seven other years he did every good deed, and again mounted the steps to Heaven, and the voice said, "who is there?" He replied, "THY SELF, O GOD," and the gates wide open flew.

* *

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase),
Awoke one night from a dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich and like a lily bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold;—
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said:
"What writest thou?" The vision raised its head,
And with a look made all of sweet accord,
Answered "The names of those who love the Lord,"
"And is mine one?" said Abou, "Nay, not so,"
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still, and said: "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."
The angel wrote, and vanished,
The next night
It came again with a great awakening light,
And showed the names who love of God had blessed,
And lo! *Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.*

LEIGH HUNT.

Reformation or Revolution, Which?

Or, Behind the Political Scenes.

It may appear presumptuous, perhaps ridiculous, for a woman to talk to an audience composed largely of men, about politics and government. Men have had the management of these questions so long, it ought at least to be presumed that what they do not know is not worth talking about. I have listened attentively to speeches from many different men—Statesmen, Legislators, Congressmen—but I failed to find in the institutions which they represented anything that is an excuse, even, for the grandiloquent laudations that they usually indulged in. On the contrary, I find so much of which to complain, in which not only my own interests, but those of every working man and woman in the country are involved, that I cannot hold my peace and see the impending desolation—which now threatens to bring a period of woe to us all—approach unopposed.

We live in an age of progress. Not anybody of whom I know

even pretends that our institutions are perfect ; although the action of some may seem to assume that they are. Not anybody will venture to say we have reached a point in anything beyond which it is impossible to go. Not anybody will deny, however, that individual enterprises have outstripped the general institutions by which they are regulated ; nor that it has come about that these enterprises control the institutions that created them, and, by so doing, are remanding the country backward from democracy towards despotic control ; are increasing the distance between the extremes of wealth and poverty—making the representatives of the former fewer and more powerful, and the victims of the latter more numerous and destitute every year ; in a word, are subjugating the “Lower Millions” to the will of the “Upper Ten.”

In the early days of the Republic, so-called, when simplicity and patriotism were the moving characteristics in the minds of the people ; when the wealthiest in the land considered it no dishonor to sit at the dinner-table with the men and women in their employ ; when the haughtiest dames put their hands to the spinning wheel and loom ; when persons were elected to the offices on account of their fitness, instead of, as now, by money and the prostitution of the polls ; I say when these things existed, it is not to be wondered at that the country, under the then recently constructed government, which was in many respects so great an improvement upon the old, was entitled to be called a republic ; or that, having supreme confidence in their own honesty of purpose, its framers did not provide for an opposite order of things ; for a time when their places might be filled with persons of different impulses and motives, seeking positions of trust which should offer a price at which they would be willing to part with their honor. In those days there were no Credit Mobilier enterprises, and the danger hidden in the womb of the future was not provided for. They imagined, no doubt, that they had constructed a government for themselves that would meet all demands of posterity.

But they were mistaken. A single century has dissipated the hopes which were built on their work. That which they intended should secure to every person the inalienable rights of the Text of the Constitution has become a gigantic engine of oppression, grinding to the earth a large proportion of the common people who, all their lives long, tax their strength to the utmost, and die at the end, leaving their families destitute, and without the means to decently bury them, while the results of their toil is being enjoyed by others.

So general and oppressive has this condition become, and its injustice so evident, that on every hand the murmurings of discontent among the masses are breaking out into rebellion, in which the hope for reformation is replaced by the desire for revolution. All up and down this broad country secret meetings are held, in which the most extreme remedies are freely discussed ; and yet those to whom the people have entrusted the public interests sleep on peacefully, and

dream of the next job, seemingly ignorant that the day of judgment is at hand; while still another class are watching the opportunity, tiger-like, to spring upon the throat of liberty as it struggles in the strife, and strangle it in its despotic grasp, so that they may plant themselves upon its ruins. When we thus pass behind the political scenes and observe what is there going on, the heart that beats with the love of justice and freedom; which cares for its country's welfare; which has a single sentiment of the brotherhood of man born in the soul, may well cry out: Can there be Reformation, or must it be Revolution, before justice shall be done?

But what were the ends to be secured by the establishment of this government, different from those that had resulted from other governments, and wherein has it failed, and of what can it be impeached? Let us go back to the beginning, and by the words of its constructors learn what their intentions were. We can then decide by comparing them with what the results have been, whether their ideas are realized, or whether there is a failure.

I presume you are aware that some of the original proposers of a new government, and prominently among them Benjamin Franklin, entertained apprehensions as to the durability and efficacy of the Constitution as it was finally adopted. On the 17th of September, 1787, this venerable man said: "I confess that there are several parts of this Constitution which I do not approve. I agree to this Constitution, with all its faults, because I believe a general government necessary for us; and I further believe that this is likely to be well administered for a course of years, and can only end in despotism when the people shall become corrupted. Thus I consent to this Constitution, because I expect no better. The opinions I have had of its errors I sacrifice to the public good;" and in speaking thus he undoubtedly expressed in a very guarded manner, the fears of all who moved originally in the matter.

It may be useful, also, to refer to some eloquent remarks of the late eminent jurist, Judge Story. He said: "Let the American youth never forget that they possess a noble inheritance, capable of transmitting, if wisely improved, to their latest posterity, the peaceful enjoyment of liberty, of property, of religion and of independence. It has been reared for immortality. Its defences are impregnable from without. It may, nevertheless, perish in an hour, by the folly or corruption or negligence of its only keepers, the people. Republics fall when the wise are banished from the public councils because they dare to be honest, and the profligate are rewarded because they flatter the people in order to betray them."

Now what is the deduction to be drawn from this language, coming from these great men? Clearly, when carried to the ultimate, that the government is not the Constitution and the laws enacted

under it, but really the persons who, for the time, make and administer the laws—a good government when these are good men, a bad government when these are bad men—which amounts in substance, to this: that there is no system of government in existence; that which is called a system being the will merely of those in power for the time being. And to be convinced that this is really so here, it is necessary to review the political history of the country only as far back as 1860. It would be as safe for the people if there were no Constitution, the government being evolved from year to year, as to depend for political existence upon what is now called a Constitution. Indeed, it is to be questioned if there have not been times when it would have been better for the public welfare had there been no constitutional obligations standing in the way of public opinion; and whether those obstacles do not oftener prevent the right than the wrong from being done.

Furthermore, a constitution for a republic should contain no provisions that could possibly cause the popular will to be defeated. Constitutions and governments for republics should be framed; first, to protect the inalienable rights of each member of the community, and should declare these rights in language so clear that they could not be mistaken; and second, to administer the popular will, as expressed by the people themselves in their approval of all measures before they take effect. The Declaration of Independence and the text of the Constitution were written evidently with these two ideas prominent, and the reason it was feared by some that the Constitution, as adopted, would prove a failure, was because it was not framed in consonance with these ideas. This Declaration and text were the rule by which the structure should have been erected, and had it so been erected, there would have been no need for, or danger of, revolution to-day; whereas we are standing upon its verge, without the remotest hope that it may be averted, and perhaps when the situation is inspected, it may not appear altogether as if it ought to be averted. There are times in the affairs of nations when revolutions are not only necessary, but obligatory upon a people, and it is an open question if such a time is not now impending over this country. One of two things will surely be: There must be reformation behind the political scenes, or there will be revolution outside of them.

Is it asked of what the people complain that, ignored, should call them to take back the power which the government has smuggled? If so, the reply will come back: Of almost everything that exists to-day as the result of government. There is neither freedom, equality or justice in the land, as I will shortly show. The attempt, by the British Government, to enforce a stamp act, such as the people have endured here, almost without murmur, for the last ten years, was one of the chief causes of disaffection of the colonies; while the further attempt to introduce and tax tea, was sufficiently

obnoxious to rouse the people to declare that "The time of destruction, or manly opposition, has now come."

And now mark the result. The action of about fifty men, in destroying a cargo of tea, brought on the revolutionary war. If fifty men, out of three millions of inhabitants at that time, with the limited dissatisfaction that existed against the crown, could bring about a revolution, how many men and women out of forty millions inhabitants are required, with the wide-spread dissatisfaction now existing, to bring about revolution?

Do not misunderstand me. I am not advocating revolution; I am demanding what belongs of right to the people. I am asking for reformation; but if it be denied, I fall back upon the right of revolution, which no freeman will deny, and I will use every effort I have at my command to produce it.

The people all over the country are saying: Give us back our rights, or we will take them; and the stupid legislators and blundering officials, with their consciences and perceptions alike blunted by the array of spoils upon which their eyes are fixed, to the exclusion of everything else, don't seem to know that anything is the matter; they act as if everything was calm and quiet. And so it is, but it is the calmness that precedes the earthquake; and I forewarn them that they are sleeping over what is liable to burst forth any day, and cost them their heads for their stupid blundering.

This may be called seditious; but would you have me, knowing this, permit it to come upon them unawares? I speak for the people, the great, honest, industrial masses, who, being obliged to toil every day to obtain barely their needed sustenance, have no time to look after the persons to whom they have intrusted their interests, and who, knowing they are being robbed day after day, year after year, cannot leave their labor to counsel together as to the means of relief. Want stands at their home-door, grinning a ghastly grin at their families, and warning them to waste no time; they know there is something wrong somewhere, but they have not the opportunity to find it out.

I repeat, I speak for this class, and as against that class which devotes its time and talent to devising means to secure the results which the other class produce. As between these two I demanded justice; and by the God of Justice it shall be rendered, peaceably if it can, forcibly if it must. Hunger, with its long, bony fingers, pinched cheeks and fiery eye, shall not much longer hold horrid revel in hut or hovel, in a land that trembles under the weight of its own productions, and is studded from end to end with palatial homes in which luxury abides. Not much longer shall thousands of men, women and children eke out a miserable life upon what a "sport" would disdain to feed his dogs, while the favored few wallow in superfluities.

GENERAL CHARGES.

But I was about to speak of the causes for dissatisfaction that are driving this country into revolution, and had said that almost everything which exists as a result of government belongs among them. Two years ago, when I was importuning Congress to do political justice to woman, which was denied, I found that the wiser portion of Congressmen feared the country was drifting into revolution. Not less than three, whom I consider the wisest of the whole lot, confessed, when pressed to answer, that they did not believe another administration would pass without tremendous political changes; and the pulse-beats of the country indicate that they are near at hand. The immediate causes will be, as I shall shortly show, the efforts of those who have monopolized the power, the wealth and the money, to hold them, as against the growing demand for a settlement on the part of the people who have produced them.

Will they who scout the idea of revolution remember that until Fort Sumter was fired upon, there were scarcely a hundred people in the country who believed war possible; and that they were accounted as insane? But it came in spite of the wise ones, and it scourged the country as it was never scourged before. The single question of losing its negroes inspired the South to fight. Shall we repeat the blunder of that time by assuming that the people who hold the political power and the wealth of the country will not fight when they see that they are going to be taken from them.

Do not deceive yourselves. Negro slavery was not so great a cause of dissatisfaction then, as are the more subtle slaveries of to-day, now. Nor were the slave oligarchs any more alarmed about their slaves then, than are the political, financial and industrial oligarchs for their possessions, now. The public sentiment, however, had outgrown the institution of slavery, and sealed its doom. So also is the public sentiment outgrowing the despotic rule of the aristocrats of to-day, and it will seal their fate. But the latter, no less than was the former, are a part of our system of government, and as slavery proved a failure, and as such was abolished, so also are the others to follow in the same way.

The developments of the past two years—the corruptions, frauds and failures—are sweeping condemnation of the system under which they have flourished. From Tammany down to the latest Brooklyn *expose*, first and last, one and all—they speak in unmistakable tones of the approaching culmination of the system. They prove beyond cavil that the government has degenerated into a mere machine, used by the unscrupulous to systematically plunder the people. Look where we may, confirmation stares us in the face. From the head at Washington down to the pettiest public office, it is the same story—fraud, corruption, speculation everywhere.

What else is to be expected? If Congress—in league with, probably, the Cabinet, if not the President himself—can be induced to push a Pacific Railroad scheme to obtain stock in a Credit Mobilier, and, being exposed, can whitewash itself by such a farce as was enacted in Congress last winter, why, indeed, should not every official in the country go into the same business, and hope to escape in like manner? Examples like that, set in high places, will be copied in lower grades; and these again are legitimate fruit of our system of government.

Even the highest officials no longer hesitate to openly ally themselves with professional speculators, and this brings the exclamation: Can it be possible that the people's money, paid by them into the public treasury, is being used as a basis for speculation, that officials, even the President himself, should rush frantically to the rescue of the jeopardized market? Can it be true, as hinted by those who ought to know, that the large banking firms, recently suspended, were operating on government funds; and, as has been stated of a case in Washington, that drafts upon the Treasury for large amounts were made recently to bolster up their trembling ventures?

Nothing is more probable. It is a well-known fact that on the eve of the Pennsylvania election last year the Secretary of the Treasury went into Wall Street and manipulated the market through his pet bankers. Who that knows anything about that little scheme doubts that the profits were largely used to make that election certain?

When officials near the head of the government are known to speculate *a la* Credit Mobilier; when jobbing schemes are continually bought through Congress, to say nothing about the needed approval at the White House; when men of highest respectability in the community, and very religious withal—Head-Lights in the Young Men's Christian Assassination Association—warm friends of the administration—by a method that is winked at as a mistake only, accidentally defraud the revenue of a few millions; when bank officials remove from the country and safely carry the people's deposits with them; when a Tammany Ring converts millions of the public money to its own use, for charitable purposes (?), and it is accounted of little significance; when hypocrisy sits enthroned in the most popular churches, and the Christians, in a holy unity that was never known until now, seek to establish a Sectarian God, Christ and Bible in the organic law of the country, and are going to succeed; in a word, when everything that is false, corrupt and damnable runs riot at the expense of the hard working, industrial masses, and is considered too respectable to be inquired into by anybody who comes out of a Nazareth; when all these things are, is it not time that a change comes? is it not time for this Babel (which we call government, and which is growing so high as to put its occupants beyond reach of the people) to topple over and be buried in its own ruins?

I do not war upon the people as individuals who are involved in

these things. To put others in their place would be a change of persons merely. It is the system that is at fault. If it were not for its glaring defects, individuals, however badly disposed, could not take advantage of the people, who elevate them to positions of honor and trust. I repeat again, therefore, that our system of government, after a century's trial, has been proved a failure. It has ultimated in corruption and peculation in all its departments, and is rotten and ready to fall; and it ought to fall, and it will fall.

It is in vain to hope that the tide now rushing on a headlong course can be turned into safer channels. Things are going from bad to worse too fast, and with too great momentum. No mere revulsion can purify them. A system in which disease generates and spreads to involve its every part, coursing with fevered rapidity in all its veins, is as impossible of medication as rottenness itself. These things to which we have referred are the symptoms of the disease, which, itself, lies back in the vital parts of the system out of which they are evolved.

SPECIFICATIONS.

I charge upon this government, in the first instance, that it is not republican in form, and is therefore directly opposed, not only to the spirit of the Declaration of Independence, but also to the letter of the Constitution. The Preamble to the Constitution declares that governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, to secure the inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Now, if a government be instituted and maintained which does not obtain its powers from the consent of the governed, can it, according to the Constitution itself, and the purposes for which it was adopted, be a just government? and if not a just government, can it be a republican government? Nobody will so pretend. Nevertheless, this government is maintained by the absolute denial of the right to express either consent or dissent of more than one-half of the governed; what is still more reprehensible, they who are thus excluded are recognized by the Constitution as lawful citizens and entitled to equal civil and political rights with any other class.

A despotic government is one in which people are governed without their consent. As a principle, it does not matter whether the governing power is vested in the hands of one person, as in Russia; in those of a Parliament and a Queen, as in England, or in those of one-half the people, as in this country. There is no difference at bottom between these several governments. Each is the arbitrary rule of a part of the people over the remainder who have no voice or power in that rule.

For my part (and I speak now for myself only), I deny the right of the men of this country to legislate for me, and I will not submit to any of their laws to which I could not consent if I were permitted to dissent, and that limit my personal rights, declared inalienable by the

text of the Constitution ; and more especially will I not conform to those which are made to control my social rights, when everybody knows they are intended for women only, men never even pretending to conform to them. I spit upon such despotism ; and every woman who does not is either a willing or unwilling slave ; and they are rapidly waking up to this fact. The government of this country was instituted and is maintained and administered by men over women who have not consented to it, and many of whom protest against it. It is, therefore, in no sense of the word a republican government, and upon this count it ought to fall ; and it will fall.

Again I charge upon this government that it is a failure, because it has neither secured freedom (and by this I mean the personal rights of individuals), maintained equality nor administered justice to its citizens. These three terms constitute the political Trinity. If it have any existence at all in a government, each of the terms will be present. There can be no such thing as justice unless there are freedom and equal conditions ; there can be no such thing as equality unless there is freedom. The Trinity is, therefore, to be expressed thus : There must be equality maintained among a few people, whose intercourse is regulated by justice. Institute that law in any country and there will be perfect government ; and so far as it does not exist in this country to-day, so far is the government not republican, and, consequently, a failure.

Moreover, it is evident that the legislation of the country, State and National, tends to defeat equality and justice and to introduce and build up unequal conditions, and unjust relations ; while caste and class distinctions are becoming more distinctly marked, every day. How much further this may proceed, depends upon the temper of those upon whom the so-called upper classes are presuming to establish themselves.

These "upper classes" may be variously enumerated. First of all is the Land Oligarchy, and this class probably is the foundation of all the rest, since if it did not exist, the others could never have arisen. Now what is the principle underlying this oligarchy ? How did it come about that they own the land ? They purchased it, it is replied. Of whom did they purchase it ? Of its previous owners—away back to its first occupants. And how did its first occupants obtain it ? Oh, they took it. Is it not clear then that all the title anybody has to any land, is that which they who "took it" had to convey ? And this is no title at all, unless they can show they purchased it from its Maker. For this is to what we are soon come to in property rights. There is but one fact that can give individual title to anything ; and that is, the fact of being its maker ; or the further fact of equal exchange of things between makers.

Man never made the land, and, therefore, he can never obtain a title that can make it justly his, as against the claim of any other living being. Land, like the water and air, is natural wealth, the use

of which belongs of right to all the people ; and being a natural right, cannot be alienated or forfeited. There is as much right to bottle up the air and deal it out for pay, as there is to claim the land and sell it for gain.

Man individually has certain demands that require the use of the land to supply ; and therefore every man, woman and child has a God-given right to his or her share for this purpose, the withholding of which by any power whatever, is as arbitrary an usurpation as it would be to shut them out from breathing the air, or to deprive them of the use of water. You see, my friends, that it is human justice and human rights, as interpreted by the laws of nature, and governing the existence of man that I am seeking, and before these all human enactments must sooner or later fall.

The Land Oligarchy, then, will be compelled to surrender the land to the people ; and the government must institute a just method of securing its use to them, having a proper regard to the relations between the mechanic and the farmer. The difference between that condition and the present, would not be so great as at first may be supposed ; the single exception would be that no person could control more than his equal proportion, of which he would hold possession so long as he paid the taxes minus the rentals, now exacted by the oligarchy.

Do you not see how infinitely this would better the condition of every occupant of a small body of land, and especially the farmers of the great West ? It could never be encumbered by debt or mortgage, and could never be taken away so long as the small taxes should be paid. But taxes, even, are soon to be among the things of the past. A government that cannot support itself ought not to exist. But I will not discuss this just here. I will repeat, merely for the sake of emphasis, that a government that cannot support itself without taxing the people, ought not to exist !

But I must pay my parting respects to the Land Oligarchy. A more unjust, inhuman and unnatural thing does not exist. A single instance will demonstrate that it is all of these. For comparatively nothing the ancestry of the present Mr. Astor obtained possession—I will not say acquired title—of the land in this city, which, by its increase in value, has made him worth half a hundred million dollars, and the income from the land has enabled him to cover it with costly warehouses and dwellings, increasing its money producing capacity at every step.

Now, even admitting that he had a rightful title to it originally, I want to ask who is entitled to the increase ? Have the Astors added to its value ? Nobody will pretend it. It was the general growth and prosperity of the city, which resulted again from the general growth and prosperity of the country that has done this.

I cannot pursue this further. I throw out these hints to direct your attention to this infamous wrong. The principles underlying

them are fundamental, and are as certain to obtain in practice as is the right to come uppermost; and they who have rolled in luxuries, without so much as a single day's productive labor in their whole lives, and at the expense of those who have labored, will be compelled to lay their hands to work, in order to obtain the means of life. The solution of this question of Industrial Justice means just this and nothing less, and those whom it is going to put to work may as well begin to prepare.

Having disposed of the land question, there come the almost equal tyrants, wealth and money to be beheaded. The relations which these terms bear to each other are so little understood, it is necessary, before entering upon their discussion, to point them out. Money is not wealth. Wealth cannot be money. Wealth is whatever there is that can be used to sustain life or add to its comforts, and it consists of two kinds, natural and artificial.

All natural wealth belongs of original right to all the people collectively, for their individual use, and each person is an heir to an equal proportion. All other wealth is produced, and of natural right belongs to the individuals who produce it; or to those who obtain it by an equitable exchange of something they do produce.

To illustrate: a farmer may exchange one-half of the yearly products of his own labor for one-half the yearly products of the labor of a mechanic, and that would be an equitable exchange. What we are seeking is equity, and it would not be equity for the farmer to exchange one-half of his products for one-fourth of the mechanic's products.

This question of justice in industry is a subtle one, and yet it is most simple. The equitable price of anything is determined by its cost; and cost consists of two items only, consumption of time in its production and of material, out of which it is produced, where this is itself a production. The establishment of price by the rule of supply and demand can never be equitable. To demonstrate this unquestionably, we have only to consider that a barrel of flour will sustain the life of a given number of persons a given number of days. It will not do more than this if it cost a thousand dollars; it will not do less if it cost but fifty cents, and so of every other necessary or comfort of life.

The chief cause of the present unequal distributions of wealth, it is clear is this unjust system of exchange, regulated by the ever varying rule of demand and supply, instead of the equitable rule of cost. To show the iniquitous effect of this rule, we have only to imagine a case where a person has a remedy which cannot be obtained elsewhere, in time, which another requires to save his life. By the rule of demand and supply, the price is fixed at a million dollars and paid—while had it been fixed by its cost, it would have been no more than five dollars. Now is not this result the same as it would have been, had the equitable price been asked and paid, and the remaining

nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-five dollars, stolen? The difference is in the manner of its getting, not in the thing done. One is considered legal, while the other is denominated robbery. "A rose by any other name smells as sweet" still holds good.

And it is also clear that, if the system of effecting exchanges of commodities was governed by cost, there could be no such unequal conditions as now obtain, and the system of middlemen, merchants, more properly hucksters, would be abolished.

With the abolition of the system of middlemen, would follow the downfall of its ally—the modern newspapers. As the advertising medium of this class, without the support of which three-fourths of them could not exist, they are conducted specifically in the interest of trade and as against those of labor. This is the reason why the influential papers let the discussion of the labor problem severely alone. So long as the present systems exist, so long must the interests of these two classes remain in antagonism. One hundred and fifty millions dollars are annually paid by the hucksters in puffing their wares, every one of which is a tax upon labor in the increased cost of what they consume, or else in the decreased cost of what they sell. Remember I do not impeach the Press; I am questioning the manner of its conduct merely. But this again is another evidence of the fallacies of our system which, when changed to a correct basis, will rear a Press of its own, dedicated to humanitarian, instead of class interests, upon the latter of which it will not rely for support. More than this; The inauguration of a system of public markets would return to productive labor one-half the people who are now living by retailing its products, upon the productive class, and thus, by so much, lessen the number of hours for daily labor.

The practice of permitting one class of people to speculate in the products of the laboring class, robs the producer or consumer, or perhaps both. We have prominent examples of this in New York City. The consumers of coal have paid as much as \$15 a ton for that which at the mines in Pennsylvania cost a dollar and a half. Now either the producer of the coal received thirteen and a half dollars too little, or the consumer paid that sum too much, less only the actual cost of transportation. Again I repeat, a legal system of robbery, not less infamous in its conception than it is cruel in its results.

Furthermore, it is to be observed that coal is natural wealth in which no one can have a right to traffic for profit; and with all other natural wealth obtained from the earth, such as metals, salt, oil and wood, belongs to the people as a whole, and should be produced for their use, by the government, at cost. Whatever objection may be made to these propositions, we can only reply that they are principles existing in nature, for which no one is responsible, and which cannot be diverted from their natural application, except at the cost of

injustice to somebody. In a word there is no escape from them ; and until they are taken up and reduced to a working system of government, the peoples of the earth will continue to suffer from industrial injustice, the ignorant and the weak being subjugated in some way by cultivated talent to the strong.

Now money is the thing invented—not produced—to represent wealth and to facilitate its exchange ; and gold being wealth, cannot be money. Gold is natural wealth, and all the gold there is in the world belongs of right to all the people, and may be used but not owned rightfully. True, gold may be coined and called, and used for, money, but it is a costly money ; and is more gold, when so used, than Bank-note paper is paper when in the form of money. The reason why gold coin is considered the best money, is because it is something more than money, being wealth, and changes from its character as money into its original properties, whenever that which it is used to represent, as money, is no longer represented by it. But it is no better as money, than something else would be which is only money—a scientific representation of wealth. The excuse for using gold as money may be used with equal force for any other kind of wealth, which is equally as convenient.

A representative of wealth is good so long as that which it represents is commanded by it. A note at hand is one kind of money, and is good so long as its maker is possessed of the wealth with which to redeem it ; and of the willingness to redeem it ; and this is the test of all personal money. Individuals or companies may part with the wealth which their outstanding notes or money represent, and lose the proceeds, and then the money becomes worthless.

Therefore all individual notes or money, or the notes or money of any company, or bank, under whatever regulations, are liable to become worthless, and consequently are not a safe money.

Bank notes are never perfect money, unless there is dollar for dollar in gold wealth with which to redeem them, and if this were always maintained, there would be no method of profit and consequently no banks. Hence banks are not a legitimate subject for legislation, either for protection or regulation, under a republican government.

A perfect representative of wealth and consequently a safe money, is that which represents wealth that cannot be destroyed, lost, exchanged, sold or carried out of the jurisdiction of the government under which it is issued. A money issued by a government representing the total wealth of the country, therefore is the only safe money that can be made. This, then, is the money which the people of republics should have ; and it should be loaned by the government to the people, without interest, upon the deposit of sufficient security. And this should be the only dealings permitted in money under the guarantee of law, dealings between individuals being left to their honor. This would abolish all banks, and all speculative operations, and reduce the business of the country to a

legitimate basis, and with cost as the limit of price, fix something like permanent values upon every commodity of exchange.

With such a money as this the government may retire its outstanding obligations including bonds, at par, stopping the interest upon the latter at once, which would inaugurate successfully the new order of things. But this, even, would be an act of injustice, since I shall show you why the Public Debt ought to be repudiated.

The Public Debt was incurred to carry on the war, and was largely, if not wholly, obtained from those who had money in their possession which did not represent any product of labour the result of their own industry; but which was the result of the industry of others, obtained without equity. Hence if it were given to prosecute the war, it was done in behalf of the whole people, to whom all surplus wealth, over a proportionate amount of the whole, for each individual, of right belongs.

If justice were established in the world, it would be impossible for a few of the people to accumulate all the wealth; therefore it cannot be unjust to restore to the people that which has been unjustly taken from them. Now consider this question impartially and without prejudice: To whom does the accumulated wealth of this country belong? To the few who pretend to own it, or those who created it? Dispense with your legal ideas and preconceived notions of property, and answer this as though necessary for your soul's safety. Again I ask who are the rightful owners of the accumulated wealth of the country? I say, those who produced the wealth by their labor, for which they could not have been equitably paid, since if they had, they would not be poor to-day. And if this is so, then repudiation is right.

But there is another reason why the bonds ought not to be paid. In the exigency of the war, many of these bonds were sold at sixty cents on the dollar, which has been almost wholly returned in the shape of interest, and therefore is equitably cancelled. The bondholders, however, want to obtain for the six hundred dollars which these bonds cost, first, twenty years' interest—twelve hundred dollars—and, finally, one thousand dollars on the maturity of the bond; or twenty-two hundred dollars for six hundred. And this is called legal honesty; but justice writes it down as common robbery. It may be urged against repudiation that it would be a breach of faith; but a sufficient reply to this is, that an unrighteous pledge is better broken than kept. And, finally, the most complimentary light in which the holders of the accumulated wealth of the world can be considered, is that they have it in trust for the whole people, to be returned to them when called for, which it will soon be, and that, too, in unmistakable terms.

Another outrage which is perpetrated upon the productive classes by the government, and which should naturally follow the public debt question for consideration, is that of taxation. Let it appear

as preposterous as it may, it is nevertheless true that these classes pay every dollar of taxation—they run the government and pay its debts. No matter in what form the tax is levied and collected, it comes home at last to the door of the daily laborers of the country. To show this conclusively requires scarcely more than a single statement:

Probably the total taxation of the country, for national State, county and municipal purposes, is not less than a thousand millions dollars. At the end of the fiscal year, has the accumulated wealth in the hands of the few been reduced by this amount? No; it has been increased instead of reduced. How increased? By the addition of more produced wealth. Produced by whom? By the laborers of the country. Therefore, though these taxes have been paid to the Treasury by the holders of wealth, the laborer must have furnished the means, else would their bank accounts have been decreased. Can anything be clearer than this, or anything more monstrous and unjust? And when the industrial classes have taken time to consider these things, they will refuse to submit to it.

Do you ask how this is to be remedied? I will tell you how it may be remedied, and how, if revolution be not precipitated, it can be. If Congress would save the country from temporary anarchy, it ought to pass, immediately it assembles, a general law entirely remodeling the system of taxation, which, if carried out, may safely carry the country over the gulf of revolution.

Every family not having more than a numerical proportion of the entire wealth of the country should be exempt from all taxes, while those possessing more than this average, should be taxed progressively, after the following manner: If ten thousand dollars be exempt, all over that sum should be taxed, say, one-half per cent.; all over fifty thousand, three-fourths per cent.; all over one hundred thousand, one per cent.; all over two hundred thousand, two per cent.; and so on up to a million, which should be taxed twenty-five per cent.

This would inaugurate a redistribution to the people of the accumulated wealth, and, in a measure, do justice to labor. In other words, it would put a penalty upon holding more than an average amount of wealth. This, in conjunction with the abolition of the revenue system and the adoption of free money, without which free trade would be destructive to mechanical industry, may be accepted by the industrial interests as a settlement of the now unsolved question between them and capital.

But why do I come before the people with the fundamental principles of scientific organization, at this specific time? Because we are on the verge, if not already in the flood of a financial convulsion that will shake this country from centre to circumference, and, if I mistake not the signs of the times, that will prove a more memorable event than as ever occurred, and in what respect I shall show you hereafter.

What is the financial condition in this city? Complete stagnation;

greenbacks at a premium of four per cent. and interest three per cent. per day on Government Bonds as collaterals. Nothing doing in other securities. Nobody depositing any money in the banks, but everybody becoming his own banker. Merchants doing nothing, are glum and fearful; and manufacturers discharging their employes. Fifty thousand men in the city without work and without money. Such a condition cannot last long. There will soon be a breaking loose somewhere. A month's continued pressure and one-half the firms in the city will fail!

But what has produced this condition? It is the result of the recent panic in Wall street, introduced by the failure of Jay Cooke & Co., and followed by other pet bankers of the government. This involved a sufficient number of professional speculators, who were obliged to realize on their ventures, to cause a fall of from ten to twenty per cent. in all the speculative stocks, and in two days it was found necessary to close the Stock Exchange, shut the doors of the Clearing House (which was virtually the closing of every bank), and to call upon the government in lustiest tones to come forward to avert the threatened disaster.

What was this danger? Simply this: Had not business been stopped by these precautionary measures, every banker and broker involved in stocks and every bank would have failed. Why? Because the banks are loaded up with these railroad stocks, upon which they have loaned up to within ten, and on some to within five per cent. of their recent market value, and it was impossible for their customers to make good, in money, the shrinkage of ten to twenty per cent. that took place, aggregating perhaps not less than a hundred millions of dollars for the banks of this city alone.

A continuation of sales of stocks under the panic and increasing failures would have pressed them down fifty per cent., broken every bank, and tumbled the whole country into financial dismay and ruin; and more than probably before this time have ultimated in riot and anarchy and the proclamation of martial law, to have been soon followed by the Dictatorship, or perhaps the Empire. But of this more anon.

Now, all this confusion and threatening anarchy was not the result of any want of general productiveness of the industrial classes. No! We are exporting at this special time more than ever before, the balance of trade is largely in our favor, and even in the panic the price of gold is decreasing. It appears, therefore, that this is a purely speculative condition, brought about by a failure of the outside public to go into Wall street, as has been their custom to do, and buy the stocks after the manipulators had worked them up to enormous prices. Finding themselves with the whole list of stocks on their hands, and large interest constantly augmenting their cost and no purchasers, the speculators had at last to begin to throw them over—that is to realize—at a loss.

By such an operation as this, have the commercial and industrial interests of the country been jeopardized. But this is not the end. The grand bursting of the speculative bubble has been put off merely, not prevented. The most extraordinary measures resorted to, re-enforced by the whole power of the government, aided by a systematic attempt on the part of the papers—purchased, no doubt—have been able only to delay the day of reckoning, without in the least restoring confidence or curing the malady.

And now the papers are beginning gradually to break the real condition to the people; to tell them that things have a "fictitious value" and a "false basis," which "must be remedied." That the merchants are getting involved because they cannot obtain their usual accommodations from the banks, which have advanced their deposits on these depreciated stocks.

Thus the money of the business community deposited in banks and of the laboring classes in savings institutions is locked up in stocks at a price greatly above the possibility of present or even future realization. Of course there must be a crash, and no one can tell to what extent the disaster will spread.

Now what shall be the verdict against a system of finance conjoined with that of internal improvements which puts it in the power of a few bold or reckless speculators at any time to entirely unsettle and undermine the industrial interests of the country? For my part I would say, Sink it in everlasting oblivion. I would have the people take possession of the entire railroad system of the country, upon the stocks of which the tendency to speculate has been introduced into the country, and thus destroy the chief means of indulging this mania that is spreading to almost every staple product of the country. It is not uncommon now to hear of "corners" in cotton, pork, wheat, and so on to the end of the list, every one of which is conceived and executed at the expense of the producing classes.

Moreover the railroad system of the country is too extensive and too intimately involved with the general public welfare to be longer trusted in the hands of those who make it the basis of these speculative schemes, and thereby keep the country in a constant turmoil. Sixty thousand miles of railroad, at a cost of three billions dollars, is an immense power, and wielded, as it virtually is, by a half dozen men, is a dangerous power, and is already potent enough to control the legislation of the country in its own interests. A system of watering their capital stocks has also obtained, by which process the industries may be taxed a thousand millions dollars to make the roads earn their eight per cent. dividends.

It is becoming patent, however, even to the railroad kings, that, unless some great national revulsion in favor of despotism is actually accomplished, they will have to give up their roads to the people. Already is the West, which is taxed two bushels of wheat to

transport one bushel to New York, up in arms against the oppression, and is moving public opinion in the direction of the remedy, while the "Granges"—the first political organization to which women were ever admitted as equals—are organizing for reformation, or revolution, if it come.

I am aware of the very general prejudice that exists against the management of the railroads by the government; but this is largely due to the prevalent and growing idea that everything with which the government is connected is liable to abuse from official corruption; certainly, however, this could not possibly exceed that which exists in railroads now. This should not, however, be judged from the present government, but from that which is to succeed it. But the experience in the same direction that is furnished by the postal service, indicates that there would be equal improvement in the railroad service over the present, that there is in this over the old method.

And were the same regulations applied to the transportation both of passengers and merchandise that obtain in the mails, there would be a perfect solution of the vexed questions of freight and passenger tariffs. The same principal that transports a letter from New York to San Francisco for three cents, while it costs the same to send one to Philadelphia, would set the wheat of Minnesota down in the New York market costing no more than that grown in the Genesee Valley.

If the postal service is self-supporting, or nearly so, conducted upon this principle, why cannot the entire system of transportation be made the same?

The government being the source of money is its legitimate custodian and carrier. It should prepare methods to receive the people's money and to pay or transmit it from one to another, on demand, but without interest. The post office is the natural channel and the money-order system the true method of exchange, and by adding to its present functions, the further one as a depository of the people's money, a reliable commercial system, infinitely superior to the present, as the blindest must see, would be the outcome. In such a system there would be no bank suspensions; no worthless or depreciated currency; no protested drafts; no failure of savings banks and robbery of the poor;—in short all the imperfections and insecurities of the present, would be replaced by regularity and security.

There is no doubt but this will be the future of transportation. Indeed, it is necessary, to establish equal conditions for the people all over the country. The people of the Mississippi Valley are now compelled to pay larger prices for everything they consume, and realize less for all they have to sell, than do the inhabitants not so far removed from the commercial centre of the country. This is an inequality of which they have just cause of complaint,

although they do not yet understand the principle upon which it is founded.

SUMMARY OF GENERAL REFORM.

Thus I have rapidly sketched the moving principles upon which any system of general reform, to meet the demands of justice and equity, must be based, and have made hasty reference to the oppressive systems that have been builded, and which subsist upon productive labor; but to bring these pointedly to view, I will briefly restate the three general principles, which, if adopted, will settle the questions at issue between labor and capital and inaugurate industrial justice, and the three methods by which this is now prevented, to wit: The monopoly of land, in defiance of natural right; the monopoly of wealth, through the regulation of prices by the law of demand and supply, in defiance of the law of equity, instead of by that of cost, which is its exemplification, and interest for the use of the mere representative of wealth—money. Abolish these and inaugurate a system of free land by the payment of taxes; of free money, based upon the public faith, and, as a method of transition, or of equalization of the accumulated wealth, of progressive taxation.

The exchange of all commodities, all produced wealth, by the law of equivalents, cost being made the limit of price, would leave in the hands of the producer the entire results of his labor, or their equivalents. Under this law, to possess property a person would have first to produce it, while commercial exchanges should be effected by the paid agents of the people through a general system of public markets.

In addition to this, the abolition of interest, together with the institution of progressive taxation, would quickly compel the bondholders and the money lenders—the leeches now fastened upon the vitals of industry, sucking, sucking, sucking its blood, day after day and year after year—to earn their own food, clothing and shelter, instead of stealing it, legally I admit, from those who do labor.

In this analysis all considerations of policy and expediency, which are ever at war with principles, have been ignored, and an earnest effort made to reach the truth. It may be said that it is impossible to change our systems so that they shall be founded upon these principles; but I affirm that truth and justice are always possible, and it is only the unwillingness of those who are playing the part of the executors of falsehood and injustice that stand in the way. Granted, that the common industrial classes do not understand what is theirs by natural right; it does not follow that they never will, nor that they ought not to enjoy it. The negro slaves did not know their rights until, in many instances, they were actually forced upon them; but the Garrisons and the Douglasses and the Phillipses understood them, and paved the way for them to be obtained. So now shall the Garrisons, the Douglasses and the Phillipses of labor

slavery also pave the way for its slaves to obtain their rights, born with them from the very Constitution itself, of their Mother, Nature ; and I will never cease the demand or stop agitation until the modern oligarchs shall willingly deliver these slaves to freedom, or else until they are compelled to do so by the stern logic of war.

ERRORS OF OMISSION.

I have thus far discussed chiefly those evils which oppress the people by the commission of errors by the government. There is still another class of crimes, almost equally reprehensible, which may be named *Errors of Omission*. These have special reference to the dependent and unfortunate classes—the women, the children, the criminals, the maimed and the insane, which together make up a sum total of human misery almost too horrible to contemplate, and which fix a stigma of reproach, an indelible blotch of infamy, upon this pretendedly enlightened people which would merit the contempt of the most barbarous nation on the globe. This, at the first glance, may seem to be too severe an indictment of our civilisation ; but I say it is just, since such things as obtain here would put the savages to shame.

The people have fought for freedom, and become drunk upon the name. They have forgotten that this blessed boon cannot exist unless equality and justice also obtain. They have imprinted the former, omitting the last two, upon their banners, and have first gone mad with enthusiasm, and, secondly, have sunk into a comatose condition, in which they occasionally, when stung into temporary consciousness by some passing event, yelp out Freedom with all their might, without the least idea as to what is really going on about them in the world.

I say the dependent and unfortunate classes, and name women as among them, and they belong to both of them. And when I say they so belong, I mean that the beautiful social system that has been enforced virtually commits every woman to one or the other of these classes. I do not say that there are not any women who rise superior to the condition imposed upon them by the system. No thanks to the system, however, that they do it ; but, in spite of it. I say that the present social system, enforced both by law and a falsely educated public opinion, makes every woman dependent for support and comfort upon some man, and it does not give the least consideration as to whether she obtains it or not. It says to her : Here is the theory, live by it if you can ; die by it if you must and the devil take the unfortunate. We, the government, we the men to whom belong all the realities of this world, can't do anything more for you except you become a social outcast, as they gracefully call unfortunate women, when we will perhaps patronize you as our demands require. I repeat again, and I wish my voice could reach the ear and the soul of every

man and woman in the world, that the theory of our social system is, that women are dependent upon men, and that to secure support they must marry and merge their identity and individuality in some man, and then it leaves her unmindful, and indifferent as to whether she secure it or not.

If she do not do this, however, and, following the male theory, attempts to support herself and to answer the demands of her maternal nature, she is compelled to suffer social death. Hence, I say, woman belongs to the unfortunate as well as to the dependent class. These are facts, and though you may ignore you can't dodge them, however unpalatable they may be. Take them home and think about them, and see if you can come to any just and truthful conclusion except that woman is man's industrial and social slave, dependent upon her ministrations to his demands to obtain a support. Think of it, I repeat, calmly and deliberately, and then condemn those who are demanding social reform, if you can.

So long as men maintain this social theory, and so long as women are its willing slaves, I say change the law, so that they shall be protected in it; so that women shall not be made dependent upon individual men. Make it a duty of the State to see that the theory which it insists on enforcing is carried out to its logical results. Let it see that woman has a support and not compel her to surrender herself to a single person, and forever after to be compelled to rely upon him for life and its comforts, when in so many instances both are denied her.

I want to ask every woman who, under this theory, has secured all the necessities and the comforts of life, how many women would frequent the haunts of vice in the Green Streets of the world, if they were placed on an equality with you; and before you come to a conclusion, remember, if you had been situated in the same circumstances that have driven them there, and they in those that have surrounded you, that it is more than probable you would have been where they are while they, perhaps, would have filled your places?

Therefore, society having constructed a social system that makes it impossible that there should not be unfortunately circumstanced women, and as it afterward condemns them to social ostracism and death because they are unfortunate, it is a self-contradiction and stultification and needs to be remodelled to make it consistent with itself. The fashionable women of the day say that outcasts prefer to remain in vice rather than do the menial work they can obtain; but let them ask themselves if they were driven to the acceptance of one or the other of these alternatives, whether they would not choose the comforts that are lavished upon the mistress, with indolence and ease, rather than the drudgery to which the kitchen scrub is subjected?

A beautiful thing, this social system of yours! People sit in judgment over their brothers and sisters, when, if they were to exchange places, they would do the same thing which is condemned.

Yea, verily, a beautiful, a just, a righteous system, worthy a so-called Christian civilization, but which would not be tolerated among the heathen. Let the government, let the male lords and rulers provide that women shall not be dependent upon men as individuals. So long as she conforms to the instituted theory and is therefore dependent, make her the ward of the State, of man collectively.

The same principle involved here applies with equal force to children. Under this social system children are born and made dependent upon the individual—the father—for support and proper training, without any provision whatever for a failure. If the father do not or cannot provide for them, what does the State care, except to commit them for vagrancy?

What does the City of New York, this Christian city, with its numerous churches dedicated to God and Christ, care for the thousands of children who live from its slop barrels, or the thousands more who die from partial starvation and neglect! Does your beautiful social system have any place or care whatever for them? No! none at all. The very classes which need its care and protection are utterly ignored in its provisions. Out upon such Christianity as this. It is unworthy of a barbarous age, to say worthy of this professedly Christian time.

I arraign this thing that goes by the name of Christianity, as a fraud; and its so-called teachers as impostors. They profess to be the followers of Jesus of Nazareth, while they neither teach, preach or practice the fundamental principles which He taught and practiced. Poets and seers of all ages, climes and tongues have sung and prophesied of a good time coming, when the lion and the lamb shall lie down together (on earth of course), and a little child shall lead them; when swords shall be beaten into plow-shares, and spears into pruning-hooks (on earth of course), and the nations shall learn war no more (because there shall then be no causes for war, as the people will then have learned that they are all brothers of one common parent, and will no longer be in active competition for everything as they now are); when all shall know the Lord, from the least even unto the greatest, and when the whole race shall be united in one government, as a common human family, owning God as the common parent, and Nature as their common inheritance.

All these are doctrines, fundamental to a religion that has any right to the name of Christian. But do we hear them taught by Christian orators? No! The only good time coming of which they give us any hope, is when the human family is to be divided into two parts; one part of about ninety-nine one-hundredths being in hell, and the one one-hundredth part in heaven rejoicing over their salvation.

This is their future. But what of the practical present? Do they ever preach: Inasmuch as ye gave no meat to him that was an hungered; no drink to him that was a thirst; that ye took not

the stranger in ; clothed not the naked ; ministered not to the sick, and visited not them who were in prison ;—I say do they preach that, inasmuch as Christians have done none of these things to the least among you, that they have not done them unto Christ ?

When I used to go to their churches I never heard such preaching. They may have varied in the last fifteen years. Still I don't think the leopard has changed his spots very decidedly, although I do hear that it isn't popular to preach up quite so hot a hell as they once did (the stock of brimstone is probably running low) ; nor quite so horrible a devil as the one that used to beat God whenever he had a tustle with him (perhaps he's growing aged and infirm, and isn't quite so hard to handle as formerly) ; neither do I hear as much about the gold and silver that was so bountifully provided for the fortunate ones in heaven (which, by the way, had better be sent to earth to relieve the suffering and needy) ; and I think they have also changed the psalm that was continually sung around the throne ;—all these things, I say, may be modified, as rather unpopular just now ; but it is after all the same old devil, with his claws where people have nails, and hoofs where the feet ought to be—the same that used to frighten me and my mates from the back seats in the church to the mourners bench ; and I denounce them as infamous frauds, palmed off upon a people which will not think for itself, by forty thousand ministers, who, if their devil should accidentally get killed, wouldn't know what to do for their bread and butter.

I charged these forty thousand ministers that they are frauds, wantonly ignoring the real doctrines of Jesus, and imposing others upon the people. The fundamental principles to which I have referred are never retailed from Christian pulpits nor practiced by Christian laymen. Therefore, judged by their own standard, they are impostors and Christianity a failure ; and it ought to fall ; and it will fall.

Jesus frequented the abodes of the lowly and despised of earth. He ate with publicans, sinners and harlots ; and of these last He said to the Scribes of His time, as He would to the Scribes of our times, They will enter the kingdom of heaven before you. If Jesus, with His rough-clad disciples, should make His appearance, some Sunday, near a Fifth-avenue church, and should offer to heal the sick by the laying on of hands, and to tell fortunes, as He did, these impostors would have Him arrested as a blasphemer ; or if he were to pass through the country and break into a field of corn and gather it for Himself and disciples, He would be charged as a thief and sent to Sing Sing ; or again, if Paul were to stand up in any of the churches, and discuss the social question as he did to the Corinthians, the Y. M. C. A. would have him in Ludlow for obscenity ; and would take care to fix his bail at so large a sum they would feel sure that none of his crowd could get him out ;—and this is your boasted Christianity. How many years longer shall such a disgrace to an

enlightened people rear its head in this land? I give it until 1900 to die, twenty years for every spire that now points sky-ward, to be levelled with the ground or changed to other uses. Remember, I say till 1900.

There are thousands of fathers in New York out of employment and out of money, with wives and from three to ten children suffering for bread. How are they to get on through the winter? Does your boasted system ask or care? No! But if they should steal a loaf of bread to keep the children from starving, or a basket of coal to keep them from freezing, it makes ample provision that they shall be sent to Sing Sing. Isn't this true? Then never again extol your social system, until you have swept it of its brutalities; nor of your beautiful government and of your Christian institutions, until those who need their protection are given consideration. I'll none of them until some of the principles and teachings of Christ are reduced to practice.

The Bible says, "Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you. Behold the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is kept back by fraud, crieth, and the cries of them which have reaped, have entered the ears of the Lord." Do the professed Christians, with their long purses and longer faces, believe this? Did the recent Evangelical Alliance have anything to say about it? No! Yet it is in the Bible, by which they profess to govern their lives! The judgment day, however, is at hand. The cries of them that have reaped down the fields of the rich; that have builded their houses; that have produced their wealth, crieth, and the cries of them have reached the ears of the Lord of Justice, and woe to the rich men. Let them weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon them if they hearken not to the cries, while yet there is time of their own accord to do justice to the classes who have made them what they are.

So long as the government maintains a theory that compels every man to depend upon his individual exertions for a living for himself, wife and children, it should also guarantee him continuous labor at equitable wages. I said there are thousands whose families are suffering for food who cannot obtain work at any price. What shall they do? Beg, steal or starve? These are their only alternatives, and yet you will curse them if they do either.

Governmental employ for everybody who cannot obtain labor elsewhere; and governmental care for wives and children who need it, must be introduced as a supplement to the present systems. Not to do this is barbarous. Already is our civilization blackened with the disgraceful accounts of the miseries that the omission to do this has caused, and if it be not done, and that at once (I speak it in sorrow, but I know it too well), there will be riot in New York before Spring.

Yes, there must be provisions for unprovided wives and uncared for children by government, that will place them upon an equality with

the best classes of society as to food, shelter and clothing, with physical and industrial, as well as intellectual education for the children ; and employment must be given to every needy man and woman. Under such regulation only, is there the remotest possibility for a continuation of the present governmental and social systems. In no other way can Reformation prevent Revolution ; and it ought not to be prevented by anything less.

Your criminal jurisprudence has also developed another infamous system. Your station-houses and jails are a sickening disgrace ; while your prisons and penitentiaries are foul generators of misery and crime. A term in them will harden the best man or woman into confirmed degradation. In your eagerness to punish crime, you destroy the man or woman. You rush them, being merely charged with crime, into your pest-hells, where they lie pent up for months, without even an investigation, and then you hurry them through something called a trial, often without a defense, and if it is possible to fix the act upon them with any degree of certainty, they are hurried to the place which seals their future career, and where they are treated worse than brutes, and as if they were not human. A "States Prison Bird" has little chance in your social system. He can practice only those things for a living which continually return him. And all this is done by your system and its executors, as I said, in the case of unfortunate women, never stop to think if they had been placed in the same circumstances as under which the criminal committed his crime, that they would have undoubtedly done the same thing, or perhaps something worse.

You erect and maintain a system one of the legitimate fruits of which is crime, and then you punish the unfortunate individuals who enact the villain character of the drama prepared by you for them. Verily consistency is a jewel that is sadly wanting in all parts of this beautiful system which is palmed off upon the world as the one thing good and true and pure, but in which ignorance too frequently passes for innocence and experience is mistaken for crime.

You must, therefore, change your criminal discipline from the theory of punishment for crime, to that of reform for the man and woman. In the first place, according to your own theory of Christianity, you have no right to punish anybody. "Judge not lest ye be judged," is fundamental to the Christian theory, and how can you punish, unless you first judge ? I repeat, then, that you have no right whatever to punish anybody for any crime ; but you may protect yourselves from its recurrence. In doing this, however, you should use no means that of themselves will tend to make men and women worse than they are. Your Prisons must be transformed into vast Reformatory Workshops, where men and women can work and be paid equitable wages, having all the common comforts during their restraint.

Sometimes, however, when I see the utter indifference to the

horrid barbarities that are practiced under these systems, I almost despair of reform. Indeed, I seem to feel to say to you that there will be no reformation except through bloody revolution. Wrongs have been heaped upon wrongs until they have reached heavenward and moved the avenging angel. Great wrongs have always been washed out by great rivers of blood, and I fear the time for this has not yet passed away from the earth.

Behind the political scenes the actors in the political drama are so busily engaged in their own personal schemes they have no time to listen to the cries that are reaching the ears of the God of Justice, and you, the people, are too much engrossed in your individual money getting, to give the necessary attention to secure any change. For the last three years, in one way and another, I have done everything that lay in my power—I have sacrificed fortune, reputation and friends—in the attempt to rouse the people to a sense of the impending danger. But they will not listen. For my efforts, however, they have branded me all over the world as the vilest of women and the most dangerous of individuals. They have robbed me of everything except my self-respect, which they could not take and with which only remaining I defied them as they made off with the rest; they have locked me up in jail when the officials who made out the order knew there was no law for it, and have pursued me without mercy on every hand.

And why? Simply because, as I told you, I have endeavored to rouse the people to a realization of the impending judgment, for long years of crime which the government has committed against the people. And they knew unless they could shut my mouth that I should succeed and they would be relieved by the people from further official duty. Yes, though I am only a little woman, the political oligarchs who are manipulating this country for a monarchy, fear me. And well they may, for I preach their doom. I sing the battle cry of freedom, equality and justice for the people, and they know that it will be caught up by them and that its re-echo from the pine forests of Maine, from the wheat fields of Minnesota, from the golden mountains of the Pacific slope, from the cotton and rice plantations of the South, will hurl from the places builded by the labors of the masses all who have been false to the trusts reposed in them.

Now to what does all this logically tend? Clearly, if it be correctly understood, To the redistribution among the people of the natural wealth of the world as well as the equal benefits and comforts resulting from its use, and the establishment for the present aristocracies of society, which are the chief aim of almost everybody's life, an aristocracy founded on personal worth, intellectual capacity and moral grandeur, which will become the new incentives or motives of life. *Now*, only man is compelled by the political, industrial and social systems that are enforced, to make wealth or money-getting his chief aim, while every woman's highest aim is to entrap the most

successful man into marriage. *Then*, for these will be substituted in the case of both men and women, who will be equal in the wealth plane, the attainment of the highest positions in the community, not for the sake of their emoluments, for these will be equal in all grades, but for the sake of doing the most good to society, and of thus becoming its most honored and beloved members. Can anyone think of any really valid objection to such a change? I think not!

A RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL DESPOTISM.

And now I come to consider the means that are to be used to prevent, if possible, the attainment by the people to what I have shown you is theirs by natural right; to prevent even the peaceable reformation that is sought, and to fasten the present conditions irrevocably on the people. In the first place, it is to be observed that a religious despotism or even a national religion, cannot exist in a politically free country, since in the former instance it would be liable to be overturned at any time by a popular election, nor, in the latter instance, since a free people could not be compelled to support a national religion. Hence it is evident at the outset that they who are moving for a national religion as they term it, know it can be established only when freedom, politically, ceases to exist.

Therefore this God-in-the-Constitution movement means more than the establishment of a formal national religion. Indeed if what is going on behind the political scenes were really made known to the people, the intentions of a grand conspiracy would be exposed, in which the leading spirits of all the monopolies are engaged, but which as yet has existence only in secret conference. The God-in-the-Constitution movement, the gradual concentration of the monopolies, and the consolidation of political power are all parts of a single conspiracy to change this form of government first, probably, to a Dictatorship and then to an Empire.

No movement approaching this in significance and importance was or can ever be sprung upon a nation without a vast deal of previous secret plotting and preparation, and each of the parts of this conspiracy are now driven together to make common cause against a common foe—Progress. As I have already shown, monopoly and the present political strategists are doomed, even in their success, to fall; but no more certainly than is their near ally in the conspiracy, whose present foundation is being undermined by the rapid spread of what they call the heresy of Spiritualism.

During the last twenty-five years not less than ten millions of people have changed their *belief* of existence in a future state to the *knowledge* of that existence. Millions of people have had communications from their so-called dead friends, denying the truth of the chief doctrines of the so-called Christian religion; and this knowledge and denial have spread into the churches, and are powder-posting

their structures with such fearful rapidity that its "pillars" realize unless something can be done at once to relieve the condition—to stop this infidelity, as the Evangelical Alliance recently put it—that the whole Christian structure will crumble to pieces and fall. They also know there is but one way to stop it; and that is, to crush it out by whatsoever stringent means, directed by the strong arm of the general government.

The bond holders, money-lenders and railroad kings say to the politicians: If you will legislate for our interests, we will retain you in power, and, together (you with the public offices and patronage and we with our immense dependencies and money), we can control the destinies of the country, and change the government to suit ourselves; and now, finally, come in the threatened church power, and it says: If you will make your government a Christian government, we will bring all the "Faithful" to your support; and thus united, let me warn you, they constitute the strongest power in the world. It is the government, all the wealth of the country, backed up by the church, against the unorganized mass of reformers, everyone of whom is pulling his or her little string in opposing directions.

Now, my friends, do not dismiss this as a matter of imagery conjured up in my mind. I am sorry to affirm to you that there is too much truth in it, the half of which I have not even touched upon. Stop for a moment and consider what God-in-the-Constitution, with these hell-fire people as its executors, means. It is nothing less than the substitution of the Bible-God and Christ, as interpreted by the church, for the present rule. Now do not understand me as impeaching the Bible, God or Christ as I understand them, but as objecting to being compelled to accept or give tacit assent to the interpretations of the church.

No one more strenuously than I do, can urge the teachings attributed to Christ. I believe in His law of love, which instructs us to love our neighbours and their children as well as we do ourselves and our children, and in thus loving to care for them as well; I believe in His advice to the rich man to "go sell all thou hast and give to the poor," and I believe in His judgment of the woman: "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone." I believe that "to the pure in heart all things are pure;" and in its corollary, that to the impure in heart all things are impure; in a word, I believe in the beauty and purity of all the teachings of Christ, as laid down in the Bible; but I do not happen to believe that they were original with Him, since every one of them, in some form, are found in Christs of earlier origin than Jesus, or that He, any more than all other men and women, or in any other sense, was the Son of God.

But I do not believe in the Christian God nor the Christian devil, nor in their heaven or hell; and it is because the facts of Spiritualism have exploded these misinterpreted remnants of mythological figures. It is robbing them of their power over the people, by dispelling the

fear of death, the devil, and hell, and they are roused to the necessity of putting down this most dangerous of all humbugs, as it has been denominated by one fully convinced of its facts. I grant that they fully appreciate it, because it is the most dangerous thing to their ridiculous creeds and dogmas and to their power and positions that could arise in the world.

The people, however, do not apprehend any danger, nor will they until it is too late, and they find themselves called upon, under pressure, to be converted. You remember the arguments that Christians used to make in Spain and elsewhere, not to mention the more modern ones of burning witches and hanging Quakers by the Puritans of New England, whose God, Christ and devil was the self-same of which these Christians now desire to become the self-constituted earthly vicegerents.

Don't comfort yourselves with the idea that they will not use equally as persuasive measures as they teach that their God uses to convert you, nor that they think a few turns on "The Wheel," or a few stretches on "The Rack," or a little quiet roasting at "The Stake," at all out of place when the issue is so great as the salvation of your souls from everlasting torments in hell fire ; where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched, where the pavements are of infants' skulls, a span in length, and all the necessary appointments to make the place good and hot. No ! Don't mistake people who profess to believe in such an infernal monster as they picture their God as being, who would torment in hell a child whom he loves, and whom, if almighty, he could save, for a single unrepented crime. They will have no more mercy or pity than He has, nor will they leave any means untried to save you from the vengeance of His wrath.

I do not overstate the picture. I take their own words, their own God as interpreted by themselves, and draw the unavoidable conclusion. If their religion is such infernalism, they should not blame me for depicting it to the people. Indeed, if they believe it themselves, they ought rather to thank me for the service I render, in showing the importance of escaping such dreadful things.

I, however, do not fear their God, I am only afraid of them, for I know if once they get the power, I shall be one of the first upon whom they will try their persuasive arguments ; there will be need of my immediate conversion.

But, seriously, it will not do to let this thing succeed. It is the last frantic effort of expiring despotism, struggling to regain its lost estate ; and if it succeed, it will endeavour to crush out the last prospect for progress. It was necessary only to have attended the recent sessions of the Evangelical Alliance in New York, to have comprehended what this means ; but if it fail, the last hope of despotism of every kind will sink into merited oblivion and be buried in the dead past, only thenceforth to be thought of as one of the horrors of antiquity, because of the crimes that belong to its reign on earth.

I have already shown you how all this may be accomplished in the event of a general panic resulting from wide-spread financial and commercial ruin. If this do not come about in the regular order of events, and at the proper time, it can be made to order. Indeed, who can tell but what has already occurred is the initial step in the drama. Does it not seem just the least bit strange that notably among the ruined, are all the houses specially known as Government Bankers; and with them also notably houses supposed to be in the interest of one of the railroad kings of the country, and probably the wealthiest of them all? Think of it, and see if by putting this and that together you cannot frame a reasonable theory for all that is passing, as connected with a grand scheme to subvert the government!

But if this is not as I suspect it to be, a genuine panic can be inaugurated any day. There are many millions of gold loaned, on call, in Wall street, mostly from English bankers. If that were to be suddenly "called" it would put gold to two hundred and United States bonds to fifty and speculative stocks to nothing, and ruin every bank, banker, broker, merchant and business in the country, conducted upon accommodation loans as nearly everything is at the present. In such a condition riot would certainly ensue, martial law become a necessity, and the empire a probability, because, as I say, all "the powers that be" are in league to make one.

Who can say that the prominent European powers are not in the secret and that they would not lend it every possible aid? Do you not remember that the most autocratic of all the generals of the army, and the one nearest the President, last year, made the tour of Europe, virtually having conference with every monarch? Wasn't that also just the least bit singular, at such a time and conducted under the circumstances it was? And who shall say that every ambassador to an European court is not secretly committed to such a movement?

The result once accomplished Europe would extend all needed aid, and, though the value of all stocks, banks, and property would be, for the time, almost nothing, yet the movers rely upon the general prosperity of the country to advance them again, in the course of time, to their present prices, and being as they would be, securely aggregated in the hands of the few and the despotism firmly established, their end would be accomplished. They would have the government and the wealth safely vested in themselves. This, I have good reason for believing, is the programme already laid out to establish a monarchy on the ruins of this so-called Republic. And what, I ask, have the people with which to oppose it? At most a few liberal leagues and a few secret societies, without either general concert of action or means of any kind to resist anything successfully. You may laugh at it if you will, but the people of this country are to-day powerless as against such a combination, and I fear they will find it out only when too late.

I have thus reviewed the present political situation, and analysed

the principles of Reformation demanded by the times and shown how Revolution may be averted, unless there are movers behind the Political Scenes who intend to force it; in which case there will be a short, sharp, bloody and decisive struggle, that at first will be altogether in favour of the conspiracy, but which will ultimate in the success of the people and the inauguration of a new and higher order of civilization. The Dictatorship, even the Empire, may succeed, and the Christian Bigots be installed as God's vicegerents on Earth, but their reign will be short and bitter, and the more decisive their success at the outset, the more terrible will be their ultimate overthrow. They will go down in a common ruin and there will be no more despots ever again to possess themselves of the rights and liberties of the people.

Let us hope, however, that all this may be averted, at least let us not be guilty of any remissness of duty in endeavoring to avert it; and that the reign of peace on earth and good will among men may come without being preceded by a reign of terror. Let us hope also that the delirium or madness by which the despots would retain their power, may give way to the sentiments of humanity and brotherhood, and that the real Christ—the spirit of love—may indeed become an earthly ruler and build up a real Republic in the Earth in the place of this which is one only in name.

Now, as a summary, permit me to present the outlines of a form of government for a Republic: At its base would be all the people of a given age and upward, of the various wards of cities and the school-districts of the country. These would elect their city and county governments from among themselves, which in turn would elect also from among themselves, the governments of the several States. Each of these would form their own organizations and appoint their executive heads, and also, during good behaviour, all executive officers of whatever branch of the government having jurisdiction within their several limits. The State governments would also, in turn, elect, from their own members, the national government, which would also appoint its own executive officers and form itself into the several national executive Bureaus, each having its own executive head; while all propositions, made by the several governmental bodies, would be legislated upon by the people, by popular vote, before becoming laws.

In such a government as this there would be no political parties. Party strife and the demoralizing effect of general political elections would be abolished, and all the public efforts of the people turned to proper legislation, and the business of the Public Press directed to the advancement of the general welfare and intelligence. In this government every citizen, of a given age, would be a legislator; and every person elected in any ward or school district, a candidate for the executive head of the nation, each department of the government of which would be a natural outgrowth of the next below it, and all of which together would form a single structure reaching from the base, the people, the legislative power, to the apex—the executive head,

administering the will of the people. To the inauguration of such a government for this people is my life dedicated.

But let us now enlarge the range of our speculations. Let us rise from the nation to the world. What is the condition of mankind at large, at this juncture, and with reference to the subjects under consideration? It is one in some measure of feverish agitation; but one still more of the symptoms of a world-wide commotion which is suppressed for the moment by the circumstances of the times. It is the partial calm before the storm; the clearing of the decks for action; the marshalling of forces—as it presents itself to my mind—for the final and decisive conflict between grand and universal opposing principles. These are, in the main, the principles of arbitrary authority and the principle of freedom.

These two principles have always stood in open or suppressed antagonism to each other; but it has been, so far as manifested, hitherto, within limited areas, or as affecting special questions. To-day, the controversy is being broadened out to the universal arena, and is involving all issues. It is beginning to appear that principles are in their nature universal. There is not one set for politics, another for religion, another for domestic life and so on; but one and the same set of principles for all spheres. It is social, or more strictly universal science which is teaching us these results.

But even in advance of science, the stern logic of events is leading up to the same conclusion. Conservatism and Radical Progression are the same in kind whether they crop out in the church or in the State or elsewhere; and each knows and affiliates with its own in other and whatsoever divine ranges of affairs. The absolute monarch knows, by an unfailing instinct, that the absolute Pope is his friend and natural ally, at bottom; whatsoever minor dissensions may exist between the crown and the tiara; and the most radical progressionist recognizes, by the same instinct, despite all intense family feuds, the essential affiliation with him or her of the free religionist or the great popular preacher who allies himself in any sense with the spirit of progress.

To superficial observers minor differences are apt to disguise fundamental identities. At bottom, or viewed on the large scale, Protestantism as a whole movement, and the Christian Alliance itself—in so far as it means *Protestantism*—revivalism and the sanctification movement in the churches, are in common cause with Atheism, Infidelity, Spiritualism and Socialism, on the one hand, tending to the freedom of the individual; and Papacy and Despotism or Cæsarism are in common cause with all conservatism and retro-active tendency in society at large, on the other hand. In the big family difference, therefore, even brother Comstock and myself belong to the same wing, are members of the same communion; however distasteful to him may be the affiliation, and I confess that

it is with some difficulty that I am philosophical enough to recognize such a sample of fraternity. But such is the fact. In the broadest division there only those two armies in the field, conservatives and radicals. Conservatism though retroactive ending in despotism ; and, radicalism by the way of progression, ending in the sovereignty of the individual, and all the freedoms—free love being merely the logical and legitimate ultimatum of that drift. Mr. Comstock, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Christian Alliance and Protestantism itself, are therefore illogical as long as they are not free lovers, and conservatives of all schools are illogical while not subscribing to the infallibility of the Pope, or of some supreme potentate or other.

This double universality of the two underlying principles of human society—authority and freedom—is as I have said becoming every day more distinctly pronounced—both actually, or in the logic of events ; and theoretically, or in the scientific understanding of the subject. Now it has appeared to me that this national arraying of these great opposite forces must continue to become more and more pronounced ; the lines more and more strictly drawn ; the antagonism and mutual aggressiveness fiercer and fiercer, until the most tremendous and bloody conflict would inevitably ensue. This reasoning of mine, such as it is, has been continuously reinforced, in my mind, for some years past, by a succession of vivid spiritual presentations or visions, I have repeatedly seen, in this way, the streets of this very city drenched in blood, the mobs and armies headed by priests and clergy and even by women, new Amazons and Joans of Arc, mingling in the bloody fray ; the stores and warehouses of the great merchants taken for military hospitals and the deposits of arms ; and whole quarters of the city desolate—burnt and burning, while the deadly fight was still raging from street to street and from house to house, with hecatombs of victims piled up in the public avenues and crossings. Material-minded men may call all this fancy, imagination, hallucination, what they will ; but I know better. I know that these visions, of which I have been a subject from early girlhood to this hour, are something very different from ordinary imagination, and that they are a distinct class of mental phenomena having a quality and a value of their own. Thousands of other intelligent men and women know the same in their own experiences and by observation in this age. Some hundreds, probably, of this audience, have as I have, more or less of this second sight.

I may not know, however, and indeed I do not profess to know the exact nature and the full value of these extraordinary and exceptional experiences. It seems to me that the priest and the doctor who charge themselves with the care and cure of the souls and bodies of men should have been able to help me to the better understanding of myself in this matter ; but whenever I have consulted them I have found them either weakly and confessedly ignorant, or else pompously

pretentious and dogmatically ignorant on the whole subject. So I have been left to wend my way unaided through the mazes of an experience so strange that I could not allude to the title of it without risking my reputation for decent good sense, if not indeed for sanity. I must be excused, therefore, for any extravagancies I may seem to commit, on the ground that even the wisest of the old style teachers have proved failures whenever they have undertaken to guide me. Left to my own guidance I have simply done, therefore, the best that I could. I have said what I thought. I have been true to the conviction that was in me. I have said and written that I believed we were on the verge of a great social convulsion. I have seen that it was absolutely essential to the well-being of humanity that freedom should be vindicated. I have committed myself with unstinted earnestness, with the enthusiasm and the daring of an iconoclast, to the destruction of everything which stood in its way. I have established, I believe, the reputation of honest conviction and earnest devotion in that direction. I have not shrunk from contemplating all consequences. I have seen, or supposed I saw, the worst even, of what I was helping to provoke. I reasoned that to ultimate or drive out to extremities the demand for freedom, would incite a corresponding reaction on the side of conservatism, and the assertion of authority. I expected persecution, a resort to repressive legislation, an alliance of all the conservative forces, a desperate and final struggle in behalf of authority. I expected to see Catholicism and despotism reinforced by accessions from Protestant and republican ranks; to see the lines more rigorously drawn; the pressure more earnest to take sides; a desperate battle inaugurated. Still, with all these prospects, I felt it imperatively laid upon me to proclaim the doctrines of freedom.

I may have been mistaken—not I am certain in the divine origin and the high claims of the doctrine of freedom. But the world may possibly be riper for change than I, possibly riper than my spirit-guides may have thought. I have had at my side, all along, friends who have urged other views. I have been reminded that authority and conservatism have also their true place in the world; that there must, therefore, be some just ground of reconciliation between these two opposing principles—that in other words Reform could be effected without Revolution, or rather without revolution of the body and physical force character. I have been told that the time for adjusting opinion by the sound has gone past; that a positive physical-force tyranny, like slavery or an unbearable oppression of that order, might need still to be disrupted and cast off by a physical-force or uprising, but that nothing whatever would be gained or could be gained, toward settling metaphysical and social problems by any amount of violence. It was suggested to me that my interior views of bloody conflict might be symbolic merely of the great intellectual and moral warfare which is actually transpiring in the

world. These and other arguments have been urged by those to whom I most habitually defer in matters of judgment. Especially was it said that in science, of the universe kind, there is steadily arising an umpire to which both and all parties will in the end gladly appeal; that the great *lis pendens* of humanity will be tried ultimately in that court, and that the verdict and the execution of the degree will be gracefully submitted to on all hands.

I have listened to every statement with an eager ear; I have wanted to believe. I, too, have prayed for humanity: "If it be possible, let this cup pass from us." But I have not been able to believe. My visions and the conviction borne in upon my soul that we are about to fall upon evil days have been too definite and forceful to admit of doubt of their significance. But I dread the truthfulness of my own impressions. I shrink with horror from the reality of bloody strife. And I do not want to be obstinate or perverse. I know that my forebodings and Cassandra-like ratiocinations have a meaning; but I am willing, and more than willing to be convinced that it is other and less fearful, than the interpretation which I have given them.

I come before you, therefore, to-night, in a new spirit; not so much to promulgate *my* convictions; not so much as the trumpeter of new truths; as to receive impressions: to feel the pulse of public opinion; to learn of you more, perhaps, than I shall instruct. I want to know what others think; what is the burden of the mission whispered to their souls for the waiting millions? What is the common message to mankind upon which we can all agree? Clearly to my mind it is either Revolution or Reform—Reform in any event; either with or without Revolution—*Revolution in any event*—but, whether with or without its bloody accompaniments.

To solve this question let us endeavour again to look behind the scenes. I have said that perhaps the world is riper for change than I have apprehended. Perhaps the old style conservative reactionary forces are weaker than I have thought; perhaps the enmity to reform in behalf of freedom is already more exhausted and reduced than I have supposed; perhaps the genial spring-time of humanity's golden age of the future is destined to come in without the common cataclysm of the breaking up of the long hard winter.

"We sleep and wake and sleep, but all things move;
The sun flies forward to his brother sun;
The dark earth follows, wheeled in her eclipse:
And human things returning on themselves
Move onward, leading up the golden year.

"Ah, though the times when some new thought can bud
Are but as poet's seasons when they flower,
Yet seas that daily gain upon the shore
Have ebb and flow conditioning their tides,
And slow and sure comes up the golden year.

"When wealth no more shall rest in mounded heaps
 But smit with freer light shall slowly melt
 In many streams to fatten lower lands,
 And light shall spread, and man be liker man,
 Through all the season of the golden year.

* * * * *

"But we grow old. Ah ! when shall all men's good
 Be each man's rule, and universal peace
 Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
 And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,
 Through all the circle of the golden year?"

Perhaps the aspirations for the golden year is more diffused in men's hearts than I have believed, and that they only wait to discern the signs of its coming. Perhaps the seeming perversity and dulness of mankind is more of the head, and less of the heart. Perhaps science, then, which is the opening of the mind's eye, may show the way and reconcile the most opposite. And perhaps already the anticipation of some such reconciliation is softening asperities and cultivating the sentiment of friendly mutual acceptance.

My mind has taken this turn in consequence of the wonderful change which I have myself experienced within the last few months in the temperature of the social atmosphere. Up to, and subsequent to the time of my imprisonment in this city, for the cause of freedom and free speech, bitterness and hostility towards me personally seemed literally to fill the air. The glacial breezes from the north pole could not be more frigid and unsympathetic than the public sentiment which surrounded me. But of late a wonderful revolution in this particular has taken place. I have of late been basking in the genial rays of public favor. In New Jersey, at the State Convention of Spiritualists, I was received after my release from prison with an ovation. In Massachusetts, at the great camp meeting at Silver Lake and Harwich, I addressed audiences of from five to fifteen thousand people amidst acclamations of enthusiasm, and the Boston press reported fairly and without slang or abatement the substance of what I said. Now, I have just returned from the three-days' meeting of the National Convention of Spiritualists at Chicago, where, after three days of the most unrestricted discussion and with the whole issue centered on the question of indorsing or repudiating my social doctrines, I was, almost unanimously, elected for the third time President of that Association. And there also at Chicago I was treated with courtesy and high appreciation by almost the entire press. It is not alone Spiritualists, therefore, but the whole public which seems to have quietly and sincerely arrived at the determination that I and the principles which I advocate shall have fair play according to merit, and along with all other things.

It may at first seem arrogant that I should assume, that a change of treatment towards me personally and towards my ideas, indicates any great or wide-spread change in social opinion at large. But if you

reflect that I stand representative for the most radical and the most opprobrious of doctrines, and that these very doctrines as I have promulgated them, have just aroused the old and seemingly dead lion of persecution into what we may now hope, were the final agonies of a feeble death-struggle, it may not seem too much to claim that when
 • *I am tolerated everything is tolerated*; and that the extension of courtesy, kindness and fair play to me, anew, and after all that has passed, is a solemn reaffirmation of a true Americanism, and perhaps the tocsin of freedom for all opinion actually achieved, and without the bloody catastrophe which my too anxious intuitions have foreseen. I am at least willing and desirous to entertain this hope, and no one will rejoice more than I to have my own prophecies thus happily disappointed.

But, yet, mere toleration is not all that is demanded. A sentimental unity of mankind is inadequate. The Christian Alliance, in agreeing to sink out of sight, in each other's presence, their denominational differences, have not in any radical manner solved the doctrinal problems which have divided them. So in society, at large, to tolerate, even to defend the expression of all ideas, is not, of itself, an arrival at the truth of ideas. Investigation inaugurated is not investigation accomplished. We have still before us an immense work; the greater work than all that has preceded it.

The career of distruction and merely critical reforms ends in a sense when freedom is achieved; but freedom itself *is merely opportunity*. With the opportunity secured, we are prepared to learn the truth, theoretically and experimentally. We must then call in the great teachers, or become great teachers ourselves. After the war came the Freedman's Bureau, and its educational operations. So now if we have received toleration we must show our competency to improve by its advantages.

Looking again behind the scenes we shall discover, that this age is the interregnum of faith. A despairing cry comes from the Pope in respect to the prospects of the Church. Protestantism is oozing out into infidelity, while, however, infidelity verging into sciences, is gradually laying the foundations of a new faith. Something grand and novel is about to burst on the earth. Religion, when it becomes practical and humanitarian, will come to mean a hundred times more than it has ever meant yet on the world. Something new and grand is about to occur; which will crystallize anew and consolidate all the elements of the new faith and the new social order.

A new age dates from the present. An old dispensation is closing up. The new element will be something decisive, reconciliative, all-embracing. It will have in it the religious, the scientific and the practical quality—all in one. Is it these combined and blended into one; or is it some other and unthought of thing which shall be the key to the whole mystery of the past, and the keystone of the arch of the future social structure. I shall be content, for the

hour, if I shall have completed the preliminary work of clearing away obstructions, and establishing the habit of fearless and universal investigation and experiment; in social matters as well as in all others.

I cannot rid myself of the impression, however, that we must strike very deep for the true basis of the final solution and reconciliation. Will not Good and Evil, God and the Devil, be somehow and sometime reconciled to the comprehension of man? Is not the seeming evil always the dark background merely of the higher good? And is not the universal scheme of being, broader than we have apprehended? Is not the old Persian faith of two eternally opposite principles, with some modern improvement furnishing their monastic identity, the higher as it is the older doctrine than Christian theology?

Perhaps I can look forward to the cessation at an early day of my duties as an agitator. I have a loving heart for all mankind, and I would far rather be understood and loved than to be misunderstood and hated. I would rather teach and lead into the higher philosophy and the higher life than to break up old foundations, horrifying and disturbing the minds of men. I am tired of fighting. I would rather be Hypasia than Semiramis or Boadecea. I would rather know and make known the highest truth than conquer the whole earth.

Thus much at least I see. Politics and patriotism are falling into the position of relative inferiority as compared with statesmanship and publicism, and statesmanship and publicism are in turn yielding the palm to sociology, as that science which deals with every range of human affairs in their cosmical or planetary amplitude. Sociology must in time have its basis in universal science. Reformers must, therefore, I see, become scientific, when they pass from the destructive to the construction phase of their work.

I would rather help to form true institutions, and so call down the blessings of this age and of posterity on my head for positive and permanent achievements, than merely to combat old errors, or achieve negative triumphs, ever so many, or ever so brilliant. Sympathize with me my dear sisters, and my true brothers, in the effort to learn, in order that I may teach; and let us all be instant in season and out of season in the good work of the future.

Then, when we shall have accomplished this work, will begin the long time sung and prophesied millennium, in which love, instead of hate, equality in place of aristocracy, and justice where now is cruelty, shall reign with undisturbed and perpetual sway, and peace on earth and good-will among men abound. Because I see this for humanity in the near future, has made me willing and able to endure what its advocacy has cost me of personal discomfort and of public censure. Finally, in conclusion: May the God, Justice; the Christ, Love, and the Holy Ghost, Unity—the Trinity of Humanity—ascend the Universal Throne, while all nations, in acknowledging their supremacy, shall receive their blessings—their benedictions.



