SERIES
OF
WOMAN'S RIGHTS TRACTS.

Freedom for Women,
WENDELL PHILLIPS.

Public Function of Women,
REV. THEODORE PARKER.

Enfranchisement of Women,
MRS. MILLS, of England.

Woman and her Wishes,
REV. T. W. HIGGINSON.

Responsibilities of Women,
MRS. C. I. H. NICHOLS.

The following resolutions were under consideration:

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

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

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

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

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

6. Resolved, That, so far from denying the overwhelming social and civil influence of women, we are fully aware of its vast extent; aware, with Demosthenes, that “measures which the statesman has meditated a whole year may be overturned in a day by a woman;” and for this very reason we proclaim it the very highest expediency to endow her with full civil rights, since only then will she exercise this mighty influence under a just sense of her duty and responsibility; the history of all ages bearing witness, that the only safe course for nations is to add open responsibility wherever there already exists unobserved power.

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

8. Resolved, That we hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; that, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; and we charge that man with gross dishonesty or ignorance, who shall contend that “men,” in the memorable document from which we quote, does not stand for the human race; that “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,” are the “ina-
lienable rights" of half only of the human species; and that, by "the governed," whose consent is affirmed to be the only source of just power, is meant that half of mankind only who, in relation to the other, have hitherto assumed the character of governors.

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

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

WENDELL PHILLIPS, Esq., of Boston, after offering these resolutions, spoke as follows:

In drawing up some of these resolutions, I have used, very freely, the language of a thoughtful and profound article in the Westminster Review. It is a review of the proceedings of our recent convention in this city, and states with singular clearness and force the leading arguments for our reform, and the grounds of our claim in behalf of woman.

I rejoice to see so large an audience gathered to consider this momentous subject. It was well described by Mrs. Rose as the most magnificent reform that has yet been launched upon the world. It is the first organized protest against the injustice which has brooded over the character and the destiny of one half of the human race. Nowhere else, under any circumstances, has a demand ever yet been made for the liberties of one whole half of our race. It is fitting that we should pause and consider so remarkable and significant a circumstance; that we should discuss the question involved with the seriousness and deliberation suit-
able to such an enterprise. It strikes, indeed, a great and vital blow at the whole social fabric of every nation; but this, to my mind, is no argument against it. The time has been when it was the duty of the reformer to show cause why he appeared to disturb the quiet of the world. But during the discussion of the many reforms that have been advocated, and which have more or less succeeded, one after another,—freedom of the lower classes, freedom of food, freedom of the press, freedom of thought, reform in penal legislation, and a thousand other matters,—it seems to me to have been proved conclusively, that government commenced in usurpation and oppression; that liberty and civilization, at present, are nothing else than the fragments of rights which the scaffold and the stake have wrung from the strong hands of the usurpers. Every step of progress the world has made has been from scaffold to scaffold, and from stake to stake. It would hardly be exaggeration to say, that all the great truths relating to society and government have been first heard in the solemn protests of martyred patriotism, or the loud cries of crushed and starving labor. The law has been always wrong. Government began in tyranny and force, began in the feudalism of the soldier and bigotry of the priest; and the ideas of justice and humanity have been fighting their way, like a thunder-storm, against the organized selfishness of human nature. And this is the last great protest against the wrong of ages. It is no argument to my mind, therefore, that the old social fabric of the past is against us.

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

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

While it is doubtless true that great minds, in many cases, make a way for themselves, spite of all obstacles, yet who knows how many Miltons have died "mute and inglorious"? However splendid the natural endowment, the discipline of life, after all, completes the miracle. The ability of Napoleon — what was it? It grew out of the hope to be Cæsar or Marlborough, out of Austerlitz and Jena,—out of his battle-fields, his throne, and all the great scenes of that eventful life. Open to woman the same scenes, immerse her in the same great interests and pursuits, and, if twenty centuries shall not produce a woman Charlemagne or
Napoleon, fair reasoning will then allow us to conclude that there is some distinctive peculiarity in the intellects of the sexes. Centuries alone can lay any fair basis for argument. I believe that, on this point, there is a shrinking consciousness of not being ready for the battle, on the part of some of the stronger sex, as they call themselves; a tacit confession of risk to this imagined superiority, if they consent to meet their sisters in the lecture-hall or the laboratory of science. My proof of it is this: that the mightiest intellects of the race, from Plato down to the present time, some of the rarest minds of Germany, France and England, have successively yielded their assent to the fact that woman is, not perhaps identically, but equally, endowed with man in all intellectual capabilities. It is generally the second-rate men who doubt,—doubt, perhaps, because they fear a fair field:

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

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

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

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

Suppose that woman is essentially inferior to man — she still has rights. Grant that Mrs. Norton never could be Byron; that Elizabeth Barrett never could have written Paradise Lost; that Mrs. Somerville never could be La Place, nor Sirani have painted the Transfiguration. What then? Does that prove they should be deprived of all civil rights? John Smith never will be, never can be, Daniel Webster. Shall he, therefore, be put under guardianship, and forbidden to vote?

Suppose woman, though equal, to differ essentially in her intellect from man — is that any ground for disfranchising her? Shall the Fultons say to the Raphaels, “Because you cannot make steam-engines, therefore you shall not vote”? Shall the Napoleons or the Washingtons say to the Wordsworths or the Herschells, “Because you cannot lead armies and govern states, therefore you shall have no civil rights”?

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

But woman, it is said, may safely trust all to the watchful and generous care of man. She has been obliged to do so hitherto. With what result, let the unequal and unjust legislation of all nations answer. In Massachusetts, lately, a man married an heiress, worth fifty thousand dollars. Dying, about a year after his marriage, he made this remarkably generous and manly will. He left these fifty thousand dollars to her so long as she should remain his widow! (Loud laughter.) These dollars, which he owed entirely to her, which were fairly hers, he left to her, after twelve months’ use, on this generous condition, that she should never marry again! Ought a husband to have such unlimited control over the property of his wife, or over the property which they have together acquired? Ought not woman to have a voice in determining what the law shall be in regard to the property of married persons? Often by her efforts, always by her economy, she contributes much to the stock of family wealth, and is therefore justly entitled to a voice in the control and disposal of it. Neither common sense nor past experience encourage her to trust the protection of that right to the votes of men. That

“Mankind is ever weak,
And little to be trusted;
If self the wavering balance strike,
It’s rarely right adjusted” —

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

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

This convention does not undertake the task of protecting woman. It contends that, in government, every individual should be endowed, as far as possible, with the means of protecting himself. This is far more the truth when we deal with classes. Every class should be endowed with the power to protect itself. Man has hitherto undertaken to settle what is best for woman, in the way of education, and in the matter of property. He has settled it for her, that her duties and cares are too great to allow her any time to take care of her own earnings, or to take her otherwise legitimate share in the civil government of the country. He has not undertaken to say that the sailor or the soldier, in active service, when he returns from his voyage or his camp, is not free to deposit his vote in the ballot-box. He has not undertaken to say that the manufacturer, whose factories cover whole townships, who is up early and lies down late, who has to borrow the services of scores to help him in the management of his vast estate, — he does not say that such a man cannot get time to study politics, and ought therefore to be deprived of his right to vote with his fellow-citizens. He has not undertaken to say that the lawyer may not vote, though his whole time is spent in the courts, until he knows nothing of what is going on in the streets. O, no! But as for woman, her time must be all so entirely filled in taking care of her household, her cares must be so extensive, that neither those of soldiers, nor sailors, nor merchants, can be equal to them; she has not a moment to qualify herself for politics! Woman cannot be spared long enough from the kitchen to put in a vote, though Abbott Lawrence can be spared from the counting-house, though General Gaines or Scott can be spared from the camp, though the Lorings and the Choates can be spared from the courts. This is the argument: Stephen Girard cannot go to Congress; he is too busy; therefore, no man ever shall. Because General Scott has gone to Mexico, and cannot be President, therefore no man shall be. Because A B is a sailor, gone on a
whaling voyage, to be absent for three years, and cannot vote, therefore no male inhabitant ever shall. Logic how profound! how conclusive! Yet this is the exact reasoning in the case of woman. Take up the newspapers. See the sneers at this movement. "Take care of the children," "Make the clothes," "See that they are mended," "See that the parlors are properly arranged." Suppose we grant it all. Are there no women but housekeepers? no women but mothers? O, yes; many! Suppose we grant that the cares of a household are so heavy that they are greater than the cares of the president of a college,—that he who has the charge of some hundreds of youths is less oppressed with care than the woman with three rooms and two children; that, though President Sparks has time for politics, Mrs. Brown has not. Grant that, and still we claim that you should be true to your theory, and grant to single women those rights which she who is the mistress of a household and mother of a family has no time to exercise.

"Let women vote!" cries one. "Why, wives and daughters might be democrats, while their fathers and husbands were whigs. It would never do. It would produce endless quarrels." And the self-satisfied objector thinks he has settled the question.

But, if the principle be a sound one, why not apply it in a still more important instance? Difference of religion breeds more quarrels than difference in politics. Yet we allow women to choose their own religious creeds, although we thereby run the risk of wives being Episcopalians while their husbands are Methodists, or daughters being Catholics while their fathers are Calvinists. Yet who, this side of Turkey, dare claim that the law should compel women to have no religious creed, or adopt that of their male relatives? Practically, this freedom in religion has made no difficulty; and probably equal freedom in politics would make as little.

It is, after all, of little use to argue these social questions. These prejudices never were reasoned up, and, my word for it, they will never be reasoned down. The freedom of the press, the freedom of labor, the freedom of the race in its lowest classes,
was never argued to success. The moment you can get woman to go out into the highway of life, and show by active valor what God has created her for, that moment this question is settled forever. One solid fact of a woman's making her fortune in trade will teach the male sex what woman's capacity is. I say, therefore, to women, there are two paths before you in this reform: one is, take all the laws have left you, with a confident and determined hand; the other is, cheer and encourage, by your sympathy and aid, those noble women who are willing to be the pioneers in this enterprise. See that you stand up the firm supporters of those bold and fearless ones who undertake to lead their sisters in this movement. If Elizabeth Blackwell, who, trampling under foot the sneers of the other sex, took her maiden reputation in her hand, and walked the hospitals of Europe, comes back the accomplished graduate of them, to offer her services to the women of America, and to prove that woman, equally with man, is qualified to do the duties and receive the honors and rewards of the healing art, see to it, women, that you greet her efforts with your smiles. Hasten to her side, and open your households to her practice. Demand to have the experiment fairly tried, before you admit that, in your sickness and in your dangers, woman may not stand as safely by your bedside as man. If you will but be true to each other, on some of these points, it is in the power of woman to settle, in a great measure, this question. Why ask aid from the other sex at all? Theories are but thin and unsubstantial air against the solid fact of woman mingling with honor and profit in the various professions and industrial pursuits of life. Would women be true to each other, by smoothing the pathway of each other's endeavors, it is in their power to settle one great aspect of this question, without any statute in such case made and provided. I say, take your rights! There is no law to prevent it, in one half of the instances. If the prejudices of the other sex and the supineness of your own prevent it, there is no help for you in the statute-books. It is for you but to speak, and the doors of all medical hospitals are open for the women by whom you make it known that you intend to be served. Let us
have no separate, and therefore necessarily inferior, schools for women. Let us have no poor schools, feebly endowed, where woman must go to gather what help she may from second-rate professors, in one branch of a profession. No! Mothers, daughters, sisters! say to husband, father, brother, "If this life is dear to you, I intend to trust it, in my hour of danger, to a sister's hand. See to it, therefore, you who are the guides of society and heads of those institutions, if you love your mother, sister, wife, daughter, see to it that you provide these chosen assistants of mine the means to become disciplined and competent advisers in that momentous hour, for I will have no other." When you shall say that, Harvard University, and every other university, and every medical institution, will hasten to open their doors. You who long for the admission of woman to professional life and the higher ranks of intellectual exertion, up, and throw into her scale this omnipotent weight of your determination to be served by her, and by no other! In this matter, what you decide is law.

There is one other light in which this subject is to be considered,—the freedom of ballot; and with a few words upon that, I will close these desultory remarks. As there is no use in educating a human being for nothing, so the thing is an impossibility. Horace Mann says, in the letter that has been read here, that he intends to write a lecture on Woman; and I doubt not that he will take the stand which he has always done, that she should be book-taught for some dozen years; and then retire to domestic life, or the school-room. Would he give sixpence for a boy who could only say that he had been shut up for those years in a school? The unfledged youth that comes from college—what is he? He is a man, and has been subjected to seven years' tutoring; but, man though he is, until he has walked up and down the paths of life, until he receives his education in the discipline of the world, in the stimulus of motive, in the hope of gain, in the desire of honor, in the love of reputation, in nine cases out of ten, he has got no education at all. Profess to educate woman for her own amusement! Profess to educate her in science, that she may go
home and take care of her cradle! Teach her the depths of statesmanship and political economy, that she may smile sweetly when her husband comes home! "It is not the education man gets from books," it was well said by your favorite statesman, "but the lessons he learns from life and society, that profit him most highly." "Le monde est le livre des femmes." Of this book you deprive her. You give her nothing but man's little printed primers; you make for her a world of dolls, and then complain that she is frivolous. You deprive her of all the lessons of practical out-door life; you deprive her of all the stimulus which the good and great of all nations, all societies, have enjoyed, the world's honors, its gold and its fame, and then you coolly ask of her, "Why are you not as well disciplined as we are?" I know there are great souls who need no stimulus but love of truth and growth, whom mere love of labor allures to the profoundest investigations; but these are the exceptions, not the rule. We legislate, we arrange society for the masses, not the exceptions.

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

One great reason, then, besides its justice, why we would claim the ballot for woman, is this: because the great school of this
people is the jury-box and the ballot-box. De Tocqueville, after travelling in this country, went away with the conviction that, valuable as the jury trial was for the investigation of facts and defence of the citizens, its value in these respects even was no greater than as it was the school of civil education open to all the people. The education of the American citizen is found in his interest in the debates of Congress,—the earnest personal interest with which he seeks to fathom political questions. It is when the mind, profoundly stirred by the momentous stake at issue, rises to its most gigantic efforts, when the great crisis of some national convulsion is at hand,—it is then that strong political excitement lifts the people up in advance of the age, heaves a whole nation on to a higher platform of intellect and morality. Great political questions stir the deepest nature of one half the nation; but they pass far above and over the heads of the other half. Yet, meanwhile, theorists wonder that the first have their whole nature unfolded, and the others will persevere in being dwarfed. Now, this great, world-wide, practical, ever-present education, we claim for woman. Never, until it is granted her, can you decide what will be her ability. Deny statesmanship to woman? What! to the sisters of Elizabeth of England, Isabella of Spain, Maria Theresa of Austria; ay, let me add, of Elizabeth Heyrick, who, when the intellect of all England was at fault, and wandering in the desert of a false philosophy,—when Brougham and Romilly, Clarkson and Wilberforce, and all the other great and philanthropic minds of England, were at fault and at a dead-lock with the West India question and negro slavery,—with the statesman-like intellect of a Quaker woman, wrote out the simple yet potent charm—Immediate, Unconditional Emancipation—which solved the problem, and gave freedom to a race! How noble the conduct of those men! With an alacrity which does honor to their statesmanship, and proves that they recognized the inspired voice when they heard it, they sat down at the feet of that woman-statesman, and seven years under her instruction did more for the settlement of the greatest social question that had ever convulsed England, than had been done in a century, of more or less effort,
before. O, no; you cannot read history, unless you read it upside down, without admitting that woman, cramped, fettered, excluded, degraded as she has been, has yet sometimes, with one ray of her instinctive genius, done more to settle great questions than all the cumbrous intellect of the other sex has achieved.

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

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

One word more. We heard to-day a very profound and eloquent address as to the course which it is most expedient for woman to pursue in regard to the inadequate remuneration extended to her sex. The woman of domestic life receives but about one third the amount paid to a man for similar or far lighter services. The woman of out-door labor has about the same. The best female employments are subject to a discount of some forty or fifty per cent. on the wages paid to males. It is futile, if it were just, to blame individuals for this. We have all been burdened long by a common prejudice and a common ignorance. The remedy is not to demand that the manufacturer shall pay his workmen more, that the employer of domestics shall pay them more. It is not the capitalist’s fault. We inveigh against the wealthy capitalist, but it is not exclusively his fault. It is as much the fault of society itself. It is the fault of that timid conservatism, which sets its face like flint against everything new; of a servile press, that knows so well, by personal experience, how
much fools and cowards are governed by a sneer. It is the fault of silly women, ever holding up their idea of what is "lady-like," as a Gorgon head to frighten their sisters from earning bread, — themselves, in their folly, the best answer to the weak prejudice they mistake for argument. It is the fault of that pulpit which declares it indecorous in woman to labor, except in certain occupations, and thus crowds the whole mass of working women into two or three employments, making them rivet each other's chains. Do you ask me the reason of the low wages paid for female labor? It is this: There are about as many women as men obliged to rely for bread on their own toil. Man seeks employment anywhere, and of any kind. No one forbids him. If he cannot make a living by one trade, he takes another; and the moment any trade becomes so crowded as to make wages fall, men leave it, and wages will rise again. Not so with woman. The whole mass of women must find employment in two or three occupations. The consequence is, there are more women in each of these than can be employed; they kill each other by competition. Suppose there is as much sewing required in a city as one thousand hands can do. If the tailors could find only five hundred women to sew, they would be obliged to pay them whatever they asked. But let the case be, as it usually is, that there are five thousand women waiting for that work, unable to turn to any other occupation, and doomed to starve if they fail to get a share of that; we see at once that their labor, being a drug in the market, must be poorly paid for. She cannot say, as man would, "Give me so much, or I will seek another trade." She must accept whatever is offered, and often underbid her sister, that she may secure a share. Any article sells cheap, when there is too much of it in the market. Woman's labor is cheap because there is too much of it in the market. All women's trades are overcrowded, because they have only two or three to choose from. But open to her, now, other occupations. Open to her the studio of the artist, — let her enter there; open to her the office practice, at least, of the lawyers, — let her go there; open to her all in-door trades of society, to begin with, and let woman monopolize them.
Take from the crowded and starved ranks of the needle-women of New York some for the arts of design, some for the counter, some to minister in our public libraries, some for our public registries, some to keep merchants' accounts, and some to feel the pulse; and the consequence will be, that, like every other independent laborer, like their male brethren, they may make their own terms, and will be fairly paid for their labor. It is competition in too narrow lists that starves women in our cities; and those lists are drawn narrow by superstition and prejudice.

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

This question is intimately connected with the great social problem, — the vices of cities. You who hang your heads in terror and shame, in view of the advancing demoralization of modern civilized life, and turn away with horror-struck faces, look back now to these social prejudices, which have made you close the avenues of profitable employment in the face of woman, and reconsider the conclusions you have made! Look back, I say, and see whether you are surely right here. Come up with us and argue the question, and say whether this most artificial delicacy, this childish prejudice, on whose Moloch altar you sacrifice the virtue of so many, is worthy the exalted worship you pay it. Consider a moment. From what sources are the ranks of female profligacy recruited? A few mere giddiness hurries to ruin. Their protection would be in that character and sound common sense which a wider interest in practical life would generally
create. In a few, the love of sensual gratification, grown over-
strong, because all the other powers are dormant for want of exer-
cise, wrecks its unhappy victim. The medicine for these would
be occupation, awaking intellect, and stirring their highest ener-
gies. Give any one an earnest interest in life, something to do,
something that kindles emulation, and soon the gratification of the
senses sinks into proper subordination. It is idle heads that are
tempted to mischief: and she is emphatically idle half of whose
nature is unemployed. Why does man, so much oftener than
woman, surmount a few years or months of sensual gratification,
and emerge into a worthier life? It is not solely because the
world's judgment is so much harder upon her. Man can immerse
himself in business that stirs keenly all his faculties, and thus he
smothers passion in honorable cares. An ordinary woman, once
fallen, has no busy and stirring life in which to take refuge, where
intellect will contend for mastery with passion, and where virtue
is braced by high and active thoughts. Passion comes back to
the "empty," through "swept and garnished" chambers, bringing
with him more devils than before. But, undoubtedly, the great
temptation to this vice is the love of dress, wealth and the lux-
uries it secures. Facts will jostle theories aside. Whether we
choose to acknowledge it or not, there are many women, earning
two or three dollars a week, who feel that they are as capable as
their brothers of earning hundreds, if they could be permitted to
exert themselves as freely. Fretting to see the coveted rewards of
life forever forbidden them, they are tempted to shut their eyes on
the character of the means by which a taste, however short, may be
gained of the wealth and luxury they sigh for. Open to man a
fair field for his industry, and secure to him its gains, and nine
hundred and ninety-nine men out of every thousand will disdain
to steal. Open to woman a fair field for her industry, let her do
anything her hands find to do, and enjoy her gains, and nine hun-
dred and ninety-nine women out of every thousand will disdain
to debase themselves for dress or ease.

Of this great social problem — to cure or lessen the vice of
cities — there is no other solution, except what this movement
offers you. It is, to leave woman to choose her own employments for herself, responsible, as we are, to the common Creator, and not to her fellow-man. I exhort you, therefore, to look at this question in the spirit in which I have endeavored to present it to you. It is no fanciful, no superficial movement, based on a few individual tastes, in morbid sympathy with tales of individual suffering. It is a great social protest against the very fabric of society. It is a question which goes down—we admit it, and are willing to meet the issue—goes down beneath the altar at which you worship, goes down beneath this social system in which you live. And it is true—no denying it—that, if we are right, the doctrines preached from New England pulpits are wrong; it is true that all this affected horror at woman's deviation from her sphere is a mistake,—a mistake fraught with momentous consequences. Understand us. We blink no fair issue. We throw down the gauntlet. We have counted the cost; we know the yoke and burden we assume. We know the sneers, the lying frauds of misstatement and misrepresentation, that await us. We have counted all; and it is but the dust in the balance and the small dust in the measure, compared with the inestimable blessing of doing justice to one half of the human species, of curing this otherwise immedicable wound, stopping this overflowing fountain of corruption, at the very source of civilized life. Truly, it is the great question of the age. It looks all others out of countenance. It needs little aid from legislation. Specious objections, after all, are not arguments. We know we are right. We only ask an opportunity to argue the question, to set it full before the people, and then leave it to the intellects and the hearts of our country, confident that the institutions under which we live, and the education which other reforms have already given to both sexes, have created men and women capable of solving a problem even more difficult and meeting a change even more radical, than this.
APPENDIX.

CALL FOR THE FIRST WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION.

A Convention will be held at Worcester, Mass., on the twenty-third and twenty-fourth of October next (agreeably to appointment by a preliminary meeting held at Boston, on the thirtieth of May last), to consider the great question of Woman's Rights, Duties and Relations; and the men and women of our country who feel sufficient interest in the subject to give an earnest thought and effective effort to its rightful adjustment, are invited to meet each other in free conference, at the time and place appointed.

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

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

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

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

Woman has been condemned, for her greater delicacy of physical organization, to inferiority of intellectual and moral culture, and to the forfeiture of great social, civil and religious privileges. In the relation of marriage she has been ideally annihiliated, and actually enslaved in all that concerns her personal and pecuniary rights; and even in widowhood and single life, she is oppressed with such limitation and degradation of labor and avocation as clearly and cruelly mark the condition of a disabled caste. But, by the inspiration of the Almighty, the beneficent spirit of reform is roused to the redress of these wrongs. The tyranny which degrades and crushes wives and mothers sits no longer lightly on the world's conscience; the heart's home-worship feels the stain of stooping at a dishonored altar. Manhood begins to feel the shame of muddying the springs from which it draws its highest life; and womanhood is everywhere awakening to assert its divinely chartered rights, and to fulfil its noblest duties. It is the spirit of reviving truth and righteousness which has moved upon the great deep of the public heart and aroused its redressing justice; and, through it, the providence of God is vindicating the order and appointments of his creation.
The signs are encouraging; the time is opportune. Come, then, to this Convention. It is your duty, if you are worthy of your age and country. Give the help of your best thought to separate the light from the darkness. Wisely give the protection of your name and the benefit of your efforts to the great work of settling the principles, devising the method, and achieving the success of this high and holy movement.

**Massachusetts.**


**Rhode Island.**

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

**New York.**


**Pennsylvania.**


**Maryland.**

Mrs. Eliza Stewart.

**Ohio.**

Elizabeth Wilson, Mary A. Johnson, Oliver Johnson, Mary Cowles, Maria L. Giddings, Jane Elizabeth Jones, Benjamin S. Jones, Lucius A. Hine, Sylvia Cornell.
A SERMON
OF THE
PUBLIC FUNCTION OF WOMAN,
PREACHED AT THE MUSIC-HALL, BOSTON
MARCH 27, 1863.
BY THEODORE PARKER.

PSALM 144: 12.—“That our daughters may be as corner-stones.”

Last Sunday I spoke of the Domestic Function of Woman, what she may do for the higher development of the human race at home. To-day, I ask your attention to a sermon of the Ideal Public Function of Woman, and the Economy thereof, in the higher development of the Human Race.

The domestic function of woman, as a housekeeper, wife and mother, does not exhaust her powers. Woman’s function, like charity, begins at home; then, like charity, goes everywhere. To make one half of the human race consume all their energies in the functions of housekeeper, wife and mother, is a monstrous waste of the most precious material that God ever made.

I. In the present constitution of society, there are some unmarried women, to whom the domestic function is little, or is nothing; women who are not mothers, not wives, not housekeepers. I mean, those who are permanently unmarried. It is a great defect in the Christian civilization, that so many women and men are never married. There may be three women in a thousand to whom marriage would be disagreeable, under any
possible circumstances; perhaps thirty more to whom it would be disagreeable, under the actual circumstances, in the present condition of the family and the community. But there is a large number of women who continue unmarried for no reason in their nature, from no conscious dislike of the present domestic and social condition of mankind, and from no disinclination to marriage under existing circumstances. This is a deplorable evil — alike a misfortune to man and to woman. The Catholic church has elevated celibacy to the rank of a theological virtue, consecrating an unnatural evil; on a small scale, the results thereof are writ in the obscene faces of many a priest, false to his human nature, while faithful to his priestly vow; and on a large scale, in the vice, the infamy and degradation of woman, in almost all Catholic lands.

The classic civilization of Greece and Rome had the same vice with the Christian civilization. Other forms of religion have sought to get rid of this evil by polygamy; and thereby they degraded woman still further. The Mormons are repeating the same experiment, based not on philanthropy, but on tyranny, and are still further debasing woman under their feet. In classic and in Christian civilization alone, has there been a large class of women permanently unmarried — not united or even subordinated to man in the normal marriage of one to one, or in the abnormal conjunction of one to many. This class of unmarried women is increasing in all Christian countries, especially in those that are old and rich.

Practically speaking, to this class of women the domestic function is very little; to some of them, it is nothing at all. I do not think that this condition is to last, — marriage is writ in the soul of man, as in his body, — but it indicates a transition, it is a step forward. Womankind is advancing from that period when every woman was a slave, and marriage of some sort was guaranteed to every woman, because she was dependent on man; I say, woman is advancing from that, to a state of independence, where woman shall not be subordinated to man, but the two coordinated together.
The evil that I deplore is transient in its nature, and God grant it may soon pass away!

II. That is not all. For the housekeeper, the wife and the mother, the domestic is not the only function; it is not function enough for the woman, — for the human being, — more than it would be function enough for the father, for the man. After women have done all which pertains to housekeeping as a trade, to housekeeping as one of the fine arts, in their relation as wife and mother, — after they have done all for the order of the house, for the order of the husband, and the order of the children, — they have still energies to spare — a reserved power for yet other work.

There are three classes of women.

First, domestic Drudges, who are wholly taken up in the material details of their housekeeping, husband-keeping, child-keeping. Their housekeeping is a trade, and no more; and, after they have done that, there is no more which they can do. In New England it is a small class, getting less every year.

Next, there are domestic Dolls, wholly taken up with the vain show which delights the eye and the ear. They are ornaments of the estate. Similar toys, I suppose, will one day be more cheaply manufactured at Paris and Nürnberg, at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, and other toy-shops of Europe, out of wax and papier-maché, and sold in Boston at the haberdasher's, by the dozen. These ask nothing beyond their function as dolls, and hate all attempts to elevate womankind.

But there are domestic women, who order a house, and are not mere drudges,—adorn it, and are not mere dolls, but women. Some of these — a great many of them — conjoin the useful of the drudge and the beautiful of the doll into one womanhood, and have a great deal left besides. They are not wholly taken up with their function as housekeeper, wife and mother.

In the progress of mankind, and the application of masculine science to what was once only feminine work, — whereby so much time is saved from the wheel and the loom, the oven and the spit with the consequent increase of riches, the saving of time, and the
intellectual education which comes in consequence thereof,—this class of women is continually enlarging. With us in New England,—in all the north,—it is a very large class.

Well, what shall these domestic women do with their spare energies and superfluous power? Once, a malicious proverb said, "The shoemaker must not go beyond his last." Every shoemaker looks on that proverb with appropriate contempt. He is a shoemaker; but he was a man first, a shoemaker next. Shoemaking is an accident of his manhood, not manhood an accident of his shoemaking. You know what haughty scorn the writer of the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus pours out on every farmer, "who glorieth in the goad," every carpenter and blacksmith, every jeweller and potter. They shall not be sought for, says this aristocrat, in the public councils; they shall not sit high in the congregation; they shall not sit in the judges' seat, nor understand the sentence of judgment; they cannot declare justice. Aristotle and Cicero thought no better of the merchants; they were only busy in trading. Miserable people! quoth these great men; what have they to do with affairs of state—merchants, mechanics, farmers? It is only for kings, nobles, and famous rich men, who do no business, but keep slaves! Still, a great many men at this day have just the same esteem for women that those haughty persons of whom I have spoken had for mechanics and for merchants. A great many sour proverbs there are, which look the same way. But, just now, such is the intellectual education of women of the richer class in all our large towns, that these sour proverbs will not go down so well as of old. Even in Boston, spite of the attempts of the city government to prevent the higher public education of women,—diligently persisted in for many years,—the young women of wealthy families get a better education than the young men of wealthy families do; and that fact is going to report itself presently. The best-educated young men are commonly poor men's sons; but the best educated young women are quite uniformly rich men's daughters.

A well-educated young woman, fond of Goethe, and Dante, and Shakspeare, and Cervantes, marrying an ill-educated young man,
who cares for nothing but his horse, his cigar and his bottle; who only knows how to sleep after dinner, a “great heap of husband,” curled up on the sofa, and in the evening can only laugh at a play, and not understand the Italian words of an opera, which his wife knows by heart; she, I say, marrying him, will not accept the idea that he is her natural lord and master; she cannot look up to him, but rather down. The domestic function does not consume all her time or talent. She knows how to perform much of her household work, as a manufacturer weaves cotton, or spins hemp, or forges iron, with other machinery, by other hands. She is the housekeeping head; and after she has kept house as wife and as mother, and has done all, she has still energies to spare.

That is a large class of women; it is a great deal larger than men commonly think it is. It is continually enlarging, and you see why. When all manufactures were domestic,—when every garment was made at home, every web wove at home, every thread spun at home, every fleece dyed at home,—when the husband provided the wool or the sheepskin, and the wife made it a coat,—when the husband brought home a sack of corn on a mule’s back, and the wife pounded it in a mortar, or ground it between two stones, as in the Old Testament,—then the domestic function might well consume all the time of a very able-headed woman. But now-a-days, when so much work is done abroad,—when the flour-mills of Rochester and Boston take the place of the pestle and mortar, and the hand-mill of the Old Testament,—when Lowell and Lawrence are two enormous Old Testament women, spinning and weaving year out and year in, day and night both,—when so much of woman’s work is done by the butcher and the baker, by the tailor and the cook and the gas-maker, and she is no longer obliged to dip or mould with her own hands every candle that “goeth not out by night,” as in the Old Testament woman’s housekeeping,—you see how very much of woman’s time is left for other functions. This will become yet more the case. Ere long, a great deal of lofty science will be applied to housekeeping, and work be done by other than human hands in the house, as out of it. And accordingly, you see, that the class of women not
III. Then, there is a third class of women, who have no taste and no talent for the domestic function. Perhaps these are exceptional women; some of them exceptional by redundance; they have talents not needed in this function; others are exceptional by defect; with only a common talent, they have none for housekeeping. It is as cruel a lot to set these persons to such work as it would be to take a born sailor and make him a farmer; or to take a man who is born to drive oxen, delights to give the kine fodder, and has a genius for it, and shut him up in the forecastle of a ship. Who would think of making Jenny Lind nothing but a housekeeper? or of devoting Madame de Stael or Miss Dix wholly to that function? or a dozen other women that any man can name?

IV. Then there is another class of women,—those who are not married yet, but are to be married. They, likewise, have spare time on their hands, which they know not what to do with. Women of this latter class have sometimes asked me what there was for them to do. I could not tell.

All these four put together make up a large class of women, who need some other function beside the domestic. What shall it be? In the middle ages, when the Catholic church held its iron hand over the world, these women went into the church. The permanently unmarried, getting dissatisfied, became nuns; often calling that a virtue which was only a necessity,—making a religious principle out of an involuntary measure. Others voluntarily went thither. The attempt is making anew in England, by some of the most pious people, to revive the scheme. It failed a thousand years ago, and the experiment brought a curse on man. It will always fail; and it ought to fail. Human nature cries out against it.
Let us look, and see what women may do here.

First, there are intellectual pursuits, devotion to science, art, literature and the like.

Well, in the first place, that is not popular. Learned women are met with ridicule; they are bid to mend their husband's garments, or their own; they are treated with scorn. Foolish young man number one, in a liquor-shop, of a morning, knocks off the ashes from the end of his cigar, and says to foolish young man number two, who is taking soda to wash off the effect of last night's debauch, or preparing for a similar necessity to-morrow morning, in the presence of foolish young man number three, four, five, six, and so on, indefinitely, "I do not like learned young women; they puzzle me." So they do; puzzle him very much.

I once heard a foolish young man, full of self-conceit and his father's claret, say, "I had rather have a young woman ask me to waltz, than to explain an allusion in Dante." Very likely; he had studied waltzing, and not Dante. And his mother, full of conceit and her own hyson, said, "I perfectly agree with you. My father said that women had nothing to do with learning." Accordingly, he gave her none, and that explained the counsel.

Then, too, foolish men, no longer young, say the same thing, and seek to bring down their wives and daughters to their own poor mediocrity of wit and inferiority of culture.

I say, this intellectual calling is not popular. I am sorry it is not; but, even if it were, it is not wholly satisfactory; it suits but a few. In the present stage of human development, there are not many men who are satisfied with a merely intellectual calling; they want something practical, as well as speculative. There are a thousand practical shoemakers to every speculative botanist. It will be so for many years to come. There are ten thousand carpenters to a single poet or philosopher who dignifies his nature with song or with science. See how dissatisfied our most eminent intellectual men become with science and literature. A professor of Greek is sorry he was not a surveyor or engineer; the president of a college longs to be a member of congress; the most accomplished scholars, historians, romancers,—they wish to be
collectors at Boston, consuls at Liverpool, and the like; longing for some practical calling, where they can make their thought a thing. Of the intellectual men whom I know, I can count on the fingers of a single hand all that are satisfied with pure science, pure art, pure literature.

Woman, like man, wants to make her thought a thing; at least, wants things to work her pattern of thought upon. Still, as the world grows older, and wiser, and better, more persons will find an abiding satisfaction in these lofty pursuits. I am rejoiced to see women thus attracted thitherward. Some women there are who find an abiding satisfaction in literature; it fills up their leisure. I rejoice that it is so.

Then there are, next, the various philanthropies of the age. In these, the spare energies of woman have always found a congenial sphere. It is amazing to see how woman's charity, which "never faileth," palliates the injustice of man, which never has failed yet. Men fight battles; women heal the wounds of the sick:

"Forgot are hatred, wrongs, and fears;  
The plaintive voice alone she hears,—  
Sees but the dying man,"

and does not ask if foe or friend. Messrs. Pinchem & Peelem organize an establishment, wherein the sweat and tears and blood of the poor turn the wheels; every pivot and every shaft rolls on quivering human flesh. The wealthy capitalists,

"Half ignorant, they turn an easy wheel,  
Which sets sharp racks at work, to pinch and peel."

The wives and daughters of the wealthy house go out to "undo the heavy burdens, and let the oppressed go free;" to heal the sick and teach the ignorant, whom their fathers, their husbands, their lovers, have made sick, oppressed, and ignorant. Ask Manchester, in Old England and in New, if this is not so; ask London, ask Boston.

The moral, affectional, and religious feelings of woman fit her
for this work. Her patience, her gentleness, her power to conciliate, her sympathy with man, her trust in God, beautifully prepare her for this; and, accordingly, she comes in the face of what man calls justice as an angel of mercy; before his hate as an angel of love; between his victim and his selfishness with the self-denial of Paul and the self-sacrifice of Jesus. Look at any village in New England, and in Old England, at the Sacs and Foxes, at the Hottentots and the Esquimaux; it is the same thing; it is so in all ages, in all climes, in all stages of civilization, in all ranks of society,—the highest and the lowest,—in all forms of religion, all sects of Christianity. It has been so from Dorcas, in the Acts of the Apostles, who made coats and garments for the poor, down to Miss Dix, in our day, who visits jails and houses of correction, and leads Mr. Fillmore to let Capt. Drayton out of jail, where he was placed for the noblest act of his life.

But these philanthropies are not enough for the employment of women; and if all the spare energies of womankind were set to this work,—to palliate the consequences of man's injustice,—it would not be exactly the work which woman wants. There are some women who take no special interest in this. For woman is not all philanthropy, though very much; she has other faculties which want to be developed besides the heart to feel. Still more, that is, not the only thing which mankind wants. We need the justice which removes causes, as well as the charity that palliates effects; and woman, standing continually between the victim and the sabre which would cleave him through, is not performing her only function, not her highest; high as that is, it is not her highest. If the feminine swallow drives away the flies from a poor fox struggling for life, another set of flies light upon him, and suck every remaining drop of blood out of his veins, as in the old fable. Besides, if the fox finds that a womanly swallow comes to drive off the flies, he depends on her wing and not on his own brush, and becomes less of a fox. If a miser, or any base man, sees that a woman constantly picks up the man whom he knocks down with the left hand of Usury or the right hand of Rum, he will go on with his extortion or his grog, because, he says, "I should have
done the man harm, but a woman picked him up, and money comes into my pocket, and no harm to the man!" The evils of society would become worse and worse, just as they are increased by indiscriminate alms-giving. That is not enough.

Then there are various practical works left by common consent to woman.

First, there is domestic service, woman working as an appendage to some household; a hired hand, or a hired head, to help the housekeeper.

Then there is mechanical labor, in a factory, or a shop; spinning, weaving, setting type, binding books, making shoes, coloring maps, and a hundred other things.

Next, there is trade, in a small way, from the basket-woman with her apples at every street-corner, up to the confectioner and haberdasher, with their well-filled shops. In a few retail shops which venture to brave popular opinion, woman is employed at the counter.

As a fourth thing, there is the business of public and private teaching, in various departments. All these are well; they are unavoidable, they are absolutely necessary; they furnish employment to many women, and are a blessed resource.

I rejoice that the field-work of the farmer is not done by woman's hand in the free portions of America. It imbrutes women in Ireland, in France, and in Spain. I am glad that the complicated machinery of life furnishes so much more work for the light and delicate hand of woman. But I confess I mourn that where her work is as profitable as man's, her pay is not half so much. A woman who should teach a public school well would be paid four or six dollars a week; while a man, who should teach no better, would be paid two, three, four, or six times that sum. It is so in all departments of woman's work that I am acquainted with.

These employments are very well, but still they are not enough.

Rich women do not engage in these callings. For rich women
there is no profession left except marriage. After school-time, woman has nothing to do till she is married; I mean, almost nothing,—nothing that is adequate. Accordingly, she must choose betwixt a husband and nothing; and, sometimes, that is choosing between two nothings. There are spare energies which seek employment before marriage, and after marriage.

These callings are not all that the race of woman needs; not all that her human nature requires. She has the same human nature which man has, and, of course, the same natural human rights. Woman's natural right for its rightfulness does not depend on the bodily or mental power to assert and to maintain it,—on the great arm or on the great head; it depends only on human nature itself, which God made the same in the frailest woman as in the biggest giant.

If woman is a human being, first, she has the Nature of a human being; next, she has the Right of a human being; third, she has the Duty of a human being. The Nature is the capacity to possess, to use, to develop, and to enjoy every human faculty; the Right is the right to enjoy, develop, and use every human faculty; and the Duty is to make use of the Right, and make her human nature human history. She is here to develop her human nature, enjoy her human rights, perform her human duty. Womankind is to do this for herself, as much as mankind for himself. A woman has the same human nature that a man has; the same human rights, to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; the same human duties; and they are as unalienable in a woman as in a man.

Each man has the natural right to the normal development of his nature, so far as it is general-human, neither man nor woman, but human. Each woman has the natural right to the normal development of her nature, so far as it is general-human, neither woman nor man. But each man has also a natural and unalienable right to the normal development of his peculiar nature as man, where he differs from woman. Each woman has just the same natural and unalienable right to the normal development of
her peculiar nature as woman, and not man. All that is undeniable.

Now see what follows. Woman has the same individual right to determine her aim in life; and to follow it; has the same individual rights of body and of spirit,—of mind and conscience, and heart and soul; the same physical rights, the same intellectual, moral, affectional and religious rights, that man has. That is true of womankind as a whole; it is true of Jane, Ellen and Sally, and each special woman that can be named.

Every person, man or woman, is an integer, an individual, a whole person; and also a portion of the race, and so a fraction of humankind. Well, the rights of individualism are not to be possessed, developed, used and enjoyed, by a life in solitude, but by joint action. Accordingly, to complete and perfect the individual man or woman, and give each an opportunity to possess, use, develop and enjoy these rights, there must be concerted and joint action; else individuality is only a possibility, not a reality. So the individual rights of woman carry with them the same domestic, social, ecclesiastical and political rights, as those of man.

The Family, Community, Church and State, are four modes of action which have grown out of human nature in its historical development; they are all necessary for the development of mankind; machines which the human race has devised, in order to possess, use, develop and enjoy their rights as human beings, their rights also as men.

These are just as necessary for the development of woman as of man; and, as she has the same nature, right and duty, as man, it follows that she has the same right to use, shape and control, these four institutions, for her general human purpose and for her special feminine purpose, that man has to control them for his general human purpose and his special masculine purpose. All that is as undeniable as anything in metaphysics or mathematics.

So, then, woman has the same natural rights as man. In domestic affairs, she is to determine her own sphere as much as man; and say where her function is to begin, when it shall begin, with
whom it shall begin; where it shall end, when it shall end, and what it shall comprise.

Then she has the same right to freedom of industry that man has. I do not believe that the hard callings of life will ever suit woman. It is not little boys who go out as lumberers, but great men, with sinewy, brawny arms. I doubt that laborious callings, like navigation, engineering, lumbering and the like, will ever be agreeable to woman. Her feminine body and feminine spirit naturally turn away from such occupations. I have seen women gathering the filth of the streets in Liverpool, sawing stone in a mason's yard in Paris, carrying earth in baskets on their heads for a railway embankment at Naples; but they were obviously out of place, and only consented to this drudgery when driven by Poverty's iron whip. But there are many employments in the departments of mechanical work, of trade, little and extended, where woman could go, and properly go. Some women have a good deal of talent for trade,—this in a small way, that on the largest scale. Why should not they exercise their commercial talents in competition with man? Is it right for woman to be a domestic manufacturer in the family of Solomon or Priam, and of every thrifty husband, and wrong for her to be a public manufacturer, on her own account? She might spin when the motive-power was a wheel-pin of wood in her hand,—may she not use the Merrimack and the Connecticut for her wheel-pin? or must she be only the manufacturing servant of man,—never her own master?

Much of the business of education already falls to the hands of woman. In the last twenty years, there has been a great progress in the education of women, in Massachusetts, in all New England. The high schools for girls—and, still better, those for girls and boys—have been of great service. Almost all the large towns of this commonwealth have honored themselves with these blessed institutions; in Boston, only the daughters of the rich can possess such an education as hundreds of noble girls long to acquire. With this enhancement of culture, women have been continually rising higher and higher as teachers. The State Nor-
mal Schools have helped in this movement. It used to be thought that only an able-bodied man could manage the large boys of a country or a city school. Even he was sometimes thrust out at the door or the window of "his noisy mansion," by his rough pupils. An able-headed woman has commonly succeeded better than men merely able-bodied. She has tried conciliation rather than violence, and appealed to something a little deeper than aught which force could ever touch. The women-teachers are now doing an important work for the elevation of their race and all human kind. But it is commonly thought woman must not engage in the higher departments thereof. I once knew a woman, wife and mother and housekeeper, who taught the severest disciplines of our highest college, and instructed young men while she rocked the cradle with her foot, and mended garments with her hands,—one of the most accomplished scholars of New England. Not long ago, the daughter of a poor widowed seamstress was seen reading the Koran in Arabic. There was but one man in the town who could do the same, and he was a "Learned Blacksmith." Women not able to teach in these things! He must be rather a confident professor who thinks a woman cannot do what he can. I rejoice at the introduction of women into common schools, academies and high schools; and I thank God that the man who has done so much for public education in Massachusetts is presently to be the head of a college in Ohio, where women and men are to study together, and where a woman is to be professor of Latin and Natural History. These are good signs.

The business of public lecturing, also, is quite important in New England, and I am glad to see that woman presses into that,—not without success.

The work of conducting a journal, daily, weekly, or quarterly, woman proves that she can attend to quite as decently, and as strongly, too, as most men.

Then there are what are called the Professions—Medicine, Law and Theology.

The profession of medicine seems to belong peculiarly to woman by nature; part of it, exclusively. She is a nurse, and half a
doctor, by nature. It is quite encouraging that medical schools are beginning to instruct women, and special schools get founded for the use of women; that sagacious men are beginning to employ women as their physicians. Great good is to be expected from that.

As yet, I believe no woman acts as a lawyer. But I see no reason why the profession of law might not be followed by women as well as by men. He must be rather an uncommon lawyer who thinks no feminine head could compete with him. Most lawyers that I have known are rather mechanics at law than attorneys or scholars at law; and, in the mechanical part, woman could do as well as man, — could be as good a conveyancer, could follow precedents as carefully, and copy forms as nicely. And, in the higher departments of legal work, they who have read the plea which Lady Alice Lille made in England, when she could not speak by attorney, must remember there is some eloquence in woman's tongue, which courts find it rather hard to resist. I think her presence would mend the manners of the court, — of the bench, not less than of the bar.

In the business of theology, I could never see why a woman, if she wished, should not preach, as well as men. It would be hard, in the present condition of the pulpit, to say she had not intellect enough for that! I am glad to find, now and then, women preachers, and rejoice at their success. A year ago, I introduced to you the Reverend Miss Brown, educated at an Orthodox theological seminary; you smiled at the name of Reverend Miss. She has since been invited to settle by several congregations, of unblemished orthodoxy; and has passed on, looking further.

It seems to me that woman, by her peculiar constitution, is better qualified to teach religion than any merely intellectual discipline. The Quakers have always recognized the natural right of woman to perform the same ecclesiastical function as man. At this day, the most distinguished preacher of that denomination is a woman, who adorns her domestic calling as housekeeper, wife and mother, with the same womanly dignity and sweetness which mark her public deportment.
If woman had been consulted, it seems to me theology would have been in a vastly better state than it is now. I do not think that any woman would ever have preached the damnation of babies new-born; and "hell, paved with the skulls of infants not a span long," would be a region yet to be discovered in theology. A celibate monk — with God's curse writ on his face, which knew no child, no wife, no sister, and blushed that he had a mother — might well dream of such a thing. He had been through the preliminary studies. Consider the ghastly attributes which are commonly put upon God in the popular theology; the idea of infinite wrath, of infinite damnation, and total depravity, and all that. Why, you could not get a woman, that had intellect enough to open her mouth, to preach these things anywhere. Women think they think that they believe them; but they do not. Celibate priests, who never knew marriage, or what paternity was, who thought woman was a "pollution," — they invented these ghastly doctrines; and when I have heard the Athanasian Creed and the Dies Irae chanted by monks, with the necks of bulls and the lips of donkeys,—why, I have understood where the doctrine came from, and have felt the appropriateness of their braying out the damnation hymns; — woman could not do it. We shut her out of the choir, out of the priest's house, out of the pulpit; and then the priest, with unnatural vows, came in, and taught these "doctrines of devils." Could you find a woman who would read to a congregation, as words of truth, Jonathan Edwards' Sermon on a Future State, — "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," "The Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners," "Wrath upon the Wicked to the uttermost," "The Future Punishment of the Wicked," and other things of that sort? Nay, can you find a worthy woman, of any considerable culture, who will read the fourteenth chapter of Numbers, and declare that a true picture of the God she worships? Only a she-dragon could do it, in our day.

The popular theology leaves us nothing feminine in the character of God. How could it be otherwise, when so much of the popular theology is the work of men, who thought woman was a "pollution," and barred her out of all the high places of the church?
If women had had their place in ecclesiastical teaching, I doubt that the "Athenasian Creed" would ever have been thought a "symbol" of Christianity. The pictures and hymns which describe the last judgment are a protest against the exclusion of woman from teaching in the church. "I suffer not a woman to teach, but to be in silence," said a writer in the New Testament. The sentence has brought manifold evil in its train.

So much for the employments of women.

By nature, woman has the same political rights that man has,—to vote, to hold office, to make and administer laws. These she has as a matter of right. The strong hand and the great head of man keep her down; nothing more. In America, in Christendom, woman has no political rights, is not a citizen in full; she has no voice in making or administering the laws, none in electing the rulers or administrators thereof. She can hold no office,—cannot be committee of a primary school, overseer of the poor, or guardian to a public lamp-post. But any man, with conscience enough to keep out of jail, mind enough to escape the poor-house, and body enough to drop his ballot into the box, he is a voter. He may have no character,—even no money;—that is no matter—he is male. The noblest woman has no voice in the state. Men make laws, disposing of her property, her person, her children; still she must bear it, "with a patient shrug."

Looking at it as a matter of pure right and pure science, I know no reason why woman should not be a voter, or hold office, or make and administer laws. I do not see how I can shut myself into political privileges and shut woman out, and do both in the name of unalienable right. Certainly, every woman has a natural right to have her property represented in the general representation of property, and her person represented in the general representation of persons.

Looking at it as a matter of expediency, see some facts. Suppose woman had a share in the municipal regulation of Boston, and there were as many alderwomen as aldermen, as many common-council women as common-council men, do you believe that,
in defiance of the law of Massachusetts, the city government, last spring, would have licensed every two hundred and forty-fourth person of the population of the city to sell intoxicating drink? would have made every thirty-fifth voter a rum-seller? I do not.

Do you believe the women of Boston would spend ten thousand dollars in one year in a city frolic, or spend two or three thousand every year, on the Fourth of July, for sky-rockets and fire-crackers; would spend four or five thousand dollars to get their Canadian guests drunk in Boston harbor, and then pretend that Boston had not money enough to establish a high school for girls, to teach the daughters of mechanics and grocers to read French and Latin, and to understand the higher things which rich men's sons are driven to at college? I do not.

Do you believe that the women of Boston, in 1851, would have spent three or four thousand dollars to kidnap a poor man, and have taken all the chains which belonged to the city and put them round the court-house, and have drilled three hundred men, armed with bludgeons and cutlasses, to steal a man and carry him back to slavery? I do not. Do you think, if the women had had the control, "fifteen hundred men of property and standing" would have volunteered to take a poor man, kidnapped in Boston, and conduct him out of the state, with fire and sword? I believe no such thing.

Do you think the women of Boston would take the poorest and most unfortunate children in the town, put them all together into one school, making that the most miserable in the city, where they had not and could not have half the advantages of the other children in different schools, and all that because the unfortunates were dark-colored? Do you think the women of Boston would shut a bright boy out of the High School or Latin School, because he was black in the face?

Women are said to be cowardly. When Thomas Sims, out of his dungeon, sent to the churches his petition for their prayers, had women been "the Christian clergy," do you believe they would not have dared to pray?

If women had a voice in the affairs of Massachusetts, do you
think they would ever have made laws so that a lazy husband could devour all the substance of his active wife—spite of her wish; so that a drunken husband could command her bodily presence in his loathly house; and when an infamous man was divorced from his wife, that he could keep all the children? I confess I do not.

If the affairs of the nation had been under woman's joint control, I doubt that we should have butchered the Indians with such exterminating savagery, that, in fifty years, we should have spent seven hundreds of millions of dollars for war, and now, in time of peace, send twenty annual millions more to the same waste. I doubt that we should have spread slavery into nine new states, and made it national. I think the Fugitive Slave Bill would never have been an act. Woman has some respect for the natural law of God.

I know men say woman cannot manage the great affairs of a nation. Very well. Government is political economy—national housekeeping. Does any respectable woman keep house so badly as the United States? with so much bribery, so much corruption, so much quarrelling in the domestic councils? But government is also political morality, it is national ethics. Is there any worthy woman who rules her household as wickedly as the nations are ruled? who hires bullies to fight for her? Is there any woman who treats one sixth part of her household as if they were cattle and not creatures of God, as if they were things and not persons? I know of none such. In government as housekeeping, or government as morality, I think man makes a very poor appearance, when he says woman could not do as well as he has done and is doing.

I doubt that women will ever, as a general thing, take the same interest as men in political affairs, or find therein an abiding satisfaction. But that is for women themselves to determine, not for men.

In order to attain the end,—the development of man in body and spirit,—human institutions must represent all parts of human
nature, both the masculine and the feminine element. For the well-being of the human race, we need the joint action of man and woman, in the family, the community, the church and the state. A family without the presence of woman—with no mother, no wife, no sister, no womankind—is a sad thing. I think a community without woman’s equal social action, a church without her equal ecclesiastical action, and a state without her equal political action, is almost as bad—is very much what a house would be without a mother, wife, sister or friend.

You see what prevails in the Christian civilization of the nineteenth century; it is Force—force of body, force of brain. There is little justice, little philanthropy, little piety. Selfishness preponderates everywhere in Christendom—individual, domestic, social, ecclesiastical, national selfishness. It is preached as gospel and enacted as law. It is thought good political economy for a strong people to devour the weak nations; for “Christian” England and America to plunder the “heathen” and annex their land; for a strong class to oppress and ruin the feeble class; for the capitalists of England to pauperize the poor white laborer, for the capitalists of America to enslave the poorer black laborer; for a strong man to oppress the weak man; for the sharper to buy labor too cheap, and sell its product too dear, and so grow rich by making many poor. Hence, nation is arrayed against nation, class against class, man against man. Nay, it is commonly taught that mankind is arrayed against God, and God against man; that the world is a universal discord; that there is no solidarity of man with man, of man with God. I fear we shall never get far beyond this theory and this practice, until woman has her natural rights as the equal of man, and takes her natural place in regulating the affairs of the family, the community, the church and the state.

It seems to me God has treasured up a reserved power in the nature of woman to correct many of those evils which are Christendom’s disgrace to-day.

Circumstances help or hinder our development, and are one of the two forces which determine the actual character of a nation or of mankind, at any special period. Hitherto, amongst men,
circumstances have favored the development of only intellectual power, in all its forms—chiefly in its lower forms. At present, mankind, as a whole, has the superiority over womankind, as a whole, in all that pertains to intellect, the higher and the lower. Man has knowledge, has ideas, has administrative skill; enacts the rules of conduct for the individual, the family, the community, the church, the state, and the world. He applies these rules of conduct to life, and so controls the great affairs of the human race. You see what a world he has made of it. There is male vigor in this civilization, miscalled "Christian;" and in its leading nations there are industry and enterprise, which never fail. There is science, literature, legislation, agriculture, manufactures, mining, commerce, such as the world never saw. With the vigor of war, the Anglo-Saxon now works the works of peace. England abounds in wealth,—richest of lands; but look at her poor, her vast army of paupers, two million strong, the Irish whom she drives with the hand of famine across the sea. Martin Luther was right when he said, The richer the nation, the poorer the poor. America is "democratic"—"the freest and most enlightened people in the world." Look at her slaves; every sixth woman in the country sold as a beast; with no more legal respect paid to her marriage than the farmer pays to the conjunctions of his swine. America is well educated; there are four millions of children in the school-houses of the land; it is a states-prison offence to teach a slave to read the three letters which spell God. The more "democratic" the country, the tighter is bondage ironed on the slave. Look at the cities of England and America. What riches, what refinement, what culture of man and woman too! Ay; but what poverty, what ignorance, what beastliness of man and woman too! The Christian civilization of the nineteenth century is well summed up in London and New York—the two foci of the Anglo-Saxon tribe, which control the shape of the world's commercial ellipse. Look at the riches, and the misery; at the "religious enterprise," and the heathen darkness; at the virtue, the decorum and the beauty of woman well-born and well-bred—and at the wild sea
of prostitution, which swells and breaks and dashes against the bulwarks of society — every ripple was a woman once!

O, brother-men, who make these things, is this a pleasant sight? Does your literature complain of it — of the waste of human life, the slaughter of human souls, the butchery of woman? British literature begins to wail, in "Nicholas Nickleby," and "Jane Eyre," and "Mary Barton," and "Alton Locke," in many a "Song of the Shirt;" but the respectable literature of America is deaf as a cent to the outcry of humanity expiring in agonies. It is busy with California, or the Presidency, or extolling iniquity in high places, or flattering the vulgar vanity which buys its dross for gold. It cannot even imitate the philanthropy of English letters; it is "up" for California and a market. Does not the church speak? — the English church, with its millions of money, the American, with its millions of men, — both wont to bay the moon of foreign heathenism? The church is a dumb dog, that cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. It is a church without woman, believing in a male and jealous God, and rejoicing in a boundless, endless hell!

Hitherto, with woman, circumstances have hindered the development of intellectual power, in all its forms. She has not knowledge, has not ideas or practical skill to equal the force of man. But circumstances have favored the development of pure and lofty emotion in advance of man. She has moral feeling, affectional feeling, religious feeling, far in advance of man; her moral, affectional and religious intuitions are deeper and more trustworthy than his. Here she is eminent, as he is in knowledge, in ideas, in administrative skill.

I think man will always lead in affairs of intellect, — of reason, imagination, understanding, — he has the bigger brain; but that woman will always lead in affairs of emotion, — moral, affectional, religious, — she has the better heart, the truer intuition of the right, the lovely, the holy. The literature of women in this century is juster, more philanthropic, more religious, than that of men. Do you not hear the cry which, in New England, a woman is raising in the world's ears against the foul wrong which America
is working in the world? Do you not hear the echo of that woman's voice come over the Atlantic,—returned from European shores in many a tongue,—French, German, Italian, Swedish, Danish, Russian, Dutch? How a woman touches the world's heart!—because she speaks justice, speaks piety, speaks love. What voice is strongest raised in continental Europe, pleading for the oppressed and down-trodden? That also is a woman's voice!

Well, we want the excellence of man and woman both united; intellectual power, knowledge, great ideas—in literature, philosophy, theology, ethics—and practical skill; but we want something better—the moral, affectional, religious intuition, to put justice into ethics, love into theology, piety into science and letters. Everywhere in the family, the community, the church and the state, we want the masculine and feminine element cooperating and conjoined. Woman is to correct man's taste, mend his morals, excite his affections, inspire his religious faculties. Man is to quicken her intellect, to help her will, translate her sentiments to ideas, and enact them into righteous laws. Man's moral action, at best, is only a sort of general human providence, aiming at the welfare of a part, and satisfied with achieving the "greatest good of the greatest number." Woman's moral action is more like a special human providence, acting without general rules, but caring for each particular case. We need both of these, the general and the special, to make a total human providence.

If man and woman are counted equivalent,—equal in rights, though with diverse powers,—shall we not mend the literature of the world, its theology, its science, its laws, and its actions too? I cannot believe that wealth and want are to stand ever side by side as desperate foes; that culture must ride only on the back of ignorance; and feminine virtue be guarded by the degradation of whole classes of ill-starred men, as in the East, or the degradation of whole classes of ill-starred women, as in the West; but while we neglect the means of help God puts in our power, why, the present must be like the past—"property" must be theft, "law"
the strength of selfish will, and "Christianity"—what we see it is, the apology for every powerful wrong.

To every woman let me say,—Respect your nature as a human being, your nature as a woman; then respect your rights, then remember your duty to possess, to use, to develop and to enjoy every faculty which God has given you, each in its normal way.

And to men let me say,—Respect, with the profoundest reverence respect the mother that bore you, the sisters who bless you, the woman that you love, the woman that you marry. As you seek to possess your own manly rights, seek also, by that great arm, by that powerful brain, seek to vindicate her rights as woman, as your own as man. Then we may see better things in the church, better things in the state, in the community, in the home. Then the green shall show what buds it hid, the buds shall blossom, the flowers bear fruit, and the blessing of God be on us all.
Most of our readers will probably learn from these pages, for the first time, that there has arisen in the United States, and in the most civilized and enlightened portion of them, an organized agitation on a new question,—new, not to thinkers, nor to any one by whom the principles of free and popular government are felt, as well as acknowledged, but new, and even unheard of, as a subject for public meetings and practical political action. This question is, the enfranchisement of women; their admission, in law, and in fact, to equality in all rights, political, civil and social, with the male citizens of the community.

It will add to the surprise with which many will receive this intelligence, that the agitation which has commenced is not a pleading by male writers and orators for women, those who are professedly to be benefited remaining either indifferent or ostensibly hostile; it is a political movement, practical in its objects, carried on in a form which denotes an intention to persevere. And it is a movement not merely for women, but by them. Its first public manifestation appears to have been a convention of women, held in the State of Ohio, in the spring of 1850.
the kindred cause.

special committees were nominated.

The undertaking until the next annual in.

According to the report in the New York thousand persons were present throughout, and, "if it could have been had, many thousands more would have attended.

The place was described as "crowded, from the beginning, attentive and interested listeners." In regard to the quality of the speaking, the proceedings bear an advantageous comparison with those of any popular movement with which we are acquainted, either in this country or in America. Very rarely, in the oratory of public meetings, is the part of verbiage and declamation so small, that of calm good sense and reason so considerable. The result of the convention was, in every respect, encouraging to those by whom it was summoned; and it is probably destined to inaugurate one of the most important of the movements towards political and social reform, which are the best characteristic of the present age.

That the promoters of this new agitation take their stand on principles, and do not fear to declare these in their widest extent, without time-serving or compromise, will be seen from the resolutions adopted by the convention, part of which we transcribe:

Resolved, That every human being, of full age, and resident for a proper length of time on the soil of the nation, who is required to obey the law, is entitled to a voice in its enactment; that every such person, whose property or labor is taxed for the support of the government, is entitled to a direct share in such government. Therefore,

Resolved, That women are entitled to the right of suffrage, and to be considered eligible to office; and that every party, which claims to represent the humanity, the civilization, and the progress of the age, is bound to in-