

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
TENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION  
OF THE  
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS,  
Held at Grow's Opera Hall, Chicago, on  
Tuesday, Sept. 16.

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MORNING SESSION.

The Tenth Annual Convention of the American Association of Spiritualists was opened in Grow's Hall, Chicago, on Tuesday morning, the 16th day of September, 1873. The Convention was called to meet at 10 o'clock A. M., at which hour the hall was well filled with delegates. Previous to formally opening the business of the Convention, some informal remarks were made. The following is a verbatim report of the proceedings and speeches :

Mr. JOHN GAGE, of Vineland, N. J., speaking from the middle of the hall and referring to the reports of Mrs. Woodhull's lecture delivered on the preceding evening, and the late Convention of Spiritualists in McHenry county, Ill., appearing in the morning papers of the city, said:

*Ladies and Gentlemen*—You have seen the reports and articles appearing in the papers published in this city this morning, in reference to this body and the lecture of our esteemed president, Mrs. Woodhull. If the language used at our Convention in McHenry county was not as good, respectful and decent language as could be used by anybody, I do not know it, the *Times* to the contrary notwithstanding. I would like to have Mrs. Severance speak to the congregation here for about ten minutes, and then, when that time is over, we will wish that she had spoken a little longer.

Mrs. SEVERANCE, of Wisconsin, said:

I am very happy to meet all of you this morning, and as Brother Gage has referred to the McHenry Convention, I will say right here that we had a glorious Convention. It was very largely attended, and appointed fifteen delegates to this body. Of course, as should be the case in all spiritualistic gatherings, different reform questions came up for discussion, and it happened to be my lot, as it generally is, to speak on the most unpopular subject that was brought before the Convention. My lecture on Saturday evening was on Freedom, considered religiously, politically and socially, and of these, that of social freedom was the greatest feature. The consideration of this question was the chief feature of the Convention, and I can truly say, and many witnesses will testify to the truth, that my lecture was received with great enthusiasm by the people, and particularly that part of it devoted to the question of social freedom. Nevertheless, as we must necessarily expect, the reporters of the secular press came out, as the reporters came out with regard to Mrs. Woodhull's speaking, and denounced my remarks as an obscene lecture. Now, if that reporter had come out and charged me with having given a very pure lecture, I should have felt ashamed of myself, because I should have known had they reported me in this way, that I had said nothing that was not in perfect harmony with the unadvanced mass of people. [Cheers]. Why, we expect nothing less of the reporters; and when they said that I had "out Heroded Herod," that I had done worse than Mrs. Woodhull, they could not have paid me a higher compliment. When I gave that lecture, I spoke what I believed to be the truth; I used as decent language as I could in which to express my ideas, and to show the points which I wished to make. They said that I told stories that were vile and obscene, and used words that were not fit to report. Now, to give you a sample of what I did say, I will tell you what took place. There was a question asked by some one in the audience, as to the great matter of women devoting their lives to the rearing of children! I said, that when women had the control of this matter, they would not be constantly burdened with maternity, and I said further, that I would like to tell a little incident that occurred to Mrs. Stanton, when on the road to California. She was met by a small

cranky specimen of a man, who pompously said to her: "My wife has raised or is raising fourteen children; has she not done more for the country than those people who go around and 'stump,' and make a great noise?" Mrs. Stanton calmly looked over the little man, and then said to him, very quietly: "I have seen very few men that were worthy of being repeated fourteen times." [Laughter]. That was the "dirty" story I told. [Cheers].

But when I say that we have no right to expect that the secular press will report us correctly, there is one place where I think we have a right to be so reported, and that is in those papers that profess to take an interest in the cause of humanity.

When I see that a spiritualistic paper, published even in the city of Chicago, has said meaner, lower, more foul things of the great social reform than any secular paper I have ever read, I am simply telling the truth, and you that have read the paper know it. [Applause.] Now, editors, to be sure, are very sensitive people, and our special editor in this city of Chicago is an extremely sensitive man; yet, nevertheless, we want justice done us. Our Convention in McHenry county was a perfectly orderly Convention. There was perfect harmony. In regard to harmony in conventions, I love it, if it can exist and the great questions of the day be discussed. But that convention, whose only idea of harmony is stagnation—that harmony which only comes because vital questions are left out in the discussions—I will say, I would rather have a good square fight on some important matter than have harmony because there was no important matter to discuss. [Cheers.] I think the time has come when we, as a body of spiritualistic men and women, have grown to the condition that we can discuss calmly, dispassionately, the great questions that involve the interests of humanity without recrimination, without personalities, but with a love of truth and principles. And this is what I wish to say to the members of this Convention. I know that there are a great many people coming to this Convention, with a variety of opinions. I know the two great classes of Spiritualists—the radicals and conservatives—will be represented here, and I want this Convention to be conducted on a fair and square plan; that if the majority of the Spiritualists here, represent-

ing the Spiritualists throughout the country, shall decide that Spiritualism means only the phenomenal part, then let them have the control of this Convention; and if we, as I hope we shall, look for bigger things—if the majority of the Spiritualists here assembled shall decide that Spiritualism is broad enough, high enough and deep enough to take in all the reform movements of the day—to take in everything that shall make of us better men and women here and hereafter, I shall rejoice. [Applause.] I believe that the majority of Spiritualists who are here assembled will take this broad conception of the Spiritualistic movement of the nineteenth century. But above all things, let us have honesty; let us have fairness in action, and let us abide the decision of the majority without bitterness of feeling or anything of the sort, and let us show ourselves to be men and women grown beyond the narrowness of conception of the great mass of the people. I will not occupy your time longer. I have spoken ten minutes already, and now I wish to hear from different members of this Association, assembled from the various parts of this country, their views no matter what they may be; because on this platform, upon which every individual may speak, is permitted the highest freedom of speech, subject, of course, to parliamentary usages. [Cheers].

A VOICE—I want to ask whether those who are not delegates can speak?

MRS. SEVERANCE—Any person present at this hour can speak.

MRS. SADIE BAILEY, of Waukegan, Ill.—Can I be allowed to read a poem which I think would be very proper, and which I think is very good. It is entitled “Spiritual Welcome to the Delegates.”

From the glorious Summer Land  
Where the “Shining Spirits” stand,  
We have come.  
Where the flowers are in bloom  
And the air is all perfume,  
There we roam.  
But our duty calls us here  
To our brethren, sisters, dear,



So before you we appear  
From our home.

For the time it is at hand  
When the world shall made a stand  
For the right;  
And the moment it is near  
When assistance shall be here—  
"Spirits bright."  
Then for all the truth stand firm  
That 'tis given you to discern,  
And the martyr's glory earn  
In the fight.

For the sorrow and the crime  
Of this dark and evil time  
It shall fall;  
And the shams shall pass away  
That so long have held their sway  
Over all.  
Like an infant at its birth  
Let the peoples of the earth  
Awake to know the worth  
Of the call.

With a magic and a power  
Never known until this hour  
Beats our drum !  
And the dwellers in the world  
As our white flag is unfurled,  
How they come !  
Then away with doubt and care,  
For there's music in the air,  
And the time to do and dare  
Has begun.

Let all shout with love and truth  
As the earth renews its youth,  
Jubilee !  
Let the valleys swell the sound  
And the mountains shake the ground  
With their glee !  
Let the birds of heaven bear  
The glad message through the air  
That the "Sons of Men" declare  
They are free.

From the happy Summer Land  
 Where the "Shining Spirits" stand,  
 We have come.  
 Where the flowers are in bloom -  
 And the air is all perfume  
 There we roam ;  
 But our duty calls us here  
 To our sisters, brethren, dear,  
 So before you we appear  
 From our home.

**Mrs. Bailey continued—**

*Brothers and Sisters*—Excuse my seeming egotism; but on taking the stand, humbly as I do, at this time, I felt the poem was so appropriate and inspiring, and that it would be a good beginning. And with an earnest prayer in my heart, dear sisters and brothers, that whatever may be the work of this Convention, we will earnestly seek pure and holy truth, whatever it may be, with earnest prayer that wisely-developed spirits may accept our action, and that, overcoming all evil, we may take our stand in the fight of which Sister Severance speaks. Oh, yes, the fight, in peace and love, for truth and right. [Cheers].

Mrs. Rhoda A. Loomis, of Battle Creek, said:

I presume there are many of our gentlemen friends here who would like to have a word to say in this Convention. But I feel that this is a women's meeting. It should be a women's meeting. We have all come here for a good time, and it is right for us to hear from the women, consequently I represent that part of the Convention. I have a poem here that I would like to read in the presence of this Convention. It is a poem written by Mrs. L. E. Drake on "Progression; or, I Wish It Were Respectable." You know there are a great many things that are not respectable at this time, and there are a great many things considered respectable which are not so. I would like to read the poem. [Go on.] It is as follows:

#### I WISH IT WERE RESPECTABLE.

I wish it were respectable to lead an honest life,  
 To speak the truth at every turn, no matter for the strife,  
 That bibles, books and selfish priests have taught so very long;  
 I wish it were respectable to sing another song.

I wish it were respectable hypocrisy to shun,  
 And let the world know what we are, by what we've said and done;  
 To teach the little children they are not all defiled,  
 Because Eve ate that apple where knowledge sweetly smiled.

I wish it were respectable an infidel to be,  
 To every false theology, on ocean, land or sea;  
 To loose all chains of slavery, that custom's laws have forged,  
 And pull down every throne on earth where sits a mortal lord.

I wish it were respectable for woman to be free,  
 To own the soul God gave to her, and from all bondage flee;  
 That man no more shall be her lord, to tell her when and where  
 She may learn wisdom from his lips, and when she must forbear.

I wish it were respectable for man to learn the cause,  
 That woman, too, is human, made so by Nature's laws;  
 And so amend his customs, his prejudice forsake,  
 That she may be a helpmeet in all the laws he makes.

I wish it were respectable to reason out the plan,  
 How Nature caused this earth to be, and how the law made man;  
 And if the true philosophy should kill the BIBLE GOD,  
 I wish it were respectable to put him 'neath the sod.

I wish it were respectable to love all days alike,  
 And not on Sunday preach and pray, and Monday morning fight;  
 To know that all the week is good, was so by Nature given,  
 And Sunday not the only day to learn the way to Heaven.

I wish it were respectable for Freedom to be bold,  
 To grapple with o'd Tyranny that long has cursed the world,  
 And hurl him from his gilded throne to unknown depths below;  
 Oh! if it were respectable it shortly would be so.

I wish it were respectable to strangle gray-haired lies,  
 And not because they're *old and gray* applaud them to the skies;  
 To place all dogmas, books and creeds upon their real worth,  
 And if they do not stand the test, count them of good a dearth.

I wish it were respectable to own we don't believe  
 That Jonah lived in whaledom, so long, and took his ease;  
 Or Elijah, with his fiery coach, went up to Heaven so high.  
 Oh! I wish it were respectable to say, "*That is a lie!*"

I wish it were respectable, when women tell the truth,  
 And place before the people all the page of written proof;  
 For men to have some honor then, and love of human right,  
 And not, because exposure comes, get mad and try to fight!

But deal with women justly, when coward hosts assail,  
 And hunt them down like beasts of prey, or shut them up in jail!  
 Oh! I wish that men could act like *men*, at least when honor calls,  
 And let the truth be ever proved, though priests and lords should fall!

I wish it were respectable for ministers of grace,  
 If they have loved another's wife, and *kissed* her out of place,  
 To be no cowards at their posts, but own the truth as well,  
 And let the world say what it will, or send them straight to Hell!

[Cheers.]

Mrs. Severance, acting as chairman, said: Any one can address the meeting.

Benjamin Todd, of Michigan, said:

I am very happy to meet you all here in this Convention; I am happy to see so many old faces with which I was well acquainted long years ago—during the fifteen years that I have traveled through the North-west, since the early days of Spiritualism, carrying its doctrines with me wherever I went. Now, knowing that there are a great many, and expecting that there will be a great many more in this Convention that are far greater than I am, and that will occupy all the time in which addresses will be made, I think I had better take my ten minutes this morning. There will be no difficulty about it, for I will be able to have my little say in about that time. When coming to this Convention yesterday in the cars, a thought struck me. I ran that thought out a little bit, and I am going to give you the result. It was this: I am an individual; I stand here an individual before you this morning. I have a head on my shoulders, and I have some brains in it. That head I have a right to use just as I please, and no one questions that right at all. I have a right to use my brain, intellectually, for forethought, for calculation or for anything that contributes to my happiness, whoever questions. I have two ears with which I can hear, I can receive sweet sounds that fill my soul with joy. I can do with them as I please, and nobody in the world will interfere to restrict me in any way. I have two eyes with which I can see the beautiful. I cast them around and behold the beautiful flowers, and then gratify my ideality and sublimity, and nobody questions the right to use my eyes in any way. I have two hands with which I toil. I can toil for my

bread—I can use them in any way I please and no one denies me the right. I have a stomach that calls for bread, and no one denies me the right to satisfy its cravings, if I do it in a proper manner. I can walk a long time, having strength, and nobody denies me the right to do so if I choose. Hence you will see I am a perfectly free individual, until I find I have sexual organs. May I not use them? Oh, no, you must not use them without being governed by some one. There is a grand, holy trinity that comes up to me and says that I shall not exercise my freedom in this respect. Who are they? They are Mr. Law, Mr. Gospel and Mrs. Grundy. Now, Mrs. Grundy is shared both by Mr. Law and Mr. Gospel, so that I think we will have to come to the conclusion that Mr. Law and Mr. Gospel indulge in a little promiscuity on their own account with Mrs. Grundy. [Laughter.] But Mrs. Grundy says: “It will not be proper to do it; you will be disgraced all over the land if you exercise these functions.” Mr. Law says: “If you dare to exercise these functions without my sanction I will send you to jail, to State’s prison, or something of the kind. You must not do it.” And Mr. Gospel comes along and says: “If you dare to use these functions of your nature I will send you to hell.” And that is just where the thing lies: one is going to send to State’s prison, the other to hell, while the third says we will not be popular. The question arises: Shall we obey this trinity or not? Why should any one of us believe that God Almighty sent us adrift on the sea of time, knowing when he did that it was necessary there should be a written law to govern us in relation to our sexual relations, and yet leave us free in regard to all the others? If it is necessary that law should govern us in this respect, why did He not send along a little screed of law among us? But He did not seem to have considered it any more necessary to guard these peculiar organs and functions than He did to guard any of the rest. No, in no way whatever. Then, shall we allow men to come up and control this matter? That is just what the world is trying to do to-day. There is a difference here. They say that God Almighty or old Mother Nature (I don’t care which) did not understand their business, did not complete the work which she began, did not finish it up in style, and the Law says it is



going to finish it up, and the Gospel says it is going to, too. But I tell you what it is, the Gospel has got to be an old, grey-headed body; the body is becoming diseased and the dry-rot is in its brains, and it stands whining around Mr. Law and Mrs. Grundy, asking them to help in making him whole again. Now, the question lies right here: Shall we or shall we not be free, independent individuals, and declare ourselves independent, or no? Shall we bow down to the shrine of Law or Gospel or Mrs. Grundy or any one else? [Cheers.] Well, I want to tell you that as for you and your house you can serve Baal if you like; as for me and mine we serve the Lord, and that Lord lies right here (striking his breast). There is my God, and I am going to serve him. [Applause.]

Mr. D. W. Hull, of Indiana, said:

I hold in my hand a parchment, which I will read:

*Indiana State Spiritual Association—To all whom these Letters may come, greeting:*

Know ye that the State Spiritual Association of Indiana, reposing special confidence in D. W. Hull, do hereby recommend, to all whom it may concern, our dear brother, having appointed him to preach the Gospel, solemnize marriages, bury the dead and do all other things pertaining to the functions of the ministers of the Gospel generally. By order of the Executive Board of the State Indiana Spiritual Association. In testimony whereof we have attached our names, causing the seal of the State Association to be affixed, on this 4th day of May, 1870.

SAMUEL MAXWELL, President.

LORENZO B. WILSON, Secretary.

I want to show you just how much reverence I have for that paper. I have never tied anybody together so that they could not be cut apart, and I do not think that I have any authority to do so. So here, in the presence of this Association, I wish to tear up that paper (which was done amid cheers). I have no use for it, and I do not wish to keep it.

Mrs. Lois Waisbrooker, of Battle Creek, Mich., said:

*Ladies and Gentlemen*—I do not know that I want to make a speech, but I want to tell you a story. I was awakened from my slumbers the other night by a rap on my door, and

I ascertained that it was a lady, a stranger—one that I had heard of, but never before seen. She introduced herself, and told me that she was on her way to Jackson, so that she could visit a friend there on the Sabbath, because she could not see him in the prison at any other time. She burst into tears as she spoke, as if her heart would break. "He is there for loving me," she said; and when she became quiet, she told me her story. It seems the man who called her wife was not suited to her, but this man had been her lover, with her consent, for years; that she had lived with him as husband just as soon as legal steps could be taken for the couple to be freed, and she and her lover recognized before the law. The respectable Spiritualists got alarmed, because this man was a Spiritualist. They raised the husband to a sense of his marital rights. They took the lover and tried him, and sent him to State's prison, and then, when the husband attempted to enforce his claims, the house was broken up, and the woman was cast out upon the public to sustain herself as best she might. I think, friends, when Spiritualists get so respectable that they try to enforce marital claims instead of the claims of love, it is time that they were crowned with the name "respectables." [Applause.]

Dr. Merton, of Battle Creek, Mich., said:

*Ladies and Gentlemen*—By those in our own ranks, I mean the reformers, those who call themselves such, and radicals and especially Spiritualists, as well as by those outside, it is charged upon us that we are sensualists. In one respect I believe in the senses. They are the only doors through which our knowledge of the external universe can reach my soul or my mind. The true use of these is as necessary and as noble as the highest conception of the human being can possibly reach. I say that these are the only doors to the temple of the mind, and in the use of the senses, in the true adaptation of the word, lies the true salvation of the human race. Now, if that is sensualism, I am a sensualist. It is charged that we believe that the lower parts of the human being should be let loose without any reins. Nothing could possibly be further from the truth. For we believe in the law of progress—and what does that law teach? Just as surely as there is a law of evolution, and there is no scien-

tific man in Europe or America who would deny it; and just as surely as that law exists, does man advance through all the phases of his individual life, from the rule of his faculties, which are the lowest in his brain, to those which are at the top. And I say that any one who believes in Spiritualism and has come to recognize that through this top-front, through the organ of inspiration here, man is raised, has received a great part of the law which is illuminating his pathway here and hereafter. It is the most cultivated of his faculties that dominates the man's character; and it is idle to say that we do not want to drag the moral elements, the moral sentiments down; we want to elevate the physical nature up to this high standard. As reformers, as phrenologists, for years even before Spiritualism was known, we held up a higher standard for the relation of the sexes—that it must be placed upon spiritual love, and that nothing less than this would satisfy the human being. We have held up this standard for thirty or forty years, and at this late date we shall not back down and be frightened by any one.

This question, which is now so terribly agitating us, must be solved by science. I, for one, though I am a Spiritualist, do not propose to smear it over by declamation or recriminations, by calling this man vile, or that woman vile and contemptible. How absurd it would be for you to attempt to settle the law of my vision, by calling me bad, or this or that woman bad. You know that you cannot settle this law in any such way, nor can you settle the laws of that one-third of the brain in which are located the social faculties, by any such process. Certainly you cannot. Science itself must furnish the only final solution, and any one who thinks that the question can be put off and turned aside has vastly mistaken the whole genius of human thought in modern times. You cannot do it. Now, in regard to throwing all law aside, we must speedily come to the point of recognizing the fact that the only laws a man can guide his social relationship by, when written down, are not binding unless they are based upon principle. [Cheers.] Then they will be written down, and we shall have as much written law and constitution in respect to the social faculties as the events demand.

Mrs. S. J. WARNER, of Wisconsin, said:

I heard a lady say before she stepped on this platform, that this was a woman's Convention. I certainly am in favor of woman's rights, but I suppose that they apply to man and woman alike. I supposed that this was a Convention of men and women to speak their honest conviction, to reason upon this great question of human life. I do not see how I can be separated from mankind. If not, what then? I do not see where the line of demarkation is to be drawn, and I think that she did not mean probably to be understood in the exact way her words might apply. The only cure that I can see for the ills that meet us in government, in social life, is to be found in the full education of the people to the understanding of this fact. [Cheers.] I cannot see what this taking of one side on the part of man or woman will accomplish; it seems to me that if I wish to create a better condition of things than exists to-day, I cannot do so by going abroad and telling what terrible bad things exist. Where is the cure? Is it in the cure of wholesale abuses upon this or that side of the question? It is in the fathers and mothers of this country understanding themselves, and bequeathing to their offspring the nature that shall lead them up to heaven's gate and make them suitable for spirit life, instead of lying down in the gutter of low desires. Who complains that he has not had his rights? It is the one who has had his hands so full that it was not possible for him to take the boon as it was carried past. We would strike down all theories that prevent the free discussion of all live issues, all truth; but to save men and women from falling into the gutter of intemperance, we must show them the true law of temperance. We cannot do it in any other way than the natural cure, that I can see. We shall clasp each other's hands and lift each other up to the great temple of thought and purity. [Cheers.]

Last Monday morning I started on a journey to go to the Convention, where I was engaged, and of which Sister Severance has spoken. When I reached Bureau Junction I was met by a telegram calling me to deliver a special discourse on Brother Thompson, at Aurora. When I stepped on the platform to give that discourse, I saw Brother Thompson and Brother Charles, who has been in the spirit world for a

long time. The thought came to me, how well it illustrated the beauties of Spiritualism. Brother Thompson had taught them the things he loved, and his influence had been uplifted far and near. But his wife did not feel that she was a widow. She felt the presence of those clasping arms. She could say to those who sympathized with her, and remarked, "Alas! you are alone"—"Oh, no; he is with me still." I thought how beautiful it was that the people could know that the resurrection was come, and that we could leap into the beautiful spheres of light and space, with all those whom we loved, where lived the noble men and noble women whose hands were extended to us in our hours of trial—who breathed from the home and the pulpit that great maternal feeling which uplifts and makes them equal with the gods. Oh, thus I pray our lives to be—that we shall so live from the real point of life, not from the point of mere theories. This is a convention, as I understand it, of men and women to learn their higher and nobler positions—to arrive at it by thought and action. May it be ours so to live every day of our lives that we shall cause the beautiful flowers of love and peace to spring up, that none need ask, when we have passed away, what we believed, for we shall have left behind us the positive effects of our belief in the beneficial works we have done for humanity.

Mr. A. C. Cotton, of Vineland, N. J., said—I did not think of occupying a moment of the time of the Conference this morning, but when our sister, Mrs. Severance, spoke of two classes—one class of Spiritualists who believe in nothing but the fundamental, and in nothing else; and of another class, who thought it was broad enough, high enough, and deep enough to grasp all questions, I thought that there should be another class represented here. I would make three classes. We all view things from different standpoints. I come here from the State of New Jersey, with a little oil in my vessel, and you know that the sea captains will tell you if the waves roll high, you start a little oil running and it will smooth the waves. I came here, questioning in my soul whether it were best to start a little oil and try and smooth the waves that will soon roll mountains high; or whether we had better let the storm go on, and those who have no boat take to the waves, and sink or swim. [Cheers.] Now, there is a class



that believes in evolution and another class that believes in revolution. I love one class just as well as the other; I am fully aware that conservatism here is unpopular; but in all my nature I have a desire to do the best thing in the best way. And here is the class that I represent—between the two extremes—one who believes in the phenomena, and one who believes that our glorious philosophy is strong enough to carry everything which it ought to carry, to grasp all subjects, to discuss all questions, and I most emphatically believe in a free platform. [Cheers]. Some one has said that, “there is no danger from error, if truth be left free to combat;” and the individual who is afraid to discuss this and any other question upon a free platform acknowledges the weakness of his cause. But now I say there is a class of individuals here who can see the way to accomplishing an object different from other individuals, and we know that that class—meaning us, as Spiritualists—believe that there is a way out of social evil rather than the way that the most radical point to—equally honest, and perhaps more numerous—and they all have rights. Now I believe that we have a right to think as we think, for whatever is, is true to the cause that produces it. Consequently, what is, is as right as it can be under the circumstances. [Laughter.] But when there are these individuals among us who declare to us that it is the highest type of humanity in the spiritual being to have his enjoyment mostly and most fully in the sexual relations, I say to him, it is not the truth for me. [Hisses and applause.] If that class of individuals say it is for me, and it is the best I can enjoy, go on and enjoy it. I cannot say to you that you must all at once come upon my plane of life with the angels, where there is no marriage nor giving in marriage. I will say to them, climb up as rapidly as you can, and here is my heart and hand to help you up. But in the coming of the angels I do not see that I must travel your road in order to get “the elixir of life” [great applause], and the joy that exists in existence. Now I did not get up only to say that you all have the same right that I have, and as conservatism is unpopular here, I shall stand here until I get a higher life, and stand upon my own individuality as others claim to stand upon theirs.

Dr. L. K. Coonley, of Vineland, N. J., who had taken the chair, said:

The time for ten-minutes' speech is up.

Victoria C. Woodhull, of New York, President of the Association, came forward and said:

The Convention will now come to order. I may state that at the meeting of the Board of Trustees we decided to ask Mr. W. F. Jamieson, of Michigan, to act as Secretary *pro tem*. He will now read the call for the Convention:

Mr. Jamieson then read the following call:

The Tenth Annual Convention of the American Association of Spiritualists will be held in Grow's Opera Hall, Chicago, beginning on Tuesday the 16th day of Sept. next, and continuing three days. Each society, association or body of Spiritualists in America is respectfully solicited to send delegates to this Convention according to the provisions of Article VI., section 3, of the Constitution.

By order of the Board of Trustees.

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL,

President of the Association.

Mrs. Woodhull—I will now introduce to this Convention Dr. L. K. Coonley, of Vineland, vice-president of this Association *ex-officio*.

Dr. Coonley said—In coming before you, friends, this morning in connection with this important association, surrounded as we are with conflicting elements in the great revolution that is taking place throughout the civilized world, we are necessarily met with obstacles in the smooth rolling way of conducting the business of the Association. The first obstacle that presents itself in our way is the absence of our regular secretary, Dr. H. T. Childs, of Philadelphia, who is not present, and has not forwarded his book. We have waited till the last moment; necessity now compels us to go on with the business of the Association. We have, however, seen a notice in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, to the effect that Dr. Childs will not be present—that he has

resigned his position as secretary of this Association. The books, however, have not been forthcoming. Another thing that stands in the way is the absence of the treasurer; and then another thing is the lack of the report that should be presented stating the condition of the Association and its surrounding circumstances at the present time. It is useless for me to advert to the events during the last year that have brought about this state of affairs. You all know as well as I do the terrible ordeal through which our president, Victoria C. Woodhull, has had to pass in the great struggle that is going on in the country at the present time. [Cheers.] What we want first of all in this Convention is to ascertain who are the delegates regularly qualified to take part in its deliberations and votes. In order that these delegates shall be perfectly qualified according to the constitution to take part in the exercises, not only must they have their names enrolled as delegates, but they must also come forward with the little sum of one dollar, which is the qualification for exercising the right of voting in this Convention. We have to lay this down clearly, you see, and we must do it until our enthusiasm shall get so individualized that we can recognize the individuality of other human beings without attempting to cramp them in their movements any further than they may cramp us in our movements. That is the position we occupy this morning, and it will be impossible for the Convention to go on smoothly until you appoint a committee of delegates to examine credentials, to whom delegates from all parts of the country will be required to hand in their credentials as delegates. We have been in the habit in this association of asking each State or particular locality to get together as quietly as possible, and ascertain those that are not present in their delegation, and by precedent, exercising the power of filling vacancies, and that will have to be done in the different States and Territories represented in this Convention. This movement has been established by the Association for the purpose of furthering and perfecting organization. At our last convention it was voted that the secretary look over the credentials, and

perhaps that is the quickest way. Let the delegates of each State and local society hand in their credentials to whoever be appointed by the Convention to investigate them. This matter is probably about as important as anything that can be done at this point.

Mr. Anthony Higgins, of New Jersey—Mr. Chairman, I move the appointment of a committee of four to examine credentials.

Mr. D. W. Hull—I move in amendment that the committee consist of five.

Mr. Higgins—I accept the amendment.

On the motion being put,

A delegate asked if the committee were to decide upon the question of the genuineness of credentials.

The Chairman—I suppose they are to determine what certificates are valid, which, I take it, is the usual course.

The resolution, as amended, was then carried.

The Chairman—The motion has been carried ; how will you appoint the committee?

Voices—By the Chair.

The Chairman—I think it will be better if the selection be by the people. I would rather not take the responsibility.

A Delegate—I would move that Mrs. Severance be appointed a member of that committee.

Seconded, and carried.

Judge Holbrook, of Chicago, was nominated by Mr. Cotton.

Mr. Hull—Judge Holbrook's credentials are to be tested.

Mrs. Severance—I do not think, Mr. President, that we have any right to presuppose what will be done.

The Chairman—It must be understood that the credentials of the delegates are required to be signed by the officers of the society sending such delegates. This, I think, will be understood by the committee ; and if the credentials presented by any delegate be so signed, they must of necessity be accepted as delegates.

Judge Holbrook—Will you allow me to speak a minute. Some gentleman took the stand this morning, and made a

speech to the effect that he had come to harmonize. I stand here in the same character. My sentiments are known, but I come as a harmonizer, if possible; and if there be any sentiment or feeling—

The Chairman—Are you a regularly-appointed delegate to this Convention?

Judge Holbrook—I understand that I am.

The Chairman—Those who are in favor of Judge Holbrook—

Judge Holbrook—I decline to serve if there is any opposition.

The vote was in favor of the appointment of the Judge.

Dr. Maxwell, of Indiana; Mr. C. W. Mills, of Chicago, and Mr. R. H. Winslow, of Ohio, were also elected to serve on the committee.

The Chairman—I have understood that Illinois has appointed no delegates, unless from some local societies. I understand there is no delegation here from Chicago.

Mrs. Severance—I will just make one suggestion. We do not want all the officers from one locality, but from different localities.

Mr. C. W. Mills—I have been appointed from the Chicago Progressive Lyceum, and have not received my papers.

Mr. Benjamin Todd—I move the appointment of a committee on business.

Mr. Hull—The State of Michigan does not give any credentials; the State of Indiana sent them on to the Secretary; and the State of Illinois has not sent up a full delegation, but there are members present who are qualified to sit on the committee.

The Chairman—I presume that will be settled by the States, when they come to move in the matter.

Mr. Thomas Lees, of Cleveland—I would like to ask the President of the Board whether he had any notification of resignation on the part of the Secretary and Treasurer?

The Chairman—So far as the Secretary is concerned, I saw him myself a week ago in Philadelphia, and he told me that



he would not be here. It was not my business at the time to ask him whether he had sent the documents, but I believe he has been notified to send them. If I am correctly informed, shortly after Mrs. Woodhull was cast into prison, Dr. Childs sent in his resignation. At the next meeting of the Board afterward, he sent another note, asking them not to act on his resignation. Since that time they have had no direct communication from Dr. Childs. That is the state of the case so far as I can understand it. Perhaps the President of the Association will inform the Convention of the facts?

Mrs. Woodhull—Dr. Coonley has given the story very nearly correctly. Dr. Childs sent in his resignation, but it was not acted upon; and soon afterward we were cast into prison, and for several months there was no person to see about the matter. Some time afterward Dr. Childs' called upon me, and said that it was entirely by spirit direction that he had sent in his resignation in the first place. After considering the matter he had changed his mind, and would act. Since that meeting of the Board of Trustees, I have not heard from Dr. Childs, either by letter or in any other way. There has been positively no communication between us. I supposed that, as a matter of courtesy, he would have sent the books here. I have heard that he intended to absent himself from this Convention, as well as the Treasurer; and in consequence of their not being here, and the Convention not having the books of the Association in its possession, it will have to get along as well as it can. I expect we can manage to get along without them; and if the Secretary and Treasurer do not make their appearance, we can find others who will act just as well. I do feel, however, it is a matter of discourtesy that the books have not been sent here.

The Chairman—They may come yet. I know that last year the books of the Treasurer were not present until after this time in the meeting.

Mrs. Middlebrook, of Connecticut—I wish to say, as one of the Trustees, that very soon after the Convention last year,

Dr. Childs wrote to me that he had resigned his position as Secretary of the Convention. I asked him if he would not state his reason for so doing, telling him if he was going to resign so soon, that he ought to have resigned at the Convention, so that another could have been appointed in his place. He made no reply to that, but afterward, through personal friends, I understood that he wished to serve, but that being very sick at the time, and sick a great deal of the time, he felt it was impossible for him to attend to the duties of the office of Secretary. Mr. Bacon, of Boston, told me afterward, and also the President of the Association, that Dr. Childs had recalled his resignation. It was his duty if he intended to resign to give up his books to the Executive Board. Further than this, the Treasurer that was appointed last year, Mr. Peter P. Good, of New Jersey, told me that he had not received the books from the old Treasurer, and that Mr. Wheeler, of Baltimore, who was Treasurer previous to his appointment, had never sent him the books. He also told me at the last business meeting of the Board that he would be in Chicago if he felt that he could spare the time and money. He felt that he could not pay out so much money and come so far to this Convention. I do not think that we can say that the Treasurer has avoided coming to this meeting on account of any dissatisfaction. But it was the duty of both these officers to send on their reports.

Mr. W. J. Shaw, of Iowa—I have been authorized to hand in the resignation of Brother P. P. Good, together with a statement of his account, which I will read:

A Delegate—Will it be in order for it to be done now?

Judge Holbrook—I think not, except to receive the communication.

The Chairman—That is a matter which properly belongs to the Executive Board, and unless they choose to let the matter come before the Convention, I do not quite see—

Mr. Shaw—I do not see how the thing can be done otherwise than through the Convention.

Mrs. Severance—I think that the business belongs to the board.

The Chairman—Yes, I think the matter will have to go to the board; I so decide it.

Judge Holbrook—In the failure of doing other business, I will ask you, Mr. Chairman, to repeat what you said about substituting delegates.

The Chairman—The custom of this Association has been as follows, and where there is no written law, custom governs it and is as it were a sort of common law: The custom of the Convention heretofore has been that, at the opening of the Convention, the delegates appointed by the State associations should come together and fill up the vacancies on the list of delegates, so that each State shall have the full quota of delegates to which it is entitled, provided these delegates have some proper credentials from some local society, or hold the certificate of somebody else who is unable to be present, and has thus transferred his rights. The Constitution was amended at Boston last year, and now provides that the State association has the right to appoint as many delegates as there are members of Congress, but this has nothing to do with local societies. The Lyceums are just as much entitled to their representatives as the State association. Previous to the last Convention, the State association had the whole control, and the local societies had to report through the State associations. This is now entirely done away with, and the State associations have no particular authority, and cannot interfere between the local societies and the Convention.

Mr. Higgins—<sup>1</sup> rise to a point of order. We do not know who are delegates until this Committee on Credentials retire and make their report. We cannot enter formally into business before, and I therefore move you that an adjournment of twenty minutes be had to receive credentials. Then, when that is completed, we shall be able to proceed in good order.

The Chairman—I have had a great deal of experience with regard to this point. It is a difficult point in the organization of Conventions. Judge Holbrook had the floor, and I suffered the interpolation to the point of order, but the point was not made clear.

Mr. Higgins—If you can establish the fact that all the parties who are discussing this question are legally appointed delegates, then your objection is, perhaps, well taken.

The Chairman—Let me explain upon that; in all discussions like this, where the question does not materially affect the business of the Convention, this freedom is to be permitted; but in cases where business is to be disposed of, the matter is different. I shall decide that Judge Holbrook is in order.

Judge Holbrook—The point on which I specifically sought information has not been fully reached. It is as to the locality of the new substitutes—are they to come from the same State?

The Chairman—I think not. I can only report so far as the action of the State of New Jersey is concerned. We have a right, by our State organization, to take any member from any part of the world to act as our delegate. A great many of our local and State associations have not come to that point yet.

Mr. Cotton (Vineland)—I move that we adjourn for twenty minutes, and that the Chairman of each State notify the members of his delegation, so that the vacancies can be filled. I, as first on the list from New Jersey, notify the delegates from that State that we will meet right here.

Mr. P. B. Randolph—I wish to make an amendment, that we now adjourn until the afternoon session. It is now nearly twelve o'clock, the hour for adjourning.

The amendment was carried, and the Convention adjourned.

## AFTERNOON SESSION.

On resuming, at two o'clock,

The Chairman said—There are many delegates here who are not able to pay hotel fare. In the town of Vineland, we had over three hundred persons from different parts of the country, and not one went away from the Convention unprovided for. In a place like Chicago, it ought to be possible to entertain three thousand people. We desire to request those citizens of Chicago, who will entertain delegates, to leave their names with the Secretary, so that those who want homes can find them readily. Some eighteen hundred years ago, there was a very important individual, who had not a place to lay his head—and there are some living yet. The hour has arrived for calling this Convention to order. The first business in order will be the report of the committee on credentials.

The Secretary—We are not ready yet, sir.

The Chairman—Then, will Brother Hyde sing a song. I should say that I have had no previous consultation with him, but I know that he can sing. [Cheers.]

Mr. Hyde, of New York—I will sing, if some of my sisters will aid me.

The Chairman—Mrs. Logan and Mrs. Balcomb, of New York, are wanted to assist in the singing.

Mr. Hyde—The song will be "The Anniversary," and is for the children's Lyceum, but we feel so much like children to-day that we will sing it.

The song was rendered in excellent style. At its close, the Chairman called on Miss Hinman to speak.

Anna E. Hinman, of Connecticut, said—

I do not feel especially burdened with anything to say, because I did not expect to be called upon for a speech here. It is said that all public speakers have their hobbies, no matter whether they make ten-minute or half-hour speeches. I confess that, like others, I have my hobby, but it does not happen to be the social question, although I deplore as much as any one the condition of society. I also see the neces-



sity for reform in the direction in which many noble men and women are working at this present time. As I am an old maid, and have never had a husband to quarrel with, and never happened to love the husband of any other woman, and have no especial experience in that respect, I cannot say that I feel competent to discuss the social question. [Laughter.] If I have one hobby more than another, it is on this idea of a religious amendment to the constitution of our Union. [Cheers.] This is, at the present time, my hobby, and I hope that a good portion of the time of this convention will be devoted to the consideration of this subject. If we have not religious freedom, no other freedom is worthy the name; if our national Constitution is to be sectarianized, then we shall have no freedom. It is useless to ask for freedom in other directions until we know that we have a Constitution that will guarantee us freedom in all directions. I have had some little experience in treating this subject in the town of Madison, Conn. I called on the chairman of the committee having charge of the only public hall that was available, and applied for its use, giving my subject as "Whither are We Drifting? or, The Proposed Religious Amendment to the Constitution." Three days after I had made my application for the hall, having had no answer as to whether I could or could not have its use for the purpose named, I called the second time upon the chairman, and then ascertained that I was refused the use of the hall. Why? Simply because the clergy in that town did not want that I should ventilate this subject of the proposed amendment to the Constitution. For they have laid a plot, and the movement is a subterranean one, and they want to spring a trap upon the common people before they have had any information upon the subject, so that they may be led to act ignorantly. They know, as well as you and I do, that if they cannot prevent the subject from being ventilated they will not be able to control the votes which they otherwise could. They tried to gag me in Madison, but (thanks to some noble

souls who permitted me to stand on their doorstep and discuss the question in all its bearings) they failed. There are a great many more who are able to discuss this question far better than I can; but it is, to my mind, an important subject. I feel like devoting my time to it as much as I am able to do. The question is right here: Shall we have compulsory observance of the Sabbath and compulsory religious obligations forced upon us, or shall we be left free? This is the long and short of it. [Cheers.] It means either the one thing or the other; it means that we shall either be free or we shall not. If we profess to love liberty, let us work for it. We have fought once, and twice, the oppressive institutions of this country, and will continue to do so, if needs be. [Cheers.] I know that there are noble men and women who love freedom, and who will work for it in this direction. We are drifting into these conditions; and what I would like is to make such a determined resistance, if possible, that we may be able to avoid war. For my part I have had enough of that. I have given my father, with the snows of sixty winters on his head, and my young brother languished two years in rebel prisons, six months of which he spent in the Andersonville Stockade, besides neighbors, friends, and many lovers—until now I stand alone, and have not one more to sacrifice, and yet my great charity to those who have not thus been bereft of all their friends, leads me to cry out, "We have had enough of war!" But yet we must have our liberty—peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must. [Cheers.] Now, let us make such a determined resistance to this movement, if possible, as shall dissuade them from their purpose, by showing them that we will never be made believers in the ideas of total depravity, original sin, endless torment in hell, the Star Chamber—as God's truth. [Cheers.] But we will have our liberty to think as we please and to judge for ourselves, that we may receive only those things which our best judgment and highest wisdom commend. I tell you that if young, athletic radicalism is permitted to grapple with old, gray-

headed conservatism, the struggle will be short and decisive, and radicalism will be obliged by the law of stern necessity to give to its aged sire a death blow. [Cheers.] Radicalism does not want to do this, but must if there is no other alternative. Then let us be united, no matter whether we be Spiritualists, Materialists, Universalists or Unitarians, in one common cause. The blow is not aimed at one but at all. They tell you that it is Christianity against infidelity, but they lie. [Cheers.] It is Christianity against liberty, and if Christianity threatens to destroy liberty, then we must take care of it and render it powerless to do so. Then, I say, let us all be united, for it is not one but all that are endangered. To wrangle between ourselves is to give quarter to the enemy, who, if the Spiritualists will be united, regardless of whatever name they bear, can never overcome them and force them into this absurd wrong which they have prepared for themselves, and thereby we shall save the ship of State from the vortex of religious fanaticism toward which we are tending. [Cheers.]

The Chairman—It will be in order to elect a committee on business and on resolutions, and perhaps a committee on education. The first is important to be done at once. I will explain the way in which the Association has been in the habit of doing it. The delegates of each State assemble together and select one of their number to form a member of committee on business, and then one to form a committee on resolutions, and so on with all the committees that may be appointed. That gives an equal representation throughout to all the States that are represented in this Convention. Of course the Convention can do otherwise if they please. They can make the appointment of committees *viva voce* if they choose. We are not prepared to make such a motion now, because we cannot tell who are entitled to vote. Each State delegation, however, can appoint its representative on the committees, so that there need be no delay. By this means we can also secure harmony and yet diversity in the proceedings of the Convention. I will introduce to you (the

Committee on Credentials not being ready to report) Mr. Cephas B. Lynn, of Boston, the official representative of the *Banner of Light*.

Mr. Cephas B. Lynn—I think that, of course, as I shall want to speak my little piece some time during the Convention, I had better do it now before we get into business. I was very much interested in the remarks of our good sister, Miss Hinman, of Connecticut, and I was glad to hear her give us her hobby. I was glad to hear her make such statements with regard to her conception of the magnitude of the efforts to incorporate the religious amendment into the Constitution of the United States of America, and I want to say here—what a friend of mine has said before—that it is a fact that throughout the breadth and length of this country to-day there is far less opposition to this religious movement than there was against the abolition of slavery when that began to be discussed. We must understand that throughout the length and breadth of the land to-day people have somehow or other got into their heads the idea that if these ministers of the Gospel should cease writing their profound essays Sunday after Sunday, we should all go down into oblivion and into chaos, and that therefore these ministers of the Gospel are arguing very consistently from that premise. They say that the American Republic can never gain glory nor move on in progress until the Constitution recognizes God, and Jesus Christ, and the Bible. [Hear, hear.] Well, we are here, friends, meeting together as a convention of Spiritualists, and I presume that we are here to talk about live questions. I presume that we are here to talk about the eternal and everlasting Now—not 1800 years ago, not even a quarter of a century ago at Rochester. [Cheers] If there is one thing that makes me glad to-day, it is to stand upon the spiritual platform, and to know that when individuals stand up here that they are no prepared padlocks to put upon their mouths. There are a great many men who were once within the Christian Church, who, standing

upon the spiritual platform, feel the elevation that comes of perfect freedom, who feel what it is to sink the priest into the man. And, in view of this fact, when we come here together, having a great variety of opinions upon a great variety of subjects, we feel no trouble about it. Why, I understood one man, who has spoken here to-day, to say that he came here as a harmonizer, that he expected by and by the roar of the whirlwind would be heard, and the waves would roll mountains high, and that if some of us did not feel a little of his oil that we would be lost on the ocean in the midst of the storm. I say that is all sophistry. God Almighty rules this universe, and in the spiritual universe there are no rocks for us to run against. For me I say let the hurricane come, I want to hear the wind blow. I went to a convention once, and my infidel friend, Mr. Jamieson, got up and said he wanted to stand on a free platform where he could speak what he wished to say. Well, he got up and said, in the mildest manner possible—Jameison is a mild-mannered man, you know [laughter]—"We know that the world won't fall, that the universe won't tumble down, and that no individual conception of anything is likely to disarrange the universe." It is an insult to the genius of the platform of liberalism at this day to tell the world that we are bound by the utterance of anybody on earth, or in heaven, or in hell. [Cheers.] Oh, there is nothing to fear—there is nothing to fear. For 25 years we have preached individualism, and now we are carrying out the doctrine to its ultimate consummation, and yet some of us want to go and put labels on our backs to tell the world how respectable we are. [Laughter and cheers.]

The Chairman—My friend, Cephas B. Lynn, is a regular graduate of the Charleston Lyceum.

Mr. Lynn—Mr. Chairman, may I have the floor again?

The Chairman—Certainly.

Mr. Lynn—I got up to make a speech on a certain point and I never mentioned it. [A laugh.]

The Chairman—You may have five minutes more.



Mr. Lynn—The point is this: That, in reference to the power of Christianity in this country, I believe that we do not realize how strong it is. We have had some evidence of it, to which I could call your attention. The point I desired to emphasize was, Miss Hinman mentioned the fact that she had been refused the use of a public hall, and her philippics against the Sunday law followed in the same line of argument that she opened with. But there is something else that we want to talk about that relates to Young America. And I am here to tell you about it. This thing that is called Liberalism touches the heart with a sacred fire; it does not need a revival every six weeks to keep it alive. [Cheers.] I say this Liberalism is the religion of Young America; and what do good Liberalists say to their children on this matter of religion? They say to their children—God bless the little children. They say—“We will not bother your little heads with any doxy.” We will say to the little child—“Grow up according to the laws of nature, and after you reach maturity, then, as an individual possessing reason, we will place on your table the Christian Bible, the Bible of the Jew; we will place on your table the sermons of Pere Hyacinthe, the Calvinists’ catechism, the Banner of Light, and all the religious books of the religious sects of the world, and we will say—Read and study them all, and the one that suits you best, take it, we will not dictate to you about it.” [Cheers.] This is the modern ground. Now, that is not all. Some of our liberalist friends, with this sort of generosity in their souls, have sent their children to seminaries throughout the length and breadth of the land, and have discovered that these institutions of learning were being manipulated by Christianity to that extent that the minds of these children were dwarfed, and they came home spiritual cripples, and that is worse than walking on crutches. [Cheers.] And that is not all. They have come home not only spiritual cripples, but they have come home to insult the guests of their families, because these guests did not believe in the certain doctrine of orthodoxy with which they

had been indoctrinated. I say, then, that what we want to emphasize, in this convention, is this movement against the introduction into the American school system of any religious book whatever, and to show that the American people do not send their children to school to learn theology, but geology, astronomy, and other branches of useful knowledge. I tell you that this is a tremendous question. In New York city, the Catholics are building parochial schools for eighty thousand odd children; and right here I will tell you, that of all the religious people who take part in this religious discussion, the Catholic is right. We say to the Catholic: You are right in determining that your child shall not be forced to read the Protestant Bible in school. We will stand by you in that; but if you ever attempt to force that Bible of yours into the common school, we will oppose you. [Cheers.] In this era of Credit Mobiliers, of salary grabs, of corruption on every side, it is time that we should strain the knee to have one thing free from the influence of the lobby, of the priests, and that is, the common schools. Let us look after the education of the young. [Cheers.]

Mrs. Severance—Your committee on credentials is ready to report.

The Chairman—Please read the report.

Mrs. Severance—The following is the list of delegates handed in to us:

INDIANA.—D. W. Hull, Amos Allman, John Fletcher, Samuel Strattan, J. H. Luther, Hiram Gregg, John Stewart, Jennie Hatfield, Sarah J. Gill, Agnes Cook, Mrs. H. A. Strattan, Samuel Maxwell, James Hook, J. R. Buell, Addie L. Ballou, Byron Reed, Mary Thomas Clark, Maggie Morgan, T. H. Stewart.

ILLINOIS.—G. N. Gould, Mrs. Miller, Mr. S. Y. Brandt, E. F. Slocum, W. Mills, W. F. Jones, Collins Eaton, S. J. Avery, John W. Cochran, Mrs. Hubbard, Stewart Cummings, James H. Rogers, F. Calkin's, C. W. Stewart, George Gage, Mattie H. Parry, O. J. Howard, J.

U. Smith, C. Smith, Milo Poster, Dr. D. P. Kayner, Martha Gage, Hiram Bidwell, Harriet C. Barnes, Mary L. Millspaugh, L. W. Calkins, S. Jennings, D. C. Brakett, Juliette Howard, McHenry; G. L. Densmore, Maria B. Densmore.

IOWA.—W. G. Shaw, H. Brooks, Union, Iowa; Cornelia B. Stevenson, Farmers Creek; Emily Bradway, Maquoketa, Iowa.

KENTUCKY.—Fannie M. Bowen.

MICHIGAN.—T. S. A. Pope, Dr. E. Woodruff, J. D. Hinckley, Hastings, Mich.; Stephen C. Bliss, A. M. Jordan, Mrs. L. A. Whiting, W. F. Jamieson, Benj. Todd, Mrs. Marion Todd, Lois Waisbrooker, Mrs. Rhoda Loomis, W. R. Hill, A. T. Garrettson, Wm. Walker, Sarah J. Pennoyer, Mrs. Hamilton, M. A. Rost, Mrs. Sarah Rockwell, L. W. Thornton, B. P. Barnum, J. O. Barrett, Arthur Merton, Benj. Dean, Wm. Jones, L. Sesson.

MASSACHUSETTS.—F. R. Ladd, C. J. Leonard, M. E. Bean, T. Leonard, C. W. Austin, Mrs. S. Austin, John Matteson, Harry Wilber, John Hardy, Mary M. Hardy, Capt. H. H. Brown, Cephas B. Lynn, Mrs. S. A. Hunt, Anna Lord Chamberlain.

MISSOURI.—J. S. Haseltine, Warren Chase, A. G. W. Carter, Mrs. Whittenger.

NEW YORK.—Isaac Nash, Walter Hyde, William Hick, Mrs. F. A. Logan, D. Doubleday, Jane A. Simpson, Mrs. N. Crans.

NEW JERSEY.—Mrs. M. B. Belden, Laura Cuppy Smith, Hannah T. Stearns, Anthony Higgins, A. C. Cotton, Ellen Dickenson, Mrs. J. Davis, John Gage, Portia Gage, Col. J. H. Blood, J. S. Longshore, O. H. Belden, L. K. Coonley, V. C. Woodhull, Mrs. L. D. Ladd, Walter Wood.

OHIO.—G. W. Kates, J. K. Richards, W. N. Hambleton, Chester Hunter, R. H. Winslow, Laura C. Owen, P. H. Bateson, Thomas Lees, J. A. Lant, Nellie Brutton, Oliver Stephens, Nancy Stephens.

**PENNSYLVANIA.**—J. F. Chew, Philadelphia; John S. Isett, Spruce Creek; Mrs. Anna Kimball, Pittsburg; Chauncey Barnes, Mrs. S. Ray, L. R. Chase, R. F. Haslett, Philadelphia.

**RHODE ISLAND.**—Mrs. M. L. Ghirardini.

**UTAH.**—Israel E. Brown, E. W. Stevens, P. B. Randolph.

**KANSAS.**—George B. Reed.

**WISCONSIN.**—Mrs. J. H. Severance, A. B. Severance, Mrs. H. Evans, David Cotton, Dr. W. H. Bancroft, O. Wilcox, S. H. Sea, M. Richardson, S. E. Warner, A. B. Randall, Elias Smith, S. Woodworth, Mrs. Olive Barrett, George Plummer, S. J. Dickson, D. E. Pease, J. Raymond Talmadge, Mrs. Eves.

**VERMONT.**—Charles C. Dodge.

**WASHINGTON, D. C.**—Geo. White.

**CONNECTICUT.**—Geo. Geer, Anna M. Middlebrook, Byron Boardman, E. Annie Hinman.

**CALIFORNIA.**—Geo. L. Barker, E. D. Barker, Anna Kimball, San Francisco.

The Chairman—The Convention can now begin to understand who the delegates are that are entitled to vote, but we cannot decide distinctly upon every question, and we must trust to the honor of the representatives on any question where there is not a call for the ayes and noes. We suppose that all persons coming to this Convention are liberal enough to do everything fair and square, and not vote unless they are consciously in their own minds entitled to do so. There are two matters which must be considered: One is the manner in which the necessary committees should be appointed.

Mr. Higgins—I move that the report of the Committee on Credentials be received and that the committee be continued.

The Chairman—I do not think that the motion is necessary, although the Convention may think otherwise. The committee is one of the Standing Committees and cannot well be discharged, and a motion for the acceptance of the report and the continuance of the committee is not needed.

Mr. J. O. Barrett, of Battle Creek—Is a motion in order?  
The Chairman—Yes, sir.

Mr. Barrett—Then I move that the committees necessary be elected by the Convention by voice.

Mr. Lyrn—I second the motion.—Carried.

Mr. Hull—I move that we proceed to nominate a business committee of five.

Carried.

The following persons were nominated, and unanimously appointed :

Benjamin Todd, Michigan ; Mrs. Anna Middlebrook, Connecticut ; D. W. Hull, Indiana ; Mrs. Maria L. Ghirardini, Rhode Island, and Captain R. H. Winslow, Ohio.

A motion to appoint a committee on finance, to consist of five delegates, was carried. The committee was nominated as follows :

Mr. Anthony Higgins, of New Jersey ; Mrs. Severance, Wisconsin ; P. H. Bateson, Ohio ; Mrs. M. M. Hardy, Massachusetts, and Miss A. E. Hinman, Connecticut.

Mr. P. B. Randolph—I move that a committee on resolutions, consisting of one delegate from each State, to be chosen by the delegates from the several States, be appointed.

Mr. Hull—I second the motion.

The Chairman—We have adopted a rule looking to the nomination by the Convention of the members of committees.

Dr. Benjamin Todd, of Michigan—I move, as substitute, that a committee of seven be appointed.

The substitute was agreed to.

The following were nominated as members of the committee, and appointed—Colonel J. H. Blood, New York ; J. O. Barrett, Michigan ; Judge Holbrook, Illinois ; Mrs. Mariam Todd, Michigan ; Dr. S. Maxwell, Indiana ; Cephas B. Lynn, Massachusetts, and W. F. Jamieson, Michigan.



The Chairman—This committee will, at their earliest convenience, retire and agree upon a report. The next thing in order is the opening remarks to the Convention by your President, Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull.

Mrs. Woodhull, on coming forward, was received with repeated cheers. She spoke as follows :

*Brothers and Sisters*—Another year has rolled swiftly into the past since we met in Boston to deliberate on the rights and duties of Spiritualists, and we find ourselves standing on the verge of the future, gazing as wistfully as then into its dim vistas, striving to pierce its hidden mysteries and to drag forth the realities that are to be, and to lay down the chart by which we are to be guided to their realization. This ought to be the moving inspiration of the present time; but they do best who, in its contemplation, forget not what is.

It is twenty-five years since the tiny raps at Hydeville, N. Y., ushered in the grandest movement of all the centuries. Led by heartless science, the world was fast declining into the blank of Atheism, but the dawning of the light of modern Spiritualism has driven doubt back into its dark retreats, where, trembling for existence, it scarcely agitates the waves of human thought. But Spiritualism has done more than this. It has replaced doubt and faith by conviction and knowledge in millions of human souls, and has bound up the broken hearts of millions more. It has destroyed the power of death and hell, and consigned the devil to the domain of superstition and ignorance, where he may yet a little longer linger to haunt the souls of the foolish and trouble the minds of the false. The Church totters under the blows that have fallen thick and fast upon it, delivered from the hands of angels, and priestcraft wraps its saintly robes about itself and plots to avert destruction.

Spiritualism has moved the world forward by gigantic strides a thousand years, and almost spanned the chasm over which mortals and spirits shall pass to and fro into each other's dominions, but not yet so that the world can witness the passage and be instructed to make it individually. Even this, however, it shall shortly do, and secure the fulfillment of the prophecy of St. Paul.

But is there not other work for Spiritualism to perform?

Having demonstrated the life to come, and shown that spirits enter there with the same feelings and passions, with which as human beings they leave the form, should its attention not be turned to effecting such changes in mortals as will permit them to pass, bright and pure, to that higher plane?

A tree is judged—and rightly—by its fruits. Judged by its practical fruits, what has Spiritualism got to present to the world? What are its fruits; what has it done? It has done all this that we have spoken of, but what does all that amount to, provided no further progress be made? It has made millions of people happier by removing their fear of God and the devil, and the burning hell. Now sincerely, my friends, is not this just what it has done? Has it made the world any better, any purer; added anything to its positive sciences; made more clear the laws of life, and as a result, a better humanity?

Judged by these kinds of fruits, "What better are ye than they?" What better is Spiritualism than Romanism, its natural enemy; nay, is it so good even as this enemy?

Romanism looks after temporal things, seeks to teach the children, and in various ways works charity, having in view if not obtaining better conditions—all of which with all else that they might do, Spiritualists have persistently ignored and refrained from attempting. The world looks to Spiritualism for great things. It holds up before its devotees all the ills and wrongs, and abuses that exist, and sues for pity and relief, as it has, before all preceding "isms" and faiths. The devout Spiritualist, following in the tracks of predecessors, commits the same error. With his eyesturned heavenwardly, he sees none of these things which the world demands of him. Forgetting the winter that reigns here, he is lost in the contemplation of the glory and beauty of the summer land.

Now, my friends, I want to ask if this is not true? and to tell you that I am sick of such Spiritualism as this.

I am disgusted with those who sing the glories "to be," and in the anthem forget the miseries "that are;" just as if we may pass from one to the other by death merely—as superlative nonsense as that in which any Christian ever pretended to believe.

Spiritualism is treading in the footsteps of old theology, and unless the few brave souls who discern this can lift it from the rut into which it has fallen, it will follow quickly where its predecessors have virtually gone—to its death; and I shall say Amen to that, since it will give way and make room for something that shall do the work laid out by angels to be done.

Then what should Spiritualism mean for the world? Should it enter it as a reformatory movement; or is it a blind fact merely, with no aims, purposes or convictions outside of the single fact of communion?

I hold that it is a reform. Now, all reforms that ever were or are, pretend to look to bettering the condition of the world, and to making it happier by making it better. Who, among Spiritualists, shall dare to deny this for Spiritualism? Are there any here assembled who will be so hardy as to do this? And yet they are heard all over the land decrying all active effort, and singing songs to the clouds.

Almost all previous pretentious systems have, however, signally failed to do anything whatever to justify this proposition. The world has grown better in most things in which it is better in spite of pretended reforms, which, for the most part, have blocked the way by establishing arbitrary and impossible methods by which to secure their ends. Shall Spiritualism also fail for the same reason to accomplish anything, because some have lost themselves in the glory of the after life? Shall it be said that this glorious advent, about which the light of angel faces lingers, also attempted to establish arbitrary and, because arbitrary, impossible methods of reaching forward into the realms of future greatness and goodness? Rather let it be abandoned before it attach this curse to itself, which, if once established, will forever blacken its prophetic record in all future generations.

Spiritualism has come to do for the world what nothing else ever could do. It has come to inaugurate on earth that government, that organization, that happiness, that glory which exists in spirit life, and which should be presented to us, not only for our admiration but also as a grand possibility to be by us accomplished. But will it do this. Are Spiritualists ready to perform the needed labor? Are they willing to ignore all this, if need be, that that which may be

hall be? That is the question. Learning what is required, will they be sufficiently unselfish and humanitarian to drop the old to put on the new?

Reform, we have said, means to make men and women better and happier.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and all these things—other things—shall be added unto you," was spoken by him of Nazareth, and it was and is true.

Find happiness and all things are found. The heaven, then, of the world, individually and collectively, is to find happiness. The question, then, for reformers to answer is, upon what does happiness depend? There are thousands of persons who realize fully that they will live in spirit life who are just as unhappy as any can be who have not attained to that realization. The fact of future life alone, then, does not necessarily make men and women better, nor more comfortably conditioned. Indeed, thus far it has rather tended to add unhappiness and discomfort to those to whom it has come.

Something else, then, is needed; and this something is an appendix to the fact of continued life; the means of making it just what it must be in order that happiness instead of misery may result.

As a humanitarian religion then, Spiritualism has not completed its work when it has proven the fact of spirit existence and communion. Indeed, when it has done this it has but prepared itself to enter upon its practical mission. The fact that an immense power resided in steam would never have done any good for the world had not a Fulton opened the way to reduce the fact to practical use. So, too, is the fact of spirit life of little value unless its possibilities are reduced to practical use. And to this decision Spiritualists have now come. It must accept its mission, else it will pass to other hands.

And it is this question that this convention must consider and answer; and upon its answer will depend the future of Spiritualism in connection with the reforms that the age demands and is to have, if not through its own, then through other means. It is objected, however, that this Association, since I became its President, has done nothing. Is this strictly true? and if so, to whose door does the fault come home? I came among



you two years ago at Troy. You were then talking of abandoning the organization, because there was really little to abandon. It had a name, to be sure, but where was its constituency and support? If much was expected of the organization, something should have been contributed to it, to give it sinews and strength. At that time I saw the weakness of the organization, and that the first thing to be done was to remove this weakness. Whatever good thing it might propose to do, it had no means of carrying out. To remedy this weakness I framed a new plan of organization, which I presented to the Association at its last annual meeting. For good reasons, I suppose, this plan has never been heard of, except what little publicity I have been able to give it through the medium of the WEEKLY, in which it has been published at length. Perhaps it was thought by Spiritualists to be too thorough, too comprehensive for present adoption. But to me it seems full time to begin some reform upon a broad and substantial basis. If, however, Spiritualists are not yet ready to abandon pure self-interest and merge into general public interests, they are not ready to adopt any plan of organization that will meet the requirements of the present crisis.

In framing this plan and offering it as, to me, the first step toward doing something, I feel that I performed my duty as your chief executive officer, and had the last convention adopted this plan or any modification of it, the work of primary organizations could have been successfully inaugurated, and this convention been really a representative body, in the true sense of representation; which I am ready to confess it is not now.

I came among you, then, a stranger, to speak a few words about children.

Spiritualists had made considerable effort in the direction of better methods of education, and I thought they might be ready to go a step further backward than education, and consider the methods of having better children to educate. I assure you this was the reason that took me to Troy. I went there hopefully, performed that for which I went, and for those few words I was made President of the Association. I can afford to pass in silence every thing that has been said (as to the motives by which I was, and am, governed) by those who are not in favor of searching amid the fountains



of life, in order that it may send forth purer and sweeter waters. Suffice it, I know them, and the spirits whom I obey know them; and if they are mistaken by some, whose zeal outruns their discretion, I will only say, I am sorry for them. They may harm the common cause for a time, but not me. I would advise them to save the strength and time lavished on me, for better purposes.

But organization is a necessity from other and grave considerations. No thinking mind can afford to ignore the meaning of certain movements that are going on in this country; nor the meaning of some things that have been done during the past year. Is any person here so foolish as to imagine that the God-in-the-Constitution Young Men's Christian Association people, do not mean business? that the National Conventions that they have held mean nothing? that the attempt to suppress the WEEKLY for publishing the biography of the Protestant Pope, and the *Train Lique*, for exhibiting the beauties of the Bible, have no significance? To me, these, with many other things to which I cannot refer, have a fearful meaning. To me they mean that we stand to-day on the very borders of a horrible war such as the earth has never known, and which was so graphically described by Jesus.

But I see you are incredulous. War! why, what should cause war now? I reply, almost everything that is uppermost in the minds of those who hold the power will cause it.

Listen, and ponder well while you listen. Not a dozen people in this country, six months before the slave war broke out, believed that such a war would ever be; and they who warned of war were called crazy, as doubtless you think me now. They said the abolitionists would never fight for the negro, and they did not, intentionally. But I will tell you who did fight for the negro: they were the Southern slaveholders, and they fought intentionally. And I tell you the slaveholders of to-day will fight for their slaves just as did they of the South.

The Southern planters saw the growth of public opinion against slavery, and they knew if something was not done to stop it, that twenty years more would destroy slavery. There was but one way, and that was to strike for the perpetuity of their power. And they did strike; but they failed.

But do you ask what similarity there is between then and now? I will tell you, and convince you as well, that if there were a single reason for the action of the Southern oligarchy, there are at least a dozen more potent ones for the same action now. The office-holding, the bond-holding, the money-lending, the railroad and the God-in-the-Constitution oligarchy are in the same strait which the South was in. They see that twenty years' longer diffusion of knowledge among the people about the corruptions in office, will cause a revolution that will sweep every office-holder away, and revolutionize the government; they see that the people are beginning to learn that the bond-holders assume the place of king, and take from the public treasury all that the people can contribute; that the money-lenders live in sumptuous idleness off of the earnings of the toiling millions; that the railroad kings levy onerous contributions upon everything they transport; they see that the people, perceiving all these things, will realize that they have been robbed of their wealth to support these pretentious classes, and that they will re-possess themselves of that which has been unjustly taken from them; and then to all these must be added those who know that their God is to be dethroned, their Christ killed and their devil destroyed; and what an array is this! All the power, all the money, all the organization—everything against the people, while they are simply an unorganized mob, incapable of contending with the powers to which they will find themselves opposed.

Will these oligarchs sit quietly by and see their power depart without so much as a word to prevent? I tell you nay. I tell you they will not wait to see anything depart. I tell you they are now plotting the means to fasten themselves upon the people irrevocably. It will not be the reformers seeking the amelioration of existing conditions who will strike the first blow; but it will be they who see their power gradually slipping away from their grasp who will strike to save it from destruction. Do you further ask how can this come, and upon what pretext? That also I will show you.

Have none of you conceived the meaning of the recent discussion of Caesarism by some of the most powerful journals of the country? The third term and Caesarism are

pieces of the same thing, and are put before the people at this time to test the public pulse, and the responses begin to be heard, and why not? Remember this and then go backward a year and recollect that the most determined autocratic character in the country, last year, made the tour of the continent of Europe and was the guest, virtually, of every crowned head. My attention was called to it at the time by the spirits who told me that he was Grant's emissary, arranging with the kings and emperors a programme for the subversion of this country to monarchy; and I believe it was true. The European powers would of course do almost anything to promote such a consummation. Another point was thus secured. All things so far prepared, then the denouement. How to precipitate all this and make an exigency! In Wall street there are some forty millions of gold coin loaned by European bankers on call; that is subject to be called for any day, while there is not gold coin enough in the Treasury to meet the call. Before this call would be made, the European bankers and the American bankers in the secret will sell the market largely short of United States bonds and then call the gold, which, as it could not be paid, would put gold to 200, while United States bonds and all railroad and other securities would fall to 50, and a financial panic immediately result that would spread into every business in the country conducted upon large capital. Business of all kinds would be prostrated, and all laborers being thus out of employ revolution and anarchy would reign supreme.

In this condition martial law would be proclaimed and the direct way opened to the Dictatorship or the Empire. And as I have shown you, the people would be impotent to resist it, since all the organized powers in the country would side with the government.

This *coup* fully executed and the power established, the gold would be immediately re-loaned and business begin again, and gradually the terrible depreciation of every sort of wealth would be restored through the general prosperity, and in ten or twelve years values would be as high as ever, and the wealth would be concentrated in the hands of the few, and the new state of things fixed upon the people.

Do you not see how a bold and competent person in Grant's

position may elevate himself to be Emperor? A Napoleon is not an impossibility even in this country; and when you remember that such a scheme as this is backed by all the powers that are now in danger from radicalism—from too much freedom, you will see how utterly at their mercy is this people.

Regard these possibilities; aye, these probabilities, and then say Spiritualists should not organize if you can!

I came among you, as I said, to speak truths that needed to be known. You received me because I spoke such truths. I have remained among you to speak more truths, and I have spoken them without fear or favor, and so long as I remain among you I shall speak out whatever is given me to speak, and neither your plaudits or your frowns shall change a single word. I have no personal favors to ask of you, and I assure you I fear no one; but I have a duty to perform, and before I leave you I shall perform it mercilessly, without any regard whatever to your tender spots or your tenderer consciences. I shall plunge the surgical knife to the hilt into the horrible carbuncle that almost all of you are even now endeavoring to cover up and make it appear as if nothing is wrong, that everything is lovely and just as it should be.

I have endeavored to call your attention to the ills of society, and some of you have dubbed me prostitute, advocating theories purposely to cover the feculency of my own life. I have attempted to show you the injustice that capital metes out to labor, and some of you have labelled me ambitious to manufacture votes. I have called the attention of women to the fact that they are individuals and citizens, and have been slimed all over for my trouble. I have held before you the slavery to which woman is consigned by marriage, and I am replied to that I want to get more husbands. But in spite of all this, and in the face of the frowns of most of you (but, Heaven bless them, with the approval of some), I have moved neither to the right or left, but kept right onward, until the time has now arrived when the result of all that has been must be summed up, and in one tremendous impulse launched upon the world. I shall do this, though you kill me afterward for the act.

You may say that I do all this for notoriety. Will any one here step forward and say they will accept my notoriety



and its costs? If not, let no one question my motives. I go back to New York to face the combined power of Church and State in the courts. I believe that, as it has so far, justice will triumph; but the exigency of the case may be so extreme as to trample it under foot. Will any of you stand by me and share the consequences? Did I write the paper bearing date November 2 in order to be sent to prison, and to suffer all that I have suffered since that time? Who among you will dare assert this? But if you do not, do not then question my motives.

But I turn upon you and tell you that all this has been done because, being commanded, I was willing to do it; because I was a Spiritualist, and because I was President of the only national association of Spiritualists there is in the country, to urge you, if possible, to become common-sense, practical laborers in the great field of reform.

Two years ago I should have been mobbed had I attempted to say publicly what I said last night. But I said it last night, and no one thought of harming me. Indeed I could have said much more than I have to say, and the terrible sham of indignant virtue would not have shown itself. Now all these things had to be said, in order that a gradual and near approach might be made for the final truth, which, if any one had attempted to give at first, he would not have been permitted to live.

Has there not, indeed, been a great work accomplished? The people, you here before me, are ready and waiting to hear the whole truth, and you need to hear it, and you know that you need to hear it, and you know that I know you want to hear it, and so you shall hear all I have found.

I said before that Spiritualists have shown some regard for one of the great questions upon which a better condition for humanity and happiness must be based—the education of the young. I do not hear that any Spiritualist calls *this* a side issue. All recognize it as a main issue and of great importance. But those who admit this, and at the same time assume that the begetting of proper children to educate—as so many do—is a side issue, stultify themselves; and I cannot see how anybody can be so blind or so obtuse. If it be an important issue to educate children, it is a still more important one to have good children to educate. Can any



of you escape that fact? If you can, and will show me the escape, I shall be very thankful and will never again press the importance of the social question as the basic reform for Spiritualists. I will then make my departure from Spiritualism and adopt that to which this department of reform properly belongs. So here is your opportunity, Spiritualists, who wish to wash Spiritualism of Woodhull. Show me that to have healthful and good children is *not* so important as the education of *bad* ones, and that while the latter is *not*, the former is a side issue with which Spiritualists, as reformers, have nothing to do, and you will be bothered with Woodhull and social freedom not a single hour longer.

If it were possible, I would say cease every effort in other directions, stop education, stop everything else and devote the powers and capacities and the wealth of the world to this single work until the problem is solved. Beside the importance of this, all things else sink into insignificance. To me it is the alpha of humanity to which happiness, final and complete, is the omega.

The law of life! The law of love! These are what we need to discover, advocate and practice; and when we shall have done all this, and not until then, farewell all human misery. Not till then can the millennium be ushered in—death banished the earth, and the resurrection accomplished. To this work I urge Spiritualists.

I urge them, first of all, to adopt a plan for general organization, based upon self-evident principles, and then to go bravely forward and solve the problem of life and death, caring neither for the favor of friends or the taunts of enemies, but only for the fundamental rock of truth upon which a redeemed humanity may safely begin to build their future destiny? and Spiritualists are going to do this.

Recently in convention at Vineland, the State Association of New Jersey adopted this question in its broadest and deepest sense; and more recently, the vast concourse of people assembled at Silver Lake, Massachusetts, eagerly listened and wildly applauded the same sentiments.

The people are getting ahead of the leaders on this subject. They are already convinced, while yet you are discussing the expediency of having anything to do with it.

I give it as my well-founded opinion, that to any audience

of Spiritualists, anywhere assembled, this subject may be introduced, and if fairly discussed they will adopt the resolutions of the New Jersey State Association of Spiritualists, to whom belongs the honor of first entering it upon their banners as a purpose of the Association.

I earnestly hope that this Convention may become historical by the work it shall do in seizing hold of the vital issues of the age, and announcing that the American Association of Spiritualists adopts as its motto, first, the proper generation of children, and, second, the proper education of children; since by these shall the world be peopled with a new race of beings, who shall not need to be regenerated; and who shall live in a continued sphere of love and wisdom. To this end is my life dedicated; and many more I know there are who would stand by my side, if they dared, and with me challenge the old dispensation to mortal combat.

The old has yielded point after point to the demands of progress. The last point is now demanded and refused; but it shall be won, and the human race stand emancipated from all the slaveries that have been its heritage, and sing the grand song of final redemption, having added to the freedom to think, which is theoretical merely, the freedom to act, what is thought, which is practical wholly.

Thus have I rendered an account of my stewardship. Your first reception and appreciation of me was a direct invitation to what has since been done; and what is still to be done.

I ask not your approval, I crave not your favor, neither do I fear your condemnation. I have done that which my hands and tongue and pen have found to do, with all my might, and my own conscience upbraids me only because I have been able to do so little, when there was such great need of so much more being done. But I am only a poor, weak, unlettered woman, coping, nearly single-handed with almost the whole world, and we wonder that I have been able to do even the little that we have done, to shock the world into thought upon this great and grave question.

And now I come to resign into your hands the trust confided to my care, earnestly hoping that whatever good seed has been sown may be nurtured and cultured, and that it may yield an abundant increase by your care; and that

whatever is evil seed, if any there have been, may die and leave no trace behind.

It has been mine to say the unpleasant truth, to stand in the fore-front and receive the heaviest of the fire. It has been mine to be aggressive and merciless, when of myself I would have been peaceable and sympathetic. But I want you all to bear witness that I hold no malice, but only love for all, even for those who have so cruelly misunderstood and misrepresented me; who have caused me so many sleepless, tearful nights and lengthened days of agony, which together have sometimes almost caused me to faint by the way; but I remembered at these times a vision of seven years ago which you will pardon me for relating, after which you may not wonder so much that I have endured what I have.

I was traveling by night from this city to Green Bay, sore at heart and sick of life, and I prayed earnestly to know if my life should always be borne down with sorrow and suffering. A gentle, peaceful sleep stole over my wearied senses, and this is the vision I saw: It was the hour of sunset, and the West was glowing with all the varied colors blended in indescribable beauty. The heavens parted and rolled backward to the north and south, and in the space there appeared a great spirit, which I seemed to know was greatest among the great. He gazed calmly, almost sorrowfully upon me for a while, and then drawing from its sheath a long sword, which he pointed directly at me, he said: "Blessed shall she be who, when the time comes, shall not be found wanting;" and his face lit up with hope and joy as he sheathed his sword, and the heavens closed in upon him and hid him from my vision.

Friends, whenever I weary and faint as I often do, I remember that scene and those words, and again I am nerved to do my duty, hard though it be and bitter, to which, heaven helping, may I ever remain faithful.

I had intended to close here, but the word that has been given out by the enemies of freedom leads me to endeavor to put this question fairly and squarely before the Convention. The question is purely one of freedom or the contrary, and it must be discussed as such. It must not be loaded down with "if " and "buts" and evasions. When

the question of religious freedom was up for decision, it was not a question of what this, that or the other person should believe, whether it should be Romanism, Paganism or Protestantism; but it was a question as to whether every person had the right to adopt whatever belief he could accept or not. And this is the question now at issue about the sexual problem. It is not whether people will be monogamists, polygamists, polyandrists or utterly promiscuous, but whether they have the right to be any or all of these. I advocate the right of the individual to choose for himself, and deny the right of the law to impair that right. This is all there is of it, and they who oppose me must deny the right to individual authority, and argue that the authority to decide when, where and with whom sexuality may occur resides outside of the individuals directly concerned, just as the opponents of religious freedom declared that the right to decide what might and what might not be believed resided in the Church, as it is now declared, sexual authority resides in the State.

A resolution that will confine the question to the limits to which it belongs may be worded as follows: That the community has no right to enact laws impairing either the physical, intellectual, moral or sexual liberty of the individual.

Now those of you who have come here to rescue Spiritualism from free love must vote "Nay" to this resolution. You must say that the individual ought to be a slave, that he ought not to be free sexually as he is already admitted to be physically, intellectually and morally. What enlightened person is ready to do this? I warn you to think well of it before you thus commit yourselves.

But to those who come here with their mouths full of vile words to spit out upon me, I wish to say: If after this any one shall dare stand up here and say that I advocate the lowest and vilest forms of sexuality; that I advocate promiscuousness because I advocate freedom for each and for all, then I say that that one does so wilfully, knowing that it is untrue. No more do I do this than do they advocate materialism, who affirm the right of the individual to be a materialist.

I do not think there is a delegate here who is so utterly stupid as not to see the application. The form of life I wish every one to live is that which will be most conducive to his



or her happiness; at the same time, being willing as I ever have, to state clearly and unmistakably what I believe to be the condition in which most happiness will be found when it is attained. Now, remember, don't say that I advocate this, that or the other; but say I advocate freedom, and then deny or affirm that this is an individual right and you will treat the real issue.

Finally, I hope that this Convention will discuss this question calmly, and that no personalities may outcrop; but if any shall here stand up and denounce social freedom as the one thing vile, who has lived or who lives a free life, I hope that some one who can, will strip off his mask and stand him up before the Convention cleaned of his hypocrisy.

Mrs. Woodhull further added—I have heard from some of the New York delegation, and from some of the other delegates, the fact that there are statements being made that I have come here to make a personal explanation. I am going to ask every man and woman in this house who stands immaculate, who has never had a sexual desire, and who has never known sexuality, and who stands before the world a female or a male virgin, to come upon this platform and prepare to throw stones. [Applause.] I want you to understand that I came here to advocate what I believe, and what to me is the highest truth. When you listen to me, you do not become Woodhullites, and sink your individuality. You ought to be ashamed to put the name of anybody else upon your backs; and it is only through your ignorance that you do it. I want you to understand that because Moses Hull tells you a little of his personal experience with some of his brethren and sisters, that you don't become Hullites, but you become just what you are yourselves. And this infernal ignorance, which has spat upon and thrown filth upon others, is becoming simply disgusting. This platform is a free platform; but I warn you that if you come upon it to besmear freedom, you had better put up your virtue in a napkin so that it may be dissected. [Cheers.] I want you to know that you have made a poor woman of me. Two years ago, when I



came to your Convention, I was what the world called a financial success. I had my elegant home in New York, and earned my \$250 per night for my lectures. I came to your Convention, and became your President; and from that moment, the foul opprobrium, the reflections of your own lives, has been heaped upon me, until you have slimed me all over, and held me up to the world as something awful, and fearful, and that must not be touched. Now I want you to understand that I am in Chicago to tear up these rotten planks, and if any man or woman mounts this platform to lie about their social virtue, and they have the privilege of doing it, let them remember there will be an avenging angel after them; and for every lie they utter, the truth will come out in thunder tones. [Cheers.] I have no fears of the Convention, or of any of the seeming pure stripe. I have not any hope that some of you will rescue anything but yourselves; but I have every faith that the people who have come here will succeed in rescuing their own damnable lives from the filth in which they are steeped. As President, I now open this platform, and you may proceed to discuss these questions as you please; but, as I said before I say it again, I have no quarter to ask of any one, and hence I shall not expect any of you. [Cheers.]

The Secretary—I move that the Convention do now adjourn until the evening recess.

The motion was withdrawn.

The Chairman—The members of the committees have stayed in the hall to hear the President's address, and have not therefore prepared any work for the Convention. We shall have to improvise a little for the time being. It is now about 4 o'clock. Let me here say again that we want the friends in Chicago to be as liberal as they can in the entertainment of delegates.

Mrs. Severance—I move that from now until 5 o'clock be devoted to ten-minute speeches, and that while the Con-

vention is in conference the committees proceed with their business.

The motion was seconded and carried.

The Chairman—In occupying my ten minutes, I do not suppose that it will be necessary to appoint anybody in my place, unless Mrs. Severance takes the task of keeping me in order while I am speaking.

Col. Blood—I know there are quite a number of delegates present who would like to be provided for.

The Chairman—That is what we are trying to get at.

Col. Blood—I was going to put it in the form of a motion, as follows:

*“Resolved, That the Chicago delegates and friends be requested to constitute themselves into a Committee of Reception to provide, as far as possible, for the delegates, and that they report accommodations as early as they can do so.”*

The motion was seconded and carried.

The Chairman—Before we adjourn it will be necessary to make some provision for your entertainment this evening. Our usual course has been—whether the Business Committee will recommend it or not, I cannot say—to devote the first half hour to ten-minute speeches, and, after that, one or two regular speakers. But you will all provide for being intellectually entertained—at least some of you will entertain first yourselves, and then somebody else, by your occupying the platform.

Mrs. Severance—We have now an hour before us in which we can express our views, and I wish to see others come up on the platform, and give utterance to their highest and best thoughts. I feel that this is one of the most important Conventions that has ever been held in the United States. It is at this meeting that the question, whether we, as a body, shall discuss the great practical questions of the day, is to be decided and let no one go away from this Convention and claim that this or the other measure was sprung upon the Convention, unless they shall stand up and advocate whatever they believe to be right and true. We are in-

vited to a free discussion, and any individual, no matter who he or she may be, will have the right to express their beliefs on this platform. The same courtesy will be extended to opponents as to friends, and every individual will be considered entitled to and will have a fair hearing. Whatever the views expressed may be, they must be taken for what they are worth. Our President has spoken plainly: I think every one understood just what she meant, and all you that know me, that have read my writings in the papers, and that have heard me speak on the rostrum, know that I indorse every word that she has said. They have been truths to me for years, and I rejoice greatly that there is one brave enough, and strong enough, and true enough, to stand before this audience and say the things that are good for all of us to hear, and which I hear welling up from the hearts of the men and women before me, all feeling sentiments that were in accord with the speaker's. I know that you men and women of brain feel that these questions are important ones, that as for us, we will gather up all the force that in us lies to try and carry along the great reform work through to every place and position. Let us honestly and fearlessly discuss the questions before us; let us understand why all the body of Spiritualists are not committed to the work of social reform; let it be distinctly understood whether we, as a representative body of Spiritualists, indorse social freedom as we do religious freedom. [Cheers.] It seems so strange to me, does this bugbear of social freedom. It is to me the most absurd of all things that those who can understand the problem of religious freedom cannot see that the problem of social freedom precisely corresponds. When we say that we believe in social freedom, does any one come up and say that we believe in anarchy or any "ism" except that which we call Spiritualism? Then, when we claim to believe in social freedom, what right has any one to claim that we advocate promiscuity or any "ism." Does not social freedom give every man the right

to decide that question for himself? And in just the same way that religious freedom works? If every man and woman has a right to decide under our views, who can get up and claim that we advocate promiscuousness? We give to every one—to every man and woman—the right to exercise that freedom in accordance with the degree of his growth and unfoldment; and if man be barely above the animal in his development, has he not a right to express himself according to his degree of growth and development? But when we say, that to us the highest development of thought is Spiritualism, and the highest form of life monogamic and continuous, which, from the first, has been declared by the President of this Association, what right have you, as a man or woman, to advance the claim that she or we advocate promiscuity? What more right have you to do that than you have to say that she is a Catholic because advocating religious freedom? She is willing that the Catholic shall worship as he pleases. Have a little consistency, I say, a little common sense, and all our great differences may be settled, and we may live together peaceably, with our different views of religious life, social life; while living honestly, acting honestly, we may have charity for all. [Cheers.]

Mrs. Laura Cuppy Smith said:

"We want Spiritualism, pure and unadulterated Spiritualism," is the cry to-day, and those who are opposed to the President and our views are the most persistent in making this demand. They say "we are Spiritualists and we want Spiritualism." Now, I ask what is Spiritualism? and I answer, that to me Spiritualism goes as deep as the deepest hell of human suffering; it is as broad as the universe, and embraces all humanity in its outspread arms; and points as high as heaven its aspirational finger, bidding us to come up higher. If it is any narrower or more contracted than this it is too contracted and too limited for me, and I for one want none of it. I cannot for my life understand how there can be any side issue to Spiritualism, for Spiritualism to me, as I have



said, is all comprehensive. Spiritualism has answered for thousands the question of immortality; it has soothed the cry of bereaved and anguished humanity. It does not stop here; and let me tell you that so long as every phase of human life, from the hovel to the grog-shop, and from the grog-shop to the church, and from the hut to the palace—so long as every phase of human life has its representatives in the spirit world, and its representatives here are clamoring for justice, so long can nothing that pertains to the best interests of humanity be indifferent to the spirits that walk the upper realms of light and love and liberty. [Cheers.] And let me tell you that one of the fundamental teachings of Spiritualism is, that we should practice our profession, that the kingdom of heaven is within us. I think we have a great deal too much transcendentalism, though at the same time the most unspiritual people that I have ever met are professed Spiritualists. They have spirit communion and spirit intercourse upon the tips of their tongues at every hour of the day, but when you speak to them of the profoundest philosophy ever given from spirit lips and from spirit hearts, they tell you that they do not want it; they are afraid of it; they are afraid, in other words, of truth. Mrs. Browning has said that “you must not pump spring-water unawares upon a gracious public full of nerves;” and of all people on the earth, the Spiritualists are the most nervous when any new truth is under consideration. [“That’s so!”] They are very sick indeed of a new disease, and that disease is chronic respectability; and there is great disappointment awaiting the majority of Spiritualists when they cross the river. They seem to imagine that they are to enter, by the mere fact of death, into a realm of dreamy rapture full of impossible beauty. Now, I assure you that as long as there is suffering here, there will be suffering there; and if I could imagine that there was a sphere where, by any means, I should know that my sympathy for the human race would be obstructed and inhibited, I swear to you that I would refuse to go there; just so long as fathers and mothers agonize yonder—just so long as there are those in the spirit life who have an eye for the unuttered anguish of the earthly sphere, then just so long will the spiritual world hold sorrow, disappoint-



ment and grief untold. And is it not from the spirit world that we receive the practical truths that our President made the basis of her remarks to you? To-day humanity is suffering; to-day humanity is in bonds, and to-day the social question is the most vital and most important. It lies at the basis of all other questions, and must be settled before any other question can be entered upon. Time was when I had certain philanthropical ideas about relieving the condition of prostitutes, those who have been turned out of your homes and have joined the fallen sisterhood. Now I have, in the contemplation of the practical issues of the hour, thrown aside entirely all sentimental (miscalled benevolent) twaddle; and I say to-day, let the prostitutes alone, and deal your heaviest blows at that condition of society which makes prostitution possible. [Cheers.] All that we have to do to-day is to open the doors of our houses of prostitution and say, "O, sisters, come forth and take your places by the bank directors, the men in the Stock Exchange and on Wall street and in your business streets of Chicago; take your places by the minister in the pulpit, by the pew-opener in the church, by the sanctimonious hypocrite who fills the pew, aye, take your place as equal beside the man who visited you last night." [Cheers.] I have no sympathy with vice, but right society, and when you have righted society, prostitution will cease, and the houses of prostitution will, with the churches and the priests, the prison and the gallows be consigned to oblivion, or only preserved as relics of the ignorance and darkness and bestial stupidity of the present hour.

To-day we want men and women strong enough, brave enough and true enough to throw themselves into the deadly chasm. Time was in history when an ancient nation saw the chasm yawn beneath it, and this vortex could not be closed up until the best representative of the chivalry of his country leaped into it. To-day a mighty chasm is yawning; we stand on the eve of the most momentous epoch of American history. To-day priest-craft stands with foot uplifted ready to crush out freedom of thought. To-day political despotism strives to clutch at the throat of liberty and strangle her to death. To-day the so-called respectable society of the hour is clogging with its cowardice, prudery, and damnable respectability, the wheels of progress; and, as beside the

modern Bethesda souls have been reclining waiting for the angel to trouble the waters and bid healing to come, so these leprous souls have waited until the angel came. Her name is Victoria, but you have baptized her demon, judging her by the miserable perfidy of your own besotted notions. You have mistaken educated prejudice for conscience, and to-day the Spiritualists who have boasted of the freedom and grandeur of their platform, are trembling lest a free word be spoken and are beseeching their speakers to abstain from touching upon these dangerous side issues. I tell you that those who have thrown themselves, as Victoria Woodhull and some few others of us have thrown ourselves into the deadly breach, have not done so without counting the cost. To-day I can say to you as she has done, I care neither for your applause nor your hisses; the iron has entered so deeply into my own soul that I stand here a fully emancipated woman, knowing no such word as "fear." no such term as "fail." To-day my poor life seems to me so utterly insignificant, save as it can be made subservient to the interest and elevation of humanity, that I would not fear any bullet that might reach my heart, or flinch from it a single hair's breadth. And because we have come out of great tribulation; because of sorrow that has whitened the hair and furrowed the face; because of the deep sympathy for humanity, that is so far-reaching that no human tongue can describe it, we feel that we are equal to the emergency, and being weighed in the balance, shall never be found wanting. I ask you, as Spiritualists, not to flinch from the consideration of this leading, this vital, this all-important question of the hour. Never mind what they call you; what does it matter? If they call you a Free Lover, they couple together two of the divinest words in the English language—freedom, for which our forefathers fought and bled; love, the divinest element in humanity. And when they place these two words in juxtaposition and call you Free Lovers, wear the name as a badge of the Legion of Honor. I care not what men call me, whether they call me prostitute or chaste, because I have that in my soul that lies so high above the consideration of human approbation or disapproval that no word that you can hurl at me will ever make me less than I am to-day—the lover of humanity, whose soul is con-

separated to the service of the hour, and sworn to work until every man and woman stands free from the miserable bondage of a false educational system.

Words are indeed of little worth. To-day we work for principles; to-day, in the deep earnestness that is called out by the present emergency, we cannot permit ourselves to suffer any limitation, or to recognize anything, save that higher law which bids us forward, let the consequences be what they may. Pledged, then, to the service of the angels, we are consecrated to the work humanitarian. We must hold up the hands of our sister and our President, that she may feel the warm recognition of the people, and, feeling it, aspire to diviner heights, and become indeed to a greater degree what she has been in the past, the evangel of social freedom, the soul that is bound to carry your sins into the wilderness of oblivion, and lift you up into diviner, more exalted, and purer conditions. To-day those who oppose Victoria C. Woodhull are those who are living behind the door the principles she advocates in the sunlight—[cheers]—those that are seeking for secrecy and concealment. The prostitutes oppose her because they say “you are breaking up our business;” the libertines oppose her because they say “you are interfering with our pleasures,” and respectable society holds up its hands in holy horror, and says, “We will oppose you to the death, because we want to hide the wickedness, the terrible ulcers that are eating to the very heart of our social body.” And these are they that are lifting their voices against us, who, being content to live our lives before the face of angels and men, realize that just so long as we live out our most sacred convictions it shall be counted to us as virtue. [Cheers.]

Mr. Chauncey Barnes said:

Mr. Chairman and members of the Convention here assembled—I congratulate you most heartily upon the privilege of meeting you, and still more so for the privilege of an opportunity to advance a few ideas and thoughts which have been given me. In the first place, as I look upon this Convention, taking into thought the Conventions of bygone years, I feel that it is one of the most important Conventions ever assembled. Twenty-five years’ experience with the inhabitants of the world beyond this has given me an opportunity to accu-

mulate many ideas and thoughts that it would be well to print or daguerreotype upon the hearts of the sons and daughters of America. I find that light has come into the world, and more especially into America, and that light finds America clothed in darkness, and the people in gross darkness. To me, America looks to-day as if it were a house of insanity; again, it looks to me as if it were a house of ill fame; to me it looks as if the very devil with all his imps had charge of all the institutions of America, social, religious and political; to me, Mr. Chairman, it looks as if it were going to be handed over to his Satanic majesty in 1876, who will then wind up the whole concern. [Laughter.] You have come here, friends, to exchange thoughts, looking to the elevation of the human race. You are representing the principles of government, socially, religiously and politically, to the whole world. But few of your delegates realize your condition and your mission here. You have taken hold of this God-given life and this immortality. You have that unmistakable evidence, as our Mrs. President gave you to understand, as I caught a few of her grand ideas, that Spiritualism is to-day walking through the orthodox institutions of the land. I have seen it for years. I have warned them for years to be watchful, or the orthodox institutions would have a mortgage upon all the spiritual societies of America. This is an outside pressure that Americans feel, and especially Spiritualists; and at the Convention called last May to take into consideration how we can remedy the effects of such outside pressure, it was not understood as it should be; we took no steps to eradicate it. I believe there was something in the form of resolutions, proposed by myself, which recognized the golden rule as the platform for the American people, or for the American Spiritualists, setting an example or every society on the face of the globe. Friends, America is the first nation that is to be reconstructed in the newness of life; it is the first nation that is to be born of God; and allow me to tell you that it is my honest opinion we have the right woman in the right place to lead mankind up higher and higher, and as Jesus Christ said in his day, so I say in my day, "for if I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." I believe that these men and women that are persecuted, myself included, and these men and



women that are rejected, are destined to become the corner-stones of the building, the head of the whole institution, social, religious and political. This is the demonstration that has been given to us through the manifestations of the spirit world throughout the Union—the manifestations of the spirit of the war, the spirit of the fire in Chicago. As it has appeared to me, all the spirits of the powers of darkness, which are the powers of destruction, break down at noon-day. You have been warned of these things and have rejected the truth; and as Jesus Christ said in his day, if you reject the truth you heap damnation upon yourselves. We have as a people heaped damnation upon ourselves, and God has rained upon the righteous and unrighteous alike, hence he is raining upon you and me. My God is a God of love, of salvation, of justice and of truth; love to all men, and to women too. Jesus Christ taught it; and as Jesus Christ said in his day, there were certain things which he could not tell them because they could not bear them, so if Mrs. Woodhull had given all her life out years ago, she would not have lived to stand upon this platform to-day. Now, allow me to tell you, my friends, that I am a sea-faring man, from a cabin boy to master of a ship; then twenty years ago, an infidel who did not believe in God, man or the devil. I thought then I was a man, but now when I look back, I see that I was nothing but an animal. To-day I am a man among men, giving you God-given truths. Heaven and hell shall pass away, but these of mine shall not pass away; for they are my work, and my work is truth, and that truth is Christ. And your brother and sister mediums are endowed with the power of gifts to show to the world that you are followers of Christ. I have many more words to say to you, but before closing I want to show to you the government that you are merged into. I have preached the funeral sermon of the Mosaic dispensation. We are now merged into the new dispensation which is shown by the accompanying chart.

Here Mr. Barnes exhibited a chart engraved with figures which he proceeded to explain.

He had just remarked—woman is a religious being, man is not; woman represents Christ the Lord, man represents God and the devil.



The Chairman—Time is up.

Mr. Todd presented the report of the Committee on Business, referring to the order of business to be observed during the Convention as follows: Convention to assemble at 9 o'clock A. M. One hour to be spent in ten-minute speeches. Regular business to commence at 10 o'clock; Convention to adjourn at 12. Afternoon session to be called to order at 2 o'clock; adjournment at 5. Evening session to assemble at 7 o'clock and adjourn at 9. This evening to be devoted to thirty-minute speeches.

On motion of Mr. Cooper, the report was adopted.

Mr. Cotton said:

I did not propose to say anything to-day, but I will fill out five or eight minutes. Our Brother Lynn this afternoon said if an individual attempted to use oil it was perfect sophistry. I was the individual who declared the propriety of using oil. Now, Brother Lynn says he believes in blood and thunder. Well, I do not wish to quarrel with him, neither shall I find fault with him if he finds fault with me for trying to use oil. I have no fears as to what may be the results of this Convention, as I said before the best way is to use oil and promote peace. Now, I will tell you what I have liked in this convention, and one of the things I have not liked. I have heard such remarks as this from some of those who are termed radicals, "We want to kill off all the cowards." Now, I don't want to kill anybody, for if an individual is a coward how can he help being a coward? Who made thee a judge of thy brother? [Or, who, then, of thy sister?—ED.] I know those who are away along in this reform and profess to see clear through to the end how it is all going to work, but if they can they can see further than I can. I told them at our State Convention in Vineland, where I live, that we had an elephant on our hands and we knew not what to do with it. Now, one individual says we will take him off this way and another off that. Now, the question is, can we discuss this great question upon this free platform, with love in our hearts, and esteem every individual our brother? Why, I remember the story of a man away off in another country in a mountain, and he heard in the bushes near a sound that,

frightened him. He looked through the fog, and as he approached nearer and nearer he trembled with emotion. By and by the bushes burst open and an individual came out of the thicket, and he found on close inspection that it was none other than his brother John. Now, when we inspect each other, although we may see each other through the mists and fogs and think they are enemies, yet when we get nearer to them we shall find that it is brother John. My own idea is not to hit brother John or brother Moses. Let us discuss the matter and find out whether he is a friend or not. I heard very much in the remarks of our sister Woodhull which I love. I like those glorious truths to which we listened. But when it is declared that Spiritualism has not in the past done anything for humanity; that we have ignored the elevation of the race; that we have not tried to educate our children or benefit them, it seems to me to be a great mistake. It seems to me that we have done and are still accomplishing much in this direction. I presume that none of us will ignore the importance of right generation as well as right education of the little waifs committed to our charge. It was said by one speaker, that those who opposed her upon the principle were practicing the same principle themselves, standing here keeping themselves covered. It was also said by our sister Woodhull that the individual who came here to question these things must bring his virtue to this platform, inclosed in a napkin so that it could be inspected. Now, I do not carry my virtue in a knapsack, but I am open for inspection. I do not want any one to label me on the back with the label of virtue. But let me live so that my life may be read and known of all men. Now, there may be, and no doubt there are, hundreds and thousands to-day who are throwing slime here and there who are practicing these things themselves, but a great many large-hearted and honest souls who cannot see her method of doing this thing, think it cruel beyond calculation that they should be lugged in with these persons who are rolling over in sexual indulgences; for there are hundreds and thousands whose lives are pure in every regard, who are fearful of themselves in the way that this is shaping; and I stand up to represent that class of individuals who, not being able to see fully that she is all right, take a somewhat different model. I will not occupy your time

any longer, but my soul is full on this subject, and if I have an opportunity I will give you the result of my thought. I want to say this, however, that those who know me, know that I am not and never was a coward. I know only enough to speak what to me is truth at what would seem to be the right time and right place. It seems to me that when any one ignores the fact of time and place for promulgating what to him is truth, ignores a fact in science and philosophy which should not be ignored. I claim that the man of Nazareth was a glorious medium, and that he gave to individuals what was suited to them, and that he never attempted to foist upon humanity things for which it was not prepared. I have felt it to be my duty to say this much.

The Convention then adjourned.

#### EVENING SESSION.

The Convention assembled at 7 o'clock.

The Secretary began the services of the evening by reading the following letters:

ROCHESTER, Sept. 13, 1873.

*To the National Convention of Spiritualists, convened at Chicago, Greeting:*

Having read with pain and surprise in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* its scurrilous attack upon the character of our beloved and highly respected friend, Mrs. Cora L. V. Tappan, I deem it justice to say to the Chicago Convention, where the slander has been so industriously promulgated, that I was acquainted with the circumstances of her leaving home, so ill in health that the kind friends who assisted in conveying her on board the vessel did not expect her to live ever to return.

Mr. Densmore, the kind gentleman with whom she went, had previously seen his wife and children safely on board a vessel bound direct to a port in France, where they desired to educate their children, with the understanding that he was soon to follow them by the way of London, and to be accompanied by Mrs. Tappan.

Mr. Densmore has long been known as a philanthropist, and among his many acts of kindness his devoted care of

Mrs. Eliza Farnham and her son during her last severe illness can never be too gratefully remembered by her friends nor too much praised by every lover of suffering humanity. He is a man of wealth, and has long been a generous friend to Cora L. V. Tappan, our highly gifted and devoted laborer in the sacred cause of diffusing the knowledge of heavenly light, that is to elevate the condition of down-trodden woman and redeem the world from the bondage of superstition and consequent sorrow.

I have just received a letter from Mrs. Tappan, bearing date London, August 28, in which she says:

"After a long and most painful illness, almost unto death, from which I have been restored by angels in both worlds, I am about to return to America and to resume my usual labors. I write to say that if the friends in Rochester desire to hear me, I shall be most happy to respond, and my appearance there might silence the absurd rumors that are afloat. I shall probably arrive about the 20th of September."

In conclusion, it is really a pitiful commentary upon the intelligence and justice of any professedly religious, philosophical and spiritualistic journalist to take a slanderous article against the character of any woman so widely known (or otherwise) as Mrs. Tappan from a conscienceless opposition paper, and publish and sustain it for truth. Verily, verily, justice is trampled under foot of men. Let woman arise and go forth under this banner, "I will be just."

Yours for the right,

AMY POST.

BATTLE CREEK, Mich.

*To the National Association of Spiritualists, convened at Chicago, Ill., Greeting:*

All honor to the many brave and noble workers who have gathered together for the purpose of advancing our beautiful faith in angel ministry and the glorious cause of social reformation. We know that it is not *alone* you labor, but from the not distant shores of spirit-realms are thronging multitudes of gifted minds, although, perhaps, invisible, yet whose power all feel and acknowledge, enabling each of you to dare and bear the many burdens and sacrifices all must share who unselfishly toil for social freedom, the great ques-



tion of the hour. And not only from the angel-world comes an incentive to urge you forward, but from thousands and tens of thousands of wretched domestic homes is wafted to your ears the almost universal cry of unrest and dissatisfaction, pleading for redress from woes well-nigh unbearable. Although we cannot be with you upon this occasion to lend a helping voice, yet know that we are with you in spirit and in prayer; that we justly appreciate your efforts, and extend our thanks to all; but most especially to our noble leader, Victoria, we say, God and the angels forever bless and protect you.

Yours for freedom,

MRS. L. E. BAILEY.

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BOSTON, Sept. 12, 1873.

*Dear Brethren*—Never before did I feel such a desire to be where I cannot as to be with you. I plainly see that the time has come when Spiritualists must see something beyond the fact of spirit communion; in short, spirit communion must be made practical. Some will object to this and crystallize; they will become a sect. "The Kingdom of Heaven will be taken from them, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruit thereof."

Others will go on adopting, preaching and practicing the reforms as one by one they are introduced to them by wiser influences, and save the world. Put me among the radicals, among the martyrs; and if my voice has any weight, let it come on the side of progress, of moving forward as fast as we can see that we are right, without consulting Mother Grundy, Young Men's Christian Associations or respectable Spiritualists, who care more for the opinions of the world than for truth and progress.

Hoping that whether harmony prevails in the Convention or not, the car of progress may not be obstructed,

I am, as over,

MOSES HULL.

P. S.—My appointments prevent my being with you.

M. H.

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 15, 1873.

*Victoria Woodhull, Pres. Am. Association of Spiritualists,  
Grow's Opera Hall, Chicago, Ill.:*

DEAR SISTER—I find myself unable to reach Chicago in



time for the Convention. I consider this a misfortune. Three short years ago I was an earnest student for the Christian ministry; to-day there is not an orthodox weed in the garden of my soul. My voice, vote and pen are for Freedom. From such defeats as those administered to the defenders of freedom, with special limitations regarding sex, good Lord deliver me.

F. BURLINGAME, Delegate from Washington, D. C.

The Chairman:

In the absence of the speakers I will fill up ten minutes' time in addressing the Convention. There are a few things that I desire to say at some time during the proceedings, and I can say them as well now as at any other time, and may be better. We have been classed as a nervous people; we are quick in our perceptions, and as a necessary consequence—I am speaking of Spiritualists and of reformers generally—we are easily excited and disturbed in our equilibrium. Ten years ago things were the same as they are now. At that time the first National Convention of Spiritualists was held in this city, and it was the stormiest convention that I ever saw. There are persons that to-night are present here who were members of the first National Convention of Spiritualists, and who when it split went off and founded another association, and I am happy to say, speaking of the progress in spiritual matters that has been made, that some of those parties are now with us and are our most advanced men. We have no animosity, and if there are any delegates left among us who are likely to feel that way, a little more education in Spiritualism will soon rid them of it. Now, one of the great difficulties that we are laboring under at the present time is croaking of old orthodoxy. We find it giving expression to distrust of radicalism and fear of change from your "R. P. J.;" they are advocating Let it alone, away down to the conservative element they are crying "Let it alone." It is too liberal, too iconoclastic, therefore let it alone. The consequence is that all our delegations are not properly filled; nevertheless, there are enough here who are prepared to see that the Association goes forward and maintains its position. I know from what I have been able to see that there can be no failure in this matter; the people are

now ready for radical truths, and they are beginning to learn that when certain individuals advise others to a certain course and say hard things, that in nine cases out of ten they are in a condition of trying to give a stab in the dark, and that these individuals are guilty of practices that cannot bear the light. They want scrutiny left alone. Now, we that are ready to exercise all our faculties for the purpose of unfolding higher conditions, know that we may make mistakes, that we may be less gross, less sensual, that we may be more spiritual, more pure and more holy; and as a consequence, in the common acceptation of the term, more divine. We are willing that we should be scrutinized. We are willing that we should learn better ways than those in which we have been living, and this is proven by the spiritual phalanx and the platform, where they can stand the whirlwind, where they can stand the thunderbolt, where they can stand all the anathemas that the compound of churches can hurl at them, and also to admit any progressive Spiritualists. I suppose I have said nearly enough, but I wanted to bring to your mind the fact that it is necessary for us to have in this Convention a most harmonious yet the most radical expression of views ever heard upon the American continent, and nobody in the end hurt, but everybody made better. For long years I have adopted the idea that when any one said anything of me that hurt there was something that needed attention, there was a wound that needed to be probed, therefore I say criticise. Say of me what the New York press did at the Vineland Convention: "The Convention was presided over by a little old crazy man, with a sing-song voice, who introduced the speakers to the audience as brethern and sistern." [Laughter.] Criticism does me good; it is glorious. I feel the better for it, and I know the man who uttered that thing and printed it and caused it to be published, has come to be so ashamed of himself that he will never do it again. I see the other speakers of the evening are ready and I will close. Mr. P. B. Randolph, of Utah, will speak to you first.

Mr. P. B. Randolph said:

Ladies and gentlemen—Of late years I have not made much of the habit of public speaking; the day for gab with me has gone by, the day for action has arrived. I have come up the

Mount of Gilead to fight for the Lord, and, by the Lord, I mean the truth as I understand it. And I have heard more truth to-day from this platform than I have heard from many others. When human emotions interfere with human duty, human emotions ought to go to the ground and be trodden under foot. Human duty is the paramount obligation on every man and every woman. I remember and will recite to you an anecdote of a great and good man, he who prophesied that negro slavery must be wiped out with human blood. It was Gerrit Smith, who said in answer to those who favored the idea of trusting the matter of the abolition of slavery to the religious element of civilization, of not meddling with it politically at all, and in time the moral sense of the people would wipe out the curse: "Gentlemen, suppose I leave this hall and travel down the street. I have left my friend and he has left me a half hour or so before. I smoke my cigar and I walk down the street quietly, when I hear the cry of help, help, and I rush to see what is the matter. I see my friend in the hands of robbers, who are garrotting him, robbing him, putting their hands in his pockets, throttling him and taking the life blood from his heart, and of course it is my duty to say, gentlemen, please to allow my friend to arise. Would you expect that of me? Not while I have the semblance of a man. My business is to take hold of the roughs, hurl them back with all my might, and cry out, let up—let up." That is one of the final elements of human progress. The men of one idea, the women of one idea, are those who have marked not only their own names on the front of the ages in which they lived, but it is these men and women of one idea who have driven back the waves of barbarism, and have introduced civilization as perfect as it was imperfect ten years since. Why? Simply because men and women, on the right hand and on the left, have got tired of the bugbears of popularity, and they dare to speak the truth, no matter who oppose. The day has come when we are no longer terrified by the anathemas of the Church or political parties. We dare to stand upon our own individuality; we dare to look the sun in the face and say, "I come from the same God that thou didst." The day has gone by when the aristocracy of wealth and position can lord it with a strong hand over

the world. The prostitute that walks the streets of Chicago can, with the highest king on the noblest throne of earth, say: "God Almighty is my father, Nature is my mother." Show me a better religion if you can. It cannot be did. [Laughter.] God, when giving a mighty truth to the world, always takes care to have some one to express His thought. I as much believe that these reformers on my right hand and on my left and around me were especially created by the Omnipotent for the part they play in the great struggle of the nineteenth century, as I do that two and two make four. Why? Simply because they are doing their allotted work. We are coming up from barbarism—from savagery—to that higher good that we may not reach on this earth, but, just as certainly as one and one make two, awaits us in the starry realm above. Every man and woman of us that feels the divine pulsation of our maternity throbbing in our souls, must have felt as I did when I heard Victoria Woodhull to-day speak the almighty truths, the grand and magnificent truths—truths which underlie the weal and woe of living men and coming generations. Thank God, say I, that I have lived to see the day, and to have believed and heard this woman. I made up my mind that it was Woodhullism for me; that, sink or swim, live or die, go to heaven or to hell, I should stand until the world could go skating in hell with ice five feet thick before I would surrender my belief in this woman [great cheers], and I will tell you why. The time has been when I believed that Mrs. Woodhull and the doctrines she espouses and so elegantly maintains had for their object the destruction of the purest shrine of the human heart. I believed, as it was charged against her to-day, that she was the advocate of sexual promiscuity; I believed all these bad things, because I, like a great many others, did not take care to investigate for myself and come to a righteous conclusion. After I had listened to her, after I had heard all that I did hear of her expressions and what she meant by them, then, said I, if this is to be a destruction, to proclaim freedom to the struggling millions of civilization under a false system of marriage, then the more I have of this kind of destruction the better I shall like it. For, step by step, inch by inch, foot by foot has her philosophy forced back barbarism and torn away the



mask of hypocrisy and put it under her foot, and shown the people, the world, the generations that are and are to be, that all the hell on earth, springs from incompatible marriages, and have their dark origin in impure and foul sexual relationship, not only outside of it as has been held, but in the very penetralia of the marriage system. [Cheers.] In 1853 I attended a Convention in Utica, where Mr. Branch, of New York, came forward and proclaimed something like the doctrine proclaimed by Woodhull. Shameless vice proclaims the thing most absurd, but the more we have of such absurdity the better for the world. Forty-six years ago there was a man who fell in love with a woman and a woman who fell in love with a man. [Laughter.] They did not stop to pay fees to the justice or to the priest, but they accidentally generated, and a fellow called P. B. Randolph was the result. [Laughter and cheers.] Twelve months after he was born she married the man and the man married her. Five or six children were born after the marriage. The world has heard something of the bastard, but not a word of the ones who came in the ordinary legal way. I am a very poor specimen of that operation, simply because the circumstances 43 or 44 years ago were less perfect than they are to-day. A great many people are afraid that if these doctrines find utterance from a thousand rostrums, in the land, and if they are accepted by the millions, that the world will go back to anarchy, confusion, chaos and destruction, totally forgetful of the almighty truth that revolutions always go forward, that progress is imminent and that advancement is in everything, that nothing recedes permanently, but that all advances. Therefore, let these doctrines be proclaimed throughout the length and breadth of the land, and nothing but good can come out of them, for this reason, that every soul upon the earth is endowed with the instinct of seeking happiness, and happiness can only be found in doing right and never doing wrong. I defy the whole world to point me out a single circumstance from which it would be right for me to infer that what is right for a man is wrong for a minister. [Cheers.] The probabilities are before this Convention meets again I shall be numbered with the dead. I am not afraid to die. I am not afraid of this grand spiritual destiny that awaits me. God knows that



I want to go to the spirit world, and if any one after I have passed away can say of me other than that I have done my best to bring the world up to a higher state; if even the worst enemy that I have shall be able to say that I have, strangely organized as I was, not done my best to reform that condition of society which haunted my mother because she obeyed the instincts of her nature and bore me without the permit of a priest or a justice, I want it said that his voice was ever raised in favor of rights in behalf of truth and justice. Sometimes I get angry, sometimes I go astray as all men have gone astray, but I tell you that in advocating and indorsing the principles enunciated from the platform by the radical party, I have done no wrong, and believe that I have done right. Moses Hull's name has been mentioned, and it has been said to me, Do you indorse Moses Hull? I indorse no man. [Good.] God Almighty must indorse for him, and he must indorse for himself. I am only responsible for myself—for the wrong I do; I can only be rewarded for the good I do. Standing upon this platform I have no right to interfere with Moses Hull and his God—they are between him and the world. I may object to his philosophy, I may object to the conclusions that the barbarous may draw from his recent letter. I may object to all this and yet I cannot object to the exercise of what he considers the highest and noblest portions of his design. If he is wrong, God Almighty and nature will correct him; if he is right, all the world cannot injure him, but he must go on and work out his own salvation by tribulation and trial, and in no other way. If it is wrong to protest against negro slavery; if it is wrong to protest against murder; if it is wrong to protest against evil doing of any kind, then it is also wrong to do good, but it is right to protest against wrong. It is right for men and women to help forward the grand tidal wave of reform, and I, for one, welcome with gladness the liberalizing element I see in the Convention, and I wish to God that the streets of Chicago might be packed and thronged through the next century with such evangels of light and truth as I have seen and heard on this platform to-day. I tell you hypocrisy has to be unmasked. Follow the men and women who say that these people are wrong-doers, licentious, to their homes, look at their wives, look at their children; fol-

low them like Mephistophiles in Goethe's great poem. There are men who will go and say, "This is all wrong." But follow them outside on the street. He will be heard to be greeted with the remarks, "A noble fellow," "A fine fellow." He has "Hon." before his name; but look at the pale woman in the household. See her pale, thin cheeks; see her bleeding to death from a thousand pores by his cruelty and his obedience to the law and kingdom of lust. Look at that picture and then at the other, and then you will see that hypocrisy ought to be unmasked. Marriage, as it exists, is an inducement to murder. It was only last week, in the city of Toledo, that a woman came to me with a sick child, and asked me to nurse the child back to light. It was falling to pieces with syphilis. The woman said to me, "I tried to kill the child six times before it was born, but I have killed six others before it came to live!" ["Shame."] If the system called marriage, if the system called civilization produces such results as these, I say that it is time that some iconoclast like Mrs. Woodhull, and these noble men and women around here, should draw the mask away, and show out in all their hideousness the damning things of our civilization.

Children of to-day are being hurried out of the world before they have a chance to perform their mission, for which God Almighty ordained human souls to be incarnated. I, in behalf of unborn millions, protest against it, and say that it is time that it should be done away with. [Cheers.] It is wrong to-day to proclaim certain truths, because they are unpopular. Murder, red-handed murder, is so popular in Chicago to-day that you cannot go on the principal streets without seeing the signs hanging out by the dozen of scoundrels in the shape of men who stand ready to commit the murder of an unborn innocent for \$5 and upward. I say that it is a crying shame against the civilization of the century, and against this infernal thing called Christianity as it exists in churches and in society. [Loud cheers.] Again, the laws of divorce compel a woman to live with a man who to her is a tyrant and a brute; and, in order to get out of that infernal bondage, one or the other of them has to commit a crime, and then some lawyer, with business-like smartness, speedily gets the thing fixed so that

they may both go and commit the same crime again. The time is coming when, if a couple cannot live together happily, they shall be enabled to part without disgrace on either side. There is another thing that I wish to speak of here, and I will occupy your attention no more. I beg you to come to the consideration of the question. It will be discussed in the morning at the Convention, and perhaps the next day. I beg you will come to the consideration of the subject as men and women ought to do. Remember that every man, woman and child in this audience—noble faces, noble habits, splendid bodies, with fine hearts—have all to die during the next fifty years, and your bodies to be laid away. But there is the law of progress, and it behooves every man and woman to remember it. It is as inevitable as the laws of the Medes and Persians are said to be. As you sow so shall you reap. Every thought, every act, every deed, every inspiration against the peace of your neighbor, hurries you back into the black Baranthas from which you cannot ascend on high by the blood of the lamb, but shall learn by experience how strikes the clock of eternity—"tick—tick—tick," every time three generations of men pass away into the realms of the infinite ether. Remember this, and that every time you do wrong, every time you commit a crime, the watchful angel on the tower of time rings the bell ding-dong, the knell of your happiness and the commencement of your future trials. Purgatory! What do you mean by that? I do not mean the purgatory of hell-fire, but I mean the purgatory of a broken heart, of an abused soul; and until you are pure and clean you cannot enjoy the beauties beyond the stars. Is it wrong, then, for a weak little woman, but one who weighs a thousand tons, to call these reformers and show them how they were to find other ways of spending their lives here than by impoverishing them? But ding-dong; and when the river is once passed there is no return. What grand and glorious philosophy this Spiritualism is! A gentleman told me the other day: "Ah, you are not a Spiritualist!" If I am not a Spiritualist, then what in God's name am I? If all the world has gone back of P. B. Randolph at times and all the world have put their fires on his head, still there was a something that came in the still hours of the night which,

said, "Do your duty; speak out, no matter who opposes—no matter who may stand in the way." It may be that ere another year elapses I shall meet some of you in the flesh and perhaps in the spirit world; but whatever may take place, take this as my parting word to you all: "Do right: be true and be just; remember the inevitable destiny that awaits you; remember that Spiritualism is not a mere word, that it is not a mere party call; remember that death is not a thing to be sneered at nor laughed at. It is a terrible thing for death to come and seize a man or woman and launch them out on the other side of time before that man or woman has done his duty and become better. Let them day by day become the better for the preceding, and every day so continue to improve." One word more. Remember this, my friends, that it is not Victoria C. Woodhull, or Dr. Coonley, or Mr. Jamieson, or any other men or set of men, who is represented on this platform, but it is God's eternal truth, and inasmuch as you shall stand for it or against it, so shall be your reward and fitness for the other side of time. [Cheers.]

Mrs. Anna Middlebrook, of Connecticut, said:

"Truth wears no mask, kneels at no human shrine, asks neither place nor applause, it only seeks a hearing. No man need fear corruption from her teaching." This is my text, borrowed, of course. It is now twenty-three years since the spirits said to me, "A great work is before you—go forth and do our bidding." I had no idea of the meaning of that communication then; I was fitted for no public position by circumstances or by education. It was impossible for me to know what the spirits could do with such a poor, feeble, uneducated person as I was. But I know now the course of proceeding they took with me. I know now the school they opened to my mind; I know now the system of training that they put me through, by trance speaking for six or eight years, and day by day and week by week, and by new ideas poured in my mind, until it began to be opened, and I saw spiritually; and yet if I could have perceived then where the pathway would have led me, I should have started back in horror. In all my ignorance of the demands of the world I never would have dared to have gone forth on the spiritual platform. Of course they come to us gently at first. They know how easily men and women were frightened, so



they talked so tenderly, and judging what their minds were capable of by what the past had given us, they gradually opened the door of new light and new truth. I was taught, first of all, that the spirit world and this world had entered, as it were, into a counsel together, they had entered together to bleed for humanity; that is those on earth who could understand the work, and those in the spirit world who could reach the receptive mind. I learned that these assemblages of spirits, congregations of spirits if you please, devoted themselves to the work of humanity, and I was unfit for the task. Yet first of all, came communications that taught people that they could begin to overlook their old prejudices, that they could go out from old opinions, and dare to criticise the bible. It was a terrible step, when men dared to criticise the bible. It was a terrible step when we even ventured to ask the question, whether Jesus Christ was the saviour of men? It was a terrible step when we united science with our cause and said, "There is no devil, and there is no hell. People asked, what shall we do with the sinners? Where shall we put them after they go out of this world? Where can we get a scapegoat for the sins of the multitude, if these dear relics of antiquity are taken away from us? Well, step by step I was led along until I found that Spiritualism meant something more than to sit down and take a nice chat with our spirit friends; I learned that it was something more to the unhallowed and old theology of the past; I learned that it meant human happiness and the welfare of human beings, and I have come to that point to-day. Through the ministrations of spirits, through the great school that they have opened to my mind, through their training and their experience and observation, and the lessons that others have poured into my ears, I have learned that human hearts need the aid of the angel world. Spiritualism to-day means reform; I never entered a spiritual convention until two years ago in Troy, for I had never seen until then any signs on the part of Spiritualists of any real practical work, that was intended to be done by them. I am obliged to tell you that I saw signs then and there looking toward the elevation of humanity, and then having the experience that I have, having observed as I have the length the breadth of the country, having listened to tales of horror that have



been poured into my ears by weeping and wailing women, I am obliged to tell you to-day that I believe of all reforms that the world has ever known, this matter of social reform is the greatest. [Cheers.] I should not be true to myself nor to the cause in which I am engaged if I withhold this my conviction; and I believe this because, first of all, we see that we are here to prepare for the other world, or rather that we are going right out of this world into another sphere in which we are to live on forever and forever. We know very well that if we don't begin life properly—if we do not learn about the life here—we shall be no better nor happier there. Spiritualism takes in these social questions because the social question stands as it were at the very head of life; but there are so many who object to side issues. In Spiritualism there are so many that are trying not to have these questions lugged on to the spiritual platform—there are so many that wish we could confine ourselves to Spiritualism—that I am tempted to ask, Is there anybody here that can tell what Spiritualism means? I asked a friend, the other day, and he said it meant religion and science. I think we may all be right in discussing this social question, then, for it means religion and science. What is religion? Thomas Paine declared that his religion was to do good. Do you know any other religion but the worship of God through bettering your fellow man? What is science? The information that we can gain from facts that can be proven. If Professor Denton can talk geology on the spiritual platform, and you say geology belongs to Spiritualism, I want to know why Mrs. Woodhull cannot talk sociology there also, and whether that does not belong to spiritual science as well? [Cheers.] I say that Spiritualism is a great tree, planted by many persons. There was a vast multitude that went to work, as they would to raise a monument in memory of some great, departed dead. They went to work and dug down deep into the old soil, that the roots might have warmth to stretch themselves out and grow; and they planted the tree young and beautiful, and they said to themselves, "It is a beautiful tree; this soil will cause it to grow; we will tend it and shield it from the thunders of the storm and the piercing rays of the sun, and it will grow up a beautiful tree." But by and by somebody came along and said: "I have never seen

a tree like that; I do not like that branch, it looks strange;" and the people said, " Well, yes, it does look a little strange; cut off that branch." Then another came along, and also objected to a branch, and another objected that the roots are spreading; and in each case the people cut off the objectionable parts of their tree, so that at last they had nothing left but a miserable trunk. The people passing by say, " The thing is dead, don't you see it?" and others say that " it is the dry-rot, and how can it be helped?" This is the condition in which you conservatives would have us thrust Spiritualism. [Cheers.] Precisely the condition. You say when you talk about Spiritualism you must hurt the churches, and be a little careful what you say. Then comes other people's prejudice, and tells you to cut off that branch, and off it is lopped; and so on with other branches. But now I will tell you how the tree has grown: it has secured men of capable and comprehensive minds in the ranks of its care-takers, and it is grown up until there has never been known anything like it. We cannot expect that it will be anything like that which has preceded it. We must give it a chance to show what it is. What if its roots do run on your neighbor's land? Railway corporations take the land of your neighbor when they want it to promote the interest either of themselves or of the whole people served by the line. This is what Spiritualism is doing. If you will let it grow it will push its way through the old soil, and wonderful will be the result; the branches will go outward and the roots downward, and you will be surprised thereat. So with ourselves; we want room to grow. Only in this way can Spiritualism make us grow truthful, noble, with a soul to love humanity. This is the kind of tree we would have it; this is the kind of tree that is needed in the world. Lop off its branches and it will die, for it must extend; let it grow in all its beauty and it will flourish.

Now, coming right back to the social question—I tell you that this is one of the issues of Spiritualism belonging to it for this reason: that society belongs to life, and life in society is right to its natural instincts and to its upward growth. Years ago I walked on to the suffrage platform before the Legislature, and saw the legislators turn away, refusing to take notice. They told us you are only women;

you have no right to vote. I have been here and there, talking with men, asking them to permit us this right, to give us the privileges they enjoy; but they said, "This prerogative is for man, not for woman." It is for only a few years that I have felt it to be an honor to be a woman. Ever since I have had the power to think I have felt sorry that I was born a woman, until within the last few years; and now I believe that woman's cause will yet be elevated to the very heavens, and that men will bow down before her, as they should. [Cheers.] I go further than any person who has spoken from this platform in this woman's cause. I believe that the mission of maternity is a most sacred and glorious one, and I believe that woman's life during the period that she is giving her offspring to the world should be as sacredly devoted to that mission as the nun devotes herself to the Church and her religion. I tell you more than this, and we must maintain it for truth, that were it not for women we would not be in existence, and you all exist by the sufferance of women. [Cheers.] She holds humanity in her grasp. It is only by her elevation that the human race can be elevated. Now, just so long as we have a religion that says to a woman, "You must keep silent, and learn in all submission; you must submit yourselves to your husbands as unto the Lord," it is impossible that she should be elevated. Furthermore, we have a religion that makes woman bear the fall of man, like the Eve of old, who was cursed for Adam's sin (for let me tell you, religionists, you have made an awful mistake when you think that woman consented) and therefore caused the fall of the human race with her, because she never received the command from the Lord at all, even admitting the whole truth of the bible, for she was not made out of Adam's rib until the command had been given. Therefore, if she did eat the apple, she did not break the commandment, so that the religionists have all the time been laboring under a mistake. [Cheers.] I want you to go home and read your bibles, if you think what I have said is not true. God laid the command upon Adam, it is said. I do not believe it all. I do not see why I should. I stand here to-night, so far as the religion of the bible is concerned, determined upon its destruction so far as I can do it. [Cheers.] In politics I am a rebel, and I announce it openly and freely.

It is a sham republic. In all social questions a revolutionist, and I will never cease my labors until I, a woman, come to be honored as much in my actions as men are. [Cheers.] More than this, I will tell you what I have seen through a long number of years, and if you don't heed the warning, it will bring you desolation and damnation. In religion, your churches are good for nothing; those who have the power to read and examine for themselves, who set themselves up as public teachers in the many isms of the day—I do not say but that some are honest—those who are most honest are most ignorant. [Cheers.] Those who set themselves up as public teachers know that they have not a particle of proof for their belief which the world to-day demands. I would destroy a religion that is not based on fact. Why should we in the 19th century go back 1800 years for our teaching? Can't we get enough, have we not common sense enough, to read and apply the signs of the times? Why should we go back to the old teachings, and say nothing else is sacred. I tell you that I believe that Christianity lives a mere float on the surface of progress, that is liable to sink, and will sink, at any time when the Spiritualists unite in a body, and are not afraid to tell the world what they believe, and this openly. And why should we be afraid? Do we not know that even in the sham republic in which we live we have a right to our belief? Now, you did not make yourselves, with your peculiar organizations you are not responsible for them; for it is a well-founded rule that you have your right to belief as I have mine, and as our complexions differ, so may our beliefs; and this is true the world over. And then, again, if you attempt to impose upon me, I have an equal right with you. If you say, "You, Spiritualists, are going too far; you must keep within the proprieties; you must not do such strange things," why I tell you, if the question had been asked me before I was born whether I would be born into this world, I would say, "No;" and if we did not make ourselves, it is clear that no one can make us responsible for what we may do. [Cheers.] Then, as to the subject of politics, I repeat that I am a rebel. I will get up rebellion so far as my feeble efforts can do it. I am not afraid of being called a traitor, for, if you come to that, you are a traitor, or you would carry out republican



principles. [Cheers.] I own no allegiance to this government; I have no voice in the matter at all; I have never consented to my governors. Not a law that was ever made under the Constitution of the United States or State legislation can claim from me one particle of allegiance; and even though I am a married woman, and have consented to these laws, yet I don't think it possible for me to break them so as to be held responsible, justly. The laws are based upon the consent of one-half, with the other half of the governed left out entirely. And right here I want to whisper to the women, and I don't want their husbands to hear it. I tell you that we are not responsible beings, and that if we have promised that we will live only with one man until death does us part, what of it? Don't you know that you did not help make those laws; that you are not responsible for them, and that you owe no allegiance to them?

[Cheers.] I am a rebel, because republican principles are a sham. It is a sham government, and it commences right down in the basis of society, for society is a great sham.

[Cheers.] But would you not have law? By all means, I would have law; but I think that Nature knew what she was about when she manufactured us, and I think the law that she has implanted in our souls is just the best law, and the law that is made contrary to this law I have a right to defy. I have only briefly stated to you how I regard Spiritualism and its relations to this great work, which, in the sincerity of my soul, I believe to be the greatest reform that the world has ever presented for consideration. I do hope, as Spiritualists, you will not shrink from handling it, weighing it, measuring it, and thoroughly testing its qualities from beginning to end, that in your work and your relations to it you may not act ignorantly, but wisely, remembering that truth is always beneficial.

[Cheers.]

Mr. Anthony Higgins next spoke. He said:

Mr. Chairman and friends—As a delegate from the State of New Jersey I am very happy to meet the representatives of from nine to twelve millions of the American people. We are called Spiritualists, but I have another name, that is, Anti-Christians. I use this name for many reasons of my own, prominently among the number being the fact that the



Christian has for eighteen centuries been a tyrant upon the metaphysical in man and woman; and, secondly, because he has assumed to be a tyrant upon the physical in man and woman. The authority delegated to man by the Bible and revelations I ignore, so far as affects me. I have been taught the great value of Spiritualism *per se*, but since Spiritualism evolved the very important idea in the minds of us that we are progressive, I perceive the necessity of creating a new name. I do not declare war against names, but against systems that tend to mar and impede the soul in its onward march to improvement. How far we have the liberty to transgress the commonly received and public ideas of right and wrong is not to be settled by the Mosaic creed, which we disown, and is not for the Christian people to settle, because we have evolved in this country a right guaranteed by the political Constitution to seek happiness according to our highest and best wishes. The Anti-Christian-Spiritualists are seeking not only to demonstrate the immortality of the soul, but the further fact that the immortality of the soul is of very little consequence so long as we have imperfect brains and imperfect bodies; and that if we seek to reform society we must do it in the directly opposite direction in which it has been traveling ever since Christianity appeared. It has been admitted that the Christian church has done much for humanity, inasmuch as it brought it up to its present standard; but Spiritualism calls upon the Spiritualist to go farther, and seeks to evolve other and better systems. The present creed of moral philosophy founded on the Mosaic cannot make men and women better than they have been in the past. But Spiritualism has evolved some new ideas. What are these ideas? One of the most prominent is the second addition to political liberty—that is, individual liberty—enounced not by the patriots of 1775, not by the pen of Jefferson, but by the Spiritualists of to-day, who, perceiving that their forefathers did not go far enough, are now prepared to advance a step farther. The evidences of corruptibility in society are overpowering; on every side men and women seem to do nothing right, notwithstanding the Sermon on the Mount has been preached to them a hundred times. There seems no hope for humanity, and hence Christianity

has lost its hold, so that without divine interposition it cannot regain it. It is thus that we see social revolution in our midst, and the little woman, becoming stronger and stronger, has slipped into the world to launch ideas into men's minds which no other philosopher has ever dreamed of in modern times. The times require such a woman as Victoria C. Woodhull [Cheers] to do the reforming work. It is a fearful task and requires an immense amount of moral nerve and backbone. It requires the moral stamina of a whole era to sustain a person in the performance of the self-elected duties, which Mrs. Woodhull has assumed for years, sacrificing everything to the highest good of humanity. In upholding her as the President of our Association, we must place the woman on one side, and consider her merely as the representative of the principles announced.

There are many Spiritualists, however, who are now hanging on to the skirts of Christianity, of whom it can be said, as was said by Napoleon: "Scratch a Russian and you will find a Tartar underneath;" and of many of the Spiritualists it can be said: "Scratch a Spiritualist and you will find a Christian underneath." [Laughter.] And why? Because a great many of them were educated as Christians, their conceptions of right and wrong were based on the ten commandments, or upon the Christian Scriptures, and when one attempts to argue with them, the old leaven is speedily discovered. The Spiritualistic philosophy has not been able entirely to wipe out the ideas previously entertained. But I tell you all the "Old clo'" of Moses must be wiped out of the brain, and it must stand clear of this and enjoy freedom—not that of which the Christian boasts. Mrs. Woodhull takes up the question of marriage as one of the institutions, and notes the fact which has been stated, that one-half of the total number of children born, die before they reach the age of five years, never arriving at manhood or womanhood. Now, why is there this immense slaughter of one-half humanity? Simply because there is the cerebrum and cerebellum seeking for happiness, and in that happiness producing unhappiness, and where there should be order finding nothing but chaos. These things exist, and you know it, and if you will not find the higher system, do you blame this woman when she steps forward in the nineteenth century

to do the duty that has been forced upon her, as she says, by spirit influence? If Mrs. Woodhull is wrong, I say down with her, and with any woman that will launch upon this world something unworthy the time and demand of humanity. But looking through the spectacles of Moses or through the goggles of the devil, you are certain to take a wrong view. Take a fair view of the woman, and before you decide what you think is wrong, look at what society demonstrates in its present actual condition. We must take society as our evidence; we must take the people who are opposed to the social question as our witnesses, and who are they? People themselves who are steeped hell-deep in the very seething mass of corruption this system is to cure [cheers]; the very people who come forward with a sanctimonious unction with that immaculate declaration that they wish to save society, and yet beneath the surface of whose exterior is working a substratum of social licentiousness. Even here, in this Convention to-day, where the best and truest of the men and women of this age have assembled to discuss this question, we find them shaking and trembling with anxiety, and dreading that exposure which I promise them is sure to come, if they do not behave, even if by the covering of their heads the exposure should be of the posterior only. [Cheers and laughter.] Every man and woman present knows very well that in his or her own life and experience they have not found the happiness in marriage that they expected and desired; and you know very well that in your own married experience you have not met with the results that you anticipated. Now, I do not say that the abolition of marriage at once would be beneficial to society, any more than I would pull away the pillars from this roof; but if we see beyond a superior structure, and if we can give a higher civilization to the future men and women, now is the hour and time to begin to pull them down. What? Just what we are commencing here to-night, the agitation of the marriage question; the investigation of the social problem, claiming as scientists the right to investigate the great principles of life underlying the phenomena that we see surrounding us in the social sphere. That is our right and it is our privilege. When the geologist comes to you and asks to experiment, you are satisfied with his promise that he will experiment, even if he

cannot demonstrate. So in the social question, we have the same right of experimenting, especially when the results are to be something far greater, far superior to those which may follow the experiments of other scientists. But the fact is that we are experimenting on a subject about which the mind has very little knowledge; if we deal with the sexual influences the sanctimonious are appalled. Why, simply because the old priest's device, who, keeping the virgin to himself, wandered around the civilization of to-day—claiming one woman for one man, has put up a fence around the paddock separating lives which otherwise would come together. Why, look at two of your citizens walking along the street: the man will cast his eye upon the woman with a look of admiration and respect for her beauty, but the blush will mount to the cheeks of the woman as though something wrong had been done; and yet it is one of the privileges of the soul to regard the beautiful with admiration. Yet we dare not speak on this question, because Christianity has a mortgage on the Spiritualist body; we are mortgaged so heavily that the result is, we cannot think for ourselves, and have to ask Mrs. Woodhull to do it for us, and to do our dirty work—the scavengering work, the breaking in of light upon society. The ministers, notwithstanding their flocks have the dry-rot, will not attend to their wants, and the medical men, although they know the facts to be as stated, will not speak lest they should injure their own business. If Spiritualism has protested against one thing more than another, it has been against the moral mortgage which is held by those respectable classes.

Ladies and gentlemen—We anti-Christians have come here to proclaim war not merely upon the old system transmitted to us by the old Jewish hierarch, whether it comes in the form of the church-guise of the day, or in the garb of some sleek, oily Spiritualists. In the time of war we must prepare for peace, and in the days of peace we must prepare for war. I have broken my chains, and you shall not put me back into the old jail again; I have my life, my liberty, my voice and freedom of speech, and I shall use it. Well, speaking of freedom of speech, let me remind you that even as part of the American people, you all owe a great debt of gratitude to any man or woman like Victoria C. Woodhull.



[Cheers.] Let the social question be what it may, she has stood forward as the champion and representative of free speech, and in proof of her self-sacrifice and devotion, has been hurled into Ludlow-street jail and confined behind the bars of the prison cell in the dull and gloomy atmosphere of the house of imprisonment. And while she has received the hisses of the populace, she has been also receiving the nails into her hands and feet, the gall has been put to her lips; and she has done this, and not for once hesitated in her part. She has fought against the Young Men's Christian Assassination Association—that's a very good name—not in hope of reward, but in anticipation that you would recognize the work she had done for you; not for love of fame, nor ambition, nor desire for notoriety, but because of her deep and broad and absolute love for liberty, freedom and for truth. [Cheers.] You know that she has been persecuted and driven for you; that she, once worth half a million of dollars, stands to-day a pauper. I know her life and the history of her work. At one time I looked at her through the goggle glasses of Moses, and said she would ruin us and our cause, but since then I have been able to see the woman in her true colors. When you know the true history of that life, it is not condemnation, it is not insult that you will feel, it will be remorse and humiliation and regret that you ever thought hardly of, or said a harsh word about, the only living champion of freedom in America. [Cheers.] I feel it is a duty and pleasure to speak in defense of her; to tell you to study the theories that she may submit, which, brought into juxtaposition with the best thoughts of your own brain, may bring forth a higher social condition, by means of which we shall make of this the land of promise for the future, and firmly establish in the minds of the people the truth that liberty is grander than morality if morality produces more sin than liberty. [Cheers.]

The conservative Spiritualists are opposing the social question, especially the leaders of that faction, from invidious motives. To such I prophesy that Chicago will be their Waterloo. Is it not strange that hypocrisy should be championed in this very hall? It shows us what a devil of a fellow *ego* is—too much self-importance; and we champion a lie to please our vanity. Jealous fools, ambitious for distinction,



are the rock-a-heads of reform, for they mirror themselves in all heaven and hell. Now, the artilleryman who spikes his guns is an ass. Yet this is just what the anti-Woodhullites are doing; for human nature, as privately manifested by them, is her strongest ally. Remember this, it is not the teachings of Woodhull, but the practices of her enemies, that give strength to the woman. [Cheers.] She is a human spectroscope, refracting the pseudo-divine light of marriage. But wise men see society where fools only see her. Admitted that she is all her enemies say she is, Christian civilization, so far as woman is concerned, is individualized in her. The money producing brain of man has been purchasing the pleasure-producing body of woman. Victoria C. Woodhull is the reaction, and the male tyrants dislike the dose. But the cow cannot consistently kick over the pail it has filled with milk. [Cheers and laughter.] The old-time Christian was the paragon of fools. He kicked and cuffed, burned and tortured effects. A second dose of idiots, under another name, is not what Spiritualism aspires to. The genius of Spiritualism is humanitarianism, the product of which is, "Condemn not men but systems." The scaffold and the ducking-stool are not revelations of Spiritualism; fold and Spiritualists who exchange the faggot for the tongue to persecute the Lord's anointed, had better cleanse their hearts of all such orthodox stupidity and littleness. Mrs. Woodhull has no exquisite method of thoughts and words to gingerly dole out the manna of truth. She leaves idle speculations to the wool-gatherers of the Summer-land—to the maudlin grumblers who turn up their noses at God Almighty's servants. Call her moral courage sublime impudence if you will; but she has kept ahead of the class. If she robs Peter to pay Paul, it was you who taught her with a vengeance. She defies the world; and I glory in the bravery, the daring, the brazen effrontery, call it what you will, that spits in the face of tyranny, for the equality of man and woman in politics and virtue is the standing joke of the centuries. I care not though she be daubed with the filth of Five Points and Baxter street, so she be not the mother of Yankee Jesuitism; for that is the bawd which, leeching upon the liberties of the people, seeks to make abortive the Constitution of 1776. Luther, Paine, Parker,

John Brown and A. J. Davis but scotched the snake. But Woodhull points to the comedy of freedom, and sang as loud in Ludlow-street Jail as she has in Chicago to-night, "Stop scotching snakes and kill them!" [Laughter and applause.] The populace will not understand her, because she has not the mental weakness of belief in the many religious and social errors transmitted from the past to play the parasite upon the human intellect. The sham morality of the age is no more a faculty of her soul than is the A B C a faculty of the brain. Let hers be the credit of discovering the mistake of confounding the natural moral being with the artificial religious being. She is no primitive savage, to be frightened with sensuous religionism. She does not shout for Allah, Brahmah nor Jehovah, but for the God-maker, man. But down with Woodhull is the cry! Oh! most illogical must be the premise of such a false conclusion. An ass were democrat enough to grant freedom to a drab or scullion. Yet, oh, consistent Republicans, there shall be no inalienable rights to Woodhull or any other Hull. This is heresy to the Constitution. High treason against the liberty of opinion and freedom of speech. What dear, simple, sacred relics of the Nicene Council we are. We wear the badge of imbecility and inanity with most commendable patience, and plaintively squeak about Yankee-morals through throats yoked with the collar of lustful Constantine. We can split hairs on transubstantiation and doting dogmatology; hoist the stars and stripes upon the Mount of Olives, and frantically screech the words of Christ "Love one another," until Pecksniff's pulpit-nasal twang drowns the groans of Woodhull and Train in Ludlow and the Tombs. But man and woman know thyself spiritually and physically. That's a horse of a different color. Brain is too tangible for ethical boobies. Soul is more ephemeral and speculative. Never mind what we are, but study damned nonsense about what we are going to be in the celestial lotus pond of the hereafter. Let us remain pious, lustful, proud and wretched; and why not, since the brains of all Egypt's mummies are so thoroughly embalmed in the thick skulls of we modern Caucasians. Political freedom was formerly as much dreaded, and is to-day in Europe, just as much as is social freedom with us. Men fear anarchy as an Irish peasant does the devil. The danger and dread of too much liberty

must not be sought for in the liberty itself, but in the old-fashioned auxiliaries through which it is perforce compelled to work. The present social order or disorder of things is in arms against a change of system, and what is called anarchy in the social life is a rebellion in the auxiliary aids of reform, which is illogically placed at the door of liberalism and freedom. If people would only see that freedom is as much opposed to anarchy as it is to despotism, and turn their attention to collateral difficulties not branching from but impeding the growth of reform, Mrs. Woodhull and her theories would be less dreaded and the march of human improvement would be less opposed. Anarchy, however, is not so much the birth-cry of freedom as it is the death-throes of tyranny and the classes who most dread a change of system are the slaves and masters. It may be and is asked, why does Mrs. Woodhull seek to change the social relations? And just here let me remind you that it is not a religious but a philosophical answer that you must seek, because love, the joint product of intellect and passion, is in the ratio of the mental and physical status of the individual; hence, it is progressive and moves by metaphysical and physical laws in defiance of all arbitrary moral law. The social trouble exists in the static nature of Christian moral law, and the progressive nature of humanity, and the best security of obedience to moral law is in the attainment of a dual motion in the law and humanity. What is called the social vice and the necessary evil is largely due to the reaching out of men and women for more happiness than the moral laws and the present system of marriage admit of. To suppress the aspiration is fearful ignorance, to guide it to the highest and most perfect results sweetest wisdom. As Christianity sought to suppress both the spiritual and animal in man and woman, and failed in destroying that which is indestructible, Spiritualism seeks to make recompense by guiding and developing it, first admitting of individual freedom to break the fetters of a false and unnatural morality as it came twenty-five years ago to announce mental freedom, so that through the exercise of this individual liberty a higher sexual knowledge may be attained out of which the coming social order is to be evolved. [Loud applause.]

Miss Addie M. Ballou, of Michigan, said:

*Brothers and Sisters*—I am glad to meet you all. I do not know, in being thrust upon you as the last speaker this evening, whether I am begging the platform or not. I turn back to two years since, this present month, and remember an incident connected with my last stand upon a Chicago platform. Then, when I stood boldly forth to tell what I knew about the morals of Chicago, hisses, scorn, contempt and anathema were poured out bountifully upon me. I do not know any less of the morals of this great city than I did then, neither do I, in all the peregrinations through which I have passed in this moral world in which we live, know any the less of the pseudó morals of the world at large than I knew then. God or Nature, or both, gave me eyes and ears and comprehension, and as I grow in grace, that is, in the abundant use of my better faculties, I have learned to use them—using them to put them to best practical use, in doing which I find that it is impossible for me to live in the small compass of my own existence. I found that I would be happier in living out the religion of Spiritualism than I could be in only serving God's premature angels. All over this great land of ours I see these infant angels around me, as here to-night; and looking down deep with my soul-eyes, I can penetrate below the surface and read the thoughts of their souls. I am able to read something of the sufferings as well as of the aspirations of my fellows there. I would not, being somewhat contrary in my own organization, choose to go among the high and lofty altogether, because I find that in all pictures there are two sides—the bright and the shadowy—suited, in order to make them perfect pictures. I have chosen to throw into my life-shadows the dark shadows as well as the high lights, so that I might make my own and many others coming in contact with it, more perfect and complete. So I have chosen to go out among those whom others have forgotten to visit or did not dare to go among in the sunlight, but in the shadow of uncertain night only; to go among the rejected stones which the builders of society have refused. Many of them are worthy to be placed as the chief corner-stones of the edifice. About three weeks ago I was invited to stand before as large a congregation as this of prisoners in Jackson, the State prison of Michigan. I never before knew what



it was to stand speechless; but I felt utterly out of place. Before me stood the condemned—those upon whom the laws of the country had placed iron bands and excluded from the world. Some of them could not read, and, in keeping with the lately repealed laws of the State, the prisoners who were sentenced to life imprisonment for murder, the death penalty being abolished, were not allowed to receive a letter. They were literally placed in a living tomb. Looking over the group of criminals, I asked myself the question, "What has brought this man or that man here?" And as I traced back the history of these prisoners, I reached the conclusions that their misfortunes were, in a great measure, owing to the characters that were born with them—to the antenatal laws, of which we still know so little, and of which we ought to know so much. No longer will I be restrained in my discussion or researches into questions affecting the welfare of human souls by any feeling of false respectability, and believing that the condition of the soul after it has passed into the angel world is dependent a good deal upon the advancement it has made upon this earth, I think the duty is plain that we should do our best to see that all those on whom we can exercise any influence leave the world the better for our guidance. After twenty-five years of experiences, now is the time, I think, when Spiritualism ought and must come down to take hold of the practical business of life, to use the great light that has been conferred upon us to good ends. [Cheers.] And in the use of these great favors I believe that everything that pertains to the inauguration of a better system of society, of a better system of families is antecedent to all other work. Although I have never been able to take the extreme ground that some of our friends take, I have not been able to see one single argument as enunciated here by our leader of which I did not see the force; and in this field, if we are determined to work for the elevation and reform of society, we must all work. Go throughout this city to the bridewell, to the jail, to the police courts, to the station houses and into the houses of the depraved, and you will find wailing hearts around you waiting for some one to come and relieve and save them. They do not want a crucifixion 1800 years ago, they want the Saviour of to-day, some one who shall come and break the

bonds that are bound about them. Then are we to take up this practical work? The question is, whether we shall or shall not do so. I have consecrated my life to the good of mankind, and not for the angels. They are able to take care of themselves, but humanity is not yet. Several years ago, when I gazed upon the wreck of the young love, and saw the iron enter the souls of others besides that of my own, overcoming the greatest struggle of my life, I was able to clasp the sister to my bosom for the sake of womanhood, for humanity, and for the unborn. And then when I went out and saw the distressed on every side suffering from the anathemas poured out upon them, I heard a voice calling unto me, "Here is the work for you to do." I see before me faces of those outcast ones who have come from families of clergymen, of whom, if Mrs. Woodhull were to ask the use of the church, they would profess to be horror-stricken. The moral-purity society of Chicago meant well at its origin, but it numbered among its members a great many who are more respectable in their own estimation than I suspect they were in the eyes of others. These same individuals for a time shut off the reporters, but the papers obtained reports, and the almost virgins of the society, finding out who was letting their proceedings go before the world, an attempt was made to hoist her out of the social-purity society. We find so many minds that are so pure and virtuous that they cannot discuss these questions, but they will pass rules bearing upon the born and unborn generations. It is not so much that they are afraid of discussing these questions, as it is the fear of exposure that keeps them holding back. There are many in this city who are trembling lest these exposures should fall upon their heads. Why, bless your souls, there are people in this audience to-night, who if they opened their lips and told one-half of what they know, would bring many of these persons present in the hall down to their knees in quick time. [Cheers.] There are all through society, institutions rotten to the core, and so long as they remain unprobed and unremoved, we shall have to bear the stench of their offal. Now, my friends, when you talk about these questions being side issues to Spiritualism, I ask you when Spiritualism had anything else but side issues to the outside world? And now

that they seem so necessary and are of such quality, I can only say I wish the world were full of side issues, for the world would be redeemed the sooner thereby. So long as we stand trembling in our shoes for fear that something will be said and touched upon; for fear that these social questions will come within our own boundaries, that something may be said that will make us look through our fingers (because if there is any nudity in the world people can see by covering up their faces and looking through their fingers, they are going to look that way rather than not see it). So long, I say, as we shall fear these things, so long shall we fail to do the required work. Now, we want to grow out of these conditions of society; we want to grow larger and better, and the things that are too immodest to speak about, will become too immodest to practice, and even too immodest to be practiced with the curtains down. [Laughter.] I am a reformer and Spiritualist, and I recognize the importance of this social question, because of the sights I have seen; and anything that will produce the better generation of children is deserving of most thoughtful consideration. Feticide is advertised in our midst and throughout the country. It means something in the many cases of wretchedness that are ever coming before the public. It may not be, it must not be, that Spiritualism, coming down with all its beauteous glories from heaven, is any the less glorious and humane when it touches the squalid and the desolate: it cannot be any the less God-like than man and woman. It must not be so, we must all work for humanity, and so long as there is a single damnable institution that punishes one class at the expense of another, so long is there work for Spiritualism to do. We do not need to give portions of medicine to the well, but to the sick, the afflicted, the down-trodden, the suffering children that we find in our jails, like one little fellow I found in the jail at Jackson, who had been there two months awaiting his trial for stealing a loaf of bread. I suppose that liberty will come to this young soul some way, and I shall rejoice to hear that he is out once again from the bad companions with whom he was confined. In this jail, the price of candles was put at seven cents each, while the keeper got them for forty cents the pound; and these candles the prisoners had to buy to keep the rats away. Then

in the same jail, three girls were confined as witnesses, owing to the brutality and lust of one man, and the results of his quarrel with another. These told me their sufferings, but I have not the time nor the inclination to-night to relate them. There is so much wrong-doing, and injustice in the world and so long as this continues so long will there be urgent need for Spiritualism to do its grand and noble work. It means equality before the law; it means elevation of purity; good will and peace on earth, and good will among men and good will among women also. [Cheers.]

The Chairman—The Convention will now stand adjourned until 9 o'clock to-morrow morning, for the usual hour's conference.

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## SECOND DAY.

### MORNING SESSION.

The Convention assembled at nine o'clock A. M., with a full attendance of delegates, Mr. L. K. Coonley in the chair.

The Chairman said—Persons holding credentials will please present them to the committee having charge of that matter, and, if possible, find out who are the other delegates from the same State, so that consultations can be freely had. The present hour is devoted to conference. The platform is now open to any one who wishes to address the Convention.

After a pause, the Chairman continued—I may say that of course we are very much pleased that the *Chicago Tribune* has given such an exhibition of its interior spirit; we have also to thank the *Times* and the *Evening Mail*, in all honesty, for the straightforward reports appearing in those papers—a little fun and a little spice—very good. I did not see the *Inter-Ocean*, but I am told by my friend, Hon. Warren Chase, that it is capital, and is as good as if he had written it himself; it's a good, honest paper, anyway. I will call upon Mr. Chase to speak to you.

Hon. Warren Chase, of Missouri, said—

I was somewhat apprehensive that you might be mistaken



and not know that I was present. I understand that I was reported as being present yesterday, when I was not in the city, but on Spiritual matters the reporters are apt to get a little ahead, and they probably reported me spiritually; and although not here physically, I was so spiritually. Some of the press got me into the list, for which I am very much obliged to them, especially if there is any attempt to impugn this meeting, or any of its members. I want always to have my name among the number proscribed for defending free speech. I know the press so well, and am so thoroughly acquainted with it, that I know that when they talk bad of a body of citizens, there is something meretorious in that body of persons. In another paper, which seems candid, rational and consistent in its report of yesterday, I do not find my name, because it contains a fair statement. I am glad when papers are candid enough to speak fairly and honestly of our movement, for I know then that the better class of people are coming on our side. I know that the mass of the people of this country are coming to the side of reform in things Spiritual, religious, political and social. You will find in society the worst class of men shunning the reformers, while the better and more intelligent part of the community are turning and inquiring calmly what we are talking about and what we propose to do. When they understand us we shall have this country with us. The sentiment of this country is really in our favor, and in favor of such reforms as must result from practical application of the principles of Spiritualists and those who have moved in this from the first. I only arose to show you that I was here, and to assure you of my sympathy with this movement. [Cheers.]

Mr. T. S. A. Pope, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, said

*Ladies and Gentlemen*—and by that I mean not only the general conception but the grand idea of brotherhood—I am most happy to meet you on the present occasion. I am burdened with the conviction that I am comparatively a stranger among you, but, from the fact that I regard you as the nucleus of the great coming body of reformers, I am satisfied that I will be granted the privilege of speaking to you on the present occasion. I have many things to say to you which I cannot say, not because you cannot hear them, but because I have not the time; and it may be that my spirit

upholders are not ready for me to say many things to you now which I must say in the future. I wish to lay this upon your souls that I am with you in this great reform, not alone intellectually, but with a soul and energy which shall come to me by that influence, Spiritual, on which I depend. I am here this morning with a certificate of fellowship from the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, and I would not tear it asunder and crush it under my foot. Why? Because I would degrade my character as a gentlemen and brother by this action. I speak for myself alone. I am independent of it, but I honor the friend and brother, Dr. Drake, who was the instrument through which I obtained it. I have a tender regard for the flag that waves over the rotten institutions of the past. The *Religio-Philosophical Journal* is a transcript of my organization: as a religious philosopher, as a mediator between science and religion it is the want of the age. And let me tell you that with a clear vision I see it to-morrow buried deep in the mire, and I pity it with my soul; and not as a lady lecturer declared it at Green Lake recently, I would not crush it in the mud and mire, but I would save it and lift it up to a superior condition. I feel as the Christ of the past, when John the Baptist exclaimed that he needed to be baptised of Him: "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to put off unrighteousness." Even so is it with these. I anticipate in the future a point of time in my individual history when I may be made an instrument to you, and I still hold myself sacred to this coming task. I have but ten minutes to speak to you. Let me say that I have watched for this glorious hour just thirty years from 1843, and I glory in the fact that my conscience regards this as the grandest day and hour the sun has ever shone upon. [Cheers.] That this is the coming day of God, the establishment of what is termed in the mysticism of the past, the fifth universal empire after the dissolution of the material kingdoms of earth. You, who have been raised to high spiritual conditions, who have watched for the time in the history of the earth when what is called God should dwell among men, and when there should be no sickness and death, when all tears shall be wiped away from their faces, and all sitting under their own vine and tree, and no Christian dare to make them afraid

—know ye that ye shall all know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. Christ said, "I shall go away, but I shall come again; and the time is coming when, as in heaven, there shall be no marriage nor giving in marriage." Ye reformers and inhabitants of this earth who have longed impatiently for the fulfillment of these grand predictions, with very few exceptions, you cannot see that these things are to be fulfilled, that the stone can be cut out of the mountain; you cannot see that in the days of this last kingdom the God of Heaven will set up his kingdom; spirits, exalted spirits, shall set up his kingdom, and it shall not be destroyed.

The Chairman—I hope the audience will not confine the speaker to his ten minutes. I hope there will be no objection to his continuing, although if there is, I shall have to call to him to stop.

Several Delegates—Go on!

Mr. Pope—I am dependent, friends, upon this unhappy organization, which the angels cannot at the present time, entirely control.

Mrs. Severance, of Milwaukee, said:

I have but a few remarks to make this morning, and they are called out by the observations made by the brother preceding in reference to the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*. When I say that there is not a paper in the land that I so thoroughly detest, I do not half express my feelings. [Cheers.] Knowing, as I do know the life of the editor, I feel, when he comes out and denounces in the bitterest terms the individuals who have the courage to raise their voices in favor of social reform, under which alone is to be found the only chance of excuse for the life that he leads [Cheers.] I feel, I say, a most profound contempt for him. Not only myself, but others in this house can testify that Mr. S. S. Jones, editor of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, does live in sexual relations outside of legal marriage. The time is coming when these things shall be brought to light, and when individuals who denounce freedom in the social relationship, and yet are guilty of living a low sensual life, shall be comprehended. They do it only because they cannot comprehend the purity that will grow up out of social freedom. But judging from their own standpoint, they condemn

the movement, believing that they can have just as much freedom without it as with it. [Cheers.] It is time that we Spiritualists take hold of the matter, and not allow any one among us "to steal the livery of heaven to serve the devil in." [Cheers.] We have papers devoted to the highest interests of Spiritualism, that stand by those who teach the highest truths of the angel world; and let us as Spiritualists support these papers, and not those that belie the highest and divinest emblems of the human soul, and which would crucify every reformer. I am in favor of the lines being drawn, and of our knowing just where our enemy is; and I don't care how near these lines come either. When we as Spiritualists, believing in every individual soul advocating his highest and best idea, see such papers coming out as they did with articles—and my name is mentioned in them and denounced because I chose to say what I believed to be true; I say, when we have such papers, denying an opportunity for a reply to these calumnies through their columns, it is time that we should have done with talking about the freedom of the press if it defends such a condition of things. Give me honesty though it lead to hell, rather than hypocrisy clothed in the garb of respectability. [Cheers].

Mrs. H. L. Stearnes, of New Jersey, said:

I come before you, a delegate for New Jersey, but a lecturer at large, and, as a lecturer, I represent the mediumistic side of the lecture field. I have a few matters of business to present, and they will be of a peculiar kind. I wished this morning to meet a few members of our delegation, but I could not find them. Now, I do not like to go into a corner and say a single word there in private that I should not care to say out aloud. I come here to say a few things to-day. Any time during the last six years, when I have wished to come as a delegate to this body, I could not come. I may be asked do I sustain Mrs. Woodhull? I do, but not as the next President of this Association. My choice is Mrs. Severance, who has just spoken to you. I want Mrs. Woodhull to fill another position. I want this body to honor her by giving her a special mission to England. I believe there is a National Association formed there, and I do not think there is any person in our ranks who would better fill a



position as representative to that body, and to the Court of Queen Victoria, than Mrs. Woodhull. [Cheers.] I want her to present to that body, and to the world at large, a call for a World's Convention of Spiritualists. [Cheers.] I do not think that you can better honor Mrs. Woodhull than by thus showing your regard for her; and also I do not think that you can honor this Convention more in filling the office of President than by the election of Mrs. Severance to the position of its President. I have other business to present in due time. What I have said this morning I have had to say out aloud, and I want you to circulate the idea. The Convention has brought this question of social freedom up to the point of being a live thing. It is the first time that it could be so considered; and Mrs. Woodhull having brought it to this point, I say let her go on with it. [Cheers.]

Mr. Pope—I wish to make an explanation. I am afraid I have been misunderstood. I am not in sympathy with S. S. Jones; but I am a clairvoyant, and I see the necessity that exists for some such paper as the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* in this age. I am wedded to the interests of religious philosophy, and, as a mediator between science and religion, I see the necessity for such a journal. I trust yet to see the flag of freedom wave over this American continent, and its virtues be enshrined in the heart of every Spiritualist. [Cheers.]

Mrs. Severance—I have just one word to say in regard to what fell from Sister Stearns, and that is: I am decidedly in favor of re-electing Victoria C. Woodhull as President of this Association. [Great cheering.] I think we owe it to her. I think we owe it to ourselves. [Cheers.]

Mrs. R. A. Loomis, of Michigan, said:

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen—It seems to me that this Convention is of vital importance, and while, no doubt, our sister Stearns feels a deep interest in its welfare, yet, in my idea, to elect any other person to the office of President of this Association for the coming year than Mrs. Woodhull would ruin us. [Cheers.] The conservative element that stands to-day in such bitter opposition to us is crying out, "You are going to be whipped?" But, my brothers and sisters, we are going to re-elect Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull to the Presidency for next year, sure. ["Good."] And

I tell you that when any step forward and want to put another individual in that position, I tell you that we do not know what we are saying. I tell you that Victoria C. Woodhull has brought us to this platform, and has done for us what no other woman or set of women, or men or set of men, in the way of promoting the liberation of women from the thralldom of the most accursed tyranny that binds every woman in the country. [Cheers.] Ladies and gentlemen, you know that she has done her work and done it well; and while I bow at no shrine and I kneel in worship at the feet of no individual, yet for the labor that has been performed for us, I say let us give to our sister the things that are our sister's, and to God the things that are God's. Secondly, I say it is necessary to give her charge over the society. Now, while perhaps, I have said enough, brothers and sisters, in reference to this matter, let me say further that the great question which is before the public to-day, and which has to be met by the public as well as by our Convention of Spiritualists, is the social question. I do not care how much they dodge it, or how much the reporters misrepresent us. We stand firm upon the rock of ages, and no power that exists in this earth can move us, for we stand there supported by the right hand of the spirit world, and whose voices are forever asking us to come up to the higher life. Oh, my friends, let us go from this Convention knowing that its work will tell for us, as Spiritualists, that we have done the task set before us; that we have placed this reformatory movement before the people. Now, brothers and sisters, this S. S. Jones, of whom the friends are speaking, is almost too contemptible a being for the women to meddle with. [Cheers.] I am not individually acquainted with S. S. Jones, yet I have been acquainted with him just so long as he has advocated Spiritualism through his paper; and I will say that so far as reading matter is concerned, it is one of the most contemptible things that the angel powers ever suffered to live upon the earth and impose upon true-souled, virtuous women. [Cheers.] I know something of the sufferings entailed by the present social system. I go from house to house, and hear my sister friends pouring into my ears the story of their suffering in the marital relation. Oh, some of my conservative friends will say, What, would you do away with the marriage insti-

tutions of the day, and leave every one to run riotously rampant in their family relationship? I say, Yes; let us be freed from all such bonds, and then we should know, as we know to-day, where Moses Hull is; we should know who to fear; we should know where you and I and every individual stand. There would be no pall to cover up the actions of any individual—the damnable blackness and rottenness that is constantly corroding and corrupting society, and is ruining the generation that is now being born—to cover up the practices that are to-day among all classes of the people, rotting out our generation of children. I say that this great wall of corruption must be thrown down, or that sooner or later we shall have to learn the grim fact that the human race will become extinct from this earth, owing to these damnable practices to which I have referred.

Mrs. Laura Cuppy Smith, of New Jersey, said:

While I know of no lady who would preside with greater dignity than Mrs. Severance, yet I say that we owe it to Mrs. Woodhull to re-elect her as President of this Association. [Cheers.] She has been dragged through every jail in New York city; she has been the mark of the Young Men's Christian Association to hurl its infamous accusations at; she has borne the standard of Spiritualism unflinchingly through all her trials; she has been the advocate of the rights of the purest social condition [cheers]; and notwithstanding all that has been said on the subject, I maintain that she has advocated the rights of and come forth as a benefactor to woman; and I further maintain that she has been just as much a benefactor of men; for anything that will tend to elevate womankind must also elevate mankind, and nothing that is done that degrades woman but also more or less degrades man. [Cheers.] Now, I feel to-day that women's rights are altogether too narrow a field. I am here in the interests of humanity, of my brothers as well as my sisters. A great deal has been said about the wrongs of married women; there are a great many wrongs of married men that have never been touched upon. There are women who absolutely refuse to live in marital relations with their husbands, who absolutely refuse to live with them, and yet who, at the same time, swear by the Eternal God that no other woman shall do so either. [Hear, hear.] When you talk

about the wrongs of women, it is a one-sided matter. There are just as many good men as there are good women. [Cheers.] I have sons that I love, I have a father whose memory I respect, and I say that in dealing with this question we are too one-sided. Men have had things all their own way in making the laws, regulating society to a large extent, and in molding the characters of women; and I say I wonder not that men as a body are as they are—I only wonder that they are not a great deal worse. They have had absolute power in their hands, just as the slave masters had down South; and I hold that when the principles advocated by Victoria C. Woodhull are carried out into life, then there will be perfect equality between the sexes, and perfect justice between man and woman for the first time. When you speak of the superiority of women over men, I do not believe a word of it. Give us all an equal chance to live and act out our natures, and you will find that men and women are very much alike. [Cheers.]

In response to calls, Hon. Warren Chase came forward. He said:

The President has most kindly offered to put the break on when required; but I am not going down hill, and am not likely to go very fast, for I am on the up grade. [Cheers.] It is several years since I met with this annual convention; its last term when I met it, was in Buffalo. I declined to attend its conventions afterward for three years, because I did not see any practical result accomplished by our six years' efforts. I have seen something of improvement during the past year, or two years, and so I have again returned to it, with my heart and head and hands ready to take advantage of the opportunity which I see of doing something. I trust that the work which is before us will not be neglected. I know that I can say that the President of this Association and those that surround her are earnest in their purposes, however much they may be misrepresented, and however much injury may be done to them and to the movement by unwise friends. I know that during the past two years something has been accomplished of vital importance to the people, the nation and the world. [Cheers.] I am sorry always to hear at conventions any



kind of personalities indulged in. I know very well the grievances that provoke them, and I would remind my brothers and sisters of the words of our great poet, James Russell Lowell; "The fellow that first gets mad is almost always wrong." [Laughter.] I leave all personalities to others; I have had enough of them to satisfy me. I think that now is the time to commence an important work, the work in which we are all of us interested, the important work of introducing social liberty. We must lay aside all personalities and move in a united phalanx against the enemy, which is the organized religious power of this country—not the Young Men's Christian Association alone, but the whole sectarian religious power of the country, which it has organized in opposition to our movement. What are they doing? They are calling upon all the believers in Christ to assist them in changing the fundamental laws of this country, and thrusting us out of the possession of all our civil and religious rights, to incorporate measures that shall outlaw us completely in the land of our birth, nativity and labor. I say it requires us to organize and unite all our friends that we may labor on one platform against the organized movement of the evangelical churches. I tell you, my friends, that those of us who are not Christians are in danger of losing the liberties that we have, and unless we rid ourselves of personalities and unite, we shall find this enemy stealing like a snake and coiling itself around us; we shall find that it has its grip upon the constitution. This, then, is our time to work. I believe it to be our duty, whatever personal friendships we hold, to re-elect the President of this Association for another year. [Cheers.] I feel so because she has been and is now the point of attack and the centralized point at which the opposition to this movement is directed. It therefore becomes our duty, in defense of liberty, Mrs. Woodhull having been a victim of persecution, to stand consistently by her and make her the rallying point, until we have put down these enemies of the liberty we enjoy. Then it will be time enough for us to change either the persons or the principles, for the success of which we are now striving. [Cheers.]

The Chairman—The Committee on Business is now ready

to report. The Finance Committee are requested to go through the audience and take up a collection.

Mrs. Lois Waisbrooker, of Michigan, said—

There is a great deal of excitement on the question of our accepting the leadership of individuals. If an individual comes out and declares his sentiments, and we do not repudiate them, are we therefore to be open to the charge of having accepted them? Now, I deny any such right on the part of any individual or set of individuals; I deny the right of any one to force me to condemn or to approve anybody's actions, or to say that if I do not condemn I approve. I will not submit to any such dictation. I have been in the prayer-room at the revival meetings, and have heard the minister come upon the platform and say, "Every individual who does not now declare for Jesus is thereby proclaimed to have committed himself against Jesus." Many a soul has been brought to its feet to acknowledge the Kingship of Jesus under this kind of Spiritual dictatorship. There are those in our ranks who desire to exercise the same kind of dictatorship over us upon this question of social reform, but I for one will not submit to it. [Cheers.] And when an individual comes forward, as Moses Hull has done, and gives his experience, and they demand of me, "repudiate him," or we will say that you accept his theories, I will say to them that they are tyrants and liars. [Cheers.] Fifteen months ago, in an article written two years ago, but which lay in the *Banner of Light* office six months before it was published—something very unusual with anything that I contribute to that paper—I said that the social question was under investigation, that we had no standard except the standard of authority—that we must have the standard of nature and of science; that, in order to this end, personal experiences were in order; that every person must not only be permitted but be induced to come forward and give his or her personal experiences; and that in this free inquiry those who were as chaste as ice should have no precedence over those whose fires were irrepressible. I said that all classes must give their experience, and then science, as an impartial judge, could step in and give us a standard. The present social system is under trial; we need witnesses. We have no right to browbeat witnesses nor to

render a verdict, whatever may be the testimony, until all the evidence is before the court. Therefore, I say that danger lurks abroad. By the force of my own soul, by the needs of humanity, as the salt sea foam falls from the crested waves of the benighted ages, so was I impelled to launch my *Age* upon the world, not alone, but assisted by the angels, to whom I have sworn, by the powers of my own soul, that I will not desert my post; that these waiting hearts shall have a chance to speak; that Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull shall be given encouragement and aid until death seizes me. People who desire to give their experience shall have a chance to do so through the columns of that paper, and no one shall besmudge them or call them fools or foul if I can help it; and no one shall dare to say that I approve of anything that appears there unless it is over my own name. If they attempt to do the contrary, I will tell them that they are tyrants, and hurl back the lie upon them. [Cheers.] So far as respectability is concerned, I repudiated it long ago [put that down, Mr. Reporter, if you please], because I mean to be an honest and true and noble woman, and I cannot be that and be respectable, too; and you know it. [Cheers.]

Colonel Blood said—As Chairman of the Committee of Resolutions, on behalf of the majority of the Committee on Resolutions, I beg to report as follows:

[NOTE BY EDITOR.—The following propositions are published here as finally amended and adopted, so as to save repeating them.]

CHAP. I.—1. That Spiritualism is the *E Pluribus Unum* of all reforms.

2. That Spiritualism is but another name for humanitarianism, and its mission is the solution of all problems in which the welfare of humanity is involved.

3. That the phenomenal era of Spiritualism has demonstrated the fact of continued existence, and that it should now enter upon its practical era.

4. That the ultimate value of Spiritualism consists in its capacity to better the condition of individuals and the race.

5. That the aim of earth-life should be not only the accumulation of material wealth, but also the accumulation of spiritual wealth.

6. That whole spiritual bodies cannot be developed in half-made-up or diseased human bodies.

7. That the basic problem of life is how to secure perfect bodies, in which the spirit may have development.

8. That perfect physical bodies depend upon perfect conditions of generation, gestation and growth; and that while we ignore no question whatever, these are the most important that humanity can consider, and fundamental to any true spiritual science; and, therefore, this Convention announces that, in its opinion, the first practical work for Spiritualists is to discover, advocate and practice the science of generating, gestating and growing children, so that in the next generation an improved humanity may be realized.

9. That hypocrisy is the most dangerous element of the present civilization, and individuals who profess one system of morals and practice another, are the most dangerous class of society.

CHAP. II.—1. That order is the first law of the universe.

2. That organization is order expressed.

3. That organization, to be effectual, must be natural—constructed after the law of evolution as found in nature.

4. That Spiritualists should organize; and that they must do so before any practical movement can be carried out.

5. That the objects for which Spiritualists should organize should be to secure and maintain religious, political and social freedom, industrial and educational equality, and universal justice for humanity.

6. That Spiritualists should never submit peacefully—should resist to the bitter end all infamous attempts of the Young Men's Christian Association and the Evangelical Alliance to subvert the religious liberty of the country by converting it to a religious despotism.

7. That the Children's Progressive Lyceum is an improved method of education, and that Spiritualists should give it their countenance and support.

CHAP. III.—1. That love of the sexes is a natural attraction which exists independent of the human will.

2. That the will of any third party, which defeats the manifestations of love, interferes with the natural order of the universe, and is an enemy to human happiness.



3. That marriage is the consummation of the love of the sexes, and where there is no love there is no marriage.

4. That sexual union where love is wanting is prostitution and any law to compel men and women to maintain this union, is a system of license for and enforcement of prostitution.

5. That like all other human capacities, love is the subject of the law of evolution, and in its lower degrees is as rightfully entitled to its own conditions as in its higher degrees.

6. That the evolution of love is its natural growth, and this growth may be promoted by proper methods of education and culture, but not by compulsory legislation.

7. That under these several propositions, enforced marriage results only in binding men and women who do not love; and, if abolished, would result only in the separation of those who, both for individual happiness and the public good, ought to separate.

8. That the community has no more right to enact laws impairing the sexual liberty of the individual, than it has to enact laws impairing the physical, intellectual or moral liberty of the individual.

CHAP. V.—1. That the clergy are a source of danger to the American Republic.

2. That as Spiritualists we recommend the organization of Liberal Leagues throughout the United States, whose object is to maintain our present Godless constitution and Christless institutions.

3. That right and justice demand a change in the revenue laws, so as to include all property for taxation.

CHAP. VI.—1. That the present organization of the American Association of Spiritualists is defective in its working machinery, and is practically unsuited to the times.

2. That a committee, to consist of Victoria Woodhull, Laura Cuppy Smith, Benj. Todd, A. B. Severance and J. O. Barrett, be raised to report to this Convention a more practical national organization.

Mr. Todd—I move that the report of the committee be received and the resolutions adopted.

Judge Holbrook—Wait: I hold in my hands a minority report.

The Chairman—The motion is first, to receive the report.

Mr. Todd—I will move that.

The motion was seconded and adopted.

Judge Holbrook—There are two of the members of the committee in the minority, Dr. Maxwell and myself. So far as I am concerned, I ought to say here that the report presented as the majority report contains many propositions to which I cordially subscribe, but it is the interweaving of the conclusions that I object to. They are capable of inferences, perhaps wrong, perhaps right. Consequently I did not sign it; and furthermore, because the subject-matter is not before the Convention.

The Chairman—Let us have your report before there is any discussion.

Judge Holbrook—It has been said here that it was the report of the majority. I want to qualify it. I want to see how far you can cramp the minority here.

The Chairman—This is not giving us the report on behalf of the minority.

Judge Holbrook—I will read the report which I have prepared. It is as follows:

*Whereas*, By the teachings of some and the unwarrantable assertions of others, it has come to be believed by many that Spiritualism urges the repeal of all marriage laws, and, as a consequence, upholds the practice of promiscuity between the sexes as a matter of right; therefore,

*Resolved*, That we, as Spiritualists, earnestly condemn and repudiate such propositions, and strenuously maintain that the monogamic marriage, under State law, with just and equal rules as to each party, and as to the perpetuity, the care and protection of the family, and as to the descent and distribution of property, is the only proper marriage, and that such a marriage is one of the necessary pillars to a permanent civilized government, a necessary basis of a high standard of morality among mankind.

*Resolved*, That such contract of marriage should be for life under the civil government, but such government should protect the just rights of each party during the continuance

of such contract; and further, that the privilege of divorce on the joint petition of both parties, made without collusion or undue influence, should be extended to cases of permanent incompatibility, the law making just and proper provisions as to the family and as to property, such as the highest good of all may require.

Judge Holbrook—There is another resolution or report from Dr. Maxwell.

Mr. Todd—I move that the report which we have just heard read by Dr. Holbrook be laid on the table.

A Delegate—I second.

The Chairman—It is moved and seconded that the minority report be laid on the table.

Judge Holbrook—Mr. Chairman, this report is not ended. It is not yet before the Convention; it has not been received, and until that is done it cannot be laid on the table.

Mr. Todd—I amend my motion to lay both on the table.

Judge Holbrook—I move to amend that motion.

The Chairman—You cannot amend a motion to lay on the table.

Judge Holbrook—I call the President to order; it is his duty to ask the Convention if it is ready for the question

The Chairman—What I to lay on the table?

Judge Holbrook—Yes, sir; no motion—

The Chairman—A motion to lay on the table is not debatable.

Judge Holbrook—This report is not ended; what I insist on is this, that the balance of the report should be added to it.

A motion was made to receive the minority report, which being taken *viva voce*, the Chairman stated that he could not decide which had the greater number of votes.

A call for a division was made.

Judge Holbrook—In that vote I demand that none but delegates record their votes. There are plenty of persons voting who are not delegates.

Hon. Warren Chase—I think that the matter can be very

easily explained. I think that if you will—

The Chairman—Let us have order, and we will get it all right.

Hon. Mr. Chase—The motion to lay on the table was not in order. When all the report is submitted, the adoption of a motion to accept it would merely bring it before the Convention, and then a motion to lay it on the table would be in order, and not debatable. Its acceptance by the Convention merely brings it before them for action; it merely discharges the committee and brings the report before you to be acted upon in any way you see fit.

The motion to accept was carried.

Mr. Hull—I now move that it be laid on the table.

Judge Holbrook—The motion is now to lay on the table, and I call for the ayes and noes.

The Chairman—The other part of the report is first in order.

Dr. Maxwell—I do hope, friends, that in this Convention we will allow each other to be heard. Let us not be afraid of anything; there is no need for us to be excited. I have a resolution which I wish to submit, which expresses my own sentiments, and will call out, I think, the warmest expression of feeling on the part of the Convention.

A Delegate—Read the resolution; no argument.

Dr. Maxwell—I will do so. The resolution reads:

*Resolved*, That we most earnestly protest against all forms of licentiousness, whether within or without the pale of marriage.

*Resolved*, That we regard the monogamic marriage founded upon love, and equal rights for man and woman guarded by just legal regulations, as being the true order of life, and ~~and~~ such marriage, together with the perpetuity of the family, are the only foundations of enlightened human society.

The Chairman—What will you do with this part of the report?

It was accepted.

The Chairman—The reports are now all in; what will you do with them?



Dr. Maxwell—I move that we take up the majority report clause by clause, and consider its adoption.

The motion prevailed.

Colone! Blood read the first proposition.

Mr. Cotton—I move its adoption.

Carried unanimously.

The Chairman—Now let me here repeat that we depend entirely at the present time on the courtesy of the audience, that none but delegates, duly qualified, will take part in the voting. We wish to be as liberal as we can, but we hope that no one will vote except they know in their conscience that they are entitled to a vote.

Colonel Blood read the second proposition.

Mr. Cephas B. Lynn—I move that the speeches made on these resolutions be limited to five minutes each, and that no speaker be allowed to speak twice on the same resolution. Carried.

Mr. Barnes—I should like to introduce a resolution.

The Chairman—It will have to go before the committee; we are now engaged on the report of the majority.

Clauses 3 to 7 were adopted. On the eighth clause of the first chapter,

Judge Holbrook said—I will move to amend this clause, in accordance with my own views, by adding the provision: "But we do not regard the public platform as the proper place for the discovery and promulgation or explanation of such science." [Hisses and cheers.]

The Chairman—The amendment is not seconded. Those in favor of the clause as presented in the report of the committee will say "aye," and those opposed "no."

The clause was adopted.

On the ninth clause,

Judge Holbrook said—I oppose the adoption of that proposition, because of its language in placing the statement in the ultimate, "the most dangerous." It is not the most dangerous. It is far better for a man to be right in principle and wrong in practice, than to be wrong in principle and

practice both. [Hisses and laughter.] It is very evident that there is something to be worked out in this clause which does not appear. It is not true. It is very plainly not to be proved; for if a man is wrong in principle, and teaches to everybody by his principle and also by his practice, that man is doing a vast deal more injury to the world than the man who teaches a correct principle and is wrong in practice. [Laughter and hisses.]

The Chairman—Let there be perfect freedom of speech.

Judge Holbrook—I am uttering an aphorism in science, and truth, self-evident truth; and when persons denounce it, they denounce themselves and others from St. Paul down, when he advocated certain principles that he confessed he could not live up to. And up to the present day it has been the sentiment of the world, the sentiment of common sense, that it should be so—that if a man advocates the wrong theory he is far worse than the man who advocates a right, although he may not succeed in living up to it. So, then, it is not true that this is the most dangerous, for the most dangerous is to be wrong in principle and wrong in practice—that is the climax. [Hisses and cheers.] That hit somewhere, and it is intended to hit. The resolution is intended to hit somebody. I do not go for hypocrisy by any means. I don't advocate that a man is justified in advocating good principles and then practicing evil. It is right that he should teach good principles and follow them. Still it is better that a man teach the truth, though he practice falsehood, than to teach falsehood and practice it also. Precept goes as far as example. Teach by your precept and teach by your example. The individual who does both is a very moral and good man. A man that is wrong in principle and in practice is a very bad man; but the man who is right in principle but wrong in practice is not so bad. Therefore it is not a worse wrong to teach good principle and practice bad, than it is to teach bad principle and also practice it.

Col. Blood—What is the meaning of hypocrisy?

Mrs. Severance—Will any man answer that?

Hon. Warren Chase—Let me have two minutes.

The Chairman—You are entitled to five.

Mr. Warren Chase—I only want to say this, that inasmuch

as hypocrisy is defended here, Shakspeare, who is better authority than the Bible in this Convention and the community, says

"Who one thing think and another tell,  
My soul abhors as the gates of hell."

So do I. [Several Delegates—So do I.] I think of all things, hypocrisy, especially in public life, is to be condemned, and this Convention ought to speak on this subject, if it speaks of anything. If we cannot, then let us keep our lips closed and be prepared to lay our lives down. If we believe a principle is right we should defend it, and if we believe it is wrong we should not practice it. Are we to be teachers to set examples in public morals and yet in our own practices to be wrong? Condemning them in our conscience and yet practicing them? Is it possible that this can be set up as an example and we not condemn it? I tell you that the hypocrisy of the age is the most damnable thing extant. [Cheers.] And I hope that this Convention will be outspoken on this subject if upon anything, and that it will speak truly and boldly condemning the hypocrisy of the age. Three-fourths of your Christian professors are teaching hypocrisy—they know better than they preach. They know the doctrines that they preach are false, but the practices throughout the community are so damnable that they are sufficient evidence that themselves do not believe the doctrines, and are hypocrites when they preach them. I say that this proposition ought to be passed, and in the name of heaven put up a proposition that will draw out the devil that lurks in every man and woman.

Mr. Mills, of Chicago, said:

I wish to repeat a little proverb that is *apropos*, and that is this: Hypocrisy is the homage that vice pays to virtue; hypocrisy is one of the land-marks of our progression; hypocrisy, I tell you, stands first and foremost. It is your homage to free thought and to social progression. [Cheers.] I have got to assume a character before I can maintain it; have I not? I challenge you to deny it? Do you dress here as in your own kitchen. Do you put on the same face in all places? No, sir? Hypocrisy is your leading-string. We learn virtue by learning to assume a character first. Hypocrisy is

hell-life-blood of our progression. Hypocrisy—I am a champion of it. I stand flat-footed on this question, I am a hypocrite. [Cheers and laughter.] Talk about its being a most dangerous thing in the community—one sees that it is not! There are many things more dangerous than that; I would rather that a man should come to me and treat me kindly and then speak bad of me, than that he should speak bad of me both before and behind me. [Laughter.]

The proposition was then carried.

On the first proposition, chap. 2,

Dr. Merton said:

That sounds very well, and it has been long accepted as true. To say that order is the first law implies that all law is not order, whereas law itself is a statement of the order which takes place. To say that order is the first law implies that it is not the first law, nor second, nor third, nor fourth, nor ten-thousandth law. I object to the classification. It is rather an orator's expression than that of a man that intends to tell exactly what he means. I believe that any law in nature is order.

The proposition was carried.

The second, third and fourth propositions were also adopted, and on the fourth

Mr. B. Dale, of Michigan, said—I was only going to speak to the clause just passed. I was going to suggest that no one will find fault with that proposition except hypocrites.

The Chairman—That has gone by.

Mr. Warren Chase—I am really sorry that I could not have added to that proposition, so that it might have expressed the fact that all infidels, liberalists and free-thinkers were included, for I am certain that we need the help of all such.

Col. Blood—There is a proposition that expresses that.

Mr. Chase—All right.

The clause was then carried.

On the fifth proposition,

Mr. George Kates, of Cincinnati, said—I think that we should be a little careful and not pass these propositions too hastily. I do not wish to attach any blame to our Presi-



dent. I think it was a little bit of unconscious feeling on his part, and I hope he will be a little more cautious.

The Chairman—The gentlemen will pardon me. I cannot keep my eyes on both sides of the house at a time. I desire that everybody shall have an opportunity to speak. It is a point I maintain above all others.

Mr. Kates—I object to the latter part of the proposition—that speaks of Spiritualism to the effect that it should organize to secure political, religious and social freedom. I object to the proposition containing the words “political and social freedom.” I do not believe that Spiritualism has any business to make this a pet issue. Of course we have a right to discuss them. They belong to us, but not as the foundation-stone of our structure. I think our business is more in the religious direction; for I think Spiritualism is one of the grandest religions vouchsafed to man to indorse and believe in. I simply move that we strike out the words political and social freedom, and I hope that this amendment will be discussed before this proposition is passed; for I think we are on the brink of something that may make or mar Spiritualism. This is one of the things that will tend to make Spiritualism something else than what it should be; will tend to break us up. We are going to advocate an organization on a co-operative basis, yet at the same time are striking death-blows at our breasts. Why do you expect those whom you are stabbing to be your friends. I cannot see the consistency of it. I have no more to say.

Mr. Randolph—I want to ask the gentleman a question. I want to ask him if by taking these two words out of that proposition the gentleman wishes to relegate us back to political and social bondage. For if you are not in favor of social and political freedom—

The Chairman—The gentleman still has the floor. No argument.

Mr. Randolph—I am asking him a question.

The Chairman—But you must not argue it.

Mr. Randolph—I want to know if he wishes to relegate us back to bondage.

Mr. Kates—The gentleman has first to prove to me that

we have ever been in social or political bondage. [Loud laughter.]

Mrs. Mills, of Chicago:

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—I don't object to this proposition, because I do not believe in social freedom, understand, but because that is an open question. It has been decided by certain parties on this platform to mean the abolition of the family relation, or, as Mrs. Woodhull says, the abolition entire of the family clanship. I oppose the proposition in this spirit, and as it is proposed hereafter to indorse her fully and wholly, to make this question the great question of Spiritualism. I feel that every man and woman that loves their family and honestly believes that in the constitution of man and not in the civil law lies the authority for the family relations, should oppose it. Understand that civil law never made a family. Understand that civil law is only the highest expression for the civilization of the age, and let us wait and see what is this expression, and find out whether this breaking up of families is the breaking up of natural laws which shall destroy our individuality, our family, our social relationship, and make everything anarchy, and in the end sweep away the marriage relationship and put it in the power of the social body, which is so corrupt to-day, to do as it thinks best. Mrs. Woodhull stands up as the advocate of this freedom, and asks me as a member of this social body to support her. I have listened to her—

Colonel Blood—We must have freedom in the first place, and then the rules and organization will grow up.

Mrs. Mills—I will say further, that if so, we do not understand the first principles of social freedom, or freedom at all, when we take the infidel idea upon which the republic of France bases her liberty, which has culminated in the bloody efforts of the Communists to frame a new relationship in love. As a man said, "I did not know that a woman would fight." It destroyed all the modesty of the true womanly spirit of love, until she fought her foe and was worse and more cruel than man. Shall we indorse the position until we have discussed the question and know what social freedom really means? I say, no. [Cheers. A Voice: "That is the point."]

Mr. T. S. A. Pope—I am in favor of the resolution because it marks the approaching epoch of the birth of the only true family relationship that ever existed on earth, perfectly legitimate and in harmony with the constitution of man. I think it is impossible in any sense to destroy the family relation. [Cheers.]

Mrs. Severance—Will the Chairman please read the proposition?

The proposition was read.

Mrs. Severance—I would like to ask what Spiritualist, with a common-sense brain, after passing the propositions which have been passed, almost unanimously, in this Convention—we have passed propositions, claiming that the highest use of Spiritualism was to generate, grow and develop the highest forms of manhood—and can this be done in slavery? It is argued that we intend to break up the family. Not a word of it. What does the proposition mean? It means simply this, that you can do what you think just and right; and if any mother has not love enough in her soul to take care of her child, far better that the child should be separated from her. [Cheers.] I believe that this proposition embodies the true principle of freedom. I do not believe that there is a man or woman in this Convention, with very few exceptions, but will vote for its adoption. I am not afraid to risk it.

Mr. Kates—Mrs. Severance says she does not know how a man with an ounce of brains can oppose that proposition, when one has been adopted setting forth that to generate, grow and develop children was the highest duty of manhood. I will say that my attention at the time that proposition was passed, was diverted, and afterward I regretted that I had not been able to vote against it.

Mrs. Severance—I will just explain one word. I did not say that no man had an ounce of brain, but that I could not comprehend, nor can I yet, how any man with an ounce of brain can oppose the proposition.

Mr. Mills—I came into this Convention because I supposed you were all liberally inclined, and there would be no effort made by any one person to choke their opinions down the

throats of other people. But we have a great many things to do, and the first is to keep good natured. Now then why cannot we adopt such propositions and such a constitution, and work upon such platform that every one can go upon it. If any want to live after their own peculiar styles let them do it, and I do not propose to compel any to change their mode of life to suit me, any more than I would change mine to suit them. But because a man or woman does not advance a doctrine that you can acquiesce in; do not become excited. We do not propose to have any pope in this Convention; that is really the reason why the great mass of people have come to this Convention, because every man and woman can express their opinions without insulting or driving off anybody else. [Cheers.]

Mr. Chauncey Barnes—I merely rise to make a remark like this: The resolution harmonizes with what I have been proclaiming to the world for the last twenty years. A time would come when we should organize, and allow me to tell this assembly that the first organization must be made within themselves. [Cries of "Question."]

Chairman—Order.

Mr. Barnes—I have organized within myself to harmonize with the resolution that is before the Convention. Spiritualism organizes me; it gives me a platform within my soul broad enough, high enough, deep enough to reach all God's creatures that are down in the lowest depths of the lowest hell. It organizes the whole world. Spiritualism to me is my religion, my politics, my government; it is my all, and it is to me all of yours. What is harmonized there is to be harmonized here, and socially, religiously and politically the principles of divine government are to be the fundamental principles of the Convention. It is not yet, however, in harmony with God's divine government, which unites Church and State. You have to come through tribulation before your eyes shall be open to light. You are blind; as much so as the believers in orthodoxy. Trouble, trial and imprisonment have opened the eyes of some of these men and women, and I am one of them. I have drank the waters in the garden of Gethsemane, and so have Victoria Woodhull, Tennie Claflin, and Col. Blood and others; and I say to this Conven-



tion that these persons will fulfill their mission. I come to prepare the way, like John the Baptist, for God's divine government to stand on earth as it does in heaven.

Mr. Gage—When I moved the reconsideration of this question for the purpose of opening discussion, it was with a view that people might vote upon it intelligently. Now, sir, in order to close this discussion, I will move the previous question.

Mr. Hull—I will second the motion.

Mr. Gage—And I would say further that the effect of the passage of the motion for the previous question is to bring a square vote upon it at once.

The Chairman was about to put the question, when Mr. Cotton rose and claimed his attention.

Mr. Cotton—I feel as though there was a great deal to say upon this question, and I hope the motion will not prevail.

The Chairman—Let me suggest that it requires a certain number of votes to call for the previous question, and let me suggest to Mr. Gage that he should not attempt to cut off any of these discussions. We have a five-minute rule. It seems to me that there are hundreds of souls boiling up on this question, and we may as well have it out now as not. The motion for the previous question was not seconded.

Mr. Gage—It was seconded twice, but I will withdraw it, for I am not one of those opposed to a full discussion.

Mr. Crocker, of Arkansas, said:

I cordially support this resolution, and I have mistaken the mission of Spiritualism, and my life has been entirely in the wrong direction for the last ten years, if Spiritualism cannot come down to the fundamental principles of human affairs. It has to come down to these practical affairs if it would fulfill its mission. Of this question of social freedom, I would say that all freedom is limited by the circumstances under which it is enjoyed. The circumstances of life are the tyrants that hold us. Yes, sir; I am glad to say that industrial and educational institutions are held up by it. I grant to you that

we have a right to freedom. To-day it is far in advance of its organic expression. We want institutions; we want to come here and organize, and let the rule of science, and not the rule of any individual, be our law.

Dr. Merton—Our enemies have charged it upon us for many years that we are hypocrites. I wish to correct a wrong impression. I am not a hypocrite because I have taught one thing and done another. We are all hypocrites in a certain way. We have a certain set of doctrines to which at some time we cannot adhere. Now, a strict definition of the word Spiritualism would not include all reform. It would only include our Spiritual relations.

The Chairman—You must adhere to the question.

Dr. Merton—I think I understand the question. Spiritualism was born long ago. We, as Spiritualists, have declared from every rostrum that the Spiritualistic philosophy included all philosophy. If we are mistaken in our conception, then let us say that we have been altogether wrong for twenty-five years in our idea of the scope of this movement. If you adhere to the strict meaning of the word, Spiritualism only refers to the spiritual relation; but I believe in reference to this somewhat in this style: If we are building a house, we have to put in a foundation before we can build up into the air. You know how the churches have done for the past eighteen centuries. They have tried to build castles of humanity in the air, and all they have got is moonshine. Do we as reformers intend to follow that miserable, despicable example? No, I trow not. We must, if we build on the spiritual element of humanity, begin down at the bottom and work upward. We cannot give people a spiritual organization at once. I had a talk with one of these religious editors of one of our papers, and he said it is all wrong to drag in these reforms. What had that man been doing these several years? He had talked and discussed these questions of reform, and yet he would not have us act upon them. Let us say we will not confine ourselves to the mere communion with the beautiful summer-land. I believe in spirit communion. It is now thirty-six years since I saw the first spirit, and I have never turned my back upon it; but before I have liberty to have

perfect communion I must have conditions, and they are to be found in the idea of social freedom.

Capt. Winslow—This is a question that to me seems a little premature. Facts are stubborn things, and when a fact is presented we cannot get round it. We have just passed a proposition that order is nature's first law. I did not know it was the first, although it is a law in nature. There are other things that have come up in this discussion. It seems to me that it is premature; I will tell you why I do not understand it. They contend that social freedom is right, because they contend that it is the highest type of our spiritual nature. Well, I do not exactly see it. There are secondary faculties, certainly secondary to the spiritual nature. [Cheers.] Here I come to the second point. They tell me in advancing this doctrine—those who believe in this social freedom—that no one should have a child unless it was perfectly harmonized. What will be the result? It will introduce a new element into the action of our faith. You may point to my life's history and find acts which were perhaps not so good as they should have been, but that does not interfere with the principles involved. What would be the result of opening this animalism upon us? In twenty-five years it would have played havoc with us. Law is for our protection, and it is right to have law, but don't tell me that it is right to take my life. I want to know if right exists on my side. I wish that we might have high and pure organizations, and I feel sorry, deeply sorry, that my organization is not of that nature that I cannot with truth say that I am pure and holy, without spot or blemish. I cannot say this, nor is there a single individual breathing that can say it. The reason is that I am a finite being.

Miss Addie L. Ballou—It seems to me that there is a great mistake made by some people on this question. Social freedom does not, as I see, compel me to take up all kinds of animalism in the street. The gentleman in his explanations seemed to make an indirect thrust at womankind. Of all duties put upon mothers, there is none more sacred than that of maternity. The deepest, holiest thought of the woman is that the child shall come into the world better organized; and in order to do that, the mother knows that the first law is pure impregnation; and I say that the filthy,

rotten men of this country are not fit to have children. If there is a pure and good man in the world, if I wanted to give the purest child to the world—and I will say right here that I do not wish to be misunderstood, for my life will stand your inspection—if I wished to become a mother again, if I wished to fill that holy office of maternity, I am sure that I should demand that the father of my child should be as pure as my own thought. I do not know where in this great community I could find such a man. I know what this question calls for. I know what it is for a mother, for a wife to be held in subjection to the will of her husband. Her body belongs to him, and his is the right to sell it to another man to pay a debt. There are persons in this hall, a woman among you whose body has been, by her own husband, offered to pay a debt. Now I claim freedom on this question on behalf of woman. If a man has the right to sell my body because the law has given him the privilege, then I say down with that law. Any other woman in this community, subject to this same law, feels equally its force, and for her I also speak, although the walls should tumble down and crush me. [Cheers.]

The Chairman—I hear Mr. Higgins's voice. It is impossible for me to recognize every one, but all shall have a chance.

Mr. Anthony Higgins—I said last night that when we scratched a Spiritualist we sometimes found a Christian underneath. There is a great deal of truth in that, because we cannot grow out of the prejudices which education and society have thrown over us. The argument brought forward against this proposition emanated in the seminary of Christianity. They have not the mark of spiritual philanthropy about them; they were born in the womb of Jesuits; they come from the Vatican; they belong to the dead past and we have nothing to do with them. Let us come to the question, "Whom are we seeking to reform?" Men and women? What are men and women? Spiritual, ethereal beings, or are they not social beings? Are we not animal as well as angel? Have we not political as well as social rights, and social rights as well as political rights? The gentleman says that the spiritual underlies the material. One need not deny it. Every person here has physical phenomena, and organs and pas-



sions located at the base of the brain. If you seek a reorganization you must not omit these, and if you wish to erect a different kind of Spiritualism from that we have to-day, you must begin at the proper base and look after the animal wants of men and women before you can reach the full developed man and woman. Therefore, I think this proposition is in accordance with the object and aim of Spiritualists. You say we are but dreamers, wild speculators, seeking to reach out into immensity for some intangible something that is to remodel society. What we want is something solid—questions we can discuss. What we want is to bring back again people to the basis of truth. Can we get a better basis than to take care of the animal nature of man—the basic element of life? They say that we Spiritualists are a religious body and have nothing to do with the animal man, and yet Moses claimed not only the soul but the body. He said, "Thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not bear false witness." The Church to-day has its grasp upon your minds and bodies; we Spiritualists are to have nothing to do with these things. We are attacking the most formidable power in the world—Christianity, yet we are not to take practical measures for making our assault. In the name of common sense, let's have some logic from the other side of the house. [Cheers.]

Mrs. Waisbrooker—There was a time when nature's laws in my being and my conscience were at conflict, but that time has passed. When I was in the church I certainly did much that my soul condemned. To-day I do not. I do not claim to be perfect; no woman can be. For years every act of my life has been moulded under the highest conception of my duty and right at that time.

Mr. Shaw, of Iowa, said:

Mr. President, this transcendentalism surfeits me; it recalls to my mind the anecdote of the Scotchman's reply to the inquiry whether he understood the meaning of metaphysics. "O yes," he said; "when ain man dinna ken what anither man says, and the man who says it dinna ken what he says himsel', that is metaphysics." [Laughter.] I have listened to a good deal of metaphysics upon this little question, as it seems to me, whether we should organize in order to secure social freedom. That is the objectionable point.

Now, the question comes up, what constitutes social freedom? I am in favor of the proposition viewing it from my standpoint, but I am not in favor of viewing it from the standpoint of another. Social freedom, as it has ordinarily been interpreted to mean promiscuity, I certainly cannot accept. Mark me here, there is not one who is socially a slave by reason of marital laws, and I put myself in that position. If the lady who has spoken here desires to select the man to be the father of her next child she is at perfect liberty to do it. Let her remember that the true law of marriage comes in after she has made her selection. The provisions of the marital law come altogether from a deeper quarter than that. It rests, deeper than this superficial law. That it is a restraining and necessary evil I tell you. It has been found necessary in order to guard against certain evils—a barrier that they have put from another and altogether different cause. That cause is a disregard of the basic law of life, which says that the earth and the fullness thereof belong to mankind individually, without respect to communities or sects. I shall stand ready here, when I occupy the platform to-night, to trace every evil, general and special, under which mankind suffers, to that one grand violation of basic law. I will tell you another fact, that we are not without experience in reference to this point. In Rome, for 500 years, women were under restraint far more severe than that which holds them now—the power of divorce was with the man alone, and there was not a divorce for 500 years. But mark the result when the law was changed, which amounted to about the same thing that you are calling for here—social freedom. The cause for divorce was made very trivial, and both husband and wife could obtain it at will. What was the result? Why, Cicero says that a man no longer counted the years by the consuls but by the number of his wives—that some men had as many as twenty wives, and some women got a little ahead of the men and had 25 husbands [a laugh], and they found that it was necessary to reverse this social law, which is now for the second time to be imposed upon a community.

Mr. Higgins—I do not disagree with my friend on the main point; he has one idea of marriage and I have another—that is all. Now, the natural idea of marriage is what we

are seeking out. The marriage of the hierarchy, of the Catholic and of the Jesuit is one thing, and that which costs \$5 for a piece of parchment is another.

Mrs. Severance—Is a question in order? I ask him what women have to do with making laws?

Mr. Shaw—I grant you that woman have very little to do with making laws, but it would be with perfect willingness on my part that they should.

Mrs. Severance—Why did you not say so?

Mr. Shaw—I have not spoken to that point yet.

Mr. Hull—The time has arrived for adjournment, and I move that this matter be laid over until 10 o'clock to-morrow.

The motion was temporarily withdrawn.

Mrs. Witchener, of St. Louis, said—I have but one fact to offer. I have practiced medicine for seventeen years, making especial point of the diseases of women when I first gave my name out. The first seven days I had six applications to procure abortions, five of them were married women, and three of them were methodists. Far better would it be that we should have our children born on the plan of social freedom than have them murdered in the churches.

Mrs. Mary Thomas Clark, of Indiana:

What I have to say will not be valuable, but so many have talked of what they do not know that my soul is alive, and I do want to say one word. A gentleman said that there was no slavery under the marriage law. I believe the gentleman has never been a slave in all his life, or he would know better. I do not stand here to speak of myself but on behalf of those women who are scared to go home after they have become slightly indisposed, for fear they might be ill used. First let me speak of the labor we have under the marriage system. I have seen my mother, who bore seventeen children to her husband—I have seen that woman quite wild, before I knew what was the matter, awaiting the arrival of another life. To obey her husband was that woman's religion. Baal was her God, and she worshiped him in her own soul. Let me pass from her to my oldest sister, who bore thirteen children. We lived in England. When we

crossed to America she had eight children and a little babe to take care of, and she asked and begged her husband that she might make the journey free. I am not ashamed, for I know the truth of what I am saying. The consequence of my sister's request was quarrels in the family. She was spat upon. I ask whether a law which compels a woman to submit—whether a law which binds them as slaves is a good law? Are you for adopting it throughout the whole country? I ask you, Which is worse—a slavery endured by a woman under such laws, or that of the Caucasian, who sells her body because she loves? I say that we are not free, and we must be free in this if we will be anything else than slaves in the next generation. [Cheers.]

The Convention then adjourned until 2 o'clock.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

The Convention reassembled at 2 o'clock P. M.

The Chairman—Although the hour for opening the Convention has not arrived, yet I will call the Convention to order, so that a little business may be transacted before we begin the consideration of the resolutions. The Secretary will proceed to call the roll of those who have paid their fees and become regular members of this Convention.

Mr. Jamieson, the Secretary, then read the list of delegates, already published.

Mr. Cotton said:

*Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen*—I do not propose to occupy your time but a very few minutes. I believe we are limited to five minutes, but if we were allowed a longer time I could not occupy it, because I am in ill health. I rise to say that there is a portion of this Convention who believe—perhaps it may be without foundation—that when this proposition is passed, they are committed to the extreme views of these individuals on this social question. You all know that an individual, who has proclaimed himself as a believer in, and a practicer of, what to me is promiscuity, has said that he can have one true love and then love forty women in forty days. I grant that he may be right when he says that he traveled by and through and into the holy of



holies to find this condition, and then assumes that I must travel through the same path in order to get that holy, glorious experience by and through which he has become more intellectual, more angel-like, and so forth, on to the end of the chapter. I say, for me, I do not want to pass through that way. There is a class here who feel that they are committing themselves to what they do not approve. Some one says that there is no such thing as seduction; that there is no such thing as prostitution; and that class of individuals to-day is substituting the word "love" for "sexual embrace." Now, if you should love so and so to-night, and so and so to-morrow night, and some one else the next night, that would strengthen the bonds binding together me and mine. Now, this is to me an absurdity, and what I want to be understood as meaning is this: That I want this Convention to have this proposition recommitted, and let those who have had this matter under consideration give us to understand what is meant, that all may act intelligently touching this subject. As I do not propose to make any extended remarks, I will just repeat my motion. "That this proposition be recommitted, with instructions to give an explanation of social reform and freedom, particularly as to the breaking up of the family relationship." Now, I do not suppose that there is a single individual but will go nearly up to the end of the chapter with regard to social freedom. But there is something abhorrent to my soul when you ask me to let myself down, and not allow the intellectual to govern the animal. To my idea, it may be all right for the persons who are doing it. I do not judge for them, but for myself. But when they say to me that I can never have this glorious experience, I demur. I am very well aware that a great many among us are peculiar in their organization, and individuals have declared to me, were it not for the gratification of what they call love, they would no longer want to live an earthly life, and the highest ambition that many have in the future—though I charge it to no one—is a gratification of that feeling on the other shore, and their hope that in that land, directly and by proxy, they may communicate and have this embrace, that there, through intellectual and spiritual conflict, they should develop into angel life. I believe if the time ever comes when humanity

shall be a law unto itself, then we can lay down all the bars of restriction, and let every one press in.

Miss Anna E. Hinman read a list of delegates from whom she had received the dollar necessary to constitute membership of the Convention to properly qualified delegates.

The Chairman—The question before us is on the motion of Mr. Cotton to recommit this proposition for explanation. Perhaps the chairman of the Committee on Resolutions will read the original, so that it may be understood.

Col. Blood then read the proposition and said:

The committee discussed this question, and they thought it was ample to cover the case. Mr. Cotton evidently misunderstands it. It says nothing about compulsion; it is very plain in its statement, and if you like I will read it again, so that it may be thoroughly understood. We do not propose to compel anybody to do anything. I cannot conceive that there could be anything plainer than the terms of this proposition. It leaves everybody to do as they please in social as in religious matters.

Mr. Cotton—Is a word of explanation in order? I would just say that there are many of us who understand this proposition to commit them to the extreme views to which I have referred. Now, can it not be differently worded, so that we can harmonize together, and work on this platform for what to us is the truth?

The amendment was lost, and the original motion adopted.

On the clause referring to the Young Men's Christian Association—

Judge Holbrook said—I rise to ask what is meant by the words, "the infamous attempt."

Col. Blood—By putting God into the Constitution.

A Delegate—I would move that Tennie C. Claflin be allowed to explain. [Cheers.]

Col. Blood—Miss Claflin declines to explain now, but thinks that she will have an opportunity to discuss the question this evening.

There were cries for Dr. Jamieson and Colonel Blood.

Mr. Jamieson said:

I am very busy with my duties as secretary, but I will just say in a few words as I can what I think is meant. The Young Men's Christian Assassination Association means the entire subversion of our American public. It means to begin at the very base of our social and political institutions, and means to overthrow them entirely. That is the object of the so-called Christian Association. This Association proposes to undo the work of the grand old revolutionary heroes. It proposes to pass upon this question in the shape of Christianity against infidelity; and in that form, when the question comes before the American people, it will be carried by an overwhelming majority, and God, or the Jewish Jehovah, and his son Jesus and the Bible, are to be recognized in our Constitution. That is what they propose to do; and when they obtain the recognition of their God and their Jesus and their Bible, then will come a time that will try men's souls, and will inaugurate the coming religious war. These men are in earnest. They are to assemble in one shape on the 2d day of October. \$180,000 have been subscribed for the purpose of advertising that single meeting of the Evangelical Alliance. That is the grand Christian Association. These men are engaged in no mere fanatical scheme; they are only carrying out the logic of Christianity, and this government of ours not being based on Christianity, these men propose that the so-called Christian nation shall be consistent, and recognizing God first in the national Constitution, shall then recognize him in the State Constitution and then in all the different institutions of the country. Their object is to overthrow religious liberty—to prevent the very freedom of expression you have listened to from this platform. [Cheers.]

Judge Holbrook—I do not consider the wording of the resolution quite exact. The article "the" is definite, and points to one object, one thing that the Young Men's Christian Association have assuredly done. I would suggest that it read "*all* infamous attempts." I will make an amendment to that effect.

The amendment was adopted.

On motion for the adoption of the resolution as amended, Mr. Cotton said:

I would just like to say that I, with Dr. Treat, attended a

convention of this class at Cooper Institute, last winter. I was surprised to see the amount of talent engaged in this direction. People say that there is no danger—that this cannot be forced down the throats of the people. But I saw enough there, and know enough of the combination made by the Catholics and Protestants in this connection. They are a power in the land; and unless we inform the people on this subject we shall soon be in the grasp of a hidden foe. I believe, beyond a doubt—and I do not speak without some knowledge—that the Young Men's Christian Association is a Jesuitical instrument to do this work. The men who are at the head of this movement say that they intend to carry it out if it takes ten or twenty years. Stephen H. Tyng, of New York, who has the confidence of millions of Protestants—who rules his people like a pope—is one of its leaders. The culmination of the idea of these persons will be, not only to continue the disfranchisement of women, but to disfranchise every liberal from one end of this country to another. Here is the danger; and I hope we shall not sleep upon our oars. [Cheers.]

Dr. Maxwell—I move that we incorporate in the proposition the words “The evangelical alliance.”

Col. Blood—The Committee on Resolutions will accept the amendment.

The proposition as amended was then carried.

On the next proposition referring to children's lyceums, Dr. Merton said:

It is hardly possible, Mr. President, to say in five minutes' time why I do not think that that proposition expresses the whole sense of this meeting. In my address this evening I intend to show particularly why the Children's Progressive Lyceum has not been that success which its originators hoped it would be. The Children's Progressive Lyceum ought to make a definite provision for the cultivation of the whole nature. But it does not. Why does it not? Because, for example, it has twelve groups of members for every complete lyceum. Why are they required? The founder of the lyceum has never given us a single reason for their existence. I believe that there is an intellectual system of education possible, which could be fully adapted to most na-



tures, and definitely provide for each of the twelve groups. I oppose this proposition, because I believe that something better than the children's lyceum can be adopted.

The proposition was carried. The first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh propositions of Chap. III. were also passed without dissent. The eighth was reached, whereupon Mrs. Severance moved its adoption, and it was declared carried. At this moment Judge Holbrook rose to his feet.

Judge Holbrook:

*Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen*—Five minutes is a very short time to make a speech on this question; but as I stand in the presence of Col. Blood, I wish to reveal what a transformation has been made in these propositions. I want to complain that good faith has not been kept. When in the conference-room, Col. Blood insisted that these propositions read just the same and meant just the same after the reconstruction as they did before. Why don't you pass the reconstruction?

Mrs. Severance—Because we thought it superfluous.

Judge Holbrook—This whole doctrine of free love from beginning to end is based on language that reads both ways. Misunderstood you! Why, you cannot be understood when you are using language that can be just as well read one way as the other. Here is the terrible social freedom of the past. It is stealing the livery of heaven to serve the devil in, that is what you are doing all the time. You bring in a proposition stating that hypocrisy is the greatest crime of the age, and this is hypocrisy from beginning to end—the use of language that cannot be understood; using the term social freedom to mean one thing when others regard it as meaning another. I do not want any of your social freedom. I am only in favor of my own. [A hiss.]

Mr. Cotton—Let us have freedom.

The Chairman—Let us have order; be as quiet as possible.

Judge Holbrook—Well, now then, if this is to be as you insist that it is, that government has just as much right to direct the matter of marriage as it has your physical liberty what is your social freedom good for? Are you insisting that the government has no right to stand in the way of any

physical liberty? You must admit it or deny it. I drive along the street; have I not a right to the whole street? You drive along that street, and you have a right to the whole street, and yet the law says that I shall go to the right and that you shall go to the right. The government is there standing in the way of my physical liberty. It is directing me what I shall do in that particular business. Well, these revolutionists here are so almighty independent that they say government cannot control them in the least. I would like to know what you mean. In this way you have no government at all, for your moral liberty is the result of the physical; and the physical is the result of the moral. According to your own construction, government has the right to interfere in the case of marriages. Now, I own a piece of land and the government wants it, or a railroad wants it. I, however, wish to live upon it, but the government will come and take it from me for public use, thus interfering with my personal liberty.

Miss Claflin—They pay you for it though.

Col. Blood—But the fact that they do so, shows evidently that the right of the community in landed estate is superior to that of the individual. Still it is taken without consent. This, however, instead of being an argument in favor of Judge Holbrook's position, is the very reverse, since it demonstrates that there can be no such thing as absolute, individual ownership, in natural wealth. That belongs of right to the people collectively. Land, like the air and water, is natural wealth to which individual title can never be acquired rightfully, because no person originally created it.

Judge Holbrook—I grant you that; but they interfere with my personal liberty. And no government has a right to interfere, according to your doctrine; and if you don't stand on that doctrine you don't stand any where. If you wish to preserve your personal liberty you must retire from the streets, because government says that such and such things may not be done at certain times; and if government has the right to do this, then it has the right to interfere with these marriages. If you think that, being married one day, you

can dismiss the wife next day, and five months afterward, if government considers that to be wrong, it can restrict your physical liberty in that respect and also your moral liberty; and if it cannot do that——

Mrs. Middlebrook—Will Judge Holbrook allow me to ask him a question?

Judge Holbrook—Yes, sir. [A laugh.]

Mrs. Middlebrook—If Judge Holbrook is willing to put before this audience his idea of social freedom, and not have a law based upon Col. Blood's idea of social freedom, I will ask him if one person's idea ought not to be protected by government just as much as any other person's idea?

Judge Holbrook—I do not understand the question.

Mrs. Middlebrook—Judge Holbrook stated that he believes in social freedom, but not in Col. Blood's idea of social freedom; and I would like to know if it would not be despotism; would it not be protecting one citizen as against another, if the government should pass a law based upon his idea of social freedom, as opposed to another person's idea of it?

Judge Holbrook—I see no better place to commence at in the answer to this question than my belief in social freedom—I mean by this social freedom, that I believe in social liberty as it is restricted by proper laws. We have no other liberty but that. Liberty has its restrictions. You talk about your absolute liberty, and there is no such thing. You talk about your absolute rights, and there is no such thing. This doctrine of social freedom in the first place depends upon absolutely inalienable rights. There are no such rights, my friend, when you look into the matter. If you have but one individual in the world you may talk of absolute rights.

A voice—"Are not the rights, to see, to smell, to taste, to feel, absolute rights of the individual, and of two individuals? May they not breathe the same air, see, smell, taste or feel the same things? Will any one dare to say that the right of two individuals to love is any less absolute or inalienable than these?"

But the moment you have two individuals in the world you

must talk of relative rights, because your right has some relation to another person's rights, and when you come into government every person's rights are limited by those of others. That is my idea. [Cheers. A Voice.—“So are the wrongs, and it is from them that people need the protection of laws and not to restrict rights.”] Now follow me and see. The whole community comes together for the purpose of protecting the individual, and in entering upon the government every right of every individual has its relation to everybody's rights. Now, that is the meaning of government; that is the force of government; all the rest of the people are against one every time. What shall he do; how far shall he carry it? What shall the individual do that is fighting the great public? The trouble is that the revolutionists carry your idea of personal freedom too far; they mean well enough, I suppose. I have much respect for their character, but I cannot say so much for their judgment.

Col. Blood—May I ask a question? Here are several of us upon the platform. Suppose that we agree among ourselves to organize a government, based upon the proposition of personal freedom and inalienable individual rights. The administration of this government would consist in protecting this freedom and these rights in every individual. We should thus secure to each other every inalienable right, and at the same time, by such security generally, every one would be protected individually. Would not that protect you equally with every one else? If every one is secure how can anyone stand in danger? What is required in sexual matters is not restraints upon intercourse, but punishment for rape.

Judge Holbrooke—That is an absurdity. Talk of inalienable rights—What are they? Is it an inalienable right to do just what you please? You cannot do it, you cannot go into government that way. You have conceded too much. Take the case of the land. Here I have a certain piece of land; it is an inalienable right of mine to own it. [A voice.—“That is your assumption.”] But the people of the United States, 40,000,000 of them, come to me and say we want it. We do not care about your inalienable rights, and they drive me away, no matter whether they pay me for it or not, yet I have a right to own the land. This is the foundation princi-



ple of all these matters. Whether they are right or not, the right of the great mass to reconstruct the individual must be granted. Government I hold is omnipotent. The great mass of the people is God, so far as government is concerned. When Jonah was in the boat and was thrown overboard, I say that is the government of God, and if I or you were in the boat, and it would only carry nine in a storm, and there were ten of us in the boat, I say it would be right for one of us to be cast overboard. This is the province of government to restrict, and we must have some restrictions upon individual rights in the matter of matrimony as in everything else.

Mr. Higgins—If we are to be governed all the time by existing forms of government, where did the men who declared their independence of the government of England obtain their rights here, but in Convention of the people, who declared their right for higher freedom? Don't you see that you limit us in our right of revolution, which every nation has the right to declare?

Judge Holbrook—The right of revolution is a right inherent necessarily in every people, because there is no right to dispute it. [A Voice—"There you yield the whole claim."] There is no power to control governments, they obtain their power by the consent of the governed; but at another point of time the people may want to overturn the government because it has been too hard upon them, and they determine to assert their rights by revolution. In this case, you say you can carry on your personal government—we say that you cannot. I say it is revolutionary, and must uproot the government before it can be successful.

Mrs. Severance—It is strange to me that anybody can see such a great bugbear in this religious, political and social freedom. Can you not see that the very same laws that relate to religious freedom apply with equal force to social freedom? That is to say, every person now has a right over his conscience and his religious acts, with which nobody has the right to interfere except they interfere with the exercise of the same rights on the part of another. Why should it not be so with social laws? Why should not the dictates of one's own conscience govern one's action in matters of social affairs as in religious affairs, so long as you do not in-

fringe upon the rights of others? [Cheers.] Is it forgotten that the women will have the same, even a greater right, to deny these ministers of carnal appetites when they rejoice in social freedom as they do now. [Cheers, and cries of "Question."]

The Chairman—Let us hear everybody; they are all entitled to a hearing.

Mr. M. E. Bean, of Massachusetts:

I want to say a word about this idea of the government against the individual. Some 200 years ago the officials of Massachusetts took it in their heads that certain women, to the number of twenty in all, should be murdered. The women were right and the officials were wrong. You can go back some 1,800 years, and some officials of Judea took it into their heads to go and do the same thing. They were wrong and the individuals were right. [Cheers.]

Mr. Shaw—I do recognize a difference between religious restraint and political and moral and social restraint. There is a vast difference. One refers to the relationship of man with his maker, and the other his relations with his fellows. Where this latter relation is established, there must come in laws. The basic conditions of society require it, and we shall find that no one can rise superior to them, whether as individuals or as a nationality. The disregard by the nations generally of the basic law of life, which speaks in favor of the equal distribution of the earth and its fulness, has caused the distress we see around us. These social propositions do not seem strange at all in view of the fact that 23½ inches of brain is unable to conceive properly what this social problem really means. Perhaps I can make my position clearer by repetition. We find that there is competition, or a law of competition, governing in the world; each man and each woman essays to claim the greater prominence, the higher position, to place, if you please, a greater distance between himself and the great demon of want or the dread of it, and this involves competition, which has within itself the elements of selfishness, and comes in to corrupt every relation of life, even the marital relation itself. When you look into your own experience, if you have had difficulty there, or look into the experience of your neighbors, you will find that the great corroding cause of this marital relationship flows

right out of its basic conditions, the disregard by the nation of the basic laws of life, which says that the earth and the fulness thereof are all mankind's equally, without respect to individuals or sects. Without overthrowing these conditions, without making them in harmony, will you inform me how you will be able to proceed without some reconstructive laws? How will you be able to do it? Will you take away the restraining laws? We have an example before us, of 500 years' duration, where the masses have been under your law of social freedom as interpreted by you. I am in favor of social freedom, but I want it free from those conditions that lie at the base of all the corruptions of society, including that of the marital relation. This is my definition of the social question.

Mr. Crocker—I want to say one word in explanation with regard to the latitude which the speakers are taking over this question. During the process of revolution, the idea of the sovereignty of the individual comes first; after this come in nature, science and universal law. Universal law is the modifying influence. The individual is always in advance of the multitude. We vote to put ourselves under the law from the demands of emergency, not because we would yield to the government of the multitude, or rather to an inferior than to the superior force. Politics come in; and, if I understand the question, we do not want to infringe upon the right of the individual. Again, you cannot legislate on social freedom. It asserts itself. It is like the muscular system in the human organization—it is self-asserting. You make all the laws you choose—it will still retain its life. Condemn it if you can. I do not care one straw with regard to all the laws that may be made; let me alone. I have a law in my own organization, and I cannot work it out; and if I have to go to hell to learn the way to heaven, I shall have to submit under the circumstances: it is inevitable. If you want to modify things, for God's sake bring circumstances to the front that will uplift the individual!

Mr. Pope—I have just a word to say on this great question. ["Louder!"] I can make you all hear me if the angels help me. If there is a double pivot upon which this just, grand and glorious question revolves, it is the question

of the rights of society and the rights of the suffering individual, and the native total depravity of all gross races. These are the pivots upon which this question revolves, and my heart desires that I should speak plainly and intelligently, as does the spirit that I have invoked. The question asked by the great Dart, in New York, and to-day asked by the great, large-hearted lawyer (Judge Holbrook) is: Are there any rights, inalienable, belonging to society? We, sir, as reformers—I, sir, as an inspired delegate to this Convention, ask, in the sovereignty of my individuality, What rights has society which the suffering individual is bound to respect, at the sacrifice of his own? This question must be settled intelligently before the subject can be disposed of legitimately. I claim—from the knowledge received by me at this hour from my mother inspirator—that all men and women have a glorious claim of that manhood—that they have an inalienable right to the pursuit of life, liberty and happiness. I ask no government but a government of my own native constitution. I ask liberty which shall give me the dictation of that inspiration within me, and I will have it, too, if I have to spill every drop of blood that flows in my veins. This is the point, and in the future I hope to say more upon it. [Cheers.]

Mrs. Stearns, of Corry, Pa., said:

*My Friends*—Three parts of my experience bear upon this question, and I wish to tell it while the Convention is on this debate. It is a personal experience, and because there are thousands of such, this question is before you. I married by and through the influence of friends. One month after my marriage, I conceived. My husband told me that I had no right to become a mother. He physicked me, but the child was born. This was one of his marital rights, he claims it assuch, that I should be a mother by and through his offices. Time passed and I separated from the man; after that separation I was deprived of the privilege of associating with my child, and in the bill brought before the court, the allegation was made that I was practicing Spiritualism around the country, and that was considered good and sufficient reason why I should not associate with my child. This bill was presented by the father of my child, who had been side by side with me for four years in the investigations of Spiritualism,



during which time I took care of the children. He said, if there was a good wife I had been one; but the law gave him the right to the child, and restricted me in my associations with it; for five years, during which for three years I never saw the child. Once I went to see it but was prevented, and the law sustained the father all the time. Now, why are we advocates of social reform? I do not mean license! We want the divine rights of motherhood respected, and we intend to have them respected. [Cheers.]

Mrs. Laura C. Owens, of Indianapolis, said:

If I had more than five minutes to speak upon this subject, I could tell you volumes. Ladies and gentlemen here assembled—the sister gave you a little of her experience, and talked about reforming the law. I am in favor of it. She had her child taken from her, and the law sanctioned it; but when my husband and I parted; I defied the law to take my child. But the law did not—it died. My husband tried to steal her, the law tried to come in, but the child was ready, and I would have killed her rather than have given her up. But I was divorced, and a month after I married the same man again. [Laughter.] And I am the mother of another child. My first child was born after my husband and I had parted, and my earnest prayer was that we both might die. I thought that I was disgraced forever. I thought the name “grass widow” was enough, without bringing a child into the world without a father. [Laughter.] I will tell you of the crimes that I tried to do: I went to a physician and offered him \$500 to cause an abortion; he professed his willingness, but my father heard of it, and said that if he did it, he would prosecute him to the full rigor of the law. The physician did nothing, and the child was born; but it died, and God knows that I am the occasion of its being in spirit land, for with tears of bitterness I prayed that she might be born dead. She lived two years—a beautiful flower. My husband and I got divorced again; six months after we were married the second time. [Laughter.] I know what has brought me and my husband to our present position; but I am going to try and cultivate a sweet, healthy disposition, the best I can. [Great laughter.] My other child is just as healthy as it can be, although I have been afraid of it once or twice. But my

mother regretted almost that I was a coming, and I am a divorced widow to-day. [Laughter.] If I ever marry again, it will not be to please my friends, but it will be for love, even if be a nigger. [Great laughter and cheers.]

The Chairman—Those in favor of the adoption of the proposition, will say aye.

The proposition was adopted without a dissenting voice.

On proposition 1, of Chapt. V., respecting Christians—

Mr. Dean—I move that the word “professed” be placed before the word Christians.

The amendment was lost and the original proposition carried. The other propositions of this chapter were adopted, as were also those of Chapter VI. This disposed of the last of the clauses contained in the majority report.

The Chairman—The question now comes upon the adoption of the majority report as a whole.

Col. Blood moved, and the motion to adopt as a whole, having been seconded, it was carried.

The Chairman—Under the rule, the minority reports are now before the Convention; what will you do with them?

Mr. Hull—I move to lay them on the table.

Mrs. Severance—I second the motion.

Judge Holbrook—I call for the reading of the report.

The report was read.

Judge Holbrook—And now I call for the yeas and nays,

While the vote was being taken,

Mr. George Gear, of Connecticut—I wish it to be distinctly understood that I think the motion to lay on the table a very ungentlemanly one.

Mr. Shaw—I did not know that it was necessary to pay in a dollar before I could vote.

The Chairman—I have announced the fact several times.

Mr. Shaw—I will pay in my money. Can I have a few minutes to explain my vote?

The Chairman—Not a bit of it.

Mr. Shaw—I did not expect to get it.

On Mr. Lynn's vote in the negative being called, appar-

ently at the far end of the hall, the Chairman said: That seems strangely hypocritical.

Mr. Lynn—The Chairman charges me with being a hypocrite because I vote "No." I am no hypocrite. Cephas B. Lynn never was.

The Chairman—The Chair did not accuse you of hypocrisy; it thought somebody else was taking your name; it had not seen you.

The vote was read as follows: Yeas, 113: nays, 28.

The list of ayes and noes was accidentally lost, and the Secretary was unable to reproduce it for publication.

The Chairman—There is still another part of the minority report.

Judge Holbrook—The question will again come up on the other part of the report.

Dr. Maxwell presented his proposition as part of the minority report.

Mr. Randolph—I move that the propositions be taken up by sections. Carried.

The first section was adopted unanimously.

A motion to table the second clause was made.

Judge Holbrook—I call for the “ayes” and “noes.”

The Chairman—Will you vote by “ayes” and “noes?” Those in favor will say “aye” and those opposed “no.”

The motion was lost.

A division was then taken by the members rising. About twenty persons rose in the negative. The proposition was consequently tabled.

Mr. Hull—I move that we now adjourn. Lost.

Mr. Randolph—I move that the regular order of business be taken up.

The Chairman—Mr. Cotton caught my eye first, and has the right to the floor.

Mr. Cotton—I hold in my hands a proposition which I wish to read, with a few words of comment. We hope that the better judgment of the Convention will decide to say something on what to me is a very important subject. It may not signify to any one else, but it may at this stage of the proceedings. It is an important proposition. I will read it, and then spend two or three moments in speaking about it.

*Resolved*—That we represent the condition represented by those who argue and practice promiscuity in sexual intercourse outside of one true love as a condition to be commiserated and not censured or condemned.

Mr. M. A. Root—Has this proposition been presented in the usual way by the Committee on Resolutions?

The Chairman—No.

Mr. Root—Is it in order?

The Chairman—There is no law on this subject passed by



this Convention, but the custom of the Association has been sometimes to allow them to be presented on the platform. This has never been denied; at other times they have been presented to the Committee on Resolutions, and through them they have come to the Convention. I decide that according to the usages of the Convention that the proposition is in order.

Mr. Barnes—I wished to introduce one but could not get it in. If you allow one you must allow another.

Mr. Cotton—I will read my proposition over again. [Proposition read.] I simply want to say, and then I will leave it to the discussion of others, that I hope this point will no longer be shunned. I am aware that it is shunned, but if I stand alone I am willing to place myself square upon it. I say as an individual, the doctrine that I may have one true love, and then go outside for pleasure and call it love, and love that may produce offspring, with high, heavenly and holy aspirations, is something that I cannot comprehend. I am fully aware that those who love in this way state, as one of their number did, that they experience their highest joys and enter the holy of holies in this way, and tell me that I must travel the same way. I have no desire to do it.

The motion was laid on the table.

Mr. J. O. Barrett—I move that the regular order of business be taken up.

Mr. Barnes—I wish to introduce a proposition.

The Chairman—You are too late. The committee will meet in the ante-rooms. The Convention is adjourned until seven o'clock this evening.

The Convention then adjourned.

#### EVENING SESSION.

The Convention was called to order at 7 o'clock.

The Chairman said—The hour for opening has arrived, and we can have some short speeches. While others are collecting their thoughts I will say a few words. Ten years in this country has been considered a decade—and a decade ago the first National Spiritual Association convened in this city, in the month of August. That Convention lasted eight days,

and delegates from all parts of the country were present. It will be recollected that in 1864, the first date of the publication of these proceedings, we were in the war of the rebellion. At that time, Mr. Henry C. Wright, who had almost throughout all his life advocated self-abnegation—that if we were stricken on one cheek, we should turn the other—unexpectedly threw a bombshell into the Convention in the shape of a series of resolutions sustaining the principles of war, and in favor of putting down rebellion. We had a troublesome time then. Some delegates thought we had a lively time this afternoon, but it was a quiet family circle compared with a boisterous political meeting, of which the first Convention was a fair sample. [A laugh.] The result was, a separation into two organizations, one of conservative the other of active workers, like the majority here to-day. We have a much smaller party here to-day, dissenting with the mass of Spiritualists on the question of the duties of the situation, than were present in the first Convention. The proclamation had gone forth from the Chief Executive of the nation—from Abraham Lincoln—that the slaves, these people belonging to the African race, must be freed, and slavery forever cease in the United States. And it has been accomplished. [Cheers.] And now another bombshell is thrown into the American Association of Spiritualists. It comes in the shape of resolutions declaring the right of freedom of nearly twenty millions of human beings. [Cheers,]

A male Delegate—Why don't you take us all in?

The Chairman—As a lady said on this platform, there are are a great many of the men who need this; and in the freeing of those whom we have been in the habit of calling our better halves, many of us will, no doubt, obtain greater freedom than we have had ever before. It is an important fact that this declaration comes upon us from what I might term, although it is disputed, yet, from what I will term the head of the revolution, looking to the enfranchisement of women, as was the proclamation from Mr. Lincoln, from the head of the movement looking to the abolition of slavery. [Cheers.] It is signalized in the commencement by almost the same circumstances. (When anybody wants the platform let them come right up.) I have watched the movements of this association since its foundation. I know that

its first President, S. S. Jones, of the *R. P. Journal*, ignores it now, but from the revealings that have been made to-day of the manner of his life, it is no wonder—the nature of the parent being transmitted to the child—that this association should have culminated in Woodhullism. [Cheers and laughter.] I make another most startling revelation. I have taken particular pains to investigate in the localities where our past Presidents have lived, and where they are best known, and you will be perfectly astonished when I tell you that there has not been but a single individual, male or female—one exception among them all—who has not stood on the same line of social freedom. [Cheers.] And that one exception I have not been able to look after yet. If the Spiritualists, two-thirds of whom come out of the churches, are ably represented in the concentrated forces of the American Association of Spiritualists, it comes with an ill grace for any of the Spiritualists to ignore Mrs. Woodhull. Everybody will understand from my manner of ruling in this Convention that I have no favorites. When I take this position of presiding officer, I have nothing but the duty that belongs to the office to perform. I have been taught in the spiritual school that one of the inalienable rights—although the existence of inalienable rights has been denied to-day—was free speech. It has been contended that when a man enters society he surrenders a part of his rights, which is the disputed point, and one which met our forefathers when launching the government of the United States. But they declared emphatically, and the people sustained them, that we have inalienable rights among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. [Cheers.]

Mr. Pope—As the chairman has extended an invitation for addresses I will attempt to continue the grand thought which he has presented to you—to push still further the inquiry, whether the individual has any inalienable rights. We as sovereign individuals have outgrown that fanaticism; and we now ask in the majesty of our advanced condition, has society any rights which the sovereign individual is bound to respect at the sacrifice of principle. [“No.”] Yes, the booming answer which comes forth from the soul of this Convention to-day is a grand and emphatic “No.” Why? Because principle is superior even to society. What, we ask,

is society but the creature, the server of the individual. This is her legitimate function, and she has none other. Her rights are found only in the prosperity and advancement of the individual, and when she refuses thus to fill her legitimate function; when she becomes the hindrance [as she is to-day] instead of the cause of the advancement of the sovereign individual, oppressing him in his upward ascension from the base of the brain to the glorious region; from the subjection of the animal by the intellectual by which she shall advance on from infinite to infinite unto the end, then is she entitled to no regard from us. When society thus hinders the progress of the infinite soul we insist that her function has ceased. We have a right to rebel, and in that rebellion we intend, through the inspiration of the spirit world, to rise to a superior citizenship of freedom socially, and into the plain of the universal family that shall give us the new heaven and the new earth.

As an individual, I have learned within the experience of thirty years what to me is an invaluable revelation—that I am a plant, and not a creature made out of nothing, and that, as a plant, I am subject to the conditions of growth. I am further convinced by my inspiration that whereas the devil, in the garden of Eden, declared if man, in his compound condition of Adam and Eve, would disobey the prohibition against eating of the tree which was adapted to his tastes and his conditions, he should become as God, knowing good from evil. That voice has gone on until, in the latter days, we hear it repeating “Ye are Gods;” and we have found that this God is not concentrated upon his throne as an almighty, powerful and avenging judge, but is disseminated. We are now seeking him in the face of our brother men. We know that this divinity is in humanity; that this God is manifest in the flesh; that this infinite intelligence and power, this love and benevolence and ingenuity, inhabits, not only the region where virtue dwells, but the base of the brain, and that it is as absolutely good as infinite wisdom and an absolute, pure God can make it. I have fought against the idea that laws and those conditions which proceed from the base of the brain are illegitimate; that they are the cause of the fall; that they are the product of man’s depravity. I insist that they are not. I assert that



they are as legitimate as the functions of the coronal region; that they are God's revelation to man; that man must commence with the inferior conditions and advance; and in this day we have the inspiration and ability to create a new heaven and a new earth. When we know that we are gods, and that we have the power, we shall advance to that position in which we shall become judges, not of our brothers and sisters, but of ourselves. I know what the functions of the base of the brain are. I know that to me, in my personal experience, they are unsatisfied; and that I am controlled, not by them, but by the rule of ideality, and spirituality, and reason, and by these I shall advance from the inferior to the superior. This is the gist of the question of social freedom. It is the freedom we ask to be allowed to advance from the inferior to the superior. What if there are those who, by their organization, are compelled to live in the base of their brain! It is God's infantile construction, and the child will remain a child until it has outgrown this limit. The aspiration of the soul for the highest good is my ideal of life, and I will follow it, and I ask you to follow me as I follow this inspiration. I have much of this kind to say to you. My soul is burdened with the fact that to-day is the day of the establishment of the fifth universal empire. It is the republic of science; it is the republic of ethics, by which we shall have religion connected with science. I claim to be a mediator between science and religion. I accept every condition in nature as legitimate, as of God's institution; it is all divine. This order of nature is divine, and I glory in the perfection which I see in every creature of God's creation. Our prospect is divine. We are to put down inferior institutions, and on their ruins erect systems that will be productive finally of the grandest souls. I leave these thoughts which my inspiration has forced me to speak. I do not desire to speak to your cold intellect, but to your souls, on these important questions.

Mrs. Dr. Barnes, of Chicago, said:

Our brother seems to fear, as too many of our friends do, that we radicals of the radical type have almost lost our wits, in fact, that coming here to-night, and gathering as we do in Convention, are a little out of order on this grand question. Now, I would like to give you a few ideas of my own upon

the subject, although they may not perhaps be altogether to your satisfaction. It was my good fortune to inaugurate this grand social question in this hall. I gave in this hall last summer a series of discourses on this important question, and many faces that I see here to-night are familiar to me from the acquaintance I then formed. Although not alone in the field of this grand question, it has been dear to me for many years. How can it be otherwise, when I look around and see so much suffering, so many unhappy couples and so few married people in this broad city that can say they are happily married. Then do you say that this is not a question of the day. What other decision can we come to, when we have these facts staring us in the face, when, at every turn in the streets, we hear cries coming up from unhappy women—unhappy in their wedded state; and not alone from them, but from men and children also? The cry seems universal, and the day has come when something must be done to put a stop to it. [Cheers.] It is the question of all; and I think that that noble woman, Victoria C. Woodhull, and the many noble men and women who are helping her in this work, have been raised up for this very purpose. [Cheers.] A short two years ago and she was a perfect stranger to me, but, in common with many others, I shared the idea that she was a very bold reformer, and that so radical a woman must necessarily, perhaps, be of a type with whom a great many ladies would not care to have much to do. I took the opportunity, while staying in New York, to see her. One glance at the woman told the whole story. To see a woman of her physique, of that frail, delicate form, that grand, kindling eye—not to listen even to her words of enthusiasm, her love for the whole race of humanity—gave the lie to all that her enemies had said against her. I came out of her office feeling that I myself was a grander—that I was a better woman, for having listened to the thrilling words of the little woman. [Cheers.] I think that I would like forever to live with her, and to the grand cause of social freedom devote my days. Since that I have been taken coldly by the hands, and have seen the averted gaze of many who knew me when I was in the church; but I do not care, for I shall do the best I can do here. [Cheers.]

We have all to work together, a few women and a few men. There is so much need of it, for the world labors in agony and trouble, the like of which has never been seen since the foundation of the world. Last winter, when I was lecturing in Boston, they said to me, "Go on in this work, never mind the rebuffs of the few, for you will at length succeed, and the many that are now groaning in slavery, in subjection to a false marriage system will be freed." These words cheered me; I felt that I had been paid for what little of personal displeasure I had met from those to whom I have referred, for what little of personal inconvenience I have suffered in this land. But not only in the direction of social form, but in the obtaining by women of every right that she must and will have, lies our duty. The two questions go right together. The woman is kept down by the marriage tie. The man and law keep her down. When a woman is left alone, what little chance she has of settling matters? In my own experience I know of this, for I well remember when if I had been a man, I should have been able to have got an extension of time which was refused to me because I was a woman. I ask why is this? Are women not as economical as men? Can they not manage business affairs as well as men? That is not the question. It is only this: that men wish to keep them down; they do not wish, in many instances, for them to have their rights. In this question I have fought against great dangers, but I shall go through all right, and many other noble women will do the same. It has been the work of ages to get down to it. We hardly knew that we had the right to rebel. When I was a little child, I lived in Boston, and father used to go on the Common to spend the 4th of July. And he always gave the boys twice the money to spend that he did the girls. And when they had spent their money, they used to come and borrow of us—and they have been keeping it up ever since. [Cheers.] I generally find that it is a woman and not a man who lends money.

But that is neither here nor there; I wish to come back to this question of Victoria, and again to say one word in her favor. How grandly she has worked, especially in regard to *exposes* in regard to the truths she has felt obliged to tell concerning the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. [Cheers.] Years ago—not many years ago, either—I lived in New York, and

I used to attend Mr. Beecher's church. I know that he is a noble and good man, and grand and eloquent, and could tell many noble truths. I sat for years listening at his feet entranced—and it was Henry Ward Beecher that made a free lover of me. [Cheers.] I know him to be a free lover; I know that every word that Mrs. Woodhull has said is true, not only of him, but of others. She is a woman, who would not tell a lie; she has been cursed and abused by the Methodists; and not only by them but by the Spiritualists—some of them for the same thing. For what? For simply telling the truth about rascals—clerical rascals in high places. If a poor, weak, miserable man or woman offends, we can talk about them, but if Henry Ward Beecher does the same, oh no, we must not talk about him. Why is that? I say and I repeat it, I admire the man—his learning, his eloquence, his greatness, his piety, but I know that every word of this charge is true.

I wish you would bear with me for a moment. When this question of her election comes up, and it is said, "why, she did this thing" or "she did that," well, it was for the best, and I thank God she was permitted to do it. I hope that she will go on in her noble work, and wherever she sees a crime being committed in high places expose it to view. Why, in this city, I know enough of families living in high style on the West side to damn them if it was published. I do not say that I will make any revelations. I would feel badly if I hurt any one's feelings; but it may have to be done yet, if things do not progress better. If we, who are standing in the rank of reform, if we are not helped on, it will be our duty to unfold these hideous matters which are now hidden, as well in the homes of wealth as in the scarlet abodes of vice. The day of awakening will be terrible; and it will have to come, and that assuredly. [Cheers.]

The Chairman—The Finance Committee is requested to meet in the ante-room.

Mrs. Lois Waisbrooker—I simply wish to announce that I am here to receive subscriptions for *Our Age*. Those who are afraid that it will fail can have a copy for five cents, but when it fails I shall go to the other shore, sure. You shall have your money's worth, if it takes my heart's blood.



The Chairman—The delivery of thirty-minute speeches is now in order. First upon the list is Mrs. Anne E. Hinman, President of the Connecticut State Association of Spiritualists, but she is not here, and the next upon the list is Mr. W. J. Shaw, of Iowa.

Mr. Shaw—Here, sir—

The Chairman—Please step upon the platform.

Mr. W. J. Shaw—Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—In proportion to the interest that, since a conviction of its truth, I have taken in what I hoped would be the leading idea that brought us together, and having within a short time my fears of the results likely to flow from divisions in our ranks upon questions of reform, I stand before you to say a few words. My attention was first called to this so-called social question several years since, and I assure you it presented itself to me in no clear light at all. I gather from the writers and orators upon that subject that spoke for or against it to-day, that on the one side it is affirmed that human love was restrained—that the marital law constituted a bond upon that human love. To a certain extent I was willing to accede to that proposition—to say aye to the proposition that human love was in bonds and under restraint I had settled for myself to be a fact; but I was unable to clearly see that the marital bond had anything or much to do with that restraint or the accomplishment of it. On the other hand, I was convinced that the repeal of these laws, acknowledging the evils that flow out from some corrupt condition somewhere, would let loose seven devils worse than the first. I looked about among the consciences of the people, both among the radical and conservative element—among those who are as radical as any here to-day upon all other subjects, and they could not see but that this step would lead to the result I have stated. When they replied to me: “We must wait for the slow march of progress, for intellectual advancement to elevate us by degrees,” I think differently. I concluded society was in a very pretty pickle indeed; much in the condition of the school boy—a little boy whose mother had made for him his first pair of pants, the first, too, that she had made. She made them quite as full in the front as in the behind. He put them on and

started off to school. But the boy came back running and calling out "Papa, papa, papa! am I going to school or coming home?" [Laughter.] And so when I look at this and the other as a remedy for an acknowledged evil, I am unable to tell with the school boy whether we were likely to go forward or backward. I indeed was in a dilemma and spent a good deal of thought before I came to a definite conclusion. I am very much in the same perplexity as the Frenchman who came down from his room one morning, after a deep debauch, and meeting the man who had been serving him with liquor on the previous night, said to him: "Vat you call dat liquor vat is a contradiction? Vere dey put in de brandy to make him strong, and the vater to make him weak, and the lemon to make him sorry, and the sugar to make him sweet. Vat you call him?" "Punch." "Punch! oh yes; and him pretty nearly punched my brains out too." [A laugh.] And so when I attempt to understand and comprehend the arguments upon which this social problem is based, I find myself very much in that dilemma. It may possibly be that I have not a brain large enough to comprehend it to its fullest extent—most assuredly I never had one large enough to put it into practice. [A cheer.] I see the common conscience of the country, of not only conservatives, but radicals everywhere, speaking out plainly upon this subject, and I begin to seek some other cause for this trouble—some other cause. With promiscuity I never can have sympathy, I never could have anything in the direction of my sympathy with it. Some may be able to persuade themselves that they may be promiscuous and at the same time chaste, that they can gratify their passions and call it unselfish virtue. They can do this, but for me better the all-sufficient—mark the word—the all-sufficient, because the undivided love of a wife and a little one. By the eternal, the animal within shall be crushed into obedience by the intellectual within me. And I look in vain among all the arguments in favor of this social freedom, from first to last, for any recognition of the intellect controlling these animal passions. And if the President were here, I would say to her that I thus bring my virtue up on to this platform and place it at her feet. [Cheers.] She may imagine the napkin, and she will excuse me if I take her own

words out of her mouth and tell her I believe it would be in danger. I have no objection to parties who feel disposed to gratify their passions to an unlimited extent and one at a time. Mark you, I do not say more than that. It is all that the member would ask for in its high position. They may gratify their passions to any extent they please, and plead it hard as a necessity of nature, to account for the posting upon their banners of the uxorious husband and of the uxorious wife, for I believe these bodies go in pairs. I say you can do that for yourselves, for I am in favor of a free expression of opinion, I am in favor of a person believing just what they wish and advocating it publicly; but as for me I prefer to stand upon what I consider right. I have not enough brain probably to imagine for myself any lower sphere than that which makes my social relationship with my wife and family stand dominant over everything else. And now I want to know whence this social problem comes? For I want to strike home. I place myself right here again, and declare that they cannot trace the cause and the evil of promiscuity—widely spread, if you please—and the results of it, whether it is monogamic, standing within the marriage law, or promiscuity, standing without it. I declare that they cannot trace it to the marriage law, and if they cannot and it is not caused in that way, why then do they wish to blot marriage out? I do not object to the fact of marital laws being regulated; and since I recognize the existence of unholy as well as holy marriages, I grant that when married people have reached the point of permanent unhappiness, that I would see in operation such a divorce law as would set people free who are suffering under such conditions; but to do away with the grand sentiment of the masses against promiscuity, being your aim, I will say I cannot go with you. I stand here to-night to charge you, who advocate what you call the society movement, I charge you that in trying to overthrow the sentiment of chastity in the minds of the masses, rather than to overthrow restraining laws, you are seeking to devise laws to suit yourselves. It is not that you want the law changed, but, as your leaders express it, you want the freedom to mate with any person, at any time and under any circumstances that shut you out from the gaze of the masses. That is the substance of it. And if it be so, what

in the devil's name do you call it? I make another charge: Which of you does not advocate your doctrines out of your own experience? Tell me, which among you can rise and say that you have not had miserable difficulties, out of which experience you wish to frame laws to govern others?

Mrs. Barnes—I can, for one. All these ten years of our married life I lived happy with my husband. [Cheers.]

Another lady also arose, in response to the demand.

Mr. Shaw—Two of my friends have arisen, out of the mass, in reply to my inquiry.

Mr. Higgins—Perhaps a hundred could arise if they chose to do so.

A lady delegate—Do you extend that invitation to the audience?

Mr. Shaw—I want to strike now while the iron is hot. I am here for that purpose. [Cries and noises.]

The Chairman—He is entitled to the floor, and he must be heard. Still, if he asks a question, any one has a right to reply to it.

Mr. Higgins—We want all these arguments.

Mr. Dean—Let him be decent, and not make such charges.

The Chairman—Proceed, Mr. Shaw.

Mr. Shaw—I will determine when I will go on. I say this: that the great mass where I have been do not indorse this movement. I assure you that in the district in which I lecture, from among the masses who have been before me evening after evening, you could not take one in more than twenty counties who favor it. This is about the proportion which those who favor this movement hold to the great body of Spiritualists. And I stand here to-night, not on my own account, but on account of the maligned Spiritualism that must bear the brunt of all these attacks. [Cheers.] I know something of the leaders, and I say it is simply disgraceful in them, and against the principles of our philosophy for them to build laws for the masses who are not in need of them.

Mr. Higgins—Have you canvassed the masses?

Mr. Shaw—Yes, sir, so far as I could.



The Chairman—Don't interrupt the gentleman.

A lady delegate—But have you canvassed the masses, please?

The Chairman—The inquiry is made in response to your own demand.

Mr. Shaw—Let me say, Mr. President, you can't prevent these interruptions. The fact is, that your liberalism has brought in the orthodox devil, and it is troubling you. They do not dissent from the speech.

The Chairman—I will.

Mr. Shaw—You do; that is all right, sir. Now, I say, I started out with this proposition, that the very evils of which complaint is made do not arise out of the marital relations at all. And probably, in proof of this, I have no need to go any further than to repeat the experience of those who stood before you to-day. Not one of them could refer back the troubles under which they labored to the marital bond. Each one asserted that the difficulty arose before Society came in to mark the fact upon all that this man had chosen as his associate for life this woman. And that is all the law has really done—almost all. And it is that sentiment that I do not wish to see destroyed. Let me refer you, if you please since these attacks may continue, to the experiences that have been told upon this platform to-day. A lady comes upon it and tells of her marital troubles, and at the outset, I think it was, she said that hers was a marriage of convenience. Well, then, before the marital bond was tied, that woman had become a slave to that man. Why? Because she gave herself to him for convenience, which, I suppose, means the sort of position or situation that he would give her. I say that when a woman comes before this audience and declares that she married for the sake of convenience, and did over again and over again, she is not entitled to the sympathies of any one that hears her, unless, my friends, she was a victim to the conditions to which I am about to refer. It may have been so, and I therefore ask her pardon. I have done nothing with a view to injure her feelings. Oh, my friends, it is not the marital bond; the fate of persons is fixed before that is tied. You never heard of a wife enforcing the law, so that her husband would be compelled to sue out a *habeas corpus*.

You cannot point to ten such cases. I assure you that I have known many wives love their husbands and many husbands love their wives; and you and I know that as a matter of fact, there is nothing to compel us to live together except the bonds of love that flow out from you to the children, and from them back to the parents again to bind them.

Mr. Higgins—Where, then, is the necessity of marriage, if love binds them?

Mr. Shaw—I will answer the gentleman. The necessity of marriage is not to protect those who love, sir, but those who, without it, would seek promiscuity.

Mr. Higgins—I want to answer. Promiscuity is the basis of marriage—

Mr. Lynn—I would like to know who those are that cry “sit down,” and yet are not members of the Convention?

Mr. Higgins—You take the question of marriage. I want to—[Shouts.]

The Chairman—We shall very soon want order on the other side, and it must be maintained.

Mr. Shaw—I will answer the gentleman. This nervousness shows the sensibilities of the parties with whom we have to deal. I say that three, if I mistake not, of those who have stood upon this platform, every one in their own words, traced their troubles not to marital laws but to other conditions of society out of which the corrupting influence springs. Now, whence come they? I know, my friends, that while I make the assertion I shall place myself under the ban of the plethoric purses, but I do say that it is from the disregard of the basic law of life. The basic law of life takes hold of the question, whether our organisms shall continue as organisms or not and of the food that supports it. I say it is the national disregard by the nation of the basic law of life which says that the earth is man's and the fullness thereof is all mankind's, without reference to individuals or sects. That I claim to be the natural law. Jefferson said: Some men were not born into the world with saddles upon their backs, booted and spurred and bridled, and other men were not born into the world to spur and ride them; and when the question was asked one of the Indians long ago

whether he would sell his land, pointed to the great spirit and said: "The land is great spirit's; it is not mine to sell." I say this is the basic law. It is the disregard of this law which has caused all your institutions to topple over, and your society to be based on the greatest wrong, by which one man represents 500 cents and another 5,000,000, and may be has the control of \$250,000,000. Now, I am getting at the things that lie at the base of all society and corrupt the marital and all other relations of life. I am going to show, if time is given me, that you may as well do away with all the laws against crime as attempt to overthrow marital laws. Out of these conditions comes caste—our positions in society, if you please, which are based upon the amount of wealth that each one possesses. As that wealth, by virtue of its own amount, is accumulative, the great mass of it is going into the hands of the few, while the majority of mankind are becoming poorer. Out of this comes the one great principle of competition, not in the high pursuits of science, not in the direction of virtue, but in the pursuits of ignoble men, leading directly to the acquisition of wealth. Now, I say, over present in this competition is the dread demon of want, that stalks after every man and woman—that is standing constantly, immediately upon the threshold of the poor, and at the gate-post or somewhere in the long lane that leads to the mansion of the rich. This same devil of want pursues every man with his possibility or his probability, and, as a consequence, each individual is seeking to place as great a distance between himself and that terrible demon of want as he possibly can do; the consequence is, that our friends come on to the platform and say they married for convenience. What does that mean but that they have sacrificed their human love to the same devil of want? seeking a position equal or higher than that upon which they stood. And for this you would desire us to sweep out the marital bond. Now, here, if you please, out of this condition arises, I say, every evil of which our friends complain, every evil in society of which the head of the Woodhull doctrine complains. A voice—"According to your theory, all women married in wealth, ought to be happy; while the very opposite is largely true, consequently your assumption falls to the ground." And the marital bonds, they

complain, have lost their restraint just because there has ever been a disposition to prostitute the sexual relation to these same basic conditions of society.

I am not saying that marital laws are not an evil. I look upon them and upon all restraining laws as necessarily evil, because all rights are relative. If we had reached that condition of society, where we might all be lawful and equal in every respect, then we would probably not have any trouble in this regard. [Cheers.]

The Chairman—We must necessarily, in such a discussion as this, have our feelings wrought upon, but I hope I shall be aided by the audience in keeping perfect order. I trust that I shall not have any more hisses on either side. We must all make up our minds to hear that which to others appears to be the truth in the same spirit that we would like to be heard if we were uttering what we believed to be the truth. Respect the golden rule always, "Do unto others as ye would like them to do unto you," in similar circumstances. [Cheers.] I have the pleasure of introducing to you Mr. Cephas B. Lynn, of Massachusetts, formerly a graduate of the Children's Progressive Lyceum. I knew him when he was a little boy. He could hardly speak a correct sentence; but now you will hear him. [A laugh.]

Mr. Cephas B. Lynn said:

*Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen*—Some say that spiritualistic lecturers use bad grammar; and I am sorry that the President said what he did, for if I make a slip up before I get through, you will remember the words of the Chairman. When I came into the hall to-night, I was requested by the President to make a few remarks, and so I am about to acquiesce in his request. I want to say at the start that it affords me very great pleasure to be present at the Tenth Annual Convention of the Spiritualists of America. Since I have come to this hall I have had the pleasure of listening to many grand utterances. I have discovered that there are men and women—I am nervous, and must have quiet—in this nineteenth century in existence in America who have their individual convictions upon certain topics, and that, backing up these individual convictions, they have a certain amount of moral heroism which forces them to say what they believe. I hold that the charge of hypocrisy,



either on the part of those who stand for or against this question of social freedom, cannot be legitimately presented against this Convention. I have heard many clean-cut speeches from this platform; and I want to show you that our friend who has just spoken to you, and others who may follow him, thinking differently on this subject—that this individual, on the one hand, and these others, on the other, show to you, citizens of Chicago, the breadth and grandeur of the Spiritual platform, which annihilates the gag law, and says, "Let discussion be free!" [Cheers.]

There are those present to-night, perhaps, in the gallery and elsewhere, who have been in the habit of attending Christian Conventions, and because they see that all the speakers do not agree in their sentiments, imagine that the devil is to pay; that we are a terrible set of creatures, and that we have come here to ruin Chicago, if it can be ruined, and to destroy the world at large. But as I gaze around this platform, I do not see the men and women upon it bearing the marks of diabolism, or demonism, or animalism written upon their countenances. I think that I see men and women of intelligence and culture; I say that it is to their credit that they have come up here and assert their views, even if Mother Grundy, who wears a silk dress that is not paid for, objects. [Laughter.] In the next place, let me tell you that this thing called Spiritualism is misunderstood by the mass. Some of you think that it is a mere sensational movement which came into existence a quarter of a century ago in Rochester, New York. Some of you think its raps run back a quarter of a century, but I am here to tell you that the raps of the Spiritual platform run back into antiquity, and that when the first man on the historic page stood upon his feet and demanded emancipation, that the man then occupied the platform on which we stand here to-night. [Cheers.]

So, then, this being the case, I hold it to be sophistry of the most transparent order to assume that Victor A. C. Woodhull, Tennie C. Claflin, and Col. Blood and George Francis Train, of New York [Cheers], or any other men or women can prostitute this Spiritual platform to the line of animalism, so that it will injure you or anybody else to come here and listen to what we have to say. [Cheers.] I tell you what it is, there are a great many sides to this great

question, and as I investigate into the characteristics of the Spiritual platform, as I note the rise and progress of the Spiritual movement, what do I discover? I discover that it is an immense and glorious work that the Spiritual platform is accomplishing, that in the past it has steered clear of the work of a sectarianized religion, and has not built its life upon a dogma. [Cheers.]

We do not make a god of any man, not even of Andrew Jackson Davis; we do not say to every man when he comes upon this platform to speak, that before he can speak he must say, "I believe in Andrew Jackson Davis, I believe in the Divine revelation;" we do not say stop and tell whether you believe in the fire test! No; I will tell you what they said to me when I loomed up on the first step to the platform: "Lynn," they said, "have you any brains?" And I, being a little egotistical, said, "Yes." Then said they, "Pitch in," and I have been doing my best in that line ever since. I have said that the time is coming at last when there shall be a platform in the world not based upon a crystallized definition of theology. [Cheers.] And, ladies and gentlemen, if you were to listen to the words of some of the conservatives in our ranks, what would you hear? Why, you would hear that they want only pure Spiritualism, they want the old sing-song story of what was done at Rochester a quarter of a century ago; they want the old tale as to how the mediums had nervous excitement, how they had muscular contractions when the spirits first began to influence them. They will want to continue on the same loud talk about the beautiful ideas of the eternal world, of the sentimentalities of the Spiritual philosophy of which some of us have had such a surfeit, that we say, "Hold up a new path, even if Victoria C. Woodhull is the standard bearer. [Cheers.]

Ladies and gentlemen, we hold that the basis of our platform is in the grand idea of progress, which shall lift us up out of the bigotry and superstition that clogged the movements of the past. And I may say here, as a young man—as a student of Spiritualism simply of six years—that it does strike me that the Spiritualists of America show that they are about to anchor themselves to the old, rotten hulk of public opinion, because they are afraid of the little woman of New York. [Cheers.]

What is a family? I am not a married man, and I suppose may, perhaps, be said to know nothing about it. But, I repeat, What is a family? Ladies and gentlemen, when you stand up here and say that Victoria C. Woodhull has it in her power to destroy the morality of the world, you make a concession to the doctrine of total depravity, of which you ought to be ashamed. [Cheers.] What did Mr. Shaw say? Why, he said "if we were all angels, the doctrine of Mrs. Woodhull would do." Had she not said, "Are men not all angels," when he made that statement?

Mr. Shaw—I hope that——

Mr. Lynn—I understand the gentleman to say that if we were on a higher plane of spiritual life, this doctrine might do. Am I correct? ["Yes."]

Mr. Shaw—Then I repeat——

Mr. Lynn—You were very much excited, and talked a good deal like an orthodox revivalist. [Roars of laughter.] This is an awful gap to put me in. Why did you select a poor cripple to stand up and take it all? I was in a Cleveland hotel once, and a fellow came in who had taken too much hemlock. He said to me, "If I was a cripple I should want to die." I said, "Which wins in the race—brains or legs?" Well, he was a pretty funny fellow, and he replied, "Legs." I replied, "The next race that is run, you cut off a man's head and then see which will win—the man without a head or the man without legs." [Laughter and cheers.] I repeat that, according to the admissions of all the opponents of social freedom, if we were all pure and bright, that this doctrine might be good. Now, what is the statement that we make? While we are willing to grant that we are not pure and holy, we say we aspire to be, and we take this doctrine into our lives to make us so. [Cheers.] I tell you that the nonsense of this matter is, that this man has given the man's argument in the matter and forgotten that of the woman.

But as I was saying Mr. Shaw has admitted all that we claim. We know the world has not grown to the acceptance of the doctrines of social freedom; but if they were never launched upon the public, the needed growth would never occur. Mr. Shaw admits that if the people were all as good as some of the advocates of social freedom are, that it would

be safe to inaugurate the practice of freedom. Again I say, we want no better indorsement than this, and every speaker who has come upon this platform, or upon any other, and said the same thing, as many have done, have paid Victoria C. Woodhull the highest possible praise. Had such people lived in the days of the Nazarene, they would have said that it was a great mistake that he did not put off his coming until the world was ready to receive him. This is their argument. They now want Victoria Woodhull to put off the discussion of this question, "which is only fit for angels to handle" until the people are ready for its acceptance. We believe in putting forth a better order of things, to invite the people to strive to attain. And this is admitted when the opposition make these statements here, let them say what they may elsewhere.

What has Victoria C. Woodhull said in this house? Has she not knocked into the vilest death the popular, Christian, sentimental humanity which says that if you put a bible against the doors, it makes no matter what you do inside. [Cheers.] And we say that in this land of moral progress we want to destroy this immaculate sentimentality to such an extent that we shall forever cast from the vocabulary of the English language that word which was born in a convention of Christian ministers—the word prostitution. [Cheers.] And we hope that here to-day this argument will come to the women, and will say to their hearts, "If you have made a mistake once, it does not follow that you have gone to hell, and that you can never be a decent woman again." [Cheers.] And I will show you the proof of this before I finish. Why, they said to me when I was lecturing on "Spiritualism and the Social Question," "Great God, Lynn, you are too young a man to talk about social questions!" What did I say? I gave to them the words of an ancient seer, "It is not a question of age; it is a question of Spiritual perception." As the boys would say, that is the kind of man I am. [Cheers.] I would prove to you what I have said with regard to the restoration of the prostitute. What have we heard upon this platform since this Convention opened? Why, we have been astounded to hear an individual get up here and say, "Ladies and gentlemen—I came into the world without the authority of the piece of parch-



ment which constitutes the marriage tie." We have had an individual stand up here and say that he was not ashamed to admit that he was a bastard. Now, what is the signification of that? You young fellows up there don't jump to a conclusion right off. I will tell you what is the signification of that statement. It is, that at last the bastard has reverence for the woman who bore him, because that woman said, "I was seduced several months ago, and I hope to heaven that I may die if I kill my unborn child to keep in respectable Christian society." [Cheers.] So you see this opens up a very broad field, underlying all of which is the one grand idea of progress. And yet some of these friends of mine say that because I have an idea about the freedom of Spiritualism, and will express it, that there will therefore be anarchy, and that I and those that are with me are likely to jump over the sectarian walls and land in the desert. We have had to meet that argument once in theology.

The ministers meet here. There is my friend Jamieson, who is an infidel, and he sides with me. What do these ministers say? They say, "Ladies and gentlemen—If you seek to climb over our sectarian walls, you are lost." But some of us said, "There is that sectarian fence, and some of us can see the pickets on the top, but we will run the risk of being caught on the pickets." And so we have jumped up, and instead of landing in a desert or mud-puddle, we have struck the most fruitful oasis that was ever found in God's world. [Cheers.]

They found that Christianity had not smudged out all the beauty of heaven; they found that the winds of heaven blew the most harmoniously out there. And this same argument will apply with regard to the family. You need not argue that men love the gutter so much that they will not be lifted out of it, for it is not true. And if I may be allowed to occupy your attention a few minutes longer, let me say that some of us have become so fearful that we are afraid of a few pounds of flesh, of a little woman from New York city, showing, as some have done in refusing to open their houses to entertain her, that they gave the lie to all the estimates made of the grand moral elevation to which we have attained. I tell you that if we are all right and holy, we can go down into hell and talk with the devils, and lift them up and make

angels of them. [Cheers.] I can go into a house of prostitution in the city of Chicago, and talk with the young ladies there, without being obliged to go upstairs with them on the elevator. [Laughter.] Is that obscene? If it is, send for Comstock, the Young Men's Christian Association man. [Cheers.] I am glad that at last we have the courage to speak, that we are not afraid to utter our thoughts; and I am glad when I see these great-hearted sisters, the noble Benjamin Todd, and my friends who are gathered here on this platform, who have labored for freedom for over a quarter of a century. I am glad that they have some young America stock to follow them. And we will follow them; and we will keep the old flag of liberalism floating above us, until death takes our body, and our souls go to heaven where they belong. [Cheers.]

I want to say something else. I wish to say that the efforts of the so-called radicals, the liberals, who have been so maligned here, have been only this: for they have said, "Let us talk about this thing; let us see what can be done toward bringing about a better condition in the future." I want to remind you here of something which I hope you will not forget, and that is, that underlying Mrs. Woodhull's statements of social freedom, there is that sentence which shines beautiful, which glitters as a gem of the first water; there is that declaration which takes one up to the very steps of heaven, and that declaration is, that the highest type of the social relation is the monogamic relation. [Cheers.] That is what the devil from New York city says. Now, look at her; she is a terrible creature, and yet she said that in her first speech on this question, and has repeated it in substance in every one she has since made. [Cheers.]

Now, finally, Mr. Chairman, I want to remark that I believe the time has arrived for us to fully test the spirit of free speech which is abroad in the land, and I, as one of the radicals in this Convention, although I voted with the minority because I should have liked to have seen the minority report right under the majority report, and to have let the people read them both, have discovered that minorities have rights as well as majorities. I hold, ladies and gentlemen, that we can show what we are made of, we can come together like brothers and sisters, and if we differ,

do so without feeling. This would have been a dry, one-horse, miserable, contemptible Convention if we had merely come together to say tweedledum and tweedledee, and then, some of us having bought our second-class tickets, started off home. I say some of us—I mean the poor lecturers, of whom I am one. [Laughter.] Again, I say to the Spiritualists and free thinkers of America, believers in the doctrine of social freedom, let us remember that we are not followers of Victoria C. Woodhull, nor of Tennie C. Claflin, nor of Col. Blood—I don't wear their shoulder-straps, though I walk barefoot through hell. [Cheers.] I say, we must remember that we are not following them, but the idea of progress. [Cheers.] And if at any stage of the game, as a poker-player would say, there are any "full hands," let us remember that back of it all lie the hosts of the eternal world ready to carry us through to victory—and we shall not be poor, for we shall have our wives and little ones with us. [Cheers.]

The Chairman--The next speaker is Mrs. Laura Cuppy Smith.

Laura Cuppy Smith said:

*Mr. President*—In discussing the social question the gentleman who preceded, Mr. Lynn, seemed studiously to ignore the fact that his own sex are already in the possession of social freedom, and enjoy it to an unlimited extent. [Cheers.] When Mrs. General Spencer, some two years since, visited the principal houses of prostitution in Washington, with other benevolent ladies of that city who desired the elevation of their unfortunate sisters, the *Washington Sunday Morning Chronicle*, reporting these visits and their results, stated that a keeper of one of the most prominent houses affirmed in response to a question from Mrs. Spencer regarding the standing, socially, of their patrons:

"Madame, our support is derived mainly from the married men of Washington and other cities. We find them among the members of Congress, the members of the different churches, men of means and substance who are regarded as the bulwarks of your social condition: they may talk virtue to you, they do *not* to us. If we relied upon single men we should starve: *they* depend upon the young ladies of your best society for their sexual gratification, and obtain for love

what their elders purchase for money." Upon Mrs. Spencer remarking, "Some ladies of our acquaintance interested in this reform called on you the other day and expressed themselves charmed with your culture and refinement," the lady significantly replied, "Yes, their gentleman friends told me so that evening." [Sensation.] Now these are painful but generally admitted facts, and I am strangely at a loss to know what this distinguished lawyer [Mr. Shaw] is afraid of. We know that men to-day oppose social freedom, and practice social vice, yet this gentleman is afraid that if freedom is assured to woman, she will make such bad use of it that through her influence men will not only become worse than they are already, which is needless, but woman herself become utterly degraded and vile, and I say sir (turning to Mr. Shaw) that this assumption is an insult to womanhood; aye, sir, is an insult to the mother that bore you and the women with whom you associate, for our judgment of a man's female companions is always based upon his general estimate of woman. [Cheers.] Now, I for one am not afraid to trust myself or my sisters with freedom. I have faith in the higher law, in the innate nobility of my sex. While the parks in New York city (those oases of beauty and verdure in that desert of selfishness and sin (were fenced in and protected by iron gateways, there were continued complaints of depredation, but an unusually bright idea penetrated the somewhat obtuse brain of the city fathers: they ordered the ponderous fences down, and put the people "upon honor," and now every wayfarer feels a personal pride in observing decency, and when the people are no longer fenced in by the restrictions of the lower law, humanity will be put "upon honor," and will pledge itself to obey its high behest. Our opposers accuse us of wanting to destroy their "sacred and time-honored institutions." Heaven save the mark! Sacred, indeed! Why, your social structure is one mighty brothel, and we need to pull it down till not one stone is left upon another to infect the air with the poisonous effluvia of its hypocrisy and licentiousness. Do you think me a fanatic upon this question, dealing in visionary speculations and exaggerated statements? I can bring a sickening array of facts to prove the truth of my every assertion.



In the quiet city of Providence where my best friends deemed my espousal of Mrs. Woodhull's cause a suicidal act, and prominent Spiritualists "could not afford" to be identified with my public vindication of this brave woman and her principles, I was informed that a policeman of that city vouchsafed the information to a large manufacturer and leading citizen that there were from forty to fifty young girls under sixteen upon his beat every Saturday night who made their living by the sale of their persons. Certainly the virtuous city of Providence should shrink from a discussion of the social question. Then let me pluck an illustration from the other side of the social hedge, and touch lightly upon the morals of "our best society." A legal friend in San Francisco said to me one day, "I intend to go to the Pioneer Ball this year and take my wife, for I met one of the managers just now and he said it was going to be an unusually *recherche* affair, quite select, you know: every possible precaution is to be taken to prevent the admission of any woman of doubtful reputation." "Oh! indeed," I responded, "and pray what precaution will be taken to exclude men of doubtful reputation?" "Why, my dear lady!" he exclaimed, "you are beside yourself; if such a thing as that were done we should have no ball." [Prolonged cheers and laughter.] Of course it would have been terribly humiliating if the gentleman's wife should have accidentally danced in the same quadrille with a woman of questionable virtue, but she received no injury to her morals by waltzing in the embrace of several half-intoxicated *roues* during the evening. Truly society revels in nice distinctions. For my part I have the bad taste to declare that I should prefer taking the hands of prostitutes rather than those of the men who visit them by night and despise them by day. [Cheers.] I charge your present corrupt social condition upon Christianity (so called) and upon the false system of morality that exists under the blighting shadow and protection of the marriage law. To-day parents have one code of morals for their sons and another for their daughters; while they make every effort to keep their children innocent, forgetting that innocence is simply ignorance of evil, a condition impossible and fraught with danger in these evil times, and the little ones go out into the world to gather their first lessons from

the hints of the vulgar and the insinuations of the depraved. Mothers are afraid to meet the natural, proper and ever-recurring questions of their children as they awaken to a realization of the phenomena of life, and, covering themselves with the fig-leaves of a false modesty, send them forth to satisfy their legitimate curiosity in some objectionable direction. For instance, the child's first question is, "How did I come here?" and the mother's first answer is a falsehood, after this fashion: "I found you under a rose tree," or "The doctor brought you in his pocket." Innocence soon tires of digging for babies under rose trees or searching the doctor's pockets, and the child arrives at the conclusion that there is a lie somewhere. A truer wisdom would suggest the truth, so told that the child would ever after reverence the sacred mystery of life, now desecrated by unhallowed prejudice. While I speak I see in memory the grave and tearful eyes of my little sons uplifted to mine in mingled awe and love as I answered their questions. Oh! mothers. Oh! men and women, come up higher, for mighty is your responsibility; and daily, aye, hourly, the victims of your ignorance are hastening to the suicide's grave or the maniac's cell. Your daughters fade in their spring-time, and our colleges are filled with your sons, the victims of vices that they would never have contracted but for your lack of moral perception, but for your ignorant and persistent reticence on these vital questions. Never till sexual science is taught in our schools will this wholesale corruption of youth be stayed. Mrs. Woodhull has been regarded as the champion prostitute of the nineteenth century because she has dared to discuss the social question in public. Her opposers have been the profligates of both sexes and the ignorant slaves of Mrs. Grundy, who constantly bow the knee to the golden calf, public opinion. These poor souls would rather be damned in good orthodox fashion than go to heaven in a "new-fangled way." [Prolonged cheers.] Instead of license we seek scientific adjustment, and declare that nothing pertaining to the highest interests of humanity is either "common or unclean." Those who would enforce silence now, and have kept silence in the past upon this question, will be held responsible for the social evil. To-day our opposers have

dragged the sexual act down to the very gates of hell. They have rung the changes upon the words "sensuality" and "animalism" till our hearts are sick, and humanity is represented by them as embodied lust, only awaiting freedom from restraint to make the world a scene of wildest outrage. Now, I protest against this profanation of the sexual act, and hold that between souls that love each other it is the very eucharist of the affections, a holy sacrament of love in which shame has no part. I would transpose the old text, "Crucify the affections and lusts," and translate it thus: "Cultivate the affections, they are of God; elevate the passions and consecrate them to the service of love, they can then never become subservient to lust."

When the ethics of social freedom are thoroughly understood, the world will perceive that moral purity is just as essential for man as for woman, because all men will realize their responsibility, not alone to themselves, but to those by them begotten, and learn that vicious tendencies can be transmitted even by "reformed rakes" to their sons, aye, worse still, to their daughters [sensation, and cries of "That's so"]; that every child has a right to demand a healthy, wholesome body as a temple for its immortal soul; has a right to pure conditions claim as its birthright. When the ideas we advocate obtain a hearing, your daughters will cease to regard a comfortable home and a good position in society as the first requirement of marriage, the husband being, as now, a quite secondary consideration. They will seek a companion instead of simply a provider, and they will sacredly guard the interests of those who may result from that companionship. No young man would carry low and debasing thoughts into his relations with woman, but would seek purely and divinely to evolve the highest joys from the association, and, holding his young love in his arms, would realize that the place consecrated by the consummation of their affection was a sanctuary more sacred than Mecca, more holy than Jerusalem. [Cheers.] There has been something said here about illegitimate children. I would remind you that some of the world's most beautiful characters, among them Jesus Christ, Abraham Lincoln, Fessenden and Farragut have been illegitimate children (so called). And I declare to you that the child, the best organized, phys-

ically, mentally and spiritually—the child born of the purest love, is the most legitimate child upon the face of the earth, even though the church and the law never accorded it their gracious permission to live and breathe and have its being. [Cheers and hisses.] Your hisses, friends, do not alarm me at all, they are only an assurance that you will applaud me to-morrow. Emerson says, “The test of greatness is to be condemned to-day and recognized twenty years hence.” I am speaking to-night from the very depths of my heart, and your hisses cannot make me swerve one hair’s breadth from the truths I advocate in the interests of womankind and mankind also. We who advance these principles have resolved to lift the stigma that rests upon the “fallen” (and when you use that word you always apply it to woman), we have resolved that the young girl who has been “seduced” has a right to the same position and respect in society as her seducer, and we intend that she shall have it. [Cheers.] A young lady of Lynn, Mass., was seduced by a young gentleman of that city, who, as soon as he discovered the results likely to follow, took the first train West, leaving his victim to her fate. Her parents discovering her condition, and being “eminently respectable,” turned her out of doors, and the next morning she was found drowned. “Another unfortunate gone to her death.” Do not be too indignant with those parents, remorse will do its work with them be sure, recalling through long nights to come the pale face and dripping garments of the child they drove to despair and suicide. Reserve your scorn for the society that makes such brutality possible, for the “Sacred Institutions” that nurture unnatural parents in the name of virtue and morality. [Cheers.] A learned judge stood up in this hall the other day as the eulogist of our present social condition and of the hypocrisy which he said was an encouraging sign of the times, he declaring that it was far better (and he may have spoken from experience) to advocate good principles and live bad lives, than to advance pernicious principles and live good lives. A novel doctrine, but quite in accordance with the opinion of a gentleman in Pennsylvania, who, in opposing Mrs. Woodhull’s views, blandly stated that he “loved to sin,” but always sinned under protest, and with deliberate conviction that he was exceedingly



wicked. This enlightened individual, permit me to say, regards Free Love as exceedingly pernicious, and ourself as a dangerous and incendiary character. We have been accused by the signers of the "minority report" with seeking, by the aid of a subtle, soul-destroying philosophy, to palm upon the world a system of wholesale prostitution. The charge is false, and I hurl the impeachment back upon those who conceived it, and would recommend to these gentlemen the study and practice of the principles they so despise.

Free Lovers, as our opponents term us in derision, are the most fastidious and least promiscuous persons in the world. They have placed themselves in antagonism to established laws and customs, after gravest and most earnest thought and from deliberate conviction, and have found that isolation—I had well-nigh said desolation—is one of the penalties of growth, and to be misapprehended and condemned, their inevitable lot. Thus, "hating no one, they accept the isolation of hatred" as their portion, and are prepared to lay their all, if need be, upon the altar they have dedicated to human redemption. I, for one, have felt my cheeks burn, and every pulse of my heart throb in indignant protest against the manner in which the opposition have discussed woman, and the creature they have depicted her. I really scarcely know which has disgusted me most—their compliments which were insults, or their sneers which were compliments. They have questioned, first, our right to freedom; secondly, the use we should make of it if we had it. Now, inasmuch as we have associated with men all our lives, more or less, and are not quite depraved, I think we may be trusted; and, for my part, I hold my soul and the temple it dwells in as so holy that I deny any man, or set of men, the right to say how I shall dispose of either. The man that inspires my truest affection, that comprehends my aspirations and brings completeness to my life; the man who can attune to divinest harmony the shattered chords of a well-nigh broken heart, that man I have a right to love if I choose, and no one can decide for me what shall be that love's boundary or limitation. [Cheers.]

Oh! friends, are ye not the temples of the living God? and do you fear to trust your own souls with freedom? Aid us, then, in ushering in a new era, in laying the foundation

of a new social order, based upon exact justice and complete sexual equality. [Applause.]

Mrs. Woodhull (who was received with cheers, came forward ghastly pale,) said:

You will have to be very quiet while I talk to you to-night. Latterly——

The Chairman—Mrs. Woodhull has been very ill, and you will have to be very quiet if you wish to hear her.

Mrs. Woodhull (coming forward with a ghastly paleness)—Can any of you tell me where I am? For my own part I am not entirely certain of my locality. Still I ought not to be mistaken in my companions. These seem to be those whom I have known before. And unless I am thoroughly beside myself, this is the platform on which we have stood for two days; but I have been so completely dazed this evening by what has been said, that I do not know whether I belong here or not; and you must bear with me, friends, until I come to myself—until I return from the horrid picture that I have been exhibited here as being, by those who seem to know more of me—of my life and my motives—than I do myself. I want to feel that I have a right to stand here and to speak for myself, before intruding upon you, and to realize that I am not deceived by my own senses.

[Apparently recovering herself.] I appear before you to-night, perhaps the most fearfully-ostracized woman in this or any other country. And for what? Is it because I have committed any crime that can be brought home to my door; is it because I have fearfully debauched myself in any manner that can be proven to have occurred? No! But simply because I have said I believe that every person is entitled to personal freedom—that each individual has a better right to regulate his or her own personal matters than anybody else has to do it for them. This declaration has carried consternation, seemingly, into every household, and even the women of the street catch the mad influence and pass me by on the other side; notwithstanding I am usually classed with them by such as have presented me to you upon this platform.

When I sat listening to these terrific denunciations from the male virgins and immaculates, I could not help remem-

bering an incident that occurred to me a few days before I left New York to come to Chicago. I had occasion to go up town, and took a Broadway stage. As I entered I observed that it contained several gentlemen, evidently respectable business men, going home from their labors, and an elegantly-dressed lady. Without noticing her particularly I seated myself beside her. She immediately attracted my attention by putting her fan to her face and whispering, as she turned near my ear, "For heaven's sake, Mrs. Woodhull, don't recognize me here; it would ruin my business!" I then recognized her as the keeper of a fashionable assignation house, to which I had been upon an errand of inquiry. I could not at first comprehend what she meant by being ruined by my recognition; but it soon occurred to me that some of the gentlemen present were her customers, who, seeing that she knew me, would never again dare to visit her house. So you see I am ostracized by those whom the world calls prostitutes almost as fearfully as I am by those whom I call the real prostitutes—those who come before you with a sanctified look, and with meek voice parading their virtue, which they profess to be in deadly fear of losing should social freedom prevail. [Cheers.] So you must pardon me, friends, if sometimes I am somewhat in doubt if I belong anywhere, as I was when I rose to address you.

As the gentleman was painting me to you an hour ago, I wandered backward in my life to the time when my young and agonized soul was first brought face to face with this social question, about which some people are singing such anthems of praise. Twenty years ago I was married, at the age of fourteen, to a man who was considered a very desirable match. His family was among the first in the country. I supposed that to marry was to be transported to a heaven not only of happiness but of purity and perfection. I believed it to be the one good thing there was on the earth, and that a husband must necessarily be an angel, impossible of corruption or contamination. I imagined that the priestly ceremony was perfect sanctification, and that the sin of sins was for either husband or wife to be false to that relation.

But alas, how were my beliefs dispelled! Rude contact with

facts chased my visions and dreams quickly away, and in their stead I beheld the horrors, the corruption, the evils and the hypocrisy of society, and as I stood among them, a young wife as I was, a great wail of agony went out from my soul, re-echoing that which came to me from almost every one with whom I came in contact. I soon learned that what I had believed of marriage and society was the merest sham, a cloak made by their devotees to hide the realities and to entice the innocent into their snares. I found everything was reeking with rottenness. Everywhere I was surrounded by men and women who pitied me for my simplicity, and who were loose in what the world called their virtue. I stood a little fragile thing by his side, and with terrified earnestness asked him what all this meant? But I received only this answer: "You will learn enough as you grow older without any aid from me." I shrunk into myself and knew that my hopes were wrecked, and I realized from that day that I should wage war against this seething impacted mass of hypocrisy and corruption, existing under the name of the present social system.

And now, when I hear these immaculate men singing the glories of the "blessed state," I wonder if they think they are designing knaves or presuming fools. They go on as though they think none of us know anything of what we are talking about. Do they imagine they can mesmerize us into the belief that they bring to us a sphere of unadulterated purity, as even measured by their boasted restraints of law? Do they think they can convince us that their virtue is so ethereal that the discussion of sexual things will sully its fair face? Or what is it that they are after?

I can tell them what I am after, and I can assure them I am after it in desperate earnestness; I am seeking for the truth about sexual intercourse, and I will follow it if it lead me either to heaven or to hell. [Cheers.] And as Horace Greeley told us what he knew about farming, so will I tell these fearful ones what I know about sexuality. And in advance, I may assume that I know quite as much about this as farmer Horace did about growing cabbages. [Cheers.] I am going to tell them, and convince them too, that the great fight in the future is to be, indeed is now, between bestial sexuality and natural coition. I know that there is scarcely such a



thing in the world as natural intercourse. Everywhere it is restriction and repression, or else debauchery and disease.

But these male dictators demur to being taught by women. They have so long held them to be nonentities in so many ways, that they have come verily to believe that no good can come out of a female Nazareth. [Cheers.] They stand up with all the impudence imaginable, and talk to us as a set of people who have never done anything to render life more desirable. I know they have heretofore succeeded in holding the lawmaking power and compelling us to obey their legal behests; but in this movement for social freedom they find they are going to be outflanked, and they are already beating a hasty retreat upon the rocky fastnesses of old-time despotism. One would imagine, from some of the speeches made on the platform, that we are about to return to the days when witches were burned, Quakers hung, all for Christ's sake. But I can tell them there will be a fight first, and that when it comes women will not form the reserve corps either.

But let me put this thing where it belongs. For one, I say that so long as women have no voice in making the laws, either by vote or by sitting in the halls of legislation, I will not be bound by them; I will not either respect or obey them. I will defy them, as I have done, and as I hope to induce every other woman to do. Men may make such laws for themselves as they please, but I respectfully decline their jurisdiction. I think I know just a little better what my need and the needs of my sister women are than they can know; and especially will I spit upon the man-made social laws, when I know they are framed especially to subjugate women, without the slightest idea that men will conform to them at all. [Cheers.]

But the cry is raised, "You don't accomplish anything; you are not practical." Have we not accomplished anything? Two years ago it was almost impossible for a woman to go alone to any prominent hotel in the country and obtain its hospitality, unless, forsooth, she carried about with her the certificate of her minister that she was a respectable woman. Now, I can walk into almost any hotel, and without a certificate secure what I need. And what is

more, there is not a person set to watch the doors of the room either. It is said this is a small matter, but I reply it is a beginning only, to be quickly followed by all the privileges that men enjoy, upon equal terms.

This little success has been gained principally through the discussion that grew out of the fact that my sister and I were turned out of a first-class hotel in New York because we advocated in our paper that legal prostitution under the marriage law was equally to be condemned with common prostitution. The proprietors would not have objected to the utmost freedom in his hotel; we might have lived there as the mistress of any man; but we ought not to talk out loud in the halls and parlors about social reform. They told me that "they admired us for the course we had taken, but to have it known that Woodhull and Claflin were living at the hotel, would frighten away all their family boarders."

But, as I said, we have fought it out until the right we claimed is acknowledged [Cheers]; and I appeal to the manhood of man, and to the dignity of womanhood to aid this work onward, until hotels everywhere shall be as open to women as they are to men.

Again, we went into Wall street, not particularly because I wanted to be a broker in stocks and gold, but because I wanted to plant the flag of woman's rebellion in the money centre of the continent [Cheers], and to show men that women equally with them are entitled to carry a pocket-book and manage a bank account of their own, and that they have the ability to do it as successfully. And now that all this is conceded we have retired from that locality.

During the three years we were there many singular incidents occurred to us. A lady called one day when there were several gentlemen in our office. Almost the first thing she said to me, as we passed into the private office, was this: "How do you manage to get along with so many different men without being insulted?" I replied that I was no more liable to insult here in daylight than she was in her own parlor by gaslight. [Cheers.] Your husband was in my office this morning [Cheers] and he didn't insult me, but, on the contrary, treated me with marked respect and deference, and said he wished his wife and daughters would imitate my example and endeavor to become self-support-

ing. [Cheers.] I could not help saying, "My little woman, what have you been doing with your husband that you expect him to insult me when he comes to do business with me." [Cheers.] I tell you that men will always respect women when they compel it, by their actions; and if women to-day would rise *en masse* and demand their emancipation the men would be compelled to grant it. The women of the country have the power in their own hands, in spite of the law and the government being altogether of the male order. Let women issue a declaration of independence sexually, and absolutely refuse to cohabit with men until they are acknowledged as equals in everything, and the victory would be won in a single week. [Cheers.] I have got my freedom in spite of the laws, and I defy any man or set of men to wrest it from me. [Cheers.] And every woman can have her liberty at the same or less price.

And yet it is said, Nothing has been done. Nothing done! Why, what do they mean who raise the cry? Is it nothing that to-day we can stand on a free platform and discuss any and all subjects, even those that heretofore have been scarcely breathed aloud, except in the dark or behind the door, and have what we say printed in the newspapers? Why, this of itself is a revolution. Last November I was arrested in New York for printing "The Red Token of Her Virginity." Now the newspapers talk as freely as need be of sexual intercourse, sexual organs, begetting children, etc., etc., and there isn't a Comstock to be heard of, or that dare show his miserable head. [Cheers.] If we keep on as fast as we have been going recently, we shall soon have a science of sex developed that will be as admirable as it is desirable. We shall be able to talk of the methods by which human beings are created without a blush, and therefore to arrive at a solution of this whole question.

And right here I wish to say that this Convention owes a vote of thanks to Chicago and its press for the courteous attention that has been given to the speakers upon these radical subjects. It has been unusual and, to me, rather unexpected, and goes far to show that the social question is accepted as a legitimate subject for public discussion in the columns of the press and on public rostrums. I see by your approving smiles that not any of you are afraid to hear any

subject pertaining to our common welfare frankly and fully discussed, and any false modesty that might be assumed by a few would not meet with any encouragement here.

Everybody knows that I am now specially interested in the social question; and why? Because I know that nearly all the misery in the world is caused by the false conditions in which it is now involved. As I said before there, is scarcely such a thing as natural sexuality in the world. There is a disgust growing up between men and women as they are now arranged under the galling of the various kinds of restraints that are enforced. If there is not some change; if the divergent course now running, continue a generation longer; if the present universal indifferent and unsatisfactory sexual relations turn, as they must, into as universal disgust, the present race will go down in eternal darkness. Remember what I say, and mark it well. I repeat, if there is not a change for the better in our sexual relations within the next few years, this civilization will be blotted out. Let these immaculates prate of vulgarity, indecency and obscenity as they may, I will not hold my peace and permit this destruction, which I see clearly, to come upon this world.

Not speak of these things upon the public rostrum! This is simply insanity. Where else, if not upon the public rostrum and in the public prints, should a public danger be discussed? I say it is criminal not to ventilate this matter in every possible way; as criminal as it would be did we know a plague was to sweep over the land and carry off the whole people, which, by timely warning, might be averted. Indeed, this is a plague—a horrible scourge; and I summon every lover of his kind to rise against it, and turn its course into channels of peace and happiness.

All honor is due to this Convention for the glad welcome its members have extended to this question, and to the speakers who have had the courage to advance and discuss it. Upon none but a spiritual rostrum could such things have been done. Let whatever effort have been made elsewhere, it would have been shut out. Two years ago, at Troy, even upon the Spiritual platform, the consideration of the relations of children to society had to beg for admission; while the consideration of the political rights of women was



at first denied. But when the Convention had listened to the rights of children, and had made the speaker President for having advocated them, then, unanimously, they invited the presentation of the woman question; and they are no longer side issues.

Spiritualists, however, who were not there, and who, consequently, did not hear, raised so great a noise about this "lugging in of side issues with which to break down Spiritualism," that almost the whole body of Spiritualists were up in arms about it; as perhaps almost the whole body will now be up in arms, because you have permitted the social side issue to be saddled upon Spiritualism. But before two years more, all the clamor will have turned into praise that you have done it, as the previous clamor has turned into praise that at Troy the other was done.

For the constant pressure that I have made to open your doors and platforms for these questions, I have had to stand your jeers and hisses, and to be paraded before the world as the vilest of women. Some of your "great lights" have felt called upon to personally denounce me as the advocate of theories calculated to excuse the foulness of my life, being themselves, as I know, fresh from the arms of some immaculate sister, who is now terribly shocked at the horrible doctrines of Free Love, or who is trembling lest Moses Hull may name her as one of those who had been his companion in the experiments he has been making to discover a way out of his living death. Now let me give these sensitive people a single word of advice, which it will be well for them to ponder well: When we hold up the looking-glass of social freedom on this platform, each person sees his or her own visage in it; and I do not wonder that some are awfully frightened. I think I should be were I in their places [Cheers.]

But, as I said, I kept sailing onward as regardless as I could be of all the fright, until at last the reflection of my work has penetrated your hearts and brain, and you have recognized the fact that all this is the very essence of Spiritualism; that upon which the bright future of Spiritualism must be builded if it appear at all. I knew you when I first went to you. I had faith that you would do all this, and

also in the Spirit world who prompted me to say the things I did say.

When asked, as I have been, "Mrs. Woodhull, I am told that you believe in promiscuousness?" I have replied, "I do not believe in it at all; I know it exists in every crack and corner of the earth, and that it exists because society compels it by the unnatural restrictions it places upon natural passion." I know that the very people who, in parading me before the world as a bad woman, aye, even those who appear upon this platform and denounce me and all other advocates of social freedom, and who hurl their javelins, poisoned by the corruption of their own body, into my soul, are the very ones who are its unprincipled devotees. These are the ones who fear open discussion, since when the sisters begin to relate their experiences, as they will, they know their names will embellish the stories, like the editor of the *R. P. Journal*, who, for the last two years, has published the most contemptible articles. There is a woman in the audience who last night told me her personal story about this pure man, and asked me to relate it from this platform, but I hardly like to keep my promise. The story is rather too obscene for me to repeat. I propose that she come up here and tell it herself. You know, of course, that I am a little sensitive on this point. There may be a Chicago Comstock present, who would scent the obscenity were it to come from my lips, who would never think of such a thing coming from others. [Laughter and cheers.]

The real point however, which I wish to make is this. I have been asked what I thought of our present condition including the little clique that meet in the gallery, over there in the corner, just after the close of the afternoon session. Now if you really want to know what I think, I will venture to tell you plainly: For twenty-five years Spiritualism had been gestating her natural child, social freedom; and it was born on the second day of last November, when the key turned on Victoria Woodhull in Ludlow-street jail. But a condition of puerperal fever has been raging ever since, because the after-birth remained. To-day, however, thank God and the spirit world, it was sloughed off up there in the gallery [Roars of laughter]; and though its stench, for a time, may offend our nostrils, I feel certain that from the

moment that event occurred, the symptoms of the fever began to improve, and I have the utmost faith that the patient is even now convalescent [Cheers], and that there will be no more delirious raving or *mania a potu* frights to prevent active and rapid progress. [Uproarious applause.]

To-morrow evening I shall deliver the most radical and searching speech that I have ever made. I shall go to the very depths of the sexual question and plunge the surgical knife to the hilt into the horrible carbuncle, which you are even now endeavoring to make me and the world believe has no existence. I shall tell you what I know about life and death; and if you do not recognize the things I shall say the scientific world will take them up, and in after years emblazon them in books, and that in time they will go to the world as a part of the bible of the future. You talk to-day as if there were no such thing as anarchy in the world, bringing death in its train and spreading destruction everywhere. To-morrow I shall tell you how to escape both; I shall speak about The Elixir of Life; or, Why Do we Die? I hope this hall will be packed, and I shall expect, as I have to-night, to receive the attentive courtesy of every man and woman in it. [Prolonged applause.]

The Convention then adjourned

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### THIRD DAY.

#### MORNING SESSION.

The Chairman said—The hour for conference has arrived, and ten-minute speeches will be in order. The Finance Committee is requested to meet as soon as possible.

Mrs. Sarah J. Penoyer, of Saginaw, Mich., said:

My friends, I have only a few words to say to you, and these, I hope, will meet with your favor. I have not made any expression of my feelings since I came here until this morning, and I purpose doing so now in a few brief words. I think when we hear such expressions as those that have come before the public this morning, that it is time for every woman with a woman's soul to stand up and express her thoughts, and inner feelings too. I have had these thoughts for many a month and many a day as I candidly ac-

knowledge, but I have now had the moral courage to express them, except to a few of my friends. But now I think the day and time has come in which every person who has a thought should express it; that those who have the interests of humanity at heart will give forth their thoughts on this subject. I read this morning in the *Chicago Times* something like this: "Evil spirits—They move in Chicago—A gang of shameless men and women come to Chicago—Another day among the Free Lovers at Grow's Hall—An exciting debate upon the adoption of the present platform." I tell you here and now that I come joyfully to this obscene platform. You may call me obscene. I prefer the liberal part of it; but not that I have no sympathy with the conservative, for I was one myself till within the last few months. But I have been growing; I have been learning some of God's blessed truths, and I thank God and the angel world for revealing to me some of these truths. [Cheers.] I wish to say that this is the first Convention of the kind I ever attended, but I hope it will not be the last. It has filled my heart and soul with feelings and my mind with thoughts that I have never had before. I have heard some truths given from the enlightened and progressive men which have stood on this platform that have rejoiced my very soul. Years ago, when the agitation of the anti-slavery movement was begun, I rejoiced to come out and say that I was an abolitionist. I gloried in the name, and now I say that I am a free lover. I glory in the name, because the name is divine. [Cheers.] There is nothing corrupt, obscene or wicked in it. There is nothing on God's earth but is good and true and holy. I acknowledge to you all I have a big, loving heart; but that does not mean that I am ready and willing to take you to my embrace. No, sir; if you think I do you are as mistaken as can be, for my love is not like that. There are no words in human language that can express it, and I do not hesitate to say that when I want to love anybody and anybody wants to love me, I do not care a fig for what anybody may say about it. I expect always to live up to my highest sense of right and duty, and so sure as one of you dare to throw any vile or infamous slanders upon me, just so sure as there is a God in heaven and an angel world, just so sure will all these vile epithets be thrown back upon yourselves.



Thank God they cannot injure me; they will bound back and only injure the aggressors. Remember that, Mr. Reporters, who are writing those obscene, damnable head-lines for the *Times*. I never had the privilege of hearing Mrs. Woodhull speak until the other evening. The divine spark of God's blessed truths shone from her eyes. I knew, when I saw the light shine from her countenance, that she was a good and pure woman, and I love and honor her, as I do all those who stand up for truth. Yesterday I thought I would have liked to have a daguerreotype of those persons who claim that the social part of our platform is obscene and unfit for any one who is respectable to have anything to do with, and that I could place them side by side with our beautiful sister Victoria. I do not mean to be personal, but I am a physiognomist, and when I take a diagnosis of the two, but little difficulty could be experienced in telling which of the two led the purest life. The peculiarly red face of her opponent indicated to me that either the gentleman had a very bad form of erysipelas, or he had a considerable quantity of very bad whisky in his stomach. There is just one thing more I wish to say—

The Chairman—Time's up. In regard to that report in the *Times*, I will only say its editor will yet live to see the day when he will be ashamed of his remarks.

Mr. Gage—I move you that the Business Committee be instructed to nominate a President and Officers of the Association for the coming year.

The Chairman—They are already doing that.

Mrs. Severance—I come before you to make only a few remarks, and those to the point. In the first place, I rejoice to-day at this tenth anniversary of Spiritualism, that, notwithstanding we have adopted a platform, we have not received one-half the opposition that we had at our first Convention in this city when the loyal resolution was introduced for a side issue. This shows the progress we have made. Another thing I wish to call your attention to is this, that the disturbance which we had at our meeting last night came almost entirely from outsiders. Now for criticism upon Spiritualism. In the first place there are only two animals that hiss, one is the goose and the other the serpent.

Let us remember this, and let us never indulge in hisses, no matter what the speaker has to say. And another thing I want to say to you, fellow-speakers, and those who occupied the rostrum last night, it would show much more dignity to have waited until they had finished their remarks before attempting to reply. Another point I wish to make is, we, as Spiritualists, have an influence in the land. We ought to have a power over the press in the land, and we can. And now let me recommend to you to mark well the course of the press in this city, and only support those papers that dare tell the truth. Let us support no papers that give such reports of our proceedings as was given in the *Tribune* of this morning. Another point to which I want to call your attention for the first time; I have seen a man brave enough—and I was going to say green enough, but I will leave that word out—to stand up and advocate hypocrisy. I never heard it advocated before from any rostrum, and it is not indorsed by many Spiritualists. In conclusion, let me say that I trust in our proceedings this morning we will look to the cause of truth and justice. Every true Spiritualist, every radical reformer should, when we come to dispose of the business of the day, vote aye to the name of Victoria C. Woodhull for our next president. It has been said that any woman representing the principles set forth by Mrs. Woodhull would do as well for the position. But let us take our advocate in the person of the woman who represented our principles when they were not popular and has led us to our present position. [Cheers.]

Mrs. Laura C. Owen—I come before you this morning to explain a little; that is all. I came to the Convention as a delegate from Cincinnati, as a conservative, and I feel a little sorry. I want the friendship of all, for they place a great deal of confidence in me in Cincinnati, as shown by their appointing me one of their executive committee and as a delegate here. I wrote a little speech when at home thinking that I would not have confidence to speak to you without preparation, but I have just been converted to radicalism. [Cheers.] I have my speech here with me and I think I will read it to you. It is as follows :

*Sisters and Brothers in Convention assembled*—This is essentially a thinking age; and the great aim of the people is for liberty. To-day—at this very hour—the cry from every soul of this beautiful earth is for liberty! The blow has been struck; a great plot is being made, or rather hatched and not only the masses, but each individual, demands that liberty that gives freedom to both body and soul. I am an individual, and my soul is my standard of authority in determining what is true or false in principle, and right or wrong in action. I am with you to-day as one of the delegates of the “Mass Meeting of the Spiritualists of America,” held in Cincinnati, May 23, 24, 25 and 26; and the great object of that meeting was to discuss the questions of organization and true Spiritualism. The question was raised as to “What do they mean by true Spiritualism?” Now, Spiritualism is a science by itself, and its facts are facts by themselves; and, as such, the doctrine should be studied and weighed well in the balance of reason. I do believe the Spiritualists are to-day attempting too much in the name of reform. Why be burdened with so large a load, before the first portion is rightly adjusted? We all know that Spiritualism embraces many reforms, yet their consummation is greatly retarded by our running away with ourselves. Let us reform our National Association, put our State organizations in a more flourishing condition and what few local societies we have make them more harmonious. Be not afraid of organization and popularity. Let us clear up our houses while the sun shines, and get in the better class of Spiritualists and teachers that are to-day as silent as the grave. Every reasonable Spiritualist knows what our National Association of Spiritualists have done in the few years past. We know of the small number of votes recorded at the last annual meeting. We know there have been things done by this Association that do not meet the approval of a large number (if not the majority) of the Spiritualists of America; and we also know, without a doubt, that there have been enterprises and reforms entered into by this Association that do not meet with a general response from the Spiritualists, in personal or financial assistance. I work for the ballot and temperance; I work with the benevolent, and I am willing to work for a reformation in the

laws regarding marriage, but I would do so only in a political, legal way. Spiritualism and Socialism are essentially different: Spiritualism is a beautiful science of future individual life; while Socialism is a social theory, entertained and practiced by persons both honest and dishonest, that conjugal love between the sexes should be regulated by affinitive inclinations only. As such they challenge a thorough examination. The facts of Socialists should be fearlessly met, and their arguments should be squarely weighed in the limpid light of principles. There are many Spiritualists who are open and avowed Socialists, yet I affirm that Spiritualism is not responsible for the existence of Socialism, nor can the teachings of Spiritualism be made to sustain any unholy conduct on the part of its advocates. If this National Association does not see fit to change its channel a little, and let its torpid stream become pure and crystallized once more, so that all may view its precious jewels deep down beneath its rolling waves, why, then I am ready, as one of the Executive Committee of the Cincinnati Mass Meeting, to call another similar meeting, and will most assuredly vote in favor of division. Let the trying ordeal come. If it be sound—its principles immutable—then forever will Spiritualism stand; if not, let her die and be buried, as other dark ages of the past.

Mrs. Owens criticised the speech as she read it, and at its close said:

I had this speech written, and the Convention gave me instructions to vote against Mrs. Woodhull, but I am going to vote for her. [Cheers.] I want to agree with brother Lynn. As to the manner in which the different religious denominations endeavor to force their peculiar dogmas upon our children at the different schools. I always attended the Presbyterian church until I was a Spiritualist, and I say that we should have schools in which our children might be taught that knowledge which we think is most proper for them. I come before you as an exposé of physical mediums. I made an *expose* of Ida Hart and Charles H. Reed. The Spiritualists should be careful of these mediums, for there are false ones and true ones.

Mrs. Fodd was about to speak, when she was interrupted. The Chairman said—



I wish to call the attention of the Convention to a paragraph in the *R. P. Journal* which has some degree of interest for us all. It is there stated that the books and papers of the treasurer had been sent to Mr. S. S. Jones. The letter which accompanies them reads like this: "Bro. S. S. Jones: I forward to your care my treasurer's account, and also a letter to the American Association of Spiritualists, resigning my position as treasurer, and will you be kind enough to hand these documents over to the officers of the Association." There was a gentleman yesterday who said he had a letter from Mr. Peter B. Good, the treasurer. I told him that he must take it to the Executive Board, who would consider it. Since then I have not heard a word about it.

Mr. Shaw—I have been waiting an opportunity to present this letter to the Convention, although it goes through the Board of Trustees.

The Chairman—You had better take it there. I will read the whole communication to S. S. Jones.

Dear Bro. Childs—A newspaper informs me of his resignation and his action in regard to forwarding his books. Please take charge of my papers.

This is signed "Peter B. Good, New Jersey."

Mr. Shaw—I want to inquire through you, Mr. Chairman, of the Committee of Arrangements with reference to the speaking, &c., especially since the evident design and intention has manifested itself to make what is called free-love the chief—

The Chairman—Order!

Mr. Shaw—Excuse me; I mean what is practically called free-loveism or Woodhullism. I desire to know what time the committee propose to give the minority for the purpose of explaining its views, or whether the majority will monopolize the whole time.

Mr. Lynn—I deny that we have monopolized all the time.

Mr. Shaw—And I deny that we have had an opportunity to reply to your arguments except on one or two occasions. Now I want to tell you a fact right here, that I understand and will probably be able to substantiate the fact,

that the Convention will cost you, ladies and gentlemen, over \$1,000 in order to carry your point before it, and that you have sent for speakers to help you out of your present position, in forcing upon Spiritualism subjects to which the great mass are opposed. I wish to know if we are to learn from the Business Committee how many or how long speeches we are to be allowed to deliver this evening?

The Chairman—The committee for electing speakers have endeavored, so far as the names were handed in, to apportion them out equally. The idea of this charge of complicity in getting this Convention together is only equalled by the apathy on the part of those whom in part you represent; as a consequence you have no right to complain.

Mr. Shaw—I wish you would answer my question and not argue about it.

The Chairman—What I say is, that so far as the Business Committee is concerned, it has been their endeavor to give every side a fair and equal chance. So far as I am personally concerned as presiding officer of this Convention, I have no partiality.

Mr. Shaw—That is all very well. And now, again, I will ask you if they have given our side a fair chance, when they have allowed a platform of the Convention to be filled with speakers on their side, while only one or two have been able to say anything in our behalf. It seems to me that the right of a minority should go hand in hand with that of the majority. I think this is the true philosophy of harmony which we boast.

The Chairman—I don't want to argue the matter. The committee can speak for themselves.

Mr. Todd, the Chairman of the Committee on Business, said:

On the first appointment we made we put on Mr. Randolph, who refused to speak while the people were coming into the hall, hence time was occupied. The next day we made arrangements for speeches expecting the propositions would get through in the afternoon. When the speakers

were put on their places there were four chosen for the evening besides Mrs. Woodhull, and these gentlemen were given one of them, which was certainly fair, when the proportion between the two classes of representatives is recollected. Yesterday afternoon the discussion on the propositions destroyed our arrangements for the afternoon. Some said let's go to work and figure out a new arrangement, but it was impossible.

Mr. Cotton—May I ask the gentleman one question?

Mr. Todd—I only want the thing perfect.

Mr. Cotton—I want to ask a question. Have you made a wise discrimination in the men who represent the minority here, who are not prepared to go so far in their adoption of extreme views as some of their brethren?

Mr. Todd—I will answer you that the matter was up before the Committee, and your own name was up among the list of speakers who had made themselves prominent in the Convention. We did not want to crowd the minority, and we proposed to allow them the privilege of speaking in proportion to the representation they have here. Now, 113 votes were cast on one side and 28 on the other, and I ask you if any unjust advantage has been taken. Remembering the speeches of Judge Holbrook on yesterday afternoon, have not the minority obtained a fair ventilation of their views? That's all I have to say.

Mr. Lynn—I want three minutes myself.

The Chairman—Is the Business Committee ready to report?

Mr. Todd—Yes, sir. The Business Committee report the names of candidates for offices in the Association to the Convention for its action. The nominations are as follows:

For President of the American Association of Spiritualists—Victoria C. Woodhull. For Secretary of this Association—W. F. Jamieson. For Treasurer—Hon. Warren Chase. For Trustees—Mrs. J. H. Severance, Wisconsin; Benjamin Todd, Michigan.

Mr. Jamieson—I object to my name—

The Chairman—Wait until the proper time.

The report was accepted.

Mr. Todd—I move that it be adopted.

The Chairman—It cannot be adopted. The constitution requires that it should be voted upon by ballot.

Mr. Higgins—I move that we proceed to the ballot for the candidate for the President's office.

The motion was adopted.

The Chairman—It will be necessary to have tellers.

On motion, Messrs. Randolph, Lynn and Higgins were appointed tellers.

Judge Holbrook—I think it is proper and honest and honorable, and will aid in the expedition with which this work may be conducted, if I say that, so far as I am concerned, and I am justified in speaking for quite a number of my coadjutors, that this effort on our part has been merely tentative, one of trial; one to make the Convention what we would like to have it. Failing in that, we do not expect to take part hereafter in this Convention. We do not now conceive that we want to remain and consider ourselves as members during the year that is now opening. These remarks refer to quite a number of us, and we will consequently take no part in the election.

The Chairman—That is, you do not intend to vote.

Judge Holbrook—Not expecting to remain with you, we would not think it fair to take part in this vote, because the officers stand for next year.

Mr. Randolph—The minority having expressed their intention of not voting, I propose that we abandon the ballot and take the vote *viva voce*.

Mr. Shaw—I wish to announce that, as an individual, I shall take no part in this election, and, for one among many reasons, because it is all out of order.

Mr. Jamieson—I call the gentleman himself to order.

The Chairman—He is certainly out of order.

Mr. Shaw—I do not want more than two minutes.

The Chairman—It is all right; nobody must be choked off.

Mrs. Middlebrook—Has everybody in the Convention a right to explain their position?



The Chairman—Everybody has a right to put themselves straight.

There was considerable disturbance, during the course of which Mr. Shaw retired from the platform.

The election was then proceeded with by ballot of the several delegates.

Mr. Shaw—I hoped that as this was a Spiritualist Convention, composed of liberals, the resolutions offered by the minority would have been allowed to have come in after those of the majority.

Mr. Lynn—That is what I voted for them for.

Mr. Shaw—But instead of that the resolution was laid on the table, the opportunity of discussing it being cut off.

The Chairman—Let me say this is out of order.

Mr. Shaw—Well, sir.

The Chairman—Do you want proof of it?

Mr. Shaw—Well, I only want three minutes.

The Chairman—Let the ballots be taken. "Let us do unto everybody as we would that they should do unto us."

Mr. Todd—I move that the vote be taken by States, and that when the name of each individual is called, he or she step forward and deposit her ballot.

The suggestion was adopted, and the ballot was proceeded with. Mr. Cephas B. Lynn announced the result as follows:

Total number of votes cast, 124. Victoria C. Woodhull, 115 votes; Mrs. Severance, 3; Mrs. H. F. Gardiner, of Boston, 2; Mrs. L. C. Smith, 1 vote; Judge Warren Chase, 1 vote; Addie L. Ballou, 1 vote; and Judge Holbrook, 1 vote.

The result was received with tremendous applause.

A delegate inquired if the Convention could instruct the Secretary to cast the vote of the Convention for the other officers.

The Chairman—I think it will be better for us to finish this part of the proceedings first.

The Secretary declared the result of the ballot, as given above.

The Chairman—I therefore declare that Victoria C. Woodhull is re-elected President of the American Association of Spiritualists for the coming year. [Cheers.]

Mrs. Woodhull on coming forward, was received with every demonstration of delight. She said:

I thank you for the honor that you have conferred, not upon me but upon the principles that I advocate. [Cheers.] The more especially do I feel this, since the principles, during the past two years, have been before the whole world, and have been “cussed” and discussed to your heart’s content. [Cheers.] Hence, I am certain that when we go from this Convention, there will be no earthly chance for our opponents to say that they were snapped upon them. I warn the people that having cast their votes for these principles, that they knew what they were about—that we have thought and read about them, and had lived under them, to find out that they are good enough to live by, and good enough to die by. [Cheers.] One thing more. The assertion has been made that I have packed this Convention. It was no insult to me, but it was an insult to all the delegates here assembled. Now what I ask is this: that the people who have been bribed by me will step forward and tell us how, and when, and where they have been bribed? [Cheers.]

Mr. Barrett—I move that the Secretary cast the ballot of the Convention for the remaining officers.

Mr. Todd—I will announce that there is another Trustee to be elected, and would nominate for that position Mr. L. K. Coonley, of Vineland, our Chairman. [Cheers.]

Mr. Lynn, seconded the motion.

The Chairman—The next thing is to ballot for Mr. Jamieson.

Mr. Barrett—There is a motion that he cast the ballot of the whole Convention.

The Chairman—As he is a candidate, that cannot be done.

Mr. Barrett—I move that Mr. Lynn be so instructed to cast the ballots.

This was carried unanimously.

On the confirmation of Mr. Jamieson as Secretary, the Chairman said: Mr. Lynn will cast the vote for the Convention for Mr. W. F. Jamieson, there being no other candidate.

The appointment was ratified unanimously by the Convention, amid cheers.

Mr. Jamieson—Ladies and Gentlemen I thank you. I will try and do the best I can for you.

The nomination of Hon. Warren Chase, to the position of Treasurer, was also carried unanimously.

Hon. Warren Chase—I do not know what you call me up here for, unless it be to see my face. This office of Treasurer, is a rather singular one to put me in; but I have been in almost every other department, and I suppose that it is my turn now to come into the finance department. As Treasurer of this Association I shall endeavor to do my duty and take care of the funds that may come into my hands, [Cheers.]

The Chairman—The next offices we have to fill are those of the trustees. One is to take the place of Mr. A. A. Wheelock, who has resigned; the other vacancies occur in accordance with the rule of rotation.

Mr. Lynn cast the ballot of the Convention in behalf of the persons nominated, and they were declared duly elected.

The Chairman—The question is, whether the Convention, after its vote on the presidency, should not pass a resolution similar to those passed in the case of other officers, namely, a motion should be offered making her election to the office unanimous. [Cheers.]

The motion was made as suggested, and carried unanimously. On its being so announced by the chairman, there was prolonged applause.

Mr. Walter Wood, of Illinois—And Mrs. Woodhull is indorsed by the spirit world. I have a message here that I received this morning before coming to the Convention:

Good morning, Walter T. Lee. You are exultant over the

success of a dear sister who has been chosen to do a work that should endure for all time. History shall paint in gorgeous colors the record of the life-sacrifices of Victoria C Woodhull. Gloriously bright will be her entrance into spirit life. Mortal mind is incapable of conceiving the joyous greeting that awaits her pure spirit. It is the unfoldment of divine love that will take the faithful, weary and worn child of earth's struggles into sweet rest, joy and peace. I would like to talk all this day to you, my earnest brother, but something is in the way now. Yours, J. W.

Col. Blood—On behalf of the Committee on Organization and By-Laws, I beg to present this basis of organization and constitution:

*[The basis of Organization and Constitution will be published next week.]*

The Chairman—You have heard the report, what will you do with it?

The report was received.

On the motion for adoption—

Mr. Shaw—I have only a word to say, and that is in reference to the principles of the Association, and the statement that when these principles are promulgated, that the existing difference in wealth will not stand in the way of equal assessments. I give the subject of it. I fail to see any definite declaration of what this brings about. I should like to have this matter of what the principle is to which reference has been made in the report.

Colonel Blood—The committee supposed that the adoption of the resolutions yesterday showed pretty clearly what the principles of the association are to be.

Mr. Shaw—This report does not refer to the propositions specifically. Is it intended to incorporate them in the report?

Colonel Blood—So far as the principles of this new association are concerned, they have never been adopted; and secondly, there is as yet no association in existence.

Mr. Kates, of Ohio—I should like to know, with my friend Shaw, before I adopt this constitution, what princi-



ples I will be asked to subscribe to before I can become a member of the primary council.

Colonel Blood—This question was considered in the committee and was discussed pretty thoroughly, and they supposed that having adopted this constitution, the Convention would incorporate the propositions passed on yesterday. But that is not done yet, nor can it be done until the Convention accepts and adopts the constitution.

Mr. Shaw—I simply want to know if that is the project.

Mr. Kates—I think, Mr. President, that it would be necessary to incorporate these principles with this constitution. I am not a public speaker, but you touch my hobby; and when you commence making a creed for me, compelling me to subscribe to any principles before becoming a member of this Association, and before I shall vote to adopt any organization that prescribes principles I want to know what I am doing.

Mrs. Severance.—I want to ask a question of the gentleman just speaking. Do I understand that you are one of those that have seceded from the Convention?

Mr. Kates—No, ma'am, I am not. I am neither a radical nor a conservative in this matter; I am not here to get up any feeling on one side or the other; I came here to do as far as I could what was for the best interests of our cause in this country; and as I said this morning, that is one of my hobbies—that nobody shall bind me to subscribe to any creed. We have heard enough here of freedom, and I believe in that in the fullest sense. If we are to base the constitution upon that one question, then all I can say is, that I shall keep clear of it.

Mr. Todd—I move to attach to that report the propositions that were passed yesterday, as our principles, and that they be added to it.

Mrs. Severance—I will second that.

Mr. Cotton—I have an amendment to offer, as follows:

“That the last clause read be adopted as our creed and not as a declaration of principles.”

The Chairman put the question on the amendment, which was lost unanimously.

The Chairman—Creeds are gone overboard. Next comes the attachment to the constitution of the principles to be adopted.

Mr. Barnes—I would like to ask a question: We have before us a constitution that harmonizes well with my interior [Loud laughter.] If these principles that are before us will harmonize with the fundamental principles of God's divine government they will stand.

Miss Hinman—The Committee on Finance is requested to meet at once.

Mr. Barnes—We are called and invited to meet the needs of the family, of the nation, and if we have anything that the world wants, if we have the right man in the right place, if we have come to the right moment and have the right men and women at our head, then we will speedily have a body of population that will be established and founded on principle and who will prove the saviours of the race. [Cheers.]

Mrs. Severance announced that an admission fee of fifty cents would be charged to the evening session.

Mr. Anthony Higgins—I call for the previous question on the amendment.

Mr. Barnes—You are under the controlling power of darkness. What did I say when I was last in the city of Chicago? Did I not predict the awful times that have come upon ye? Did I not tell you that the powers of darkness would have your city and others. I say honor to God and angels, but ye say honor to the power of darkness. [Cheers.]

Judge Holbrook—Out of chaos shall come order Mr. Chairman, I want to keep your ear until I move an amendment; but how does it stand before the Convention now?

The Chairman—The amendment has been voted down, and it now comes upon the first motion.

Judge Holbrook—I move as an amendment, so as to bring

the matter before the Convention, that "It shall not be in order to speak in advocacy of (nor in opposition to) those subjects which are removed from Spiritualism, and in no especial degree based upon or connected with its facts, theories, demonstrations and philosophy, among which are enumerated the general questions of politics, government, the Woman's Suffrage movement, and social freedom; but persons may be specially invited to speak on special subjects by a vote of two-thirds of the members of the Association represented in Convention." Now, Mr. Chairman, one word in reference to that.

Mr. Chairman—I would ask if your motion is seconded?

Mr. Shaw—I will second it.

The Chairman—The amendment is before the Convention, and Judge Holbrook has the floor.

Judge Holbrook—Now, Mr. Chairman and members of this Convention, I say that I have come to this Convention, in my own mind, as a harmonizer, for the purpose of making the Convention as near what I would have it as I can, and of such a character that I could remain with it and work with it from year to year; and also I think I represent a large number of Spiritualists. The complaint has been made, that everything has been admitted upon the spiritual platform, and the effect of this complaint is, that if you allow everything to come upon your platform, you lose the character of a spiritual organization—have nothing left but the name of it. What I have submitted suggests itself to me as a proper principle and rule to govern our action. In the first instance, there should nothing come upon our platform but what is called Spiritualism proper—its facts, theories, philosophy, demonstration. But now comes the compromise in this matter. Those whom I represent are willing to concede this much, that on the vote of two-thirds of the members of a society, any speaker can be invited to speak upon any subject. I do not propose this in any captious way, for I believe that it is the principle that will be adopted throughout this country in course of time, to bring order out of chaos. We may all have our rights and yet concede something; and we will see that it will work beautifully. Here we are in this Convention; we all run

one way, and under this rule of mine we can invite one speaker to speak on one thing and another on a second, so that it would be a fine thing for all of us, which I am free to confess I do not think it is at present. I therefore move that my amendment be adopted and incorporated into the rules which you propose for the government of your respective societies.

Mr. Higgins—I call for the question.

Dr. Merton—Excuse me; I hope that this amendment will be adopted, for this particular reason, previous to the consideration of which you will observe that the principles for which we fought yesterday, and if I am not correct the secretary will correct me—these principles declared that Spiritualism included all the various relations of men; and if this be true, if Spiritualism does reach down into all the subjects that may be legitimately brought before a spiritual convention, then, my friends, see that they are not subjects which are removed from Spiritualism. These two propositions will be in such sweet and everlasting and beauteous harmony, that I do hope Judge Holbrook's amendment will be adopted. [Cheers and laughter.]

Mrs. Severance—Just one word about this. I do hope that none of you will be absurd enough, after passing unanimously that Spiritualism covered all reform, to pass this which says that it does not.

Mrs. Mills, of Illinois:

Mr. President, I am in favor of the adoption of the proposition which the Judge has just made, and although my name is on paper, I want it understood that I am in favor of free and public discussion of every subject that interests humanity, and Spiritualism embraces the whole universe. I want to state for myself wherein I differ. Four years ago I wrote some articles during the earliest days of the discussion of this question, and the first paper headed one of them, "Mrs. Mills on the Marriage Institution in Danger." I believe that he did it honestly, knowing that the whole social system was corrupt. I go farther, and say I believe that the evil laws of the country are inefficient, and are all absolute failures in controlling social relations upon the highest basis known among men, or among angels, or to God himself.



Now, I want to stand fair, for I was misrepresented from one end of the country this morning. I protest to-day that our friends are unable to come forward to-day and reply to the question, "What do you call love?" Do you mean lust is a manifestation of law? I understand you to say so, and for that reason I protest. I stand here as an angel-inspired one; I stand here feeling that the social evil penetrates from the highest to the lowest, and that we have to talk this question with the world. I believe that on the summit of the blood-love plane are some of the finest women and children, because it is natural; but when you say that blood-love means that you shall gratify, as you call it, the magnetic love that is within you; if a man comes to a woman, and with all the sympathies of her soul in its native purity, she is drawn out by his magnetic influence, while he is simply gratifying his appetite, then it is lust, and I cannot stand it, and all I ask on this platform is that you will define your position. We ask Mrs. Woodhull to define her position.

Mr. Kates—I desire that we shall all understand this amendment. It says that it shall not be in order to speak in advocacy nor in opposition on those subjects which are removed from Spiritualism. Mark the language of the proposition which enumerates the general questions of politics, government, the woman suffrage movement and social freedom. It is said that Spiritualism embraces all these things. True, it does; but they are special subjects on which it shall require a two-thirds vote to allow them to be touched. The feeling of those who wish this amendment made is this: that the discussion of this social question has for the last three years occupied the time to the detriment of everything else connected with Spiritualism; to the detriment of the organic functions of the work; to the detriment of the work of organization, of societies, of employment of lecturers, and of that very thing that they wish to see started, a true, successful Children's Progressive Lyceum that you are—probably I had not better finish the sentence. I want you to understand our aim in this movement, believing that if it is successful, we of the minority can co-operate with you

of the majority. If not, then we must go somewhere else.  
[Cheers.]

Mr. Todd—I move that we adjourn.

Withdrawn temporarily.

Mrs. Middlebrook—I hope that Spiritualists will remember that about three-fourths of the speakers on this platform are influenced by spirits, and that when they come to a place to deliver a series of lectures, it is impossible for any society, or any set of men, to tell what the subject will be upon which the speaker will enter. The proposition offered by Judge Holbrook is simply and wholly a muzzle of the worst kind. [Cheers.]

Mr. Barnum, of Michigan—I cannot vote for the proposition, for these reasons: First, I believe Spiritualism is a religion, and I understand religion to be the manner in which we live out our relations in life. Anything short of this does not cover my idea of religion. Therefore, when a Spiritualist lecturer ascends the platform to deliver an address, I say we will not put restraints about her, but let her do as she thinks best under the guidance of angel power. If the people do not wish to hear them, they may remain away. So long as I utter my own sentiments, no one has a right to say to me that I shall not do so. [Cheers.] Whether I am in sympathy with the extremes of one side or of the other, matters not; but this I do say, that I object to the proposition, and will vote against it.

Mr. Shaw—Are there two minutes left?

Chairman—Yes.

Mr. Shaw—I would simply inform the brother that this proposition does not cover the outside operations of the lecturers in the field.

Mr. Todd—I renew my motion that we adjourn; but before it is put I wish to say that when the Convention opens this afternoon, the motion will be made to add, as a sort of preamble to the body of the rules of the Association, the platform of principles adopted by the Convention yesterday.

The Convention then adjourned until two o'clock.

## AFTERNOON SESSION.

The Chairman called the Convention to order at 2 o'clock.

Judge Carter, of Missouri—I rise to a question of privilege. I wish to record my vote in favor of the champion of all the principles here discussed, Mrs. Woodhull, for president of this Association. [Cheers.]

Dr. O. J. Howard, of Illinois—I ask the same privilege, sir?

The Chairman—If there is no objection the request will be granted; there being none, the request is so granted.

The Chairman—We will now take up this report on the organization, with Judge Holbrook's amendment.

Mr. Batesall, of Ohio—I wish to make a personal explanation. I am not a conservative; I am called very radical; but when I am beside these extreme radicals you may think me a little conservative. I am opposed to the passage of this plan of organization, as proposed. The first objection and the main one that I have, is that it proposes to establish a creed to which every person must subscribe before he can become a member of even a primary counsel. If this Association determines to make a creed, it matters very little to me what they may do, for I am opposed to all creeds, and will never vote or consider myself bound by any one. Here for two days we have been continually preaching about the doctrine of freedom; to every word of which I have assented, so far as freedom of belief and action was taught; I am here now as an advocate of the same doctrine of freedom, and I am very sorry to see an attempt made in the plan of organization to do just that to which we have objected, namely: The enforcement on every person of a creed.

Col. Blood—Will you permit me to ask you a question?

Mr. Batesall—Yes.

Col. Blood—If these propositions discussed yesterday were propositions of freedom, how can they have the effect of limiting freedom?

Mr. Batesall—That is a question foreign to our object here. The second objection that I have to the adoption of a creed is that as we know a great number of Free Spiritualists, free thinkers scattered throughout this country will refuse to be

bound by any creed, and they will prefer to remain outside of any organization rather than be bound. This is a practical matter, and for the interests of our organization I think we should consider it carefully. We should pause before adopting a plan of organization which as delegates we cannot go home and ask our own fellow Spiritualists to enter as we know they are opposed to it. As a delegate from the society of Toledo, I know, for the question has been before our people, that I cannot go home and ask them to adopt this plan of organization in place of the one they already have. They would laugh me to scorn if I undertook to do it. They have always advocated freedom, and I could not take them back this plan of organization and ask them to put a chain around their necks. But my chief and specific ground of complaint is that it will be impossible to organize under the proposed scheme. I am therefore opposed to its adoption.

Mr. Pope—I wish to say a few words in favor of this resolution. The time has come when we are called upon by the spirit of the hour to determine between principle and creed, and if we have spirit illumination and intelligence we can do so rightly. If we have not, we shall probably refuse to subscribe to the principle which we advocate here as the true foundation of the kingdom of God. I deny that this is a proposition to continue the life of creeds. I say the distinctive feature of these resolutions that have been passed is that they are based on the divine law, and that they are invulnerable to all the creeds of the past; that they are rather an encouragement for humanity to come up to the standard of perfect obedience. Man is superior to society, and society has no rights that the sovereign individual in his inspired moments, and with the peculiar illuminations given him from the spirit world, is bound to respect at the sacrifice of principle. These resolutions, as I read them, are based on the fundamental principles of the constitution of human nature, and I subscribe to them as a whole, as a revelation from God to me individually as a law for my future. I ask none to subscribe to them who are not in harmony with them. Those who have not grown up to them, individuals and organizations, will not receive them. This is the order of the day. This question of social freedom is the only live ques-



tion in existence, from the fact that it is at this hour affecting the disintegration of society that we behold. It is the day of judgment, it is the morning of the resurrection, it is the restitution of all things; it is the coming of the new heaven and of the new earth. There are many grades in the spiritual condition. Here and there are individuals coming up from these organizations who form a glorious nucleus. Subscribing to this advanced order of nature, we do not expect everybody to patronize it; but the few who do show their character by subscribing to the desire that they shall go down to posterity as of those who, by illumination, could see uninterruptedly the divine order of nature, and knew that the resolutions heading beautifully this organization showed it to be the nucleus of the everlasting kingdom of God. [Cheers.]

Mr. Todd—I want to say just a few words with regard to the plan of organization here. There are a great many individuals in the world at the present day who are so very much afraid that a creed of some kind will be adopted, that they dare not take the necessary measures to make their faith effective throughout the world. I will grant that I felt somewhat that way myself, once; it is the natural result of the reaction from the fetters of old orthodoxy. It seems to me that the time has come when Spiritualists should look at this question in a different light from what they have done in the past. You talk about this being a creed. What is there that looks like a creed in this business? Yesterday you voted almost unanimously to adopt these resolutions which we have made the basic foundation of our declaration of principles. We are striving to make a practical application of our views.

I, for one, am tired of depending altogether upon theories which we are afraid to make practical. We ask you now to take hold of your old faith, make it practical, and do not be afraid of it. What we want is a plan of organization which is thoroughly democratic. Look at the plan we submit: You go right from the national council to the State councils, from the State to the district, and from them all the way down until every single act that is performed in any one of the several branches, having reference to the general interests of the organization, must come before the people and be

ratified by them before it can be made any part of their work. Can you find anything more democratic than that? Suppose Congress sent every important question affecting the interest of the nation brought before it, back to the people to decide upon, would they not hold a better opinion of them than they do to-day? In making this organization so thoroughly democratic as we have done, do you not see that you hold in your right hands the reins of government, that it will be impossible even for those who are in the habit of asserting their authority and usurping the position and rights of others, to interfere in any way whatsoever, so long as the people are the foundation of power—so long as they shall decide all questions?

Said one delegate, "I cannot go back to my society at Toledo and carry this thing." He sees a bugbear which has no existence, except in his own imagination, which is very frightful. Not that I wonder at it; it is the result of his coming out from the old institutions of darkness. There is no self-glorification in this matter. It has been too much the practice of Spiritualists to get together in convention and make self-laudatory remarks and assert our glorious religion, and so on. Then the world has demanded to see the fruits of our religion, and we were powerless to set forth anything. We were powerless, apparently, but we have come together in this Association and have determined to take hold of this matter; that we mean to do something; that we intend to work for the education of the young and of the old; that we are going to work for the amelioration of mankind, and that by means of every door by which we can reach humanity; and that where we find evil entrenched, we shall break in, even if it be in the Christian Church; and if it is necessary—like Samson—for us to grasp the pillars of the temple, and in the destruction of the wicked, we, too, shall give up our lives. We intend to penetrate through the miseries of life until we are able to cry out, "Behold the emancipation of the enslaved wife!" [Cheers.] Mr. Chairman, I move the previous question.

The Chairman—I hope that will not be done, for I wish to ask the privilege of saying a few words to you myself on this matter. I trust they are important at the present time. I have been a close observer of the movements of one of the

most prominent evidences of future progress in the direction of organization. And what is that? Never before in ten years have I seen so great a desire manifested in every quarter to balance their local arrangements so that they can become a part of this national organization. Then another point. Let me state to you, by the returns of the census of 1870, we have the status of Spiritualism, and a measure of comparison afforded with other institutions of the country. We find that the Catholics, who are generally very close in these things, say that three years ago there were 11,000,000 Spiritualists in the United States. I know the figures are disputed, but there they are. The number returned by the government officials on the religious census showed only 6,000 Spiritualists in the whole country. [A laugh.] Then, property belonging to the denomination is estimated at \$100,000 value. How many places of worship? According to the government census, 14. [A laugh.] This is, you perceive, just where we stand. Now, it seems to me that the plan of organization proposed, starting away down with its ramifications through all the people, cannot fail to be appreciated among the people. It is time we were at work on this matter. [Cheers.]

Mr. Crocker—Do you embody the propositions in the organization?

The Chairman—No; they are added as a kind of preamble. Are you ready for the question?

The proposition incorporating the platform and adopting the plan of organization as reported by the committee was then carried.

## PLAN OF ORGANIZATION AS ADOPTED BY THE CONVENTION.

### CONSTITUTION.

#### CHAPTER I.

#### ON ORGANIZATION.

This Association shall be known as

“The Universal Association of Spiritualists,”

and shall consist of the following divisions and sub-divisions, to wit:

1st. The Primary Councils, consisting of the various primary organized bodies of Spiritualists everywhere.

2d. The State or District Councils, consisting of delegates from the several primary councils within the limits of different States, Departments, or Districts.

3d. The National Councils, consisting of delegates from the several District Councils of the several Nations; and

4th. The Universal Congress, consisting of representatives from the several National Councils.

## CHAPTER II.

### ON MEMBERSHIP.

ARTICLE 1. Any person eighteen years of age may become a member of any Primary Council of The Universal Association of Spiritualists by subscribing to the principles of the Association, and paying the regular initiatory fee.

ART. 2. Membership shall continue during the pleasure of the member, unless the name be dropped from the rolls by the order of a majority of the Council to which the member belongs, for the non-payment of dues, the member having first had a month's notice of such intended action; and no member shall be expelled from this Association for any other cause.

## CHAPTER III.

### ON PRIMARY COUNCILS.

ARTICLE 1. A Primary Council may consist of not less than fifteen regularly initiated members.

ART. 2. Each Primary Council, upon perfecting its organization by choosing a Recording Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer, and sending the same, with a list of its members to the Council of the District in which it is located, shall be recognized as a regularly organized Council, and allotted a designation by number.

ART. 3. The Primary Councils shall hold regular weekly meetings for the discussion of, or lectures upon, the principles of the Association; and, whenever possible, shall organize, maintain and conduct a Children's Progressive Lyceum as a model system of education, in which ultimately to merge all other systems of education.



ART. 4. The Primary Councils shall make regular quarterly reports to State or District Councils, setting forth their progress, condition and prospects, accompanied by the quarterly dues and fees hereinafter provided.

ART. 5. Primary Councils shall exercise control over all matters which specially relate to themselves; always providing that the principles of the Association shall not be transcended or infringed.

ART. 6. Primary Councils may make propositions to District Councils relating to matters concerning the State or District, and to the National Councils or Universal Congress upon subjects of a more general application.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### ON STATE OR DISTRICT COUNCILS.

ARTICLE 1. State or District Councils shall consist of delegates chosen by the Primary Councils from among themselves, each Primary Council of two hundred and fifty members or less being entitled to one delegate, and to an additional delegate for every fractional two hundred and fifty members, who shall hold their offices for one year, and until their successors are duly chosen, unless sooner recalled by the Primary Councils.

ART. 2. State or District Councils shall hold regular quarterly sessions at the largest cities within the States or Districts, beginning on the second Mondays in January, April, July and October. And upon perfecting their organizations by electing Recording Secretaries, Corresponding Secretaries and Treasurers, who shall reside in the said cities and constitute the Executive Committees, and such other officers as may be necessary to conduct the affairs of the Association within the States or Districts, and forwarding the same to the National Councils, together with a consolidated report of the Primary Councils within their several jurisdictions; they shall be recognized as regularly organized State or District Councils, with full authority to administer the affairs of the Association within their several jurisdictions.

ART. 3. State or District Councils shall make regular quarterly reports to the National Councils of the progress, condition and prospects of the Association within their several limits, together with the dues and fees hereinafter provided;

and shall keep such records of Primary Councils and the members of each as shall show the condition of the Association.

ART. 4. All propositions received by State or District Councils upon matters relating to their respective States or Districts, shall be referred by them to the several Primary Councils within their limits, each of which shall make a return of the number of affirmative and negative votes; and if it be found that a majority of the members voting favor the proposition, it shall be considered as adopted, otherwise it shall be considered as rejected, and the proposition in the same or other form shall not again receive consideration during the current year.

ART. 5. All propositions received by State or District Councils, having a National or universal application, shall, if approved by the Council, be forwarded to the National Council.

ART. 6. State or District Councils may take the initiative in any matters relating to the Association, and forward their propositions to the National Councils.

## CHAPTER V.

### ON NATIONAL COUNCILS.

ARTICLE 1. National Councils shall consist of delegates chosen from among themselves by the State or District Councils of the several nations, each State or District Council of fifty members or less be entitled to one delegate, and to an additional delegate for every fractional fifty members, who shall hold their offices for one year and until their successors are duly appointed, unless sooner recalled by the State or District Council.

ART. 2. National Councils shall hold annual sessions beginning on the third Tuesday of September, at such place as shall be deemed for the best interests of the Association; and shall remain in session until all business is disposed of.

ART. 3. The permanent organizations of National Councils shall consist of Presidents, who shall be known as President of the — Division of The Universal Association of Spiritualists, Vice-Presidents, Recording Secretaries, Corresponding Secretaries and Treasurers, who, with the Presidents and six members of the Councils to be appointed by the Councils shall form the Executive Committees, which shall hold regular quarterly meetings to conduct the affairs of the Association; and such other additional officers as shall

be necessary to administer the affairs of the Association within their respective jurisdictions.

ART. 4. All propositions received by National Councils from State or District Councils, and all propositions originating in the Councils, shall be referred through the District Councils to the Primary Councils for approval or disapproval; and if it be found that a majority of members voting approve, then the proposition shall be considered as adopted, otherwise it shall be considered as rejected; and the proposition in the same or any other form shall not again receive consideration within the current year.

ART. 5. The National Councils shall, on the receipt of lists of members with the initiatory fees from State or District Councils, return blank cards of membership, signed by the President and Treasurer, which shall, by the State or District Councils, be forwarded to the several Primary Councils for distribution to the members.

ART. 6. When members are dropped from the rolls, cards of membership held by them shall be returned to the Primary Councils.

ART. 7. Any person holding a card of membership shall be entitled to visit and speak in any Primary Council, and to vote on propositions relating to the State or District, when in his or her State or District; and on propositions relating to the nation when outside of the State or District; and on universal propositions when outside of the nation.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ON THE UNIVERSAL CONGRESS.

ARTICLE 1. The Universal Congress shall consist of twenty-five representatives, chosen by the several National Councils, the number from each bearing the same proportion to the whole number as the number of members of the Association in each nation bear to the whole number of members in all nations.

ART. 2. The Universal Congress shall convene in the country entitled to the largest number of members, by the concerted action of the National Councils of the several nations; and shall originate propositions regarding its own duties, which, when approved by the majority of all the members of the Association voting, shall be held to be adopted.

CHAPTER VII.  
ON PROPAGANDA.

ARTICLE 1. The National Councils shall call National Mass Conventions, to meet at the same places at which the several Councils shall assemble, which shall make their own organizations, but at which the Executive Committees shall report the proceedings of their Councils at the last sessions, which reports shall be open for discussion as the first proceedings of the Conventions after their organizations, after which the Conventions shall proceed with their own orders of business.

ART. 2. In like manner to the National Councils, State or District Councils shall hold regular quarterly Mass Conventions, at such places within their several Districts as shall best promote the interests of the Association.

ART. 3. The National Councils, as soon as it is possible, shall, at the national capitals, at the expense of the Association, publish newspapers, which shall be official organs of the Association, including the Children's Progressive Lyceums; and for this purpose may appoint editors and publishers to conduct the same, who shall hold their office during the pleasure of the Councils. These papers shall be, editorially, impersonal, and their columns open to the impartial discussion of all subjects, the editing of which shall be prescriptive to no subject or writer.

ART. 4. The said organs shall be made regular weekly issues at the earliest possible time, and shall be furnished in bulk to the several State or District Councils or to their order, in proportion to the respective numbers of their members. The paper shall also be issued at a fixed price to persons not members of the Association, and to the news companies for general sale.

ART. 5. The National Councils shall, as soon as possible, establish a General Publishing Department for the publication of such books, pamphlets and documents upon the principles of the Association as shall be approved by the Councils.

ART. 6. The National Convention shall also organize a Lecture Bureau as soon as the finances of the Association shall permit, and shall keep before the public as many of the best speakers as possible, endeavoring to make it a source of



profit, instead of an expense, to the cause; and shall make such provisions as are necessary for such speakers and mediums as become aged, infirm or indigent in the service of the Association.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### ON FINANCE.

ARTICLE 1. Each person before becoming a member of this Association shall pay to the Treasurer of the Primary Council, for the use of the National Councils, an initiatory fee of one dollar, and regularly thereafter quarterly dues of twenty-five cents, which fees and dues shall be regularly forwarded through the Treasurers of the State District Councils to the Treasurers of the National Councils, at the end of each quarter at the time of making their respective quarterly reports, as heretofore provided.

ART. 2. The Primary Councils shall, as bodies, be responsible to the State or District Councils, and the State or District Councils to the National Councils for the full and regular payment of the above-provided fees and dues.

ART. 3. The Treasurers of National Councils shall make regular official exhibits of all receipts and expenditures of money, which, for the information of the Association, shall be published weekly in the organs of the Association.

ART. 4. The Treasurers of this Association shall make no payment of any demand for money unless it shall first have been duly audited as provided by the several Councils.

## CHAPTER IX.

### ON JURISDICTION AND ADMINISTRATION.

Each Council of this Association shall, within its limit, have full jurisdiction over all matters relating to the Association; and any question which may arise as to the administration of its affairs shall be decided by Councils without referring them to the members of the Primary Councils, and may make such rules and regulations, for government and order, as may be best adapted to the local conditions; always providing that the principles of the Association shall be preserved intact.

## CHAPTER X.

## ON HONORARY MEMBERSHIP.

As it is impossible under our present arbitrary and unequal distributions of wealth to conduct the material affairs of this Association upon the principal of individual pecuniary equality, resort may be made to methods for raising revenues, other than the equal assessment of all members; such as the conferment of Honorary Membership in such manner as may be devised by the Councils, the issue of Certificates of Indebtedness or Bonds, or such other methods as may be deemed expedient and possible under the various local conditions. But all distinctions thus conferred shall cease when the principles of the Association shall become practically formulated through the organizations of the peoples rendering further aid of that kind unnecessary.

## CHAPTER XI.

ARTICLE 1. The President of the American Association of Spiritualists, by and with the consent of the Board of Trustees, shall appoint an Advisory Council of twenty-five members, which, together with the Trustees, shall constitute a Provisional National Council, which shall have the powers and functions and perform the duties provided for the National Councils, and which shall hold their offices until the regular National Councils shall have been duly organized as hereinbefore provided.

ART. 2. Until the regular State or District Councils shall be organized (which they may do whenever there shall be ten or more Primary Councils within the limits of a State or District), the Primary Councils shall make their reports, as herein provided, to the Secretary of the Provisional National Council.

## CHAPTER XII.

The Association, within the limits of the United States of North America, shall be known as "The American Division of the Universal Association of Spiritualists."

## ARTICLE XIII.

## ON AMENDMENTS.

The Constitution may be amended as proposed by any member or Council of the Association, when the amendment

shall have received the approval of a majority of all members of the Association voting.

The Chairman—We are now ready for any other business. The next order of business is fifteen-minute speeches, and the first speaker on the list is Mrs. Sadie Bailey.

Mr. Kates—I ask privilege of recording my vote “No” on the question just disposed of. I was speaking to a friend at the time it was put, and did not have a chance to vote.

The Chairman—If there is no objection, permission will be granted. There is no objection. The vote will be recorded.

The Chairman, in introducing Mrs. Bailey, said—You all know that J. K. Bailey who had that row with this organization. This is one of his wives —

Mrs. Bailey (that was)—When I arose for the purpose of talking to you for a little time, the thought came to me that a number of individuals here asked themselves this question. Is that woman, like all the others that preceded her, about to give us a discussion on free love instead of Spiritualism? Brothers and sisters, I would love to talk to you of the glories and beauties of the glad summer-land. I would love to give to you some of the beautiful visions that I have had from time to time, from the age of a little child, of the beautiful sons and daughters of our spirit home. But I must pass by these and ask you a question. What would you think of a parent who said: “My child I am going to take you to a beautiful garden to-day;” and the child is delighted, and enters through the open gate. His father stands there expatiating upon the beauties of the scene to the mother, but the child cries out: “Father how can I correctly view this scene with these great death goggles on my eyes?”

Now, there is a vast mass of humanity which is born and conceived in false and unnatural conditions, and these conditions are like unto the goggles of the child; and the Spiritualists say to the world, to the children of humanity: Come with us and we will talk with you of the grandeur, the beauties of the spirit life; we will expound to you the truth of Spiritualism. And because we the, free-love Spiritualists, first take the goggles from the eyes of humanity, for-

sooth, we are reviled and persecuted. Do you understand? I will further explain: We know that only as children are born in love can they receive harmonious organizations, be capable of unfolding the spiritual faculties; we know that children can be born in love only as love is free, because there is no love but what is free.

Therefore, my friends, do you not understand that the free-love question, that free love in all its purity, as much as it can be pure, until at last it shall be made into pure Spiritualism, and be understood and do its work, explains the reason why we are holding these free-love conventions, if you choose to call them so. and are making these free-love speeches. And you, conservatives, must remember that if this is a free-love convention, it is also the tenth annual convention of the National Association of Spiritualists. You must know that it proves that no organization of Spiritualists all the world over can live unless it be founded on free love, and has the approval of the angel hosts of heaven. To-day the free-love flag shall be unfolded, never again to be furled through the ages of all coming time. In days past, we have heard of the times that tried men's souls, and they are not over yet; but the present days are those in which are the times that try the souls of women. [Cheers.] These are the times I prophesied when but a girl—a school girl; my spirit angels sent me forth to preach the gospel of health and true generation to all nations.

I was but a mere child when I first arose on the public platform in one of our lyceums and made the declaration that love alone constituted marriage; that the study of sexuality was a grand but beautiful study; that our sexual organism and its functions should only be looked at and thought of with the dearest and most beautiful thoughts and feelings. And through many a country-place I wandered to preach these truths. I have often felt disgusted with Spiritualists because they were not practical reformers. I have studied the different organizations in the different localities, but you cannot succeed where there is not freedom. And I blush to say that, while I have been a poor lone woman, struggling to be a true mother to my children, the cruelest neglect and persecution which I have ever received has been at the hands of would-be respectable Spiritualists; and it seemed



to me that I had shed tears of blood in crying out to heaven to send us a woman noble and brave enough to redeem us. Do you think I was surprised when Victoria Woodhull came to our rescue? I never feared that she was our destroyer; I knew that she was to become the saviour of Spiritualism. [Cheers.]

And here is one of the most beautiful effects of Free Love; for if Mrs. Woodhull had never met her soul's counterpart she never could have succeeded and done the work that she has done, without that true and brave and steady, unflinching worker at her side—Col. Blood. [Cheers.] And when, on the first day of the Convention, I grasped their hands, it seemed to me the brightest moment of my life. As she gave me a warm, loving embrace, and a kiss, she said to me, "Sadie, there is a work which we have been looking for you to do, and that you have not done;" and I said, "Victoria, suffer me until I am competent to the task." With a prophetic eye, she replied, "You may have it to do in this Convention." I trembled, because one word of reproof from her lips is more to me than the condemnation of all the world besides. If this was an experience meeting I might give you a history of my soul for twenty-four years; but I have rebelled against the work which the angels have told me to do. I cannot do all my work to-day, but I will undertake to do it all before my time is up. Then if I can be excused to Victoria, to whom I gave the promise to relate the circumstances of a little history, I will tell the tale in the columns of the WEEKLY. I will try to boil it down into one column, and so, if you will allow me, I will close by repeating the poem entitled "Freedom."

Mr. S. J. Dickson, of Eau Claire, Wis., said:

*Ladies and Gentlemen of this Convention*—I appear before you as the monitor of the North-West. One who has in the past, and one who intends in the future, to shout abroad the truth regardless of the Mrs. Grundies and the power of the satanic majesty combined. I came here for the purpose of being taught. From circumstances I am compelled to give forth a few secrets which are hidden within my heart. I come here and appear before you as an advocate of free love, and as such advocate I am in duty bound to the eternal principles of truth and justice to defend that lady who has

so nobly represented this body during the last two years. I have listened to the speeches which have been made upon this platform, during which time the Beecher-Tilton Scandal has been referred to. Now I know something about the Beecher-Tilton Scandal. When I first read the articles that came from Mrs. Woodhull's pen, in the midst of many friends and foes, I stated that the internal evidences of the truth of that article were so apparent that it was destined to convict Henry Ward Beecher. I made an allusion to Mrs. Woodhull in a city where I lectured, proclaiming my belief in the truth of her charges.

I think that it was some time in December last that I met Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton at the home of Martin Daniels, now deceased, of Eau Claire, Wis., at which time and place she informed me in the presence of several others, that your statements pertaining to Henry Ward Beecher and the wife of Theodore Tilton were correct—correct from the fact that she received them from the lips of Theodore Tilton himself. And furthermore, she stated that Miss Susan B. Anthony told her that she received the same from the lips of Mrs. Tilton.

And, furthermore, she, Mrs. Stanton, at the same time and place, affirmed that Mrs. Anthony wrote to Mrs. S. inquiring if she was not to be at the then pending trial of Mrs. Woodhull. She (Miss A.) stating in said letter, that she intended to be present that justice might be done.

When I started to this Convention, many of my so-called friends affirmed that if I attended the Woodhull Convention they would withdraw from my society. I turned and said to them, that, by the living God, I would attend that Convention, although, upon my return, I found my pews empty for evermore. Let me, in closing, say to you that I have ever supported the doctrines of Mrs. Woodhull. Finally, I will say that I come here as a delegate to vote for her as our next President, and to affirm to you that, notwithstanding all my past falling-short, for I have been found wanting sometimes, I have never been guilty of bowling a stone at that pure woman, Mrs. Woodhull. If there is one thing of which I am proud—one thing of which I shall always boast, it is that I have never been guilty of letting my influence be a bar in the way of progress—of one of the most

beneficent things on earth. Thank God, that in his infinite mercy, He has thought well to raise Mrs. Woodhull up for the welfare of suffering humanity. [Cheers.]

Mr. W. F. Jamieson said:

*Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen*—My subject will be rather a singular one: it is "The Cowardice of the Press." It is a notable fact, that the average editor, however much of a man he may be as an editor, is a natural born coward—afraid to say that his soul is his own. I say the average editor, and by this, of course, I mean many honorable exceptions. Ten years ago, in this city, Spiritualism was all belimed by the local press, with scarcely an exception; and to-day, after the passage of a decade, we find the men and women of this Convention slandered, without the least pretext, by the press of this city. There are some exceptions; but cannot you see that the American press of this day is subsidized by the terrible monster called Christianity? And this is the reason why these editors are made the cowards they are. It is called policy for the editor to write one thing while he believes another. What is called dishonesty in other men is policy with him.

But this scrofula of deception and hypocrisy and dishonesty permeates the entire press of this country, so much so that a man who wishes to read the truth has generally to read a paper the wrong way. [Cheers.] The Chicago press have repeated, with some honorable exceptions, the infamous slanders they told of us ten years ago. The *Inter-ocean* gave by far the best report, and the *Times* came next; but the *Tribune*, the organ of the Christian sentiment of the country, is the most lying and deceptive of them all.

Mr. Jamieson here read from the report of the *Tribune*, making comments upon the different remarks of the writer.

He proceeded to say—So much for the secular press; I have a rod in pickle also for some of our spiritual papers. I propose to come home. You know there is a paper published in this city that makes a *pseudo* pretension of representing Spiritualism. The editor of this almost unpronounceable name, *Religio-Philosophical Journal* [Laughter], has emitted the worst and most foul odors. But ten years ago the *Journal* told us all about Spiritualism, as a pure and true

representation of it was found in its own columns, But if the *Journal* presented a fair representation of modern Spiritualism, I would be ashamed of it, and would not be able to sleep over one night with the conviction upon my mind that I was a Spiritualist. I would recede from the movement at once. You recollect how, a short time ago, the paper took a spite against one of the best and truest men in our ranks—Dr. Henry Slade, of New York—and denounced him as an imposter; when he found that it was all a mistake, the editor of the *Journal* had not the manliness or courage to come out and say so. Only a short time ago this *Journal* came out and slandered one of the most eloquent women orators in our ranks, Cora L. V. Tappan, and then when it was found to be a gross libel, would not retract. Of course none of your exemplary sheets in Chicago would have described a convention of ladies and gentlemen in the loathsome and beggarly way in which we have been described.

But we are surprised at nothing we may read. Look at the way in which they describe even myself in the *Tribune*. W. F. Jamieson, they say, made a long excuse for being an infidel. Why, I always gloried in being an infidel. Other points in the sketch were also referred to. Spiritualists that are making heavy bids for the approval of Mother Grundy, say that we Spiritualists that believe in a free platform are selling Spiritualism out to free-loveism. I have challenged one of our opponents in the State of Michigan to meet me in my own town, and I will challenge him as a debater to any discussion of the theory he may like to make, and I will make good this proposition, that for ten years preceding the advance of Mrs. Woodhull among us there were just as coarse and immoral doctrines taught by the leading writers of Spiritualism as have ever been promulgated since. Now, here is a chance for them. Take, for instance, the *Banner of Light*, the paper of which we are so universally proud. It is charged with this by a clergyman, and in this connection I may say there is not a single original feature in the attacks of the so-called respectable Spiritualists that is not stolen from the thunders of abuse that the clergy are now ashamed of. We find this published in 1868, Sept. 26: "We would allow all parties making bad bargains by marriage, in which no other parties were interested, to dissolve them as they



made them, by mutual consent, before the same authority that sanctioned them and for as little compensation."

There is Woodhullism for you by the editor of the *Banner of Light*. Take up the *R. P. Journal* and what do we find it say. Listen:

Neither priest, court or jury can make or break a relation so intimate as that of marriage. As society now is, we sanction and legalize marriages without scarcely an inquiry regarding the parties so bound, and refuse to divorce them, or rather to recognize a divorce that nature has already made, without giving to greedy scandal-mongers the undoubted prerogative of impugning the motives and assailing the character of those seeking to dissolve such relation. Marriage is made honorable; divorce dishonorable.

Judged by the sentiments and life of this editor, marriage must be dishonorable and divorce may be made honorable. This sanctified, clarified editor of one of the only pure papers published in the United States is going to bring purity back to the world and teach its lessons to Spiritualists.

Farther, we can quote without limit from the various publications of the Spiritualists, from Andrew Jackson Davis and others.

From the *Banner of Light*, Oct. 3, 1868, we find these sentiments advocated: "The time is coming when you will understand that that marriage which is not of the soul is no marriage at all; that that which is brought about by external conditions is altogether unlawful. That which God hath joined together none can put asunder; but that which is joined together by the conditions of human life almost any man can put asunder, and it is lawful that they should, because the parties are unlawfully bound together." This is just what Mrs. Woodhull says. Take the "light from the spirit world," and we find it laid down that we see more unfortunate results from legalized marriage than we shall disclose. And I can go on quoting from spiritualistic writers everything which is as bad as what these men who form a little insignificant minority in the Convention—are striving to make us believe will sink Spiritualism out of sight. For twenty years Spiritualism has stood this kind of attack; and can it be possible that a little woman in the form of Mrs. Woodhull can sink Spiritualism, when one hundred writers and lecturers could not do it in all the years that have passed? Listen to what Andrew Jackson Davis and Henry

C. Wright have to say about this question. Mr. Wright, in his work on the relation of husband and wife, says: "Should a man or woman, after entering into the relation of husband and wife, become convinced, by various means, that each does not embody the other's ideal, then they are not truly married. They are divorced; and both have a natural right to seek further of the heart's ideal associate. If either wishes separation, there is no longer true marriage." Just what Mrs. Woodhull says. What is the secret main-spring of the wonderful power of this woman, that taking up the scattered ranks of Spiritualists she has brought them into one gigantic array? [Cheers.] And we discover that the *R. P. Journal*, which as a matter of fact has joined hands with the Young Men's Christian Association, is carrying on the same work in which it was engaged years ago. Now it seems to have awakened through the slumber and become suddenly virtuous and respectable. Andrew Jackson Davis, in page 348 of his "Great Harmonia," says: "Marriage is pure, proper and chaste only when it is sought to satisfy the soul's deepest, purest, highest attractions." With such a motive any degree of marriage will prove a benefit, although merely circumstantial and transient.

And on page 331 of the same work he says: "Transient marriages are good in themselves considered, and should be made useful to the world. It is a law of nature that all the lower temperaments, without implying impurity, will suggest and demand transient marriages, because, manifestly, they are essentially bigamic, polygamic and omnigamic in their attractions." Why don't these pure, sanctified, regenerated Spiritualists protest against Andrew Jackson Davis? Why do they still buy his "Harmonia," and never think of gagging it while they are ready to vomit over themselves and everybody else when Mrs. Woodhull says the same things?

This, in short, is what they propose to do. They propose to deprive Spiritualists, liberals and infidels of the right of suffrage if they can get the power. Christianity has always wielded all the powers she could gain in this way, and now these sanctified, white-turned-up-eye, white-chokered gentlemen who want to save us from ruin are swooping down upon us. I know of no class in this world that can be more

easily spared than these white-chokered clerical professors. We have 40,000 professors in this country, and if they were all to die off, we would not be any worse off morally than we are now. They are going to wash everybody clean in the blood of the lamb, which vicarious atonement these men have been hawking around for many centuries. Why, Protestantism itself originated because Henry VIII. of England, with his many wives, wanted to be his own pope. It was born in lust, conceived in iniquity, and will die a death of disgrace. [Cheers and a hiss.] Yes, there is one goose in this audience.

Let me give you an instance of a clerical rascal, taken from the *Detroit Free Press*. Of course, all the parties moved in the most respectable society—that kind of society which our respectable Spiritualists so much want to get into. They want to get into that company, oh, so bad. They want to be so pure—so good. As for myself, I have no desire to be an angel, and with the angels stand. I don't want to be a saint, for the very good and sufficient reason that if I was I would be the loneliest and saddest individual you ever looked at. The clerical rascal wrote to his bosom friend to the effect that he had resumed preaching in the far West; that he would be an exemplary character in the future, as if he had not been in the past, finishing the epistle with the ejaculation "Bless Jesus." [Loud laughter.]

These are the men that are going to save us. We should all remember that this Christian power in the land is setting on these reporters and cowardly editors to belittle and belabour us all over. I remember a revivalist—one Moffat—who went down among the congregation, and seeing a beautiful young lady in tears, said to her, "Sister, do you feel that you love Christ? Are you sure that you love Jesus?" "Yes, I am sure." "Well," said the minister of the Gospel, "kiss me for Christ's sake!" [Cheers.]

Mrs. Benjamin Todd, of Michigan, said:

This fight in which we are engaged is a battle of freedom against tyranny. There is no middle step between the two. You must be for one or for the other; for until freedom reigns, despotism reigns, and until the last act of despotism is done away with, freedom does not exist. My friends, we are in slavery to-day. We have abolished African slavery,

and we wish to abolish the slavery of American women [Cheers], because of the oppression that still holds its head up among us and runs its course. We may never hope to arrive at the brightest period of civilization so long as women are yet enchained, and present the most hideous of all spectacles—an imprisoned soul and body; so long as the doctrine is taught to women, "Submit yourselves to your husbands, you have no rights as against him." You may have intelligence and ability, but thou art a woman, and that alone condemns thee.

But the eternal laws of nature demand progress, and the elevation of woman from her degraded position into which she has been thrust by her slave holders will be accomplished by the ripening and increasing purity of civilization. It may take ages, but it must and will be done. Flowers will cease to bloom and rivers to flow, the highest mountains may crumble even with the level plain, but the long fight for freedom will at last triumph, for God is just and his laws are active, impartial and progressive. We must be either for freedom or despotism. I ask you what you are here for. Many of you even to fight against your own freedom, although I am ashamed to use so barbarous an expression. Spiritualism knows no personal god or devil other than one incarnated in the flesh and worshiped 1800 years ago. It honors no particular Jesus and falls at the shrine of no saint. More devoutly we may worship them, but no more devoutly and under like circumstances than do the poor and unfortunate Marys of to-day worship their fatherless Christ. Submit yourselves to your husbands will never be heard fifty years from to-day.

Mr. P. B. Randolph said:

*Ladies and Gentlemen*—I am here to fill a gap, and I would not endeavor to fill it only that P. B. Randolph always does the best that he can do under all circumstances. In the first place, let me say to you that I am taking to-night my last and final farewell of conservatism. [Cheers.] I have launched my bark on a broad sea. They have sometimes said that I was not a Spiritualist; that I had denounced Spiritualism. I happen to have in my pocket a copy of the New York Tribune containing my somewhat noted recantation speech, and in that you will find these words: There are two kinds



of Spiritualism—an orderly one and a disorderly one, and I repudiate the one and accept the other, and only after a lapse of eighteen or nineteen years have I found out my mistake in designating which was the orderly and which the disorderly part of Spiritualism. What I supposed was disorderly turns out to be orderly, simply because it is the Spiritualism of progress. [Cheers.] Spiritualism means advancement. So far as the conservative side of Spiritualism is concerned, they wire in and they wire out, and no one counts their coming or their going. But such is not the fate of the live Spiritualism that we have inaugurated here for the first time during these last two or three days. There is no chance to misunderstand where the direction of Spiritualism is at present. Some of our friends have paid their respects to the Young Men's Christian Assassination Association Society—a band of brothers who wear white chokers and best of clothes; and when one of our sisters goes for them, this Association, coming up to the rescue, takes a stand which it is impossible for any one to misunderstand. Its watchword is the rise of man and the rise of woman. [Cheers.] I know there is a considerable amount of misapprehension on the part of some as to the position assumed by the radical party to-day, who think that chaos, riot and destruction are going to be let loose upon the world. But they forget the fundamental principles of the nature that surrounds us; they forget that God Almighty never created a perfect thing, but that his plan necessitated that we should always begin at the bottom and advance step by step upward. Every man and woman who has right in their hearts feels the divine influx taken in from the universe, which keeps them going on a little longer. The man who has come out and declared himself to be a mouth-piece of the eternal god, was crucified as we have been crucified in the past and in the present. But at last the glorious resurrection comes, for the world is based on the law of advancement; revolutions never go backward; a truth once turned out into the world must go on forever, it can never die. Why? Because it is the hidden nature of truth to spring from the bosom of the infinite father and incarnate itself in human brains, in human hearts, in human souls, in human conscience. It follows that when the Almighty

sends this mighty coach in its elliptic course around the universe that truth is bound to come, transforming the animal to the man, taking him out from the lower hell of animalism as you call it, and gradually bringing him back to his father's house.

God Almighty who stands there, is saying: "Come back, my children, come home, my child;" and we are all going home on the bosom of freedom, liberty and Spiritualism, as God Almighty understands it, and as the angels of the heavens proclaim it to every receptive soul on the surface of the soil we tread. [Cheers.] How grand, how noble a thing it is to be a human being to know that wherever you may abide, you sprang from the infinite, and to the infinite you will return. It is good and grand and true; they crucified Jesus Christ, they sawed asunder some of his prophets, they boiled others in hot oil, and the land was marked with gibbets; how much better are we than those that have gone before? What a grand thing it is to be a martyr in a cause so grand as this? What a grand thought it is that all the illimitable hosts that have crossed the dark river are waiting for us, of whose myriad ranks death has transported them all to the spirit land; which no matter whether you be a conservative or a Christian in your life, five months after you are dead every one of you become a spirit. How easy it is in view of the grand aim which God has in store for us all to bear the little indignities of this world.

Spiritualism has again came to the front, and lifts up its head beyond the power of its enemies to crush it. Like the Chamomile, the more you tread upon it the better it grows, the more luxurious it becomes. There seems to be a principle connected with Spiritualism which seems to be scarcely understood. I refer to the principle of spirituality. I do not think much of the men and women who follow the lead of any leader without inquiring the reason or being able to explain the cause. I have gazed into the spiritual world. I have been familiar—and I say it without egotism, God knows—with the spirit world. I see them there now—mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, even to the child that was murdered by its mother five or six weeks before its earthly birth—I have seen them all. And I know of a truth that up there is still the principle of individuality, and

here let me say that I find the principle of individuality sustaining the human race. What I mean by that is, that every discipline, every experience, every educational step you take, in whatever line or direction it may be, is intended for the purpose of making you do your own thinking, your own aspirations, your own learning, is rounding out your own souls, independent of what Mrs. Grundy may say, or what a half-fledged society may demand of you.

There is another thought that lies back of this, is the continual advancement right on forever and ever, not as a great many Spiritualists believe—as a great many Christians believe—that when you arrive on the other side of the gates of death, you are in boundless space it is true, but must always be what you were when you left this mortal life for all eternity. But a greater mistake was never made; can never be made. The spiritual world is the realm of action, thought perpetuation and generation of power and the ultimate destiny of the soul as the child of an infinite father. It is said that Nature is our mother and God is our father, which I thoroughly and most assuredly do believe. If that be so, all that Spiritualism asks and demands of you is to be worthy of your parentage, worthy of the destiny that awaits you, be worthy of the high calling to which you have been appointed. For in the time that is rapidly approaching, a few short years at the most, you will be launched into the great eternal Spiritual kingdom, where you will meet your father and mother, your husband or wife, and there will be the end of it, so far as that stage is concerned.

When you meet them there on that other side you are going to find towns and cities, lakes and rivers, labor and rest, sleep and sweet dreams. Some of you do not know much about your spirit; you hold it to be after death an unsubstantial, airy nothing, but a greater mistake cannot be made. The spirit is as solid matter as you or I, only it is of a higher plane. What do I mean by solid matter? I mean to say that the spirit of a human being is a being of solid thought, of eyes and digestion. Everything on the Spiritualist plane is mere air. What do I mean by Spiritualists' plane? What is this that I have in my hand? that is nothing more nor less than, say a piece of ice, and now it has

melted and has become liquid water; put it over the fire and it becomes steam, and apply heat and it becomes incandescent, and the next step it has all apparently melted away into thin air. But yet it is matter still, although the substance may be spiritualized. And so it goes on.

No principle, no system of religion can make you happy on the other side if you have not done your duty on this. Thus the body is nothing more than a mere machine, elaborate in its details, but complete in itself. Cut my hand or my arm off, Mr. Surgeon, and what is left? Thus the body is nothing more than a machine. The hand is gone; the blood and bone, the nervous blood is all buried in the grave, but somehow or other I can still close my hand, still feel my fingers itch. What is the matter with that soldier? There, see, he is stretching his cork leg. And so, I say, you cannot disarm the spiritual body; but here I take my finger, and you see it and feel it, and I hold it over the flame and it does not burn. Why? because of the soul within. The mind or the thing that thinks, feels, knows, as the chemist who elaborates from all matter its very essence. When you come to the spiritual world you shall die no more, and if you cannot die what are you going to do? Are you going to the other world unprepared for it and blindfolded? Let me go on even for five minutes. I shall boil over on this subject if you do not. A great many people are going to the eternal world with their eyes tight shut, and some won't allow their eyes to be opened. But what do we see here? For the first time in the history of Spiritualism, for the first time in twenty-five years, we see Spiritualism is an organization, bold enough in resources, bold enough in spirit to make the world listen to the child just born. This Jesus who has come out of the new Nazareth, this Jesus which does not seek to save souls by the blood of the Lamb, by the crucifixion on the cross, but which seeks to save and build up manhood and womanhood, and true civilization, by revealing the spiritual fact that though a man is born of, woman, he can never die again. It teaches that awful fact of your individuality, namely, that upon the evidence of your soul, of your spirit, of your bodies, of that law written upon every particle of your substance depends your weal or woe.



You cannot hide when you get into the spiritual world; you cannot run away in the spiritual world. I may do a bad act here; I may kill and murder you; but so long as I escape the law, if I have no conscience, I may be comparatively happy. Spiritualism teaches this eternal truth, that whatever you do is a witness against you; and when you pass into the spiritual world to be met by A., or B., or C., the question that will be asked you, not only by others but by yourselves will be, "How have you used the talents given you? Have you improved the time? Have you cherished your individuality and become a strong and noble and true man or woman?" Oh, the Christs that are crucified for Spiritualism, for this grandest of all truths. Oh, the Calvaries that are strewn with bones of those who suffered! The oceans that have run deep—knee deep—with tears of blood from the eyes of those who have suffered. What for? That they might gain a place in your esteem? No; but that they tell you the road that leads to the endless glories of the spirit world. Oh, yet a little longer and I too shall be with you! Oh, great God, spare me yet that I may go down into those hells among my would-be foes, among those that are lost and ruined, physically and mentally, by Christianity, and lead them all into the bright clear light of Spiritualism. My God, can you reject it—will you reject it? Rather, does it not fill your souls until you are ready to be sacrificed under that terrible Juggernaut of Christianity, in order that men may be saved and the world redeemed. [Cheers.]

Each one of us is poor; not has been made rich by Spiritualism. There is not a woman who has embraced it but has had the finger of scorn pointed at her; not a man who has espoused it but has been called fool, lunatic, insane. Obloquy and contempt have been heaped upon them, and they have been ground down even beneath the heels of harlots. I do not mean the female harlots, but he and she who sell their souls for the thing called Christianity. It is not your hands nor your heels that I come to talk to; it is your souls—the divine part of you. I may talk in barbaric fashion; but I tell you that away down in our hearts there rests a diamond pure as ever fell from the infinite heavens. It is the human soul; it is the spark which fell from deity, and if it came from

heaven it is going home again, and you are going home with it. [Cheers.]

They say to me, "Randolph, you are a fool; why don't you go out and become a good and honest Christian; why don't you leave these people who have despised you?" "Why," I have said, "I cannot go out, for it is one of the fruits of Spiritualism, that, like a man stung by an adder or bitten by a mad dog, it is in his blood—in his nervous system, and so the man that has ever believed in a single rap can never disbelieve. [Cheers.] I said to myself once, Spiritualism is an infernal humbug, and that very night a hand was placed upon my head. Then again, in England, in 1864, I said, "Oh, it is all a delusion; they are demons and devils to lure our souls to destruction." And then I went to sleep, and in the silence of the night there was a rumbling and roaring in my room, and right there, beneath an arch, stood the sainted form of her who bore me. We march on. I have this day taken my stand by the side of Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull, because she is the champion of her sex. My mother said to me, "My son, let the world go back on you; let them crush you down. You are fearful and miserable. Well, work, labor, go through sin, hate, storm, obloquy, contempt, slander, persecution, of it be even for three score and ten years; it will be a very cheap way to purchase eternal glory." [Cheers.] "How is that for high?" [Laughter.] And the pith of the story is not yet told. What I want to say is this: What is this I have here? Why, it is a great, big cocoanut. That is good to eat. No, I cannot eat it. But cut the outside; there is something underneath. But I cannot eat it as it is now. Christianity is indigestible; but underneath it lies Spiritualism, and underneath Spiritualism lies Individuality—the innate goodness of the soul in all its transcendent and glorious majesty. Where lies the blame for so much misery and wrong-doing? The cause is undoubtedly to be found in the bad conditions which grow out of the present state of marriage, under the Christian system which sanctifies it; perverting the human soul from the objects for which God intended it; making robbers instead of honest men. Let us see to it that we do all that in us lies to lift the world from that thralldom which has grown out of Calvary.

Aye, to-night it is again buried, and this is its grave, and I have preached its funeral sermon. [Cheers.]

Mr. Cotton said:

*Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen*—I desire your attention for a few moments; not that I can command your attention by my eloquence; but “hear me for my cause, and hear me that you may hear.” I have longed for this moment, first of all that I might put myself right before this people; and I want to say, in the first place, that I stand upon this free platform, and whatever is, is true to the cause that produces it. I lay this down as a basic fact, that an individual cannot believe unless the knowledge that he or she may have, does prove the thing; and when approved, they have no other way than to yield and believe, so that we are not the arbiter of our own fate. Secondly, I have no curses or abuses to heap upon individuals, because of their faith or because of their want of faith. The whole world is my church, all humanity the brotherhood, and to do good my religion.

Having said this much with regard to my position I want to say that from the first, since Mrs. Woodhull has been President of this Association, I have fought her battles according to the little ability that I have possessed. And as I have traveled nearly all the time in various sections of the country, and come into contact with people who abused her, I have stood up in defense of her, so far as I agree with her principles. And when she went to prison for declaring through her paper what seems to me to be a fact, I sympathized with her, and denounced the institution which virtually put her in that position; and I, with brother O. P. Kellogg, were attempting to inaugurate something to release her from jail, when, before the scheme was fully matured and carried into operation, help came to her, for which I am very grateful. And I want to say to you that it has been said to me time and again, “Mrs. Woodhull is not a good woman.” I had said to such, “She and we all are as good as we can be under the circumstances.” We, none of us, have the right to boast under this fact; but I will say this, that because a person is guilty of what the world calls a crime, it shall never cause me, like the priest, to elevate my eyes and pass by on the

other side. I will stretch out the hand of sympathy, although Mrs. Grundy may say, You will lose your respectability by so doing.

I well remember a story told by Mr. C. B. Wilson of a lady who was passing over from New York to Brooklyn in a ferry. There came along an individual whom the world terms a prostitute, and sat down by her side. And another individual came along, and said to the lady, "Do you know who you are sitting by the side of?" And the lady replied, "She looks as if she was a woman." "Do you know that she is a prostitute, and do you dare to sit by her side?" And the lady replied, "All right; it is not catching in our family." I think that we may feel all right that all these things that are said to be improper are not catching in our family. But I want to say that I have not been magnetized, nor mesmerized, nor sociologized, as some have called it, and that to-day I believe with Mrs. Woodhull, up to a certain point, on this marriage question; beyond that point, I differ. I will tell you how I believe with her that marriage is not a sacrament, as believed by the Catholics; secondly, that it is not a divine institution, as believed by the Protestants.

But I do believe that it is a divine institution between soul and soul, as I believe the Bible recognizes Christ in man, which is the good principle, and that this is the saving power which is come to redeem the world. So that there is a golden thread of truth in the old theology that Christ was the Saviour of the world. And that Saviour of the world is in humanity, and has come to redeem the world to God and to people earth with angels. Now I would say to you that I believe this soul relation is the true marriage, and that marriage should be a civil contract, and the law should be passed to that effect, so that they can come together, and in some way arrange the matter. I believe also that if they shall diverge from each other, from any cause, so that they cannot live in harmony together, that they should be able to separate. But here is the point to which I wish to call your attention, and as I have but a few moments, I may not be able to make myself perfectly understood.

Mrs. Woodhull said, in a conversation which I heard her have in the room, as well as introducing Moses Hull, that she



used the term love for sexual embrace. Now, I believe that while we have one true love, we must of necessity be true to that true love; if we go outside of it for a new love for a day, to me that is promiscuity, and I do not know how to call it anything else. Now, she says, that "if Col. Blood should love you, speaking to Mrs. Hardy to-night"—speaking of sexual embrace and using the word love and it is with her consent that I tell you this)—"I could love you the better because I love him." Now, there I diverge, I cannot see it. There is just the point where I am not able to follow. If you have one true love it must be a true love, and a true heaven-born relation between souls; and when, from any cause, you have outlived it, go where you can find it, but this going out after it every night I do not understand.

I want to say also that it has come to me, that it is right, as she has promised to give us what she calls the "Elixir of Life," that in connection with that she shall give us the history of her life. Not believing it to be right to be a hypocrite, I think she ought to come out like Moses Hull and divulge the whole thing; and in connection with uncovering individuals from Butler down, she was going to tell you that she, not for love nor lust, but for power to carry on this glorious work, had prostituted herself sexually to do it. Now I said I was going to put myself in a position to tell her story to-day, whether she puts in practice what she preaches. Now I say, in face of all this, I fight for her, for she is doing a work that no other woman could do. I will sustain her in her glorious work of redeeming the world in this direction; for she has gone down to the sinks of iniquity to do a work for humanity. Why, in God's name, let us sustain her. If she is doing a good work which, though some of us may feel that she has done some things for which we might wish to condemn her, yet I say verily, nay, let us do as the Apostle Paul instructs us—I quote him because I believe it to be the truth—he says: "Why, judge ye for yourselves what is right, but judge no man," and I am going to add "no woman." [Cheers.] I stand for myself, and live in my position, and allow everybody else to do it. And I do not see why I should be compelled to take the same path to the Holy of Holies as others, since my path is my own as that of others is theirs. I am open to conviction, but this idea I

shall fight for until I see the right, and then I will acknowledge it, but not by psychological influences, for I am not susceptible to them. [Uproar.] And now I say to those dear friends that have heard this statement —

The Chairman—Time.

Mr. Cotton—Shall I finish this sentence? That I love humanity with all my heart and soul, and I will work with this woman who has labored as she best understands the way, for the good of humanity, whether we agree upon all these points or not.

There were loud cries for Mrs. Woodhull.

Mrs. Woodhull, on coming forward, was received with cheers. She said:

Mr. Cotton has been coming to these things for some time, and I suppose he wants a reply. Not being able to make an impression by assailing the principles of social freedom, he now descends to assail the personality of their advocate. First of all, I want to know what it is he is trying to get at. Now, Mr. Cotton, will you please tell me? I want to fully understand you to know what you want me to do? What is it that you want me explain? I believe I was talking in the room when you came in, and was saying something like that which you said. But tell me what do you want?

Mr. Cotton—I would say that I wanted fifteen minutes, and I have had them. [Laughter.]

Mrs. Woodhull—I am a little confused. I am thinking whether I shall lose any of my womanly dignity if I stoop to answer this man. I am really considering whether I shall. A man questioning my virtue! Have I any right as a woman to answer him?

The Chairman—I hardly think it necessary.

Mr. Cotton—I do not think I am worth the powder to shoot at. I have only told what I can prove. [Hisses.]

Mrs. Woodhull—I hardly know if it is necessary for me to answer this man. If this Convention wants to know any thing special about my sexual organs let us have it understood.

Mr. Shaw—Did he tell the truth?

Mrs. Woodhull—Suppose he did tell the truth. Has Mr. Cotton ever had sexual intercourse with Mrs. Woodhull?

Mr. Cotton—No.

Mrs. Woodhull—Do you know of any man that has?

Mr. Cotton—No.

Mrs. Woodhull—Then, what in the name of heaven can you prove? Have you in your eagerness to do something for the public weal, which, I suppose you consider in danger, caught up the uncomprehended sayings of some busybody who thinks he knows more about my business than I do myself and better how to manage it, that you come before this Convention and arraign me for hypocrisy? I hurl the intention back in your face, sir, and stand boldly before you and this Convention, and declare that I never had sexual intercourse with any man of whom I am ashamed to stand side by side before the world with the act. I am not ashamed of any act of my life. At the time, it was the best I knew. Nor am I ashamed of any desire that has been gratified or of any passion alluded to. Every one of them is a part of my own soul's life, for which, thank God, I am not accountable to you. Therefore, sir, I have nothing to offer up on the altar of the confessional. If others have, I have no objections. I had intended to put these things before the world in my own time and way; but I shall not be forced to explain anything, by any job, put up to compel me to take a position that does not belong to me to assume.

It may, however, be a fit time for this issue when a man, and such a man, feels called upon in the name of virtue to come before this Convention and arraign me for my sexual acts, when he is compelled to say he does not know of any man with whom I ever had sexual intercourse. I think it may be a fitting time—a fitting ending to this Convention since—it brings the question down to just this: Of what does virtue consist? But I fear I may lose myself and say things I am not yet quite ready to say. It is not, however, from cowardice I hesitate; but out of respect to some of my friends who, thinking to do the cause a service, have forced this issued at this time. I am full cognizant of it all, but it has assumed a form for which they did not provide, and has passed from their control to that of the opposition,

which having failed to crush out the doctrine of social freedom, now at this late stage of the Convention, think to do something by springing this issue. They are welcome to all the comfort it will afford them. But I am not yet entirely satisfied as to how far I ought, indeed how far I can, indulge them and maintain my womanly dignity. A woman questioned on the public platform, and that too by a man at this stage of agitation for freedom!

But what is it that this man is after? He wants me, because I claim that Moses and Elvira Hull had a right to do what they have done, that I shall divulge the private history of my life, and whether I have prostituted myself to carry on this work. Did this man or did any other person even hear me make any pretensions to any special line of sexual life? I am an advocate of freedom. I have openly declared that I had the right to change my love every day of my life if I wanted to and could. What more does he want? Does he want me to say I have the right to change love oftener than that? Is that sufficient for the man? Is that freedom enough to satisfy his longing? Can I say anything more to assuage his desires? Or is it that he would make me an inconsistent advocate of sexual freedom by the acknowledgment that, when questioned, I have a right to stoop to explain? I should really like to know at what it is he is driving —

Voices—Tell us to-night.

Mrs. Woodhull—I have my own proper business to attend to to-night. I want to know why people congregate in this Convention and make me their president. Is it because I have shown any cowardice during the last two years? Or is it because I have gone through the very depths of hell to give them freedom? I want to know. Is it because I have been a coward, or is it because I have braved the penitentiary and every other damnable thing that could be put up to hinder me giving you the truth? [Cheers.] Well, now, when I came out of my prison I came out of it a beggar. I appealed to the Spiritualists, to the reformers of the country, to send in their money that I might send you my paper. But did you do it? No; you left me to starve in the streets; you left my paper to die; you sent in a few paltry dollars, but not enough to meet the necessary payments. I knew my paper



had to live, or I should assuredly be sent to Sing Sing. Hence, I went to the world's people. I went to your bankers, presidents of railroads, gamblers, prostitutes, and got the money that has sent you the paper you have been reading, and I do not think that any of you are the worse for handling it. [Cheers.] I used whatever influence I had to get that money, and that's my own business, and none of yours; and if I devoted my body to my work and my soul to God, that is my business and not yours. I have gone before the world devoting heart and soul to this cause. I have been willing and still am willing to yield up my life, if need be, to further its interests. [Cheers.] All my mind; all my might; all my strength; all my faculties are engaged in this labor, and when any of them are demanded, they are not withheld. It would be no glad thing for me to have to yield my life that the world may gain freedom. Jesus of Nazareth, whom Christians worship to-day as God, even he prayed that the drinking of such a cup might pass from him. And so do I. [Cheers.] But I would drink it if the spirits, whose servant I am, present it to my lips. They have intrusted me with a mission, and I have done and shall do everything and anything that is necessary to accomplish it. And more than this; I am proud to say that whatever that has been or may be I am not, nor shall be ashamed to proclaim it to the world, standing side by side with my lover [cheers] who stands by me now, as he has stood for nine years, manfully holding up my hands and encouraging my weary, sometimes almost fainting heart when deserted by everybody else. [Cheers.] Hence I say, suppose I have been obliged to crucify my body in whatsoever way to fulfill my duty, what business is that of Mr. Cotton? I prostituted my body by speaking to you last night when I was scarcely able to stand alone. I shall do the same to-night, in order to advance a great truth to the world that shall prove its salvation. And you prostituted me by the failure to come to my support when I needed you. I have racked my brain, my body, my strength, my health, my all that this cause might live; aye, even that this Convention might meet under the favorable auspices under which it has met. [Cheers.] And now this man stands up to demand of me if I have sold my body to help this on, just as if there was no other prostitution ex-

cept that of sexuality. [Cheers.] Bah. such cant and from men.

I am ashamed of the Spiritualists and Reformers of the country who profess an interest in the cause, that they have left me all alone to prostitute myself in whatever way to maintain their interests. Did they stop to ask if I should have to crucify my body to obtain the needed means? [Cheers.] I doubt if one of you ever did, and yet I besought you earnestly all the time of my needs, and forgetting all this I am placed on the stool of confession by a man from Vineland [cheers], who, if he has ever given a dollar to the cause, I don't know it. But let me tell you quite a different story. Suppose I had not done what I have, let that be whatever it may, and that the WEEKLY had died and the Y. M. C. Assassination Association had succeeded in sending me to Sing Sing, where would have been your cause? Where this Convention to-day? Can any one answer me that? Are there any of you, you here I mean, who would have come forward and put your bodies in the gap? If there are I hope they will now come forward and relieve me. My body has been crucified until I am almost unable to use it any more. I am weak, faint and want rest. Will you give it to me? If you will not, don't put me before you as needing to confess anything that in your self-sanctified spirits you may conceive to be prostitution.

Suppose that I had permitted the WEEKLY to die and the cause of freedom to sink, and I had come before this Convention, and as you would in that case have had a right to do, because I had received some of your money, you had asked for an explanation. And suppose I had arisen and said: Ladies and gentlemen, I did all I could to keep up the cause and to issue the WEEKLY, but there did not money enough come in, and one week I was short of the amount that was needed to purchase the white paper, and as I did not feel disposed to make any extra exertion, and was not willing to crucify myself in any way to get it, we had to stop. What would you have said? Would you have elected me your President? I don't believe it. And yet I am asked if I do this and this or this and that to aid on the cause. Once and for all time, let me assure the highly respectable male citizen from Vineland

that I have done whatever was necessary to perform what I conceived to be my duty, and so long as I live I shall continue to do whatever is necessary, even to giving my life, but that shall be the last resort. Everything else before that, even if it be the crucifixion of my body in the manner for which I am now arraigned. If you do not want one to be forced to that extreme, come to my rescue as you ought to have done before, and not let me fight the battle all alone, and be subjected even to the possibility of a thing so utterly abhorrent to me as to submit sexually for money to a man I do not love. If Mr. Cotton, or if any of you are so terribly alarmed lest I may have been obliged to do this, let him and you manifest your alarm by rallying to my support so as to insure that no such exigency shall ever again arise. I hope Mr. Cotton and you are answered. But perhaps he may desire to tell you what he knows about sexuality.

Mr. Cotton—Give me five minutes and I'll tell.

The Chairman—I will give you one minute and a-half.

Mrs. Woodhull—I do not know whether you are a virgin or not, having by that virtue had the right to cast your stone at me. [Laughter.]

Mr. Cotton—So far as outside the marriage relation, I am. [Cheers.]

Mrs. Woodhull—He is a virgin. What have I always said? That you have the right to love one woman or forty women, and nobody has the right to say no. And no one has the right to exercise any tyranny over my sexual organs any more than they have over the processes of thought in my brain. I know none are without sin, which I call virtue. Without sexual desire you are not men and women. You are the result of men and women copulating before you. You are the result of that act; and that act is my religion, and by that act the world is moved to-day. And I shall love it and admire it, and pray God that my sexual desires may become so purified and intensified that I may be able to enjoy them as I do any other desire or passion of my soul; and if I want sexual intercourse with one hundred men I shall have it. This question is up for discussion, and we may as well have it out with these people who are so terribly alarmed about their virtue. I am sick and disgusted with

their cant; and I repeat here, as I said yesterday to Mrs. Hardy, in that room, that if Col. Blood surely loved her—because I know nobody can know except himself—it would be my courtesy to mind my own business. And I hold that this would be true courtesy, such as will obtain in the future when women are no longer sexual slaves. I do not propose to be mortified.

And if I or you wanted intercourse fifty times a week, or but once in a lifetime, or at any other time, when feeling disposed nobody has a right to interfere. And this sexual intercourse business may just as well be discussed now, and discussed until you are become so familiar with your sexual organs that a reference to them will no longer make the blush mount to your face any more than a reference to any other part of your body. Have I not done my work? Have I not done everything that was demanded of me? Have I not carried this important work on through every state? And I shall do so still. I shall push forward this great question of sexual adaptation, for I am the result of a sexual abortion, and my first child is a sexual abortion; and I have it on the brain, and I propose to keep it on the brain until the brain rules the sexual relationship. I do not propose to have any blush on my face for any act of my life. My life has been my own; I have nothing to apologize for. I do not ask you to accept any of my sexual relations; but I ask you to be happy, and then you will be virtuous; and then I think we will have no more of this blackguardism and discussion about anybody else's sexual organs; for if you knew how contemptible it is, you would mind your own business, and permit everybody else to do the same. [Cheers.]

Hon. Warren Chase said:

I have not troubled this Convention very much, and I do not propose to do so now. You need not be very much alarmed, for I do not think I shall hurt any one with what I have to say. I am very glad to have a few minutes to speak before the dissolution of this body, because I have a few things I wish to say: One thing is to thank the reporters of the *Times* and the *Inter-ocean* for the fair and candid reports that have appeared in their papers, so far as I have read them, up to this time. I have not anything to say with



regard to the *Tribune*; your Secretary has attended faithfully to that.

Now I want to say to you all, to any foes if I have any, and I ought not to have—that you need not be alarmed. Spiritualism in the last quarter of the century has been killed at least fifty times, and I have been killed myself almost as many times in the estimation of my friends; and yet I am still alive, and so is Spiritualism, and it is likely to be. You need have no fears; I want to say to my friend Judge Holbrook, that he need not be alarmed. Spiritualism is not going to suffer from anything that is said here or elsewhere. This platform is broad enough, for we want to take hold of all subjects, and to find room for all persons. After what we have had attached to Spiritualism for the last twenty years, if you think anything can kill it, you are very much mistaken. There is no danger of its being killed by the discussion of these questions. They are vital questions and they must be discussed, and there is no other platform but the spiritual platform on which it can be done, and here it will be done, until the great public mind has settled them. The great popular will, which is the glory of this country, will settle this marriage question, and you need not be alarmed. Never will it separate the families which are bound together by the ties of love and affection; under it children will be respected while mothers are interested in the making of laws as they will be.

Therefore I will say to Judge Holbrook, and his *fidus achates* from Iowa, to this young lawyer I say, that when he has been through the world as I have, and knows as much of life as I know, and has had the experience that I had before he commenced to study law, he will be wiser than he is now. I assure him that he need not be alarmed, that this Convention need not be alarmed, because it has some, who like the prancing ponies on the old stage line, seem ready to dash into the river; but it is safe enough in the hands of the old heads. I say let us therefore have room on our platform; let us have free speech and free debate on every subject that members may desire to bring forward. Let everything be spoken freely, but use decent language. Be courteous, kind and civil. Speak your thought freely, then let us canvass it,

let us discuss it, let us hear it, and see what is best for us to do as a community.

We do know as well as we can that in the past some institutions have been failures. The thousands of voices that come up to us from the congregation of married ones, proves that there is something wrong in that institution, and every soul of you know it. You all know that it must be from some causes and that cause must be removed. There should be harmony in the social life, and these people who are engaged in the movement are endeavoring to bring it about. Do you think that these are the patrons of the houses of prostitution? Do you know that every one of these people have been urging the adoption of the law that recognizes the female prostitutes, but would also provide for the registration of the names of the men who visit these houses, and have them published? Do you know that? Whose names do you think will be on the register? These people who advocate Free Love, as you call it? Do you think that their names will be registered as patrons of these houses? No; it will be those who applauded so loudly when my Iowa friend was on the platform. [Cheers.] It would be that class of persons who throughout the country are defending the institution as it is, because it guards, guides and covers them with the sacredness of the name of membership in a church. These are the kind of people that we want registered—the hypocrites who are damning themselves by claiming one thing and practicing another, and who endeavor to keep institutions as they are, in order that they may keep on practicing one thing and preaching another. Do you ask, do you want the repeal of the whole marriage system? I say I do, and not that alone—I want to repeal the divorce law also. And then you will have none of these causes dragged into court, to become a scandal to the community, and your newspapers unfit to be read, and with particulars of it for Comstock to prosecute. Your simple law of love will be sufficient. When woman is secure in her own right—is secure in her share of the prosperity of the country—when a civil law contract shall cover the whole question of marriage, and shall be all that shall be required—then we may expect to see a reformed state of society. That is what we mean. And yet you ask

us whether we advocate promiscuity. Do you know that every speaker of yesterday emphatically condemned promiscuity, and that a resolution was unanimously passed in this assembly to the same effect? It is not promiscuity that we are advocating. It is the civil rights of woman—the right to take care of her own. She has not the right to protect her body now; but we propose that she shall have the right, and that the law shall sustain her. Is this promiscuity? Is this legalizing prostitution? Take care, then, that you do not do anything that you do not like to have talked about on the platform. Take care of your life; take care of your spirit; take care that you do not do that to your fellow which shall make you fear to meet him face to face in the eternal world. [Cheers.] Be sure that you injure nobody, and that nobody will be able to charge you with injuring them in the world to come. Look you to it, that you may meet those whom you have made happier, purer, better—whom you have strengthened in the newer nature, the higher life; that you have made the world purer and happier for your children, that they may take no fear in doing the work set before them, and the angel world will bless you, and you will go in and out of that beautiful kingdom of which my brother Randolph speaks, for I indorse his sentiments, every one of them. [Cheers.] So that, with your own conscience clear, you can enter the kingdom of light and love. [Cheers.]

Mr. Todd then announced the list of speakers for the evening session.

Judge Holbrook—Mr. President, as I said, I have a protest, which is signed by ten or twenty delegates, which I wish to read.

The Chairman—Will the Convention hear the protest?

Voices—"Yes."

Judge Holbrook—The protest is as follows:

*To the American Association of Spiritualists, to our Constituents and the Public:*

The undersigned, members of said Association, now in Convention at Chicago, Ill., deem it proper to withdraw therefrom.

The principal reasons that induce this action (omitting many others for the sake of brevity) are as follow:

Before the Troy Convention, which was two years ago, we believe the

society could not boast of much vitality or usefulness, and hence it attracted but little attention. At that Convention, which was quite thinly attended, by some sudden movement and questionable proceedings, Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull, a person not before then widely known as a Spiritualist, but rather as a leader in the Woman Suffrage movement, and in some way a nominal candidate for the office of President of the United States, was elected president of the Association.

Immediately thereafter the new president treated this election as an indorsement of her former position, and seemed to degrade the society into the place of use merely to her political aspirations; and if the officers of the society consented thereto, which we believe is a fact, so much greater was the wrong then, and the cause of complaint now.

Failing in the consummation of her pretences and aspirations in the political line, and being abandoned by her associates in the woman suffrage movement, she became the most bold and unscrupulous advocate of free love in its worst extremes. And now in turn she proposed to convert this association, in reality weak, and only seemingly strong, and of any importance, in the fact that it was nominally a representative of the Spiritualists of the whole country, into a subordinate aid to her chief and all-absorbing theme. To effectuate this in a seemingly lawful manner, it is insisted that the platform is absolutely free, without any limitations whatever as to subject, and perhaps not as to persons and method of advocacy; and this, too, on the further plea that spiritualism is in some way connected with every reform, actual or self-styled, merely projected or imaginary, in the wide world.

Under such a construction, free love, now called social freedom, is brought upon the platform, and every effort is made by her and her coadjutors (and surely with great success) to make this the central figure, and to give it nearly all the attention and time in and out of convention.

We protest against this as a great wrong. It is not according to the design of the framers of the association, nor within the purview of those who since then maintained a so-called free platform; nor in accordance, as we verily believe, with the proper constituency of such association, that fair would have sent delegates to convention, had not the association so lost character by such proceedings, that a very great many have thought that the effort to regain and repair is not worth the cost, and hence have not sent them. It is a wrong in that it changes the character and office of the association! Everything else as well as Spiritualism can be advocated upon its platform by the same means and to the same extent, and hence it is no longer a "Spiritualistic Association," in any especial sense—nothing but the name is left, and that now is a misnomer. It is a wrong to whatever of a minority there may be opposed to such action, as they have a right to the normal action and use of the society.

This is a wrong when any foreign element is introduced, however right it may be and worthy of advocacy in itself at another time and place;



but when the foreign element is in itself a master evil, erroneous in principle, most essentially vicious in practice, abhorrent to the views, sentiments and sensibilities of a very large portion of cultivated and refined society, and highly detrimental to the advancement of the cause of true Spiritualism—then the wrong is infinitely increased.

According to our views, then, we are called upon to protest against such a use of the Association, and we feel the more called upon to do so in that now the evils of such dogmas are widespread, are enhanced and strengthened by the position under such a rule and such a management of their national association.

But not to be restrictive and tenacious in our own views, and being desirous of preserving the national association to true Spiritualism, to works and a name worthy of her high origin, and to future years of usefulness, we have endeavored to save it from disunion and decay, and to prevent a division in our ranks by presenting honorable terms of compromise of extreme views and action, and reducing them to practical terms of harmony. It is for such a purpose that some of us have attended this Convention, being persuaded to make such a venture quite against our better judgment as to its success; that if successful, well; if not, that there should be no wrong judgment made in haste, and that there should be no fault on our part and no opportunity to charge any against us by the majority managers of the Convention or their sympathizers. We have proposed, as a rule for the platform, that it should not be in order to speak in advocacy of, nor in opposition to those subjects which are remote from Spiritualism, and in no special degree based upon and connected with its facts, theories, demonstrations and philosophy; among which are enumerated the general questions of politics and government, the Woman Suffrage movement and Social Freedom; but persons might be especially invited to speak on specified subjects by a vote of two-thirds the members of the association represented in convention. This rule, as we think, would preserve the special character of the association, while a reasonable opportunity would be afforded for a diversion for specified objects where there were an unanimity of sentiment sufficient to justify it.

But no concessions have been made to meet this proposition; but, on the contrary, a rather more rabid extremism has been exhibited, as well as promised for the future, so that but very little attention has been paid to any other question than Free Love, and it seems to have been determined that there shall not be, at least in the immediate future.

According to our best judgment, then, we must surrender this association; and as we must deem that it is desirable to have a national spiritual association, we recommend that a call be made for a national convention to form such an association, limited, for the sake of harmony and efficiency, in the first instance, to those who are willing to restrict the action of their society to Spiritualism proper, at least within the confines of the rule above referred to as offered to this convention:

Edward S. Holbrook, Chicago, Ill.; George W. Kates, Cincinnati, O.; W. J. Shaw, Iowa; Ed. T. H. Stewart, Indiana; G. L. Jenifer, Lawrence, Kansas; Mrs. Dr. S. Avery, Chicago; Mr. Chas. W. Mills; W. R. Hill, Detroit; A. S. Waterman, Waukegan, Ill.; R. Hoyt Winslow, Akron, O.; Dr. W. H. Bancroft, Wisconsin; Jos. H. Longshore, M. D., Philadelphia, Pa.; Wm. H. Hicks, Delaware; John W. Cochran, Joliet, Ill.; Dr. B. P. Barnum, Michigan; W. L. Thornton; S. C. Bliss Riley, Clinton County, Michigan.

#### EVENING SESSION.

The Convention was called to order at half-past seven o'clock.

The Chairman—We will have to listen to a few preliminary speeches before Mrs. Woodhull comes on to the platform, and I would announce that after the other speakers have done, and before she commences, Mrs. Moore will sing a song.

Mr. J. O. Barrett, of Wisconsin, said—

My reticence at this Convention is owing to the condition of my lungs. I have congestion of the lungs, which prevents my speaking. I have just recovered from a severe sickness, and I shall have to decline speaking. I thank the committee for having assigned me to this honorable position. My heart is deeply in earnest in this work. I believe that from it there will outgrow something that shall be of great value and salutary influence to our country and to the world. [Cheers.] I decline speaking in favor of Bro. Lynn.

Mr. Cephas R. Lynn, of Massachusetts, said:

I am perfectly astonished to see that some of our good friends who have come in here, and who have never attended a Spiritualists' Convention before, are so remarkably interested in the proceedings. When a man stands up and asks a question of this audience, when an individual demands an answer to a certain interrogation and another individual stands up to answer it, why those very liberal gentlemen in the gallery may cry "Put that individual out." Now, we hold that the individual is in order who answers to the vile insults of the speaker. I tell you what it is, we are not such fanatics as not to know what constitutes order, and we propose to run this Convention ourselves, notwithstanding that you paid half a dollar to come in. You just

let us alone and we will show you that we are not just such fellows as you take us to be. [Hisses.] To-night I want to remark to you is the concluding session of the grandest Convention that has ever assembled in the United States of America. [Cheers.] I want to tell you that the tenth annual Convention of Spiritualists of America has set its foot down, has talked in plain language, and that we of the radical party are perfectly willing to stand up to the record that is here laid down; and let me tell you that the opponents of Mrs. Woodhull in this Convention conceded the propositions of the radical party when they declared to us that were we all angels of light, that then the Woodhull doctrine would do to be preached to the world. [Cheers.] I say that they have conceded the fundamental principle of the radical party when they made that declaration. But I am sorry to say that at this stage of the game, as the poker player would say, it has come to pass that when I or anybody else stands upon this platform and speaks for liberty, when we ask that the devil himself, if it were possible to restore him from hell, should have fair hearing here, that some of the virtuously sanctimonious say that we have allied ourselves to animalism. And this simply because we say that we are not afraid of anything that is wrapped in pantaloons or in petticoats. [Cheers.] And it is because of this fact that we have come upon this platform and have declared that the minority should have an equal chance with the majority. But the minority have lost the game, and having lost it have not the moral courage to bolt. We say to the minority bolt and organize a new society, just as Ben Butler ought to have done the other day. [Cheers.] Why do we say this? Because we are content to let the world see what are the ideas of the majority and what are the ideas of the minority. I hold, therefore, that the minority have a right to bolt, and while, ladies and gentlemen, I voted with the minority so far as the publication of their statements was concerned, yet, at the same time, I want to make another declaration, and that is, that if we are to be true to the genius of the spiritual platform, there never can be a schism in radicalism. Why? Because we have taught, for the last quarter of a century, that the convictions of the individual do not compromise anybody. Remember that. [Cheers.] We have taught

that, no matter what Tennie C. Claflin might say, no matter what Victoria C. Woodhull might say, no matter what Col. Blood might say, no matter what our respected Chairman might say, their individual utterances did not compromise the great mass of the people, who stand to-day on the platform of liberalism and Spiritualism.

Hence I am glad the time has at last come when we have discovered the fact that we do not anchor ourselves to any crystallized definition of the theology of antiquity, or to the words of anybody on earth, be they Woodhull, Claflin—I mean Victoria—or anybody else. [Cheers.] And I want the ladies and gentlemen of this congregation to understand that those of the majority in this Convention, because they have stood by it, because they have fought for it, have not necessarily given up their individuality to the New York ring, if there should be such ring, which I deny. I do not wear the shoulder-straps of the Woodhull party. What do I see? I see the Woodhull party on the one hand, which is striking out for liberty and progress; and I see on the other the conservative party, which is shivering and quivering as if it was wearing paper overcoats in the middle of winter. [A laugh.] And as between the two, between paper overcoats and Mother Grundy, give me the other side and I will stand by it. Why do I say that? Because I am thoroughly convinced that there is no such thing as chaos in God's spiritual universe. You talk about regulating a human soul. I tell you that you cannot do it. I tell you that God Almighty made us and he takes care of us all the time, as he takes care of the birds of the air, the beasts on the land, the fishes in the sea, as he takes care of the worlds that roll majestically through the heavens above us, as the law enzones the world beneath our feet. Do you suppose that he is going to let a human being, which is the grandest part of his creation, come to nothing? Not a bit of it. [Cheers.] We need not fear. The fact is, we have credited the bugbears which have been set up to startle us; the bugbears of the books which are set afloat by the men—these virtuous, sanctimonious men who have always been true to their wives—over the left. [Cheers.] They are afraid chaos is coming on in this big Chicago of the nineteenth century. [Cheers.] They say when we are crying for freedom that wo



are going to break into their houses and violate the persons of their wives and daughters. But when they say that we say that they lie about us. If they understood the radical idea they would understand that reciprocity was the cardinal idea of the whole system.

And there is something else. Now don't you fret, who want Mrs. Woodhull to come forward. I am a necessary evil on one crutch to-night. [Great laughter.] I want to say something else. I want to say that among the many grand things that have emanated from the Tenth Annual Convention of American Spiritualists, is a clear cut, a gigantic statement of the encroachments of the Young Men's Christian Association upon the liberties of the citizens of the American Republic. [Cheers.] Now, I am going to tell you something confidentially. Y. M. C. A.—what do they mean? [Hisses.] Don't hiss; I am simply telling you what Comstock has permitted to pass through the mails. The letters Y. M. C. A., according to George Francis Train, mean, the "Young Mule's Concubine Association" [a laugh]; according to the Christian, they mean, the "Young Men's Christian Association." Brick Ponieroy says they mean the "Young Men Christian Asses." [A hiss.] Don't hiss me; it is not me that says so. Victoria Woodhull says they mean "Young Men's Christian Assassination Association." [Cheers.] Now, what do we discover? Why, that this so-called Young Men's Christian Association have subsidized the United States Government to protect the man who stands behind the orthodox pulpit to-day. You cannot get rid of it. It was the Y. M. C. A. that turned the key of Ludlow-street jail upon our President, and when that key turned, and we heard the click, we swore by the living God that that click struck the key-note of a new declaration of independence which should be greater than the first. [Cheers.]

Men who come to this Convention and slander us—you reporters of the press—I tell you that Mrs. Woodhull went on the cross for you as well as for us. Talk about the coming man and the coming woman! I tell you I want you to look after something else. I am looking for the coming individual—the coming reporter—that dare say what is true. [Cheers.] I tell you that this cutting-down of the manuscript of local reporters—of which Mrs. Woodhull spoke

in her lecture—has got into the religious press; and we who stand on the spiritual platform have sworn by the holy God that we won't write another letter to the *Banner* without placing every word above our names, and not be afraid of Mrs. Grundy. Talk about delay—of slow legislation! The history of the world shows that when the individual has exerted himself against the law, that the law has gradually receded. I am confident that I have but a very few more minutes. [Cries of "Go ahead!"]

Mr. Lynn—I want to make another point, and that is that I believe the citizens of the United States of America are sleeping to-day on a volcano. Why, suppose we had been members of Congress when our soldiers were falling by thousands, and had said in answer to the cries of the people, "War? there is no war;" we should have been called ignoramuses. But from this platform we can point to several instances which go to show that the government of the United States in 1870 and 1873 has given the lie to what it said in the days of Washington. It was because Mrs. Woodhull made declarations which were disastrous to the doctrine of salvation through the blood of Christ, that the officers of the United States government cast her into Ludlow-street jail, and I am very happy to say that we found a friend not among the philosophers, so-called, not among scientists, so-called; not among reformers, so-called, but the man who vindicated American liberty was the man that we all had laughed at, and that man's name was George Francis Train. [Cheers.] When they arrested George Francis Train they had an elephant on their hands, and they did not know what to do with him. Why did they refuse to try George Francis Train? Ladies and gentlemen, dearly beloved friends in the gallery, have you ever thought this matter over? I will tell you all about it. They refused to try George Francis Train because the words that he had quoted in his paper, and on which he had been indicted for obscenity, were quoted from the immaculate, the divine book, the bible of Christianity. [Cheers.] And they knew very well that if they forced George Francis Train to the test, that Christianity itself would be brought into the Court-room. They knew that it would be convicted and sent to jail. The Y. M. C. A. have felt the inspiration of the nineteenth century; they have discovered

that the Star of Empire leads to the West. They struck the Toledo *Sun*, and here is the young editor who has been arrested for obscenity, because what he allowed to be inserted in his paper struck the gospel of salvation through Jesus' blood to the heart. [Cheers.] I am happy to say that here is an editor who dared speak the truth while 6,000 journals in America were wondering how many subscribers they would lose if they put in the paragraph.

Voices—Let him come forward.

The Chairman—It is the pleasure of the audience that the gentleman stand up that he may be seen. I propose that we give him three cheers.

Mr. Lant, the gentleman in question, stood forward and was received with cheers. He said: Thank you, I will only say that we intend to do it again if we have an opportunity. [Cheers.]

Mr. Lynn—I want to show you that this is not a religious meeting. [Laughter.] It's a grand thing to stand up on the pulpit and say "We will sing hymn 86, and after reading the words, sit down." Oh it is a wonderful thing; but we say let the contemptible conventionality of the clergymen give place to the ringing eloquence of the orator of the nineteenth century. Spiritualists should remember that their platform is upon this broad basis. Now, before I sit down, let me call your attention to simply one thought; let me tell you I am glad to-day to think that we have had our Convention in Chicago; that I am glad to think that while the minority have stood up here and insulted us—shall I say it? I say that the minority have insulted us—the majority of this Convention. They have argued that because we outvoted them we are the most contemptible fellows that ever walked. I respectfully raise my voice at this time in opposition to this declaration. Mark what I say to you before I sit down, and after I do, Benjamin Todd, one of our finest orators, will give you a few truths, and then you will have the pleasure of listening to the bravest woman that lives on the American continent, and her name is Victoria Woodhull. [Cheers.] The woman that subsidized reporters and cowardly editors have tried to bury, but could not; for she has terrified the mock professors, and has capsized Christian rottenness and fright-

ened some of the elect half to death; and because it is so I will bring my remarks to a close. The closing point that I make is this: The idea of friendship. I tell you what it is, this talking about friendship is all perfect nonsense. There is one spiritual lecturer, Moses Hull, who has stood up and told all that he has done, and these spiritualists say: "Let us excommunicate him." What do we say? We say: "We won't excommunicate the devil!" [Cheers.] We say we have no right to put anybody up or down; we say that the individual who is in the wrong needs your friendship and your love more than anybody. Take him up and do not cast off anybody; and if you are so pure, so holy, so immaculate you will win, so that you need not borrow any trouble. [Cheers.] I will tell you an illustration which I had of this, and which came to my mind but a few days ago. The last time I came to the city of Chicago my visit was interrupted by the receipt of a telegram announcing the death of my mother—the mother who bore me, the mother whose mind grasped Spiritualism when I was like a great many other young persons, turning up my nose at it and claiming that I knew everything. But my mother talked with me and took me out of that darkness. When I got that telegram there was with me a man well known in the West, a man who is known as a great, mighty worker, a man who put his hand into his pocket and said: "Here, Lynn, is \$50 it'll carry you home." [Cheers.] And that was Dr. Dumont C. Dake [Cheers]; and he did not ask me if I was a Woodhullite or not. On that day he was a Christ to me. So we must remember this, and do unto others as we would they should do unto us. What we are looking for is liberty, and we know that you cannot point to a single instance where, in the order of the universe, freedom is synonymous with anarchy [Cheers.]

Mrs. Waisbrooker said :

Surface minds rest in effects; cover, repudiate, or lay claim to, just as said effects chance to please or displease those who hold the reins of power. It matters not as to said course of action, whether the actor seeks power and place, or simply desires peace, rest, under the existing order of things. Having decided that "What can't be cured must be endured," they



strive (if benevolent) to palliate where they can, and to cover, hide away from public gaze, where they cannot.

But there is another class of minds who seek for causes, and having found, set to work to remove those, which from their very nature must inevitably produce the bitter fruits, which, in spite of all attempts at palliation or secrecy, are everywhere so apparent. Several weeks since there appeared in the columns of *Our Age* a letter from the first lady who presided over this Association as its president, in which she asks the question, "Why a woman seemingly of Mrs. Wood's qualifications, education and experience, should engage in any business, and live a life that her own soul does not sanction?" and goes on to say that "such a woman has no need of making merchandise of her charms and graces for bread."

And the editorial comment upon said question was, "I will tell you WHY, as soon as I can get to it; and the WHY I shall give, I have never even heard hinted at by others. My position may be vulnerable, but I believe it to be impregnable." As the agitation increases, when the subject of freedom for woman is talked of; as misrepresentations multiply; as honest confession is met with repudiation, while sneaking hypocrisy comes to the front (or tries to) and talks long and loud of the purity of Spiritualism, demanding its freedom from side issues, I am led to ask "Why is it? Why all this disturbance? Why is it, when prostitution runs riot on our streets, that leading Spiritualists do not seem particularly distressed? When advertisements for the cure of diseases brought on by abuse of the sexual functions are posted upon almost every street corner, there is manifest no particular anxiety about the matter by those who so earnestly desire the respectability of Spiritualism. When women are forced to prostitute their bodies daily to the abuse of legal brutes called husbands—*call themselves virtuous*, and shrink from the very touch of the garments of the more womanly woman who is prostituted illegally, forced thereto by the damnable edict of respectability, because she loved in purity of soul and *trusted illegally*;—when Spiritualists know all this to be true, and they know also that broken health, diseased, discordant children, are the legitimate fruits of these legal prostitutions—evils fully as

terrible as those that arise from illegal prostitution. And further, Spiritualists everywhere are ready to acknowledge that woman, as a sex, is less sensually inclined, loves more from the spiritual, than man. We, as a body, admit all this *in theory*; but why is it then that when a portion of us propose to carry it out in practice—to give woman control of her own person—demand that the wealth of the world shall be so used that she shall not be pressed, either directly or indirectly, into giving herself from the money plane, or in other words, for a support; why is it when we demand this, that the spasms of respectability are so terrible that the Spiritualistic body seems about to be rent in sunder. Theory is well enough, but practice would be terrible. It is well enough TO TALK of the more spiritual nature of woman, but to trust that nature in its own keeping would destroy the *pure influence* of Spiritualism, unless Spiritualism, or rather Spiritualists, repudiate at once and forever the damnable heresy. Now, why is this? I ask, why this terrible agitation, when we propose to work for a reconstruction of society, which will practically exemplify the truth or falsity of the theory which accords to woman a higher spirituality than to man? I ask the question, and I propose to answer, and in doing so shall answer Mrs. Brown's question as to why such women as Jennie Wood should follow a disreputable business—disreputable, but lucrative, through the support of respectable society. Were there no *respectables* to sustain disreputable houses, they would sink at once and forever from sight; and yet, Spiritualists are so anxious to be RESPECTABLE. But I have said that I would answer my own questioning. But to do so I must state my premises, and reason from thence to the conclusion; and further, my premises must be such as so commend themselves to the soul consciousness that no *honest* man or woman can object thereto. Swedenborg says that every one is as their ruling love is. No matter how imperfect the results as to carrying out the legitimate ends of that love—the love which *rules* decides the character. Is there any thinking man or woman who will deny that this is so? Are not all our decisions as to the real character of an individual based upon the motive which prompts, rather than upon the result of their acts? The man who gives a hundred dollars that he may win the applause

of the world, and the man who gives five that he may bless another—is it the sum given, the smount of good resulting, or the ruling love which prompts the givers, that decides their characters? There is, there can be no difference of opinion here. Another point. All the forces, all the powers of the being will be used (wisely or unwisely, as the intelligence of the individual shall determine), but all will necessarily be used, so far as they are used at all, to forward the objects of their ruling love. There can be no difference of opinion here: the statement has only to be understood to command assent. Still another point. It has been demonstrated beyond the power of contradiction that without the union of the two forces, known as masculine and feminine, there is, there can be no form of life, of growth. And, still further, the nature of all forms of life is decided first, by the degree of the development of the elements which enter into the compound; second, by the ruling force, or element of said compound.

The above positions are as impregnable as are the axioms of mathematics, and upon them, as upon a rock which cannot be moved, I propose to build the argument which shall meet the demands of our questioning. First, character is according to the ruling love. What is the ruling love of Society to-day? Need we ask? Need we stop to inquire, when we feel the pressure of its power on every side? When, without it we are slaves, and with it we are masters of the situation? Money is God, and all the people obey. Acquisitiveness rules, and all the powers of the being obey. Love, tenderness, charity, religion, all are the bond servants to this money-God, chained to his chariot wheels, crushed by his relentless tread, if they dare to put themselves in his way.

But all life, all activity, is generated by the union of the two forces, known as the masculine and feminine. All life, not simply physical, as embodied in plants and animals, but mental life, spiritual life, society life. An individual may have a large and well balanced front brain, and top brain, but without a corresponding back brain, there is no life, no power. Such persons resemble, in the individual powers, or organs of the brain, a splendid train of palace cars without an engine, with no fuel—powerless for use, but good to look at. The life of the ruling power in individuals and in so-

clety, must come from the back brain ; and further, the organ of the front or top brain, to which the creative force of the back brain gives the most of its life, rules the others, and through them the entire being. Carrying out the proposition to its ultimate, the greatest number who are ruled by it, whose creative life forces go to invigorate the same front or top brain organ, constitute the majority, and rule society ; and, having siezed the throne, force all the others to aid them in maintaining it. But, we find that not only certain forces are necessary to the organization of individual life, and of society life, but that that, upon which said life is continued, must possess the same elements. The man whose ruling love is money, is not at home with those whose ruling love is benevolence, for the atmosphere generated by the latter, does not furnish the element needed to enable the money love to hold its supremacy ; and, being the ruling love, it takes the man to an atmosphere generated by the money power, for there only can it breathe freely. But, remember, that the back brain gives its creative forces to that organ of the front or top brain which rules, gives character to the others ; and further, that every individual carries about him or her, an atmosphere like unto themselves—generates said atmosphere from the active forces of their own being. But said atmosphere is not fitted to aid in perpetuating its own kind of life, unless it is made up of both masculine and feminine elements.

In other words, the man whose ruling love is money, cannot breathe freely—cannot have an atmosphere suited to the supremacy of said love, unless he mingles with women whose ruling love is also money ; and he must not only mingle with them fraternally, but sexually—that is, either directly or indirectly. You will ask how one can associate sexually indirectly. Whenever we appropriate magnetic elements of one of the opposite sex, whose ruling love is like unto our own, we associate sexually indirectly ; for their sexual life permeating their ruling love is given off in their magnetic sphere, and in appropriating that magnetism, we use that element of the sexual which is like unto ours in character, and opposite only in its sex, thus fitting it to blend with ours in making our ruling love fruitful in the realm of active life.



We have seen that the ruling love of society, as it exists to-day, is the money element—that this love, to hold its place, must have its proper element of sustenance—that said element, to give life activities, must be both masculine and feminine. Consequently, so long as the money power is in the ascendancy, woman must of necessity be mercenary in her love; and, if not naturally so, must be made and held so by the force of circumstances; and in no way could this have been done so effectually as it has by making her subject to man in the matter of sex, and dependent on him for support and protection. Woman's whole being is subject to man, in the present order of society, just so far as that which constitutes her woman, affects her life or happiness. She must wait till man asks her to be his wife. She must not herself make a movement looking in that direction, or she is considered unwomanly; so she must wait her natural life alone, or accept something short of that which is recognized by society as marriage; and, if the latter, then she is ostracised—shut up to the merchandise of herself for support. Man has control of the avenues of wealth, and will hold woman's wages to the lowest point possible; that is the wages of labor, while he uses the money that has been wrung from the virtuous woman's toil to pay for sexual gratification. He does this at the command of the ruling love, which is that of money, and true to the universal law which demands two forces in union, in order to active, successful life, he tempts woman to a mercenary use of her sexual nature, tempts her from one direction and drives her from one direction to another, forces necessities upon her through the control of the wealth of the world, and then tempts those necessities with money rewards. Love, devotion, maternal, filial or conjugal tenderness—love in some form—is the ruling power of woman's soul, when unperturbed. And this is particularly true of her sexual nature; she yields it where she loves, and only there when left free from outside pressure. This sex life of woman, controlled by, and giving life to first the special, and secondly the universal, maternal, would, in freedom, control all the remaining organs of the brain, or the powers of the soul through them in the service of humanity, acquisitiveness not excepted. With this, the ruling love of woman, to wit: the maternal in the ascendancy, as it would be if she

had the entire disposal of her sexual nature, making man's subject to her in this direction, instead of hers to him, as it now is, for the sexual magnetism given off in vitalizing life's activities, would not, could not then be, from the money, but from the love plane. With this, the ruling love of woman in the ascendancy, monopolies of wealth, to the injury of the masses would be impossible, for the vitalizing life for such a condition would be wanting, and of course the condition itself could not exist. The mockeries of wealth, in contrast with the wretchedness of rags and hunger, would no more be known, for the woman hand, guided by the woman heart, unperturbed by forced obedience to the money-God—now God no longer—that hand, guided by the true maternal heart of woman, would wipe the tears from off all faces.

We see why it is, then, that brothels can exist, and marital infidelity run rampant all over the land, and the churches be comparatively silent, and Spiritualists so carried by the tidal current—so held in the grasp of the dominant power, that they seem but little exercised upon the subject; but when it is proposed that woman shall be set entirely free from subjection to man, sexually, then the anxiety for the preservation of purity, manifested from all quarters, is wonderful to behold. For the preservation of purity! we must first have it before it can be preserved; and true purity we never can have so long as we are under the rule of the present order of things. We can see also why such women as Jennie Wood, intellectual, educated, largely maternal in her soul, we can see why such are held to a life their souls repudiate. They are held there by the power of the ruling love—the God of society.

We can see, also, the power that will be brought to bear against us. We are rebels in the fullest sense of that word. We are determined to overthrow the ruling power, to dethrone it and to place the Christ of love, existing in woman's soul, upon the throne. That Christ who has worn the crown of thorns and had the wormwood and the gall pressed to the lips, through the ages of the past—has been crucified between the two thieves of marriage and prostitution till the very heavens are black with agony, and the veil of the temple of hypocrisy is being rent in twain from the top to the bottom. Soon the passion of suffering will be finished and the resurrection morn be ushered in. Already the angels have descended to roll back the stone from the door of the sepulchre.

Mr. Benjamin Todd—In coming before you to-night, although I may take the strongest ground of our principles, yet I am uttering no sentiments that are new to me. They are the sentiments which I uttered when traveling over this North-west as spiritual lecturer for something like twenty years, commencing not less than eighteen or nineteen years ago. I have as long ago as that said the very thing in regard to the marriage law and the marriage relation in its influence upon women, that has been said upon this platform. I have lectured upon woman's rights, upon physiognomy and other subjects. I gave a course of lectures in San Francisco, and my opponents were aroused so that they warned me to leave, and, in the event of my not doing so, threatened to shoot me. But I unbuttoned my coat and said, "Shoot me; I would just as lief die here now as not, if I cannot have the privilege of expressing the utter horror and contempt with which I look upon the marriage law—that law which binds woman to man; that so-called sacred altar, upon which women's hearts are bleeding and groaning every day; that altar that once blushed in the sun, but now so deeply saturated with human blood that the rains of centuries have not washed out the stains." And that is just the place where I stand to-night. It matters not to me who knows it, or who entertains these opinions. I am not one of those who are accustomed to feel afraid; and years ago, when I was advocating these sentiments, whether of social or political science, I felt as I do now. Then they appealed to me to be silent, but I said, "Get thee behind me, Satan." I never sold my birthright for a mess of pottage, and what is more, I swear by the eternal God that rules above, and by all the devils that rule in hell below, that while I stand here on this earth I am going to exercise the right to declare my sentiments before the world, and it is not in the power of press or the people to put me down. I am well aware that S. S. Jones, of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, here in the city of Chicago, has left undone nothing during the last six months which a bad man could conceive; and you may rake hell over and not find any one meaner than this spiritual editor. He has done nothing but slime and slander; and let me tell you that he has enough slime and slander in his heart to cover up the whole world if he would

only let it out. And yet there are Spiritualists who take his paper, and pay money for it. I ask you where you can find a paper that will compare in filth with the copy of the *Journal* issued two weeks since? An individual wrote to him a little while ago—one of these poor sisters troubled with so much virtue—"S. S. Jones, do in Heaven's name send us a list of the speakers that are not Woodhullites." They are so afraid that speakers may get down there who are Woodhullites. He says the number of advocates of Woodhullism is so small and the number of those that are opposed to it so large. But four is the full number of those that were opposed to Woodhullism, and what is more, I will give S. S. Jones \$5 a piece if he can name four in all this North-west. [Cheers.] He cannot do it. I say, then, down with such a man, down with such an editor. He is one of those virgins, one of those immaculate individuals, one of those Christians that never did a wrong, and yet he has lived with a woman here in Chicago, not being married to her, for the last seventeen or eighteen years [Laughter], and has children by her, and has them there to-day. And all this I hold myself responsible to prove if the gentleman will come forward and ask for the proof and the testimony. And that is the pure, immaculate individual that deals out such grand spiritualistic fodder for the people. Oh, shame! Let Jones and his *Religio-Philosophical Journal* go, for they are on the road to hell just as fast as they can go, and I do not need to kick them any more.

A Voice—May I ask you a question? Are you a liberalist?

Mr. Todd—I am, sir.

The Voice—You show yourself to be one.

Another Voice—Did you marry in San Francisco or California?

Mr. Todd—I did, but not in San Francisco.

The Voice—Have you your wife yet?

Mr. Todd—Here she is. Do you want to see her?

Mrs. Todd—Happy to own him for my husband. [Great cheering.]

Mr. Todd—Any more questions of that kind? Have them out. I am ready to reply to them.



**The Voice**—Are you a free lover?

**Mr. Todd**—Do I understand you to ask if I am a free lover? You do. Then I say I am. [Cheers.]

**Mrs. Todd**—I am a free lover, thank God. [Renewed cheering.]

**Mr. Todd**—Now let me have order. I am going to talk to you for a little while longer. Now the conservatives have gone out from this Convention, they have put their virtue in a napkin and come to this assembly, they now very plainly say that they are going to withdraw from the Convention. Oh, what a tremendous thrill went through my soul when I heard that; I thought then, certainly, our freedom and our Convention had all gone to ruin, but they withdrew. The parturition pains were suffered, and the child was born; and what does it prove to be? I tell you that it is not going to affect our position at all—we are just as strong to-night as if we had them with us, and we may be stronger. I wish to answer some of the charges which were made by Judge Holbrook, when he read that report. He charged Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull with perverting the institution to her own political purposes. Did Mrs. Woodhull ever ask a single soul to sustain her? Has she ever done it? Is there a man or a woman that will come forward and say that Mrs. Woodhull has ever asked them individually to support her? Or had asked them collectively to support her? No. I claim she has not done it in any way. Why, then, do we come out in her support? Not because of mere friendship, but we come out to support her because she has had the courage to step a little further than any of the rest; and what is more, she has been shrewd enough to keep a little a head. That is the reason why. [Cheers.] And all this cry about making a radical change in the institution is nonsense. Did our forefathers think they were legislating for all time? No; for they provided the means whereby the Constitution could be amended from time and time; and so much have the people taken hold of this idea, that our Constitution stands to-day with fifteen amendments tacked on to it. But is that Constitution changed? The United States Government is just the same. How then shall our opponents say that we have destroyed this organization? Now,

with regard to this Spiritualism which is so much abused, let us see why it came into the world and what it is? The fact of it is, the angel world saw years ago, the fact that no reform could be introduced into the world on any basis that then existed, because there were no religious institutions existing except those that never changed—that would not admit of any improvement. And what is more, I tell you that there has never been a single moral reform introduced into this world by any religious society whatever. What, then, was necessary? That a new religion should be sent into the world, and that happened to be Spiritualism coming with unhesitating power and strength in itself, that it could become the basis for all reforms. Hence we claim that every reform in the world has Spiritualism for its basic foundation and rests thereon. And if Spiritualism is not strong enough to meet the wants of the people, or of the reform movement in any way, let Spiritualism go down to-night, even though everything in God's almighty world goes down with it. I am not afraid of this; let every sham in the world go down, and what have you left? God and humanity, and that is enough for me. Hence Spiritualism claims that it is the base of every reform, and this social freedom is one of the grand reforms which is based upon it. [Cheers and calls for Mrs. Woodhull.]

The Chairman—You will have to wait eight minutes before she appears.

Mr. Todd—I will not detain you. I say, then, that social freedom is the grand crowning apex of all these institutions. It is spreading; it is abroad in all its beauty in the world; it is madness for people to undertake to wipe these principles out. I believe that you cannot do it. Gentlemen, you may try with your puny arm to throw back the waters of Niagara, you may just as well try to blot out the force of the sun at noonday as to try and destroy the principles of freedom.

The rest of Mr. Todd's speech was lost in the uproar consequent on the impatience of the audience to hear Mrs. Woodhull. At length

Mrs. Woodhull came forward and was received with great applause.

[On account of the great length of Mrs. Woodhull's Speech and the fact that it was originally set in large type and wide measure compared to these, and that there is too great a press of matter to permit the occupation of these columns another week, it will only be published in connection with the pamphlet in a separate form.—Ed.]

Mrs Woodhull concluded:

And now a word to the Spiritualists. Another year has rolled away, and to-night another of our conventions will close. We have had a three-days' session at which all questions have been brought up and fully and freely discussed from all sides. We have put out to the world a platform or a set of propositions which, when they are properly understood by the human race, will bring about such a complete harmony that we shall never hereafter meet to quarrel. I want to say this: I have been accepted by you to-day as your President. I thank you for the courtesy and for the honor conferred upon the great principles of eternal life, equity and justice to the human race, through a little woman, whom you have made President to-day. [Cheers.] So far as the woman is concerned it matters not, but the principles will live. No matter whether she lives to meet you in convention again or not, the principles will go on. This platform will be before the world, and will take captive the souls of every man and woman, and free love, equity, financial, religious, political and social freedom will be the rallying cry; and whether in the form or out of it, Victoria C. Woodhull will be the first that will greet you as you meet at your Eleventh Annual Convention of Spiritualists. I am certain that you are going to your homes with a freedom burning in each of your souls such as you never knew before. I am certain that you will go away with a conception of the social question that you never thought of before. Imagine for a moment; a few years ago, and Theodore Parker was mobbed in the great city of Boston because he dared assert religious freedom; and you men and women to-night receive a little woman who dares come forward and in the earnestness of her soul assert the divine principle of social freedom. [Cheers.] I think we owe you a resolution of thanks for the attention and courtesy that you have paid

us, and I hope some of our friends will not forget to offer it, in all due respect. Thank you for the sympathy you have extended to me. I hope to meet you again, and that when I do there will not be a hiss or dissenting voice heard. You know my belief in humanity is very great. I believe that the seed that has been sown here will fructify and grow out into your churches, into your homes and everywhere, and that social religion will become the grand religion of the future. [Loud cheers.]

Mrs. Laura Cuppy Smith—I move that the thanks of this Convention be tendered to the citizens of Chicago for the cordial and courteous reception they have extended to the delegates sent to this Convention.

Dr. Jamieson—I beg to second that.

The resolution was unanimously carried.

The Chairman—The President will now dismiss the Convention.

Mrs. Woodhull—Our Convention will now adjourn *sine die*.

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[The Committee of Arrangements assigned a portion of the last evening of the Convention to J. O. Barret, who was unable to speak on account of ill-health. We have therefore deemed it but just that his manuscript lecture should appear with these reports, as it was prepared for the occasion, with a time set for it, and has a special bearing upon the objects of the movement. Here follows his speech on reforms.—Ed.]

Man can have no absolute isolation anywhere or in anything. Note his governments. Human populations involve diversity of loves and interest; hence the demand and construction of laws and institutions as supplies. If his religion, even, contains but one single idea, he has to defend it by sacred books, creeds, logic, ordinance and interpreters of the revealed law.

Is there any possibility of separating ourselves from these multiform dependencies? Can prison cells, or caves or exile exclude us from each other or from social "responsibility?" An *e pluribus unum* in make-up, ever will our re-



lations and institutions be so. Fast as we abide here and work here in the social, so shall we thrive as nature orders and is sure to bless.

But there is a class—even some unfledged Spiritualists—who, in their contemplation of spiritual beauties, seem to forget this law of association, and so neglect the reforms that will make them the imagery of those beauties. They are so exquisitely spiritual they dislike coarseness, roughness, crudity, and spit on such as beneath their notice; and so fall into a dainty pharaseeism, chilling every noble feeling of the soul. The divine motherhood of nature made the old gray rocks and tangled briars and wild glens and mountains, all so rough, and these prudish idealists call it vulgar. By and by the husbandman comes along with cruel ax, grubbing hoe and plow, slashes down the trees, burns up the brush, drags out the rocks and roots, turns up the soil, fences it round, cultivates it, and lo, a beautiful field! And you admire it now. Oh, yes! but do you pause to think it first needed all this wild and rough out of which to develop the field?

And what do you say of our Spiritualism? Are you shocked at it? It is rough, yet somewhat æsthetic, undevout, undisciplined, ungoverned, scattered, dissonant, combative, iconoclastic, not even churchied or christened. It has its wierd raps and tips, hallucinations, rhapsodies, prophecies, arts, inventions, literature progressing, but all in a jumble yet. "Can any good come out of Nazareth? Come and see?"

We are the more hopeful for Spiritualism, because it is crude, rough and positive; because it touches all planes of life with its inspirations, low in the haunts of vice as in the high courts of refinement, grading all up to one grand level; because it brings to its free platform all kinds of thought, and hears all to learn the most of truth, because it is represented by converts from all religions and races, and governments and sciences under the sun.

Crude as it is, it evolves out of its chaos and disciplines a most beautiful ideal of life. What so charming as intercourse with angels, with the wise and good of other ages, with the loved and gone before? What so magnificent as spiritual character? Yes, yes; but when we try the law of growth on; when we enter the court of angelic action; how

are we are thrown back on the facts that there is harder work, fiercer battles, greater sacrifice than even in our old relations of life. The sublime heaven we dreamed of and expected, disappoints us; it first appears a hill of jars and alienations; and our disappointment will reach into a yet sadder feeling than ever before, if we do not here comprehend the situation in all its bearings of reform; if we are not willing to institute reform, producing the heaven we seek.

You say you love Spiritualism.—love its blessed oracles, its sweet communings, its lofty inspirations. How *much* do you love it? Enough to let go one single pleasure? Enough to part with reputation, ease and self-gratification? Enough to bring hither a cross of crucifixion and be thereon virtually slain to vindicate the saving virtue of angels' forgiving love?

Reform is the watchword of the hour. It is the body of pure Spiritualism, its life, its food, its drink, its home, its industry, its work of promise. It is in human growth what the root, stalk and leaves are to the flower thence developed. You love the flower itself, it is so beautiful and sweet; but would it ever be beautiful and sweet without its appendages—without dirt, and rain, and root, and stalk and leaf? Suppose you remove these instrumentalities, what have you left? Where is your flower? Where is your beauty to admire and fragrance to inhale? If we neglect the means, we attain no ends. If we refuse the aids of Spiritualism, we have nothing but a dead, dry name. If we do not bestir ourselves here our oracles are silenced, and our places of worship in groves and halls are desolate, and the world goes back by our neglect into its former gloom and doubt.

Like Nature in her rough estate, man needs pruning and culture. He is organized to make everything serviceable to his improvement. If he becomes indifferent, fancying all will be well because a good God reigns and immortality is in store, what is he but a shiftless appendage in this universe? The idea that high altitudes are attainable in easy chariots is defeat of it all. There is no rising except by subduing, bringing all our forces into order of wise and loving superintendence. Growth comes from below upward, and the primal spring is from above, descending to enfold us. Be it remembered, too, that not a force of ours is to be ignored, not a passion left out. All is divine in fundamental prin-

ciples of human life; and this divine is revealed when bloomed out into beauty of life by re-forming.

And do you not know that the price we pay for liberty—our whole self denied—is the method of growth? that every soul-pang is a forcing process? that every excess of habit curtailed is gain in morality? that every passionai feeling spiritualized is an open door to holy angelhood? that every popular oppression that, chaining us, is broken up, is building better? that all our struggles and victories in changing public sentiment for higher type of private and public character reverts in sequential good to the actors, making us brave, moral, noble, companionable with all before us who have whitened their robes in the waving waters of affliction?

The true line of reform is from within outward, as roots to flowers, as springs to rivers, as sunbeams to earth. It is not my neighbor first to reform; it is *me*, and *then* my neighbor. Is my body in order—lungs sound, heart full-pulsed, head level, thought clear, passion pure, motive benevolent, action moral? That's the first question. When, with careful search, watch and culture, all feeding, inspiring, rounding-out, beautifying, till full of genuine affections of soul, courtesies and sweet attractions; when truthful, sincere, forgiving, with a reasonable share of common sense; when spiritually-minded, self-denying, faithful, sunny in sphere of life; when angelized so in all departments of our being—then are we Spiritualists indeed qualified to reform others and be their saviours.

Where responsibilities are involved is apprenticeship served and demanded. In building a house, fence, railroad, anything, we ask first for skill and trustworthiness. So in reforms; it begins at home and advertises itself by its works.

Qualifications considered, look out now and comprehend what must be done in public sentiment and law to open the way of actualizing our new religion from the individual to the collective whole. We are hedged in on every side. The statute law is against us, because it does not measure our new thought as angels have inspired it. The civil courts are against us, because the law is old and unadaptable to our needs; because popular theology, stamped upon the law, has artificial standards of authority, while ours are natural. The church is against us, because it caters to the false re-

spectabilities which we fight; because its theology is dead, while ours is alive; its belief is in creed, while ours is unstereotyped and free; because its teachings are from the records of inspiration, while ours are from *inspiration itself*; because it crystallizes, while we grow as plants; because it disdains the cast-off and unfortunate, while we make them the reformed exponents of our religion; because it would deaden God in the National Constitution, while we would translate *him* and *hers*—"Our Father and our Mother, too"—the orific soul of the living universe into our own soul, and make *that* our constitutional law.

The press is against us. It has with all these other antagonisms fought us for twenty-five years—here and there a happy exception, and the exception is growing. The press is generally in the interest of capitalists, mainly supported thereby. It bribes with legislators, truckles to church theologies which it secretly scorns, panders to a low sensationalism, conserves against innovations, black-mails the public agitators who expose popular anointed evils, pays its reporters for writing even false statements of us for the sake of a sensation, more eager to report faults than to correct them, the abettors of condign punishment upon the unfortunate, instead of reforming them; fills its daily and weekly columns with reports of murders, steals, rapine, seductions by sensational words and pictures, thus keeping the usual vices in the foreground, which in turn psychologizes the masses into a low debasing ideal of human life, and so breeding and augmenting our dark catalogue of criminalities. If any one paper or reporter questions the bravery or fidelity of such writers, or exposes the inside corruptions of our social machinery with a view to retrenchment, the press cries out obscenity; while in its sensuous advertisements and emblazoned records of vice, it is the very quintessence of obscenity itself. Where is the independence of integrity? It ought to be, and must be for the sake of averting a very rotting down of the nation, the stern and incorruptible defender of human rights, the herald of life's virtues more than its vices, the uncompromised guardian of public morals, the honest reporter of facts unvarnished by lucre, the palladium of liberty, the emancipator of the oppressed, the leader in all reforms, the voice of justice, the house of refuge



to the fallen, the merciful benefactor of our race. Happy the day when our public press shall assume and actualize such responsibilities, and star-crowned shall we be if we aid in accomplishing such a reform.

Consider, for a moment, how we are hedged in from other quarters. It is not only the Church and press that forge the chains around us, but it is a gigantic oppression upon the hard-working people that is always crushing out their very vitals. We are under bonds, under the rulership of specially favored capitalists, under the orders of the unlaboring laws of the markets, under a system of servile time-cheaters to rebuild a worse than English aristocracy upon these shores. But there is a more damnable oppression than all this, which supports all this, which in turn is supported by all this. It is our social system—a system of masculine usurpation, of betrothed betrayal, of foeticides, of enforced lusts, of unwelcome children, of diseased bodies, of blasted hopes, of hypocritical slanderers of morality, set up queenly in our wholesale Vanity Fairs, with orders for us to worship and perpetuate queenly debauchees of Christian civilization. It hedges us in; it stares us in the face at every corner of the street—the polluted stare of the libertine—the pale and sickly stare of woman's ruined virtue! As the seers of heaven and earth look down, *down, down* through the murky cloud and stench of so-called respectable society, and see how the official representatives of the people manage, how they live, how they grant favors for considerations, how they bribe woman's virtue; and see how some of our business men, in high repute and power, secretly run their own institutions, and, for a pretense, join the church; how they cohort together with some popular ministers, preaching piety, practicing lust; teaching purity, covertly defaming the beautiful law of self-denial, but persecuting and even imprisoning the truth-tellers, and cry out, "Obscenity!" when the righteous indignation of the very angels is aroused to stir this hitherto quiet lake of social leprosy, as the true should see and feel all this—it were criminality itself to be silent.

The task of American reformers is greater than the Seven Tasks of Hercules. But there is no escaping the responsibility. We must act or be slaves!

We must agitate or nationally rot! We must arouse the masses to serious thoughtfulness and retrenchment, or meet the next issues of an internal war right at our doors! This is no idle tale, no mere sensation, no unnecessary alarm; deep in the convictions of the seers is it pondered, and the machinations of liberty's enemies fearfully measured. All the seething elements portend it. The God-in-the-Constitution movement is but one of its outward signs; the under-wave is the social struggle for freedom, and this is deep as the great heaven of love. This is pushing out, out-swelling higher, circling wider, destructive to marital claims and honored institutions, when at some coming hour we shall be tried as never mortals were in human revolution. If by means of our agitation the battle breaks upon us, it is fate, and we must meet it. If, by agitation, we can stir the masses and enlighten them in the righteous principles of human government, and avert wars, it is the providence of our fidelity still. Move on we must, or be hurled from the Tarpeian Rock.