

161
THE PLACE AND MISSION OF WOMAN.

AN

INSPIRATIONAL DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED BY

MISS EMMA HARDINGE,

AT THE

MELODEON, BOSTON,

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, FEB. 13, 1859.

PHONOGRAPHICALLY REPORTED BY JAMES M. W. YERRINTON.

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¶ This Discourse was listened to by a very large audience with profound attention, from the beginning until its close. In the evening, MISS HARDINGE again spoke, and delivered an exceedingly eloquent, touching, and impressive address, on the subject of "MARRIAGE," to an overflowing audience. This second discourse will be issued in the same form as the present, early next week.

Boston, Feb. 19, 1859.



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ON THE
HISTORY OF WOMEN IN AMERICA

THE PLACE AND MISSION OF WOMAN.

WE can foretell the future for ourselves; and only faithful to himself is each. Truth is of no sex. This day we propose to speak of WOMAN; the half which must complete the angel; the dual principle which makes our God, our father and our mother. Woman! we might plead for thee in tones drawn from the heart of beauteous Nature, clothed in flowers, echoing in music, wreathed around with the tenderest sympathies into which love, pity, affection, ever coined the human heart. But, O woman! no effort of mere oratory shall fritter away thy claims this day; no attempt to enforce from thyself, or from thy companion, either pity, sympathy, mere emotion. We never yet saw that institution, that art or science in the world's history, taking its place in Nature, that was the result of mere authoritative command. All change, to be permanent, useful, divine, must be the result of natural growth; and this day, O woman! we will not speak either in a tone of command or entreaty to man to do thee right. He cannot do it. It is with thyself, thyself alone, that thou must build a name and a place in history, more glorious than that which the past has decreed, and that place and name must grow from practice. It is to tell thee and suggest to thee, from the loving heart of the spiritual sisterhood, what thou canst *do*, not what Utopia thou mayst *enjoy*, that we are this day met together. We may, therefore, enwreath our speech with few phrases of ornament or beauty; but what we shall give to thee is the welling up of a heart gushing with love for the name of woman, proud to bear it, and striving from the soul of souls the quivering link to find that has its birthplace in the heart of mother and father God, and twines around that of every human soul, not excepting that which is vibrated and acted upon this day by the intelligences which control your speaker.

Woman! regard thy place in the history of the past, and thou wilt see that the Divine hand has led thee, step by step, as He has led thy companion, not as thou dost suppose, beneath the pall of degradation and obscurity, but precisely where thy foot should have been planted. Men and women! you know that the elements of change, when they rise to the surface, appear in bubbles upon the ocean, or in fires from the volcano, — all portend that a change is at hand, that a transition state in society is being passed through. The butterfly must be born of the worm which is now writhing in the effort to cast its shell. Learn from the signs of the times, that the subject of Woman and Marriage now agitates society with a power that portends a mighty change. The few who dare to step into the arena of public discussion, and bear the standard marked with these two names, do so in defiance of public opinion. Hence they have been forced into an extremism which is alike injurious to the cause of truth and to the name, grace, and purity of woman. On the other hand, the exceeding polarity which ever prevails, in the change which public opinion must undergo before it finds its equilibrium, is forcing others into retirement and obscurity. Shall there be found none who dare occupy that position which may tend to a just equilibrium in public opinion? There should be some; and let none call himself or herself a Spiritualist, who is not willing to occupy this position. As Spiritualism is the light of heaven, which alone can vitalize and reform, by calling up the race from the position from whence they have sprung, from the animal to the spirit world, so on the integral parts of society, as they from time to time present themselves for discussion, Spiritualism is bound to cast the light of its divine and radiant morality. In the name, then, of Spiritualism, as one who has assumed, —

whether self-constituted or elected, God alone can decide, — as one, then, who has assumed the place of reformer and teacher and humanitarian, our design is this day, whether in defiance of public opinion or forced hither by its voice, to speak of Woman and Marriage.

We ask, in the first place, what position has woman occupied in history that she needs to claim her rights, so called? Does she not possess them? She says she does not, never has. Trace the history of the past, and you will find that, from the earliest ages, woman has appeared ever, not as the helpmeet for man, so much as an appendage upon the condition of man. Why is this? If, as we stated in the first portion of our address, woman's sphere has been marked out by God himself, is this just and right? Certainly not, in the abstract, as man and woman at present stand; but when you consider the necessity of the world's progress, and recognize that that progress has been forced upward, as it were, from the plane of physical strength to intellect, and from intellect to spirituality, you will observe at once that the conformation of man and woman demanded that man at the outset of creation, as the recipient of the principle of force, of physical strength, should be the leader; that man, who was to build, dig, and fashion, with the world's hard, rude tools, the elements of civilization, must, of necessity, rejoicing in his own strength, and acting it out, be the active portion of the world. Woman has not found, as yet, her sphere. When you observe the differences that Nature has stamped upon each, even in the tone of the voice, in the fashion of every nerve and muscle, in the color of the skin, in the aspiration of each soul, you perceive, inevitably, that woman is destined to be the finger which shall point upward, man the hand that shall carve out the way. You must also recognize, that as the era of physical force began to yield, as the mighty pyramids of Egypt gave place to the fairy architecture of Greece and Rome, woman gradually assumed her place as the companion of man, as the helpmeet for man; and while man still inherits that lordship which his peculiar conformation and strength gave him, and ever will assign to him in a world of matter, where physical force must ever be the foundation and corner-stone, so, not

until the mind, both of man and woman, perceives a higher aim in life, and attains to the knowledge that the spiritual is the ultimate of existence, that spirit is the changeless thread upon which the forms of matter are strung, like beads, in ascending gradations, — not until men and women both recognize this, will woman's true sphere, that of the spiritual ascendant in the human nature, be found.

Remember, women, in all the ages of the past, have manifested greater aptitude for what is termed inspiration. The means of inspiration are strictly chemical. The means by which inspiration from thought reaches the brain are nothing more nor less than the affinizing principle, even that principle called magnetism, which, outreaching to the magnetism from thought, forms the compound which you call knowledge or inspiration. Women, by their peculiar organism, by the fineness of their nerves, the susceptibility of their sensations, the absence of that large, coarse, and physical development, which does not require so finely strung an organization, women have always been peculiarly susceptible of impressions through the imaginative and sensational parts of their natures, also, the affectional and emotional. Men, with their larger and firmer knit minds, judgmatical, more apt to reason, as they are more fitted to reason, from the external and sensational plane, weigh and measure that which is presented to them, while women perceive and appropriate truth by what is termed induction. But when you doubt, and say that you will place man and woman upon the same plane of action, however you may desire to equalize the balance of thought, or governing principle, between them, you must first appeal to Nature, either to reverse or equalize their conformations as physical beings.

We perceive in Nature also, even in the grasses of the field, even in those chemical affinities which we find to exist in metals, that the male and female principle is that which constitutes the dual principle which produces life and being. Of consequence, then, we look to this dual principle to form a third; we look to man and woman as the organisms by which the ultimate creation is to be outworked. The question will arise, — and it is one that we shall hereafter discuss, — whether there is not a law in Nature which

represents a single metal, a single flower, a single animal, or a single human being, as but a part, as but a subdivision of that alone which constitutes the whole, the union of the two? You can neither diminish nor increase, then, the vast importance of the subject of the place which woman shall hold in that far future which is inevitable; you can neither hasten its coming nor retard it. A change is predicted by the signs of the times; and that change is inevitable; it is precisely that for which woman, by her conformation, as well as her mentality, is fitted. Our business be it to endeavor to ascertain that, not to outreach for some fancied good beyond her sphere; not to trample upon the flowers which are springing up around her; not to attempt to grapple with that which Nature has not destined for her.

Let us now ask what woman claims, and then proceed to measure it by what Nature determines for her.

We understand that she claims equality with man, as far as regards her social, religious, and political position. She requires equality with man in the right to govern her person, her property, her children. She requires equality with man in the right to enter into schools, and the associations of commerce and trade, and to hold positions in the government. These we believe to be some of the phases, or, we might say, some of the demands, which the ordinary term "Woman's Rights," includes. There are, of course, many other points which we cannot now enumerate, which grow out of these. We believe, however, that we have stated that which includes the entire of the social, religious, and political position of the race. She requires to be permitted to raise her voice in the Legislature. This is the first point which we ask leave to discuss. In doing this, we shall be compelled, apparently, to step out of the purpose of our address, to consider what Legislatures, not only of this land, but of every land, are, as they stand at present. Woman! you shall then determine for yourselves whether what you covet is worth the possession.

What are governments? They are supposed to be a class of persons, or one person; a few persons, possessing the power, ability, and strength, mentally and physically, to represent and govern the masses. We look abroad upon the earth this day, and we do

not see, throughout its length and breadth, one single legislative body which answers this purpose, — no, not one! What are the interests to be represented? Is there a legislative body upon the face of the earth, where one of its members dares to rise up, and, in the face of scorn and ridicule, ask the question — "Do spirits communicate?" Is there that Senate, Legislature, Parliament, or Congress upon earth where one dares to stand up and say — "What are the evidences of immortality? Let us legislate and convene a council to inquire into this." Is there one who dares to ask — "What are the best means either of enforcing or of impressing upon the people the duty of doing to others as they would be done by?" Is there one legislative body upon this earth that possesses within itself those who know how to work in wood, iron, and steel? — who can paint, who can draw, who can build, who can fashion the tools of life, who can dig, who can sew, who can spin? And yet all these are represented — their interests, their wants, their demands. And how are they represented? In theory. Not one single operative by which the world's machinery rolls on do you ever find practically represented; that is to say, represented by the voice of one who can practically identify himself with the working of that which he claims to represent. The soul's best interest — the question of immortality — of life — of death — of religion, in a word — is supposed to be represented when men vote money to build churches and pay priests; but the working of that priesthood, the use to which those churches are devoted — shame and scorn would await that legislator, member of parliament, senator, or monarch, who should consider these worthy subjects for public discussion. To make a nation great, to make it strong and powerful, to devise the best means by which the few can govern the many, is the object of all human legislation.

Now, woman! raise thy voice in such an assemblage as this, and then see what good you will do. What is your mission? When we place it before you, you shall see how worse than useless would be the cry of thy beating, burning heart to give love and humanitarian considerations their full value in a legislative body. You may swell the numbers, you may swell the clamor, but you

never can be aught of use in a legislative body, until the people's interests, the people's work, the people's souls, and the people's moral relations are fairly represented. Do you wish to legislate concerning tariffs, and rates, and dues, and statistics, and weigh, measure, and gauge the heavy articles of commerce? Do you know the value of bales of wool and cotton?—and if you do not, you know nothing of the present system of legislation; and when Nature robs your cheek of its bloom, and your hair of its soft and silky waves; when she makes you coarse and strong, when she takes from your possession the poetry of life, when she converts your moon-like love and your star-like beauty into the strong, coarse, gairish light of day, then shall you weigh, and measure, and perform feats of physical force and strength, and then may you be fitted to have a voice in Legislatures, as they at present exist.

Wherever the true interests of the soul, of little children, of wives, mothers, and friends,—wherever the real interests of humanity, in short, are to be consulted, woman has her legislative power, her legislative sphere. She has it in the heart of her brother, her father, her husband, and from these alone go out those quaking emotions which redeem the world from being a mere mass of legislators, and makes it men and women.

Equal rights in voting? Voting, as a matter of course, belongs to the election of legislators. We leave the question where we leave legislation. In the future, when, as we before stated, the people shall be represented, woman will and must gravitate to her place. She need not ask it; she *must* be there. She now represents the heart and the brain; ere long she will open the gates of spirit land, and when all these shall be deemed worthy subjects for the mind, the genius, the heart, the spirit of a nation's legislation, then woman must of necessity gravitate to her place.

She asks, then, for equal personal rights, equal rights to her property, her children, in social life, in the means of acquiring knowledge and working it out in practice. And now, O woman! we clasp hands with thy demand; and let us see what thou canst do, and what the world, or the interests of the world, has hitherto condemned thee to do. What art thou chiefly fit for? There are

three specialities which grow out of the very structure of woman, for which she herself is the leading speciality in the race. The first of these is teaching. That which can receive inspiration from the spirit world for the benefit of humanity, must, above all things, be the best qualified to give these inspirational thoughts forth. As woman is more apt to receive, quicker to perceive; so she reads the spirit of humanity as quickly, as aptly, as she is approached by the disembodied spirit of humanity. She can read the spirit of pain; she can read the spirit which is aspiring, and longing, and struggling to express its thoughts, and finding words too feeble to do it; she can read the spirit of anxiety and suffering, with a gentle aptitude, which man, with a judgment that weighs and measures the mere externality, would too often hide, instead of revealing. She can therefore perceive and appreciate the spirit of the little child, the spirit of the rising generation, the spirit of those who need that instruction which she is so well qualified to receive from the spheres of those who are the best qualified to teach; and therefore, as a teacher, woman, above all other occupations, is pre-eminently destined to shine.

Next, as a physician. Deepest, strongest of all ties—that which administers to physical suffering, and builds up the shattered temple of the spirit; that spirit which never can fairly express itself except the temple be perfect, except the organism be in firm and pure health. As a physician,—because she is constituted to be a teacher, because her sympathies are strong and her perception quick,—woman is especially fitted to shine.

Last and highest, that of the mother. This, of necessity, we include, because, as we stated in our preamble, a woman who does not fulfil the mission Nature has stamped upon her, as the half of that which is to give birth to a third, loses her mission, and stands in an exceptional place.

Now, let us consider what woman can do beyond this. Wherever, in knowledge, in art, in science, in use, in information to be communicated, to be acted out, her brother can shine, there is woman calculated to walk with him side by side. We exclude her alone from those positions where mere physical force, and the habits, practices, and knowledge resulting from physical force, are needed. With this one exception, woman,

in her place, is surely a companion meet for man, in all respects his equal; and every institution which will instruct and develop her in this plane of action should be open to woman. But how is it? In what way has this capacity in woman been unfolded? Now mark! In all families the same course is followed out; no matter whether high or low, from the prince to the beggar, there is not to be found in civilized Europe or pioneering America, one family where the males have not some object or purpose in life, and where they are not instructed for this. Granted that wealth and station may shine upon them; that there is no necessity for them to labor, either to attain a position, or to obtain wealth and honor; then they are instructed as travellers, navigators, writers, legislators. To shine, to adorn, to propel forward the wheels of progress in some way or other, is the glorious mission vouchsafed by society to every masculine member of the human family. How is it with woman? In extreme infancy, the brother and sister are educated alike; but from the very moment when characteristics begin to stamp individuality upon the child, the brother and sister are separated; the brother is destined to the glorious field of use, the sister is polished for the market of marriage. But one mission is open to woman—that of being laid on the counter for man to choose, as toy or ornament. Externalities—all externalities; for she cannot go forth to ask for herself that companion which her soul may yearn for, but she must be laid like the ware of the trader exposed to view, all those qualities sharpened, refined, brought to the external, which will fit her for the marriageable market.

Alas! alas! Woman, we fear we grate upon thy loving heart by this sad picture, but the deeper we cut into the heart of society, the more clearly do we perceive that this most bitter doom lies at the root of all thy restless yearning for a better and higher destiny. Woman! thou dost not know to what thou art rushing when thou wouldst covet the grasp which the strong hand of man is holding, either upon the reins of government or the reins of power, but thou hearest thy crushed and breaking heart within calling for a mission, and man, and society, and thyself have forced thee into that extremism which is despoiling thy cheek of its bloom, and sully the fair and beautiful

name of woman. O, be it ours to rescue thee from this foul blot, to keep thee still pure and loving as thou art, and never to suffer thee to step outside of the flower-bed of purity and modesty!

Woman, then, demands a mission; woman demands occupation; she demands from father and mother, and guardians and society, from the very moment when she begins to manifest individuality of character, that she shall have some occupation, some place in life. Granted that she should be educated to be the companion of man; granted that this is the destiny of the sex; and so it is with man; man, too, should be educated to be the companion of woman; the very first teaching that a child should have should be instruction with regard to its own sex, its own structure, its own capacity, its own place in life; to know that each sex is to be the companion of the other; to be taught that to be this companion is the highest and holiest mission which men and women can perform in relation to each other. We would claim, then, that the very first knowledge which should be impressed upon children should be the duty that rests upon all, in the relation of male and female, to sustain, uphold, teach, and support each other.

Let us now consider the three positions—for there are but three—which woman occupies in regard to the future, one or the other of which is destined for her in every family. There are those placed above the necessity of laboring, or of becoming the wives of operatives, or of those with whom their uses, as wives and mothers, will be called into action. These are the daughters of fashion, and include all, of every rank and station, where lavish wealth is at command, and where they are expected to make what is termed high matches. How are they educated for this? Ornamented, polished, taught to govern a household,—that is, to command with graceful dignity those who are subordinate to them; taught those accomplishments, those graces, those duties, which become the matrons, queens, and aristocratic dames of fashionable life. Beyond this, there is no teaching for woman. She may be painter, poet, architect, designer; she may be any thing that the world deems of use, *in the germ*, but the education specially-calculated to refine and polish the mistress of a fam-

ily, is all that is given to the daughters of the rich and great.

O, think what magnificent uses are before every human soul! O, think how glorious it is to gaze upon the shining stars, to look into the eyes of God, and measure their height and depth, and know the meaning of those shining, wondrous things that tell such a tale of immensity! Why should not woman be an astronomer? Why should she not deal with those vast and sublime speculations that gauge the skies, and draw the heavens down to the comprehension of man? And think what magnificent uses are those which have invented the telescope, the glass, the beads, and all the various appliances of science, by which this marvellous heaven is mapped out! The art of the navigator—does it consist alone in propelling the ship, in bearing a part in all the hard labor which is performed, and performed willingly, by the noble tars of the ocean? No; it consists in that more subtle generalship that measures the deep; that scans, with the far-seeing eye of science, the shoals and depths of the mighty ocean; that wanders, in search of knowledge, round the world; that dreads neither heat nor cold, nor the perils of the sea, nor rock-bound coasts; that builds light-houses, and invents all the appliances by which man may be safe when crossing the mighty deep, and know that the strong arm of science is controlling the treacherous element upon which he is floating. And why should not the mind of woman follow the mariner forth? Why should not she, with her clear intellect and her brilliant genius, contribute to the safety of husband or father, or poor ship boy, from whom she parts with such anxiety and grief?

O mother! mother! what a glorious mission would that be, when thou hadst sent thy sailor boy forth, to stay at home, and with the eye of love kindling from the genius within, inspect the deep mysteries of science, drag them forth, and pile them up like a tower of strength around the orphans and fatherless children who are to be sent forth like thine own loved one! The strength of thy love, the power of thy faith, would give a light to the chambers of thy brain that would enable thee to drag down all the secrets of the skies, and make them thine own. There is not a thought which the deep, heavenly nature of woman

may not quicken into better and higher uses than the sovereign of the world has yet been able to discover. We can see no limit to the power of woman to enter into the chambers of knowledge; we can see no bound which should hedge in the genius of woman; but we can see, in the fine and ever-revolving wheels of her womanly nature, so many levers, so many propelling powers, that we ask thee, O man, for thy own best interests, to open the doors of thy colleges and schools, and permit thy helpmeet to walk in, and do thee a better service than thou canst render for thyself. O, think what thou wilt do for that army, which at present is but an army of martyrs, the dolls of the drawing-room, the mere glittering children of fashion, who troll their silks and satins along the highway, desolate for want of an occupation, with all the yearning aspirations of their souls going forth in the wrong direction! You cannot crush them out of life; there they are, and they will find an outlet. And how do they find it? They fall upon what you leave for them—the shop windows, the toys and frivolities of life, or, it may be, upon those minds and hearts which are more fitted to reciprocate all those yearning and burning thoughts within them, that without one consideration of the worth of the flower they are plucking, crop it, appropriate it, and when the world's scorn has warned them that society has hedgerows beyond which it is crime to tread, then, alas! woman finds that in her yearning to escape from a life of idleness and frivolity, she has purchased the sword of knowledge which wounds her own fair fame, and leaves her a wreck upon society.

We now look to those who have been helped up, and ever will be, as the patterns, the models of their sex and of their mission—the wives and mothers of the land. We grant they are models, but, O man! hast thou the least comprehension of what the life of one of these models is? Let us take one simple illustration. Here is a fair and beautiful woman you have brought to your home, arrayed in youth, and health, and strength. You do not know, for you have never sounded, the depths of her genius and her capacity. You toil, you drudge, in city life, and you attribute to yourself merit for the toil, merit for the drudgery. You well know that locked up in her mind is the

capacity to relieve thee of more than half thy burden of toil and drudgery, wouldst thou but let her help thee; but no, she is to be the *good* wife, the *good* mother. We see her day after day, with one little one after another clinging around her. At last, she is the centre of a fair and beautiful group. Now, go forth to that sphere—where woman in her lowest capacity is found—amongst the hirlings of life. Bring home one of these, and ask her to become cook, laundress, seamstress, teacher, nurse, slave to this fair and beautiful group, and she will tell you that no wealth you could offer would induce her to undertake such a mission; she could not do it. She will be your cook, or housemaid, or laundress, your teacher, your nurse, she will undertake the charge of *one*; but you ask your wife, or rather you *charge* your wife, to undertake the charge of *all* these; and, more than all, you ask her, when weary and harassed with the cares of the children around her, and worn out with the toil and drudgery of every day life,—you ask her, when you return at night, to be the star of your fireside; to greet you with the merry laugh; and while her spiritless, worn-out frame is sinking with exhaustion, you expect her to administer the elixir of cheerfulness to you, because you have been toiling and drudging to sustain your household.

O man! you do not know, you cannot conceive the wrong you are doing, not alone to such martyrs as these, but to the children, each one of whom, with its peculiar characteristics, requires some special training to unfold the flower of its nature. In each department which the poor hard-working drudge at home is compelled to undertake, she leaves undone some duty, some necessary elaboration of her child's character. Wonder not that imperfect physical organizations and imperfect mentality are eliminated from such households as these. Men and women grow up by accident, and but for that "cloud of witnesses," but for those household fairies, unseen but never unfelt, whom God has charged by inspiration with constant guardianship to watch around the children of men, the spirits nearest and dearest in affinity to every household, humanity would be a mere wreck, because the burden of humanity,—of educating, training, drudg-

ing, slaving for humanity, — has fallen upon one frail, helpless woman, with but half of the qualifications to fulfil these duties. It is considered disgraceful for a woman to study anatomy, and yet she is required to comprehend the anatomical structure of her children, and provide for all their ills; to train up their physique in that order which can alone proceed from knowledge, except accident or some invisible hand is at work to help the poor mother. She is expected to train her children in the way they should go. To-day this uneducated woman, the doll of the street, the boarding-house, and the saloon, is expected to comprehend the fine strings of human character; she who has never been taught what mentality is, or what eternity, or spirit life, or what the immortal soul is, — she is expected to administer to and fashion the peculiarities of every one of those children, and see that none of them diverge into the paths of immorality and crime.

We say little more of the household duties; it is enough that they consume time. Well, what is time? A mere grain of sand—a mere drop in the ocean of eternity. Ay, but that grain is the molecule that fashions the being that is to live through eternity; that grain of time which is the earth-life, is to decide the destiny of the being through eternity. But what can woman do for her soul? What can she do for her spirit? What can she do for all those aspirations, those thoughts, those hopes, which stretch out to infinity in the scholar, in the student, in man, in his moments of reflection? O woman! sitting with dim eyes and fading cheek—the little capital upon which thou traded thyself into marriage, thy beauty, fading day by day—well mayst thou sit and look into the dim unknown, and ask, "When will the hour of release come? When will the bright doors of spirituality open and let my soul go through, and recognize that its mission is to live throughout eternity?"

That is the condition of woman—not exaggerated, scarcely colored—for our time will not allow us to speak of the details of the life of what you term a good wife and a good mother. It is enough to say that it is to be harnessed to earth, on earth to be dragged along; and if the spirit can soar

through the crust of that life, it is by God's mercy in opening the brain of woman to the possibility of being inspired.

We take the lowest condition of woman, — that of the domestic servant, — that of the spinster, who is expected to earn her own bread by the work of her own hands, in factories, in schools as a teacher, or a mere drudge, scrubbing in household work. That is the lowest sphere open to woman. We grant that with the very lowest range or sphere, the absence of responsibility may also be the absence of misery; that here, in her very condition as a nonentity, as a mere household broom, used by the hands of others to sweep along the ground, — we grant that here she may be free from those thorns which the yearning of the spirit to know itself may thrust into the souls of those situated in a more intellectual sphere. But O! think what it is to chain woman, to chain any human being, any soul, any spirit, down to such a sphere! Is there no remedy for this?

We have not yet spoken of the Magdalens of life. They shall have a chapter yet out of our warm heart's love; but we reserve it for to-night. We speak now only of the occupation of women. We have placed before you, as best we may, what it is. We must now hasten to see what she can do, not by way of remedying, but by way of preventing, the terrible evils to which this limited sphere chains her down. And now, O woman! we call upon thee to help thyself. Thou canst not obtain what thou wouldest have from legislation; thou canst not secure it by uprooting any of the institutions of earth — no good or benefit ever results from the violent disruption of old forms — you must obtain it by the assertion of that soul within, of that spirit within, which will make itself felt, which will make its mark upon the world in such beautiful and gentle characters that man shall be proud, and not unwilling, to recognize thy rights. It is, then, to start with — mothers! sisters! friends! we beg, we beseech of you, to lend an earnest ear to this portion of our subject — it is, to start with, to determine that every female child shall have her mission in life, her occupation; that from the princess on the throne to the beggar by the wayside, each female child shall be trained, like her brother, to do something to earn her bread,

and make herself an occupation in whatever sphere her mind and her heart shall fit her for. There are two branches of education that should be arbitrary upon every woman; the first is some knowledge of anatomy and physiology, to enable her to be a physician; and the second, some knowledge of mentality, to enable her to be a teacher. Arm her with the capacity to deal thus with the bodies and souls of her fellow-creatures, and you give her a sword that will enable her to cut her way from end to end of the earth. Say not it is impossible for woman to study the human system. Physiology and mentality are more easily studied than arithmetic, geometry, grammar, or reading; and these are simple sciences, which are taught in all your public schools, to the lowest and least of God's children. And why should not these most important and beneficent branches of instruction, physiology and mentality, be added to, — ay, supersede, if it must be so, — those branches which may be said to be useless, in comparison with these two grand and glorious means of occupation? If she has no speciality, woman — from the highest to the lowest, as a teacher, as a physician — will find her occupation, will walk the earth a ministering angel, elevating the race, sweeping away, with the wand of strength, power, and knowledge, every disease to which flesh is heir. We say this with reference to all.

Following upon this, let her, if she will, choose a special occupation. Let it be disgraceful for the women, for the daughters and sisters of life, to have no occupations, as it would be disgraceful for men to fritter away the noble energies of manhood, and spend their days in idleness and uselessness, — the drones of life. You never find them doing it; and woman can no more bear the absence of this speciality than can man; injury, deterioration, to mind and body, spirit and soul, result alike to man or woman, in such a case.

But you will say, "Of what value will this occupation be to wives and mothers?" Here is the point where we can conceive many a wife and mother may take leave of us; but we trust not. We trust you will follow us a little longer. You are now a wife and mother; you have an occupation, you have a station, a business, a profession, and that which places you on an equality

with man. Now assert that equality. You need not lie on the shelf, waiting for man to purchase you. Go forward, and in the noble trade of exchange, place yourself and your qualifications before him whom you would deem practically your companion; treat men as men should treat you — as their equal. You bring to your husband the ability to share with him the charge of maintaining your household. You are now upon an equality with him; you are now a wife. The morning comes. The husband goes forth to his occupation, and so does the wife. It may be that, in the enjoyment of wealth and station, he merely goes forth as the soldier, the merchant, the legislator, or the man of leisure, to travel, or the man of intellect and science, to gather up the fruits of science. Why should not the wife do the same? The hours of the day roll by, and when evening comes both meet on equal terms; both bring home the gathered treasures of life, which only result from going forth into the world's great mart, and mutually exchanging, man and woman, woman and man, the wealth that each possesses. Then, indeed, are they companions meet for one another. There is no inequality; there is no weariness; there is no lack of interest between them. It is the reunion of equal minds.

But granted, that the man is an artisan or operative. Look on the blessings that will result from the fruits of the labor of his companion. Each works in his or her sphere. "But," you say, "there is the position of mother." We grant this. Now comes the pain, and suffering, and arbitrary occupation of maternity. But even this is a portion of the burden which equalizes the action of the two. While the woman is compelled to endure the seclusion, and retirement, and suffering of home life, she is then bringing her meed of occupation towards the general whole. She is now a *mother*. Does she still go forth? Why not? We have called upon every woman to be educated as a teacher — as a physician. We have now in the world trained bands of nurses and teachers. There are those who are better qualified to train, teach, and guide the young than the mother. She cannot bear the burden alone. Now, look for yourselves at the smile of delight which greets the father on his return home. What child does not cling more lovingly to the father on account of his ab-

sence? Would children love their mother less because they had been, for some portion of the day, committed to the healthful care of one who has learned, through the teachings of science, how to train and how to guide them? No; they would love both mother and father better than when, as is too often the case, on the return of the father at night, he finds a perpetual scene of altercation, with a harassed mother, and a troop of children, all clamorous and headstrong, and beyond her power to govern. They now meet as a happy family circle, and the events of the day's experience are canvassed, adding link by link to the interest, the joy, and the happiness of this meeting. The mother may, if she is qualified to do so, undertake this office of teacher, if she does it professionally. She then does it still on an equality with her husband; she professionally hires herself as teacher, nurse, and physician to her children. But if she chooses rather to devote her energies to another sphere, we have, as we stated, this universal system of education, fitting woman to govern; we have trained bands of teachers, better qualified than the mother, ready and able to occupy the place which the mother, in order to pursue her out of door occupation, temporarily abandons.

There is but one more point upon which we shall insist. What is to be the occupation of the higher classes? The ladies, the princesses, the fair flowers of earth — how shall they find themselves employed in this general scheme? We answer, let the daughters of fashion, and pride, and luxury band themselves together to teach the poor and the lowly, who cannot afford to pay for the instruction. Let them enter the hovels of the poor, let them occupy the place of nurse, and physician, and teacher, but for one hour of the day, and, O! what an amaranthine wreath of grace and beauty, of use and purpose, would they bind around their fashionable heads! Would they descend? You may talk of descending; we tell you, O woman! that every step into the hovels of the poor, every door which opened to admit thy grace, thy beauty, thy fashion, bearing with thee thy purity, thy wisdom, thy refinement, would build thee a Jacob's ladder upon which thou shouldst ascend to heaven.

This is what we propose as a general system of occupation for woman. None should

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be excluded from it. It should be shameful for any woman to be unemployed. Make this her sphere; make this her mission; make her a helpmeet for man; and then, O woman! instead of the mere flower thou hast hitherto been, thou shalt be the fruit of life, which thy companion shall pluck, and perceive that he is partaking indeed of the fruit of the Tree of Life, and not of that of Good and Evil.

O fair and beautiful woman! not to overstep the boundary which Nature has set for thee, but to make thyself a ministering angel upon earth, we beseech thee to arise in thy strength, in thy spirituality, and make for thyself a place in future generations. For the evils that have now fallen upon thee, for thy degradation and suffering, there may be little or no remedy in the present generation; but in the future, it is for thee to build up a race of ministering angels, going forth to elevate

and purify society, from the highest to the lowest; no more the dolls of fashionable life, no more the vapid and useless ornaments of saloons and society, but ministering angels, *useful* as well as *good* women. Women! this is the mission, this the place we ought to fill.

This night, we propose, in further elaboration of our subject, to consider the sacrament, bond, or institution of Marriage.

To Him, the Mother and Father, of the race—the flower, the fruit, the tree, the Great Spirit—who sees heart and purpose, who has stamped upon fair and beautiful woman the image of his soul, while He left upon man the impress of his divine form, we now in all humility commend our spirits!