CUPID'S YOKES:

OR,

The Binding Forces of Conjugal Life.

An Essay to Consider some Moral and Physiological Phases of

LOVE AND MARRIAGE,

Wherein is Asserted the Natural Right and Necessity of

SEXUAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

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CUPID'S YOKES.

Love, in its dual manifestations, implies agreement, he who loves and she who reciprocates his feeling therein binding themselves, neither to hurt the other, nor evade any moral or pecuniary obligation which the incarnate fruits of their passion may present. When a man says of a substantial girl, "She suits me"—that is, she would be to him a serviceable mate,—he does not often as seriously ask if he is likely to suit her; still less, if this proposed union may not become an ugly domestic knot which the best interests of both will require to be untied. Whether the number outside of marriage, who would like to get in, be greater or less than the number inside who want to get out, this mingled sense of esteem, benevolence, and passional attraction, called love, is so generally diffused that most people know life to be incomplete until the calls of affection are met in a healthful, happy and prosperous association of persons of opposite sex. That this blending of personalities may not be compulsive, hurtful, or irrevocable; but, rather, the result of mutual discretion—a free compact, dissolvable at will—there is needed, not only a purpose in lovers to hold their bodies subject to reason; but also radical change of the opinions, laws, customs, and institutions which now repress and deprave natural expressions of love. Since "falling in love" is not always ascension, growth, (as it should be), but often degradation; as persons who meet in convulsive embraces may separate in deadly feuds,—sexual love here carrying invigorating peace, there desolating havoc, into domestic life,—intelligent students of sociology will not think the marriage institution a finality, but, rather, a device to be amended, or abolished, as enlightened moral sense may require.

When the number of opinions for and against a given measure are equal, it is called "a tie vote," and is without force and void, unless the speaker of the assembly throws his "casting vote," thereby giving to his side a majority of one, and enabling the measure to become "a law," binding, not only on those who favored, but also on those who opposed it! Not to note the manifest injustice and absurdity of such "an act," in the popular connubial assembly of bride and groom both vote one way,—that is, to "have" each other,—while the binding, or casting, vote is given by a "speaker," called priest or magistrate, who is supposed to represent society so far as it is a civil act, and God so far as it is a sacrament* or religious matter. But, since neither society nor deity has ever "materialized" at weddings in a manner definite enough to become responsible for what lovers may do or suffer in their untried future, we have no further use for a "speaker" in our nuptial congress, and must search elsewhere for the moral obligation which lovers, by their tie vote to be "one," incur. In its desire to

MORAL TIES.

*A sacrament is any ceremony producing an obligation, sacredly binding.—*Worcester.* An invisible hand from heaven mingles hearts and souls by strange, secret, and unaccountable conjunctions.—*South.* The mind is God's book, and its sympathy attractions are his laws.—*Austin Kent.*

"confirm this amity by nuptial knot," society forgets that lovers are such by mutual attraction which does not ask leave to be, or to cease to be, of any third party; that its effort to "confirm" love by visible bonds tends to destroy the magnetic forces which induce unity; and that lovers are responsible only for what they, themselves, do, and the fruits thereof. Since the words "right" and "duty" derive their ethical qualities from our relations to what is essentially reasonable and just,—to the nature of things,*—legislative "acts" neither create nor annul moral ties. As "alone we are born, alone we die, and alone we go up to judgment," so no one can escape from himself; but each must administer the personal and collective interests which he or she embodies. Being the authors and umpires of their rights and duties, the sexes weave moral ties by free and conscientious intimacy, and constantly give bonds for their mutual good behavior. Cause and effect are as inseparable in human actions as in the general movements of Nature; choose as you please, the results of the choice you are the responsible author of. Relieving one from outer restraint does not lessen, but increases, his personal accountability; for, by making him free, we devolve on him the necessity of self-government; and he must respect the rights of others, or suffer the consequences of being an invader. In claiming freedom for myself, I thereby am forbidden to encroach.† When man seeks to enjoy woman's person *at her cost*, not a lover, he is a libertine, and she a martyr. How dare woman say she loves man, when seeking her own good at his expense? Perfect love "casts out fear," and also sin; if derived from the Greek *sinein*, to injure, the word sin implies invasion, injury; so the gratification of love in a way that injures another is sinful. Though they have a right to enjoy themselves at their own cost, yet, if their passion is hurtful, a sense of duty to themselves and others should teach lovers continence.

VIRTUE, CHASTITY.

Having its root in the Latin *vir*, a man, the radical import of the word virtue is manly strength; usage invests it with intelligence to know and power to resist wrong.‡ One cannot choose without comparing the objects of choice; without judging for himself what is right, and personally placing himself at the disposal of reason; hence, virtue consists in ability to reason correctly, and force of will to obey thought. But, since one cannot choose or act, when mental and physical movement is suppressed, liberty, occasion, is the primary and indispensable condition of virtue; while vice originates in stagnant ignorance, which the policy of repression enforces. The conscience, feeling, or impres-

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* Everything is right which is conformable to the supreme rule of human action; but that only is *a right* which, being conformable to this supreme rule, is realized in society, and vested in a particular person. What it is our duty to do we must do because it is right, not because any one can demand it of us.—*Whewell.* Duty is a moral obligation imposed from within; obligation a duty imposed from without.—*Worcester.* Duty is the relation or obliging force of that which is morally right.—*Webster.* There are no rights without corresponding duties.—*Coleridge.* Men have no right to do what is not reasonable.—*Burke.*

† True self-love and social are the same.—*Pope.* Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.—*St. Paul.*

‡ Virtue implies opposition to passion or wrong.—*Fleming.* That course of action, by which a man fulfills or tends to fulfill the purposes of his being, is virtuous.—*Worcester.* Virtue is nothing but voluntary obedience to truth.—*Dwight.* The four cardinal virtues are prudence, fortitude, temperance, and justice.—*Paley.* The virtuous freely choose to live in accordance with the right reason of nature.—*Philo.*

sions which precede and inspire thought announce the presence of ethical intelligence, and indicate how largely human actions are influenced by spiritual impulse. While, therefore, Liberty is the father, Conscience is the mother of virtue. Chastity is power to choose between purity and obscenity, a power born of the same mental scope and activity which promote virtue.* Sexual passion is not so much in fault as reason; flesh is willing, but spirit is weak; the mind is unable to tell the body what to do. When the true relation of the sexes is known, ideas rule and bodies obey brain; purity of motive—just and ennobling action—follow the lead of free inquiry. The popular idea of sexual purity, (freedom from fornication or adultery, abstinence from sexual intercourse before marriage, and fidelity to its exclusive vows afterwards), rests on intrusive laws, made and sustained by men, either ignorant of what *is* essentially virtuous, or whose better judgment bows to Custom that stifles the cries of affection and ignores the reeking licentiousness of marriage beds. Is coition pure only when sanctioned by priest or magistrate? Are scandal-begetting clergymen and bribe-taking statesmen the sources of virtue? The lascivious instincts prevalent among men, the destructive courses imposed on women, and the frightful inroads of secret vice on the vitality of youth of both sexes, all show the sexual nature to be, comparatively, in a savage state, and that even public teachers have not begun to reason originally on questions of love, virtue, continence and reproduction.

While love denotes movement in one person towards another, and tends to overleap unnatural barriers, its proposals are, nevertheless, subject to rejection; created and nourished by PASSION, the object of attraction, it is self-limiting. Free love, REASON. then, generates, but never annuls moral obligations. If selfish, love is invasive; but, the person assailed, has a natural right of resistance; and, if a woman or girl, her effort in self-defence will be reinforced by disinterested strength around her. If men do not rally to protect a woman thus imperiled, it is because their sense of right is distorted by an idea that women belong to men, and that the person of this particular woman is, somehow, the property of the man who can overpower her. Our applause of an example of love measures the contempt which right-minded people feel for a man who imposes himself, or the unwelcome fruit of his passion, on woman. She is "safe" among men, not through laws which deny liberty, but by prevailing knowledge of the fact that Nature vests in herself the right to control and dispose of her own person. If lovers err, it is due, not to liberty,† but to ignorance, and the demoralizing effect of the marriage system. If free to go wrong, disciplined by ideas, they will work out their own salvation in the school of experience. The free love "delusion" consists in the belief that persons recognized in law as capable of making a sexual contract are, when wiser by experience, morally able to dissolve that contract; and that love is not so depraved as to be incapable of redemption and self-government.

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* Chastity is the regulated and strictly temperate satisfaction, without injury to others, of those desires which are natural to all healthy, adult beings.—*Benj. Franklin.* Prostitution, sexual intercourse *without* affection; Chastity, sexual intercourse *with* affection.—*Robt. Owen.*

† Freedom is the only cure for the evils which freshly acquired freedom produces. —*Macaulay.* When appetite draws one way, it may be opposed, not by any appetite or passion, but by some cool principle of action, which has authority without any impulsive force.—*Reid.* They only are free who are divinely bound.—*John Orvis.*

FORCE OF CUSTOM.

An original impulse of Nature, love has laws of its own; but, coerced by custom, its natural intent and scope are not generally understood. We were all trained in the school of repression, and taught that, to love otherwise than by established rules, is sinful.* To get out of one's body to think, to destroy all his old opinions, is almost necessary, to enable him to approach and investigate a new subject impartially. The grave tendencies of the love question, its deep-seated hold on human destiny, its momentous relations to government, religion, life, and property, make any revolution in its doctrines, or institutes, difficult and alarming, if not perilous. But, since nothing is fixed but natural right, the most radical method of treatment is the most truly conservative. Evils like libertinism and prostitution, which have baffled the wisest human endeavor, will yield only to increasing intelligence, and the irresistible forces of Conscience. I beg my readers, therefore, to bring to this subject honest intent to know truth and obey it. That the grand impulse of love is capable of greater good than has yet come of it, is certain; that this noblest element of human being does not logically lead to the marital and social ills around us, is equally evident. The way out of domestic infelicity, then, must lie through larger knowledge of the nature of love and of the rights and duties involved in its evolution.

MARRIAGE, A HUMAN DEVICE.

Since the sexual union, (for life or until legally divorced), of one woman with several men—Polyandry; or that of one man with several women—Polygamy; or that of one man with one woman—Monogamy, is a conventional agreement between two or more individual contractors and a collective third, society; marriage, in either of its three historical forms, is a human device to tame, utilize, and control the sexual passion, which is supposed to be naturally ferocious and ungovernable. What Nature "hath joined," man need not attempt to "put asunder;" but, since the legalized marital relation† is so chaotic and mischievous, (clergymen and legislators themselves often being the first to violate what they profanely assume to be a divine ordinance); and since Deity has never yet come forward to own that he is "the author and finisher" of marriage laws, it is better to attribute them to the erring men who enacted them, than to accuse Divine Wisdom of so much folly. Marriage, then, being the creature of men's laws, we have the same right to alter or abolish it that we have respecting any other human institution. The principles of Nature derived from a careful study of essential liberty and equity, are a safer guide than crude social codes which come to us from the ignorant and despotic

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* The rules of etiquette, the provisions of the statute book, and the commands of the decalogue have grown from the same root, Custom. * * * The right of private judgment, which our fathers wrung from the church, remains to be claimed from Fashion, the dictator of our habits.—*Herbert Spencer*. The Orinoco-Indian woman, who would not hesitate to leave her hut without a fragment of clothing on, dare not commit such a breach of decorum as to go out unpainted.—*Humboldt*. Habit is the deepest law of human nature.—*Carlyle*. We gain a residence in the senses by birthright, but are born late into ideas, the country of the mind.—*Alcott*.

† I have observed so few happy matches, and so many unfortunate ones, and have so rarely seen men love their wives at the rate they did whilst they were their mistresses, that I wonder not that legislators thought it necessary to make marriages indissoluble to make them lasting. I cannot fitlier compare marriage than to a lottery; for in both he that ventures may succeed and may miss; if he draw a prize he hath a rich return for his venture; but in both lotteries there is a pretty store of blanks for every prize.—*Hon. Robert Boyle*, 1665.

past. Woman, who, being up first in the morning hours of history, played a winning hand in this marriage game,* is again coming to the front; and, in the parliament of reason, where the thought, impulse, attraction, and conscience of both sexes have free play, better methods of sexual intercourse and reproduction will be matured than exclusive male wisdom has yet invented. It is for the free-love school to develope an order of sexual unity worthy to be called a sacrament, and which sensible people need not blush to share.

"Will you have me?" is the prayer by which man seeks partnership in the being of woman; and she also has persuasive ways and means to pray to, and "capture," him. This MARRIAGE, would be well, were it not a compulsory choice of evils, COMPULSIVE. and were they able to determine, in advance, the grave interests of offspring, industry, business, health, temperaments, and attractions, which mutually concern them, and on the adjustment of which depends their future weal or woe. Girls become pubescent† at about 12, and boys at 14, though girls, then, are much older, sexually, than boys; from these ages young people are capable of all the pleasures and miseries of passional experience. But, since sexual union for life is extremely hazardous for both parties,—it being impossible to correct the fatal mistake of marriage without the commission of crime by one or the other,—they are usually left to illicit intercourse, or to exhaust their vitality in secret vices. Even when married,—coming into this new relation without knowledge of its uses or of self-control,—they prey on each other, and a few years of wedded life and child-bearing may leave the wife an emaciated wreck

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*The evolution of human society commenced in the institution of complex marriage. But we are informed by authentic historical documents, that, in the very early times, public opinion becoming more and more enlightened in certain favored communities, the women of these communities—sustained by that public opinion and shocked and scandalized by the social condition in which they found themselves—were enabled to successfully revolt against complex marriage, and to overthrow it. Strange as it may seem, the old-world women established a new social organization for the more advanced communities, and a new marriage system, based on the ground of absolute female supremacy. (How the women managed to do it the writer shows, but I have not space to quote.—E. H. H.) In the new order of things the husband became the subject of the wife; the woman was absolute owner of the homestead; property descended, and relationships were counted, exclusively in the female line; and the women seized and retained the principal share of political power. * * * The companions of Romulus (the founder of Rome) were men who ran away, took to the woods, to escape from the rigors of female government. These runaways established themselves in easily-defended fastnesses, distributed the lands surrounding them among themselves as "real estate," following out the lesson which the women had taught them. It was in this way that the title to "real estate" began to vest in men, to the exclusion of women, and to descend in the male, intead of the female line. The heads of the groups in this new society were males, and members of the groups were also males. It was necessary, therefore, in order that the new society should become complete, that each male should steal a wife for himself from some neighboring tribe, and bring her to the mountain fastness. The men did not fail to perform the special duty that devolved upon them. The case of Rome was not an isolated one. All over Europe, and all over Asia, men rose against the women, transferred the titles to land, from the women to themselves by actual force, dethroned the sovereign witch-women by whom they had been so long governed, and supplied themselves with "CAPTIVE WIVES." This new institution of the "captive wife" gave occasion, in Europe, to the establishment of monogamy; in Asia, to that of polygamy.—*Wm. B. Greene in "Socialistic, Communistic, Mutualistic, and Financial Fragments," pp.* 188–208.

†Puberty is the time of life at which a person is capable of procreation or of bearing young, which, according to the civil law, is at twelve years of age for females, and fourteen for males.—*Bacon.* This is the English view, but puberty

of her former self, and the husband very much less, a man, than Nature designed him to be. Though bewildered moralists advise early marriage, they well know how often puny offspring rebuke the alliance,* teaching indiscreet parents that coition should have stopped short of reproduction. Those who think the evil is not in the essential immorality of the marriage system, but in its abuses, denounce with just severity the legalized slavery of women therein.† The absurdity to which Mr. Greene refers, below, consists in an effort to make the wife legally "equal" to the husband inside of nuptial bonds; it is an effort to make her an equal victim and an equal oppressor with him. Since marriage involves the loss of liberty, many of our best people, especially women, never marry, preferring to endure the ills of celibacy rather than fly to what may prove irretrievable ruin. Slavery is voluntary or involuntary: voluntary when one sells or yields his or her own person to the irresponsible will of another; involuntary when placed under the absolute power of another without one's own consent. The compulsive features of marital law are incidental and secondary to the marriage relation itself, which is unnatural and forced. Pen cannot record, nor lips express, the enervating, debauching effect of celibate life upon young men and women. Who supposes that, if allowed to freely consult their natural wits and good sense, they would tie themselves up in the social snarl of matrimony? Yet they are now compelled to choose between suicidal evils of abstinence and the legalized prostitution of marriage. Some, by clandestine intimacies, live below marriage; others, by personal defiance, and at the expense of social ostracism, attempt to live above it; but both are on the "ragged edge" of peril, as were "free negroes" who tried to live above or below the old slave system. The fierce blood-hounds, put upon the track of fugitive slaves, were fore-runners of the "dogs of war" which marriage now trains to hunt down its victims. A system so prolific of hypocrites and martyrs is compulsive in the most mischievous sense of that word, and will be abolished when free and virtuous people resolutely confront it.

TYRANNY OF LUST.

Since marriage does not provide for the education of sexual desire and expression, and their subjection to reason, but gives legal right and power to sin, every priest or magistrate, who "solemnizes" the rite, sells indulgences of a far more disastrous nature than those which scandalized the Romish Church. On account of her political, social, and pecuniary vassalage, woman is the chief martyr to the relentless license granted man; but cases are on record where the husband was effectually

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varies with climates; in temperate New England it is often delayed till 15 and 17, while in torrid regions it comes at 10 and 11, and earlier. It is said that one of Mahomet's wives bore him a son when she was but ten years of age! What kind of a life does such a fact indicate that this especial "Prophet of God" led among young girls?

*In the entire animal kingdom, the fruits of the first signal of reproductive instinct are constantly imperfect.—*Aristotle.* Marriages soon after puberty produce a diseased, puny, and miserable population.—*Montesquieu.* Give a boy a wife, and a girl a bird, and death will soon knock at the door.—*German Proverb.*

†Marriage is the only actual bondage known to our law. There remain no legal slaves, except the mistress of every house.—*J. S. Mill.* The definition of the wife's condition, as given in the English law-books, contain all the elements of a definition of domestic slavery. But the definition of the husband's status, as given in the same law-books, is that of a lord, not that of a slave. * * * American legislation is more absurd than that of England.—*Greene's "Fragments," pp* 212–113.

subdued by the tigress, with whom he went into the nuptial "paradise."* Founded on the supposition that man's love is naturally ferocious, marriage attempts, by legal means, to furnish food for his savage nature; and we have but to lift the roofs of "respectable" houses to find the skeletons of its feminine victims.† It is because the marriage theory is unnatural and barbarous that it works out such shocking results. In the phrase "tyranny of lust," I have brought a good word into bad company, and must apologize for its misuse; for lust properly means desire, prayer, exuberant strength. So the popular view of love gives a devilish intent and drift to the divinest of words. Advocates of marriage cling to the exploded doctrine of natural depravity, and free-thinkers, spiritualists, and atheists, who scout theological perdition, think social hells of permanent necessity in human life. Nowhere does the human intellect so disgrace itself as in its cowardly, skulking, and hypocritical attitude in the presence of Love Reform. When woman's thought comes forward in the discussion, we hope for better things. In the early struggle of history which led to the establishment of polyandry (as in later domestic conflicts), the ruling impulse of the women was not sexual desire, but, rather, spiritual superiority, intuitional strategy, by virtue of which they were masters of men in the realm of religious fanaticism. On the contrary, the repulsive evidences of sexual depravity, in men, referred to in the the notes below, indicate the savage use, now made of animal force, which is capable of beneficent expenditure. When man loves woman intelligently, what is now consuming passional heat, will make him a genial, civil, and serviceable being. The unreserved devotion, with which a lover gives himself and his fortune to his bride, discloses the possible divine life on earth. But when impulsive, self-forgetting love, overflowing the narrow limits of family enclosures, gives one's heart and purse to deserving girls and women, the now, seemingly, savage suitor becomes Providence incarnate. Charles Sumner, in his will, gave money to the daughters of the poet Longfellow, of Dr. S. G. Howe, and of the Rev. Dr. Wm. H. Furness, "in consideration of his profound regard for their estimable parents;" but cases have occurred, and will multiply, as civilization prevails, where men of no blood relation, and

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*It is said of Valeria Messalina, wife of Claudius Cæsar, that "her husband's chief officers became her adulterers, and were allied with her in all her abominations. She cast an eye of lust on the principal men in Rome, and whom she could not seduce to gratify her propensities she would contrive to destroy. She was so excessive in her sensuality, that she often required the services of the strongest and most vigorous men to satisfy her lusts."—*History and Philosophy of Marriage, pp.* 107–108.

†Victoria C. Woodhull speaks of a New York clergyman who married a beautiful woman, and, sometimes demanding indulgence, six or eight times a day, actually killed her by his lecherous excesses.—*Scarecrows of Sexual Freedom, p.* 23. M. Lallemand, in his work on spermatorrhœa, speaks of a Greek who for years indulged on an average fourteen times a day.—*Elements of Social Science, p.* 84. I know a physician who, the first year, and while his wife was pregnant with twins, indulged seven hundred and thirty times. * * * The woman is now broken down and barren.—*Quintus in Social Revolutionist, June,* 1857, *p.* 187. Here are my mother's words:—"Oh! your father's death is such a relief, he was so amative; I could never talk to him on any subject, or lie one moment in the morning, without his becoming excited. I submitted to it all, because I thought I was married, and ought. I thought it a woman's duty to submit to what I conceived to be man's right. When I think of my suffering during child-bearing and nursing, when I look on a life of force and violation, I must say your father's death was a relief." My mother sleeps in the grave.—*Cora Corning in Social Revolutionist, July,* 1857.

without a hint of sexual intimacy, give money, and even estates, to girls and women worthy of love and distinction, irrespective of their parents, ennobling themselves and human kind in so doing.

"WHO IS SHE?"

Though man may "propose," and woman "accept," a notion inhabits the average male head that the irresistibly attractive force of woman's nature makes *her* responsible for any mutual wrong-doing. Thinking woman at the bottom of all mischief, when a male culprit is brought into court, the French ask "Who is she?" In saying that Mrs. Elizabeth R. Tilton "thrust her love on him unsought," the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher thereby indicates how much there is in him of the "old Adam," who said to the "Lord God," interviewing him after he had indulged in the "forbidden fruit," "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." The insanity plea put forward in courts of law by aggrieved "husbands" who, as in the Sickles and McFarland cases, murder men that are attracted to their "wives," also affirms, in a round-about way, the supposed inability of a man to control himself when under the spell of woman's enchantment. Contrary to the old law which regarded the husband and wife as one, and the husband that one, when the twain sin, *she* is held responsible, and he is excused on the ground that he was over-persuaded, and too weak to withstand her wishes. From the Garden of Eden to Plymouth Church, skulking has been the pet method of man to escape from the consequences of sexual indiscretion. Beecher's confessions and "letters of contrition," with his later denials, sadly illustrate the pathetic penitence, the sniveling cowardice, and brazen-faced falsity with which "great men" endeavor to appease, cajole, and defy equivocal public opinion.* The harsh judgments pronounced on women, which abound in the literature† of all ages, are equalled only by the evidences of ludicrous puerility which men display when confronted with their sexual "deeds done in the body." The tragic anarchy which now distracts social life originates first in the legal denial of the right of people to manage their own sexual affairs; and secondly in the supposed exemption from moral responsiblity of either man or woman in love.

NATIONAL GAG-LAW.

The facts of married and single life, one would suppose, are sufficiently startling to convince all serious-minded people of the imperative need of investigation; especially of the duty of young men and women to give religiously serious attention to the momentous issues of sexual science. But, on the threshold of good intent, they are met by established ignorance forbidding them to inquire. It is even thought dangerous

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*My allusions to Mr. Beecher are not intended to indorse the "exposure" view, for his alleged relations to Mrs. Tilton are none of *my* business; but his words and acts as a public teacher of morals, and his false and hypocritical attitude, as an official "solemnizer" of the social crime of marriage, make him a legitimate subject of criticism. While his natural right to commit adultery is unquestionable, his right to lie about it is not so clear.

†Better a thousand women should perish than that one man cease to see the light.—*Euripides*. Frailty! thy name is Woman!—*Shakespeare*. Unhappy sex! whose beauty is your snare!—*Dryden*. A state's anger should not take knowledge either of fools or women.—*Ben Jonson*. I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee.—*Gen*. 3. 15. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death. Who can find a virtuous woman?—*Solomon*, who kept 700 wives and 300 concubines, or "fast" women!

to discuss the subject at all.* In our families, schools, sermons, lectures, and newspapers, its candid consideration is so studiously suppressed that children and adults know nothing of it, except what they learn from their own diseased lives and imaginations, and in the filthy by-ways of society. Many noble girls and boys, whom a little knowledge from their natural guardians, *parents, and teachers*, would have saved, are now, physically and morally, utter wrecks. Where saving truth should have been planted, error has found an unoccupied field, which it has busily sown, and gathers therefrom a prolific harvest. The alarming increase of obscene prints and pictures caused both Houses of the U. S. Congress, March 1, 1873, to pass a bill, (or, rather an amendment of the Post Office Act of June, 1872), which was immediately signed by the President, said to be "For the suppression of Obscene Literature," and from which I make the following extract:—

§ 148.—That no obscene, lewd, or lascivious book, pamphlet, picture, paper, print, or other publication of an indecent character, nor any article or thing designed or intended for the prevention of conception or procuring of abortion, nor any article or thing intended or adapted for any indecent or immoral use or nature, nor any written or printed card, circular, book, pamphlet, advertisement, or notice of any kind giving information, directly, or indirectly, where, or how, or of whom, or by what means either of the things before mentioned may be obtained or made, nor any letter upon the envelope of which, or postal card upon which indecent or scurrilous epithets may be written or printed, shall be carried in the mail; and any person who shall knowingly deposit, or cause to be deposited, for mailing or delivery, any of the hereinbefore-mentioned articles or things, or any notice, or paper containing any advertisement relating to the aforesaid articles or things, and any person who, in pursuance of any plan or scheme for disposing of any of the hereinbefore-mentioned articles or things, shall take or cause to be taken, from the mail any such letter or package, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and, on conviction thereof, shall, for every offence, BE FINED NOT LESS THAN ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS NOR MORE THAN FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS, OR IMPRISONED AT HARD LABOR NOT LESS THAN ONE YEAR NOR MORE THAN TEN YEARS, OR BOTH, IN THE DISCRETION OF THE JUDGE.

I Credit Congress and President Grant with good intentions in framing this "law;" for, ignorant of the cause of the evils they proposed to correct, they were probably unaware of the unwarrantable stretch of despotism embodied in their measure, and of the use which would be made of it. A humane man, Dr. Lewis has not the savage disposition which the extracts I have quoted, above, from his book, indicate; the influence of "obscene literature" is unquestionably as depraving as he affirms; but his measures of repression are a clear invasion of natural right, and will serve only to hasten the downfall of marriage, which he writes to uphold. "Prohibition a Failure" is the title of a book, in which Dr. Lewis, by irrefutable logic, shows that the policy which he brings to the social question is indefensible and self-defeating when applied to the liquor traffic. When the Doctor as intelligently studies social reform as he has temperance, he will blush to remember the heated words that have fallen from his pen. Regarding Anthony Comstock, agent of the Young Mens' Christian Association and the real author of the "law" quoted above, I regret to be unable to entertain so favorable an opinion. In a let-

*The woman that deliberates is lost.—*Addison.* The man who reflects is a depraved animal.—*Rosseau.* Regarding physicians who do not follow the beaten path of custom in prescribing for sexual disease, Dr. Dio Lewis asks "Is there no law by which such miscreants may be suppressed? * * * It seems hard that decent men are not allowed to shoot them on sight as they would shoot a mad dog. —*Chastity, pp.* 23–205.

ter addressed to Hon. C. L. Merriam, M. C., dated Brooklyn, N. Y., Jan. 18, 1873, he says: "There were four publishers on the 2nd of last March; *to-day three of these are in their graves, and it is charged by their friends that I* WORRIED THEM TO DEATH. BE THAT AS IT MAY, I AM SURE THAT THE WORLD IS BETTER OFF WITHOUT THEM." This is clearly the spirit that lighted the fires of the inquisition. Appointed special supervisor of the U. S. Mails (by what authority I am unable to learn); and, by religio-sectarian intolerance, constituted censor of the opinions of the people in their most important channel of inter-communication, he is chiefly known through his efforts to suppress newspapers and imprison editors disposed to discuss the social question. In November, 1872, he procured the arrest and imprisonment of Victoria C. Woodhull and her editorial associates for publishing a preliminary ventilation of the "Brooklyn Scandal," which afterwards filled American newspapers. Subsequently, he caused the incarceration, during seven months, of Geo. Francis Train for publishing in his newspaper (The Train Ligue) certain quotations from the Christian Bible, touching the same "scandal" which implicated churches employ Mr. Comstock to hush up. As I write this (Jan. 1, 1876), a note from another subject of his vengeance, John. A. Lant, editor and publisher of the N. Y. Toledo Sun, dated Ludlow St Jail, New York, Dec. 30, 1875, says:—"Judge Benedict to-day sentenced me to imprisonment in Albany Penitentiary one year and six months. I will endeavor to send you a copy of the sentence. It is worth to us all it costs me." Mr. Lant's crime is sending through the mails his newspaper, containing criticisms of the "scandal" and of the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher! Mr. Comstock's relation to Mr. Lant, as heretofore to Mrs Woodhull and Mr. Train, is that of *a religious monomaniac,* whom the mistaken will of Congress and the lascivious fanaticism of the Young Men's Christian Association have empowered to use the Federal Courts to suppress free inquiry. The better sense of the American people moves to repeal the National Gag-Law which he now administers, and every interest of public and private morality demands thorough discussion of the issue which sectarian pride and intolerance now endeavor to postpone.

LOVE, NOT EXCLUSIVE.

"Beauty is a joy forever," and for all; the quality of beauty being to awaken admiration and esteem in observers to the extent of their ability to appreciate it. To be susceptible of beauty in one thing does not unfit, but rather prepares us to appreciate it in others. Love of the beautiful in person, or of character, is not less involuntary and non-exclusive than in things. A man cannot love even one woman truly unless he is free to love what is lovable in all other women. The fact that sexual love is passional, as well as æsthetic, does not make it exclusive. The philosophic Irishman who liked to be alone, especially "when his swate-heart was with him," expressed the natural privacy of love, and also indicated the scientific fact that the affectional union of two creates a collective third personality, superior, in some respects, to either constituent factor. If from this mystical confluence of two beings there springs a child, even that conclusion of love does not make either one of the three persons less accountable to self and truth, or less permeable by material and spiritual, human and divine influences which either may encounter. Monogamy holds that love is possible only between one man and one

woman, the word itself meaning *to marry to one only.** Yet, *so called* monogamists constantly violate that principle; for, if divorced by death, crime, or the courts, scarcely a man or woman hesitates to marry the second, third, or fifth time. Are they any the less "pure" in doing so? Certainly not: second, third, or subsequent marriages may be more healthful and harmonious than the first, for the good reason that at least one of the parties has had the benefits of experience. It is admitted that, if the previous partners in her bed are divorced by death or other cause, a woman may truly love and wisely marry the second or fifth man; but the purity of her love for the fifth man is not determined by the previous four being dead or divorced; were they all living and her personal friends, she can love the last man as truly as she loved the first. Consistent with the teachings of the Bible, which sanctions polygamy.† Christians support missionaries in foreign lands, who welcome to church membership and the communion table, men who have a plurality of wives. David, the "man after God's own heart," compassed the death of Uriah to get possession of his wife, Bathsheba,‡ and "took more wives and concubines out of Jerusalem after he was come from Hebron," for God "gave him the house of Saul and the wives of Saul into his bosom." Though Solomon was very "promiscuously" married, Sunday-School children are yet taught to revere him as "the wisest man." The monogamic, or one-love theory is both theoretically and practically rejected by modern Christians, (as also by "infidels") and, if they will honestly follow Jesus,—who, while he did not directly condemn polygamy, was yet, theoretically, a woman's emancipationist—he will take them into his free-love Kingdom of Heaven, where, he says, "they neither marry nor are given in marriage."

Though the Jehovah-God of the Bible, disliking irresponsible divorce, "hateth putting away," he is a thorough polygamist; its Jesus-God as plainly favors the entire abolition of marriage. Out of the modern Christian Church have come three phases of sexual morality,—Shakerism, or the utter proscription of sexual intercourse; Mormonism, or sanctified polygamy; and Oneida-Perfection with its free love and omnigamy. While the questions of marriage and property are to be settled on the basis of reason, the Bible and other records of past thought being only incidental evidence, the Oneida Community§ are nearer sound on these two points than any other Christian sect. I give, therefore, a brief abstract of their love doctrine, mainly in the words

THE ONEIDA VIEW.

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* To have one wife only and not to marry a second; to disallow second marriage. —*Webster*. Monogamy is the marriage of one wife only, as distinguished from bigamy or polygamy.—*Blount*. It is the condition of not marrying a second wife after the death of the first.—*Chambers*.

† Polygamy existed legally, and was not put down by the moral sense of the Jewish nation.—*Woolsey's Divorce and Divorce Legislation*, *p.* 12. The Sacred Scriptures represent the wisest and best men that ever lived as practising polygamy with the divine blessing and approval.—*History and Philosophy of Marriage*, *p.* 63.

‡ God did not approve of his method of procedure, for he said to David, "I will take thy wives and give them to thy neighbor. * * * And, of Bathsheba's child by him, he said it "shall surely die." David "wept and fasted" to atone for the "scandal," the Prophet Nathan being the *exposer* in this case, who, as Mrs. Woodhull to Beecher, said, *Thou art the man*. God let him have Bathsheba, who became the mother of Solomon.

§ "Bible argument defining the relations of the sexes in the Kingdom of Heaven," being part of the First Report of the Oneida Association.

of their leader, Rev. J. H. Noyes. The kingdom of heaven supplants all human governments; in it the institution of marriage, which assigns the possession of one woman to one man, does not exist, the intimate union of love extending to the whole body of believers.* The pentecostal spirit abolishes exclusiveness in regard to women and children, as respecting property. The new commandment is that we love each other fervently, not in pairs, but *en masse*; as religious excitements act on amativeness, this is an indication of the natural tendency of religion to love. The union of hearts expresses and ultimates itself in union of bodies. Love is attraction; seeking unity, it is desire; in unity, happiness. In unobstructed love, or the free play of the affinities, sexual union is its natural expression. Experience teaches that sexual love is not restricted to pairs; second marriages annul the one-love theory and are often the happiest. Love is not burnt out in one honeymoon, or satisfied by one lover; the secret history of the human heart proves that it is capable of loving any number of times and persons, and that the more it loves the more it can love. This is the law of nature, thrust out of sight and condemned by common consent, yet secretly known to all. Variety is as beautiful and useful in love as in eating and drinking. The one-love theory, based on jealousy, comes not from loving hearts, but from the greedy claimant. The law of marriage "worketh wrath;" provokes jealousy; unites unmatched natures and sunders matched ones; and, making no provision for sexual appetite, causes disease, masturbation, prostitution, and general licentiousness. Unless the sexes come together *naturally*, desire damned up breaks out irregularly and destructively. The irregularities and excesses of amativeness are explosions incident to unnatural separations of male and female elements, as in the explosion of electric forces. Mingling of the sexes favors purity: isolation, as in colleges, seminaries, monasteries, &c., breeds salacity and obscenity. A system of complex marriage, supplying want, both as to time and variety, will open the prison doors both to the victims of marriage and celibacy: to those in married life who are starved, and to those who are oppressed by lust; to those who are tied to uncongenial natures, and to those who are separated from their natural mates; and to those in the unmarried state who are withered by neglect, diseased by unnatural abstinence, or ploughed into prostitution and self-pollution by desires which have no natural channel. Carrying religion into life, pledging the earnings of each for the support of the whole, they seek "not the union of two but the harmony of all souls."

CHOICE, NOT COERCION.

Whether the Oneida scheme succeeds or fails, as an experiment it is doing great service to civilization; and New York State has the thanks of all intelligent reformers for permitting Perfectionism to illustrate its ideas of sexuality in its own way. But their conceited and self-righteous contempt for socialists who "have no religion," and their belief that liberty tends to demoralization,—"leads to hell,"—show the Oneidans to be ignorant of the source of the spirit of toleration and progress, which presided at their birth and

* Those interested to consult texts are referred to Matt. vi. 10; xxii. 30. Eph. i. 10. John xvii. 10, 21. Acts ii. 44, 45; iv. 32. 1 Cor. vii. 29–31. Rom. iv. 15. 1 Cor. vi. 12 See "History of American Socialisms," pp. 622–9.

has compelled marriage bigots to leave them unmolested.* Making better use of religion than any other Christian sect, the Oneidans yet fail to learn the deepest lesson which Jesus taught, are mistaken in supposing that Free Love and Free Labor are possible only within their iron-clad scheme of socialism, and that the first lesson of progress is to have one's Individuality broken on their religio-communistic wheel. Impelled with Paul, to prove all things and hold fast to that which is good; inspired by the good old doctrine of Jesus, that each soul must *judge for itself what is right,* and be saved or "lost" on its own individual responsibility; declining to join the "bread-and butter brigades" of communism, lovers will find their salvation *in liberty* to choose,—to live on their own merits. The persistent growth of the "social evil" in defiance of all efforts to abate it, shows an irresistible tendency of people to associate even against law and custom; when they obey the higher law of liberty, which makes social *choice sacred,* and individual integrity a duty, domestic life will gravitate towards unity, and love become the potentially redeeming force which Nature intended it to be.†

"HONEY-MOONS."

But, since human nature is imperfect, and heats of love often precede cool reason, young people cannot too early learn that they may choose wrongly; and that, if not guided by the rudder of thought, they must learn wisdom by collision with the rocks of experience. It is better, however, to do wrong and suffer the consequences, than to be "saved" by mediatorial agencies which *act for us,* thereby overriding our necessity and power to reason, and divorcing us from an original relation to truth; better go to hell by choice than to heaven by compulsion. Those who think, with Victor Hugo, that "the foolishness of love is tho wisdom of God," must have a large share of idiocy in their idea of Supreme Truth. The crude propensity of youth to unserviceable devotion to attractive maidens, when "life is half moonshine and half Mary Jane," is matched by the voluptuous freaks of Gray-Beard, who wants to be "better accomodated than with a with a wife." The amorous usurpation and delirious sentimentalism, which are the "legitimate" stock-in-trade of modern novelists(in whose books lovers are chiefly heroic in fornication, and, when married, cease to be interesting until "soiled" with adultery), are the main props of the marriage system. The affinity-seekers,‡ whose "love-sick ditties" disgrace even the best of poetry, and who

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* If Christians had their way, their outraged sense of "virtue" would impel them to assail and scatter the Oneida Community. The Presbyterians of Central New York recently implored the State authorities to abate this "moral nuisance," as they call it. Always opposed to reform as a body, "Professing Christians" are "conscientiously" hostile to efforts to free, legal and illicit "prostitutes," from their marriage masters.

† Adultery is an offence committed against a vicious social order among men, an imperfect social State, and is engendered by it exclusively; so that, when society comes or is acknowledged as the normal state of man, adultery will disappear as the fog of a marsh disappears before the morning sun. * * * Our existing conjugality, accordingly, is not marriage except in name, because it disallows an inward, free, or spontaneous tenure, and admits only a legally enforced or outward one. It is simply a legalized concubinage of the sexes.—*Henry James.*

‡ Marriage originated otherwise than in contracts by which one man bound himself to one woman exclusively, and, reciprocally, one woman to one man. It has been almost always based in modern times and in Christian countries on the "affinity theory," that is, on mutual consent grounded in natural attraction and the

expect "perpetual honey-moons" when they find "their mates," but who find "mates" only to soon loathe and discard them, are at once logical exponents and ludicrous examples of "wedded bliss." The philosophy which supposes another imperfect, or reprehensible, because she, or he, does not, and cannot suit me or you, is an insane philosophy. To waste under burdens of "inner life unshared," or vainly expect happiness in the union of blighted personalities, is our destiny, until we learn that the human heart can find its home only in social concord which does not invade the sanctity of individual liberty.* The sexes naturally "expect each other," love to live and work together, love to find rest, and be lost in each other. Bating all the antagonism and heart-breaks which marriage causes, how much, even now, of rational joy, healthful association, and redeeming ecstacy there is in conjugal life! Greater than justice, stronger than reason, wiser than philosophy, is this widely diffused, and to be all-controlling sentiment of love.

MYSTERY OF SEX.

In entering the ecstatic state of love, we cannot, if we would, leave reason, or the inevitable sequences of cause and effect, behind. What we sow, thereof must we reap; Fate is unexplored fact. Wise heads have thought coition a mysterious lottery; but it is mystified by ignorance and superstition.† Whether it shall produce a child is a matter of choice; and the sex and character of the child are predetermined by its makers, the parents. "Queen bees lay female eggs first; afterwards, male eggs; so, with hens, the first-laid eggs give female, the last, male products. Mares shown the stallion late in their periods, drop horse-colts rather than fillies. If stock raisers wish to produce females, they should give the male at the first signs of heat; if males, at the end of the heat." With the human female, conception in the

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recognized natural interadaptation of the parties to each other, each being the affectional complement and counterpart of the other; such mutual consent following upon a necessary prelude of courting and love making, in which the fact of the "affinity" is authentically tested in respect to its genuineness.—*Greene's "Fragments," pp.* 201, 2.

*The Shakers, who try to suppress sexual love, and the Oneidans, who would redeem and glorify it, are now the two leading exponents of Communism, in the States; amid the ruins of New Harmony Robt. Owen prophesied that individual property and marriage must go down together; while the old Brook-Farm Association died of too much love of marriage, usury, and "cultured" sentimentalism. There is some truth in Mr. Noyes' idea that a religious basis is necessary to successful association; but the "religion" must consist in obedience to Justice, Truth, and Liberty,—not to a theological Christ merely. The Shakers and Oneidans have only taken women and children into the old property-conspiracy, and, according to the popular idea of "co-operation," they divide the profits, or spoils, among a larger number of thieves. But, by abolishing interest, rent, and profits, we shall establish property on the basis of Equity; and Love and Liberty, in the absence of marriage, will promote associative unity.

†For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery.—*St. Paul.* I should love to have such children as I can imagine, but I have no great desire to put into the great lottery of paternity.—*De Tocqueville.* I cannot doubt that the structure of animals is governed by principles of similar uniformity with that of the rest of the universe.—*Newton.* Little improvement can be expected in morality until the producing of large families is regarded with the same feeling as drunkenness, or any other physical excess.—*J. S. Mill.* Man scans with scrupulous care the character and pedigree of his horses, cattle and dogs, before he matches them; but when he comes to his own marriage, he rarely, or ever, takes any such care.—*Darwin's "Descent of Man."*

first half of the time between menstrual periods will probably produce girls; in the last half, boys. If coition occurs within six days from the cessation of the menses, girls are usually the result: if from nine to twelve after cessation, boys.* Regarding the physical, intellectual, and moral character of children it is surprising that parents, who are careful to secure the best parentage for their canary birds and chickens, are utterly heedless in reproducing their own species. What graver act than to give life to a human being? What clearer right has a child than to be well-born? More impressive than the theological "Judgment-day" will be the tribunal before which diseased and crime-cursed children summon guilty parents to answer for the sin-begetting-use of their reproductive powers. People are little aware to what extent it is incumbent on them to foreordain what their children shall be. Better that every marriage bond in Christendom be severed than that one child be given life legally, when it can have a superior parentage by coition above law. No woman or man should have a second child by his or her marital partner, when there is another person, willing to assume the relation, by whom he or she can have a better child.† It was an ignorant and tyrannical prejudice which forbade Plato, Jesus, Paul, Newton, Humboldt, and other bachelors of the past, to bequeath any human relic of their genius to humanity. Many of the noblest women now live as maligned "old maids," and will go down to their graves childless, because the natural right of maternity is denied them. "Good people" will think me rash in making such statements; but I appeal from them to the wiser future, which will *demand* that the reproductive instinct be inspired by intelligence and placed under the dominion of the will.‡

That sexual intercourse is yet an Ethiopia, an unexplored tract of human experience, is due to a prevailing impression, among religious people, that it is "unclean,"§ and, among free thinkers, that it is uncontrollable; both views tend to remove it from the jurisdiction of reason and moral obligation. But, "to the pure all things are pure;" and, while

SEXUAL HEALTH.

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*The above statements respecting human offspring are based on facts within my own knowledge. Other theories for predetermining sex are afloat, but this is the most reliable one I have met. Those wishing to pursue the interesting subject further are referred to Napheys' "Physical Life of Woman," pp. 129, 32; Trall's "Sexual Physiology." pp. 149, 200; and Noyes' "Scientific Propagation."

†Lycurgus laughed at those who revenge with wars and bloodshed the communication of a married woman's favors; and allowed, that if a man in years should have a young wife, he might introduce to her some handsome and honest young man, whom he most approved of, and when she had a child of this generous race, bring it up as his own. On the other hand, he allowed, that if a man of character should entertain a passion for a married woman on account of her modesty and the beauty of her children, he might treat with her husband for admission to her company, that so planting in a beauty-bearing soil, he might produce excellent children, the congenial offspring of excellent parents.—*Plutarch's Lives*, *p.* 36.

‡Each generation has enormous power over the natural gifts of those that follow, and it is a duty we owe to humanity to investigate the range of that power, and to exercise it in a way that, without being unwise towards ourselves, will be most advantageous to future inhabitants of the earth. * * * All life is single in its essence, but various, ever-varying, and inter-active in its manifestations; men, and all other animals, are active workers and sharers in a vastly more extended system of cosmic action than any of ourselves, much less of them, can possibly comprehend.—*Galton's* "*Hereditary Genius*," *pp.* 1, 376.

§Thinking woman impure, the ancients called her monthly flowing *purgation*

"religion never was designed to make our pleasures less," science brings disciples of God and Fate to answer for their misdeeds before the tribunal of human intelligence. Neither superstitious supernaturalism with its theatrical terrors, nor learned infidelity, "full of wise saws and modern instances," should deter the sexes from thought and experiment as to the best uses of themselves. That woman expects man, or man woman, is as natural and proper as desire for food or clothing. Since the mind cannot rule the body until it becomes acquainted with it, lovers,—who are "servants of Providence, not slaves of Fate,"—are divinely called to be students in the laboratories of their own bodies. The eye, the arm, or leg perishes by non-use; so without natural vent, exuberant sexual vitality wastes and destroys. Not to mention the fearful loss of vigor through involuntary emissions, celibate abstinence and solitary vice probably engender more disease and death than all other causes combined.* Though he well knows the cause and cure of these ills, what physician dare prescribe the natural remedy? Accursed is the "civilization" which thus immolates its best life on the altars of superstitious ignorance! Retribution comes in wide-spread venereal diseases, syphilis so generally permeating male blood that it is unsafe for a lady to kiss a man, lest she be infected fatally. Though probably less injurious than the fatal drain of involuntary emissions and self-abuse, yet, because illicit intercourse is usually undisciplined and excessive, it is often extremely hurtful. Since intense passion is never expressed in obscene terms, the sources of love are pure; so vice does not consist in the judicious gratification of sexual desire, but in repression and disordered excess. Health, temperance, self-control, and native graces are developed by intimate exchange of

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Hence the command of Moses that men should not approach her at certain periods. But what theology calls "purgation," science proves to be "the sacred wound of love in which mothers conceive."

*Of those unfortunates who jump from bridges, take arsenic, hang themselves, or otherwise seek death, nearly *two-thirds* are unmarried, and in some years nearly *three-fourths*. In France, Bavaria, Prussia, and Hanover, four out of every five crazy women are unmarried, and throughout the civilized world there are three or four single to one married woman in the establishments for the insane.—*Napheys's "Physical Life of Woman,"* p. 41. Sydenham says "Hysterical affections constitute one-half of woman's chronic diseases." * * * Hysteria is comparitively unknown in India, where it is a matter of religious feeling to procure a husband for a girl as soon as menstruation begins, but in this country, (England), whose customs enforce celibacy, no other disease is so widespread. * * * A happy sexual intimacy is the best remedy for hysteria.—*Elements of Social Science*, pp. 176–82. Thrown upon himself by the asceticism of our morality, the young man falls into solitary indulgence. Haunted by amatory ideas, and tormented by excitement of the sexual organs, the spirited youth wars manfully for the citadel of his chastity. * * * Night brings no consolation after the gloomy day, for he lives in constant dread of nocturnal discharges of semen, which weaken him so much, that in the morning he feels as if bound down by a weight to his couch. * * * He consults physicians, but, overawed by the general erronious moral views on these subjects, they shrink from their duty to assert the sacredness of the bodily laws in opposition to preconceptions. * * * Rosseau was an instructive instance of a most noble mind, struggling under the inevitable ruin of a secret bodily disease. * * * Pascal also is thought to have had the disease, and probably Sir Isaac Newton, who is said to have lived a life of strict sexual abstinence, which produced before death a total atrophy of the testicles, showing the natural sin which he had committed. * * * It is a disgrace to medicine and mankind that so important a class of diseases have become the trade of unscientific men.—*Ibid*, 80, 81, 88, 102. See also Lewis' "Chastity," and Trall's "Sexual Physiology."

magnetisms, and both sexes are thereby fitted for parentage.* The progress of civilization is marked by the degree of freedom and intimacy between the sexes. In the East, women appear in public veiled, it being thought sinful for them to allow their faces to be seen by any men not their husbands; here they walk, ride, dance, pray with, or kiss men, and no harm to either. We now forbid the sexes, unless married, to sleep together; but this restriction is a relic of oriental customs, which will vanish as intelligence increases. In schools, churches, theatres, shops, factories, counting rooms, each sex is benefited by the presence of the other. The same exchange of impulse, thought, emotion, magnetism, and grace, which develops and refines both sexes in industrial and social meeting publicly, will be still more improving in the most intimate relations of private life. It will erelong be seen that a lady and gentleman can as innocently and properly occupy one room at night as they can now dine together.†

In the distorted popular view, free-love tends to unrestrained licentiousness, to open the flood-gates of passion and remove all barriers in its desolating course; but it means just the opposite; it means the expulsion of animalism, and the entrance of reason, knowledge, and continence.

SEXUAL CONTINENCE.

As is shown in the opening pages of this essay, to say that every one should be free, sexually, is to say that every one's person is sacred from invasion; that the sexual instinct shall no longer be a savage, uncontrollable usurper, but be subject to thought and civilization. The damning tendency of marriage begins in giving the sexes legal license and power to invade, pollute, and destroy each other; and the immaturity of Science is painfully apparent, when it accepts the fatalistic theory of love, and abandons the grave issues of coition to chance and necessity. Though my experience is quite limited, yet, facts within my personal knowledge enable me to affirm, without fear of refutation, that lovers' exchange, in its inception, continuance, and conclusion, can be made subject to choice; entered upon, or refrained from, as the mutual interests of both, or the separate good of either, requires.‡

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* The utility of the passions well directed has become a maxim in medicine as in morality; the fathers in medicine and their modern followers agree in this.—*Napheys, p,* 76. Children should be the fruit of liberty and light; it is doubtless of the most elevated voluntary love that heroes have been born.—*Michelet.* The passions are the celestial fire that vivifies the moral world; it is to them that the arts and sciences owe their discoveries, and man the elevation of his position.—*Helvetius.*

†The evils of celibacy I believe to be a fruitful source of uterine disease. The sexual instinct is a healthy instinct, claiming satisfaction as a natural right.—*Dr. E. J. Tilt, London.* Our appetites, being as much a portion of ourselves as any other quality we possess, ought to be indulged; otherwise the individual is not developed. If a man suppresses part of himself, he becomes maimed and shorn. The proper limit of self-indulgence is, that he shall neither hurt himself nor hurt others. Short of this, everything is lawful. It is more than lawful; it is necessary. He who abstains from safe and moderate gratification of the senses, lets some of his essential faculties fall into abeyance, and must, on that account, be deemed imperfect and unfinished. He may be a monk; he may be a saint; but a man he is not.—*Buckle.*

‡I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection.—*St. Paul.* The discharge of the semen, instead of being the main act of sexual intercourse, is really the sequel and termination of it. Sexual intercourse, pure and simple, is the conjunction of the organs of union, and the interchange of magnetic influences, or conversation of spirits, through the medium of that conjunction. . . . . Abstinence

Until lovers, by pre-good sense, become capable of temperance and self-possession in sexual intercourse, it is an outrage on children to be begotten by them. Though Paul thought it "better to marry than to burn," it is best and feasible to neither marry nor burn; for, as in Plato's phrase, lovers are persons in whose favor "the gods have intervened," sexual intercourse may be constantly under the supervision of both human and divine good sense. Since children are begotten by their parents, not by act of Congress, or divine Providence, married people are forced to study methods of preventing conception;* unnatural, disgusting, and very injurious means are frequently used, especially by some clergymen and moralists who, in their public teachings, hold that coition, except for reproduction, should be forbidden by law! From six to eight days before appearance of the menses to ten to twelve days after their cessation occurs, conception may follow coition;† but intercourse at other periods rarely causes impregnation; if, however, it escapes control, it exhausts both persons, admonishing them to keep within the associative limit, which is highly invigorating, and not to allow themselves to gravitate to the propagative climax. To experience love, instead of dwelling so much upon it in thought and imagination, is Nature's method to promote continence. The fact that those in whom love is most repressed,—young male victims of seminal weakness, hysterical girls, hypoish boys and men, single women, priests, and poets,—dwell much in thought on sexual subjects, and yet, by unreasoning custom, are denied natural association with the opposite sex, is most disastrous to themselves and society. If persons do not acquire habits of continence by force of will, Nature's method is sharp and decisive; she confronts them with a child, which effectually tames and matures both parents. Far better that their attraction lead to illegal parentage, than end in marriage, or by suicidal celibacy. The fashionable method of single persons, and very many married people, is to get rid of the child before birth by abortion; but this murderous practice is unworthy of free-lovers; they accept and rear the child, but take care that the next one be born of choice, not by accident. Since the increase of population outruns increase in means of subsistence, Malthus urged that, unless people refuse to marry, or defer it till middle life, there will be

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from the propagative part of sexual intercourse may seem impracticable to depraved natures, and yet be perfectly natural and easy to persons properly trained to chastity. . . . . A very large proportion of all children born under the present system, are begotten contrary to the wishes of both parents, and lie nine months in their mother's womb under their mother's curse.—*Noyes' Male Continence, pp*, 12, 13, 15.

*When the health of the mother is doubtful, and the family cash box empty, or a pre-disposition to some grave malady inherited, they will ask how conception may be prevented, or the next child postponed.—*Lewis' Chastity, p.* 89.

†Conception may take place from sexual union within six days before the beginning, to ten days after the cessation, of the menstrual evacuation.—*T. L. Nichols' Human Physiology, p.* 271. M. Bischoff, the celebrated German physiologist, says that coition, to be fruitful, must take place from eight days before to twelve after the menses cease. . . . . Various unnatural means are employed to prevent the seminal fluid from entering the womb, thus preventing the union of the sperm and germ cell which is the essential part of impregnation; among these means are withdrawal before emission; the use of safes, or sheathes; the introduction of a piece of sponge so as to guard the mouth of the womb, and the injection of tepid water into the vagina immediately after coition. But these methods, except the latter, are injurious and disgusting. *Elements of Social Science, pp.* 348-9. See also Owen's "Moral Physiology."

too many consumers for the food grown; and that, if they do not heed this admonition, Nature sternly represses excessive increase of population, "by the ghastly agencies of war, pestilence, and famine." Lycurgus favored destroying imperfect and sickly children; Plato, in his imaginative Republic, advises a similar weeding-out process; and, thinking sexual desire "a most enervating and filthy cheat," Shakerism endeavors to exterminate it,—three popular devices to govern propagation: 1. The Shaker-Malthus method, which forbids sexual intercourse; 2. The abortion-child-murder method, which destroys life before or after birth; 3. The French-Owen method of barriers, withdrawal, &c., to arrest the process in its course;—but, since they are either unnatural, injurious, or offensive, all these devices are rejected by continent free-lovers. Extending the domain of reason and self-control over the whole human system, and believing that all things work together for the good of those that love good, they not only believe, but *know*, that, under self-discipline, "every organ or faculty in the body works invariably, in all cases, and at all times, for the good of the whole."

CAUSES OF "PROSTITUTION."

The thread of philosophy, with which people connect scattered facts of their social experience, is religiously used to entangle so-called "fallen women," in hopeless depression. But, if each "common" woman entertains an average number of five men as her customers, for every woman who sells "her virtue" there must be five "fallen" men who buy it. How came they to have money to buy it? How came she to be so dependent that she consents to sell the use of her person for food and clothing? Wine, women, and wealth are three prominent objects of men's desire; to be able to control the first two, they monopolize the third; having, through property in land, interest on money, rent, and profits, subjected labor to capital, recipients of speculative increase keep working men poor; and, by excluding woman from industrial pursuits and poisoning her mind with superstitious notions of natural weakness, delicacy, and dependence, capitalists have kept her wages down to very much less than men get for the same work. Thus, men become buyers, and women sellers, of "virtue." But many women, not in immediate need of money, engage in "the social evil;" for, allied with this financial fraud is the great social fraud, marriage, by which the sexes are put in unnatural antagonism, and forbidden natural intercourse; social pleasure, being an object of common desire, becomes a marketable commodity, sold by her who receives a buyer for the night, and by her who, marrying for a home, becomes a "prostitute" for life.* The usury-system enables capitalists to control and consume property which they never earned, laborers being defrauded to an equal extent; this injustice creates intemperate and reckless desires in both classes: but when power to accumulate property without work is abolished, the habits of industry, which both men and women must acquire, will promote sexual temperance. In marriage, usury, and the exceptionally low wages of women, then, I find the main sources of "prostitution." Luckily the profit-system will go down with its twin-relic of barbarism, the marriage-system; in life united, in death they will not be divided.

*It is a lamentable truth that the troubles which respectable, hard-working, married women undergo, are more trying to the health, and detrimental to the looks, than any of the harlot's career.—*Herbert Spencer.*

SEXUAL RIGHTS.

In telling the woman of Samaria, who had just said to him "I have no husband," "Thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband," Jesus quietly recognized, without reproof, her natural right to live with men as she chose; and when a woman "taken in adultery, in the very act," was brought to him for criticism and sentence, he sent her accusers home to their own hearts and lives by the emphatic rebuke, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." By Mosaic Law she should have been stoned to death, and the lascivious ignorance of religio-"cultured" Massachusetts would imprison her; but wiser Love points her to the upward path of social and industrial liberty. Impersonal and spiritual, love has also its material and special revelations, which make it a sacredly private and personal affair. Why should the right of private judgment, which is conceded in politics and religion, be denied to domestic life? If government cannot justly determine what ticket we shall vote, what church we shall attend, or what books we shall read, by what authority does it watch at key-holes and burst open bed-chamber doors to drag lovers from sacred seclusion? Why should priests and magistrates supervise the sexual organs of citizens any more than the brain and stomach? If we are incapable of sexual self-government, is the matter helped by appointing to "protect" us "ministers of the Gospel," whose incontinent lives fill the world with "scandals?" If unwedded lovers, who cohabit are lewd, will paying a marriage fee to a minister make them "virtuous?" Sexual organs are not less sacredly the property of individual citizens than other bodily organs; this being undeniable, who but the individual owners can rightly determine when, where, and how they shall be used? The belief that our sexual relations can be better governed by statute, than by individual reason, is a rude species of conventional impertinence, as barbarious and shocking, as it is senseless. Personal Liberty and the Rights of Conscience in love, now savagely invaded by Church, State, and "wise" free-thinkers, should be unflinchingly asserted. Lovers cannot innocently enact the perjury of marriage; to even voluntarily become slaves to each other is deadly sin against themselves, their children, and society;* hence marriage vows and laws, and statutes against adultery and fornication, are

*The Master said, "swear not at all;" and no exception in favor of the marriage oath is made. Sacramental marriage is outside of the normal conditions of human society. . . . Under the Christian dispensation, no man can rightfully make himself, by any process cognizable before the civil courts, a voluntary slave. . . . No man can rightfully repudiate his own conscience; neither can he, by any foregone act, mortgage his own conscience in the future. . . . The 11th amendment of the Mass. Constitution says, "No subordination of any one sect or denomination to another shall ever be established by law." . . . If one sect believe on moral and religious grounds, that it is wicked to put all people under the alternative of not marrying at all, or of marrying for life, where is the contitutionality of the law which forces them to marry in a way against which they have conscientious scruples? With what show of justice could the courts punish, with fine and imprisonment, parties living in such a way that fornication and bastardy, through their example, becomes respectable?—*Greene's "Fragments," pp.* 220-2. Those who marry as little intend to conspire their own ruin as those who swear allegiance; and as a whole people is to an ill government, so is one man or woman to an ill marriage.—*Milton.* Did South Carolina, which, before negro emancipation, had no divorces, present a better civilization than Connecticut and Indiana, in which divorces were readily obtained? Does the Romish Church, which opposes divorce, embody higher types of character than Protestant Churches favoring it?

unchristian, unconstitutional, unnatural, and void in Massachusetts.

Against all repressive opposition, Individualism steadily advances to become a law unto itself; the right of private judgment in religion, wrested by Luther from intolerance in continental Europe—later asserted in politics by Hampden and Sydney against the English Stuarts, and by Adams and Jefferson against British-American centralization—is now legitimately claimed in behalf of sexual self-government. Protestantism, Magna Charta, Habeas Corpus, Trial by Jury, Freedom of Speech and Press, The Declaration of Independence, Jeffersonian State Rights, Negro-Emancipation, were fore-ordained to help Love and Labor Reformers bury sexual slavery, with profit-piracy, in their already open graves. Thanks to the inspired energy of ancestral reformers, the guarantees of personal liberty, which we inherit from our predecessors, are all-sufficient in this free-love battle. Those who resist free tendencies to-day can read their doom in the prophetic wrath of Proudhon, who, confronting property usurpation and Napoleonic despotism in France, said, *He who fights against ideas will perish by ideas!* Yet not ideas, not intellect merely, but moral appeal, the might of Conscience, and the all-persuasive impulses of the human heart enter this conflict. Human nature may well blush if the *drama of deceit* enacted in the "Brooklyn Scandal" is to be taken as a fair expression of American thought and feeling. But the array of intellect, scholarship, and eloquence opposed in that struggle; the impressive pomp of courts, the mustering clans of ecclesiastical authority, the listening attitude of thousands of pulpits, and the recording pens of an omnipresent press,—all these are for a day, fleeting and contemptible, when weighed against an honest heart-throb between one man and one woman! The loud clamor of words will cease, the majesty of courts fade, churches vanish, Christianity itself pass away, but the still, small voice of Love will continue to be heeded by Earth's millions gathering at its shrines! And as the dictation of statutes is increasingly resisted and the wrath of slave masters defied, more and more will the bonds of affection be welcomed, for the yokes which Cupid imposes "are easy and their burden light." I opened this essay accepting Love as the regnant force in social life; I conclude it by emphasizing the same faith. Money, ambition, respectability, isolation, magnetic fervor, fascinating touch, glowing beauty,—whatever influences concur to induce social union, the nourishing power, to continue and prosper it, is the attractive force of personal worth, the call to live and serve together, the impulse to defer self and partial interests to the welfare of the being loved.* Sired by Wisdom, born of Truth, Love stimulates enterprise, quickens industry, fosters self-respect, reverences the lowly and worships the Most High, harmonizing personal impulse with the demands of morality, in a well-informed faith, which renders conventional statutes useless, where "the heavens themselves do guide the state."

HEARTS, TRUMPS.

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* Judged by the final test, the chief thing, in life, is love.—*Theodore Tilton.* There must be a unitary passional code, enacted by God, and interpreted by attraction.—*Fourier.* Individuality, as the principle of order and repose, is directly opposed to promiscuity.—*Josiah Warren.* He whom love alone does not satisfy cannot have been filled with it.—*Richter.* No man is qualified to feel the worth of a woman who reverences herself. . . No woman shall receive an acknowledgement of love from my lips to whom I cannot consecrate my life.—*Goethe.* Let the motive be in the deed not in the event; be not one moved by the hope of reward; he who doeth what is to be done, without affection, obtaineth the Supreme.—*Kreeshna.*

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