

THE
ELIXIR OF LIFE;

OR,

WHY DO WE DIE?

AN ORATION

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

TENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION

OF THE

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS,

AT

Grow's Opera House, Chicago, Ills.,

BY

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL,

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5. A new financial system, in which the government will be the source, custodian and transmitter of money, and in which usury will have no place.
6. A new sexual system, in which mutual consent, entirely free from money or any inducement other than love, shall be the governing law, individuals being left to make their own regulations; and in which society, when the individual shall fail, shall be responsible for the proper rearing of children.
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The Elixir of Life; or, Why Do We Die?

I appear before you to-night to speak of a subject which, more than any other, ought to command the attention of the enlightened world; but which, more than any other, receives the anathemas of its professed representatives—the so-called Christians—because, forsooth, to discuss it, is to attack, necessarily, one of the chiefest pillars of the Christian edifice. The subject involves the necessity of free speech, in plain terms. John Stuart Mill, whom all reformers have learned to love, said: “The diseases of society can, no more than corporeal maladies, be prevented or cured, without being spoken about in plain language.” I propose to speak about the diseases of society, and if I expect to present either a preventative or a cure, I must speak in terms so plain that none can mistake my meaning. You may affect to blush, and the papers may call me indecent and vulgar, and say I have no shame, to speak as I shall, what they do not dare to repeat. But ought not you and they rather blush with shame that such diseases as I shall mention, exist at all to be spoken about? I say shame upon the newspapers, and shame upon your preachers, teachers and doctors, that I should have cause to stand here and tell you what they should have freely discussed, years ago, and thus have saved me the present unpleasant task.

Standing, however, as I do, somewhat representative of the immense issue of sexual freedom that is now agitating the public mind, I have a duty to fulfill, to which I should be recreant did I withhold a single sentence that I propose to utter. But, more than this, even: I am intrusted with a mission by those whose disapproval I would not earn, were it to gain the approval of a thousand audiences like this; therefore, though the task be not a pleasant one, I would not shirk it if I could. If, however, in performing it, instead of driving you farther away from me than you now are, I should draw you all nearer, then should I indeed thank heaven for giving me the moral strength to utter the plain, unvarnished truth, as I know it, about the most important question that has ever interested or distracted the human mind.

I ask you for the time being, to cast aside your prejudices; to unloose every fetter that hangs about your minds; to disperse all clouds that shadow your understanding, and to not prejudge me by concluding in advance that you know more about this matter than I do; but let the words that I shall utter sink deep into your souls, since, some day, whether you heed them now or not, you will have cause to remember them. I ought to know more of what I am to speak about than almost any of you, because I have given it more attention; but if there be any here who have studied it, in its various phases, one-half as deeply as I have, they will, with one possible exception, agree with me in everything that I shall say.

Still further in preparation, I wish to ask : Are there any here who fear the truth? I hear no replies. Now again, are there any who are afraid of an error. Again I hear no replies. So if you are afraid neither of truth or error, I see no reason why you should quarrel with me about anything that I may advance ; since whatever it may be, it must be one of these. But I can tell you of what you are afraid—if, indeed, you are fearful at all. You are afraid that I may hold up a glass in which you will see your secret deformities ; and you scarcely dare to look upon them. But no matter. Let them be ever so hideous—and that they are hideous enough, I know right well—it will do you good to see yourselves, for once, as others see you. For there are those to whom your every thought and your most secret acts are as well known as they are to yourselves ; and let me remind you that, if your secrets were as well known to human beings as they are to spirits, none of you would be any the worse off, while many would thank heaven that they no longer carry the awful load alone. Hence it is of your own lives that you are afraid rather than of the truth ; since he or she whom the truth will not stab, has no cause for fear.

I think I know enough of the world at large, and of individuals specially to say, that there are not a half dozen persons present, who are not in the most abject slavery to what the world pleases to call, their secret vices. Wouldn't it be strange if these should, after all, turn out to be virtues instead. Then wouldn't their subjects be heartily ashamed of themselves for having been frightened at shadows, merely, into being liars, thieves and hypocrites so large a part of their lives !

Again and finally, let me entreat that, for once in your lives, you throw off the sickly sentimentalism about sexual love—your sham morality and mock modesty about the most common and harmless, as well as innocent and beautiful of things ; and like common-sense individuals, with me, consider, specially, that department of our natures with which, though you have pretended such immaculateness, you would no sooner part than with life itself ; indeed, to blot which out of life, would be to leave but a precious little worth living. For once be men and women, acting as if you were known by each other, as you are, to be men and women, possessed of all the endowments of nature, and wanting to know if there is still something to learn that will make them yet richer, more beautiful and bountiful of happiness than ever before ; and willing to accept the lesson at least for consideration, to which I will proceed without further delay.

○ I have said that this problem of sexual love is the most important one that ever engaged the human mind. It becomes so because within it is concealed the science that shall finally solve the problem of life and death, which must remain unsolved until this science is discovered to the world. When I say life and death, I mean literally what I say. I mean that within the sexual problem is concealed the law that shall enable us to solve the mystery of life by conquering death.

Immense as is this to the inhabitants of earth, how immeasurably more so shall it become when it is known that, upon this planet for the first time since creation, has this problem nearly approached a solution. Planets countless millions of ages older than this, have all their weary lengths run out, waiting for the fresh, green earth to give them the knowledge of life and death, that shall make them superior to ooth.

The resurrection of the body, and the ascension, at will, of the Spirit,

have never been attained by the inhabitants of even the oldest planets. These, although immensely superior to the people of the earth, in physical, intellectual and moral culture, are less advanced than we are, as a people, spiritually. This fact has come to be known to the inhabitants of the solar system, and their attention is now centered upon this planet in hopeful anticipation, willing, in order to obtain the prize, to yield to us the palm. Here, then, the palm must be won. Here, death must be conquered. Here must be produced to the waiting Universe, the individuality, the personality, that has partaken of the Elixir of Life, and thereby put the last enemy—death—under foot. And here it will be done, and the glad anthem ring out upon the startled world, "Oh, death where is thy sting! Oh, grave where is thy victory!"

Do you ask me how I know this? I will tell you. Spirits, who have never deceived me, have informed and shown me why it must be so; and I know from the intense anxiety now existing among the Spirits, to whom this solution has been intrusted, that they feel a responsibility about it resting upon them, such as was never before borne by either mortals or Spirits. They tell me that Spirits from all the Planets in the Siderial Universe are now congregated, watching the issue of this momentous question, which must be solved rightly, else the universe will go backward into a darkness from which it will require millions of years for it to emerge even to its present condition.

That which has been undergoing the process of evolution since the birth of the first planet, is now at the culminating point. The efforts of the various epochs have centered to evolve a new and higher order of life, in which the wants and requirements of the purely physical existence, and the consequent demoralization and dishonesty that have crept into the world, through them, shall be done away with. The whole power of the great and good of the boundless universe is stretched to the utmost tention to attain it. If it shall succeed; if it shall reach the culmination; if the gladsome song of victory shall sound out upon the world, even though it be from a lowly manger, and from a despised Nazarene, civilization will spring forward by a single bound, a million years in advance of the present period.

But if it fail—I shudder as I contemplate the possibility. Nothing that has ever occurred to the world; nothing that the Millerites have ever believed; nothing that has ever been pictured of despair and darkness, can, for a moment, compare with that prospect. You look back almost with horror, to the dark ages that followed the submersion of civilization, when the forests of the North of Europe poured down their Goths and Vandals and Huns upon the devoted city of Rome. This was but the result of a physical contest over a physical civilization. Then how much more horrible must be the fate, that would follow the defeat in a Spiritual contest, in which the prize to be gained or lost is Spiritual life. The Barbarians of Europe succeeded in the former contest; now after a thousand years, let it not be said that the barbarians of earth have again triumphed; and this time over, not only the highest civilization of earth, but over this, reinforced by the armies of heaven. Let it not be said, that flaming hells yawn again; that tormenting fiends are again set free; that cloven-footed devils are again unloosed for "a thousand years," since if they conquer they will reign inexorably. A fearful tragedy or a glorious victory await us; and upon us here assembled perhaps depends the momentous issue.

Do not, however, receive this as coming from me; but accept it as coming from the wisest and best of ascended Spirits—those whom you have learned to honor and love for the good done while on the earthly plane; those to whom, if they were to appear before you here, you would willingly yield implicit obedience; and who would appear here, were not the one essential element still wanting, and to whom for six years I have yielded a willing and appreciative obedience. Gladly would I name them. They are familiar to you all; but I must not presume beyond my commission; but I am commissioned, aye commanded, to declare unto you, and through you to the world, that in the despised, the ignored problem of Sexuality, lies the key that shall unlock to Spirits the doors of materiality, and show in boldest relief that of which, the most blessed, have as yet caught but faintest glimpses—Spirit Materialization.

The perfected blending of the positive and negative creative forces, which has never yet been accomplished, must furnish the special elements, now needed, to perfect and make general the possibility of spirit resurrection. Of course I cannot offer you the proofs of this. It is something of which as yet there is no proof. During the past eighteen months, thousands of persons have been put on trial, as the means to present this to the world, and I know there are a few, at least, here present, to whom this prophecy has been made; but alas all have failed, and the whole power of the spirit world is now centered upon a single individual to effect it, and all the opposing powers of hell and darkness are also centered upon the same individual to defeat it.

I know these things, and fearful to me have been the means by which this knowledge came. So terrible at times have they been that I have shrunk affrighted from the contemplation. For months I lacked the courage to launch this question upon the world; for months again I lacked the courage to do that which has called the world to the discussion of the social problem; and still again for months have I hesitated to do what I am doing to-night; but the exigency is such that it could be delayed no longer, although some of the necessary elements are lacking still. The law must be advanced, though the illustrations be delayed.

Shall I now proclaim what it is that is wanting to complete the victory; that which will once and forever settle this question of sexuality, and from this mud-bedaubed, filth-defiled, Christian-damned, this vulgar, indecent, and obscene thing, which Christianity has made it out to be, lift it to rest upon the brow of every man and woman, as the chiefest jewel in their crown of brilliants? Will you now permit me, in the name of the spirit-world, to proclaim what it is that is wanting to accomplish this—a greater, grander, a more pregnant for good revolution, than all others that have preceded it?

But first let me explain what the results of all this will be—what fearful existing social diseases are to be changed and cured—so that, from their possibility, together with their desirability, as the greatest of human needs, you may the more readily consider the means by which they must come, if they come at all. I urge you to consider them in the true spirit of inquiry, confessing that you have not yet arrived at infinite truth, and conjuring you to accept truth, in whatever garb or form it appears, even if it be revolutionary to every present thought and action in the world.

Not any body will deny the desirability of a perfected physical health

for humanity ; but many may doubt the possibility of its attainment. I, however, make the bold, bald assertion, that disease, when the new era shall be inaugurated, will be banished the human body ; and that too by the same means that shall make the era a new one. Almost everybody has witnessed the beneficent results of so-called magnetism in the removal of disease ; as well as the further fact that not the same magnetism will produce equally beneficial results upon the same disease in different persons ; and still further, that magnetic effects are the most positive and apparent when the operator and subject are of different sexes. It has also been observed that these effects may be produced, though distance separate the persons involved ; but that the effects are more palpable when they are, for instance, in the same room, with their minds concentrated upon the conditions ; and still more so, when there is actual physical contact over the parts diseased.

Now what is the philosophy of this healing by magnetic power ? This, simply, and it has a whole volume of meaning in it, to the analytic observer : That the operator and the subject, are positively and negatively related to each other ; that the approach of the poles of the battery have been sufficiently near to make the connection, and that upon the perfectness of the connection depends the extent of the effect produced, and the consequent curative influence. That is to say, where a person positive or negative to another, afflicted with disease, is brought into magnetic relations, with this other, and the positive and negative currents are established, that disease, whatever it may be, necessarily departs, since where these currents exist, disease cannot remain.

It is safe then to assume that all diseases that have not already destroyed organs upon which life depends may and ought to be cured ; and, if this method of cure were once established, no disease would be permitted to go on to the extent of vital organic destruction, and consequently that death from disease would be virtually abolished.

This is the philosophy ; but upon what is this philosophy based ? What is this magnetic relation that produces such wonderful results ? It is called Animal Magnetism, and so indeed it is. But what is Animal Magnetism ? It is Sexual vitality merely ; and it is nothing else. A person, whether male or female, cannot be a magnetic healer, except he have sexual vitality ; and it will be found, that the most successful healers, are those who have the most of this element. Nor does the fact that those of the same sex, often relieve each other, impeach this statement ; since he who has the vitality, imparts it to him who hath it not, by the law of equalization.

It is an axiom in the medical profession that the patient who experiences sexual desire is not dangerously ill ; and also that the patient who has been dangerously ill is convalescent when sexual desire returns. Thus, it is held that the presence of the sexual appetite is a symptom of health ; but if it turn out, as I hold that it will, this statement, to make it strictly true, will have to be reversed. That is, cause and effect have been transposed, the effect having been placed behind the cause. Sexual appetite is the basis of health, and when re-established in an invalid, health follows. This becomes clear, when it is considered upon what a cure by magnetism depends. It is the restoration of sexual vitality, or animal magnetism—the introduction of this into the system of the patient, causing health ; and not a certain condition of health, making it possible for it to be introduced. Thus in this as in almost all pretended

science, the real truth reverses the existing order of things; and in this if what I say be true, you will see how nearly the whole world is bordering on promiscuous sexual intercourse, and not only this, but how much the health and happiness of the world depend upon still further, so-called promiscuousness, or, more strictly, perhaps, upon a harmonious variety or a composite and a perfected unity.

But this may not be so evident until another fact is made clear. And this fact is this: almost all disease among adults is caused by some unnatural or untimely sexual condition. Take the married classes. Show me a man or woman who is a picture of physical health and strength, and I will show you a person, who has healthy sexual relations; but these may be at the expense of the other person in the partnership. Show me, however, a man and a woman who live together, who are perfectly healthy, physically, and I will show you a God-ordained marriage, which man cannot put asunder. Or again, show me men and women who are in perfect health, whether they are married according to law, or whether they live monogamically or promiscuously, and I will show you persons who are living according to the laws of nature, sexually, and, consequently, are living rightly. Dispute this who can!

It is useless to kick against facts. They are stubborn things, and the world has been butting its head against the science and facts of sexuality, already too long. Although the attempt has been made to bury it in the mud, it shall, nevertheless, be exalted white and pure, to the throne; and there it shall rule the world in peace, happiness and endless progress. If, as I tell you the fountain of health, is concealed in this great problem, shall we be so foolish as to longer ignore it, and thus deprive ourselves of its priceless boon? I say, No! A thousand times, No! Rather let every thing that is held sacred or profane, perish in a common ruin, than let this problem remain longer unsolved.

If health depend upon proper sexuality, it follows that disease depends upon improper sexuality. To this general proposition I make another and a specific one: That all disease not directly to be attributed to so-called accidental causes, is the result of improper, or the want of proper, sexual conditions. And this applies to persons of all ages and both sexes. Show me the man or woman, married or single, old or young, who is suffering from any chronic complaint, and I will show you a person who has either improper or no sexual relations.

Now, just here arises the great and grave question: What are and what are not proper sexual relations. In endeavoring to answer this, I must be permitted to speak so as to be properly understood. And why should I not? Are we not endowed by nature with the sexual passion; and is it not given us for a purpose—one that should be a blessing, instead of a curse as it mostly is, to humanity? Nobody will pretend to answer, No! Then why should we not discuss it as freely as we do any other subject? Is it because our thoughts and desires about it have become so abominable, so perverted and so impure, obscene and vulgar, that any, even needed reference to the subject, brings the blush of shame to the face and a sense of degradation to the soul? Are we indeed so impure that to us all sexual things are impure? I lay it down as an axiom that he or she who blushes and is ashamed at any mention of sexual intercourse, has, at some time or other, done something sexually of which to be ashamed. I hold that every thing connected with the manner and method in which human life has its fountain, is a proper and a modest

subject for either public or private discussion, and I simply pity all who say Nay! to this.

Sexual intercourse that is in accordance with nature, and therefore proper, is that which is based upon mutual love and desire, and that ultimately in reciprocal benefit. Sexual intercourse that is improper is that which is not based upon mutual love and desire, and that does not ultimately in reciprocal benefit. Of the former there is but one class of cases, since in this class, all the conditions of perfectness are present. First, Love; Second, desire based upon love; and, Third, mutual happiness as the result. Who is there that shall dare to interfere with such sexual relations? Let it be whoever it may, he is an impious wretch, and an enemy to human happiness, and consequently to humanity.

Of the latter there are several classes, which deserve to be enumerated, so that they may be understood wherever any of them may be met. First, that class where it is claimed by legal right; second, that class where the female, to please the male, submits without the proper self desire; third, that class where, for money, or any motive other than love, the female sells the use of her body to the male for his gratification; fourth, that class where mutual love and desire exist, but where there is such want of adaptation as to make mutual consummation impossible.

Now, under either of these conditions, if sexual intercourse be maintained for any considerable length of time, disease and sexual demoralization will surely follow; but the most destructive to health as well as the most numerous, are the first and the last classes, which occur almost altogether in marriage. The wife who submits to sexual intercourse against her wishes or desires, virtually commits suicide; while the husband who compels it, commits murder, and ought just as much to be punished for it, as though he strangled her to death for refusing him.

But this even is not so destructive to health as is that intercourse, carried on habitually, without regard to perfect and reciprocal consummation. And when it is known that three-fourths of all married women, who otherwise might be happily mated, suffer from this cause, the terrible and wide-spread results may be readily conceived, and the need for amelioration as readily understood. I need not explain to any woman the effects of unconsummated intercourse though she may attempt to deceive herself about it; but every man needs to have it thundered in his ears until he wakes to the fact that he is not the only party to the act, and that the other party demands a return for all that he receives; demands that he shall not be enriched at her expense; demands that he shall not, either from ignorance or selfish desire, carry her impulse forward on its mission only to cast it backward with the mission unfulfilled, to prostrate the impelling power and to breed nervous debility or irritability and sexual demoralization, and to sow the seeds of disease broadcast among humanity. What is merely hinted at here involves a whole science and a fine art, incomparably the most important of all the sciences and of all the arts, hardly yet broached to the human thought, and now criminally repressed and defeated in their effort at birth by the prejudices of mankind—by your prejudices, and even, perhaps, by mine.

It is a fact terrible to contemplate, yet it is nevertheless true, and ought to be pressed upon the world for its recognition: that fully one-half of all women seldom or never experience any pleasure whatever in the

sexual act. Now this is an impeachment of nature, a disgrace to our civilization—an eternal blotch upon the otherwise chivalrous conduct of men toward women. It is a standing reproach upon physiological science that this ignorance has existed so long; and upon medical science, that its dire effects have been so long concealed. I have recently had repeated interviews with a member, in high standing, of the New York College of Physicians; and he does not hesitate to acknowledge that, more than all I have yet said is true, about the sexual demoralization of the race; but the age of hypocrisy reigns as supremely in this, as in the clerical profession. Its members are waiting for the world to get ready to hear the truth, and have thus made it necessary that a weak woman should proclaim it, who, instead of being a recognized authority, competent to enforce her statements, is almost crucified, because she feels it her duty to do what they should have done, whose business it is to guard the health of humanity.

Now it is as impossible for a woman to remain in health under unnatural sexual conditions, as it is for a person to take poison and not suffer from its effects; and every woman who hears me knows this is true. They know that the demoralized and degenerate condition of female humanity is to be attributed to false sexual relations; but who among them have the courage to declare it? I have had hundreds of wives say to me, "I would not endure these conditions a single moment, were I not dependent upon my husband for a home," or "if society would not ostracize me for leaving him;" or some other equally lamentable excuses. To these my reply has been, "You have the face to tell me this, and almost in the same moment you shrug your shoulders at a passing prostitute whose features beam with health, and whose rounded form speaks of unmistakable strength and beauty, while your face and form are a living condemnation of your life, let it be what it may."

Out upon such damned hypocrisy. "I hold that the poor woman, who, cast out by society, because, in ignorance, she admitted her lover, without procuring a license, to the sacred relations of love, is compelled to sell her body to some demanding man, for the pitiful means to keep life in her body, and perhaps in that of her unrecognized child, is as high as heaven above her who, in silks and satins and with a long retinue of friends, and the sanction of the priest and the law, marries a home for life, with a repugnance in her soul for the man who furnishes it.

I can have a deep sympathy and respect for the modest prostitute who feels the degradation into which she is almost compelled by the ostracism of society; but for her who goes through the gorgeous pageantry of a modern marriage, to proclaim to the world that she is now going to enter into sexual relations with the man, with whom she has consorted, every other way, for an indefinite time, according to the recognized standard of sexual things, I can regard only as brazen and immodest. To me this farce of marriage is a public placarding, merely, to this effect: that I, the bearer, am this day sold, to be the sexual slave of the person to whom the law, holding that I do not know enough and am unable to protect myself, has committed the care of my person. Wives may not think they are slaves, and yet be open to this charge. Some may not be; but let the large majority attempt to assert their sexual freedom, and they will quickly come to the realization.

To what does modern marriage amount, if it be not to hold sexual slaves, who otherwise would be free? I ask the married: Do you live

together because the law compels you? And they scout the idea; but in the same breath they condemn me for saying that the law only binds people who ought to be set free, and who, without the law, would be free: that those whom God—Love—has bound together no man, or woman, can put asunder.

Beside the evils of improper sexual relations resulting from legalized prostitution, there are the still more terrific conditions to which they are condemned, who languish in single cursedness. To this very considerable portion of female humanity the right to the exercise and enjoyment of their sexual instincts is absolutely denied, under the penalty of social death. They are condemned to a life of degradation and misery, from which there is no escape. Add to this class who are sexually starved, those who are compelled to undesired relations with the legal owners of their sexual organs, and a sum total of misery is formed which altogether beggars description.

I have not the inclination to go through with the sickening details that have come into my possession, in my investigation into this subject. Suffice it to say, that I know fully one-half of the world is undergoing sexual starvation; dying either for the want of intercourse, or for lack of the proper kind.

There is, however, another and a graver consideration lying back of the present demoralized sexual condition of the people; and this is the result it is producing upon the coming generation. If the present social system of compulsory marriage were all that its admirers claim for it; were it the guardian of peace, prosperity and purity; in short, were it the one thing good and true in our present civilization, yet for the curse it entails upon children, I would wash it out, if need be, by the blood of one-half of our race.

Four-fifths of all children who are conceived are undesired, and they come into the world, as it were, with the brand of Cain upon their brows; or else with the seeds of some fatal disease in their systems; which accounts for one-half of them dying off before they reach the age of five years—a commentary upon the present social system that sinks it to the level of a horrid, aye, a brutal tragedy. And yet the world pretends to have a deep solicitude for the children. It crieth out: What will become of the children if marriage be done away?

I will tell you just what will become of the children, which, if the children of to-day had inherited, I should not now have had occasion to enter my protest against the awful crime, that is being committed against them. In the first place, without marriage, and with women made, as they must be, independent of the individual man for support, there will be no unwelcomed children born; secondly, they will be born in health and with a lease of life beyond the adult age, and, thirdly, they will all inherit the same right to equal education—physical, mental and moral, and thus enter upon adult life having had equal preparation.

It is as much better to be the ward of society than to be dependent upon an individual, as society is greater than the individual. Who would not rather have the bond of the United States—even under present political conditions—than that of any individual? How much more to be preferred for children, then, will be the faith of the future reconstructed government, over either the legal or moral duty of the individual merely. They would do well to examine the outcome of children, who cry out against the social revolution, because of them. Of all the improved conditions possible, those of dependent women and chil-

children will be most improved. We are looking earnestly forward to a better race of men and women, and one of the means by which it will be produced, will be this condition for children.

To begin. Children must first be conceived, gestated and born in proper conditions; and afterward, properly and scientifically reared and educated; and with this neither marriage or present customs will have aught to do; indeed they have nothing to do with such matters now, except to interpose obstacles in the way of their natural development. People argue as if children are the result of marriage, while the truth is, that to them, marriage is an arbitrary incident, merely, entailing unthought of misery.

It is also to be observed that another horrible result of the system of marriage, is sexual vice, both in children and adults, and when its terrific ravages are considered, a remedy, let it be whatever it may, should be joyfully welcomed by the whole world. I need not tell you that four-fifths of the children practice self-abuse before they are old enough, of their own wisdom to know better; nor that, finding the inroads it is making upon their health, they attempt to abandon it, and spermatorrhea is substituted for the original vice; nor that almost everybody, female as well as male, when licensed, legally, to enter upon the relations of sex, are so fearfully debilitated by this vice, or this disease, as to debar them from even a medium measure of happiness; and still more to unfit them to reproduce themselves in children. Indeed does vice in childhood culminate in misery in adult life!

The repressions of law and a pretended public opinion, and the resulting enforced and unwilling relations in marriage, are already yielding their natural fruit—a growing disgust sexually, between the sexes. Were I to tell you the extent to which Sodomy in man and its antitype in woman have attained, I should shock you beyond measure; and if to this I were to add the beastly practices to which resort is had to revive or stimulate the depraved and demoralized sexuality in men, and women too, I should disgust you, though speaking nothing but the truth, and such truth as the world needs to know.

I am only reiterating what is known to be true, by those who have investigated the subject, medically and physiologically, when I say, that a change for the better must soon be made; since if things go on for the next century as they have for the last, there will be no further reproduction possible, or even desirable. These are questions of mighty import for the consideration of the present. They come to *us*, and *we* must determine whether the race shall become extinct, or whether we will have the moral courage to inquire into the matter, and find the remedy; and when found to apply it.

For my part I do not care what that remedy may be. I do not care if it be promiscuous sexual intercourse for both sexes and all ages. I do not care if it be, what is to me, the most unpalatable of things. I would gladly seize hold of it, and expend every possible effort to secure its inauguration.

But when the remedy shall be found and accepted, it will be in perfect harmony with the highest happiness and conditions, and the best interests possible for humanity. It cannot be promiscuous sexuality; since I am prepared to prove that a person who follows this, becomes impotent in from six to ten years. And yet I am charged with advocating such a thing as this. Perhaps, however, we do not yet fully understand what promiscuous sexuality really is. Promiscuousness signifies without

selection or choice ; it means indiscriminately. Harmonious and reciprocal variety is not, in any proper sense, promiscuousness ; nor does it lead to the effect of promiscuousness, which, as I said before, is impotency.

Indeed if I were to sum up the meaning of the movement for sexual freedom in a single sentence, I should say : It is a strife for supremacy between bestiality in sexual intercourse, on the one hand, and its normal expression, according to the law of its own nature, on the other hand. And opponents shall not escape that point, nor blind the eyes of the ignorant, nor even rouse the superstition of the vulgar, much longer, by the cry of promiscuousness, when in this strife we know that promiscuousness shall go down in a common ruin with everything else in sexuality that has brought misery, desolation and death into the world.

Now, the remedy for all the ills to which I have called your attention is the substitution for the present rule of sexual intercourse, the rule of mutual consent based upon mutual desire, which may be temporary, or may continue during life. To prove this, permit me to ask if any person ever knew of any detrimental results following from the application of that rule ; did ever any disease, or anything but happiness and peace, follow from natural, mutually desired sexuality ? I tell you nay ! You may search the world through and through and fail to find a single exception. It is impossible that anything but good should follow the natural expression of a natural desire ; while we have found that almost all the ills of life, follow as the results of intercourse, based upon an entirely opposite rule.

Again, let me ask if any body is so blind as to imagine that the law has anything whatever to do with the begetting of good children ; and, again, if children begotten under the rule of love and consent, can possibly be bad ?

And here I desire to correct an error that exists regarding my theory of stirpiculture. It is supposed by many, that I contend, when a woman desires a child she should select for its parent, some person, who, from physical health and perfectness, should be something like an ideal man. I utterly repudiate all such stirpiculture as this. I do not believe it possible for a woman to produce her best child, except by the man whom she loves best and for whom she has the keenest sexual desire. If this be for the perfect physical man, why, all the better ; but I have observed that even when the physical conditions of parents are not so good as they ought to be, but when they are closely allied by love, that good children follow ; while I have seen the most inferior children result from parents who, from physical appearances, ought, apparently, to beget the very best ; therefore I am obliged to conclude that the order of children depends not so much upon the physical perfection of parents, as it does upon the perfectness of the love upon which the sexual impulse is based, that precedes conception. The conditions for the future generation of children, then, are : 1st, Perfect love ; 2d, Mutual desire ; 3d, Perfect health.

Furthermore, I hold that for a woman to have sexual intercourse with a man, for any other reason than that she loves him and has a sexual desire for him, is to degrade herself, while the opposite conditions must always produce the opposite effect of exaltation. I hope, therefore, that nobody will hereafter class me among those stirpiculturists, who reduce the begetting of children to the level of that of cattle ; and who would exalt the best merely physically endowed men to be the progenitors of the race, without regard to any natural attraction and denying sexuality to all of inferior endowments. I repeat again, and I wish emphatically to impress

it upon you, that, to me, love is the element by which the best children are begotten; and that when there shall be no sexual intercourse except that based upon love, then there will be no half-made-up children born to be a curse to themselves, and a burden to society.

Again it is to be observed that there is no course so safe when there is danger of any kind ahead, as to have those who are to encounter it fully informed of its character, and thus prepared to meet it. But in the matter of sexuality, the world's practice is entirely different. Those who know anything about the dangers by which the sexual passion is surrounded, make the most strenuous efforts to conceal them from those who are ignorant of the perils which attend their development. It is utterly incomprehensible to me how mothers, fathers, teachers, preachers and doctors are so diligent in impressing the young under their charges against the habits of lying, cheating and stealing, while never a word is said to them about the dangers of self abuse. Children at some period of growth find a strange sensation present with them, and in their simplicity, perhaps, seek to learn what it all means; but they are met with a certain and effectual rebuff, and probably are treated to a dissertation about the awful wickedness of such thoughts, and the most positive injunction never again to entertain them. But they will come, and they will not be discarded, and thus they are left to drift almost assuredly into obtaining, surreptitiously, sufficient knowledge to teach them the manner in which gratification is had. With this knowledge, added to the stifled but still growing passion, they decline into a morbid sexual condition which, running into years, carries them beyond the possibility of a return to natural and healthy action and to maturity, utterly ruined, sexually and physically.

Now, in place of this repression, children need early instruction in the uses and abuses of sexuality. They need to be taught that it is a divinely-gifted agent for human happiness, and to regard it as a capacity to be cherished equally with all other capacities. All secretiveness and false modesty and sickly sentimentalism ought to be removed, and the subject reduced to an every-day affair, and thus we shall rob it of the morbidity and mawkishness by which it is now enveloped, and by which it is cursed, and the passion itself will be permitted to develop, healthfully, under the guidance of an enlightened understanding of all its possibilities.

From the day that sexual science is introduced into schools, as assuredly it will be, from that day the sexual evils that now beset the youth of both sexes will begin to vanish. Familiarity with anything robs it of the power to harm as well as of the power to demoralize. If this question of sex were as common a subject for conversation as that of diet or any other human need, many of the ills that now grow out of it would fade away, and it would be rapidly reduced to a science, and everybody come to know to whom they are and to whom they are not related by the ties of love; and knowing it for their own happiness, would be guided by this knowledge.

But what is this mystic power called love and from whence does it derive its potent power over mankind? In the first place genuine love is something beyond volition, and exists entirely independent of the will. There never was a love that was learned. A deep and sincere regard, even a pure affection, may be acquired; but love is the recognition of the relationship that exists naturally between the positive and negative conditions of matter. Wherever there are two or more elements blended, by attraction, there is the love of nature. Love, therefore, is the attraction of opposites by the inherent power of relation that exists, but can never be created. Hence in human beings, it is found exhibiting itself where it is least suspected to be possible. Moreover when the related elements exist in

two persons, let them meet wherever they may it is impossible to avoid a mutual recognition, and let them be bound elsewhere in whatsoever manner, they must love, because they have no power to prevent it.

It is also to be observed that there are various degrees of love, all the way from the merest present exhibition, to the most complete blending. Hence there is need for freedom that the fittest may predominate, since if love at all be right, then the highest—the most perfect—should be the love that should control, and he or she who does not obey the higher love, sins against the law of love and must suffer the inexorable consequences of that law.

Therefore, from the point of present human happiness merely, the further we analyze this matter of love the more convincing the proofs become, that it must and will be free; and the more conclusive the evidence that, though the bodies of two may be kept asunder by the terrors of the law and a fearful crucifixion be thereby entailed upon them, yet their souls will mingle and the magic thrills of reciprocal feeling pass and repass whenever they come within the sphere of each other's influence. Is it not foolish then—aye, is it not more than this, is it not criminal, longer to attempt to place limits upon this heaven ordained passion? Shall we not the rather recognize the truth as stated by Pope when he says:

"Love free as air at sight of human ties,
Spreads his light wings and in a moment flies."

As the results of freedom for love, then, we may predicate the elevation of humanity out of the awful chasm of misery and despair into which it has been precipitated by slavery and the endeavor to escape or evade its duties, to purity, peace and happiness. We may expect from it that hypocrisy, deceit and lust will be banished the earth, and that in their places will be enthroned a love that shall seek to bless, instead of to possess, its object.

But a great many people say *Oh*, yes! I believe in free love, but not in free lust, meaning thereby that they believe in free love for such as are exactly upon their planes of love, but not for those who are not yet so far ascended. Now I am striving for freedom for all conditions; for those low down in the scale of development as well as for those higher up the ladder of progress. A freedom that grants less than this is despotism. If freedom be an inherent natural right, then all individuals of whatever status are entitled to it. The only limit that can be placed upon it is the boundary of its own sphere, so that the sphere of another shall not be invaded, without first obtaining the necessary consent. All sexual love based upon consent must be free love, since there is no compulsion involved.

What then are we to understand by free lust, and what do they mean who say they are in favor of the former but not of the latter? I have already defined love to be an attraction existing between opposites in sex, independent of the volition of either party, and sexual intercourse by such opposites as proper sexual conditions. It can make no difference whether those conditions continue an hour, a day or a lifetime. It is sufficient that they exist. But lust is the perverted action of the desire for sexual love exhibiting itself in masturbation, sodomy, purchased intercourse as in prostitution, or in enforced intercourse as in marriage; and to this sort of lust I am as much opposed as anybody can be—and therefore while the people will have marriage laws, I would also have laws to protect wives from the beastly lust that now prevails so fearfully in marriage, and by which thousands of wives are annually sent to untimely graves, and the world peopled by intellectual, moral, or social dwarfs and abortions.

Yes! it exists and what is the remedy? Why, simply the freedom that will permit this lust to exhibit itself in proper sexual relations and thus become love; hence when freedom is inaugurated, lust will have lost its domain, and there will soon cease to be any such thing. But the objectors do not mean this, they mean that those who are inclined to constant change, shall not be permitted to change. But who is to decide when freedom is the rule? Surely not any individual for anybody but himself. So it matters not how promiscuously inclined anybody may be, there can be no possible right to restrain him, except through growth from his conditions. This whole matter must be remanded from the control of law to the sphere of education and growth. The person who desires promiscuous sexuality has just the same right to obtain it that he who desires pure monogamy has to obtain that. To state it differently; They who desire promiscuousness, have just as good a right to enforce it as a rule for society, as they who desire monogamy, have to enforce it as a rule. It is strange, however, how few people there are who are able to look at this question from a point of view opposite to their own.

Because I advocate the right of freedom for all classes, I am charged, as I said before, with advocating promiscuousness; but I can easily and clearly show the utter foolishness and the absurdity of that charge. I advocate the freedom for religion, to be enjoyed equally by the Christian, the Infidel, the Pagan and the Jew; but I am neither one or the other of any of these, but a Spiritualist. Now why is it not charged, because I advocate this freedom, that I advocate Paganism? Simply because I do not—and people are so well versed in religious affairs as not to make so ridiculous an assertion; but the same persons who would never think of charging me with the advocacy of fire-worship, because I advocate the right of the fire-worshiper, do not hesitate to charge me with promiscuousness because I advocate the right to that condition for those who desire it. Is there anybody here who fails to see the analogy or the inconsistency of my would be judges?

Since the manly letter of Moses Hull appeared in the WEEKLY, many persons have written to ask me if that is Woodhullism. I reply, No! That is Hullism without the Wood. But if there be anything that may with propriety, be called Woodhullism it is this right of everybody to their own lives. And for my part I wish that all professing spiritual teachers would be as honest as Moses and Elvira Hull have been, and tell us the results of their experiences. Should they do so, I have no doubt that many of them would excel their predecessors—the Hulls—in profitable lessons. I do not think I venture anything in saying if every person present, who has been before the people as a spiritual teacher, were to relate his or her sexual experiences truly, that from this day the revolution would be accomplished. Moses Hull writes in the last WEEKLY that more than fifty speakers have said to him privately: "I have lived the same life you have, and with the same results; but I am not a big enough fool to tell of it." A pretty lot of teachers, surely. They have lived a certain life from which they confess to having received benefit over the accepted methods, and yet they will not enlighten us by the facts of their experiences so that we may profit thereby.

Compared with such hypocrites, Moses Hull is an angel of light, and I trust the time will come, and that he will have no peace until it comes, when Moses Hull shall support his own statements by those of a similar character received from those persons who are afraid to be anything but hypocrites, so that the world may know how much of its happiness and goodly conditions depend upon such lovers as it pretends to condemn—and more than this, even; I hope and trust that he may be along

if nothing else will do it, into reminding a few professing "immaculates" who have ministered to his relief, that it is not exactly in good taste to denounce those who advocate sexual freedom.

Mark me, as this warfare for our rights continues, every person who has lived a free life, which they now attempt to cover by the hue and cry of "Mud Dog" and "Stop Thief" will be compelled to stand unmasked before the world; and I can name a dozen, who now berate Moses Hull, who when this time shall come would gladly change places with him. This infernal hypocrisy and sham morality have got to be exposed and abolished. They are sapping the vitals of honor and truth, and threatening the existence of all faith in humanity.

Whatever you may say of "Woodhullism," it cannot be that it is rotten at the core, of deceit; or that externally it is mildewed by hypocrisy. You may, however, if you will, slime it all over with freedom, sexual freedom if you please, for the highest as well as the lowest, for all grades and kinds, and I will still rejoice that this ism is affixed to my name. There is but one other word in which I glory more than in that of freedom, and that word is love—love, the fulfilling of the law. Love, all that we can know of God—indeed that is God. Oh! what possibilities cluster around that heavenly name, that shall be realized when, with it, is joined its needed counterpart, freedom—freedom for love—freedom in love—freedom to love; and when it shall be the highest blessing of life to love and to be loved freely—when both men and women shall be able, with pride, to proclaim it to the world that they love, instead of as now, being compelled to shrink into the dark corners of the earth with their happiness, lest it be learned of men. Then indeed shall men and women be as the angels in heaven, who neither marry or are given in marriage, and heaven and earth be merged in one. Such is to be the fulfilling of the law, "that ye love one another."

But I must pass to another and still more momentous part of my subject. I have shown you why we die, and it is not because of our false religion, our politics or our lack of them; but because of our false carnal relations. Here is the cause, and here must we look for the remedy. But how obtain it? I have told you that the inhabitants of the oldest planet, still die, and that as spirits, they are not yet resurrected; and also that the needed elements by which to arrive at this condition, must first be combined upon the earth, since here they are only to be found.

Now what does the resurrection, of which so much is said in all so-called holy, because inspired writings, mean? Simply a return to physical life, as thousands of spirits have been endeavoring to do for the last few years; and only partly and unsatisfactorily, at best, succeeding. At most, admitting all that is claimed to be true, they are able merely to make themselves known to friends. Even this is a great success, and merits all the adoration that is given it; but what is this compared with that which shall be when this return shall be complete and made at will; when they shall return, and, assuming a body of flesh, abide again with us on the earth? No spiritualist will be prepared to deny this possibility. Indeed I believe it is generally conceded, by spiritualists, that materialization will soon be perfected.

But do any consider what that means to us of earth? Do any imagine that, when the great and good of spirit life, shall return and, in the flesh, abide with us, they will pay tribute or respect to the present order of social things? Will they, who thousands of years have been, as the angels in heaven, neither marrying nor given in marriage, conform to our laws which pretend to control sexual intercourse? will they marry their loves on earth legally?

Perhaps some respectable Spiritualists who frown upon me for advocating an order of things that must be, before Materialization can be, had better set their faces against this new and dangerous thing, for I tell you that the spirits are coming back to tear your damned system of sexual slavery into tatters and consign its blackened remnants to the depth of everlasting hell. And would to Heaven they would come here to-night and confirm my words. You would believe them while you will not believe me, who now speak for them.

Do you not suppose that many, now on earth, are loved in heaven; and that when these spirits come again that that love will make itself manifest? Do you suppose they will care for your marriage laws? I tell you they will walk into your families and claim as their loves those who are held as slaves and carry them off before your very eyes. They will come to your daughters and inspire them with a love which, perhaps, they have never known. Will you turn your children from your doors, because, forsooth, they have dared to love a resurrected spirit, without having the consent of the Parson or the Squire? Bosh! I am disgusted with such pitiful morality, and I am sorry for those who have yet to be awakened to the fact that it is pitiful, who imagine that purity and virtue are lodged in a license which is granted by law, at a cost of twenty-five cents and upward, *permitting* people to consort sexually.

No! They will laugh at your professed ownership in sex, and tell you to enforce it if you can. They will snap their fingers at your officers and spit upon your laws as I have been taught by them, to do. Nor will they wait for divorces either. They will love whom they will; and in their loving, lift us of earth, to their level. I know there are thousands who have been sexually inspired of spirits; and many more whom spirits control and through whom they receive the benedictions of love. Once and for all I tell you, Oh, children of earth, that you had better put your houses in order and await the coming of the bridegroom or the bride. Accept sexual freedom while yet it can be attained, by degrees, and not wait until it shall tear your souls at its sudden coming. I know how hard it is to give up to the embrace of another the one whom you think you love, but whom you desire for selfish gratification rather than to bless. I know that it is often easier to yield life itself; and I have come to you, in time, to warn you to prepare for what is surely coming, aye, is even now at your very doors, liable to break in upon you and find you like the foolish virgins with your lamps untrimmed.

But the possibility of the resurrection of spirits involves another startling fact which has been, as yet, barely thought of. If the spirit world has so nearly approached this as to be on the point of being able to take on the body again at will, this world must be so near to the spirit world as to be able to throw off the body at will. Have you ever thought of this? Yet when you think of it you will see that it must be so. And this means the beginning of the final reunion of the inhabitants of the two worlds in a common brotherhood. Many of you already know that the spirit often leaves the body. You know that when many mediums are entranced, the resident spirit is absent from the body. What does all this mean, except it be the near approach to the possibility of leaving the body at will? It is the counterpart to the return of the spirits. Both spheres advance alike toward each other, and when the union shall come, it will not alone be spirits coming to earth but mortals going to heaven as well. Indeed, it will be both; and heaven and earth will then be forever merged in one.

Before this can be established everywhere, however, it must have a beginning somewhere; and from that, spread out to the broad universe. And it is to this point that all my remarks have tended. This is the question directly and first at issue. This solved, and all the rest shall come. I have already said that the Spirits, engaged in this movement, have concentrated all their power upon a single individual; and that all the opposition has also centered there; and the fiercest of battles has been waging for the last eighteen months. It was upon the point of being solved at that time, ago, but the ignorance, weakness and foolishness of the individual, thwarted it. The failure called the attention of the opponents to its near realization, and enabled them to renew the combat at that point; and thus it has waged; and thus it still wages, undecided. Meanwhile the time approaches, when it must be decided, or go by, and the world be remanded, as I said before, to a long age of darkness and desolation, compared to which there is nothing recorded in history. Civilization will be blotted out and the Spirit world shut from earthly view a million years. Is it any wonder that I am in earnest when I know these things are threatening? How can I hold my peace and see all this befall the fair earth and its civilization, which is so advanced on the road toward the millennial era; indeed is just about to enter upon it?

But what must this beginning be? Why, evidently the attainment of the power over death by a human being, to counterpart the power over life, by a Spirit; that is: an inhabitant of the earth-sphere, must attain to the condition of superiority over death, so as to counterpart the condition of an inhabitant of the Spirit-Sphere, with whom it is possible to assume, at will, the material form; that is, again, that a human being must attain a spiritualized materiality, such as Spirits will take on when they shall return. It will be readily understood that, when the final union has occurred; when Spirits become materialized, and human beings become Spiritualized, that the bodies in which both shall appear will be of the same etherialized material. Now this is what I mean, when I say there must be a beginning somewhere, in order that the desirable may spread everywhere. This beginning will be with a single individual, and when attained, there will be perfect Spirit Materialization. From this it will spread, through many, to all individuals both in and out of the present bodies.

The birth of the possibility; the first realization of the conditions, will be to the world like the birth of any new fact in science, to be rapidly made use of by persons here and there all over the world. Then when once the demonstration comes, it will run with lightning speed around the world and revolutionize every existing custom, form, law, and nearly every pretended science, and every habit of life.

Now, are you ready to receive what I was on the point of saying early in my subject? And will you accept it as coming from the Spirit world; from Spirits who represent the organized

forces of that world, and who are to inaugurate their government on earth; coming from them through one who has had sufficient experience to know of her own knowledge that it is true!

I presume there may be a dozen persons, not more, in this hall who, at some time in their lives, have felt magnetic thrills, based on sexual contact, that for the time have transformed them, so that they scarcely knew whether they were in this or the other sphere, and which have lingered for months, in greater or less power; and many more who from, perhaps, the slightest touch of another, have felt the magnetic currents course every nerve in their bodies, but from the contact not proceeding to sexuality, not experiencing the perfect ecstasy of the other condition? Now, this condition is the perfect sexual blending of the sexes, and those between whom it exists are perfectly mated sexually, and married divinely. And it is, that every individual in the world may find his or her sexual mate who shall be this revelation, and arrive at this ethereal condition, that I have raised my voice, and suffered all I have for sexual freedom. And will any venture to say there is a single person in the whole world who is not insanely prejudiced against freedom, who does not desire to arrive at this condition; indeed who would not sell all that he has if, with the proceeds, it could be purchased?

This is what I mean by the impossibility of disease when perfect sexual conditions are present. Those who have any near approach to them cannot be sick; and those who shall have them perfected, cannot die. I say, some have experienced the conditions of which I speak; but not yet has anybody in the world gained them perfectly. The experiences that have occurred, and which are a prophecy of what is in store for every human being, have been impossible of continuation because of the preventing influences of our present system of social slavery. The subjects of them, preferring the approval of society, rather than the possession of eternal life (not contemplating that the condition meant the final triumph over death), have failed to be free, in which condition only it can come.

And what I mean by being free is, to be so far above caring for the world, or what it or anybody in it may say, as to stand boldly before it and live complete freedom. To be enslaved by public opinion, to be prevented from doing right from fear of what anybody may say or anybody do, is to be in a more cursed slavery than is that of law itself. I would rather be sold and delivered, by law, to a man, than to be compelled to live with him, not being married, from the force of public opinion. I tell you that many reformers are in a worse slavery than they are whom they would emancipate. And I know it.

There is a something abroad in the land, however, that assumes the name of freedom—in which to hide its deformities—against which I wish to declare my personal objections. It is that freedom which conceals itself behind the mask of hypoc-

ris; that seeks its own line of life while passing, for living something quite different—that has a make-believe love for the husband or the wife, while really loving elsewhere; that receives the caresses of the husband or wife, inwardly disgusted by them, while lavishing those which proceed from the heart, elsewhere. Once, and for all time, permit me to say, that I hold this thing—which many people at present call freedom, and which many more live, and name it respectability—is the poison Uvas tree of the present social condition, and the bane of freedom. Beside such damned hypocrisy as this, Moses and Elvira Hull are, in my esteem, as white as snow. People must live the lives with which they wish to stand accredited before the world. Then, and not till then, can there be freedom; since those who live a life they do not wish the world to know, are degraded slaves, as much below the negro or the legal slave, as he who wallows in bestiality for its own sake, is below her who sells her body to buy food for her starving children.

The new element that the Spirits require for the purposes of more effective and permanent materializations, is a spiritualized sexual aura, to be exhaled by the perfect blending of the sexes, in the highest and divinest relations known to humanity. The conditions, requisite to develop this element, reside, without question, in many individuals—many pairs of individuals; and without doubt, various temporary exhibitions of the perfect unity of these conditions have occurred, which, had there been unlimited freedom for their existence, might, ere this, have evolved what is required; hence, the triumph over slavery, in all its forms, must be, before these conditions can be, and continue. All things that operate as obstructions or hindrances, must be removed, so that the opposite poles of the battery may remain in undisturbed connection. Like the magnetic telegraph, the medium over or through which the positive and negative currents pass, must be unbroken and undisturbed. The foul atmosphere, arising from a diseased public opinion, must be corrected by the sanitary influence of some powerful disinfectant, so that its miasm may not blight the new-born life, nor poison its vigorous action. The child of heaven must live, even if all that is must die that it may live; but to no such extremity need things come, if the contaminating grasp of the despot be removed from the throat of freedom, and it be permitted to breathe, as if it had a right in the world. But there must be freedom before there can be life; and there must not be so much as a criticism, even, of public opinion, to prevent its full and free reception and action: nor to deter the people from seeking it with earnest desire.

I said in my Steinway Hall speech, "I am a Free Lover. I have an inalienable, constitutional and natural right to love whom I may; to love as long or as short a period as I can; to change this love every day if I please, and with this right neither you nor any law you can frame have any right to interfere." I will supplement this by saying now: That I will love whom I

may ; that I will love as long or as short a period as I can ; that I will change this love whenever the conditions to which I have referred indicate that it ought to be changed ; and that neither you nor any law you can make shall deter me. I hope everybody will understand just what sort of a Free Lover I am, and never have any more contention over it.

Now, do you not see the solution of this whole matter ? The strife in life is to be, to attain to the condition of triumph over death, and this comes only by the perfect blending of two of opposite sex. To gain this there must be, as in every other department of discovery, freedom to experiment, until the law that governs it is discovered, when everybody will be able to know who is his negative or her positive.

I wish here, however, to explain what will be perhaps unwelcome to many, who think that, promiscuousness is the process through which this boon is to be gained. I am sorry to feel compelled to disappoint their anticipations ; but I do not mean, if I can help it, to be misunderstood about this matter any longer.

The law by which this attainment is governed is this : the greater the number of failures made by people in seeking their sexual mates, the greater the difficulty will be in mating when they are found. This will become evident when it is considered that every sexual act which is not the legitimate expression of sexual unity, has a deleterious effect on the sexual organs and impulse. This may be illustrated by the stomach. A hungry person may, in the absence of the most proper food, eat that which, not being best adapted to his condition, will produce derangement of the stomach ; but which, nevertheless, serves to prevent starvation for the time. A sufficient continuance of this food will cause chronic dyspepsia, which will yield only when that which was needed at the outset to prevent the disease, is procured.

So also is it with Sexuality. Pure and perfect conditions and uses are as necessary to its health, as is proper food for the stomach. In the absence of perfect conditions, imperfect relations are maintained, which, continued indefinitely, produce chronic derangement — demoralization — of the organs, and through them, as I have shown, of the system generally, which derangements can be cured, only, by the perfect sexual blending of two perfectly or nearly related natures. Hence the young, who have never had sexual experience, are the foremost candidates for the new era of perpetuated life ; while those who do not attain it, will continue to die and arrive at this condition from the opposite sphere by the opposite process, prolonged perhaps to hundreds of years.

Looking at this matter from another stand-point, it is seen that when its facts are recognized, as they will be, the whole social rule of society will be revolutionized, since the strife will then be for life, instead of for wealth ; but I cannot enter upon this broad field now.

By this new motive, given to sexuality, it is, at once and forever, lifted from the mire and filth, into which it has been cast by the debaucheries of the world, consequent upon mistaken sexual restrictions, and seated upon the throne, it cometh to judge the world in righteousness. It is indeed the Christ that is to come, by whom every person shall be justified of himself and to himself; by whom alone can any man be saved from the vices, superstitions and miseries of earth-life. It is by this gate by which alone the kingdom of heaven—happiness—can be entered; and whether we first lay the mortal body in the ground, and enter it from the other sphere, having passed through the purgatory necessary to purge our sins; or been driven to the depths of the lowest hell by the tremendous weight of our iniquities, that they may be consumed by its quenchless fire; or whether we enter it by the direct and natural methods of regular growth—continuous evolution—without the descent into purgatory or hell, depends upon the use we shall make of this new-found salvation. This is not only to usher in the resurrection of the dead, and thus fulfill the Scripture, but also to unite the parts of the system of salvation, which are now scattered among the various religious beliefs, into one complete and perfect system for the whole world.

There has been personal experience sufficient to prove that what the spirits have told me about this matter, is true. Almost every woman, at some time in her life, has suffered from false sexual relations. Many who by nature are eminently endowed, sexually, seldom or never know delight, thinking the while that they love their husbands with their whole souls; but they will some time learn, that this is custom and education rather than genuine affection on the part of either. For years these endure sexual starvation, since starvation means unconsummated sexual desire. They lose their health, not knowing the cause. They grow old before they are fully matured in form, and some disease sets in that ultimately proves fatal, and of which it is imagined they die, while the real cause lies back in these false sexual relations.

But all these long weary years, there is a void in the inner soul of every woman, which tells spiritually and prophetically—for all women are endowed in this way to a greater or less extent—of a lover with whom she shall traverse the infinitude of futurity. In spirit dream she wanders the woods and hills with him, and gathers flowers of sweetest fragrance; and when some sorrow presses her heavily, his Spirit comforts and soothes. And when she meets, as meet all shall, oh what a revelation. Words are insignificant to express it. A new life dawns. A low and thrilling melody breaths transcendent strains of hope and fear, and the longing ear listens lest one sweet note escape, and the hope go by forever. The stars grow brighter; the moon fairer; the fields greener, and all nature roll onward in its mighty circuit, in an atmosphere of perfect joy. The heart beats faster; the eye sparkled with a new lustre; the crimson

deepens on cheek and lip, the voice grows low and deep and tremulous; and the whole being thrills with ecstasy as it recognizes and embraces the companion so long watched and prayed for. The emaciated form assumes its rounded proportions; disease vanishes, and again she is a woman restored to her pristine beauty, vigor and life.

To sum up what I have to say on this most important of questions, and to generalize what I have said upon the subject of sexuality, I would repeat that the conditions under which progressive rejuvenation or immortality in the form may be attained, can only be secured under the auspices of absolute and entire freedom—a freedom not incompatible with perfect law, but its certain consequent and proper consummation. Let us hope that it may soon be established, notwithstanding the fact that it has taken ages to evolve the yet imperfect law which obtains among us. To the credit of our country, in our Revolutionary War we placed the keystone in the arch of man's spiritual freedom when we decreed in our Constitution, if not civil, at least religious liberty, and guaranteed it to our people by law. We must now advance upon that position and ordain Social Freedom, which is its natural ally, and its necessary aid and support.

And of all freedom that the spirit of man or woman can conceive, or the heart of woman or man can desire, the highest—Social Freedom—culminating in personal liberty, is the most valuable. It is the natural foundation, the true basis of all other liberties. We must affirm, and, as far as we are able, must secure for all human beings this most sacred of all rights—a right which belongs to every man and every woman (unconvicted of crime) at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances; and of all functions in the body of a man or woman to which this greatest of liberties most especially pertains, the sexual function is the most important: it must not and ought not to be disturbed in its offices by arbitrary laws, unless it unwarrantedly invades another's liberties; and the effort to reduce it to legal or religious bondage has resulted, and ever must result, in introducing into society misery, bestiality, anarchy and destruction. If we would change the present rotten state of the world with regard to our sexual horrors, all that we have to do is to acknowledge and inaugurate this grandest of all liberties; to recognize the right of woman to rule in the domain of the affections; to aid the full development of the natural love that yet exists between the sexes; and to guard our children from that ignorance in sexual matters which has decimated and is decimating the present generation of mankind.

Then, and not till then, when we have performed all the above-mentioned duties, may we look for our reward in that progressive and progressing life, which I believe is even now at our doors, waiting for admission. When that is obtained then shall we behold a light without a shadow, a morn without an eve, a day without a night. Then shall we be able to bridge

over the gloomy chasm of death, and to build for ourselves a Jacob's ladder, reaching from earth to heaven, on which spirits and mortals will be perpetually engaged ascending and descending in unending harmony and felicity. It may be that not one of us may witness this fulfillment: I in the prophecies of the past; but, if we do our duty, we have every reason to hope, and I, for one, believe, that we shall soon succeed. We are now like Bunyan's Pilgrims in Doubting Castle, the den of the giant Despair; but, like them also, we have a key in our bosoms that will unlock the gate of it, and let us out into the flower-spangled fields of pleasure and delight, and the name of that key is—Liberty!

Yes—Liberty! Full and free in all matters pertaining to humanity; civil, political, religious, social and sexual liberty. When that is attained, then may we hope by right education to achieve for men and women, that improvement and exaltation which we have already accomplished, by arbitrary laws, based upon those of nature, for flowers, fruits and animals. Then may we look to bid adieu to the miserable and deformed specimens of humanity, which now meet us on every side, too often exposing their infirmities as a means of soliciting our charity. Then may we aspire to see nations doing their duty by their children, extending their fostering care over them in their infancy, and bringing them up tenderly to labor and to love. Then may we expect woman to throw off the chains of the barbarisms of the fashions, and prove *in propria persona* that art cannot improve the charms which nature has lavished on her when following right counsels and obeying true laws. Then may we also find in man, not a pitiless tyrant absorbed in the pursuit of money, but a benign benefactor, the provider and careful distributor of the wealth of communities.

Oh! that these my earnest desires may speedily be realized! That the ghastly darkness in which the world is now involved with regard to sexual affairs may rapidly pass away! That, by the attainment of a better knowledge of ourselves we may be able to produce a very superior race of men and women to that at present existing! That the sexual miseries and bestialities of the present time may soon be annihilated forever! If I had the power I would unvail all the hidden horrors of the system which now are covered, to the scorn and loathing of the world; but I would do so, as the skillful surgeon dissects a rotten corpse, not to injure the dead—but to benefit the living:

I hack to teach; not mangle to expose.

But the world charges me with taking delight in so nauseous an occupation. It is mistaken. I would that my lot had fallen in pleasanter places; but it has not. Sufficient for me, and for all of us, if, in our passage through life, we perform our duties therein.

Alas! who should envy me my position! Fortune, fame,

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a good name, even health itself, has been demanded from me in my work, and I have given—cheerfully given them all. I have been the sport of society—in many instances the rejected of the sex I have served and am serving so well. The debauched ruffian, tobacco-stained, and redolent with the fumes of whisky, points at me as something worse than himself. I have been for the past three years pitilessly lampooned and caricatured in lewd and impossible positions by execrable artists, in the public press: unjustly hounded out of my office by the minions of the law; my business destroyed without hope of renovation; torn from my family and illegally imprisoned for more than a month; excessive bail demanded from me, not for the purpose of security, but with intent to compass my further oppression; and all these for an act which has since been repeated by other journals, with additions—without punishment. Added to this, as a consequent of the intense mental anxiety arising from judgment deferred, I have been stricken almost to death, having been in a comatose state for many hours, so that my life was, for a long time, almost despaired of by my nearest friends and kindred. Yet—in spite of all this—I am here, unchanged, fighting the old, old battle for the liberty of woman, and the consequent exaltation of man.

Neither do I despair of the cause I advocate, or mourn over the price it has cost me. Individual personal freedom, culminating in perfect sexual liberty, is indeed a pearl of great price, whose value is beyond computation. It cannot be too dearly purchased, for in it is hidden the world's regeneration; and, whatever may be said of those who battle for it, the future is certain to do justice to their memories, and crown them with garlands of honor. Nor will their recompense be alone the applause of humanity in after times, but they will receive a more immediate reward for their exertions in the cause of virtue and of justice, that glorious Summer Land, to which we are all rapidly hastening—that happy place, where peace and delight are the prizes awarded to all who have developed their own souls here, by performing their duties freely toward their fellow-mortals.

And although, at the present time, in the industrial, civil, financial, intellectual and social world, every thing appears to be in chaotic confusion, I have the faith to believe, that the picture of the future I previously painted will soon be succeeded by a glorious and unending reality. Is it wicked for me to wish for the realization of such a vision? That human beings may speedily be relieved from their fetters, and men and women walk forth free in the light of perfect purity, holiness, liberty and love. Surely not! In the language of the ancient seer, then, let me conclude this lecture, calling upon all of you to aid in bringing forward so blessed a consummation. "And the Spirit and the Bride say—Come!—and let him that heareth, say—Come!—and let him that is athirst—Come! And whosoever will, let him drink of the 'Water of Life' freely.