
The Young Maiden

A. B. Muzzey

- ⌚ [Chapter I. THE CAPACITIES OF WOMAN.](#)
- ⌚ [Chapter II. FEMALE INFLUENCE.](#)
- ⌚ [Chapter III. FEMALE EDUCATION.](#)
- ⌚ [Chapter IV. HOME.](#)
- ⌚ [Chapter V. SOCIETY.](#)
- ⌚ [Chapter VI. LOVE.](#)
- ⌚ [Chapter VII. SINGLE LIFE.](#)
- ⌚ [Chapter VIII. REASONS FOR MARRIAGE.](#)
- ⌚ [Chapter IX. CONDITIONS OF TRUE MARRIAGE.](#)
- ⌚ [Chapter X. THE SOCIETY OF YOUNG MEN.](#)
- ⌚ [Chapter XI. FIRST LOVE.](#)
- ⌚ [Chapter XII. CONDUCT DURING ENGAGEMENT.](#)
- ⌚ [Chapter XIII. TRIALS OF WOMAN; AND HER SOLACE.](#)
- ⌚ [Chapter XIV. ENCOURAGEMENTS.](#)

Chapter I. THE CAPACITIES OF WOMAN.

The appropriate sphere of woman—how ascertained. By considering her Intellectual, Moral, and Physical Constitution; by a view of the Scripture teachings on this point; by a reference to History, observation, and experience. The women of Babylon. Patriotism of Phoenician women. Grecians and Romans. Modern Pagan Women. Occupations and Habits of Christian females friendly to improvement. State of Society, especially in this country, favorable. Effect of Chivalry on woman. The division of Duties between the sexes, and their Mutual Influence demand separate spheres. Woman should not engage in severe Physical toil. Milton's opinion. Nor in Political life. Plato's theory. Nor in promiscuous public Discussions. Home one part of her sphere. Private Beneficence. The Statue of ivory better than that of brass. Society requires Woman's presence. Lord Halifax's a good view of Female capacities.

Before entering on any statement of duties, it is incumbent on us to determine what power there is to perform them. An angel's task may not be laid on a mere mortal. It is only where many talents have been given, that great returns can justly be required. Nor should our requisitions fall below the powers of those of whom they are made. We may not claim simply a child's service, where the ability of a giant clearly exists. Achilles would spurn the light offices of Adonis. So will that woman, who regards her sex as co-equal in every part of their nature, with the opposite sex, condemn the delicate tasks, usually termed feminine.

Much is said in our age and country of the appropriate sphere of woman. The discussion of that point is too interesting and too important to be passed over in this work, but the consideration of it involves another, viz., What are her Natural Capacities? How does she compare with, and wherein differ from man? This topic seems a fit introduction to what may follow in our survey of the wide field now open before us.

The capacities of woman may be ascertained by the study of her Physical, Intellectual, and Moral constitution; by the disclosures of the Sacred Scriptures; and by a reference to History, observation and experience.

1. The Physical Constitution of woman is peculiar. In barbarous nations she has often been subjected to the same manual exertions as man; sometimes to those even more arduous. But the progress of refinement and civilization always establishes a marked distinction between the two sexes, in this respect. Nature revolts at the thought of the Amazon. A Boadicea and a Joan of Arc, were they now to appear, would be almost universally regarded as disloyal to their sex. A masculine woman and an effeminate man are in equal disesteem. We instinctively pronounce her to unsex herself, who arms for the battle-field, or engages in those agricultural, mechanic, or other manual pursuits, which

demand great bodily vigor. God hath made the sexes herein to differ, and man, we feel, ought not to confound them.

In respect also to Intellectual Powers, there is among most people a conviction that severe reasoning, comprehensiveness, and logical acuteness belong pre-eminently to man. I know there are illustrious exceptions to the truth of this statement; but do we not rightly esteem the Elizabeths and Somervilles that occasionally challenge our admiration of their intellectual strength, as exceptions to the ordinary female mind? Ascribe this difference, if you please, to the neglect of their education, say that man is only the superior, because of his higher advantages of culture, still must not the fact of his present mental superiority be conceded?

Nor should I deem it to the discredit of woman, were it incontestibly proved, that her Maker had given her less intellectual power in some provinces than man. For though, in civil affairs, in controlling the destinies of nations, in framing laws and administering justice, man labors in his exclusive sphere, yet in delicacy of perception and taste, and as a guardian at the fountains of Imagination, to woman he must yield the superiority. In the silence of her retirement she ponders on the themes of fancy, and while the consecrated names of Hemans and Sigourney shall endure, let man be slow to assume an absolute dominion in all the noble provinces of intellect.

But maintain as we may our constitutional ascendancy in the Physical and Mental capacities, there is one realm where woman reigns in undisputed supremacy; it is the realm of Moral power.

God has given her a keen sensibility, and a strength of feeling, and sympathies and affections which prepare her for singular eminence in moral attainments. In the religion of Ancient Greece, it was she who presided at the tribunal of fate; her native enthusiasm qualified her for this office. "A man," says Diderot, "never sat on the sacred tripod; a woman alone, could deliver the Pythian oracle; alone could raise her mind to such a pitch as seriously to imagine the approach of a god, and panting with emotion, to cry, 'I perceive him, I perceive him; there! there! the god!'" The same zeal which was displayed in devotion to a false faith, is seen in Christian lands, sustaining the morals and piety of eternal life.

Woman is more susceptible than man of sudden and strong impressions. Her impulses are quick and prompt, but this trait unless counterbalanced by others, would expose her to irresistible evil. She would fall an easy prey to lawless emotions. God has kindly averted this calamity, by inspiring her with a constancy and devotedness seldom witnessed in man. Let her place her affections on any object, and they will cling to it through every trial and change. What love so strong as woman's? What moral power can compare with hers, when principle, duty, devotion, once engage the full energies of her soul?

2. What we have learned from this glance at the constitution of your sex, is verified by the Sacred Scriptures. In the book of Genesis we are told that God "took one of the ribs of Adam, as he slept, and closed up the flesh instead thereof." Some commentators

translate this passage thus: "he took one out of his side, and put flesh in its place;" and they thence infer that Adam and Eve were created at once, and joined by the side to each other; that God afterward sent a deep sleep upon Adam, and then separated the woman from him. They were thus on a perfect equality till the period of the fall. After that melancholy event, the sentence was pronounced on woman, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." And through all the subsequent history of woman, as found in the Bible, it is said, her inferiority to man is constantly implied.—Among the woes predicted by the prophet Isaiah, as awaiting Jerusalem and Judah, this is included, "Women shall rule over them."

Let the original relative capacities of woman have been as they might, one fact is clearly apparent, that the general condition of women among the ancient Jews, and in contemporary nations, was one of degradation and servitude. She was the slave of man. The Essenes, a Jewish sect not unlike the modern Shakers, treated this sex with little respect, often with contempt. The system of polygamy, of old almost universally prevalent, tended directly to "stifle the best emotions of the female heart, and to call all its worst passions into exercise." It has been supposed by some, that the wonder which the disciples of Christ expressed, when they found him conversing with the woman of Samaria, originated partly in their low opinion of her sex. The Talmud teaches that it is beneath the dignity of a Rabbi, to talk familiarly with a woman; and the Jew was accustomed, we are told, to give thanks to God, that he was not a woman.

But open the New Testament, and how in a moment is this estimation elevated. Of the Physical and Intellectual rank of woman, nothing is, indeed, there said. But as a creature of God, and a member of the great family of mankind, she is placed on an entire equality with man. Christianity does not make her responsible, as a moral and immortal being, to man, but represents both as having a common Master in heaven. No virtue inculcated on the one sex is omitted in describing the duties of the other. The Christian character is a moral statue, to be wrought by every living hand; and taste, composition, symmetry, effect, are required and expected, in the spiritual workmanship, no less of woman than of man.

The personal treatment which this sex received at the hand of Jesus, was always respectful, as well as tender and kind. "His earliest friend was a woman; his only steadfast friends through his ministry were women." It was "the daughters of Jerusalem," who wept for him in his final agony. "The last at his cross, and the first at his sepulchre, was a woman. And when, after his ascension, the little company of believers was assembled, waiting for the fulfilment of his promise, there also were found the women who had accompanied him in life and stood by him in death." How could he, with such proofs of their piety, zeal and perseverance, fail to regard the sex with a consideration, at least equal to that he bestowed upon man?

And in the religion itself, we find qualities with which the capacities and powers of woman singularly harmonize. It is based upon the affections. Love to God, and love to man, are its two great commandments. The sacrifice it requires on the altar of life is that of the heart. And what is this but the unquestioned empire of woman? Sentiment with her

is natural, the growth of her moral being; in man it is usually acquired, the result of thought. Deny, as man may, her mental equality with himself,—doubt as we may, the comparative strength or capabilities of any other portion of her nature, as related to man, in the possessions of the heart, no man can contest the ascendancy with woman. She is naturally less selfish than man. She can, if she will but obey her best impulses, rise to the loftiest heights of Christian excellence. And, if serious impediments oppose her progress, on herself, her own culpableness, not on her nature, must each consequent failure be charged.

Another characteristic of our religion is its call for what have sometimes been termed the passive virtues, fortitude, submission, patience, resignation. The acquisition of these qualities is to man a most arduous task. He can toil, and struggle, and resist. In scenes of active effort, and strong conflict, he is at home. But his power of endurance is by no means commensurate with these traits. In woman they find a congenial spirit, a heart open, and waiting for their reception.—“Those disasters,” says an elegant writer, “which break down and subdue the spirit of man, and prostrate him in the dust, seem to call forth all the energies of the softer sex, and give such intrepidity and elevation to their character, that at times, it approaches to sublimity.” Who does not perceive that this sex enjoys pre-eminent advantages for the culture of that spiritual union with God required of the Christian? And in sustaining the ordinary trials of our lot, as social beings; in cherishing forbearance toward the unjust, kindness to the thankless, and love toward those who inflict personal injuries, woman is endowed by her Maker with a divine power.

3. The History of this sex is a still farther testimony to their moral capacities. We have examples of illustrious female virtue in the annals of the Patriarchs, as Sarah, Rebecca, and Rachel. In Holy Writ, we read also of Miriam and Deborah; and the picture left us by Solomon, of “a virtuous woman,” evinces not only the existence, but the appreciation of a true woman, by some in those early ages.

If we turn to the records of heathen nations, we find them occupied, when they speak of this sex, almost universally, in describing rare cases of personal prowess or physical conquests. The wealth of Babylon was such, and its advancement in science and refinement so great, that we may presume the female character to have been more elevated, than in savage countries. There was a true moral courage in that act recorded of the Phoenician women, who agreed, that if their countrymen lost a certain battle, they would perish in the flames, and who crowned with flowers her who made that proposition in a council. Would that history had transmitted the testimony of those quiet, unobtrusive virtues, which must at some ancient periods have prevailed, and which are the glory of woman.

In more recent ages, we find among the Greeks noble examples of female heroism, of conjugal love, and sisterly affection; but the exclusion of woman from society placed her under great moral disadvantages. Rome allowed this sex more free intercourse in social life, and the renowned Cornelia was hence a representative of no small number of her age.

But how few opportunities do modern Pagan religions allow woman for exhibiting her moral capabilities. The stern creed of the Mussulman pronounces, we are told, that woman has no soul; she is treated, in any event, according to this doctrine. In China, among the lower classes, all the hard labor is laid upon the wife, while the husband performs only the lighter tasks. In the higher classes, the sex is completely secluded from all places of public instruction, and subjected to laws which repress all their energies, both of mind and heart. India furnishes examples of conjugal devotedness, worthy a more enlightened direction. Alas! that such a spirit can find no purer modes of self-sacrifice, than casting the body on a funeral pile, or beneath the wheels of Juggernaut. Profane History, in its wide range, gives us indeed but an occasional gleam of the genuine virtues of woman. How unlike Christianity, which presents a brilliant succession of these fair examples.

In Christian lands the occupations and habits of woman are such as to give scope for moral eminence. She has fewer worldly interests and engagements than man. She is not here accustomed to command armies, nor lift up her voice in the Senate chamber. Nor is she subjected to those coarser employments, and that severe bodily toil, which elsewhere rob her of all true delicacy. What an immense chasm do we see between the Christian female, devoted to her quiet domestic duties, and the inhabitant of Van Dieman's land, for example, diving into the sea for shell-fish, while her husband sits by the fire, pampering his appetite with the choice morsels which she has procured for him.

But Christianity must be pure, to produce this change; we shall else retain, under the light of the Gospel, the spirit and practices of Paganism. "In one place on the road," says a recent traveller in Italy, "we saw at least one hundred young girls, mixed up with as many rough coarse men, carrying baskets of earth, some fifty rods, upon their head, for the purpose of filling up an embankment or road." "Heathenism, and paganized Christianity," he remarks, "degrade woman to a level with the slave." "In none of the slave States which I have visited," says Professor Stowe, "have I ever seen negro women drudging in such toilsome out of door labors, as fall to the lot of the laboring women in Germany and in France." "Haggish beldames fill all our markets," says Chevalier, "and three-fourths of our fields."

But in the beautiful language of another, when speaking of the sect called Friends, which language I would apply to all genuine piety, "The Inner Light sheds its blessings on the whole human race; it knows no distinction of sex. It redeems woman by the dignity of her moral nature, and claims for her the equal culture and free exercise of her endowments. As the human race ascends the steep acclivity of improvement, the Quaker cherishes woman, as the equal companion of the journey." The Christian's home is a scene of retirement favorable to moral culture and to growth in grace. There the soul may contemplate its Creator, and hold communion with the lovely image of his Son. Far from the fields of ambition and gain, away from the agitations of a public arena, in sacred seclusion pursuing her domestic avocations, why should not woman be distinguished for her spiritual attainments? Can it be, that with the same watchfulness, and self-denial, and toil, she should not surpass man in the acquisition of holiness and purity?

Another circumstance, friendly to the developement of woman's capacities, is the state of society and the country in which we live. Our free institutions do much to remove those obstacles, that elsewhere exist, to the full exercise of her powers and faculties. Those false distinctions in society, by which wealth and rank alone can secure to a child its rightful education, are here seldom witnessed. In the public schools, the daughters of all, rich or poor, high or low, mingle for literary instruction. A mighty arm is thus raised to level that barrier, which in other lands, rises even between the cradles of the titled and the obscure.

Not only is the intellect of woman thus trained in childhood to equal progress with that of the opposite sex, but all those moral advantages, which are connected with mental culture, are secured to this sex. The constitutional advantage she possesses, for attainments in virtue and piety is thus indulged with peculiar facilities for its exercise, and her sphere of employment, so quiet and hallowed, is not corrupted but purified by the social atmosphere she breathes from her earliest days.

We are now prepared for a reply to that exciting inquiry alluded to in the commencement of this work, "What is the appropriate sphere of woman?" Having determined for what duties and occupations she is qualified, it becomes less difficult to decide when she is acting within her true sphere, and when she departs from it. If Nature has intimated any class of employments, as more suitable, from their delicacy, for her physical powers than others, then we infer, that if she forsake those for sterner avocations, she disobeys the will of God; and that too, as clearly and certainly, as if it were inscribed in letters of fire on the material heavens.

It would have been surprising, however, had not many in this age, and especially in our own country, have passed to extremes in their opinions of the rights of woman, and of her appropriate sphere. Having escaped, through the influence of Christianity, from the error of degrading her to the station of a slave, it was natural that they should more and more elevate her, until her true position in the world would be entirely misapprehended.

The first impulse in this direction was seen in the age of Chivalry. Then woman was the idol of man. She was served with a sickly and sentimental devotion, through which its object became indolent, degraded, and lost to all moral and intellectual excellence. Then came the influence of those Political changes produced by Christianity, which, while they somewhat elevated the mental condition of this sex, left them still subordinate in many respects to man. At length a republic was founded on these shores, tending, in its true uses, to elevate all classes, but still to render each individual, when his own best interests were perceived, content in that state, for which Providence manifestly designed him.

But how natural that the condition for which God had created the strongest physical frames and intellectual capacities, should be an object of envy, and discontent, and ambition, with those to whom he had denied these endowments. Could it be anticipated that woman would in all cases be true to her sex, and reply, as did the discreet Shunamite to the prophet's interrogatories, "What is to be done for thee? Wouldst thou be spoken for

to the king? or to the captain of the host?" "I dwell among mine own people." That is, "Where God has appointed my lot, I am content to live and toil."

It may be objected that I assume the existence of two distinct spheres of action, in this world. This is acknowledged, and it is, I believe, susceptible of demonstration. In all nations there is found a division in the character of human occupations. The savage has his hunting and fishing grounds, which call for labors of a wholly different character from those of the wigwam. And though woman may, and often does engage in the sterner duties of the tribe, yet man cannot supply the earliest wants of the infant, and he violates the plainest decrees of nature, if he leave not some other duties exclusively to woman.

Civilization modifies this division of labor, but cannot obliterate it. Rather must its true work be the more wide separation of the sphere of each sex from that of the other. Christianity elevates the rank of woman, and through civilization, gives her a new moral and intellectual importance in society. Mental culture, again, diminishes both the taste and the necessity for those coarser tasks, to which, in ruder ages she must in some degree be subject. But if it qualify her for higher intellectual employments, her progress does not surpass that of man. They are relatively, as distant in this respect from each other, as they were in the days of the Patriarchs. The cultivated female mind enchants the world,

"And fills

The air around with beauty; we inhale

The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, instils

Part of its immortality."

This leads us to say, that God must have designed woman for a peculiar sphere of action, because it is only when she is thus situated, that the mutual influence of the sexes, so important to earth's moral good, can be fully exerted. The boy at school inclines to rough manners. What more effectual restraint upon this tendency, than the delicacy and gentleness which marks the little girl? She again, may become painfully diffident, and a recluse in her bearing, if not subjected to the society of the more confident sex.

Encourage the boy to sit always by the fireside, and studiously shun conversation with the opposite sex, or put the girl forward and incite her to a bold and boisterous manner, and their mutual influence is diminished and soon lost. You transgress a plain law of the Creator.

So in the society of adults. Let men group themselves together, and they will converse only of their farms, their merchandize, and their manufactures, or of governments and administrations. Insulate the female sex, and they shall discourse upon dress, or the minor affairs of their neighbors, far too exclusively. But shall we, to obviate these evils, completely transpose their conditions? Do we wish to see woman on Change, or man given up to fashion, and culinary duties? No; let the main pursuits of each be distinct; but let neither regard him or herself as having no influence on the duties of the other.

What check were there on man's wrong impulses as a lover of gain, or a devotee of ambition, should woman participate with him in these dispositions? And would not the

inevitable consequence of her resigning herself to masculine offices and labors be, that she became as insane in the toil for riches as man; that she proved his rival instead of his ally; that far from composing and regulating the fire of his ambition, she did but kindle it to a devastating flame? To argue the contrary were to close our eyes on the native ardor of woman, and to forget the fearful agency of sympathy, when it takes an unholy direction. Morality, religion, the order, if not the very existence of society, hence point out a peculiar and appropriate sphere to woman.

Let me say first, negatively, what is not the province of this sex.

They should not engage in pursuits, for which their Physical powers are inadequate. If man is endowed with superior bodily strength, to him exclusively be allotted those manual avocations, which demand that strength. Let not the more delicate sex be tasked with the severe exercises of the field or the workshop. And if mental power depend at all on physical, if giant minds are usually found in vigorous frames, woman may infer that she can engage in the highest intellectual pursuits only by becoming an exception to the ordinary character of her sex.

“For contemplation he, and valor formed,
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace.”

Again, it is not the province of woman to enter into Political life. Plato, indeed, admitted this sex to an equal share with man in the dignities and offices of his commonwealth. But we should remember his was an imaginary state, an Utopia, not a part of our plain, practical world. I do not forget here the long line of Queens that grace the annals of history; yet what had they achieved, wreaths though they wore on their brows, had not man been usually the prime minister and controlling agent in their governments? The affairs of nations require in those who guide them a practical acquaintance with business transactions, and a familiar knowledge of pursuits and interests with which woman is not ordinarily conversant. And how unfeminine were it in her to raise her gentle voice amid the storm of debate, or to rush into the heat and strife of partizan politics! Let such scenes never be coveted save by the Wolstonecrafts and the Wrights who have madly unsexed themselves.

Nor can I admit that woman may with propriety be seen and heard at Public Meetings, mingling with the opposite sex. Man becomes effeminate by intermeddling with the province of woman. She also becomes coarse and masculine, when she enters his sphere. Is her nature more mild than his? Why then desecrate it, by those fierce collisions with him, which attend so many of our public discussions? How unlady-like are contention, violence, and passion. How certainly will woman sacrifice her best influence over man by consenting to stir his spirit to hostility, in ardent debate. Where are those mutual services, and friendly offices, so beautifully ordained by Providence, between the two sexes, when once they are ranged, as public competitors, in pride, zeal, envy, and jealousy, stimulating each other to the struggle for victory?

But to speak on the positive view of our subject. What is the appropriate sphere of woman? Miss Sedgwick, in her work on Self-training, has answered this question well, and to that I refer the reader. Meantime we all have, I think, an ideal of this sphere, although in the details of it we may somewhat differ. We all desire to see this portion of our race pure and pious; and we should add to these qualities gentleness, graceful manners, and a delicate, modest deportment. There are limits moreover of propriety, established in our own minds, beyond which we should be pained to see a friend of this sex ever pass. For one, I would not so contract these limits, as to repress the powers, or to do injustice to the capacities, or trench on the rights, of woman. I would encourage no Sultan spirit, nor arrogate a single claim over her, deduced from any assumed superiority of my own sex. Give her every opportunity; remove all obstacles; furnish the utmost facilities, and let God speak his will through her actions.

To this end, I would name first, what is incontestibly one part of the sphere of woman, Home. She may act in other situations, in this she must. Providence whispers to her in the cradle the divine monition, "Be a kind, obedient, dutiful daughter." And if, to the latest moment of her life, she heed not this solemn charge, she is false, not only to her own sex, but to man and to God.

The Sister, by what other virtues can she expiate a neglect of the claims of her beautiful relation? Let her be a monitor to the younger, and receive kindly the counsels of the elder, in her paternal circle, and how does she grace a sweet portion of her appropriate sphere. Nor will I omit to say, that whether united to another by the sacred bond of marriage or not, if she be a true woman, she is instinct with those inward charms, and Christian dispositions, which qualify her for that responsible connection. Intelligence, wisdom, disinterested affection, a mind to advise, a heart rich with sympathies, and a hand to aid,—these should find in her their chosen resting-place.

And what Mother can fill the sphere ordained for her sex, if she be not a devoted parent? Possessed of this trait, no woman can fail of honor and usefulness. She who looks on her race with a maternal interest, who feels that God hath made of one blood all the children of the earth, and who lives not for herself but her neighbor, she is of the genuine female nobility. There is in her character a grandeur,—let her dwell in "Alpine solitude,"—before which the admired of all admirers, the gay butterfly, whose wings open and close with the sun of adulation, shrinks into an object of pity.

Next to home, I should cite Private Beneficence, the scenes of Charity, and the chamber of sickness, as within the sphere of woman. Let her not only minister to the needs of her own fireside, but put on the sandals of mercy, and go forth to the bed of suffering, and the dwelling of poverty.

Does she court distinction and applause? There are those who would rend the air with shouts, did she pass as a Queen, in some gilded chariot; or clap their hands at the strains of her eloquence, in crowded halls. But how few are these, compared with those who commend her, who is an angel of love in the dark hours of life. What true woman would

not prefer that the statue erected to her honor should be of the delicate ivory, rather than of brass, that emblem of boldness?

She who would follow Christ, must, I am sure, take generally the sequestered path of private charity, rather than live for the public gaze, though it were that of the host of officers and members of all the benevolent societies in Christendom. Who were the women, whose charities are engraven on the eternal records of the New Testament? Private almoners, Joanna, Mary Magdalen, Susanna, and others “ministered unto their Lord of their substance,” by personal attendance.

But still farther, in the intercourse of Society, woman has duties appropriate to her sex, grave and weighty duties. I would not that she engage in a single pursuit, that shall disqualify her for this function. If she degrade herself to the rank of a painted image, decked in apparel to charm simpletons, or if she flutter in the breeze of silly speeches and simpering airs, she is a traitress to her nature. She goes out, deplorably out, of her sphere.

Nor would I that, by sun-burnt labors and field-tasks, she should bronze herself, and lose that refinement, which is a guardian to her virtue, and the anchor of her spiritual hope. A coarse woman, she who fails in all the attractions and graces of her sex, and who is a corrupter of good society, steps sadly aside from her place. While Christian gentleness, seeking to render all happy, and Christian purity, frowning on every shade of guilt, in social intercourse, are the true praise of this sex.

Lord Halifax, in his advice to his daughter, observes, “Nature hath made you such large amends for the seeming injustice of the first distribution, that the right of complaining is come over to our sex. You have it in your power, not only to free yourselves but to subdue your masters, and without violence, throw both their natural and legal authority at your feet. We are made of different tempers, that our defects may be mutually supplied. Your sex wanteth our reason for your conduct, and our strength for your protection; ours wanteth your gentleness to soften, and entertain us. The first part of our life is a good deal subjected to you in the nursery, where you reign, without competition, and by that means, have the advantage of giving the first impressions. Afterwards you have stronger influences, which well managed, have more force on your behalf, than all our privileges of jurisdiction can pretend to have against you. You have more strength in your looks, than we have in our laws; and more power by gentleness, than we have in our arguments.”

Have I circumscribed too much the sphere of woman? Does she aspire to other and broader scenes of occupation? If God hath endowed any one with the spirit of a prophetess, let her prophecy; if of teaching, let her wait on that office. Wheresoever a capacity is bestowed, it is the sign-manual of Heaven. Forbid it, honor, justice, and all that is manly, that I close one avenue opened by the Divinity. But I have spoken of woman in the mass;

“Common clay, ta'en from the common earth,
Moulded by God, and tempered by the tears
Of angels, to the perfect form of woman.”

She who is faithful to her Home, to the sacred calls of Charity, and to the holy impulses of her Social being, fulfils no mean office. She ranks with the glorious sisterhood, who have gone to the rest of the sainted. Let her soul be baptized into the spirit of God, let his glory be the seal of her deeds, and she shall at length join that great company, who “neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God.”

Chapter II. FEMALE INFLUENCE.

Christianity a bond of union. Why woman was created. Her influence on Society; on Intellectual Culture. Madame Galvani. Miss Herschel. The Mother's Influence. Bonaparte's Remark. Alfred the Great. Influence on Society. Home friendly to piety and virtue. Man's Temptations. The plea of Eve. Fraternal and Sisterly Influence. The Mother's sway over her Children. Woman's Political Influence. The Christian Religion. The Church. Religious Education. Benevolent Enterprises. The Minister of Legislative Beneficence. Responsibilities correspond to Influence. Madame de Stael's description of Society in Paris. Woman by Nature a Teacher. Domestic Claims. Patriotism. The women in the French Revolution. A Family in the West. Claims of Religion.

Christianity was designed for the benefit of all classes of mankind. There are none so high that it cannot raise them still higher; and none so low, as to escape its kindly notice and fostering influences. It unites in one fraternal bond, all who bear the impress of God. As a social religion, breaking down every wall of partition, and bringing the whole race into fellowship, its fundamental principle is, “We are members one of another;”—“No man liveth unto himself alone.”

If we consider the influence of woman, on the Social, Intellectual, Moral, and Religious condition of the world, we shall find abundant reasons for giving a prominent place, in all counsels and instructions addressed to the public, to her spiritual necessities.

Let me here premise, that, in dwelling on this topic, I should revolt at the thought of administering to a vain, self-complacent spirit. It is mournful, it is humiliating to know, as we do, that the incense of adulation has been offered up to this sex, from the most selfish and unworthy motives, and in commendation of qualities which a true woman will regard as her lowest praise, mere personal attractions. Was it for this that the beneficent Author of nature called her into being? Does she answer the purpose of her existence by submitting to be the toy of man? Has God breathed into her an immortal principle, to bestow its best energies on the mortal frame that enshrines it? to live for an outward adorning? to be satisfied with applause for her external graces alone?

“For nobler cares, for joys sublime,
He fashioned all the heirs of time.”

This position will be confirmed by a view of the influence of woman on the condition of Society. If this be at all extensive, then we must infer that her Creator intended she should be thoroughly educated; that her moral and intellectual powers should be fully developed; that the spirit should not be subject to, but reign over, and that with entire supremacy, the outward and perishable form.

But, is it not true, that civilization, refinement, and the manners and habits of society, depend much on her character? In Christian lands, and beneath our own observation, we can see that it is so. Mark the nation, the city, the village, where order, purity and the social virtues in general, prevail. What is there the female character? We hazard nothing in the reply, that it is elevated, accomplished, and pure. The coarse jest, the impure expression, the subtle inuendo,—poisoning the more surely and deeply, by its very obscurity,—where are these tolerated? Where woman maintains the high rank of her sex? No! for she has but to frown on such improprieties, and steadily, and on all occasions, to discountenance them, and they are banished from the social circle. Let her influence, in this regard, be correct, let it be mild and gentle, yet always decided, and there is no passion so rude, nor any proneness to an outbreaking of temper, or to a violation of the courtesies of life, which she cannot, and does not, restrain.

The influence of woman on the Intellectual condition of the world, is by no means small, or unimportant. How many of our best literary productions are from her pen. Science owes much to her. Galvani acknowledged himself much indebted to his wife, for aid in those investigations which led to the discovery of the science that bears his name. Miss Herschel, sister of the distinguished astronomer, received a gold medal from the Astronomical Society in London, in praise of her contributions to their great work. In how many Seminaries of learning has woman been the chief instrument in forming the minds of the youth, not only of her own but of both sexes. Who has not marked, that where a taste for reading and mental cultivation is found, there the female sex is usually intelligent, educated, and refined. It follows indeed naturally, that a well trained intellect will discover itself in the intercourse of society, and that it will impart a tone to its familiar associates. She who reads much and profitably, will converse upon the subjects that have occupied her thoughts. This will incite others to imitate her course; and pride is sufficient,—were no higher motive awakened,—to induce man to make himself at least the companion and equal of her who thus laudably cultivates the nobler part of her nature.

But should this position be questioned, none can doubt that in one sphere the intellectual influence of woman can hardly be exaggerated. I refer to that of the Mother. “What is wanting,” said Napoleon, one day, to Madame Campan, “in order that the youth of France be well educated?” “Good mothers,” was her reply. This struck the Emperor. “Here,” said he, “is a system of education in one word.” Let the mind of this parent be imbued with knowledge, and her children will imbibe from her the love of learning. How often has she planted germs, which in subsequent years expanded, and produced the fairest fruits of science and wisdom. It is related of Alfred the Great, that at the age of

twelve years, when he had not even learned the alphabet, his mother once shewed him and his brothers a volume adorned with versicolored letters and other embellishments. Seeing it excite the admiration of the children, she promised to present it to him who should first learn to read it. Alfred immediately procured a teacher for himself, and in a short time was enabled to claim the promised reward. And such was his thirst for knowledge, that, in after years, he became one of the most learned men of his nation. Bacon, Cuvier, Sir William Jones and many other prodigies of learning, received their first impulse in the path of study from their mothers. Who is that mother, that thinks lightly of her influence on the minds of her children? Let her know that on her it may now be depending, whether a son is to pass through life, ignorant of this world, of his duties as a man, a citizen, and a Christian; or to be so educated as to adorn the stations he may hereafter fill, to be a blessing to his country, an honor to his race, and better than all, trained up to know and to serve the Great Father of lights.

This leads me to observe, that woman affects vitally the interests of Society, from the transcendent influence she exerts on the Domestic relations in general. The prosperity of nations depends intimately on the prevalence of the fireside virtues. Unless the foundations of order, peace, and a genuine benevolence be laid in our homes, we can hope for none of these essential blessings. Let there be discord in our families, and the same spirit that creates it, will lead to public, civil, social, and political, dissensions. If our sons are trained up in an allowed disrespect to their parents, the retribution will be felt, not only in the privacy of our homes, but everywhere around us. And the daughter, who demeans herself irreverently toward the guardians of her life, will not fail to manifest the same melancholy trait in her intercourse with all her superiors.

Nor may we confine these remarks to this one aspect. We desire kind neighbors, men who will regard the rights and the happiness of others, and who will strive to promote them in their daily walk. But from what school do these virtues usually proceed? Where are generous, conciliatory, obliging dispositions first formed? In the family circle. The faithful and affectionate husband, the tender, yet wise and judicious father, the considerate and kind brother, these are the elements which constitute both the good citizen and the good neighbor. He who is false to the claims of home, may shine on splendid occasions, and attract the admiration of a distant world of spectators. But his heart is hollow, and the more he is known, the less will he be loved or esteemed, and the feebler will be his influence.

The inquiry then becomes of paramount interest, "What are the chief springs of domestic wellbeing?" Who are they, that contribute most largely to the advancement of piety at home? I answer, with confidence, the female sex. For what is essential to piety at home? It is gentleness, quiet habits, the beautiful harmony of many members, fulfilling each its appropriate function. It is the peaceful spirit of the Gospel, mingling with the joint efforts of a well disposed household.

But the habits and occupations of man are adverse to this tranquil temper. He is called, in the pursuit of property, to labor abroad, amid conflicting interests. Competition, the pursuits of a crowd, eager for gain, planning and toiling ceaselessly to reap some little

advantage over their fellows, this is the sea on which he must follow his fortune. And what a restless and troubled deep it is. Now the sun beams brightly, and the wind is propitious to his course; anon, darkness gathers over his prospects; clouds are lowering; the distant murmur of peril is heard. Too happy is he, if some portentous sign do not swell, and ripen, and at length break upon him, in dread fulfillment of his fears. And what but the same unquiet path do the sons of Ambition tread? Party excitement, and the contests of rival factions, are to them the very breath of life. An intense interest in political questions is at war with inward peace. He who burns for office, station, and power, has little within him congenial with the calm of the domestic circle. And these are the two great spheres of human occupation, gain, and honor; they are both exciting, both unfriendly to the highest virtues of home.

Nor is this all; the employments of our sex lead us of necessity away from the fireside. Were they ever so favorable to quiet excellence, we should be compelled, for the livelihood of our families, to absent ourselves, a large proportion of our lives, from this sphere of duty. But woman passes her days within the walls of domestic retirement. That is her accustomed scene of toil. In the temptations that befall her relatives abroad, she is not present. But where thoughtfulness comes, where good resolutions are formed, where the tears of penitence are shed, in that sacred retreat where man finds his only refuge for prayer, for self-examination, and for the culture of the spiritual life, there woman habitually dwells.

From this circumstance, joined to her native susceptibilities, she is pre-eminently qualified to preside over and foster the fireside virtues. Who has not seen the unbelieving husband sanctified, made serious and holy, by the believing wife? Where a free intercourse on the subject of religion exists between them, it can hardly be that man is not softened, his thoughts withdrawn at times from the world, and the concerns of the soul, infinite and eternal considerations, brought home to his heart by the power of his nearest earthly friend. Sometimes, alas! she, whose whole nature and whose entire condition seem but one lesson to awaken piety, has given her influence against it. By a worldly disposition, by a neglect of the means of religion, or by indifference to the most solemn themes, and an habitual levity of character and speech, the wife has been known to check the best aspirations of her husband, and reduce his spirit to the same low, earthly level with her own. She has fastened the more firmly around him, that chain, which the love of riches, or a thirst for fame, had already drawn till it corroded his immortal part. And when God has spoken to his conscience, and rebuked him for his iniquity, what better plea was at hand than this, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat"?

Look again at the fraternal influences in a family group. What inestimable power, can a wise and virtuous Sister exert. Has she a brother prone to waywardness and passion? Her words may restrain his wanderings, her example subdue his anger. It can hardly fail, that a daily influence, mild, gentle, Christian in its character, will produce no effect on so near a relative. Do the brothers incline to seek their recreations abroad? Are the charms of merriment, of sensuality, or of questionable excitements and pleasures, stealing on the heart, and estranging it from God and duty, from purity and heaven? Now is the moment

for kind remonstrance, for affectionate counsel, and earnest entreaty. She, who employs these means, and adds to them all the attractions she can throw round their common home, may be sure that her efforts will not be lost. Let her persevere, and success, earlier or later, shall crown her toils and hopes. What power is there in her intercessions before Heaven, "Years have passed away," says the grateful brother, as his thoughts revert to his distant home, "and Heaven has prospered me. Often, when temptations have assailed me, should I have yielded to them, had not a still small voice have whispered, thy sister prays for thee."

"High above
The fret and tumult, and discordant jar
Of the base world, she led me, and the war
Of grosser passions, which she dreamed not of."

But there is yet another relation, which gives woman her chief power over the destinies of our race. It is that of the Mother. We have already spoken of this power, as affecting the intellect of children. But a far higher work is still to be accomplished. For if the mind alone be educated; if science and literature be all she impart to them, if their love of knowledge be not quickened and controlled by a spiritual love, it will be a vain possession. The culture of the religious affections, the developement of the sense of duty and of the entire moral nature, this is the great business of human life. And to whom has God entrusted the commencement of this solemn work? Who is to cherish the swelling bud, who to point the infant soul to its spiritual Father? On whom does it devolve to call forth the infant man? Where is the influence that shall keep the young heart from fatal wanderings and errors? It is the mother to whom we look, for the discharge of these momentous offices. It is not more certain that Providence designed her to supply the first wants of the animal nature, than it is that she must impart to her child its spiritual nutriment. If she neglect to do this, there remains no substitute, none to whom we can turn, to excite, purify and foster its immortal faculties. An irreligious mother! what an anomaly, what a monster, among things human, is she. A wicked woman is always one of the darkest spectacles this earth can exhibit. But if that woman be a parent, and give poison to her own offspring, who can exaggerate her faithlessness, her unnatural, may I not say, her inhuman qualities?

The influence of woman is felt beyond the circle of her own fireside, in the wellbeing of her Country. If this sex contribute so largely, as we have affirmed, to the progress of civilization and refinement, then can it be no little aid they afford, by their character and exertions, to the support of pure political institutions.

True, the fair hand of woman deposits no vote in the ballot box. She takes no part, at primary meetings, or on days of election, with the mass who place men in office. But is she therefore destitute of political power? No, she has the sacred right of petition. She may be heard, appealing to the legislative body for redress of the wrongs done her, or of the grievances she suffers. Question, as some may, the expediency of her ever exercising this privilege, she has still great influence, a far greater one than the exercise of this right can give her, over the destinies of her country. Think of the mother of Washington.

Peruse the biography of the wife of that sainted patriot. Study the character of the elder Mrs. Adams, of the wife of Hancock, and of the long list of females, who lived and toiled in the period of our Revolution. Could they do nothing,—did they accomplish little,—for this country? How many hearts were cheered in the Senate chamber, what courage was infused on the battle-field, by the mother, companion, sister, and daughter, among the noble race that then lived.

In these latter days, what is to give integrity to the statesman, purity to the patriot, and true glory to the nation? It must be done in part by woman. Let her be educated, and above all, let her educate herself, in intelligence, grace, and holiness, and I have no fear of conflicts abroad, or of perils at home. The little watchman, shut in the security of a glazed frame, does not more surely save the ship, amid darkness and storm, than does she, who at the quiet fireside, exerts the influence which she may for her country, on son, husband, and brother, by pointing out the path of political salvation.

The influence of woman is felt in the general interests of the Christian Religion. We have already remarked that she was a personal friend and servant of Christ, while he was on earth. Nor did her devotedness to his cause, terminate with his ascension to heaven. We read of “some of the chief women and the devout,” as among the earliest converts of the Apostles. Paul speaks of certain “women, which labored with him in the Gospel,” and he sends numerous special salutations to individual females, who had “helped him in the Lord;” shewing that this sex took a direct share in the promulgation of Christianity. They not only embraced it with their whole soul and strength, but they gave their influence, both remote and immediate, to induce others to participate in its blessings.

Their efforts have been seen in determining the general character of the Christian world. If any age has been peculiarly spiritual, or any people more than ordinarily devout, it was because woman was there true to the holiest impulses of her nature. Point me to the most prosperous era of the institutions of Christianity; shew me a sect, who honor the Sabbath, or who sustain most liberally the ministers of Christ, and I am confident that then and there the female sex will be found most active in defence of the holy day, and of sanctuary privileges.

Look at the Church of Christ. Who are they that confessed their Lord before men, in the early ages of the gospel? “Within a few years after Christ, the Christian martyrologies are full of the names of female sufferers, who, for Jesus' sake, went to the stake, with all the courage and inflexibility of apostles.”

Whence come the majority of church communicants? Let woman reply. She, who at first encountered danger and death, and who inspired man to do likewise, has always been prompt to profess her faith at the table of her Lord, and give her influence to the honor of his visible church. Had this work been left to the other sex, where had been now this goodly fellowship of avowed believers? Should woman ever forsake her Master, or shrink from bearing his name at the altar, it would portend gloom, decay, and desolation, to the fair fabric she now so devoutly upholds.

To the female sex we owe a large share of the benefits resulting from the present enlarged means and methods of religious education. Not only in the day school, and at the fireside, but in the Sunday school, we find this sex occupied in one of their most hallowed services, the training of the young. Difficulties occur in securing and retaining the aid of male teachers in the Sabbath school. The heart of man is not always so disengaged from the world, and so intent on the calls for a pious benevolence to the young, as to come cheerfully and punctually to this divine work. But our female teachers are prompt to assume, and unwearied in the discharge of, this function. What were the institution, without the spirit of woman operating on its vital principles, toiling and praying, and sacrificing herself, to save those "little ones" whom Jesus loves?

"Meekly ye forfeit to your mission kind
The rest of earthly Sabbaths.—Be your gain
A Sabbath without end, 'mid yon celestial plain."

Let me add, that the Benevolent Enterprizes which mark the train of Christianity, have received much of their support from woman. Previous to the coming of Christ, public charities were nearly unknown. Among the names of the disinterested women of the first century, who were "full of good works, and alms-deeds, which they did," stands that of Dorcas. Her example was not lost on the ages that followed. And in the Catholic church, the kind, self-denying labors of the "Sisters of Charity," are worthy of all commendation.

To whom, but to this sex, are we indebted for the sacred and sympathetic services rendered by the multiplied Benevolent Associations and Institutions of our own age? So long as the Orphan has a tongue to tell of her deeds, or the sick-bed of Poverty can show a gleam of gratitude, or the Seaman's heart shall beat and glow, they will testify, that it is woman, who is God's high-priest of mercy to the suffering. Legislation may appropriate its thousands for the Blind, the Dumb, and the Insane; but how poor were its consolations, did not she who best knows how to smooth the pillow for the aching head, and cheer the spirit in its heaviness, administer to each sufferer the public bounty? Who can estimate her influence in originating, and directing, in co-operation with man, and in giving its final efficacy to, every blessed charity, that springs from the soil of Christianity?

Such being the influence of woman on all the great interests of humanity, how should she exert it? Is there any peculiar inference to be drawn from the possession of this mighty power? No candid mind can deny that it involves responsibilities, corresponding precisely to its extent. To whom much is given, of them much is required. Were this sex of insignificant moment in the world, then might they plead for an exemption from its duties and obligations. But now the burden presses on them, and no individual can cast it lightly from herself.

In society, woman should ever bear with her a deep conviction of the power she there exercises. Her deportment should never be of that frivolous, or insipid character, which betrays no consciousness of a share in the dignity of our nature. She should carry to the social circle a sense of the value of human life, and a resolution to acquit herself as

becomes an intelligent and immortal being. A courteous, yet perfectly natural manner, a cultivated understanding, and pure morals, are the tribute she should lay on this altar.

Why should our approach to a lady be the signal for trifling and nonsense? How long shall there be circles of this sex, from which a man of sense must turn away with the caustic saying of Wallenstein,

“I cannot traffic in the trade of words
With that unreasoning sex.”?

When will the civilities of social life become, through her influence, something beside an exchange of heartless forms, or of self-seeking attentions? Precisely so soon, and so fast as woman shall determine to reject the empty adulation of fops and simpletons, to be commended only for what deserves praise, and to be entirely sincere and Christian, in the social interview, no less than by her own fireside. Until this take place, society, in fashionable circles, will be, as an authoress remarks, like “the brilliant assemblies of Paris, a collection of young men who have nothing to do, and young women who have nothing to say.”

The responsibility of woman extends widely through the world of Intellect. She is called to preside over schools for the nurture of the infant mind. Every child receives thus the impress of her taste and talents. Shall she come to this work, and daily pursue it, without a thoughtful preparation for her task? Is it for the mother to say, “I may read little or much, as I please. Of what consequence is the condition of my mind?” when she can hardly breathe on the germs before her, without either blighting their beauty, and checking their expansion, or shedding life, health, and eternal freshness, upon them?

Let no young lady disclaim for herself any lot or portion in those sober concerns. Hannah More had, at one time, more than a thousand children under her instruction. Others have recently followed in her steps. Every woman is, I maintain, by virtue of her sex, a teacher. There are now, or there sometime may be, minds subjected to her influence, over whose destinies, for weal or for woe, she will exert a fearful sway. Is it certain she will never be school-mistress, or mother, or guide and guardian to another? No, it is certain that, unless her path be strange, secluded, and anomalous, she will be either the architect, or destroyer of, or at least, a more than leaden weight on, some human intellect. Let her reflect on this fact, and conduct herself always in view of it.

At the fireside, what a sum of duties does her power impose? Here she wields a more than regal sceptre. Wisely did Boaz argue the excellence of Ruth, when he said, in reply to her modest question, “why have I found grace in thine eyes?” “It has fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law, since the death of thy husband.” Such domestic piety, a virtue that could sacrifice home, people, substance, and which tendered even life itself for a parent, was an earnest of the choicest worth. It formed

“A wreath that cannot fade, of flowers that bloom
With most success, when all beside decay.”

Of the confessed power of the mother, and the unrivalled claims of her children on her spiritual care, no language can speak too strongly, or even in adequate terms. From the hour when their first cry announces to her their utter helplessness, onward through the trials of childhood, and the crossing elements of youth, till they part from her charge,—no, this they never do,—but until she grasps their hand amid the chill of death, they draw from her, as a well-spring of life. What a question then is there to be asked, “Does she shed upon them an Eden-like fragrance? Is she a true mother?” Worlds of wellbeing hang on the answer.

In every domestic relation, the influence of woman is of transcendent concern. Let her measure the responsibilities that attach to her position. The faithful daughter, the kind sister, the disinterested inmate, no less than the parent, must habitually realize, that around that little spot, her home, she is distilling and must distill, either dews that fertilize the spirit, or night-damps which blast what they touch.

Consider the demands of her country upon woman. Sparta required her women to bear arms in war. Rome called on hers for the austere virtues of heathenism. But America justly anticipates in this sex a union of grace with power, intellectual cultivation sustained by moral and religious attainments. During the French Revolution, we are told that the wives and daughters of the celebrated artists gave their jewels to extinguish the national debt. Would that they had added the fairer gift of the Christian graces.

She who shapes so emphatically the destinies of home, should be aware of the calls of patriotism on her sex. I have read of a family in the West, in which the daily conversation of both sexes is, “What can I do for my country?” Rare as this example may be, I earnestly hope that, through a sense of her high obligations to her country, woman will everywhere emulate its spirit.

Is it not due for the rank she is allowed to hold in our republic? Released from the servitude of her sex, which prevails in so many foreign lands, and recognized as a partaker in the divinity of our nature, why should she sink into inaction? How, as if an angel spoke to her soul, should she rise and gird herself in the meek robes of righteousness, standing fast by the young, and inciting them to a lofty patriotism, quickening brother, husband and son, to public integrity, and calming the fierce spirit of political contention.

But how shall I describe the paramount necessity of woman's devotion to the interests of religion? Christianity regards her as a human being, equal in moral power to man, and accountable to the same God and Judge with him. Our religion has elevated her sex from Pagan degradation, and expects a commensurate return, in her superior virtue. Let her then first give her own soul to God, and then shew forth in her works the spirit of her Savior. By the study of the Scriptures; by establishing herself in a rational faith; by an humble profession of her belief in Jesus; by diligence in the Sunday instruction of the

young, and by a series of benevolent and charitable offices, among the sick and the needy, let her requite the love of God, as manifested in the Gospel of his Son.

How can one of this sex, constitutionally gifted with strong and enduring affections, sequestered from man's peculiar temptations, and summoned by unnumbered considerations, to meditate on heaven, be other than pious, other than a beacon-light on the rock-begirt coast of human life? What can she offer at the judgment-seat of Christ, if she have denied him on earth? To every young woman, I would say, shew

“That thou, in the prime of earliest youth
Wisely hast shunned the broad way and the green,
And with those few art eminently seen,
That labor up the hill of heavenly truth.”

* * * * * “That

Thy care is fixed, and zealously attends
To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of light.”

Chapter III. FEMALE EDUCATION.

The term lady. Its various significations. How should woman be educated. As a Human Being. For a Peculiar Sphere. The Persian Women. Hindoo Doctrine. Temperament and Susceptibilities. Madame de Stael's Opinion. Influence. Remark of Cato. Isabella's Influence. Should receive the Best Education. The Whole Nature to be Developed. Wordsworth's Description. The Future. To be Educated partly in Public. Good Intellectual training. Imparts Vigor. Good Taste. Knowledge. Secures good Mental Habits. Is Practical. Qualifies for Every Station. Inspires Virtue. Madame Neckar's View. Mrs. Jameson's. Conversation, an Art. Speak from your own Mind and Heart; of Principles, not Persons. Make Friendships Improving. Intimacies of the School-room. Self-education at Home, and in Private. Reading. Meditation. Extract from Coleridge.

The prophet Isaiah, when predicting the fate that awaited the renowned Babylon, uses the following striking expression: “And thou saidst, I shall be a lady forever; so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it.” The term lady, here employed in personifying a prosperous city, is one of various significations. Its etymology is Saxon, it being derived from a word meaning “loaf-giver;” which refers to the custom of females distributing bread among retainers, after the feasts which were held in the halls of barons. In later periods it has been used, under monarchical governments, to designate women of rank, the wives of knights, and the daughters of earls. It is used by the apostle John as a title of honor: “The elder unto the elect lady and her children.” We find it employed by the prophet in still another sense, that of dominion and power: “Thou shalt no more be called the lady of kingdoms.” In our modern use of it, there is perhaps a union of these two significations. I shall be a lady forever, would be now understood to mean, “I shall be always an object of supreme

attention, and of honor. To me will also belong all power, so that I can command the services of whom I will, and be free myself from all care and effort.”

Before proceeding to my main topic, let me premise, that the word woman is, in my judgment, an honorable appellation; and that, under our republican institutions especially, it should be regarded as no ordinary praise, to say of a female, she is a true woman. Better, far better aspire to deserve this name, than to repose indolently on a rank and a title deduced from monarchies, to say to thyself, “I shall be a lady forever.” But our present associations with the term lady being such as they are, and so many in every condition being jealous of their claims as ladies, I am compelled to adopt that appellation in order to guard against injurious misapprehensions.

Having spoken already of the capacities of this sex, and said something also of their Influence, we are now prepared to answer the great questions, “How should woman be educated? Under what training should she be placed? and what is the End of her tuition?”

First, I reply, she should be educated as a Human Being, possessed in common with man, of an intelligent, moral, and spiritual nature. Christianity recognizes no distinction of the sexes, so far as the broad principles of piety and virtue are concerned. Both are endowed with the same conscience. To each is allotted the same sphere of discipline; and unto both is the gospel of Christ, in its solemn appeals, its sacred encouragements, hopes and promises, and its fearful sanctions, alike addressed.

Contemplate this holy companionship, and how insignificant seem those barriers raised between the two sexes, in some ages and countries, by the pride, the caprice, and the despotism, of man. Are we destined to a common moral tribunal? Pitiful is his spirit, who, for any fancied or real, outward advantages, shall here and now, with the ancient philosopher, “thank God that he was born a man, and not a woman.” And contracted or misjudging must she be, who allows herself, even in the secrecy of her heart, to look on one of the opposite sex with the murmur, “O that Heaven had made me such a man.” In all that is noblest, purest, divinest, thou art a man. Defile not thy spirit with invidious prayers. Thank God that thou dost share with man all that dignifies him, all that is worthy the high aspirations of immortality. Educate thyself as a human being; unfold the godlike powers, which are thy joint possession with man; prize and improve thy blessed partnership in the bequest of Jesus, and thou shall rejoice evermore.

Nor is this view at variance with the position that to woman is assigned a peculiar sphere of duty and action. Her gifts differ, in some important respects, from those of man. Her station and relations in life are not his.

A second point then is this, that she should be so educated as to know her appropriate sphere. There are two errors in this respect, which she is liable to commit. She may undervalue her capacities, and imagine, that being able to acquire or perform little, nothing need be attempted; or that her influence is trifling, that she helps few and harms less, and therefore, whether she be ignorant or learned is of no consequence. Or she may pass to the opposite extreme, and believe herself all-competent, qualified by nature to

cope with man in every situation. This view will lead her to self-satisfaction, and of course prove unfriendly to her moral character, and to her spiritual culture. The affectation that has sometimes accompanied learning in females, has led not a few men to abhor the very name of a "literary lady."

A good education will so expand her mind and mature her judgment, as to rescue her from the dangers of these fatal extremes. A refined intellect will not consent, with the women of Persia, to dwell in the harem; nor subscribe to the Hindoo doctrine, that "the female who can read or write, is disqualified for domestic life, and is the heir of misfortunes." Neither will such a one aspire to the baubles of office, pant to join in harangues to the crowd, or to compete with man at the ballot-box.

Woman has rights; but how shall she truly understand them? Not through ignorance, not by being half-educated, or miseducated. It can be only through a liberal culture of all her faculties. So trained, she will ever bear in mind "that knowledge is not to elevate her above her station, nor to excuse her from the discharge of its most trifling duties. It is to teach her to know her place, and her functions, to make her content with the one, and willing to fulfil the other. It is to render her more useful, more humble, more happy."

"Such a woman will not seek distinction, and therefore she will not meet with disappointment. She will not be dependent on the world, and thus she will avoid its vexations. She will be happy in the fulfilment of religious and domestic duty, and in the profitable employment of her time."

Woman should be educated according to her Constitutional Temperament and Susceptibilities. If, in any respect, her endowments be, as they certainly are, superior to those of man, then let there be but a secondary degree of culture given to these faculties. Has she naturally a nicer perception of beauty, or propriety, a more correct taste than man, then do not bestow your chief care on the developement of this quality. Is she less gifted with strength of intellect, with calmness, or comprehensive understanding than man, employ the greater efforts to supply this defect. Let the solid preponderate over the merely ornamental. Plant not the pliant osier, but the firmer elm. Instil principles of severe reasoning, and form habits of connected thought. Is she rich in imagination? Madam de Stael tells us she is, that this is the chief of her faculties, and that "her sentiments are troubled by her fancies, and her actions dependent on her illusions." If this be so, then strengthen her judgment. Does she love God, inspire her with a boundless philanthropy. Thus will she be a true companion and undisputed equal of man. Excitableness and acute sensibility will be beautifully tempered in her by the spirit of sound knowledge and good sense. The whole character shall be fitly framed together in Christ and in life.

Let the education of woman be commensurate with her influence. Is it true that, in the complexion of social life, she is mistress of that which decides its hues? Then let her be trained to wield this fearful power with skill, with principle, and for the salvation of social man. Does she sometimes bear the sceptre of a nation's wellbeing in her hand? Cato said of his countrymen, "The Romans govern the world, but it is the women that

govern the Romans.” The discovery of this very continent testifies to the political influence of woman. Who favored the bold genius of Columbus? Do you say Ferdinand of Spain? I answer, it was Isabella, prompting her partner to the patronage he so reluctantly bestowed. Her influence unexerted, the Genoese mariner had never worn the laurel that now graces his brow. Will you leave this all-potent being illiterate, to rear sons debased by ignorance, and to become dupes of the demagogue?

Look at the Domestic circle. Not more surely does the empress of night illuminate and beautify the whole canopy of heaven, than does woman, if educated aright, irradiate, and give its fairest tints to, her own fireside. To leave her uncultivated, a victim to ignorance, prejudice, and the vices they entail, is to take home to our own bosoms a brood that will inflict pangs sharper than death. For the love and honor of our homes, let us encourage the most liberal culture of the female mind.

A more general diffusion of the privileges now enjoyed by a few only, would prevent the envy of others, no less than the vanity of the favored ones. It would assimilate the tastes, and multiply the sympathies, of the sexes; it would repress the arrogant sense of superiority in man, and convince him that woman was neither made for a household drudge, nor yet for an education of mere show and accomplishment. The useful would be seen to benefit her at least as much as man.

Some are fearful that women may become too learned, that they will then be discontent with their ordinary occupations, and become tinged with “blue,” and lose their native simplicity. Such should recollect that it is “shallow draughts” of knowledge, which “intoxicate the brain.” A truly learned person seldom affects superiority to others, or gives himself airs. I know of no better security against the tyranny of fashion, against caprice, *ennui*, and the languishments of indolence, than a well stored mind. She who best comprehends her nature and relations, will usually best adorn any and every sphere in which Providence may place her.

I am led here to say, that if a distinction must exist in the education of the sexes, that, which is deemed the weaker, should receive the best. Is it not palpably unjust to assign woman a low rank in the scale of intellect, when we do nothing to elevate her to an equality in this respect with man? Why educate the girl only in the graces of learning, while you give the boy tasks which try his utmost power? Are accomplishments all she needs to place her on a level with man? Yet how often do we see her

“Bred only * * * * *
* * * * * to sing, to dance,
To dress, and trouble the tongue, and roll the eye.”

Give her facilities for the full culture of her understanding and the highest faculties of her soul, and if she then fail, with more reason may you repeat the taunt about her mental inferiority to man.

This leads to the remark, that female education should embrace our whole nature, and not one portion of it. Why sacrifice the body to the improvement of the mind? It is a melancholy spectacle to witness the pale countenances and attenuated forms of many youth of this sex, as they issue from the school-room. How long shall consumption prey on so many at this age? When will American females imitate those of our fatherland, where sickness among this sex is almost as rare as perfect health is in our own country?

And why should the Moral powers be neglected as they are, and their culture postponed to that of the intellect? For manifold reasons these faculties should be simultaneously developed. The best interests of the mind demand it. Increase the moral energies, and you strengthen the intellect. Vice does not more corrupt the soul, than it darkens the judgment. A pure heart is a well-spring of clear thought. Again, virtue promotes mental composure. It confers inward peace; it secures that tranquillity, without which no science can be successfully pursued. Sin disturbs the reason. Putting evil for good leads one to substitute error in general for truth. Nero was said to be as deficient in taste, as he was cruel and wicked. The imagination of a profligate cannot be other than depraved. And then, as regards the great objects of life, do good, and you perceive these with more and more clearness. Thus is "light" always "sown to the righteous." Live in God, and you enjoy a perpetual sunshine.

Earnestly, therefore, would I plead with all occupied in female education, that while they encourage the study of the philosophy of life, they join with it the practice of its duties. Let knowledge be the herald of goodness. Let intellectual improvement conduct to active virtue, and sincere piety. Unite with literary excellence a devotion to home, to charity, to faith and prayer. I have now in mind a picture of moral purity surmounting skill in the divine tones of music, and the exercises of the pencil and the brush.—Virtuous maiden,

"Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
The freedom of a mountaineer;
A face with gladness overspread!
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred!
And heavenliness complete, that sways
Thy courtesies, about thee plays."

Of what avail indeed is the best literary education, if the heart be left barren and dead? Can any degree of knowledge compensate for a selfish spirit? Let envy, pride, jealousy, vanity, be nurtured by the studies that engage the mind of a young lady, and who can rejoice at her intellectual progress? Better have less learning, less mental power, than increase these possessions only to desecrate them in the service of iniquity. Ignorance is always a less evil than guilt. No amount of literary acquisitions can atone for the want of a spiritual mind, for frivolity, heartlessness, and irreligion. Let then the desire to be useful, to be holy and heavenly, crown and consecrate the education of woman. Let her ponder on wisdom and learning, and "lay all these things to her heart."

Female culture should always have reference to the Future. It should lead to a remembrance of the "latter end" of life's course. How much has been done, in this work,

for the present, for show and effect. Instead of rearing a thorough edifice, of sound materials, and on a firm foundation, the endeavor has too often been to build up in a day a specious structure. So has it been, that, when, the storms of life came on, the moral building was rocked by the winds, the rain pierced its thin covering; it rested on the sand; it fell, and great was its fall.

Here is a young school-girl. What is to be her situation on arriving at womanhood? Must she assume responsible stations? Have we here the germ of the conjugal tie, and the elements of maternal influence? How then can we forget these relations, and train a being fit only to bask in the beams of praise? Let not this be. Address now the same motives as you must in subsequent years. If there must then be self-denial, toil, and care, for the love of humanity, leave not the young heart, at this stage, to become steeped in selfishness. Let the glory of God and the good of man become now solemn and effective considerations.

We come here to speak naturally of the Place, the theatre, on which the young female must be educated.

It is to be done partly in public, at the schools instituted for this purpose. But I do not design to enter the halls of science and literature. I would rather, adverting here to the conclusion of her studies, confine myself to the use which a young lady should make of the education she has received at school. The advantages, now enjoyed by the youth of our land for mental culture, are rare. Parents are solicitous that their children should spend much time at the seats of learning. The daughters are receiving a far higher intellectual training than their mothers enjoyed. But is this all a sure good? Have the thousand rivulets of learning that now flow fast by our homes, sprung all from a crystal fount? Do they, in a word,—for that is the test question,—so penetrate the life and soul of the young, as to give them solid, practical excellence? I fear not.

Much is said about “finishing the education.” And finished, in one sense, is that of many females in this age. For, between their school culture and their subsequent character, there is as little connection as between the body and its dress. The school-room is left, and the garment, so beautiful to the eye, falls at once off. Into the centre and essence of the individual's being, the permanent character, nothing has passed. The books once studied are gladly thrown aside. Not a single motive is felt, to press forward in the noble work of self-education. Languages have been learned; but their great object, as keys to the study of foreign literatures, is left unanswered. History is a dull theme; philosophy is merged in the newest novel; dress and gossip, a little fancy needle-work, and a world of castle-building,—oh! it is sad; it is humiliating; would to God it were false. I speak to the wise, judge ye, and say if the picture has not some counterpart within your personal knowledge.

But how should the young lady improve the literary privileges of her early days? Let her not depend on the reputation of the teacher who instructed her, nor of the school, high though it be, which she last attended; nor yet again on the branches she has studied, however numerous or unusual they are. It is her own efforts, the attention, the

application, and the intellectual toil she passed through, on which alone she may reflect with satisfaction. What effect did all these studies produce on her mind? Is the tree laden with fruits, or did the profusion of blossoms fall barren to the earth?

Among the results of a good intellectual training is this; it gives vigor to all the powers of the mind. Memory is cultivated, but not at the expense of the understanding. Female pupils often shine in those branches which depend on mere memory, while they fail in those which task the reason. Geography and history are their delight; mathematics and metaphysics, their aversion. This should not be.

Woman is exposed, by her habitual seclusion, to many narrowing influences. She has little of that severe discipline of the mind to which man is daily subjected. His intercourse with the world is more extensive. His whole life is a school for the intellect, while she is restricted, to a great degree, within the limits of home. Her duties consist much of details; and small subjects engender contracted views. Therefore should her early days be devoted to studies that, in after life, will serve to counteract this evil tendency. It should be made a matter of principle with teachers and parents,—and the pupil must, of course, co-operate in their plan,—to enlarge her mental vision, to fortify her intellect against limited notions, and to strengthen her judgment. The atmosphere of the fireside is often close and oppressive; let her in her youth, breathe the free air of heaven. So will her mental constitution be invigorated and prepared for all coming duty.

If I may venture to recommend one study in particular, for its invigorating influence, I would name the practice of frequent composition. She who writes daily, whether it be in her journal, or essays on indifferent subjects, or even good letters, will, in addition to many other benefits of this practice, strengthen in herself greatly the habit of connected and profitable thought.

Study should form intellectual Tastes. To what purpose has the girl been placed all these years at school, if, when her privileges terminate, she has no fondness for study? Why lead her through the pleasant fields of learning, if, at the close of her walk, she is to possess no relish for these scenes? She has drank at “the wells of English undefiled,” and shall she now turn aside and imbibe the turbid waters of a corrupt and corrupting literature? Alas! that she should now prefer fiction and folly to the healthful writings of wise men. Deplorable is it, that her past lessons of instruction, so many and so faithful, must now, by her own indolence or perversion, prove to have fallen on her ear, like snow-flakes that melt on the ocean.

Another office of education at school is to impart Knowledge. It has been said that a woman must possess either beauty or knowledge to commend her to favorable notice in the world. The former is the rare gift of nature; while the latter may be always acquired. John Wilkes, who was as famous for his ugly face as for being universally popular in society, on being asked the secret of his popularity, answered, that “it took him but five minutes to talk away his face.” What a talisman might every young woman thus bear with her into society, would she early cultivate and store her mind. How should it be, that she who has spent years over grammar, cannot now write a letter to a friend without violating

its fundamental principles? I have read of one, who, when at a loss how to spell a word, put a dash under the doubtful letters, that if wrong, they might pass for a jest. Miserable subterfuge! What better is it to pass the most precious period of life in a school room, if such be the fruits, than to live uneducated and ignorant? Those are indeed the truly and unpardonably ignorant, who leave their studies with no accurate knowledge. Better is her lot, who was constrained to give her whole youth to manual labor, if she have a thirst for knowledge, and devote her leisure frugally to profitable reading.

The young lady should not finish her school occupations without securing good Habits of mind. Let her carry through life her present mental discipline. Let her accustom herself, if she read a book, to review and give an account to herself of its contents. Is she listening to a discourse? What a valuable means may it be made of intellectual improvement. Let her reflect on each topic, and on the order, the arrangement and connection, of the whole. After listening to an interesting conversation, let her recall, and strive to impress on her mind, every useful thought that was advanced. Indeed, her whole earthly experience may be so improved as to be a continual seminary of self-instruction and mental advancement. How infinitely better is it thus to construct a firm bridge across the entire river of life, than to trust to the frail bonds of ice, the work of a night, and to be dissolved before the next meridian sun.

This leads me to say that female education should be of a Practical description. The girl is destined to be a house-keeper, and yet she is, perhaps, doing almost nothing to prepare herself for that station. She thinks a knowledge of housewifery comes by instinct; and so it is that she cares more for her French and her piano than for those studies which would fit her for domestic duty. But in vain do this sex receive high degrees of culture, if they are still unable to apply their knowledge to any useful purpose. Why train the mind so sedulously, if it prove in the end but a leaden instrument, too flexible for service? Every woman should be trained for a variety of situations. Let her be educated for self-subsistence. What a miserable creature is she, if incompetent to obtain her own livelihood. That she is now placed in independent circumstances, affords no assurance that she will be always thus situated. Can any one forget the fearful reverses of fortune, especially in this land of pecuniary adventure and adversity? A lady, who had once rode in her own carriage, and lived in Eastern splendor, was seen, not long since, seated in Broadway, New York, selling nuts to the passengers. Talk we of independence! Who are free from bondage to others, and slavery to time and circumstance, but those who cannot earn their own subsistence?

Among the causes for gratitude, that woman now has, not the least is the circumstance that new avenues for female industry are constantly opening in this age. To some one at least of these, should every young lady direct her attention. No one should be entirely unskilled as a teacher, a housewife, and above all, in the use of the needle.

But let it not be imagined that I advocate the education of females for any one station or class of circumstances. Let her who is prepared to support herself by toil, either mental or manual, be also qualified, should Providence elevate her in life, to grace the highest social and intellectual circles. If there have been any single error in the training of this

sex, more prominent than all others, it has been this, that they were prepared for one station, or for one event only, and that every influence was deemed quite unimportant, save those which tended to qualify them for that station or relation alone.

But it was not surely for marriage *alone* that God fashioned this associate and moral equal of man. Neither was it for high life, or low life, or middling stations, for east, west, north, or south, that she was made in the sacred image of her Creator. For all these circumstances, if Providence so appoint, should she be prepared. In one word, her whole nature, physical, intellectual and spiritual, should be fully developed; then is she truly educated.

Especially should the school-room give personal Virtue. It should train the conscience, the heart and its affections aright, and guide to consistency of character. "Want of perseverance," says Madam Necker, "is the great fault of woman, in every thing, morals, attention to health, friendship, &c." Her intellect is cultivated too exclusively, in our times. It is to be feared that her education now gives her little moral energy. This is a grievous error. Instead of being more frail in body, and less firm in mind, or thorough in morals and piety, than in past ages, she should be endowed with new force of character. Amid the increased dangers of society, what is to protect her, and lift her from feebleness and degradation, if not personal character? Man is to be educated for a vigorous encounter with the world; in him the stronger qualities, tempered by sensibility and affection, should predominate. Woman should be prepared to co-operate with him in the station he may fill, not openly and directly, but by a wise, gentle, and steady, domestic influence. In her, love should be the ruling star; but that love will avail him comparatively little, unless joined to a well trained intellect, a cultivated mind, and sound judgment. Amid the darkness, and tempestuousness, and growing perils of these latter ages, she should be a Pharos-tower, giving light and life to tempted man. If her moral culture do not correspond to her literary acquirements, they will prove but dangerous weapons in the hand of the lawless. Catharine de Medici was renowned, like her family, for talent and learning. She possessed unbounded influence over her son, the prince. But the horrid massacre of St. Bartholomew, the work of her spirit, is sufficient to render her name as infamous as it is distinguished. Let the intellect of this sex continue to be highly cultivated. But let

"such respect
To woman's noiseless duties sweetly blend
And temper those high gifts, that every heart
That fears their splendor, loves their goodness too."

Mrs. Jameson inquires, and very properly, whether "where woman is idle and useless by privilege of her sex, a divinity, and an idol, a victim, or a toy, her position is not quite as lamentable, as false, as injurious to herself, and to all social progress, as where she is the drudge, slave and possession of man?"

Another scene for the education of woman lies in circles for Conversation. This is a pre-eminent means, not only of pleasure, but of improvement. It is a quickener of the

intellect, a purifier of the affections, and an instrument of heightening our spiritual aspirations. I doubt whether woman especially is not more indebted to this, than to all her other facilities, for mental and moral advancement.

But how shall it be made conducive to the highest possible good? It must be studied, as an art. A girl may as easily be taught to converse well, as to recite lessons in philosophy. Persons differ, in this talent, it is true, as regards fluency; but this is by no means essential to useful conversation. Good sense, a respectable education, and a pure heart, are the great requisitions. She who has these, cannot fail, with suitable efforts, of becoming agreeable and edifying in her discourse.

To give the utmost effect to your privileges in this respect, learn first the talent of listening to others. Never pass even a few moments with one skilled in this accomplishment, without earnest attention. You will thus not only gather knowledge, but observe how this great art may be practised. You will perceive that no affectation and no insincerity are needed to enable you to improve in this precious power. Simplicity, naturalness, a truthful air and manner are, indeed, more frequently the result of labor than their opposites. It is hard, in this world of artifice, to be perfectly artless.

To educate yourself in this talent, resolve, in the outset, to speak always from your own mind and your own heart. Nothing is more fatal to improvement than being the echo of other voices. Let your remarks be like the gentle stream from the hill-side, which spreads freshness and verdure on its banks. Better say a simple thing of your own than a wise one purloined from your neighbor. Regard this great principle, and you will grow in the gift of conversation, and you will also keep your soul unpolluted by guilt.

Adhere sacredly to the truth. Avoid exaggeration, the sin of the young and the ardent. Rather understate than exceed the facts of a case. This rule will save you from the two great vices of social intercourse, flattery, and detraction. It is right to tell another precisely what we think of his merits, if done discreetly. But to give him a better impression of our estimate of his character than the truth will warrant, is, although very common, a plain violation of the laws of God. Adhere to the truth, and you will always exhibit charity in your discourse. This central luminary will shine on your words with a noon-tide brightness. It will dispel the mists of scandal, and beautify, and write the law of kindness on, your lips.

Speak much of principles, and little of persons. You have enjoyed a good education, and why should you prefer the discussion of such beggarly topics as dress, or the private concerns of your neighbor, to those noble thoughts, which learning, morals, and religion, would always supply to your mind? Determine to carry with you childhood's innocence, and angel love, and you will find the field of topics spread out before you an illimitable harvest of good fruits.

Make your Friendships a means of intellectual and moral improvement. God has graciously given us this boon, as a burnisher of our existence:

“Nature, in zeal for human amity,
Denies or damps an undivided joy.
* * * Joy is an exchange;
Joy flies monopolists;
Delight intense is taken by rebound.”

The friendships of woman, from her being gifted with strong affections, exert a peculiar influence on her character and destiny. Therefore is it, that a young lady should choose her intimate associates with care. Let it not be accident, still less unhallowed gratifications, prejudice, pride, passion, folly, which form the basis of this holy structure. Where our friends can be selected, they should be those of attainments superior to our own, of pure principles, and virtuous habits.

The pursuits of the school-room afford opportunity for forming the closest friendships. The address of Helena to Hermia, is applicable to very many females who associate early in seminaries of learning:

“We, Hermia,
Have with our needles created both one flower;
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion;
Both warbling of one song, both in one key;
As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds,
Had been incorporate.”

Let the youthful female beware, in school and everywhere, of hasty preferences, of taking home to her inmost confidence the acquaintance of a day. Her own character is too precious to be exposed in heedless traffic. Purity and love, the loftiest powers of our nature, not time alone, but eternity also, should form the seal of her lasting friendships.

Educate yourself at home and in private. By fireside fidelity the soul is expanded and our being lifted toward God. View your relative connections as each a Heaven-sent teacher. Incline your ear to them, as if through their lips an oracle uttered its decrees in your hearing.

By your Reading, much may be accomplished toward correcting your taste, enlarging your intellectual vision, and sanctifying your spirit. Form now the habit of daily reading some volume with reference to your personal improvement. Let no engagement seriously interrupt this practice. Read the writings of your own sex. Woman takes up her pen, usually, from the promptings of sympathy and affection. The temple she builds to literature, may have an altar consecrated to reason, or to imagination; but it is love, a high and holy love, which she inscribes on its portals. Her works thus not only elevate the taste but amend the heart.

Woman is addicted to the eager perusal of works of fiction. I regard this fact as an indication of a want of her nature. Not, therefore, to eradicate but to control, and direct, and restrain, this propensity, would I make an endeavor. In the words of the afflicted

Lady Russell, used on the anniversary of her husband's execution, I would say, "I do not contend with nature, but keep her as innocent as I can." Select only such writings of this class as some judicious friend has recommended. Read poetry. If it be true poetry, it is the twin-sister of religion. It will exalt and ennoble your soul. Study history. From that you will draw unfailing draughts of knowledge and wisdom. Be familiar with good biography. Above all, make the Word of God your constant study. So will you be educated for every stage of your existence, and ripe clusters of virtues will adorn your life.

But louder than those of books are the praises of Meditation. Reflect on your reading. Let each line raise a rivulet on the bosom of your being; let there be in it no stagnant waters. Be active in mind; meditate on your daily experience, your prospects, your deficiencies, your progress, your hopes. Wouldst thou have peace in this world,

"From the soul itself must issue forth
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
Enveloping the earth;
And from the soul itself must there be sent
A sweet and powerful voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds, the life and element."

Wouldst thou enjoy peace in the interminable future, "lay these things to thy heart." Then shall thy inward beauties shine with a fadeless refulgence. All true power shall be given thee. Thou shalt be "a lady," not indeed of an earthly kingdom, but of that high realm, boundless as thy desires, and enduring as God.

Chapter IV. HOME.

Domestic virtues the glory of a country. Views taken of Home. The Spiritual one. Scripture females distinguished at home. The Filial relation. Burns' touching description. Daughters of Milton. The Father. The Mother. Mrs. Sigourney on the "living lost." The good Sister Wordsworth. The Teacher. Other Inmates. Domestics. Home friendly to the Virtues. Health. Industry. Order. Frugality. Noble sentiment of Lady Jane Grey. Gratitude. Disinterestedness. Elizabeth of England. Charities. Quietness. Spirituality. Piety at home the zest of Joys. It gilds the darkest cloud.

Wherein consists the true glory of a people? Their prosperity does not lie simply in outward abundance. It depends far more on the solid virtues and the Christian graces of the young in their midst. And these qualities appertain not only to our sons, in whom it is often imagined the whole strength at least of nations is concentrated. Our daughters likewise are concerned in the advancement of this high object. One of the sacred writers implores for his countrymen this blessing; "that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace." They must be "corner stones," lying at the very foundation of the social edifice, and therefore an essential part of its support. And to their

power must be added moral beauty. They are to be “polished after the similitude of” that most splendid of structures, “a palace.”

Observe also the relation through which the sex may afford this aid to their race. It is not petitioned by the writer referred to, that our women may become all eloquent orators; or be fitted to bear the sword, or sway the sceptre; nor yet that they may rival man in physical achievements; nor even is the prayer that they may be renowned for genius and intellect alone, or supremely. But to a far less conspicuous and imposing sphere are our thoughts directed by the Psalmist. It is to home, to “our daughters,” and through them to the domestic relations in general, that we are pointed for the elements of public prosperity. “Happy is that people,” among whom these are assiduously cherished. Happy are they, because a people “whose God is the Lord.”

What views are usually taken by the youthful female of her parental home? It has various aspects. To one it appears pre-eminently as the place in which she is to find the necessities, comforts, and, perhaps, luxuries, of life. The heads of the family are appointed to toil for her. At her feet must brothers and sisters lay the daily tribute of service. She exacts from each inmate all the attention that can be rendered to one born to command. She is, in one word, a household divinity.

Another regards her home as a scene for display. The furniture, the style, the outline, and the filling up, must be all for the eye of the visitor. If she consent to give her own hand to the work, the main motive is for fireside decorations.

A third is alive to the natural ties which bind her to one and another; but it is chiefly as a matter of sentiment, that she contemplates even the nearest and most sacred relations. Has she been absent for a season, how fervent are her salutations, on returning to her native spot. Does sickness assail a parent or a brother, and life seem exposed, what tears, what wringing of the hands, what uncontrolled wailings are heard. But the test of true love is not here. It is the personal sacrifices we make for another, the toil, self-denial, watchfulness and patient service we bestow on him, that reveal the sincerity and depth of our affection.

Still another class are those young women who esteem the great purpose of their home to be the furnishing all possible facilities for their literary instruction. If they attend school constantly and improve their time there, then they have a claim on all their connections to wait their bidding, and execute their mandates, in every interval of study. The whole being is thus absorbed in the intellect.

There remains one more view of the fireside, and that is the moral, spiritual, religious one. This I believe to be the grand figure on the canvass of domestic life. Every other should be subservient to this. It should stand forth with a commanding interest, and address us in a tone of authority. Our home may be welcome for the conveniences and comforts it affords. We may take a just pride in its external aspect. Our hearts are allowed to fix some of their affections on its objects. It is right that the young should seek earnestly the means of intellectual culture at the hands of parental care. But these are all

“lesser lights.” They can only borrow and reflect. There must be in the highest heaven a “greater light,” even the Sun of Righteousness, or life sinks beneath a darkness that may be felt.

The Scriptures assign this rank to the moral bearings of home. The patriarchs exhibited their fairest virtues in the private relations of life. Judaism was penetrated with a domestic spirit. The age of the wise man could furnish qualities, of which, in the book of Proverbs, we have an illustrious picture, in the character of a perfect matron and wife. Sarah, Rebecca, Ruth, Hannah, where was the scene of their glory? In home. Equally does the New Testament exalt the spiritual influence of the domestic relation. Who was the immortal Mary? The mother of Jesus. What gave Martha and the other Mary their renown in the gospel? They were sisters of Lazarus, and partly from their fidelity as such, were loved by their Master. She who cast the two mites into the treasury, among the rich the richest, was the more commended because a poor widow. Lydia, not only gave herself, by the baptismal seal, unto God, but honored the cause in her household. Thus does home blend its waters with the river of life. Fidelity to its trusts is an inseparable ingredient in the cup of salvation.

Therefore would I conjure the youthful female to value her domestic bonds as a means of moral culture, and never, under sunny skies, or beneath clouds that lower, to lose sight of this use of them. She should carry into the detail of her daily walk religious principle. Not the slightest act should she perform, which is at war with her spiritual culture. Love, duty, trust, these may enter into the very soul of her being. Let her place them before her, and pursue them steadily, and she shall become the “corner-stone” of her family, “polished” with a divine lustre.

But, to render a greater aid to her who desires and wills domestic excellence, let us now speak of the particular relations of home, and their natural, consequent claims on the young of her sex.

The filial relation is replete with moral incentives. To both parents a daughter is indebted beyond even the powers of requital usually granted her sex. From the hour of her birth up to the present moment she has been to them an object of unceasing thought, care, and solicitude. The little being, over whom, as she graced the cradle, they hung with the deepest joy, spoke to their hearts the more eloquently, by her very inability to tell of her wants, by her utter helplessness. No labor was spared, no sacrifice withheld, did they promise to advance her happiness. A few weeks pass, and she is radiant with smiles, the emanations of light and love; but they are smiles effaced often by tears, and for these, the parent cannot rest till they dry on the cheek. And soon her age exhibits character, dispositions, propensities. How anxiously is their earliest developement observed. What plans are devised, what efforts employed, what prayers nightly ascend, that she may prove an heir of grace and godliness.

“The parent-pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request
That He who stills the raven's clam'rous nest,

And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
Would, in the way his wisdom sees the best,
For them, and for their little ones provide;
But chiefly, in their hearts with *grace divine* preside.”

That father, with what meditations, and watchfulness, and alternate hopes and fears has his soul been visited, as he looked on this daughter. How has his daily toil been cheered by the anticipation that its fruits would afford means to meet her wants, to educate her well, and to furnish resources for supplying the outward and inward necessities of her responsible age.

Can she love, respect, and honor this benefactor? Can she avoid it rather, who does not ask? I know how much has been written, in romances, of the devotedness of daughters; and yet the warmest coloring of this sentiment seems never beyond parental desert. There are scenes in which this truth is strikingly illustrated. It was a severe task for the daughters of Milton to read to their blind parent, languages sealed to their own understanding; but was it not the discharge of a simple duty? We are struck with the Roman instance of filial piety, in which the life-blood was shed by tender woman to save a father. Yet when should one meet a voluntary death, if not for the redemption of a parent?

Let the daughter confide then in her father, and seek so to demean herself that his eye might dwell fondly on the very secrets of her heart. Let her refer to his opinions, consult his wishes, and conform to his tastes and habits. His reception as he returns at evening to his fireside, should not consist in ceaseless importunities, nor of aught which terminates in unreasonable regards for self. How much better were a studious concern for his wants, and the bestowal of some act of delicate attention.

His pecuniary circumstances should be thoughtfully considered. Perhaps he is destitute. Then do not press him with calls he is pained, but yet compelled, to deny you. It may be that his fortune has recently been marred. Consider this, and be willing to relinquish personal gratifications and adapt your feelings and desires to his present situation. Or he is thrown, perhaps, on the bed of sickness. Manifest now the reality of that affection you professed for him in his health. Delight to bathe his fevered brow, and to perform those unnumbered services, for which Providence has qualified your sex.

In his old age be still more devoted. Point out to his failing vision the path he would tread. Let him feel that you are striving to solace his declining years, and to requite that love which was shed upon you, the earliest moment of your consciousness. Can you do less for him, now that desire fails and the grasshopper has become a burden and he must soon go to his long home? Of you may it be said,

“Amid the giddy round of prosperous years,
The birth of new affections, and the joys
That cluster round earth's favorites, there walked
Still at her side, the image of her Sire.”

But, if all this be due to a father, how shall we describe the claims of a mother? To this parent the daughter owes her very being. These are the arms which never tired of supporting her in infancy. For her the step was light, the voice hushed, the breath almost suppressed. To minister to her wants the social visit was forborne, and home made the one thought, until the cheek grew pale, and the eye dim for sleeplessness. The sickness of her daughter poured new waters into a cup, that seemed already filled with cares. To clothe and adorn her, every personal comfort was cheerfully foregone. That she might enjoy the best mental and moral culture, this mother discharged daily those services, which the domestic walk daily demands.

In sorrow there is no bosom that consoles like a mother's. Into her ear the child pours its every trial. When the world censures, she will soothe. Let injury, degradation, distress come upon us, let us dread the eye of others, or, through guilt, shrink timidly from them, we flee to her for refuge. This affection is bestowed on the daughter with a fulness and a permanence, which she cannot comprehend, and remain still insensible.

In view of her relation, the true daughter will always sympathize with, and aid, this her greatest earthly benefactor. It will be her study, not to throw every burden on her spirit, because she is willing to bear them. No, her point of view will be the opposite of this. "How much," she will ask, "can I do for my mother? Is there nothing in which I can relieve her from her toils? The utmost I can render her is but a meagre compensation for her countless sacrifices for my sake."

The daughter may not only think of those domestic duties which require manual efforts, but in the general education of her brothers or sisters, she may prove a powerful ally with their natural teacher. Having composed the infant to rest, let its childhood continue to be her care. She can aid it to lisp the first accents of its native tongue. In the rudiments of knowledge she may be an efficient instructor. For this work her age peculiarly qualifies her. As the breath of spring quickens the tender bud, so let her youthful spirit infuse vigor into these minds yet younger than her own.

For the sake of a mother's heart and hopes she should strive for a spotless character. What joy and pride will her obedience to Jesus impart. Let her know, that the virtue of her daughter is dear to a parent as life itself. What a weight is thrown on that bosom, if she fail of goodness. Death is grievous:

"But ye, who for the *living* lost
That agony in secret bear,
Who shall with soothing words address
The strength of your despair?"

Weigh well the influence you exert on this parent. God has ordained that the child should re-act on the parent in his riper years, that the daughter should become in her turn the counsellor and the confidant of her mother. Let her wield this power with wisdom and in purity of conscience. Never take advantage of your influence, to secure a sanction of the wrong. But lead your mother, and aspire yourself, toward perfect integrity, and the

sinlessness of heaven. Let the portraiture of a holy life be drawn on the canvass before you; then will you enjoy the sweet anticipation, as your tears bedew her grave,

“My mother—where thou art gone
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more.”

If the claims of a parent be such as I have described, then no defect of character, still less any outward deficiency, can justify the daughter in a disregard of father or mother. Wealth does not increase the filial obligations, neither does poverty diminish them. Honors, dress, fashion did not lay the foundation of your duty to love and respect your parents. Let them then live in obscurity, or be constrained to wear plain apparel, or have unfashionable furniture, or lack graceful manners, none the less are you solemnly bound to honor and comfort them.

There is one circumstance, especially, which leads some young ladies cruelly to neglect their parents, and yet with no reason whatever. The daughter has received a better education than they; she has spent a few months, perhaps, at a boarding school, and learnt music and French. But what are these, and all her accomplishments worth, if they have but taught her to despise or neglect her truest benefactors? Can she cast off, in their old age, those who toiled and bore unnumbered burdens, to procure for her these literary privileges? If she do this, then, woe to her; and woe to the unfortunate being, to whom she may be joined as a partner. For no sin does the curse of Heaven more surely descend on one, let it be delayed as it may, than for unkindness to parents.

Nor does their guilt dissolve the bonds of filial duty. Every offender deserves more our pity than our cruelty or wrath. Who then should be commiserated and watched over, whose evil should we seek to overcome with good, and whose heart to melt by love, if not an offending parent's?

Another relation, happily suited to promote female virtue, is that of Brother and Sister. Here are those united, not only by nature, but by all those sacred and dear ties which belong to the associations of childhood. Theirs is not the conjunction for an evening of planets, whose orbits lie all apart; but it is a union that dates from the earliest moments of life. And it is one as pure as it is primitive, giving scope for unalterable attachment, and deep joys, for kind offices and sincere virtue.

But let it not be imagined that all these fruits spring from the soil spontaneously. Not of necessity is a sister happy in this relation; and the reason is apparent. She is not coerced into sympathy, and self-sacrifice, and devotedness to her brothers, and without these qualities no outward connection brings peace and pleasure to the heart. It must be her study to devise means, frame plans,—and to execute them faithfully,—of promoting their good. Far will it be from accomplishing this most desirable end, to make protestations of her love, when prompted by impulse. Her actions must be the still, small voice that conveys the rich tones of her heart. If she refuse to enter into the schemes and prospects

of a brother, and to render him those minute services, which both indicate affection and prompt to it, she will regard this relation as a dull thing. It may be but a source of alienated feelings, of vexation and strife.

Especially must the sister guard well the avenues to moral danger, which beset her brothers. Let her strive to make home attractive in their sight. Is she competent in music, she has here a means of ever-new interest, and of affording that variety of recreation for which the young man thirsts. By pleasant conversation, and by reading occasionally a volume to a brother, she may bind him to the fireside. Does he desire to pass the evening abroad? Better join him, even at some cost of personal ease, or of taste, than leave him exposed to seek places of equivocal character. Be his confidant, his adviser, constant in demonstrations of kindness. Perhaps he is aiding your progress in the walks of intellect. How can you so well requite his care, as by a steady emanation of moral and spiritual light? A sister's love is often an amulet to the subsequent character of a circle of brothers. She whispers to them, when on the brink of temptation. Her form is ever present. Their thoughts wander often to their childhood's home, and in secret self-communion the sentiment re-visits the heart,

“For I, methinks, till I grow old
As fair before me shall behold,
As I do now, the cottage small,
The lake, the wood, the waterfall;
And thee, the Spirit of them all.”

The services of a sister are peculiarly to be appreciated by the other sisters. If they comprehend most fully the joys of one another, so do they those sorrows, with which no “stranger intermeddleth.” They, who have shared one mind and one heart, from their early days, can comprehend those sufferings which not even the parent, from her elder age, entirely participates. In sickness they may be true angels of mercy to each other. And in those trials, to which their condition through life subjects them, no sympathy is dearer than a sister's.

How unnatural is a deficiency in these holy dispositions. Can it be that the one is ever an object of envy, or jealousy, or ever regarded with distrust, coldness, or still more with hostility, by the other? Let them beware of the first approach of a contentious spirit. Their manners,—as indeed those of all in a family circle,—should never be rude, or careless, but ordered with watchfulness, delicacy, and propriety. The manner between sisters may be such as of itself to enshrine and secure their mutual kindness. It may too, by negligence, become a provoker of dissension and enmity. The fairest of maidens, is not she whose cheek mantles in beauty; but she whose gentle, Christian, courteous, carriage with brother and sister, radiates a perpetual moral beauty.

The eldest of a band of sisters is by nature appointed to teach, intellectually and spiritually, those of her circle younger than herself. How can she so well fulfil all righteousness in the domestic sphere, as by cheerfully sharing with her mother this office? Her age and experience qualify her to instruct the mind and train the affections,

and tempt forth the virtues, of pliant childhood. Neither sister nor brother can estimate, in this life, all they owe to such a teacher. Eternity will reveal the extent, and complete the reward, of these sacred services.

The young woman may be useful, still farther, to all the Inmates of her father's dwelling. Not one of the number can witness her daily deportment, without receiving from it some impression of her character. And now what shall this be? Do all testify that she lives unto others, that the noble spirit of the gospel is inhaled, as the life-breath of her moral being? She has constant opportunities to deny herself for the sake of some member of the household. Does she seek, or does she shun, such opportunities?

It is not the parent alone, who has demands on her kind consideration. Nor yet is this duty restricted by the fraternal bond. Her remote relations should be sedulously regarded. Let me add that, if her situation be a favored one, her poorer relations should be objects of thought and attention. How ungrateful for her own blessings were she,—and how forgetful, that soon she also may experience the buffetings of fortune,—did she treat such a relation with negligence, or with a haughty, condescending, patronizing, which is often a heart-lacerating, attention.

Why should a visitor be despised because her age, or manners, or dress are not perfectly agreeable? Woman has been celebrated by travellers for her universal hospitality. Let it not be strangers alone, and these the learned and prosperous, who enjoy her smiles. All, who come beneath a father's roof, should be made to feel that the daughters are Christian ladies.

Nor should Domestics fail of receiving a respectful and generous treatment from the young females of the family. They are endowed with the same nature, body and mind, as ourselves. Why then demand of them tasks, which only the mere animal can sustain? We should strive to assist ourselves, for their sake, no less than our own. Spare them in their sickness. Speak to them always in a tone of gentleness. If an overbearing manner in the head of a family be hard to meet, how must it strike a domestic, when coming from the younger members? Above all, provide something for the mental, moral, and religious, good of the domestic. Can you not lend her a volume, or read aloud to her yourself? Can you not, occasionally at least, facilitate her attendance at church? Remember you must meet this being at the common judgment-seat of Christ; and let this thought pervade your whole manner toward her.

Having contemplated a part of the duties growing out of special domestic relations, let us now advert to a few of the prominent moral virtues, for whose culture home is peculiarly congenial.

I begin with what some may regard as hardly to be dignified with the name of duty. But if Health be essential to happiness, and the basis,—as it doubtless is,—of several Christian qualities, who shall deny the sacred title of duty, to the care of the physical system? Whence proceed that morbid sensitiveness, that sickly sentimentalism, and that puny selfishness, which sometimes mark the delicate woman? They spring from ill health; and

while no means are employed to remove the root of these moral evils, in vain will the branches of each month or each day of her life be pruned diligently away. If there be no muscular energy the nerves become irritable, and the temper a source of perpetual disquiet, not only to one's self, but to every associate in the household.

It is therefore a duty of the young woman, for health's sake, not to allow a kind mother to become her waiting maid, but to exert herself in the performance of domestic, manual services. If she permit the needle to engross those hours, a part of which should be sacredly devoted to physical exercise, then let her know that God is thereby dishonored; for laws, which he thought worthy to establish, are, by her negligence, daily and directly violated.

Home is a moral school for the acquisition of habits of Industry. It is a singular fact that, while every young man is trained to a regular occupation,—even the sons of the wealthiest are so,—and to have no business or calling is, with this sex, deemed a reproach, young ladies are, in some circles, not only excused in indolence, but regarded as disgraced, if they are industrious and useful. Is this a pure state of society? Are not all who thus judge, and all who thus live, sadly deluded?

God has wedded industry and happiness, and ordained that they shall never be divorced. Idleness corrodes the mental faculties, and thus causes depression and gloom. It is the disturber of conscience; for nothing makes us so miserable, as the thought that we are wasting our lives, and are drones in society. Blessed are the poor; for they know the sweets of toil. Pitiably are the rich, if their treasures generate a selfish indolence.

Equally true is it that diligence is indissolubly bound to virtue. The mind, when unoccupied by profitable topics, roams on forbidden ground. Folded arms are accompanied by a distempered imagination. The tongue of the idle often setteth a world on fire; for scandal and gossip vegetate to rankness in the garden of sloth. The degradation, therefore, is not on the side of work. Be not ashamed to labor; for it is Heaven's decree that all should labor. Conceal not your industry. It is honorable, and honored by all good minds. In a republic especially, where the follies of caste should never enter, let woman, if she must glory, glory in being scrupulously devoted to some useful occupation. So living, she will find grace and goodness attend on her steps.

Where is the habit of order better acquired, than amid the routine of a well arranged household? In what school can a girl so well learn lessons of energy and firmness, as in that where she relieves a mother more and more, as her ability increases, of the charge of her family? Neatness is of primary importance. The care of a brother's linen, or even so humble a teacher as the duster, may inculcate this virtue. Let her, who prizes cheerfulness aright, know that never does she sing lullaby to an infant sister, or act as a peace-maker between two contentious brothers, without making music in her own heart.

At the period of my writing no quality is more loudly commended than frugality. It should always be encouraged, for its Christian influences. She, who is prodigal of her father's possessions, is seldom mindful of the calls of charity, or marked by propriety of

dress, and the subordination of the appetites. I have elsewhere spoken of habits of industry as a preparation for reverses of fortune; but were a young lady perfectly assured of pecuniary independence through life, for the sake of her own character, she should be diligent and frugal. Let her expend freely for her mental culture, and devote large sums rather to the relief of the needy, than to selfish indulgences. She who belongs to the mass in this country, removed alike from the extremes of wealth and poverty, can never with impunity allow herself in habits of extravagance. This thought should be kept daily in mind, as she pursues the round of domestic duty. The wardrobe and the table constantly suggest it.

The duties of the fireside are friendly to Contentment. Why are females so often restless and disquieted at their own abode? Why does ennui prey on their spirits, save when some visit or visitor is in prospect? How should it be, that daughters, blest as those of America now are, should pant for the excitements of a round of public pleasures? Providence designed our institutions for the promotion of woman's content and peace, no less than for that of man. Her hearth-stone was intended to be dear to her soul. She, who takes right views of herself and her duties, will ever find it so.

Here is an individual, who is disturbed by ambition. Her own little family circle is too narrow a sphere for her. But she mistakes the springs of content. Let her know that the wreath she wears should rest on her heart. The reply of the illustrious Lady Jane Grey, to those who informed her that her father had left her the crown of England, is worthy of her sex. "I am not so young, nor so little read in the smiles of fortune, to suffer myself to be taken by them. My liberty is better than the chain you proffer me, with what precious stones soever it may be adorned, or of what gold soever framed;—if you love me sincerely and in good earnest, you will rather wish me a secure and quiet fortune, though mean, than an exalted condition, exposed to the wind and followed by some dismal fall." Her melancholy fate, which occurred within ten days from the utterance of this language, gave a new and sad proof of her rare sagaciousness.

She who is faithful in the domestic walk, enjoys singular opportunities for the exercise of Gratitude. Not only may she, by her assiduous attentions, partially requite a mother's services, but she can thus express her grateful sense of the superior elevation now allotted her sex. At the table and the fireside she may cause man to bear witness to, and rejoice in, the use she is making of her increased privileges. Here may she describe, in Christian colors, the much sought "line of beauty."

Our country has done for her what Greece and Rome proudly denied her sex. It has conferred on her the blessings of education, equality of companionship with man, new means of benevolence, and the pledge of new spheres of action, so far as nature qualifies her, and the paramount claims of undeniable duty shall permit. What returns shall she make? Her country asks but one. Fresh zeal in self-tuition and in training those subject to her charge, for domestic fidelity, for true citizenship, and for immortal virtue and blessedness.

Another moral aspect of home, to be regarded by woman, is that it affords room for the practice of habitual Disinterestedness. A selfish man is an object of painful contemplation. How much more is this defect to be deplored in woman. She, whose nature, so ardent and susceptible, prompts to an almost instinctive kindness, cannot fail in this quality, without shedding a blight on her entire character.

But designate a female insulated by circumstances from the usual family connections, uninterested in domestic duties, and how often do you see one destitute of sympathy and an expansive benevolence. Elizabeth of England had no love of home; and what do we hear of her? That she had a lion-like port; but woman-like, Christian-like, humane, she certainly was not. She passed through life, it is said, without a single friend.

She who performs the domestic duties aright, will find time for, as she must have calls and incentives to, Charitable services. The Sunday school is a sphere in which her fireside virtues prepare her to instruct. Teaching in general accords beautifully with the inspirations of home. Every female should be an intellectual and moral guardian to some portion of the young around her. In bestowing of her substance, and especially of her personal attentions, on the sick and the poor, she will find all she has done of good at home an invaluable prompter and aid. For the sake, therefore, of others, as a social and responsible being, let the flame she would support on the public altar be kindled from the vestal fire of the domestic one.

Again, what purity would it infuse into her Friendships, did the young maiden love first and serve best her own kindred. Let her deep affections be developed by fireside fidelity, and how may she expend, of these heart-gathered riches, on the friends she is making of her own sex. What a pledge has she given too of constancy in every new relation she may form.

Piety at home is friendly to that Quietness which is the “work of righteousness, and its effect” also. She is the true gentlewoman, who nurtures most faithfully in herself the calm virtues of the domestic walk. Heaven is a tranquil abode; let the soul be attuned for its harmonies by the quiet measures of fireside melody.

I close by saying, that in the family we may best cultivate a Christian Spirituality. There may self-communion be enjoyed. There too can we indulge in the perusal of those writings, which invigorate our faith, and give a firmer tone to our religious sentiments and our moral principles and habits. Be frugal of your moments, and each day you will redeem the hour for this duty, which God and the future demand. Commune habitually with that Being, whose countenance beams brightly on our dwellings. It is morning; trust not yourself to the trials and temptations before you, without commending yourself to your Immortal Guardian. It is evening; enter the sanctuary of the Holiest,

“And take the thought of this calm vesper time,
With its low murmuring sounds and silvery light,
On through the dark days fading from their prime,
As a sweet dew to keep your soul from blight.”

To all your literary acquisitions, and to every accomplishment, as a relative and a friend, add piety at home. That shall be an ornament of grace to thy neck. If God prosper your domestic ties, piety will give fresh zest to every homefelt joy. And should He call you to those trials, disappointments, and sorrows, of which, when they come on a household, woman must drink the dregs of the cup, how will you sustain them, without the love of God in your heart? Make Him your early trust, and He will gild the darkest cloud, with a ray of that mercy, which falls never so welcome as on the stricken heart.

“Earth may forsake—oh! happy to have given,
The unbroken heart's first fragrance unto Heaven.”

Chapter V. SOCIETY.

Dangers on entering Society. Of cherishing a Passion for it.
Sensitiveness to Public Opinion. Dress; Miss Sedgwick's view of it; connected with virtues. Mrs. Hancock. Exposure of Health. Affectation; of extreme sensibility; of insensibility.
Conversation for Effect. Entertainments. Nominal Morality. Two guards, Moral Independence, and Ingenuousness. Dangers in regard to your own Sex. Envy. The Swiss sisters. Jealousy. Detraction. Ridicule. Flattery. Cultivate Gentleness. Dr. Bowring in regard to Ladies in the East. Kind Feelings. “The art of being Pleased.”
Good Sense. Good Taste. Amusements. A holy Purpose.

We spoke, in the preceding chapter, of the paramount demands of home on the youthful female. This was represented as the central luminary of life. We are led naturally, in this place, to note those influences adverse to domestic piety. There are planets, in the moral heaven of woman, whose orbits are so eccentric, that their motions are of fearful import to her heart. When she enters society, an equal among elders, it is a trying exigency; a crisis then occurs in her character. Her temptations are numerous, while her moral energy is usually less decided than at subsequent periods.

Among the perils appertaining to this stage, of a general description, I name, first,

That of cherishing a Passion for Society, to the neglect of domestic duty. To one issuing from an ordinary light, into the broad glare of the sun, there is danger that the vision may suffer. How often has she, who might have graced her home through all coming years, had she retained her first love of it, failed and fallen from this height, by being overpowered by the dazzling charms of a round of new pleasures. In vain has a brother, distant from home, entreated that she continue a sisterly correspondence. To no purpose has the gentle voice of a mother been at length raised against her dissipating course. The spell of a sorcerer is upon her. She is a doomed woman; there, in the gay world, fluttering, perhaps the admired of all admirers. Her own hearth-stone is deserted; and what must we anticipate, should she be placed at the head of a new household?

Another exposure, always to be feared in society, arises from the sensitiveness of woman to Public Opinion. In our country this influence brings danger and evil to both sexes. The language of Cecil, if true of London, is more so of America. "Doing as others do is the prevalent principle," he affirms, "of the present female character. This,—so far as it avails with man or woman,—is the ruin, death, and grave of all that is noble, and virtuous, and praiseworthy." An inordinate desire to please every one is surely a snare to integrity and purity of character.

But who so tempted, in this respect, as a young, dependant, and almost helpless, female? Such are the customs of society, that woman is placed beneath the protection of man. A consciousness of this position cannot fail to awaken a strong desire for his favor. This sentiment, always active, will have a superadded sway over one just entering the path of social life. In future days she will gain, perhaps, new confidence in herself, and rely more on her inward resources, while in the world. But now, she must lean much upon others, and will, almost insensibly, conform unduly to their wishes and practices. Let a guard be early stationed at this post of peril.

In regard to her Dress, the young woman is liable to subject herself completely to that form of public opinion termed fashion. This power, elsewhere an idol, seems in the realm of dress a very Moloch. How often are our children cast into its fiery arms, and the cries of the victim, or rather the cries of duty, and reason, drowned by the harsh music of the world.

Not only at evening parties, in the streets, and at Lectures, but in the very house of God, you shall see the dominion of this tyrant. I quote, on this topic, an eminent female writer of our country. "From your youth upwards you are accustomed to hear such remarks as follow: 'Did you observe Mrs. M.'s dress last Sunday? She must have got it from France; it was something so out of the common way, I could not take my eyes off from her all church time.' Another wore some article so old, or ill-fashioned, as to be unfit to be seen at church. A third looked so ugly in black that she 'must detest going into mourning.'"
Now is not all this unworthy a rational and immortal being? Shall even the sanctuary be profaned by this polluting intruder? It is only our familiarity with such scenes, that prevents our shedding angel tears over this sin.

Why should it concern us, that Paris is glittering with some new token of her passion for outward adorning? It is sad to see the devotion of this young republic to the customs and follies of the old world. The gardener tells us, that a tree or a flower, unless imported from abroad, has almost no value in the sight of our boasted horticulturists. Let us reform this spirit of servitude, and, repair to our own fields and forests for specimens of beauty. Let the good sense and the good taste of the American woman, shew to the nations abroad, that we will not servilely depend upon them, for every turn of a collar, or form of a bonnet. Had we more of "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," yes, a quiet, contented, and Christian spirit, we should devise for ourselves meet fashions and modes of apparel.

My reason for dwelling on this subject is, that it has important Moral relations. I do not deny that dress may be properly regarded, both from a reasonable conformity to custom, and as an expression of the sense of beauty. Nay, I believe it may minister to several of the virtues. Neatness, economy and purity, rank high in the Christian scale of attainments, and all these are promoted by propriety of dress. It is indeed a good index of one's character. Modesty and simplicity, those prime moral qualities, are very often manifested by the mere materials, or the construction, or adjustment, of the dress. Let it never, therefore, be viewed as a matter of indifference. Still less should a lady excuse herself in negligence in this respect, even for the care of her family, or the culture of her mind. Least of all should she affect a total unconcern about dress. The wife of John Hancock was remarkable, to the close of her life, for her attention to the neatness and beauty of her apparel. "I will never forgive," said she, "a young girl who does not dress to please, nor one who seems pleased with her dress." Literary ladies are sometimes strangely negligent in this respect. They may imagine that carelessness about personal appearances will be taken for a proof of genius. But men do not thus judge. On the contrary, they regard her as truly great, who is eminent for learning and talents, and at the same time not unmindful of dress and manners.

The sin of this matter lies in a breathless devotion to outward adorning. This is fatal to the inward and Christian graces. She who foregoes a reasonable regard to economy, for the sake of dress, is decidedly culpable. We are told that "a collection of three hundred and fifty pounds was once made for the celebrated Cuzzona, to save her from absolute want; but that she no sooner got the money than she laid out two hundred pounds of it in the purchase of a shell cap, which was just then in fashion!" Something of the same prodigality is often exhibited, only on a smaller scale. She who thinks more of her apparel than of her language, more of adopting the latest fashion than of conversing with intelligence, and demeaning herself as becomes a disciple of Jesus, must beware of her moral exposure.

Let it not be conceived, that whatever of error woman exhibits in her attachment to fashion is to be charged on her sex alone. The other sex have, in too many instances, extolled and idolized foreign modes of dress. It has been to gratify man,—and he knew the disposition that prompted it,—that such folly and excess have been shown in her apparel. Yet will I say that it is not so with us all; few, very few of our sex are propitiated by an extravagant care for fashions. Most men are pained by the attenuated forms and pale countenances of those, who are slaves to every new mode of dress. They prefer the bloom of health, and the evidences of good taste, good sense, purity and propriety, seen in a well-dressed female, to the caricatures sanctioned only by the name of some foreign city.

The care of a young lady's health is another interest affected much by her entrance into society. The little girl is a picture of bloom and buoyancy. And why? Because fashion permits her to sport in the freedom of nature. The laws of God are allowed, in her case, to be so regarded as to secure her health. But for our young lady, it were rude and disreputable in her to indulge in those bodily exercises essential to her physical wellbeing.

There is much ignorance, I am aware, among this sex, in reference to the conditions of health. Yet more are they who sin in this respect against light, than in the absence of it. Is it not known that the exposure of the feet to wet and cold, in shoes genteelly thin, may induce disease? Can it be, that the multitudes, who compress the lungs and chest into half the space designed for them by nature, and thus occasion diseases of the spine, if not even consumption, sin all in ignorance? A slender waist was not regarded in ancient Greece as an attribute of female beauty; in Paris it is now usually deemed a deformity. When will this perverse taste in America be corrected? Let gentlemen cease to praise such distortions of the frame, and let ladies exhibit the intelligence and regard to the laws of God, which will second and secure a reform. Who does not know that the Chinese barbarity of a pinched foot is contrary both to health and true taste? Why should we refuse instruction from the ancient models of beauty, on these points, more than on others? Is it not known that to pursue the dance in winter through the chills of midnight, and return to one's home, as the day dawns, in summer apparel, is treading that path which has led thousands to consumption? Yes, too often are these guilty practices indulged in merely from the bondage of fashion. Not only are parental voices unheeded, but personal convictions are silenced, rather than violate its Draco-like laws.

There may be men who encourage woman in the culture of a false delicacy in reference to her health. There must be somewhere a power, before which these unhappy beings do homage. Else had we never witnessed that affected fastidiousness of appetite, and that affected sickliness, so fashionable in some circles. Let this sex, however, for the sake of self, and of posterity, of man and of God, rise above that wretched servitude, which calls for the sacrifice of sound constitutions, and sometimes even life itself, rather than permit the "tender and delicate woman to set the sole of her foot on the ground." Let physical vigor, attended by mental excellence and moral soundness, become a part of her noble adorning. No more may childhood and youth be the only seasons, in which public opinion shall tolerate those generous exercises in the free air, by which buoyancy and vigor may be prolonged even to old age.

Fashion, if allowed its entire sway, leads woman into many modes of Affectation. Rousseau affirms that "artifice is a talent natural to woman. Let," he says, "little girls be in this respect compared with boys of the same age; and if these appear not dull, blundering, stupid, in comparison, I shall be incontestibly wrong." Does this, if it be true, explain in any measure the strange fact that the servants of fashion must never be known as industrious, still less laborious in any useful avocation? that they must be always at leisure for the morning call and the evening *levee*? Nothing, in some circles, would prove so fatal to a lady's reputation for gentility, as the character of a working woman. The more idle and dependant on others, the greater the renown.

And then, too, to be in high repute, one must feign an ignorance of every kind of employment. To be a good housewife, to understand every domestic duty, is degrading in the extreme. It is thought a proof of vulgarity to be acquainted with ordinary things. Pride is taken in egregious mistakes as to certain persons, places, and pursuits. To show a knowledge of what is done beyond her own caste would be to forfeit her rank, and would expel her from the highest circles in society.

How many in the fashionable world conduct as though an excessive refinement of feeling were the chief praise of their sex. They cannot witness any spectacle of suffering and pain; it shocks their nerves to be present with the sick. O how fallen is she from the high station, for which God created her, who thus shrinks from scenes where the beauty and glory of her nature may be so nobly displayed! Can it be that an affected sensibility shall shut one of this sex from the chamber of sickness? Lives there the man, who commends this wretched sentimentalism? If there be one such in this land, we devoutly hope that our soil may soon cease to be polluted by his steps. Let him take refuge among the nobility of man's fabrication; for God hath denied him a place among his.

There is but one species of affectation, to be more severely reprehended, in this connection, than that now considered; it is the opposite of this, a feigned Insensibility. I once heard a lady, who was about parting from a circle of most valuable friends, parting too from her own native spot, on being asked if she did not feel deep regret at the thought of leaving those scenes, reply, "What good would it do to cry about it?" The expression might manifest the philosophy of a Stoic, but a Christian philosophy, I am sure it did not. And a more unfeminine spirit than it discovered, I have never known in one of her sex. If it be weak in woman to exhibit great sensibility, it argues no moral strength, to guard against this by affecting to be a stock, or a stone. "The haughty woman who can stand alone, and requires no leaning-place in our heart, loses the spell of her sex."

Another form of the disposition in question, to be avoided by her who is entering society, is Conversation for the sake of Effect. It is feared by some that the simple truth, simply expressed, will fail to attract and impress. Hence come departures into the boundless field of imagination. Ridicule is employed to color, and give zest to, the truth. Or Mirth suggests the addition of some new fact to a story, that the laugh may be universal and loud. Exaggeration is employed. The plain food of truth must be seasoned by here throwing in a circumstance, and there suppressing one. An emphatic tone, a nod, or a gesture, intimate far more than the lips dare express. A favorite phrase is continually recurring, or a set of superlatives, shewing that nothing common occurs in the sphere of this individual. Perhaps Irony is indulged, to such unreasonable extent, that a stranger to our young lady's habits of conversation, would be totally at a loss to judge when she was in earnest, and when trifling with the truth.

Now all this "colloquial romancing," as one styled it, is a violation of duty to God and our fellow creatures. It is a deviation from the truth of God; it is unjust to those, of whom, and to whom, it is daily addressed. She, who is soon to be exposed to this moral contagion, should be kindly forewarned of its approach. Honor, affection, and her personal good, through the range of her whole being, forbid her to yield to the temptation.

In the world, a young woman is in danger of a love of Fame, as concerns her Personal appearance, her style of Living, and especially the Entertainments given, on her account, by her parents. It is right that we love the approbation of the virtuous; nor may we violate good taste for the sake of defying popular opinion. But she, who allows her desire of human esteem to supplant the higher sentiments and principles of our nature, clearly does wrong. And are there not those, who pine in secret, because they receive less notice than

their ambition craves? It is nothing to such that hundreds are won, so long as a single heart refuses them homage. What condition more truly deplorable than this insatiable thirst for applause? We are told that Elizabeth of England, “who referred everything to self, was even jealous of the beauty and the dress of her maids of honor. When advanced in years, the sight of her face in a mirror would throw her into transports of rage, and so exasperated did she become, as finally to lay her mirror wholly aside.”

You shall see this same spirit manifested in an excessive care for showy furniture, in the encouragement of artificial and numberless wants, and in a willingness to live on resources dishonestly obtained, and on means belonging rightfully to another, sooner than relinquish one particle of former splendors. In ambitious entertainments, how often is woman tempted to lift herself above those, whom it should delight her to meet in society as her equals. If they can afford only plain walls, hers must be garnished. Her chamber must exhibit tapestry, and her windows the silken and fringed curtain, or she will not surpass them. Her table must groan beneath the productions of all climates. Already it is said, we in America expend in our dwellings, on a slender income, more than many in Europe, who have millions at their command.

Now let the young woman be made acquainted with these facts. Although a fond father or mother would fain make her presentation eclipse the displays of her richest neighbors, let modesty dissuade her from this course. She may save a parent from bankruptcy. He, who is a true friend, will assure her that life is not that rose-colored thing, which some of her companions describe to her. Let her know that a vortex is before her, and ere her feet are within its feeblest eddies, let her prudently escape the peril. A quiet life, inward adorning, should be the jewel worn nearest her heart. If she cherish a thirst for outward exhibitions, too late may it be her doom to feel that the sunshine of the world's favor and applause, has but beamed upon her, to make more fearfully distinct the caverns and wastes of her ever unsatisfied heart.

The young woman is passing into a state of society in which she will find much merely nominal Morality. At home she has probably been nurtured amid sincere hearts, and under the high standard of Christian action. In the world she will hear indeed the same standard, for the most part, verbally commended. But let her not anticipate the same practical conformity to its requirements. She will still be told that purity of mind, soul, and manners, is the shield of her sex, and yet, in some circles, practices shall be tolerated, or fashions of dress, or conversation permitted, which to her all-unsophisticated reason must seem absolutely indefensible. History tells us, that in the thirteenth century, when the plague raged in Florence, it spread through the suburbs of that city, from the exhalations of certain beautiful flowers. See, my young friends, that the lovely associates of your life, even by their most interesting traits, do not betray you into, first slight, then graver, and at length into serious, departures from rectitude and purity.

As a check against the corrupting influences of popular opinion and practices, woman should cultivate two virtues, Moral Independence, and perfect Ingenuousness. If she determine to cleave sacredly to her homebred convictions of right, let the world commend or condemn her, she will maintain the royalty of her sex. Her path will be

broad, free, upward, and ever toward God and felicity. But let her succumb to society, and bow to every mandate of fashion, and she shall become a mental and moral slave.

Equally would I incite you to the retention of your youthful Frankness, and Simplicity. When a child, you expressed precisely what you felt. Let not womanhood rob you of this angelic trait. Shun art; abhor affectation. Set to your seal, that, if detected in this habit, you will lose the confidence and the respect of all noble minds. Know that if you are always ingenuous, you will secure self-respect, and a conscious integrity of heart. Let clouds lower, let the storms of deceit menace the circle you grace, on you will all eyes fix,—and none more benignantly than the All-seeing one above;—and in you will all behold the blue ether of Heaven.

If the general dangers which beset a young woman, on her entrance into society be great, those which have reference to her own Sex require of her a peculiar watchfulness. Let philosophy explain, as it may, the cause, nothing is more certain than that the feelings, and deportment, and speech, that occur between her and her sister females, are a source of constant temptation. Man has charity for the faults of woman; and she has much for the errors of his sex; but for those of her own sex how contracted is her mercy. Never are her Christian principles so tried, as when the character of another is in any wise impeached. Curiosity, opening paths filled with snares, often leads her to venture, where angels dare not tread. Let her mark well its perils, and beware how she intermeddle, with tongue or thought, in the secrets of her neighbor.

A root of iniquity in this world is Envy. In the lower grades of society what pining and misery might be traced to this baleful passion. Why are the actions of a rich rival, or one endowed with personal charms, or gifts in conversation, and the object of attraction in society, so often disparaged, and ascribed to any but pure motives? Whence is it, that a woman of talent and literary claims shall be thought by so many of her sex tinged with “blue?” Why the secret endeavor to awaken ill-will toward the distinguished, and the reluctance to join in the defence of such, when unjustly accused? Too readily are the faults of a compeer rehearsed, and too slowly are her virtues acknowledged. Should the modesty of some one be commended, may it not be because her diffidence gives us room to pass before her in the public eye?

During the middle ages, the young and the beautiful were sometimes burned at the stake, on the charge of having dealt in magic. If the body be not thus sacrificed, in this latter age, truth knows that the peace and happiness of many an innocent young woman are devoured by insatiate envy. Imitate, my young friends, the sweet temper of those ladies in Switzerland, who are reported to be so firmly knit together in the Infant Societies peculiar to that country, as often to meet, after separation, in the meridian of life, with the affection of sisters. A love like this would scorch and destroy each germ of envy, while it gave life, vigor, and permanence, to a gospel charity.

Akin to envy is the passion of Jealousy. The conscious possession of eminent attainments exposes one to this sin. Let it not be palliated, as if consistent with humility. It is the child of a morbid selfishness. It is pride, which makes us jealous of inferiors; never does

humility. Observe the manners of her who is infected with this spirit. Does that lofty carriage, do those averted eyes, and that sullen lip, speak of self-abasement? Woman, dwelling in and for her affections, is prone insensibly to indulge the risings of jealousy. A female writer says, "Our sex are apt to be more aristocratic than men." The aristocracy of claiming attention, friendship, promptly and unremittingly manifested, the aristocracy, in a word, of the heart, who can doubt that this sex often does cherish. Counsel, therefore, calls them to be vigilant, lest they offend in this respect, even unawares. Is a young maiden in prosperous circumstances? Let her know that the growing fortunes of another will excite her to temptation and prejudice. Even now the branches of the oak, that will tower and shade her whole being, might be detected in the acorn. Has God endowed her with personal charms? Prudence would apprise her, that "if the body be a paradise, it needs a cherub to guard the spirit within it."

Especially, in this connection, would I warn my female friends against the vice of Detraction. There are those, who find pleasure in repeating what they hear of the sins of a neighbor. If a misfortune befall another, it is made food for calumny. Her adversity is made the occasion of intruding on her most private concerns, and exposing them to the world. Compassion is expressed, and yet in a tone that betrays a secret exultation. Faults are descried and magnified; no sympathy is felt for the sufferer, but a vulgar curiosity bruited the ill-natured rumor, and many hearts must hence bleed in their unseen solitude.

How easily may a few words, spoken concerning an enemy, or a rival, kindle a village into flames. Recklessness may prompt speeches, full of mistatements, wounding the fame of another, which a life may be insufficient entirely to correct. The young woman must set herself resolutely in opposition to this practice. If she once form the habit of selecting the errors of others of her sex for her usual topic of discourse, time may make it like the change of the leopard's spots, if she ever thoroughly reform. A light word, a breath, may so scatter the Sybil's leaves, that no human power can again reduce them to order.

A most dangerous weapon, when employed by one of this sex against a sister, is Ridicule. Not only does it rob her who indulges it of the rich joys of admiration, but it poisons the depths of her own spirit, and breaks the peace of her associates. Few are they, who have not some foible or personal defect, on which this vice may fix itself. One is an object of taunts for her ignorance; another for a plain face; a third for an impediment in her speech; and how many suffer this infliction for some article of dress proscribed by that mistress called fashion. Too often are we reminded of the fabulous Melusina, to-day, a theme of wonder, for her grace and eloquence, to-morrow, a loathsome reptile, with a tongue full of scorpion stings. How does every attraction we feel toward her, who was framed with powers of speech to obey the highest law of God, wither, as flax in the flames, when the lips thus breathe desolation around them. The eye of the eagle is there piercing all depths by its intelligence; but the soaring wing of that bird is wanting.

It is the office of woman, her high privilege indeed,

"To heal and pacify distempered spirits."

Can she then sufficiently dread and shun dissensions with her own sex? Allow that an associate has reached that eminence, which you could not attain, be it in learning, affection, or fortune. Will you foster toward her a spirit of animosity? Is there one of this sex alive to the noble capacities of her nature, that can descend so low, as to seek redress for fancied or real injustice, by girding on the armor of retaliation and resentment? Remember Jesus, and you will bow to the wrongdoer meekly, magnanimously.

Nor should our young friend yield to a disposition to Flatter her favorites, any sooner than one to depreciate a rival. We may praise another simply to gain a return in kind. Or we may do it thoughtlessly, and by impulse. In each of these cases, we not only injure her by inflating her vanity, but wrong our own souls. Nor are all commendations right, which spring from a desire to gratify others. Ill-timed or excessive praise often does serious evil. It is only that which is just, rational, and moderate, that we should bestow on a friend. Avoid flattery; express precisely the approbation you feel, professing no affection you do not possess, and promising no fidelity, that circumstances may forbid you to manifest, and you will then speak the words due to merit, perfectly free from falsity, and acceptable in the sight of God.

To speak now of the positive view of our subject, I would name a few virtues and graces, of primary concern in a young woman's intercourse with society.

There should be Gentleness of Manner. In this term we include not simply external appearances, though these are of no trivial importance. If manner impress and accomplish much in the sterner sex, as we all have felt, it is in the other, almost omnipotent. Dr. Bowring informs us that, in his recent travels in the East, he found the Samaritan, Syrian, and all Mussulman, ladies were accustomed to veil themselves in public. He was asked whether "the English women were so immodest as to walk out with uncovered faces?" Thus highly are gentleness and modesty prized by the heathen. Should they be less so by us? What object more revolting than a coarse and rude woman? In such we expect,—and we are seldom disappointed,—to find a rough character, a destitution of the gentle spirit of goodness and Christ. Will not one of this class flame against her dress-maker, if some point of fashion be violated by her? Must we not fear that animal impulse will control her actions? I recommend no courtly airs, no studying of gesture, or look. But I must think that, simplicity, freedom from pretence and affectation, modesty, self-possession, escaping both reserve and boldness, and a perfectly frank, truth-speaking manner, are deserving the culture of every female, who seeks the true adorning, and who would give pleasure, and do good, to others. Octavia was none the less marked by a Roman severity of virtue, because gentleness and grace shone through her bearing. Neither is the Christian woman the more pious, for an utter disregard of the courtesies of life.

But lest some should misinterpret these remarks, I will add that there must be grace at heart. Kind Feelings, or the most accomplished manners are but a splendid hypocrisy.

Avoid discourtesy, but avoid still more a hollow, insincere, merely outward, gracefulness. If the feelings be correct, the manner will usually be so. Corregio painted three furies, represented by as many young women, with beautiful forms and regular features.

Looking intently on the hair, you might see a single serpent wreathed in its tresses; and studying the expression of their countenances, you detected in them cunning, malice, and cruelty. Such “beauty” and grace are truly “vain.”

No single quality is so essential in society as a willingness to be pleased. “There is one art,” says a late writer, “which those whose object it is to charm, would do well to cultivate, the art of being charmed. For it rescues many an hour from listlessness and discontent, by freshening all the springs of life and action, awakening in old age the energy of youth, and persuading the weary and desponding that they have still the power to please, and that even for them the world has happiness in store.” Opposed to this stands caprice, a morbid desire of attention, a self-consequence, which would draw all eyes and all thoughts to its own important person. This spirit is full of coldness, jealousy, and every unamiable sentiment. Let the young woman forget herself, and study the feelings of others. She will then notice the modest, encourage the diffident, and strive to call forth concealed talent and virtue. She will scrupulously avoid all allusions, that would give pain to the hearer. His ill-fortune, the trade he pursues, if unpopular, or his low extraction, or the faults of his connections, and his own misdemeanors, will be carefully kept out of view. Thus will the inward man be perpetually overflowing with Christian courtesy.

Good Sense is another requisite of female civility. “The excitable imagination and ardent feelings of woman,” says a female writer, “expose her to exaggeration of sentiment.” Ignorant and weak women mortify their friends and disgust many others, in society. They talk for the sound's sake, giving flippant utterance to the commonplaces of the day. But did God endow this sex with speech, to be exercised only on folly and nonsense? No, we have seen too many living examples to the contrary, of women

“alike from careless levity remote,
And a behavior schooled by selfish rules,
Alike removed from rashness and from fear.”

Is not this better than the indulgence in perpetual trifling and tattle?

How long shall it be charged on this sex that they often yield, without an attempt at self-control, to their supposed natural volatility? If man be constitutionally grave, and life be with him all a serious affair, then should woman supply this want by careful self-culture. I would not frown on the innocent gratifications of the tongue; but I would entreat this sex, instead of seeking their pleasure in discussing the concerns of their neighbors, to pause, consider, and resolve that they will set their feet in a new path. Do not reveal the secrets of a family, because accidentally made acquainted with them, or privileged with their intimacy. Disdain, as unworthy your nature and your sex, the practice of prying into the domestic affairs of others. Cultivate a taste for reading, and talk of books and principles, not persons. And never forget that “for every idle word you must give account” hereafter. Be so filled with good sense and knowledge, that of you it may be said, mark

“that fund of truth and sense,
Which though her modesty would shroud,
Breaks like the sun behind the cloud.”

Good Taste is needful in society. There are those, who so appear, as “thoughtless of gracefulness, to be yet grace itself.” This is the native endowment of some; but all may approximate toward it. Propriety is a rich ornament of female speech. Modesty is a cardinal point in good taste. But let it be sincere. In the early ages of Rome, the women, in general, wore veils in public. Latterly they were worn by certain of the beautiful, but disreputable of that sex, partially to shade the face, and thus add to their unholy fascinations. Beware of a tincture of this spirit. Let your deportment be always so pure and self-respectful, that “guilt shall seem a thing impossible in you.” Consummate the marriage intended, under Providence, between Taste and Virtue.

The last topic I name in this connection is Moral Courage. There is a tyranny of circumstances which you may sometimes fail of successfully resisting. But never may you desist from the attempt to do this. Strive to maintain, mildly, yet firmly, every particle of the ground of right and duty.

Perhaps no one source of temptation will so try your moral energies, in this respect, as that of amusements and recreations. God intended that you should sometimes rest from toil, and find relaxations to repair your exhausted spirits. Pursued for this purpose, they will ever prove more than innocent; they will be useful, and acceptable before Heaven.

I would not specify particular amusements. For, perilous as are theatrical entertainments, and protracted dances, there is, sometimes, greater guilt in the scandal of those who condemn, than in the character of those who pursue, them. But why desire these exciting indulgences? Why risk health and morals, for the sake of a few hours' pleasure? Excitement do you seek? Where is there more of this, so far as it is rational and safe, than in leaving your studies for an hour's domestic avocations; for a walk amid the enchanting beauties of nature; or for a cheerful interview with a tried friend? In the very change of employments, there is a fund of recreation. To train a few flowers for the hand of the sick, or prepare a dish of fruit for a neighbor, is a blessed amusement. Of such enjoyments you would never be constrained to ask, “May I safely partake in them?” They are sweet at the moment, and hallowed by the ever-fresh joys of memory.

Enter, finally, the world, with the holy purpose of passing its fiery ordeal unharmed. Let not fashion enslave and consume your soul. If society would degrade your nature, say to it, “Get thee behind me, Satan.” So will it exalt, and purify, and save, instead of overwhelming, you in perdition. Avow before all persons, your attachment to principle, to your Savior, and your God. Fix your eye, not on this vanishing scene, but on that land, where lies “the pearl of great price.” Submit not for a day to the dominion of an outward adorning. Let the jewels you wear, be fastened on “the hidden man of the heart.” Be ornamented with incorruptible robes. Secure, most of all, not the renown of earthly admiration, but that honor, which, when the world and its charms shall be dissolved and melt like the morning vapor, will crown you with laurels that fade not away.

Chapter VI. LOVE.

Delicacy of the topic. Love, how regarded. As a Mystery. Burns' lament. As an Illusion. An Impulse. A Weakness. A Disease. Romantic views of Love. A Fatalism. "Matches made in Heaven." Some say, "Love can be Suppressed." Associated with Lower Propensities. A theme for Jest and Sport. Quotation, shewing its holy nature. The mind not to dwell constantly upon it.

In approaching the topic named at the head of this chapter, I am by no means insensible of its difficulties and its delicacy. But no one can contemplate its bearings on the happiness of woman, without feeling that a work, treating of her duties and prospects, in which this subject is studiously avoided, must be regarded as essentially defective. It is the remark, I think, of Madam de Stael, that "love, which is but an episode in the life of man, is the whole history of woman." Without subscribing to this opinion in full, we must still contend that the destiny of her affections is to her a theme of vital interest. She cannot but reflect much upon it; and since her views may affect so deeply her ultimate decision in reference to a matrimonial connection, is he a true friend who fails to give her all the light, and counsel, and guidance in his power, on this point?

It is well known that not a few among the insane of this sex have been made so by their erroneous ideas relative to the exercise of the affections. I may be pardoned for adverting, in this place, to some of the many and various views entertained in regard to the sentiment of love.

One considers it a Mystery, something with which the understanding has no concern, and which is never to be reasoned upon, although we may exercise that prerogative on all other subjects. Hence, according to the Roman mythology, Amor, the God of love, is represented as blind-folded. His arrows inflict wounds, it is said, of which the sight can take no cognizance. The language of the poet records the bitter experience of woman, often consequent on this delusive impression:

"Had we never loved so kindly,
Had we never loved so *blindly*,
Never met or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted."

The opinion under consideration is egregiously erroneous. Woe to her who abandons the helm of judgment, in forming that connection, which is to decide her whole fortune for life. Ill-fated must she be, who concludes that the head and heart must be divorced, before she can experience that sentiment, which binds human souls in the sacred tie of marriage.

Another believes love to be an Illusion. She thinks it a subject fit only for the fevered imagination of the poet, or for tales of fiction and romance. With the realities of life it has no concern. In this plain, matter-of-fact, working-day world, there is no room, she thinks, for this creature of the brain. Therefore does she determine to fortify herself against its

approaches. Others may pursue the phantom, if they will, but she is resolved to be never so cheated, as to “fall in love” with a man.

The enthusiast may subject herself to severe disappointments, and may find ultimately that the husband she loved and married, under the sway of the blind god, falls far short of that mysteriously exalted being she deemed herself connected with for life. But far more to be deplored is her fate, who entered the matrimonial state with the Stoical faith that love was all an “illusion.” What sympathy can those, thus joined, but not wedded, feel in the season of sorrow? How little will they share, or even imagine, those joys which spring up between hearts that have been pledged, exchanged, and cemented.

There are those, who regard love as of necessity a mere Impulse; a thing not subject in any wise to human control, but fitful, an outbreaker, a tyrant. They can govern other emotions and sentiments. Anger, envy, jealousy, resentment, pride, they believe capable of being moderated, if not wholly suppressed. But love is lawless. Its mandates must be obeyed, and that instantly; they may not be opposed, no, not even questioned.

Who has not seen some young woman of talent and virtue sacrifice herself to this mistaken impression? The plume of the soldier, the gay air of the debauchee, the flippant beau, the half-insane tippler, could she not have seen her doom in being affianced to one of these poor pageants of humanity? Ah, but “she loved; she could not help loving;” she gave herself a victim at the profane shrine, because she always thought she must love where and whom, her unbidden, irresponsible, feelings should direct her to love.

There are others, who deem this sentiment a Weakness. If a lady find herself inclined to it, she should at once strive to subdue it. Much as one, whose face is marked by disease or accident, would fain conceal the blemish, so would she hide, even from a mother or sister, any experience of affection for a particular individual. Love is, in her view, a thing to be ashamed of, an infirmity, which, if one have not power wholly to escape, she should yet lock with eternal secrecy in her own bosom.

Now I ask, why should we blush for emotions, of which the God of nature implanted the germs within us? Is it weak to indulge a sentiment so productive of happiness as this, so essential to the wellbeing of the holiest bond on earth? Love is not a folly; in its purity, it is a noble, unselfish thing, the inspirer and friend of moral excellence. When I see a young woman pining over a hidden grief, which might have been spared, had she imparted her feelings to a friend; when I witness the mental powers tried, and at length overcome, by the struggles of a pent-up fire in the soul, I lament the sad error, to which these mournful consequences can be so directly traced. Why, if the object, especially, of her affection deserve and requite it, why should she bury it as a weakness in her soul? The cases are very rare, in which there is no one to whom a secret of this description may with propriety, and ought, to be frankly confided. The peril lies in concealment.

Some esteem love a Disease. They look upon her, who indulges it, as in an unsound condition. It is as if a member of the body were amputated, or maimed. The individual, on whom its visitations have been inflicted, is an object of compassion. Hence its

approaches are actually dreaded. She who entertains this theory, instead of receiving cordially the advances of a gentleman, even a favorite, shrinks from the thought of it, and repels the intimations of any special attention on his part.

Is this well? Is it right so to deal with a sentiment common to the sex? Were it a disease, we should form exceptions to the rule. But since it is so almost universally experienced, why should one avert it from the heart? She who does this, misinterprets the human constitution. Let her study the purposes of Providence, and no more will she refuse the admission of this sentiment, when circumstances justify its encouragement, than she will decline taking food, lest it cause sickness and death. The laws of nature, she will see, extend over the spirit, no less than the body.

There are not a few who cherish Romantic ideas concerning the affections. They regard "marriage," in the words of another, "as an occasion to be preceded by fears, and hopes, and love's stratagems, by love-letters, passionate vows, sudden crosses, and intense joys." It is to transform the individual subject to its power, to fill her with sensations, which she cannot now even imagine. With this transcendental view of that passion, a young woman is likely to conclude that, for herself, she shall never see the person whom she can love. No angelic being, in human form, will ever cross her path, and therefore she shall always remain single. Anon she dreams of going into a nunnery,—“to pine away and die.”

Now we cannot too early set about correcting these false imaginings and vain expectations. Poets may sing of love as convulsing the frame, and rending the heart, and transmuting a human sentiment into divine extasies. But in the sober experience of life, such rapturous emotions are exceedingly rare. Indeed all the deep feelings of our nature are tranquil. It is the shallow stream only, which dashes, and sparkles, and deafens us by its noise. If you ever know the power of genuine love, you will find it as calm as it is intense. It will be in harmony with your other pure sentiments. Never will it subjugate, and tyrannize over, and do violence to, your whole nature.

We have seen those,—and we suspect they belong to a numerous class,—who conceive that true love is attended by a Fatalism. It is first assumed, that every one must love some individual of the opposite sex. A necessity is laid on us all, it is thought, to bestow the affections in marriage. The question may not so much as be raised, “Is it certain that I shall ever meet with one to whom I can give my heart?” No, woman was made to love and to be married, that is her unalterable destiny. All that is to occupy her thoughts in this respect, is, “Who shall the individual be, on whom I must place my affections?”

This opinion is surely erroneous. For Providence has so arranged the circumstances of human life and of society, that some females are absolutely precluded from forming the matrimonial connection. Ill-health,—to name no other cause,—sometimes positively debar one from this relation. There are abundant reasons, indeed, for which every one, ordinarily situated, should contemplate marriage. It is the design of our physical and moral constitution, and the spring of unsullied enjoyments, social and spiritual; and no one should voluntarily exclude herself from this bond, save for imperious considerations. Yet let no young woman predetermine that hers may not be an exception to the general

law. The inquiry should at least arise in her mind, "May I not be of those, whose usefulness and happiness do not absolutely require their entering the marriage state?"

But our friend thinks there is a fatalism not only in regard to her marriage, but in reference to the particular companion, with whom she must be associated for life. "Matches are made," say some, "in Heaven." Prudence has no concern with this matter. A young woman fixes her affections on some individual, and believes that it is decreed she should love and should marry him. If circumstances appear unpropitious to their intimacy, she is perfectly wretched. And this, not simply because she loves him so ardently, but because she believes a decree of Heaven will be violated, if their union fail of consummation. "Our presentiments," it is said "often work their own fulfilment." I cannot doubt, that, in the formation of the marriage bond, at least, they often do, and that with the saddest results.

What an idea is this, if one will steadily contemplate it. That the heart is not subject, in the slightest degree, to our dominion? That we must love, and love, too, one whom perhaps accident alone threw in our way! Are you, indeed, obliged by a physical or moral necessity, to marry this person, because he is an inmate of your father's household, or because you were both born in the same village, or because he has something in his countenance that tells you,—before a word has been exchanged between you,—that he must be your lover, and your husband? The picture needs but be presented one moment before a calm, dispassionate eye, to force on us the conviction that, if in any human transaction we are free to accept, and free to reject the offers of another, we are clearly so in this.

There are those who, passing to the opposite extreme, entertain the opinion that love is a sentiment, not only subject to human control, but capable of being entirely suppressed. They deem it altogether optional with themselves, whether they shall know anything of the affection between the sexes, or not.

Did this notion extend only to the relative power of the sexes, or the direction we may give to our hearts, it would be less objectionable. For doubtless love, though more essential to woman than to man, can be more easily controlled by her than by him. A person of a strong will may bring herself, for prudential considerations, to prefer in marriage one who will be "a good match" with her, as the phrase is, to another whom she sincerely loves. And she may succeed in subduing, to no ordinary degree, her affection for the rejected one. But to eradicate from the heart the powerful principle of love is not given, I believe, to woman. She may substitute another object for that which ought to have engaged this class of her affections. A mother, or sister, or a friend, may be installed in that place. Nay, I have known a mere animal to be caressed and apparently loved, as it could not have been, had the affections been properly bestowed on a human being. We can regulate and direct, but we cannot destroy, in the heart, the sentiment of love.

Some, again, associate with the thought of love the idea of our Lower Propensities. They regard it as an animal passion, and as debasing to the character. With false notions of

delicacy, they determine to shun its snares, and hence strive to banish the impure thing from their minds, and to steel themselves against its access.

How unworthy of our nature, and of the Being who formed us, is this view. To those who entertain it, we must say, “what God hath cleansed, that call not thou common, or unclean.” Far, indeed, are they, to whom we allude, from the elevated and true idea of that sacred tie, which joins the pure in heart. A better knowledge of their race would acquaint them with multitudes, who have proved marriage to be “honorable,” and to whom love has been the chief refiner of their souls. That it may be perverted, we cannot, of course, deny. But that its legitimate tendency, is any other than to exalt, ennoble, and sanctify the spirit, we do not believe. So thorough is our persuasion of this, that we would commend the marriage relation to a seeker of moral excellence. We would say, that, in the hallowed sympathies of love are incitements to purity and piety. To her who earnestly desires to become spiritual, we would present the association in marriage with one spiritually minded, as, above all adventitious means, friendly to her holy purpose.

To how many is love a theme for Jest and Sport. The ancients represented Cupid under the aspect of a boy engaged in amusement. He appears driving a hoop, throwing a quoit, playing with a nymph, catching a butterfly, or flying with a bright torch in his hand, shewing, in each case, that love is a subject for sport. Let heathenism, if it must, so regard it; but the Christian ought never to trifle with this sacred interest. The rite of marriage is a solemn thing. Who would jeer, and jest, as she stood before the altar, and pledged fidelity unto death to her betrothed partner? And why, I would ask, should the preliminaries of marriage be treated as a theme fit only for levity and merriment? It is said that we Americans are peculiar for banter on this subject. One scarcely hears it alluded to in society, except with a laugh, or a jest. As a natural consequence of this state of feeling, and this style of conversation relative to the affections, it is not easy to know when one speaks as he means on this topic. Not “seriously,”—for the matter is all sport,—not in “sober earnest” may you take what is said, since soberness is supposed to be wholly irrelevant to so light a subject.

And then too the effect of this practice on the feelings and deportment of the parties most nearly concerned, even during their engagement,—if this take place amid the bandying of jests,—is often unhappy. The same levity pervades their conversation and manners toward one another; and there is scarcely one sober sentiment, or calm thought, associated with their interviews.

So also has this habit a blighting influence upon the views with which the individuals are at length joined in marriage. What was commenced in gaiety and sport, and has been continued in the same spirit, is consummated in thoughtlessness. It is only when these scenes of mutual delusion and folly are over, and the two beings are united by an inseparable bond, and begin to feel the pressure of real duty and actual life, that they look on each other as rational creatures ought. The words, sacred, and principle, the thought of responsibility to God, ideas of solemnity, are now for the first time associated with marriage. Can this condition of mind be other than deleterious to the virtue, peace and happiness, of the parties involved in its effects? “O there is nothing holier, in this life of

ours, than the first consciousness of love,—the first rising sound and breath of that wind, which is so soon to sweep through the soul, to purify, or to destroy!” So let every young maiden deem of this sentiment. None will then banter words with her upon her sacred affections; for there will be that in her air and language, when this topic is referred to, which shall convince every one that she holds it a consecrated theme.

In summing up my general remarks on the view to be taken of love, I would say, talk little with your companions about it; and resolve, if the topic can only be introduced by a jest, that you will preserve upon it a profound silence. This would at first make you appear singular. But such a course would soon commend itself to every considerate friend and acquaintance in your circle. Or, if some should persist in importuning and teasing you in regard to it, you would be sustained by the consciousness of exerting all your influence for the elevation of society in their views, and conversation, on the most holy of human connections.

Nor should the mind be permitted to dwell constantly upon this subject. Some are perpetually imagining themselves in love; others are dreaming over the philosophy of the affections, and wasting precious hours upon that which adds nothing to their happiness, and does little to prepare them for married life. Let the mind be kept tranquil on this subject; the heart will then be preserved in its soundness. No good affection will die or decay, but, in the time and method ordained by Providence, advances will be made, and the heart addressed, and the hand solicited for marriage. Let the young maiden bide the passing months in cheerfulness, and prepare herself for a Christian life. A character thus matured will give hope of the happiest results in new relations, and amid all the coming and unknown scenes that await her.

Chapter VII. SINGLE LIFE.

A wrong idea. Some designed for Single Life. The “Old Maid's” reproach. Addison. Two errors, Reserve, and Forwardness. Virtues of Single women. Humanity. Modesty. Economy. Neatness. Usefulness. Hannah More. Miss Sedgwick. Miss Porter's “Aunt Rebecca.” Avoid affectation. Advice of Mrs. Hall. Two essentials, Mental Cultivation, and Industry.

Marriage is not seldom regarded as “our being's end and aim;” hence a young woman is often filled with a feverish anxiety to form this connection, or at least to enter on its preliminaries, at an early period of her life. We believe there are thousands, who never so much as ask themselves the question, “Is it certain that I must be married, or be miserable?” No, they assume that in one condition only can they be happy, and in that, therefore, let what may betide them, they must centre their every hope of coming peace.

Now I believe this impression to be erroneous; and so disastrous are its consequences, that it should be removed from the mind of every girl who entertains it. God has not left woman but one alternative in this respect. Marriage is the general lot of her sex. It is productive of joys and blessings peculiar to itself. But not always, not of necessity. There

may be, and there doubtless often is, great suffering in this connection. No small share of this might be ultimately traced to the fact that so many form this tie under the belief that they *must* be married; that all which concerns them is to ascertain who the individual is, in whose hands they must place their whole earthly destiny.

But although Providence did intend woman, in all ordinary cases, to enter the marriage state, yet precisely as much did He design some of this sex to remain single. He made all for the sake of character, usefulness, and happiness. Every institution he appointed was to be instrumental to the production of these three grand objects. Hence woman was not made for marriage; but marriage for woman. If in any instance it shall appear that her improvement will probably be retarded by her entering that state, or her usefulness less extensive, or her happiness evidently sacrificed, then is it manifest that she belongs to the class of exceptions. It is her duty to continue unmarried. So that it is not simply a choice among many suitors, with the necessity of selecting or accepting some one of them, that is given her, but the whole subject is to be seriously pondered. If, after doing this, she is convinced that no individual has offered her particular attentions, whose character promises to enhance her virtue, usefulness, or happiness, then should she calmly resolve,—let the decision be painful, as it may, and perhaps must be,—that she will remain, under present prospects, through life, as she is.

But the reproach of being an “old maid,” how can she endure this? I answer, let her not, in the first place, unduly magnify this reproach. I know that certain charges are preferred against “old maids,” as this class are ignominiously termed, which do much to strengthen the impression just spoken of. They are said to possess an inordinate curiosity. Addison, like many others, alleges that old maids are given to credulity, and pours on them, for this reason, contempt and raillery. They are accused of disgusting affectation, of pretending to youth, to censorial importance, and to an exquisite sensibility. Finally, it is said, that they are notorious for envy, and ill-nature, being match-breakers, because themselves unmarried. Let these charges be destitute as they may of foundation, they doubtless impel many females to the determination that they must and will escape this terrific condition.

But there is no portion of the community, whose opinion we should value, that will esteem a female the less for being in that condition where Providence has clearly placed her. It is not true that single ladies are usually despised, or subject to ridicule. Those who do suffer these things, have usually brought them upon themselves by a deportment, which might have been shunned.

Some have been derided for their excessive Reservedness of manner, for never permitting one of the opposite sex to address them, even indirectly, or scarcely to exchange a word with them. What else can the prude anticipate, or reasonably require, than that she be an object of reproach, if not of ridicule, for obstinately adhering to a manner that must result in her perpetual singleness of life? If she debar all access to herself, except from her own sex, misinterpret every word and all intimations of, and thus insulate herself from, any special acquaintance with any gentleman, let her bear the consequences without a syllable of discontent. A morbid sensitiveness, in reference to all such company, must, in most cases, seal one's doom.

Perhaps a young maiden takes the opposite extreme. In her anxiety to fulfil what she deems her only possible destiny, she becomes Forward and assuming. She regards it as necessary to force attention toward herself. She is not of those who “to be won, must be wooed.” Her aims are obtrusive; instead of waiting for the approach of another, she makes constant advances toward him. This fault is still more repulsive to most gentlemen than the other. They esteem it an indication of great vanity on the part of a young woman, and expressive of no very high sense of their own powers of discernment, or of their delicacy of feeling. Such persons must expect little favor at the hands of the other sex, should all their endeavors be frustrated. “She might have been married,” is their uniform language, “had she not exhibited such boldness, and such determination to carry one's heart by storm.”

Nor will her own sex be sparing in their reproaches of one left in a single state, after so many, and such ineffectual, efforts to change it. The modest lady pities, and blushes for, a sister thus regardless of proprieties. Her companions, successful by their very neglect to toil for success, will doubtless apply to her, and with some pungency, the epithet of “old maid.” Ought she to repine at the fruit of her own indiscretion and folly?

Far different is the estimate usually formed of her who, by unforeseen and inevitable circumstances, or by a wise preference, continues single. Such cannot fail of being generally respected in society. That they are thus situated is perceived to be no fault of theirs, but, at most, a misfortune. In a multitude of these instances a young woman shall be the more respected for remaining unmarried. It argues a moral independence, a regard not only for her immediate happiness, but for her personal character, which cannot fail to excite, in all candid and generous minds, a true admiration.

There are several traits characteristic, in some degree, of what is termed an “old maid,” that are in reality to be ranked among the higher Virtues.

Such persons are usually marked by their Humanity. Not being exclusively devoted to one individual, or one small circle of individuals, they find objects of interest everywhere around them. She who retains her cheerfulness in this state, is often an invaluable friend among the sick, and the suffering poor. She has leisure to follow out her kind impulses. They are not contracted to a single sphere, but wherever she can go and do good, thither her steps hasten. Even the inferior creation share her attentions. There is many an eye, not radiant with reason, nor accompanied by the powers of speech, that is yet eloquent in praise of her kindness.

Single women are usually adorned with Modesty. Some may court publicity, and pant for the forum, or the pulpit, but they are the few. Most ladies of this class are graced by a retiring manner, and quiet habits, and a gentle address. These traits we all prize in woman. Even in their excess, though they have virtually caused an individual to be single, they still have attendant advantages. They are certainly an ornament to the character, giving new lustre to what we, perhaps with difficulty, discovered beneath them.

Economy is another characteristic of a single woman. It may degenerate to a fault, it is true; but in most of those in this condition it is so restricted, as to be a theme not for censure, but approbation. In a country like ours, where, if fortunes are often made, they are also not seldom lost, in a day, this virtue is of prime concern. And everywhere it is an incumbent duty of the Christian to “gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost.” She who does this may be a most valuable auxiliary in the family she resides with.

Suppose one partly dependent, for her subsistence, on her manual exertions, or an inmate in the house of a relative or friend, she may do great good by an habitual watchfulness that nothing be wasted. Servants are proverbially lavish and careless in this matter. The head of the family may be deficient in economy, or what is by no means uncommon, so engrossed with other inevitable cares, as to have little time to look after the savings, which might daily be made. But here is an individual, whose habits prompt her to the service, and who has leisure to make herself useful in this manner.

Unmarried ladies are usually distinguished for their Neatness. We often hear it said of another, “She is so afraid of a speck of dirt, that she will certainly be an old maid.” If this be the chief index of that character, it is one which the married lady would do well to imitate, rather than deride. The personal habits can be excusably neglected by no one. If those, charged with the care of families, are so absorbed in their employments, as to pay little attention to neatness in dress, their condition is deplorable. She who has less to interfere with this all-important quality, and who, therefore, gives much time to cleanliness, order, and neatness, is to be envied, not censured. Should she hereafter be placed in the situation of a wife and matron, her partner will rejoice in those circumstances, which contributed to this most valuable trait in her character.

Single women are sometimes more Useful than they would have been, if married. Such cases are probably rare; yet the capacity of doing as much good in that state as another, should reconcile one to what might, otherwise, appear an evil. Who can estimate the amount of virtue and piety, that might be traced to the writings of Hannah More? Had she been married, the world might have lost the whole of these sixty years' toil in the cause of humanity. How large is our debt to the accomplished authoress of “Home,” and of those manifold publications of the same character, that enlighten, and bless, the youth of our age.

Nor is it in literary walks alone that this class have proved signal benefactors of their species. In the domestic sphere, amid scenes of sickness and affliction, how often have they proved ministering angels. Miss Porter, I think it is, has a character in one of her works, which she names “Aunt Rebecca,” who was full of kind offices among the families in her neighborhood, taking care of the sick, supplying the place of absent mothers, and aiding relatives and friends with promptness, in their times of trouble and grief. The reader is sometimes tempted to smile at the abuses of her good nature by the selfish and indolent; yet the character suggests to us the noble field of usefulness allotted to many, who are often supposed to lead a course of life contrary to nature.

Having so many virtues incident to her condition, and enjoying such opportunities to do an amount of good, and of course to secure a degree of happiness, denied to those in married life, why should an individual repine at this lot? Single women, it is well known, are sometimes envious, querulous, discontented, and restless. “Who can shew us any good in our state?” ask some. “Providence made us, like the rest of our sex, for love, yet we are doomed to be indifferent. It is our fate not to be loved.”

In the agony of despair such array themselves, perhaps to old age, in attractive dresses and a profusion of jewelry, and affect the air of young ladies. But these views and practices are founded in error. Reflect upon the case, and you will see, that it is no more a law of God that your sex in general should love and be loved, and should marry, than it is that some of their number should remain single. She, who thus considers, is prepared to inquire whether she herself may not possibly belong to that class, and to be content in that condition, should circumstances seem to ordain her for it.

The advice of an English lady on this point seems peculiarly pertinent. “Let women,” says she, “of a certain age beware of the affectation of youth, if they would avoid the shipwreck of their respectability and character. As the loveliness of girlhood fades from their cheeks, and the liquid brilliancy of youth departs from their eyes, let them make unto themselves charms which neither the rust nor moth of time can corrupt; let the warmth of goodness yield its gentle tinting to their cheek, and let tears of tenderness, of mercy, of loving-kindness, make their eyes moist with those beauties which will not be destroyed, but perfected hereafter. We must all fade, but it is in our power to exchange our charms. Keeping far from us envyings, strife, jealousy, evil-speaking, let us, as our days increase, improve in wisdom and good deeds; caring for the young, comforting the old, and rendering our home the throne of domestic happiness.”

There are two things requisite, I believe, however, to the enjoyment of its best effects, in a single state. The lady, who proposes to herself this destination, should cultivate her Mind. A good education prepares one for any fortune, or condition of life. She, who has stores of knowledge and a well-balanced intellect, will find herself possessed of unfailing resources, both of improvement and happiness. It is the ignorant, those whose thoughts feed on vacuity, and who, through the want of mental culture, dwell incessantly on degrading subjects, that suffer in the single state.

The other preparation I referred to, is Occupation, habits of industry. An intelligent person may be indolent, and if so, the mental cultivation she has enjoyed may only serve to expose her feelings to more acute pain, from her solitary state. But she who is diligent in domestic economy, in the use of her needle, in the daily reading of valuable works, and especially in doing good, as she has opportunity, to others, can hardly be miserable, because unmarried. She will make friends, wherever she may reside, and find hearts rejoicing to reciprocate her affection.

Chapter VIII. REASONS FOR MARRIAGE.

The Fear of being Single. Faith, and Moral Courage needed.
Marrying to gratify friends. "Match makers." Self-will. To leave
an Unpleasant Home. To obtain a Home. Practices in Mexico and
France. Marrying for Wealth. Offer in Texas. Personal Beauty. A
noble example. Fancy. Influence of Novels, and impure Poetry.
Flattery. Passion. Personal Bravery. Custom, in island of Borneo.
Proximity. Family Connections. Persian marriages. Marrying from
the cradle. Personal Distinction. Nobility of Naples. Tragedy in
Philadelphia. Love of Conquest and Power. Madam Gamarra of Peru.
To escape Toil and Care. Marrying to Reform. Being importuned.
From a Sense of Duty. As a Business transaction.

To attempt the enumeration of all the inducements which may lead a young woman to marry, were perhaps a hopeless task. So complex are our motives that it is difficult to analyze them correctly, or even to say with confidence what was the sole motive operating on the mind in any particular action. This difficulty is increased, where the affections are concerned. They are too subtle and ethereal in their nature, to be subjected to minute examination. I shall, therefore, only promise in this chapter to endeavor, as I am able, to treat of a part of the reasons for marriage, as they affect most persons in actual life.

At the head of these stands the fear of being Single. There is supposed to be some latent and terrific evil in remaining unmarried. The imagination of the girl depicts its loneliness, its desolation, the blight it must shed on every gentle and happy emotion, the reproach it must bring on her from her entire circle of acquaintances, and the pride with which her more successful companions will look down upon her. These and other features in the picture become so fearful to contemplate, that she resolves to embrace the first opportunity to escape so awful a dilemma. She will engage herself as soon as practicable, lest she should outstand her day, and be left in the dread condition of an "old maid." Hence a train of miseries.

To prevent this calamity,—for it often proves a serious one,—I would recommend the culture of two virtues, Faith, and Moral Courage.

There is no cause for a young woman, in any ordinary circumstances, to fear that she shall be left single. How very few are they, who deserve the attentions of the other sex, and yet never receive any overtures for marriage. Where the means of support are so equally distributed, and where girls are so well trained, as they are usually in this country, nearly every young man is married, and of course finds somewhere a companion. Have then Faith that you will not be neglected. This will do much to inspire that modest conduct, which attracts so powerfully the opposite sex. It will also lead you to a course of steady preparation, in all respects, for marriage, and thus both insure your entrance on that state, and qualify you for its duties.

Cultivate Moral Courage. It is better to wait this year and next, and many years, rather than, for the sake of appeasing the popular cry, to throw yourself away on a dolt, or a

villain. What consolation can it be, when bound to such a companion for life, to reflect, that you have escaped the odious name of an “old maid?” Better ten lives of singleness, than a few years of that wretchedness so often occasioned by marrying simply and solely for fear of being single.

Others marry to gratify their Friends. This world abounds in match-makers. They are, too, of all descriptions; some true friends to the parties concerned in their management, perhaps their parents; others entirely indifferent in this respect; others mere busy bodies, burning for the excitement of love affairs, for new offers, engagements, and weddings.

As regards the agency of friends in these matters, I believe little good ever comes of their plans and efforts. Where they succeed, there are fearful chances that the individuals, intended to be benefitted, will have cause to rue the consequences. It is far better to let nature direct, or rather to leave Providence his own modes of operation, instead of attempting to force, or urge, what should be left entirely to the feelings, judgment, and taste, of the parties involved.

For those meddlesome creatures, who spend their days in instigating others to love, I can only say, they will have a dark account to render in the end. There is no more despicable character than a finished “manoeuvrer.” It implies a meanness, that can pry into the corners of others' affairs, an indolence, that neglects one's own proper business, and a mental vacuity, and a littleness of purpose, which are the dread of every noble mind. Beware of the impertinence of such persons. Be very sure that you give not your hand and heart where *they* point, instead of following, as you ought, your own good sense, and the promptings of affection.

There are those of an opposite description, who marry to gratify Self-will, and to shew their independence of advisers. This is the more dangerous error of the two. The law of the Laplanders on this subject is not without some reason, severe though it certainly is; it is there death to marry a girl without the consent of her friends. The instances in which this occurs are rare; yet there are those who, through pride and perversity, choose to be miserable in their own way rather than happy in one proposed, or sanctioned even, by others. Young women are sometimes disinterested in the indulgence of a passion, for they do it to their own injury, and to the sorrow of their relatives. Because advised to marry a particular gentleman, they set themselves in array against him. Or, blind to those faults, which every one else discovers, and warns them against, they commit their destiny to the actually abandoned. I knew one of this class, who, in spite of all remonstrance, married an intemperate man, and who went even so far as to say, after his death, which resulted from this vice, “that she never saw her husband intoxicated in his life.”

Some marry to remove from an Unpleasant Home. They are obliged, perhaps, to work hard for a small compensation, or for none. The mother is unkind to them, or the father is morose. The daughter receives frequent hints about her support, or, of her marriage being necessary to make her “respectable” among her companions; or, the parents talk of their own early engagement, &c. This conversation awakens a strong desire to escape dependence upon them. Other circumstances serve to alienate a female from the place of

her birth, her town, or village, and she is induced to sacrifice herself to any one who proffers his hand.

But is it not

“Better to bear the ills we have,
Than flee to those we know not of?”

By an ill-assorted match, a lady is placed in a situation, where, let her have suffered as she might previously, her condition is nearly certain to be made worse by the change. Under the parental roof, she enjoyed much liberty; but now she is chained to one spot, and must receive to her bosom, a being, who inflicts pangs on her spirit. The die is cast; she is enslaved by a perpetual master. Piteous is her doom.

Many are married to obtain a Home. They desire an establishment; the prospect of having no dwelling, which they can call “their own,” fills them with restless apprehensions. They crave some special protector, in whom they may merge, as it were, their own being, and be thereby released from personal responsibilities; one on whom they may lean for the gratification of every wish and want. Like the emigrant who leaves the tough soil of New England, for the glorious West, they imagine that their exchange is to release them from toil, and crown them, at the same moment, with plenty.

Such expectations are delusive. Woman was not created for this absolute and unlimited ease. Neither single, nor married, can she subsist with comfort to herself, except by being largely endowed with self-dependence. As a wife, she will not be caressed and cherished in one cloudless day, even though her husband prove the kindest of his sex. She must do and suffer much for his sake, or the bonds of their love will soon be as flax amid flames. If she enter the marriage state with any other design than to devote herself to her family, to toil more, instead of less, than she now does, either by mental or manual exertions, or by both, let her be assured of a fearful disappointment. She may promise herself, in a pure connection, great joy, much to compensate her sacrifices, but a life of ease and entire freedom from care, let her never anticipate.

There are ladies compelled, I am aware, to seek a home by matrimony, through the influence of their parents. This may be exerted, as in Mexico, indirectly, through solicitors and by management, or, like the French, the parents may negotiate the marriage in person, if not in form, yet by such methods, as to leave the daughter no alternative, but to accept such shelter abroad as any suitor may propose to her.

Rise, I entreat you, above this servitude. There is a method, by which you may provide an habitation for yourself. Prepare so completely to earn your own livelihood, that no one, friend or foe, dare say of you, “she is obliged by her helplessness to marry some one.” There are honorable avocations, and not a few either, in which every young woman can support herself. Let all be acquainted with some of them, with one at least. Then may they listen to overtures of marriage, with the feeling, that, as for a home, that, they have already secured by the skill of their own mind and hands.

Young ladies sometimes marry for Wealth. They have been educated to regard this as the criterion of excellence. A man's "worth" is reckoned, not in moral attainments, but in dollars and cents. He, therefore, who is poor, is set down as beneath much consideration. From her earliest days, the girl has, perhaps, heard her parents talk of "being well-settled," of "a good establishment," and "a handsome property," as the *sine qua non* of married life. In Tartary, a young man must purchase his bride, and if too poor to give money, he must serve her father four or five years. If a richer rival presents himself before the term of service expires, the first suitor is dismissed; he can claim only wages for his work. How many parents in this civilized and Christian land, thus sell their daughters. Give the transaction whatever smooth name you please, it is, after all, a bargain and sale.

Legislators, it appears, sometimes openly and directly encourage this traffic. The Congress of Texas recently offered a premium of nearly three thousand acres of land to every woman who would marry a citizen of Texas, who was one at the declaration of Independence.

Let me warn my female friends against this influence. Marry for riches alone, and you will be a neglected, unhappy wife, as sure as gold is not kindness. How many of your sex have sold their honor for paltry lucre. Our cities contain awful testimonies to this fact. Beware of that path, which leads in this fearful direction. Marry only a good man. Heed the advice of Themistocles to that Athenian, who consulted him in relation to the marriage of his daughter. She had two suitors, one a man of worth with a small fortune, the other rich, but in low repute. "I would bestow my daughter," said he, "upon a man without money, rather than upon money without a man."

Never fear to form this connection with an individual of merit, though his circumstances be humble. Poverty indeed is often the nurse of rare virtues. It imparts energy, prudence, and industry, when rightly regarded. I like the reply of the Irish maid, when reminded of the extreme poverty of herself and her lover. "Sure, two people eat no more when they're together, than they do when they're separate." And if this were not true, there are advantages in equality of condition which often render such alliances among the most happy ever found on earth. God will bless those who act from principle and affection, as in all other relations, so in the formation of the marriage tie.

Woman sometimes gives herself to Beauty of Person. She is led captive by a fair face and an elegant exterior. These cases are less frequent than those, in which men marry for beauty. Still, they do occur, and although outward graces are not to be contemned more than other gifts of Providence, yet she who bestows her hand for their sake alone is a victim to folly. Should such be free from impure passion, they still build their hopes on a foundation of straw. In the conflict of life, we need, in our nearest friend, inward charms. Where these are wanting, our lot is pitiable indeed.

There are vain men, so weak, as to pride themselves on external attractions alone. But they are hollow-hearted. Woe to her, who commits her happiness to one of these shells of

humanity. She is trusting to a treacherous hope. Her love, far from being pure, is that which

“dies

With beauty, which is varying every hour;
While, in chaste hearts, uninfluenced by the power
Of outward change, there blooms a deathless flower
That breathes on earth the air of paradise.”

Not a few marry from Fancy alone. They are attracted toward a gentleman by his manners and external appearance. They conceive a liking for another, because he has a pleasant voice, or an engaging smile, or is full of gaiety and wit. The influence of these qualities is felt by us all; nor is it wrong to give them some weight, in forming our estimate of one as a companion. But what are they all, if disconnected from a praiseworthy character? She who gives her heart, for this poor price, will sometime awake to a sense of her delusion. The imagination has an influence, perhaps an unavoidable one, on the affections. We invest a favorite with ideal charms, and put out of sight his faults. But in contemplating the solemn relation of marriage, no lady should abandon the exercise of her reason. Love, it is said, often so excites the fancy as to call forth effusions of poetry, where they were hitherto unknown. But woe to her, who cheats herself with the belief that the creature of her imagination is a real being, who will not listen to the counsels of understanding, but rushes blindly down the precipice, which, with one open eye, she might easily have foreseen.

A recent writer, in giving advice to young ladies, speaks of “novels and tales,” and especially of the “best fictions of our day, as holding up to view the mistakes and faults, which young persons are most likely to commit on the subject of love and matrimony, in such a way as is likely to prevent their repetition.” With deference to one so intelligent in her remarks on other topics, I must differ from her on this. I believe that the reading of novels almost uniformly operates unfavorably on the female heart. In the first place, fictitious writings are very seldom read, except for the sake of the story. Let the author append a moral to his book, who thinks of stopping to read that? But again, where is the novel, which is an exact transcript of real life? There may be no one character in a work, that is not somewhat natural. Yet are the relations of each to all the others such as those in which we daily see people placed? Are not the remarks of the speakers often forced and strained? Do such loves occur in this working-day world? Are not the incidents, and the plot in general, indebted largely to the writer's imagination, for the effect they produce on the reader?

It is the reading of fiction and impure poetry, more than all things else, I fear, which leads so many females to sacrifice themselves to unprincipled and base-hearted men. Instead of consulting these works, as a guide in marriage, let every one take counsel of her sober judgment. When “the dreams of youth are fled,” and the novel ceases to captivate, we shall be left in a pitiable condition, if united to a being whom we could give no good *reason* for marrying. Fancy alone, much more a mere whim, is a fearful agent, with whom to entrust our entire happiness for life.

There are those who accept the hand of another, because enticed by Flattery. The human heart is never more exposed to the poison of this insidious foe than in the affairs of love. A lady is beautiful, and she is praised to excess for her personal attractions. Her vanity is soothed, and her mind is so darkened, that she sees no bad motive whatever, and no blemish in the flatterer. "A woman," says one well versed in our nature, "can always find a palliation for the misdeeds which are set in motion by her own beauty." How often do we see the faults of the flatterer, in this way, actually converted into graces. Or a lady is but moderately well-favored, and is commended on that point where she felt a distrust of herself. The assurance of her charms rushes like a tide over her spirit, and she surrenders herself a victim to blandishments. Or she may be even personally plain. The praise of some one good feature, will then suffice, perhaps, to subdue her affections.

Is one more cultivated than her sex in general? He, who offers incense to her intellect, may intoxicate and win. How often does this kind of adulation succeed, where the commendation of personal attractions would have failed. But let her, who is subjected to gross and excessive flattery, ask her own heart, "Do I respect this individual? Has he my sober esteem? Can I look on his character, and say it is such as to give promise of happiness to his bosom companion?" These few questions would often dissolve the spell. If you marry one, such as I describe above, he may continue through the bridal month this delicious repast, but amid growing cares, when busy and anxious, you shall soon find that the syren voice is hushed. It will be you, who must then speak sweet words. To you, will he turn for those kind attentions, which the habit of being caressed and complimented, and never forgetting yourself, will have miserably prepared you to bestow.

It requires much watchfulness to shun the contagion of an earthly Passion, in forming the marriage tie. We should be perfectly certain that our impulses are all pure, that it is the moral and intellectual we prize in our friend. The spirit alone can profit us. An intemperate woman always shocks us beyond measure. She, who lives for the pleasures of the table, falls from the rank of her sex. All who would preserve their integrity, must guard against every gross and low tendency, and cultivate in their inmost soul a regard for character alone, and a desire of spiritual acquisitions, in their partner for life.

Some are charmed by personal Bravery. It is often remarked, that the female sex admire military characters. Being constitutionally timid, the courage they associate with the soldier, is to them always an attractive quality. They lean upon it fondly, for protection in their own physical weakness. In the Island of Borneo, no man is allowed to solicit a damsel in marriage until he has cut off the head of an enemy. To how many, in Christian lands, is personal prowess a primary recommendation, in a candidate for marriage.

Yet are not tenderness, fidelity, and constancy, quite as important in a husband, as physical courage? She who gives herself for a plume or an epaulet, or for the bravery they are thought to indicate, will learn, in after days, that although the oak be admirable for its stoutness, there are gentler trees one would desire in the garden of domestic love.

Many matches are made solely through the accidental Proximity of the parties. A young lady visits a friend often, and the brother, by being daily seen, engages her affections.

Perhaps a gentleman boards in the family of her father. The simple circumstance of her being more in his society, than in that of others of his age, is the foundation of their marriage. There seems almost a fatality in these cases, they so often occur.

Now I am far from recommending a female to put on an unnatural reserve toward those she sees thus frequently; but let her recollect, that the mere fact of her interchanging so many thoughts and feelings with another, predisposes both to a more intimate connection. It is better, if the connection would be an improper one, to prevent such a consummation, by decided conduct in the outset, than by encouragements to induce an offer, you may feel compelled to accept. Are you much thrown by accident into the company of a particular gentleman? Be sure that your deportment toward him be not such as to mislead him, in regard to your estimate of his character. Avoid every thing that shall seem to make it a matter of course that you will marry him. Study his traits, and look on him in all respects precisely as you would on any other associate. Let it not be said by others that you are fated to marry a certain person, because you are so much in his society.

A young woman is often induced to marry a man for the sake of his Family Connections. They are, perhaps, wealthy, and have a high standing in society, on that account. Or, they are respected for their name and rank, as descendants of worthy ancestors. The friends deem it "a good match;" the alliance is desirable on many accounts. Who can think of rejecting overtures from so eligible a quarter? All this is said and done with much the same feelings as the crowned heads of the Old World negotiate intermarriages with one another, in cold blood, and as a business transaction. If the parties are of about equal standing, as regards their relatives, it is called on each side, "marrying into a good family," and what more can be desired?

Or, the lady may be raised in the world by connecting herself with a family superior, in fortune, or rank, to her own. To this surely, it will be said, no one can object. Were it not folly to lose so fine an opportunity of entering a renowned circle of relations? In Persia, the father first of all, selects a family, with whom he wishes to have his son connected. After this, he makes inquiries about the girl's personal endowments. Is not something very like this often done in Christian lands? The leading question, in these cases, is, "What are the connections?" not, as it should be, the reverse of the practice in Persia, "Who and what is the individual particularly concerned?" The character, the principles, the disposition and heart of him, to whom a lady consigns her whole destiny, are thus actually put out of view, for the sake of his family! One may see, daily, alliances between individuals who come together evidently on account of their kindred alone; and who, for any congruity of disposition, or fitness of traits, might as well, like the English nobility, have been betrothed in their cradles.

Many females marry for Personal Distinction. A gentleman is eminent in the political world, or as an author and scholar, or in military fame, or for skill and success in his calling; or he shines in fashionable society. The origin of this practice may sometimes be found in early education. The parents are ambitious of elevating their daughter by marriage. They awaken in her hopes and expectations above her condition in life. They

teach her, by their conversation and deportment, if not directly, that her “being's end and aim” is to rise in the world.

The cases are frequent, in which a girl is encouraged to receive the addresses of one, who is deficient in almost every quality requisite in a good husband, merely because he is “a great man.” A writer observes that “love is our first toy, our second, display.” But here this is completely reversed. Display is the first toy; as for love, that is an inferior consideration. You shall see a young woman led to barter herself to a man who is ignorant, proud, selfish, and unkind. “Let the person,” says one, “be blind, lame, deformed, diseased, severe, morose, vicious, old, or good for nothing, if the parents can but a little advance their daughter above the quality or condition themselves have lived in, the poor child must be made a living sacrifice, and probably know no more happy days after the solemnization of her nuptials.” We are told that in Naples, it is not uncommon for a nobleman of decayed fortune, to send his daughters to a nunnery, because his means will not enable him to educate them for marriage in the highest circles of society. The recent tragedy enacted in the city of Philadelphia, was a mournful illustration of the dangers of parental ambition. A father had toiled for years, to amass wealth for the purpose of introducing his daughter to society in England, and elevating her to a high station in that land. She married contrary to his wishes, and in his fiend-like disappointment, wrought up to insanity, he actually murdered the victim of his rage, his own child. Why will parents thus attempt to coerce the chainless affections? Why should so many females consent to marry the objects of their aversion, nay, sometimes, of their disgust, for the sake of a name?

Woman has been known to marry from the love of Conquest, and the desire to rule. The female heart is susceptible of the love of power, and one may seek, or consent to join herself to, a husband, for the sake of having a subject, over whom continually to reign. We are told that Madam Gamarra, the wife of the President of Peru, is a “female Bonaparte, and though her husband is nominally the head of the republic, she is the real sovereign.” How many smaller empires exhibit the same unnatural picture. It is in vain to say that the wife is the more capable of the two. This by no means exonerates her from blame, who deliberately entered the marriage state with so little respect for her companion, as to cherish a determined purpose of lording it over him, as her inferior.

Ambition of power is always a dangerous principle of conduct. She who consents to marry another, without love, esteem, or respect for him, and merely to queen it over his life, can hardly possess the Christian temper. She is assuredly destitute of that chief grace of her sex, deep and sincere affection. Mrs. Phelps says, on this subject, that “Submission and obedience belong to everything in the Universe, except the Great Master of the whole. It is a law, that support and protection demand obedience. Hence, the child is bound to yield this tribute to its parent, and the people to the laws, and the wife to the husband.” This doctrine, although advanced by a female, is likely to meet with some remonstrance at this day. Yet surely, none will contend that the reverse of it, is a true one, that, contrary to the affirmation of Scripture, “the woman is the head of the man.” Let the maiden turn from such thoughts in her earliest days.

“Now let a true ambition rise,
And ardor fire her breast,
To reign in worlds above the skies,
In Heavenly glories drest.”

Some ladies exchange their single condition, in the hope of escaping thereby the Toils and Cares of life. They picture to themselves the felicity of having one constantly devoted to the supply of their wants, and waiting to gratify their every wish. This looks all exceedingly captivating, in prospect. They expect from their friend not only the same attentions as he rendered during their engagement, but an increased service, from his being ever near them and having nothing but their happiness to occupy him.

But can a lady anticipate these rivers of ease and pleasure, without securing the respect of her husband? No one, who reflects for a moment on the future, can do this. Does our friend expect the idolatry of her husband? She must recollect that “No respect,”—and, of course, no love,—“is lasting, but that which is produced by our being in some degree useful to those who pay it.” No age ever erected altars to gods destitute of good qualities. She, who would be worshipped in the heart of her bosom companion, can secure this homage only by deserving it through exertion. Married life must be one of care and toil. Let no female delude herself by imagining it to be otherwise. It brings, where hearts are wedded, as well as hands, joys and supports far more than sufficient to lighten its burdens. But burdens let none think to shun in it.

Instances are not wanting, in which woman has given herself to a vicious companion, in the belief that she could reform him. The stage has often produced dramas, in which the hero, after a long course of conduct utterly inconsistent with matrimonial happiness, has at length been suddenly converted to the ways of virtue. Hence the false and pernicious maxim, that “a reformed rake makes the best husband.” But in real life, it will be found that instantaneous changes, occurring on the eve of marriage, are usually adopted for the sake of appearances, and endure only so long as policy requires.

Dr. Dwight observes well on this point, that “nothing but folly can lead us to expect that this institution can change the whole nature of those who enter into it; and like a magical spell, confer knowledge, virtue, and loveliness, upon beings who have neither.” She who marries a man, that is addicted to immoral practices, incurs fearful hazards. Not only does she risk her personal happiness, from his vicious conduct, but she exposes her own character. Who can tell that, instead of being reformed by her, the husband may not entice her into his own sins, or into those equally ruinous? Will she calmly commit herself to the talons of the vulture, in the hope of taming his ferocity, and changing entirely his habits? The experiment is one which no woman of ordinary prudence will try.

The temptation I allude to is likely to be presented to many of this sex, especially in populous places, where the vices cluster. Had I a friend thus exposed, I would entreat her to beware of looking with the least partiality on a profligate, or an unprincipled man. “Let him be a very courtier, for his grace and agreeableness in conversation,” I would say to her, “be not you ensnared by his tongue.” By a strange paradox, the worst men sometimes

fancy and select pious females for their wives. I do not deny that cases occur, in which the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife. But if gross sins be added to a want of religious faith, I contend that no woman is justified in forming this connection. Should she detect such traits and practices in her lover, on the eve of their marriage, she is bound to dismiss him. God will provide a lamb, if we come boldly to the altar, and keep not back our dearest affection.

Some females have consented to bestow their hand, without a gift of the heart, upon one who importuned them by ceaseless addresses. They did not love, nor could they, where consent to marriage was yielded with such reluctance. Perhaps some considerable aversion to the union was expressed, but it was at length abandoned, as they thought, from necessity. "I am fated," such an one will say, "to marry a person I cannot love, and so it must be." We have known many instances, in which it was paradoxically asserted, that the lady "married a certain gentleman to get rid of him."

The sentiment of compassion, has a large share in some of these cases. A suitor relates his troubles again and again; his happiness will he forever blighted; he shall even sicken and die, if rejected. Desdemona listens to the story:

"'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful;
She wished she had not heard it."

But alas, from pitying, the steps are few to "embracing." To relieve such sufferings, a lady resigns her every prospect of peace and comfort.

How many, indeed, after once rejecting a suitor, are moved by his renewed entreaties, to sacrifice themselves, merely to assuage his flowing tears. They think it a duty, it may be, to forego every hope of happiness, to fly in the face of certain evil and woe, rather than see one so pained by a refusal.

Benevolence deserves commendation in all cases. Yet not always is it the result of sound judgment, or the demand of duty to marry one, because importuned to that step. He, who waits at your feet and implores acceptance, might not be so miserable after all, as he and you imagine, should you decline his overtures. In the cares of a busy world, he may find a draught of the waters of Lethe. His affections,—if it be a pure and deep love that impels him, and not insanity or mental intoxication,—may be turned into other channels, and the remnant of his life prove, after all, an endurable evil. He may be directed to a companion, who will render his lot far more agreeable than it could be, had you, with the feelings under which you separated, been his wife.

Besides, the instances are very rare in which a female is required, for the gratification of an importunate lover, to do what she feels must be suicidal to her own peace. As a Christian, she is bound to love others as herself, if you please, even as much as herself; but not more. If she offer up all her self-love, and take a course intended exclusively for the gratification of another, does she not go then beyond the gospel command? There are cases in which this may be a duty, but let a young woman ponder long and seriously,

before concluding that hers is of that number. It may call for great energy to withstand importunities. She may sometimes feel that her resolution must give way; but let her consider the future, a whole life of aversion from one ever at her side, and if this seem her inevitable doom, did she now marry, she will remain firm in her purpose to the last.

Nearly related to the class just described, are those who marry under the impression that it is their Duty to form this connection with some one. Public opinion demands it, as a matter of course; their parents have always conducted, as if this was their view of the subject, and the daughter conscientiously believes that she must conform to it. Now, if what I have hitherto said is correct, there is no such thing as an unconditional obligation to marry. It is a duty only when circumstances favor it. If there be decided objections against the character of the one, or the many, who may have made overtures of marriage to a young lady, it has never yet become her duty to marry. On the contrary, she is solemnly bound still to remain single, to wait until Providence indicates to her a prospect of so changing her situation, as to enhance her usefulness and happiness.

Marriage is regarded too often as a Business transaction. It is entered upon for prudential reasons alone; the heart is not interested, nor, of course, given at the altar. In our country, where all things take the form of traffic, there is especial danger that the most sacred bond which man can form, will bear a mercantile aspect, by being rudely exposed in the market place. Let prudence have her office in this matter, but let it always be subordinate to a higher principle. Affection should prompt and impel; discretion ought only to act as a guide, a light, and counsellor, never as an originator and master, in matrimonial concerns. There is a wide chasm between imprudence and rashness in this transaction, and a Stoical sale of the hand, while the heart is kept back.

Some marry from Gratitude. They have received pecuniary aid from another; or they have been assisted by him in sickness; or he was their friend in their afflictions or troubles. But can they not express their gratitude otherwise than by marriage? If the single act, or few acts, of past favor, deserving though they be in themselves, constitute his sole claim to their hand and heart, let them be slow in the gift.

Chapter IX. CONDITIONS OF TRUE MARRIAGE.

But one divine cement. "Marrying to increase Love." Must be Free.
Advice of Parents. A rare example. Good Disposition. Good Temper.
Charity on Religious Opinions. Intelligence. Refined Taste. Good
Health. Energy of Character. Similarity of Fortune; of Age. Early
Marriages. View of them in Italy. Recommended by Dr. Franklin.
Objections. Lady Blessington.

Before forming any connection in life, we should consider well its objects, and the means by which they promise to be accomplished, and then ask ourselves if these be placed within our particular reach. Now what is marriage? *The union of two individual souls in one.* This is its essence, that without which, it loses all claim to the sacred name it bears. But what will secure a union of souls between husband and wife?

There is but one divine cement, Love. No substitute can atone for its absence; no talisman can produce consequences that belong only to this holy principle.

Many joys are inherent in a true marriage. It has sympathies, the most intimate of which mortals are capable, and it calls forth affections, such as pertain to no other voluntary relation of life. But these sentiments are the fruits of love alone. Disgust and aversion cannot produce them, nor are they the growth of indifference. If there be not a peculiar interest in the society of another, and a pain in his absence, no foundation is yet laid for a genuine marriage between him and yourself.

Again, there are evils incident to this life, which lose much of their bitterness, when shared with another. There is a sorrow of spirit, which none but a near friend can soothe. Peculiar trials belong also to the marriage condition. How can these evils and trials be mitigated to the wife, or the husband? Only by the power of love. If you dislike your companion, you cannot minister cordially to his griefs, nor will he participate in yours. Marriage is an arch; if love be its keystone, it will stand firmly; it will grow stronger with time. That wanting, it will crumble in a day. Never should this relation be formed, except with such sentiments as give reasonable hope of an ever-growing love.

Our natural emotions, on witnessing a marriage without apparent affection, are painful. If a lady be compelled so to marry, we pity her doom; if she do it voluntarily, we cannot but feel a disgust at the connection. Yet how often, could we unveil human hearts, should we see at the altar, nothing deeper than stratagem, expediency, fancy, or at best, friendship, as the chief attractive cause. Is it right to complain ourselves, or should we wonder, at the spectacle of miserable matches in others, if the temple of marriage rest thus on wood, hay and stubble, instead of having gold, silver, and precious stones at its base?

“Marrying to increase love,” says a writer, “is like gaming to get rich. You are liable, in the hazard, to lose all you carry to the game.” They, who join hands, with cold hearts, often cease even to respect one another. They become, in truth, like the pith-ball, in its approach to the electrified cylinder, the more fiercely repelled, the nearer the contact. If you do not love the individual you wed, above all his sex; if nothing more than fancy and friendship draw you toward him, then your marriage will be indeed a “lottery,” and yours may be a blank. Let there be genuine love, and if alienation afterward occur, it may be overcome by time and circumstances. Enter this condition in coldness, and strange will be the exception, if that chill ever be exchanged for a glow.

A true marriage must be Free, contracted by the preference and choice of the parties. If it be done by constraint, or against the will of either, it comes short of an union, and is a mere bargain and sale. An offer may be accepted, simply to gratify a parent or a friend, when the taste of the lady would have prompted a rejection. The case of Madeline Bray, in *Nickleby*, is precisely of this character. She pledged herself a victim to one whom she did not love, and could not but secretly despise, and had the marriage been actually consummated, it would have hardly been a more incongruous, forced, and unnatural connection, than many which occur in real life. To marry *only* to please a third person,

even though it be a father, or mother, is never a duty, and can be the result only of a misled judgment, or a mistaken kind of filial piety.

Yet I by no means recommend the disregard of parental advice, in this sacred transaction. Perhaps the dangers of this age lie chiefly in that direction. There is often a false independence in this matter, an idea that a certain individual must be a lady's companion for life. She may believe that "the match was made in Heaven," and that it is a sin, in parents and friends, to oppose it. Or, she may determine that, let what will be the consequences, she will accept the overtures of the gentleman before her. The tendencies of the times induce many parents to keep silent, and take no part, and give no advice, when their daughters receive proposals for marriage. It is thought that, let them advise as they may, their children are resolved to do just as they please, and, to preserve peace, they forbear to interfere in the least.

This state of things cannot be too deeply deplored. When a young woman has an offer of addresses, it presents a solemn occasion, one which demands of her great deliberation, thoughtfulness and discretion. The instances are rare, in which an immediate decision can with propriety be effected. Counsel and assistance are never more needed, than in this important exigency. And to whom should one go, in preference to those who best understand her character, and what traits are needed in another to render her happy, and useful to him; and who feel also the deepest interest in her welfare? The daughter should seek advice from this quarter, and the parent ought promptly to give it.

In the other extreme, where parental partiality would coerce the feelings of a child, and impel her to a step she would fain avoid, then let the daughter mildly, but firmly, maintain her own purpose. I saw recently an account of a couple who were married nearly three years since, but owing to the opposition of friends, they lived separately, and kept their secret, until circumstances permitted a disclosure. Here must have been genuine affection, a true union of souls. "Stolen waters are sweet," and none seem more so, than the draughts of a clandestine marriage. Much as I deprecate the result of such elopements, I would rather a young lady should be even guilty of this imprudence, if she sincerely love her companion, than that she marry one she does not love, nor can hope ever to love, for the sake of gratifying any individual in the world. Let advice be sought, and let it be weighed and well heeded; but let it operate only on a free mind, and induce only to a more serious, and dispassionate consideration, for yourself, of the reply you shall give.

A good Disposition, if essential in the wife, is no less so in the husband. No young lady would marry one she believed destitute of this quality. Every instance, in which it is ultimately found to be wanting, is the result of a deception, either culpably disregarded by the lady, or so artfully conducted, during the days of "courtship," as to be then wholly unperceived. But of what value are all other recommendations, talent, beauty, wealth, family, without an amiable spirit, and kind feelings? She, who allows herself to hazard any thing on this point, is little less than insane. If her partner prove morose, sullen, selfish, it will blight forever the joys of their marriage day. Better had she been bound to the dead, as certain offenders of her sex were said to be of old, than bound to a living

mass of pollution, to one whose principles become more and more her horror, as they are daily betrayed.

Next to the disposition, I regard a good Temper as essential to domestic happiness. If nature have bestowed sparingly of this gift, and there be evidence of inward passion, unless there be also unceasing efforts at self-control, commit not your destiny to the individual. When the restraints of unfamiliar acquaintance are at length thrown off, what can you anticipate, but captiousness, and peevishness, if not actual violence? “Where surfaces,” says one, “are contiguous, every little prominence is mutually felt.” How fearful that minds subject to unrestrained anger, should be brought in so near collision, as may be produced by marriage.

You will desire proofs of sensibility. This is often accompanied by excitable passions; but not uniformly, not of necessity. No one could be prone naturally to greater strength of passion than Washington seems to have been, yet how admirably did he control his anger. The beau ideal of a desirable companion combines quick feelings, with a serene, self-possessed temper. Spare no efforts in ascertaining how near the individual who addresses you approaches this ideal. An utter failure, should present, in your view, an insuperable obstacle to a connection with him for life.

Another condition of happy marriage, is an union of spirit on the great subject of Religion. It is desirable that the husband and wife belong to the same Christian denomination; and that the family they constitute worship in one church. Still, the circumstance of their adherence to different sects should not alone prevent their connection. They should hope to unite in their views on the main doctrines of religion; but even this is not indispensable to a true marriage. One thing, however, is so; and that is, that they each possess *the spirit of Charity*.

There must be sympathy, as respects the value and necessity of personal piety. It is not their belief alone, which can produce this; nor will a diversity of opinion prevent it, where the spirit of Christ exists mutually between them. We are told that, where husband and wife enter into a cordial union, there often becomes a growing personal resemblance of one to the other. Like views, tastes, feelings and interests, generate a similar expression of countenance. This blessed token of genuine affection, will often be manifested, where there is found a spiritual sympathy. Let this holy temper be deemed essential, and you shall

“Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend
Towards a higher object.—Love was given,
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end.”

I have in mind, an instance, where there seems great unity of spirit between two, whose religious opinions are supposed to be diametrically opposite. Who can tell but, by her singular charity, the wife is there sanctifying her husband, when had she exhibited toward him a bigoted and repulsive disposition, she might have driven him even to blank infidelity?

Let there be a full and frank expression of opinion on points of faith and conscience, before marriage, as well as after. Occasion is sometimes given for the complaint that the true feelings and intentions on this subject were concealed, during the engagement of the parties; or, that more charity was expressed then, than afterward. This, of all prospects, is most assuredly fatal to the hope of a happy marriage. Whatever difference may exist, as to preferences of doctrine, or places of worship, let them be explicitly communicated, before marriage. Then will it never be said, "This I did not expect. It was not so, during our engagement."

The young woman may justly require that her future companion be a man of Intelligence. "Mental attractions alone can gain a lasting empire. Where these are wanting, as the object loses its novelty, and becomes common, its beauties fade away, and the imagination, and the eyes which complacently and admiringly, rested upon them, begin to wander.—Love, if it ever existed, rapidly abates; one or both regret precipitation;—glaring defects stand out in bold relief, in place of the perfections which the imagination had painted." She, who does not regard another as at least her equal in talent and education, can hardly entertain for him that respect, which is the basis of all true love. Not only should there be a moral and religious, but also an intellectual, sympathy between husband and wife. Else, how can they enjoy the society and conversation of each other, in those numberless hours, when they are sole companions? What a burden to a lady of cultivated mind, must be the society of one, who takes no pleasure in a book, and can appreciate only the gossip of the day, or outward gratifications.

The mortification too, of being linked to stupidity, or ignorance, for life, of feeling always anxious, when in company, lest your companion utter the follies he does at your fireside, must be insupportable. If you have a husband, whom you cannot trust as a man of common sense at least, woe is your lot.

Nor is it unreasonable to require in your partner, refined Taste, and delicate feelings. There may be valuable traits, and still this be wanting. A friend of mine married an individual, whom she respected for his talents, and Christian character. But he was still destitute of acute perceptions and deep sensibility. There was a coarseness in his nature, which made him blind to her feelings, and a vulgarity of habit and speech, which to her was completely disgusting. He did not intend any harm, but was still always offending her taste; and this simple circumstance embittered her whole happiness, and hastened her, I believe, out of this world. Opinions may differ; the grave may marry the gay, and the silent, the loquacious; the irritable may seek the calm; the bold, the modest; and the impassioned, the gentle. This occurs, indeed, according to the analogy of the physical world, where attraction takes place between different bodies, as between the opposite poles of magnets, &c. But it is not so in matters of taste, certainly not, so far as refinement and coarseness are concerned.

Good Health is a point of no ordinary moment. It is needful for the discharge of our duties; and she can hardly be justified, who allies herself to one evidently incapable, for his physical debility, of sustaining a family. A person afflicted by an incurable disease, especially if hereditary, cannot reasonably expect a young lady to sacrifice herself upon

him. There are other offices, beside that of the nurse, demanded of a wife, and the cases should be rare, in which all other considerations are merged in this.

But there may be health, and still a deficiency in Energy of Character. With this trait as the foundation, you may anticipate a fair superstructure; but if this be wanting, you ought not, and cannot, look for anything but poverty, and wretchedness, throughout your connection. A worldly-minded man, will be far from an interesting companion; yet, in the issue, it is better to trust yourself with the slave of business, than with a palpable drone.

Similarity of Fortune is to be desired in those who contemplate marriage. There need not be, it is true, entire equality in this respect; yet a great disparity of circumstances is often the source of melancholy evils. The individuals thus joined, will probably differ in their habits, and in their views of economy, of dress, and style of living. One shall appear mean, and the other extravagant. She, who is raised suddenly from poverty to affluence, must possess rare humility, to escape undue elation and pride. While to one accustomed to opulence, there will seem a degradation in the condition of a destitute husband. These evils will spring up also in the character and feelings of the husband, where the wife has lived in circumstances entirely unlike his own. Instances there are, and will be, in which such consequences will not follow; but the tendencies are strongly in this direction.

The Ages of those joined in marriage, should be somewhat near each other. How else can there be true sympathy between them? One shall charge the other with levity, and that allegation be retorted by the charges of moroseness, and insensibility to enjoyment. It is well, perhaps, that there be that difference of age, which nature indicates in the sexes. It is not of two, or four, years we speak. The great poet of humanity writes, and perhaps wisely,—if these be the limits,—thus:

“Let still the woman take
An elder than herself; so wears she to him,
So sways she level in her husband's heart.”

Much has been said in relation to the expediency of Early Marriages. In Italy, early marriages are regarded as so important, that in many churches and fraternities, there are annual funds established, to raise portions, and procure comfortable matches for young maidens who are destitute. In their favor, is the circumstance that the habits are then less established, and the parties may more easily conform to one another, than afterward. Nor is prejudice then so strong, nor opinion so inflexible, as in later manhood. The husband and wife can hence educate one another better, than if their marriage had occurred late in life. It was for these, and for prudential reasons, that Dr. Franklin recommended early marriages.

On the other hand, it cannot be questioned, that young ladies are often engaged, and sometimes married too early, before their school education is completed, or their judgment matured. The mother is, perhaps, anxious to marry her daughters “off her hands,” and, moved by a miserable ambition, she and they, lest she be later in her engagement than some companion, consent to her being sacrificed on the first offer, be it

what it may. Hence come those fatal alliances, in which “a six month's acquaintance after marriage, transforms the beau ideal into a fool, or a coxcomb; and the happy couple, to use an expression of Lady Blessington's, have to 'pay for a month of honey, with a life of vinegar.'” Circumstances should affect a predetermination on this point, yet where they are balanced, she is the wiser, who postpones a matrimonial connection, until her age, and her preparation for it, indicate its propriety.

Chapter X. THE SOCIETY OF YOUNG MEN.

Importance of right views on this point. We cannot banish all thoughts of love. The opposite extreme. Regard not every one as a lover. Two errors in the society of gentlemen. Forwardness. The poet's caution. Undue reserve. The happy medium attainable. Should know a variety of gentlemen. The acquaintances of Brothers.

No period of life is more decisive of a female's character, than that at which she enters the society of the opposite sex, as a woman. Her manners and conversation at that time usually do much to determine her condition for life. The IDEAL which she carries with her into the world, becomes the presiding star of her destiny. On her general estimate of man, and the views she entertains of his sex, every thing now depends. If she can penetrate character, and has resolution to form high purposes, blessed is her lot.

First, then, I cannot join with those who advise a young lady to banish entirely from her mind every thought of love, until she receives overtures for particular attention. Providence designed her for the exercise of her affections; why then seek wholly to suppress them, or to expend no thought whatever upon them? “Nature,” says a recent writer, “will assert her rights over the beings she has made: she avenges all attempts to force or shackle her operations. We ought long ago to have been convinced that the only power allowed to us, is the power of direction.” Yet “to girls have been denied the very thoughts of love,—even in its noblest and purest form.”—They “know nothing at all of it, or nothing but what they have clandestinely gathered from corrupt sources.” Is not this evidently doing violence to one of the strongest, and I will add, the holiest, impulses of their nature? If it be true, as some affirm, that the marriage service is the first part of the Liturgy perused by a young lady, I do not regard it as matter for surprise, derision, or censure. She, who forces her mind wholly off this subject, will be ill qualified, when the occasion demands it, to listen to proposals of marriage. Ignorance and blindness can do little to give her that sound judgment, and true discrimination, which alone should dictate her reply. No, let this rather be done. Let her teachers and parents speak frankly on this topic, treat it as a serious concern, and aid her to form in her mind, a model of moral and intellectual excellence, such as would render one a desirable companion, and yet let this model be not a creature of romance, but of real life. Is it not better thus to guide the affections and regulate the views on this subject, than to stifle all feeling, and blindfold the mind to love? In what province should reason be exercised, if not in that, which affects our condition through life, for weal, or for woe?

But, while encouraged to give suitable thought to this subject, let not a young lady become totally absorbed in it. Let her not look only on a gentleman to canvass his merits as a lover, and a husband. The sexes should associate for other and nobler objects; for social enjoyment, for intellectual improvement, and for mutual aid, as moral and religious beings. She who overlooks these precious advantages of general society, sacrifices an invaluable means of education, no less than one of rational gratification.

Still less should one allow herself to imagine every gentleman in love with her. This sometimes occurs in consequence of an ignorance of the world; sometimes from the illusion of very strong affections; and again, from the unworthy practice of certain young men, who delight in exciting and trifling with the feelings of the opposite sex. Let the cause be what it may, nothing more exposes a lady to ridicule. Such extreme and manifest sensitiveness provokes the trifler to fresh follies. The sensible are disgusted by it; and she, who thus indulges her imagination, is sowing the wind, and will reap the whirlwind. Sorrow, regret, and disappointment await her.

In regard to "behavior to gentlemen," I do not think set rules and forms are needful. Where the heart is duly controlled, and the understanding cultivated, and fancy a servant not mistress of the soul, the deportment will be spontaneously right, and commendable. Then all may safely be trusted to nature. The manners will be the expression of gentleness, mingled with firmness.

Two errors, however, are so prevalent in some circles, as to demand a passing notice. One is that of the Forward and presuming. No lady can make advances of a character bold and obvious to a gentleman, and still retain a good name in society. Modesty is the only current coin of her sex; nothing can atone for its absence. A self-possessed, yet retiring manner, is at once the index, and the charm, of female worth. It may be needless to speak of the confirmed coquette. She, like the coxcomb, may expect no mercy from others. There are few, to whom the caution of the poet is necessary,

"She can both false and friendly be.

* * * * *

She gives a side glance and looks down,

Beware! Beware!

Trust her not;

She is fooling thee."

Examples of this character, I believe, are comparatively rare, despite his opinion, who said that "at sixteen, woman is a coquette, *par instinct*." Still, it is too true, that "the whole system of female education tends more to instruct women to allure, than to repel;" although "as rationally might the military disciplinarian limit his tuition to the mode of assault, leaving his soldiery in entire ignorance of the tactics of defence."

Opposed to this fault stands that of undue Reserve. Some young ladies are so trained as apparently to enshrine themselves from all approach, in the society of gentlemen. They are models of decorum, miracles of prudence, and drawn up, as if always anticipating a

foe. They inwardly sneer at all sentiment, and deride those, who exhibit it, and pride themselves, above all things, in keeping every one completely at a distance.

I do not deny that a female has a right, and ought, to repel all improper liberties, and to shew those, who are unduly familiar, that she can assume, at fit times, a little dignity. But need one, in doing this, build round herself a wall of ice? Shall she, through fear of seeming fond and forward, put on an eternal frown? In avoiding French freedom, we often substitute an Anglo-American prudery. The slightest compliment is interpreted as flattery, so that the remarker must do violence to his honest convictions, lest he offend an ever-suspicious, maidenly, pride.

The true medium between boldness and a chilling reserve may not be easily attained; yet it is worth years of effort, even to approximate this happy manner. There are women, who can invite to easy and pleasant conversation, and yet repel the most trivial impropriety in a gentleman. I could wish that our female writers, in their minute directions to the young of their sex, had recommended this desirable medium, instead of teaching them to regard themselves as always acting on the defensive. Can a lady never accept a present from a gentleman, without so doing it as to encourage his particular attentions? Does she, by consenting to walk, or ride with one, bind herself to him for life, or invite his addresses, as a suitor?

But let a young woman resolve, that, while she receives the ordinary marks of courtesy with readiness, she will not allow herself to infer that they signify every thing. If the remark of Lord Bacon be correct in general, that “women, when young, are the idols of men,” the reverse of it is not seldom true. A companion for the evening is invested with imaginary dispositions, and she, who ought to have exercised her judgment, and waited for decisive tokens of favor, is captivated without the least intention on the part of her fancied lover.

It is certainly desirable that a young lady be acquainted, and that somewhat particularly, with a variety of gentlemen. Thus only can she be qualified to discriminate between the undeserving, the indifferent, and the excellent. How else can you know the indications of those who undervalue your sex in general, the worthless, gay, and unprincipled, and guard against their influence? There are those, who delight in making sport of an inexperienced female. To understand the traits of such, you must sometime have met with them. But be sure you never place yourself in the power of an individual of this character, or of one, whose principles and designs you suspect. If you doubt the purity of any one who seeks your society frequently, consult a friend older or wiser than yourself; and abide by the judgment of disinterested observers.

There are instances, in which a young woman is brought into the society of the other sex, by her Brothers. This sometimes exposes one to mistake the civilities of friendship, for manifestations of love. Thus situated, you ought to take special heed against those romantic ideas, and premature inclinations, that spring from passion and fancy. Here as at all times, the advice of a judicious brother, before whom those of his own sex are accustomed completely to disclose their true character, should be sought and prized. Do

not permit yourself to indulge a predilection for one, against whom, as a companion for life, so near a relative and friend has warned you.

Chapter XI. FIRST LOVE.

What is love? The first, the only all-pervading. Petrarch and Laura. "Love-matches." Self-oblivion indicates true love. Proofs of one's being affected by this sentiment. Shakspeare's description of a lover. Jealousy and Timidity indicate love. Overtures. Unrequited love. Rejection of Addresses.

I use the expression at the head of this chapter, because of the importance I attach, not only to the sentiment in general, but especially to its earliest developement. There are those, who sneer at the name of love. There are many, who laugh at its mention, if made in sober earnestness, and yet some of these, who thus speak in public, do, I believe, in the secrecy of their hearts, believe in, aye, reverence, it, as one of the most sacred impulses of our nature. Because we have witnessed, or read of, a silly sentimentalism, that affected its character, let us not straightway question the possibility of its existence in any one.

Nor would I encourage the little girl in musing over novels, or listening to talk on this subject, until she dreams herself in love. There is indeed little danger of this where friends have not made it a theme for perpetual inuendos and jests, but spoken frankly, simply, and seriously of it, as a reality in human experience. She, who finds herself tending to foolish imaginings on this subject, has but to employ her mind constantly, and preserve her health in soundness, and the illusion will be dispelled.

But what is love? Shall we take the description of it given by the master poet of our nature, who tells us that

"Love with the motion of all elements,
Courses as swift as thought in every power;
And gives to every power a double power,
Above their functions and their offices"?

It may be thus mighty in its sway over some hearts; but not always are its courses so "swift." The affections of some "tremble, like a leaf, at every breath of love; while others, like the ocean, are moved only by the breath of a storm." Yet in all, its approach causes great changes in the character, and usually alters the entire complexion of life. Where the individual has enjoyed great mental culture, it brings in its train increased hazards; and in not a few hearts, its involutions are strangely complex, and its abysses of fearful depth.

I am one of those who believe, that in strict truth, the first love is the only real, all-pervading affection. There are other sentiments, on which the marriage relation may be founded with fair and reasonable hopes of an happy result. But no one can love two individuals, simultaneously or successively, with equal strength. There is a fervor, in the freshness of the heart's first gift, that no second occasion can quicken. Petrarch could

never have found another Laura. Though his was love at first sight, it endured until twenty-one years had terminated the life of its object. Our earliest manners, tones of voice, and expression of countenance, endure the longest. So does the stamp of love's seal, when new, outshine every subsequent impression. Hence the importance of bestowing this primal treasure with wisdom. Where all of this life, and all of the future is at stake, wary should be our steps, and well pondered our decisions.

We hear much of "love-matches." Weak transactions, but the foam of love's great deep, are many of these matches. Still there is such a thing as marriage based on spontaneous love. It may occur at a chance meeting, not, I allow, to be consummated without the revision of calm judgment, but still the fruit of a moment's impression. There is a kind of love, which is not natural, impulsive, and cordial, but the result of an unnatural predisposition, and an inflamed and diseased imagination. None the less is there an upwelling, genuine affection, that for the time, commands and absorbs woman's entire being. It is possible, that what is treated here as a jest, and there, as a matter of skepticism, may exist in some true hearts, suddenly conceived, yet persevered in, and permanent.

Some marry for money, others for beauty, for intelligence, or rank, or family, or fancy; there are those who marry for love. We have known females, who venerated the object of their affection so completely, as to mourn sincerely their own unworthiness of, and regard themselves as a simple gift of God to so good a man. Where one sees this beautiful self-oblivion, can he be a true philosopher, and assign any cause for it, save the existence of genuine love? She, who unites to this passion a provident self-possession, who is as calm, as she is keenly susceptible, will enter the marriage relation with the happiest omens of joy, and ever-growing success, in every coming duty.

After these preliminary remarks, it will be expected that I should give a sketch of the tokens and proofs of one's being under the influence of this sentiment. It occasions, on its approach, important changes in the feelings and character, such as no one experiences without being sensible of their occurrence, although, so close is the resemblance between love and the effects of a warm imagination, that one may fancy herself in love, when she really is not. It wakes emotions and sympathies never before awakened, and lying deep in our nature. No writer has described its signs and effects so minutely as Shakspeare. If we may believe him, it is not always marked by deliberation, and entire self-possession:

"If thou rememberest not the slightest folly
That ever love did make thee run into,
Thou hast not loved:
Or if thou hast not sat, as I do now,
Wearying thy hearer in thy mistress' praise,
Thou hast not loved:
Or if thou hast not broke from company,
Abruptly, as my passion now makes me,
Thou hast not loved."

Love makes the hours, when its object is absent, long and dreary. It renders even the contemplation of the preferred one more agreeable than the society of others. A prepossession for a particular individual usually makes one jealous of attentions bestowed by him on other persons. I once heard a gentleman remark, that it was this jealousy, which first convinced him that he was in love. You cannot open your lips to speak against him, who has impressed your heart. You will inwardly, although not probably in words, defend him from the attacks of others. To blush and falter under such circumstances would indicate love, much more surely than open professions.

Were the question put by yourself “Do I love this person?” the first reply,—that of timidity and doubt,—would be, “no.” Still for no consideration could you rest an hour in that conclusion. Unstaid in all motions else, there would be one fixed object,

“The constant image of the creature
That is beloved.”

Should Overtures be made by a gentleman, it requires great delicacy to treat them aright. Are you decided in the determination to accept them, let your reply be prompt. It is ungenerous to trifle with the feelings of another, when in your power. Perhaps you need advice. Those entitled to your first regard, on this subject, are your parents. Reserve at this period causes many unhappy mistakes. A word of information, a hint from so true a friend as a mother, may confirm your undecided purpose, or lead you at once to abandon it. Let it not be your fault, if you do not enjoy the benefit of such valuable counsel. Suppose your parents object to the connection, when your heart is interested, and judgment approves your affection. There are examples of noble self-denial under these circumstances. Cases there are, too, in which health, peace of mind, and even life, have been the forfeit paid for compliance with such advice. I believe it right, where the opposition is evidently unreasonable, that a young lady should obey the promptings of her own heart. Gretna Green, if it have witnessed the union of some unprincipled fugitives from home, has seen others joined in a true and sacred bond. Is not such a resort better than to hang, or suffocate oneself, as is so often done in France by thwarted lovers? The instances that justify this procedure may be very rare, yet surely it is better to follow nature's holiest law, than to drag out a lingering life of martyrdom, as thousands have done, to gratify what the world knew to be but a whim of an ambitious father, or a capricious mother. When conscience approves the step, let it be firmly taken. If the blessing of God can be invoked upon it, then is it right.

Another event may occur. The offering of the heart may prove Unrequited. She, who has poured forth the fulness of her affections, meets a chilling repulse. Perhaps it is instant; or there may be intimations of a favorable regard that shall fan, and keep alive, a hope. That hope is at length totally crushed. How is one to demean herself, under this severe trial? Let her cherish no resentment. This will but aggravate her sufferings and expose her to contempt. Neither should she dwell morbidly on her fate, and nurse in her bosom the seeds of consumption. Rather let the whole energy of her soul be given to banish the occurrence from her thoughts, and let her seek relief from the Source of all solace.

The task of extinguishing our affection for an individual, voluntarily, is never an easy one. They, who are called by circumstances to this effort, should know that it can usually be effected only by a resolute purpose, and by a force of exertion which, to those of strong feelings, seems almost to rend the spirit in twain. Yet so it must be. As a lady has well remarked—"to a frank and ardent nature," and such usually have this sex, "reasoning on love is a useless pastime;—it can be overcome only by an effort strong as the whirlwind, such as uproots the young and vigorous oak, in its bright leafing time. Woman's warm nature must cast it far away at once, though death were in the parting."

You may feel it a duty to reject the offers of a suitor. In this case, let your decision be communicated in such a manner as to spare the feelings of him, who cannot but be mortified, if not humbled, by your decision. How can she maintain a clear conscience, or even a sense of honor, who exposes a gentleman, under these circumstances, to the derision of the public? Let no one share the secret, beyond the precincts of your own family. Return all letters, and leave no evidence of the disappointment of your friend, where it may be discovered.

She, who conducts thus kindly and wisely, will retain still a respect for her suitor. If she lose his friendship, or alienate him entirely from her regard, it is sufficient proof that there was something wrong, either in the spirit, or the manner, of her refusal. Why should one sink in your estimation, for an event unexpected on his part, and for which he had seen nothing in your previous deportment, perhaps, to prepare him? Let your conduct be judicious, and then, should he address himself to another lady, she will not indeed have his first love, yet, unless greatly prejudiced by the fact of his previous rejection, she may accept his addresses, and be united to him, with the fair hope of a happy life.

Chapter XII. CONDUCT DURING ENGAGEMENT.

Two aspects of the Future. Extravagant Anticipations. Calm, and rational ones. We should disclose our true and entire Character. The great error of the Betrothed. Disclosure of Faults. Esteem and Respect to be secured. Sacredness of our Plighted word. Implied engagement. Dismissing a Suitor. A noble example of constancy. Sad fate of Mrs. Hemans. Preparation for marriage. Duration of engagement. Testimony from Père Lachaise. Short engagements usually most desirable.

After mature deliberation, and in accordance with the sacred impulse of love, you are now, let us conceive, pledged to one, who anticipates a future consummation with you, of the dearest relation which man can form. What views ought you to take of your present situation? and how should you deport yourself in your intercourse with this near friend?

There are two aspects, under which the future may, from this point, be regarded. It may be to you a region of dreams, and extravagant Anticipations. The mind may easily be allowed so to dwell on its scenes, that imagination shall take the place of reality. Circumstances often warrant but moderate expectations; yet amid the most arid waste you

see, like the deceived traveller in the deserts of Zahara, the enchanting *mirage*, a beautiful lake of deep, refreshing, inexhaustible waters.

A moment's reflection might teach such an one the delusiveness of these prospects. Let it be that your lover has every good quality you ascribe to him, that he is quite perfection; you must know, from the experience of other anticipated enjoyments, that the possession of an object tends naturally to moderate our feelings in regard to it. The heart, which beat feverish pulsations beneath the summer of expectation, becomes calm, when autumn's tranquil days have arrived. There is a wide chasm between the illusions of sleep and all we can call

“The sober certainty of waking bliss.”

There is a joy, it is true, in the marriage bond greater even than we once anticipated. But it comes from an unlooked-for source. It is not that very thing we imagined; in that we are often disappointed. It consists in the shining forth of new and before undiscovered traits. But when were extravagant anticipations ever yet realized, and that too in the precise objects, on which they had fastened?

Another view a lady who is engaged may take of coming life, is, that of the calm and Rational description. She may strive to see her lover in the true light; she may pray that her heart be not betrayed into false hopes, and resolve that she will never abandon her judgment, in so momentous a transaction. Such an one looks at the world as it is, a chequered scene; a place in which “one thing is set over against another;” a mart in which a just price must be paid for every article we obtain. This aspect of life may be less pleasing than its opposite. It may render what is termed “Courtship” something else beside a golden age; yet, in the end, who can doubt, it will prove a rich source of substantial happiness?

If it be desirable that a young woman see her lover in his genuine character, so is it that she disclose to him every feature of her own. Why should she wish to keep any thing concealed? What is the purpose of that period, which passes between the engagement of two individuals, and the consummation of their marriage? If it have any rational meaning, it must be to afford an opportunity for a thorough mutual acquaintance. The parties do not,—ostensibly, at least, this is the case,—they do not, pass hours and months in the society of one another, except the better to understand, and hence the more truly to sympathize with, each other.

Not, surely, does the suitor enter the presence of his friend, to exalt himself into an unnatural position. He is not striving to pass with her for some creature of romance, some hero, or god. No, the ostensible purpose of their interviews is, that he may exhibit himself to her more and more truly as he is, in heart, principle, character, and life. So is it designed, by these acts and conversations, that the lady should present her true phases before him. To suppose that she arrays her person, or frames her speech, with a view to concealing her real feelings, and thoughts, and dispositions, from him, is a mockery of the most sacred relation on earth.

One would imagine that nothing would give an individual such pain, in this situation, as the fear that her too partial admirer might conceive of her as a divinity, instead of a mere woman, inheriting the common frailties of our nature. Her chief solicitude would be, we should think, to guard against his forming too high expectations of her future character. Rather would she that he undervalue her merits, and so leave her room to rise in his estimation, than so heighten her charms, as to render the fruition of his hopes impossible.

Is this the usual tenor of feeling in the hearts of the betrothed? It would argue little practical knowledge of the world to contend that it is. On the contrary, there seems a systematic endeavor, on the part, too often, of both individuals, to disguise their real sentiments, cloak their sincere opinions, and throw a mist over their daily principles and habits. The gentleman usually exhibits only his Sunday exterior and manner, aiming studiously to veil his face, in the company of his affianced one. And instead of encouraging her to speak out her true thoughts, and show her ordinary disposition, he burns before her the incense of flattery, until she is constrained to force herself up to unnatural heights of goodness, in appearance and expression, lest her lover be compelled to lower his conception of his paragon, and at length see her, a poor, unadorned sharer of humanity, just as she is.

Who can wonder, amid this utter want of frankness, and these pasteboard forms, that the foundation is laid for sure disappointment and misery, when the masks are thrown off, and the two individuals stand, a mere man and a mere woman, before one another? Human ingenuity could not devise a system more completely adapted to entail sorrow and suffering on our race, than this.

It may be said that I exaggerate the case, that the parties do not *mean* to deceive each other, but do really feel all that they now mutually express. In one sense this may be correct. The circumstances in which they are placed tend, I know, to foster kind feelings, and create courteous manners; and to the manifestation of these, all that flow spontaneously at the moment, I do not object.

But is not more also expressed? Or rather,—for the error lies chiefly in restraint,—is not much suppressed, that ought, in all wisdom and ingenuousness, to be distinctly avowed? Suppose I have faults,—and who has not?—why should they be cautiously concealed from my nearest friend? I am, by nature, and indulgence also, peevish and ill-humored; ought I to seek to pass for all that is opposite to this? Contentiousness is a besetting sin of my character. Shall I strive to appear, always and only, one of the most yielding of my sex? My temper is violent, or sullen, why should this fact be kept from my lover, until some outbreak after our marriage day? Ought I not to speak decidedly, and unequivocally, of this my infirmity? I am addicted to occasional depression of spirits and gloom; by what right, or on what principle of religion, or expediency, shall I labor to keep up an unnatural cheerfulness? If I am extravagant, is it wise or just to be always sounding the praises of economy? Why profess a taste for reading, when I loathe the sight of a sober volume? Why force myself up to a pitch of neatness, when my wardrobe would, by a single glance, prove me a slattern?

It is hard, it seems cruel, to require these painful disclosures, to roll clouds over the sun of the matrimonial sky. But is not even this better than to suffer a dense mass to accumulate, which shall at length break in storm, and thunder, and desolation, upon the devoted pair? We are both weak and wicked, if we deliberately lay a train, that must at length explode, and cause decrepitude, if not matrimonial death, to one, who is about committing his entire happiness to our hands.

No marriage can be consummated, with a fair prospect of good, except between individuals, who have made it a point of principle to disclose to each other their entire characters. New scenes may develop new dispositions unfriendly to perfect harmony. But these can be met and successfully encountered, if there were no intentional deception, if there were an earnest desire and effort to show frankly every fault, that did really exist before marriage. Any efforts to engage the affections of another by false appearances will inevitably abate thus much from the future happiness of those who make, or are misled by, them. All that is termed "Courting," so far as that word implies assumption, pretence, and flattery,—and it too often means nothing more,—should be sacredly avoided. Nature alone can lay the basis of an enduring superstructure; art, affectation, disguise, and concealment, are but a sure presage of bitter regrets.

The intercourse we describe would be pervaded by mutual Esteem and Respect. It would prevent the habit of trifling on the concerns of the affections, and render the conversation worthy of the holy relation now contemplated, and such as could be reviewed with satisfaction. From their taking just views of one another, there would be sincerity, confidence, and a rational, ever-growing, attachment, between the individuals thus situated. Their most private hours would be marked by perfect delicacy, modesty, and propriety, of deportment. In public, no occasion would be given for remarks on their silly and sentimental airs, while all would perceive evidence of a mutual and deep interest between them, and predict, as they ought, that their future connection would be auspicious of the happiest results.

Where a true understanding of each other's characters, and an esteem, sustained by self-respect, exists, the communications, however conducted, whether by personal interviews, or by correspondence, will be of a rational description. The letters will not be crowded with nauseating compliments, with nonsense and vanity, but will contain good thoughts, no less than the expression of pure feeling, and generous sentiments. There will be nothing of insincerity, nor what would lead a stranger, who perused them, to say that they were mere folly and illusions.

A lady should feel bound, from the moment of her engagement, to be true to her plighted word. She is forbidden, by every dictate of Honor, from pursuing any course of conduct that will give pain to her friend. There is a steadiness of feeling and purpose, under these circumstances, which cannot be too highly commended. "What state could fall," asks a recent writer, "what liberty decay, if the zeal of man's noisy patriotism was as pure as the silent loyalty of woman's love." Erring,—all human as she is, to others,—God gifts her with a thousand virtues, to the one she loves; it is from that love, that she drinks her nobler nature;—it gives her the meekness of a dove, the devotion of a saint. In his danger,

she has the sagacity of the serpent, and the courage of the lioness. Like the chivalrous knight, she who thus feels, will “avoid no foe, forsake no love.”

There are those who apparently enjoy the opposite of this course. They consent to receive marked attentions from others in company. A French author says he has known individuals among his countrywomen, “who unconsciously, actuated by a thirst for emotion, provoked very lively scenes with their lovers, solely to obtain for themselves the pleasure of tears, reproaches, and reconciliations.” This luxury is one, in which no lady of principle will indulge herself. Agreeable as an occasional conquest, or flirtation, might be to her, she will sacredly abstain from every act that tends in this direction. The sure possession of one true heart, one affianced protector, and unalterable friend, will suffice her desires.

Nor is it enough to refrain from encouraging the open attentions of others, the truly loyal one will not allow herself to cherish a secret feeling or preference toward any other. Her every affection will be true as steel to the magnet. She will know no wayward inclinations, nor give way to whims and fancies, and undefinable emotions, to feelings, which she would blush to betray to her lover.

This true-heartedness will operate not less where an engagement is implied and understood between the parties, than if a formal pledge had been given. It is what we conceive another to expect from us, and what we have encouraged him to expect, more than any set speeches and written promises, that binds the conscientious mind. Some, indeed, are never formally engaged, before the day of their marriage. The trust which such instances manifest, is a beautiful trait, and will be fostered by every pure heart.

But, it will be asked, if a lady is never to change her mind in relation to a gentleman; if she must always love where her affections have been once placed, and have no power of breaking off an engagement. This I do not contend. There are, doubtless, cases, where one is not only permitted, but bound, to dismiss a suitor. If he have intentionally deceived her in respect to any circumstances, which he well knew would have prevented her consenting to an engagement, had they been disclosed, she ought, at once to refuse any further intimacy with him. Or, if his character change decidedly for the worse, during their acquaintance, if he become a disbeliever in religion, or a known profligate, let her immediately dismiss him.

If on the other hand, he be merely visited with misfortune, by adversities, to be traced clearly to the hand of Providence, then should she not, for a moment, cherish the desire to dissolve their engagement. A noble instance of moral principle, as well as true love, under a change of circumstances, occurred in England but a few years since.

Sir Robert Barclay, who commanded the British squadron in the battle of Lake Erie, was horribly mutilated by the wounds he received in that action, having lost his right arm and one of his legs. Previously to his leaving England, he was engaged to a young lady, to whom he was tenderly attached. Feeling acutely, on his return, that he was a mere wreck, he sent a friend to the lady, informing her of his mutilated condition, and generously

offering to release her from her engagement. "Tell him," replied the noble girl, "that I will joyfully marry him, if he has only enough of body left to hold his soul." This is marrying for the gem, and not for the casket. It is true constancy.

I would not have a young woman insensible to any fault in her lover. Many persist in being blind to the least moral blemish in the loved. We are told that the lamented Mrs. Hemans was a victim to a passion of this nature. She was warned by her friends of the unsuitableness and dangers of her intended connection. Yet neither this admonition, nor a three years' separation from her lover, could quench her affection for him. The soldier and hero of her glowing imagination had power to captivate, and then ruin, her noble spirit.

When a dismissal becomes inevitable, let it be given with decision, yet kindly. Never should the event be made matter of public remark, nor should a letter or line of the former correspondence be rudely exposed. Let oblivion rest on the whole transaction. But so painful an issue should, if possible, be averted. For no freak of fancy, still less for the gibes and jests of others, should so important a connection be frustrated. The cause should be one that sober judgment will approve, to your latest day.

A most trying lot is hers, who is deserted by one, who had given a solemn pledge to be hers through life. It is no credit to steel one's self against the sorrows of such a lot. There are those, who would well nigh offer their life to gain a lover, and yet could think of a faithless one only with emotions of indignation or anger. Such can possess but an apparent affection. I speak of that which is true and deep. When this is thus wounded, let the sufferer preserve a calm temper, if possible, a calm exterior always, and turn from human faithlessness to that Love which is a perennial fountain.

As regards the Preparation to be made for marriage, where it is contemplated with fair prospects of certainty, little need here be said. The whole previous life should be one act of preparation. The school-room should train the wife and the mother. Fidelity to home, to parents, brothers, sisters, and all the inmates of the paternal roof, is among the best qualifications for married life. If these duties have been hitherto neglected, be assured that the marriage ceremony will do little to supply the deficiency.

The Duration of an engagement should ordinarily be brief, at least, not needlessly protracted. We are told that no tomb in Père Lachaise is so often decorated with chaplets of fresh flowers as that of Abelard and Héloïse. This shows how large is the number of thwarted and disappointed lovers who visit that cemetery. Not a few of these crossing elements would be averted by less prolonged engagements. There are those, I am aware, who maintain that early and long continued engagements are desirable. Applied to those cases where the parties reside near one another, and are placed under similar influences, this doctrine may be true. The earliest attachments are sometimes most happy and permanent. But how often does it occur, that the condition and character of two individuals become completely changed, in a few short years. Suppose a young man to leave a farm, and take up his abode in a city, as a merchant, or to commence a course of study with a view to a liberal profession. The girl, who, as a child, won his affections, has

not, as a young woman, improved in her tastes, and character, like himself. His choice of a companion, if now to be made, would fall on one quite unlike her. There is something of this evil often attendant on protracted engagements. The affections may be biased by enlarged intercourse with the world. There are innumerable perils that beset a long acquaintance of this nature. The safe avoiding of them all comes usually from short engagements, from those in which the character and tastes of the parties are much the same at marriage as at the moment of the first decided intimacy.

There is one topic more which I cannot pass over in this connection. It is that of Spiritual Sympathy. How many are there, who never exchange one thought or feeling upon religion, until after their marriage. It is not until they are constrained to do it, in the bitterness of bereavement perhaps, that they communicate with one another on this momentous subject. Were it not wiser to weave a chaplet early, to their joint remembrance of Christ, rather than hang the first consecrated wreath on the tomb? How would it assuage their mingling tears, could they sorrow, "not as those without hope," but in the long cherished spirit of a common faith and submission. They are musing on future joys. With what heightened charms and new anticipations would they enter the marriage state, if they had pledged their united hearts, before the Eternal One. They would then feel, that the bond which joined them was not one of a few fleeting years, but imperishable as their cemented souls. Shall they, can they, maintain a midnight silence upon all Heavenly themes, until "the evil days" overtake them?

Chapter XIII. TRIALS OF WOMAN; AND HER SOLACE.

An ancient example. Trials springing from Physical Constitution. Acute Feelings. Sentiment of Burns. Trials from Imagination. An affecting incident. Want of Interesting Objects. Defencelessness in Public. Sufferings through Affections. Instance of true love. Trials of Domestic Life. Bereavement. Mrs. Sigourney, on a lost Daughter. Supports should be equal to Trials. Need of Mental Culture. Moral Developement. Friendship. Piety the great Solace.

It was remarked by an observing and wise statesman, recently deceased, that "most women are either formed in the school, or tried by the test, of adversity." In this class stood the devout Hannah of old. She was reproached and persecuted by her haughty rival, she was the subject of remonstrance with her husband, and when she went to the temple of God, to seek peace in her troubles, because she spake not aloud, but only her lips moved, she was rudely charged with the vice of intemperance. To this allegation she replied, "I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord." These words remind us of the trials of woman; and they point us, at the same time, to her only, and effectual, Solace in trouble.

Human life contains much to try the spirits of all. There are many afflictions, which man must share alike with woman. But, superadded to these, are sources and occasions of sorrow peculiar to her sex. There are none, who do not sometimes descend the vale of

tears. The cup of bitterness is placed in the hands of all. But woman is constrained to drink it sometimes to the very dregs.

In dilating on the Trials of woman, I commence with naming, first, those which spring from her Physical Constitution.

To man Providence has assigned severe bodily tasks, but he has given him likewise a vigorous frame. It is the lot of woman, notwithstanding her infirmities, to sustain more physical sufferings than come usually upon him. Her nervous organization is more delicate, and her sensibility to pain must, therefore, be greater. We might cite the scenes of the sick chamber, and hours, in which she needs a martyr's fortitude. But more than this, in those sufferings incident to her sex, and almost universally experienced, she has trials of her firmness, energy, and patience, from which man is constitutionally exempt. How many secret tears are wiped from her cheek; what untold anguish does she sometimes endure. And none the lighter is this load, from her being excluded, by her silence, from the supports of sympathy. On whom shall she cast her cares? If there are motives, which forbid the disclosure to human ears, of the sword that is cutting the bare fibre of her frame, and piercing her heart, to whom shall she go for strength?

But not the outward man, alone, or chiefly, causes the severe trials of this sex. Their Feelings are acute; they are peculiarly sensitive to the circumstances, events, and influences, of this world. The winds of adversity, which to the stern spirit of man, seem but a passing breeze, prostrate her to the earth?

“To feel and to suffer,” says one of this sex, “are synonymous, with woman.” This may exaggerate the strict truth, and yet it is doubtless substantially correct. Some of the noblest virtues of her sex imply great sensibility. What gives fortitude, in her case, such illustrious merit? Her extreme susceptibility of suffering. The blow, from which the gnarled oak will rebound, shall crush the frail dahlia. Why is patience a prime grace in woman? Not only because she has such burdens laid on her spirit, but still more for the reason that she feels so keenly their weight. Whence is it that tenderness, and a reliant dependence, qualities which, in their excess, unfit man to grapple with this tough world, and are therefore censured in him, as effeminate, are her ornament and praise? Her native sensibility qualifies her for these and their kindred virtues, and without them, we deem her an apostate from her sex.

It would not be too strong an expression to say, that woman *lives* in the realm of feeling. Her life is not that outward thing, which it so often appears. Beneath a calm exterior she sometimes bears an heart full of disquietude and sorrow. Would you extend her the hand of gratulation? Be first sure that you can discern the interior of her being. You may else admit sunbeams to a plant already scorched with heat, and demanding the waters of sympathy. Consider, too, that as are her griefs, such is her fortitude. Hence, without question, we sometimes regard her as bowed and overwhelmed by some worldly casualty, who has in her soul a power of endurance, that gives her angelic strength.

We hear it affirmed that woman is naturally buoyant of spirit, that she is disposed to enjoy life, and look on its brighter aspects. Let this be conceded for truth; what does it show, in relation to her sufferings? That poet, who wrote from his own delicate soul, tells us that

“Cords, which vibrate sweetest pleasure,
Thrill the deepest notes of *woe*.”

So is it, that she who feels most keenly each pulsation of joy, is alive to corresponding tones of sorrow. The obtuse may receive less positive joy from the happy events that befall them; but let us not forget that they suffer also less than the acutely sensitive. Says one of this sex, of a powerful mind, and a sagacious remarker, “I have seldom met with a truly cheerful-minded, and contented woman.” How should this be, unless the soul often loses its harmony, and then gives forth discordant notes, proportioned to its primitive melody? We admire the Corinthian column. Its lightness and grace are replete with beauty. Yet, in the storms of this rude world, how often does it prove a fragile thing. The gayest smile on the fairest face preaches fearful susceptibilities of disappointment and grief.

Woman is tried moreover by her natural Imaginativeness. The superior force and activity of this trait in her character can hardly be denied. She anticipates, in the day of health and happiness, more coming good, than man dares expect. Fancy creates round her a world of bliss.

“Evermore her eye
Is busy in the distance, shaping things
That make her heart beat quick.”

She dreams of golden gains, of victory, conquest, and triumph. The car of fortune bears her, amid gilded honors, with a subjugated world in her train.

Or, do gloom and despondency come over her, imagination, not content with the cloud of to-day, summons from the deep, dark piles, that are charged with storm and tempest. Let her once begin, with high credit, to borrow trouble, and the future shall be well nigh drained of its myriad sorrows. She becomes fancy-bankrupt. An incident of recent occurrence, illustrates the transition from one to the opposite of these conditions. A young lady was seen wandering by the banks of the Hudson, wailing, and wringing her hands for grief. She related to a spectator the occasion of this grief. A sister-in-law, to whose dwelling the death of her mother had compelled her to resort, had treated her so cruelly, that she had fled from her face, and had now no home or friend on earth. Touched with her troubles, a circle of generous spirits contributed a large sum to her relief. Such was the sudden ecstasy of her joy that she became actually frantic.

Another trial of this sex springs from the want of interesting Objects of pursuits. The boy is no sooner arrived at his youth, than a world of occupations opens before him. He turns from his father's roof and gives himself to preparation for some manly calling. A

thousand scenes are daily in his path. Adventure, enterprise, the collision of men, and of interests, all rush in to fill his youthful spirit. In such courses trouble stands in his way but for an hour. The agitation and turmoil of life soon sweep from his bosom even the memory of yesterday's sorrows.

Far different is the lot of the gentle girl. Her school-day tasks completed, what great object comes in their stead? She has a bounding pulse, high hopes, and ardent purposes. But whither shall they now be directed? Will she not fancy the little sphere of home quite too contracted for her feelings and exertions? In this position of the young woman, there is much of suffering, that springs from unexhausted feeling, and is wrought into acute pain. Let her beware of a morbid self-contemplation. Let her see that she do not expend on her own thoughts, desires, and feelings, that energy, which should be given to God, and her associates in humanity. What a foe must she now guard against. How high and glorious should be that great object, that is to receive the full strength of her interest.

Woman is tried by her comparative Defencelessness in Public. She may hold opinions dear to her heart, and sound in themselves. These views may be unjustly assailed. Yet such is the sentiment of the community she inhabits, that it would degrade her, to appear as a public champion of her opinions, wrestling in the vulgar arena with man. Her character may be rudely aspersed; but who does not feel that to defend it by lifting up her voice in tumultuous assemblies, or even to enter the lists with her pen, were derogatory to her sex.

The law of the land may bear, in some instances, unjustly upon her. She may be deprived of natural rights. No one can deny that she did thus suffer, and was grievously oppressed, by the laws against Witchcraft, in the early history of New England. Nor is it impossible that taxation may wrong her; that divorces may separate her, without right, from her partner; that fines, imprisonment, and even capital punishment, may be visited iniquitously upon her. Still what evils, what a vast preponderance of harm, would accrue, on the whole, from her mingling in the affairs of legislation, and standing as an advocate at the bar. If man, through a spirit of despotism, of meanness, or from whatever motive, shall trench on her God-given and inalienable rights, she must commit herself to that Being, who ever judgeth righteously.

Another trial of this sex is one which I descant upon, in this place, with diffidence. Yet so severe are the sufferings, that spring, directly and remotely, from the exercise of her Affections, that I could not acquit myself of true fidelity, were I silent on this topic.

By an appointment of Providence, woman is so constituted as to find her bane, or her blessing, pre-eminently in the interests of her heart. Her natural ardor, and strength of feeling, prompt her to place her affections on some object, with concentration and intensity. Nor is she exempt from that credulity, which usually accompanies an ardent temperament. Hence, the depths of her heart become often a fountain of disappointments, troubles, and sorrows. Her affections may be bestowed where they shall meet no requital. Perhaps this result was wholly unanticipated; or, it may be, there was less self-control than might have been desired. Let the cause be of whatever description, the consequences

are most trying to the female character. Man may throw off a grief thus occasioned by seeking new objects of interest. But woman must wear the iron round her very soul, and sometimes, only sits down, to weep, and sink in despondency. For such sorrow there is but one anodyne. No earthly solace can sustain a spirit thus stricken.

In the destiny of her affections woman is, to a great degree, passive. She has little option left her. A negative, or affirmative reply, is all that shall decide the fortunes of her happiness through life. To how many desires, crosses, and reverses of feeling, to what painful indecision, or regretted decisions, is she thus exposed. Friends may induce the receipt of attentions, where her heart cannot follow the assent of her lips. Perhaps her prospects have but assumed some certainty, when the promised hand is capriciously withdrawn. I have read the record of one, who, in the agony of a grief thus awakened, pursued the object of her regard into scenes of trouble, released him from prison, by her generous gifts, and attended him, when driven, by his guilty courses, to actual insanity. She, who thus conducts, is no summer friend. The blight of such sympathy is no ordinary calamity. Who is surprised, that untold sorrows, from this cause, should corrode the very springs of life? Disappointed affection has a melancholy tale to relate, wherever are gathered the sad subjects of mental derangement. And blessed are those noble Institutions, which, by the power of Christianity, soothe the minds, and restore the reason, of those thus unhappily afflicted.

The trials of Domestic Life impose no light burden upon woman. Those daily cares incident to the family, are a touch-stone of her patience, a test of her disposition, and an ordeal to her temper. She has petty disquietudes, and slight annoyances, singly unimportant, yet in amount not trivial. How often is her spirit borne down, and her frame attenuated by the accumulation of these minor troubles. Like the patient in the restlessness of fever, she needs some composing potion to allay, and give peace to, her soul.

Again, the character, and deportment of each inmate in her household may present to her a trial. Self-denial must be practiced by some for the enjoyment of the remainder. How often does the lot fall upon her. The reputation of each near relative is another depository of her joys, or sorrows. Should he, whose position calls him to cherish and care for all beneath his roof, prove unkind, and selfish, and demand every arrangement to conform to his ease and appetites, on whom will the burden of the service required, be imposed? Does he yield to temptation abroad, forsake the partner of his bosom, and give himself up to sensual and inebriating habits, there is one heart that must bleed over his sins. Honor and pride, it may be, forbid her disclosing his errors, and the fire must consume her spirit in solitude. Needs she no support in this exigency? What can the world give her, adequate to her fathomless wants?

But still heavier trials befall this sex in their homes. Sickness visits the loved. By the midnight lamp, the wife bathes an husband's burning brow; or the mother administers draughts to the parched lips of a daughter. To what fears is she then and there subject? Tediously roll the long hours. Not the body alone sinks, but the spirit at length faints. For the conviction is forced on her mind that life is endangered. Suspicion yields to

apprehension; that again grows into argument. The physician shows signs of doubt; friends whisper anxieties. Swayed for a season between hope and fear, at length, the dread certainty comes over her. She must part with this being, dear as her own life. The fatal stroke is near; the hour arrives. Gone forever from mortal eyes is she, in whom blent

“All images of comforter and friend,
The fireside charmer, and the nurse of pain,
Eyes to the blind, and, to the weary, wings.
What shall console”

The survivor? To whom can we commend her who thus mourns the riven tie of a mother's love? Where is the solace for the dependent, affectionate female, who weeps over the ashes of a departed parent? A sister is at her brother's grave. Pleasant was their love, and who can assuage these bitter tears? The husband,—deepest of all life's bereavements,—perhaps it is he, for whom the funeral wail is now heard. What can time, and dust, and this tomb of earth, minister to her, who sits in the freshness of widowhood?

The catalogue of your trials, my friends, may seem to some already prolonged. But have I not left much unsaid? Did *you* guide the pen, secrets of grief could be revealed, all unknown but to your sex. But enough has been written to persuade the thoughtful, that suffering must be to woman a thing of fearful account. Our afflictions, it has been well said, never leave us as they found us. We are always either hardened, or improved, by the discipline of Providence. The question then with woman, what use she is making of her trials, is one of the deepest concern. She has peculiar griefs; whence can she gain strength to endure them?

Woman needs every support that God has placed within her reach. She requires, first, Mental Culture. This will give her strength of mind, power to discern the true relations of our nature. A narrow mind cannot comprehend the great scheme of Providence. If it submit to his will, there is still much blindness in the act. A fuller trust would come from enlarged conceptions of duty and life. She, who enjoys reading, can beguile many a sad hour, by a useful volume. How many are prostrated by domestic afflictions, for the want of that mental discipline, by which they might fix the eye of faith steadily on Heaven. The grave absorbs their thoughts; they want energy to turn from the body, and contemplate the sainted spirit.

Woman needs a Moral developement, corresponding to the demands of her peculiar temperament and dispositions. Her sensitive frame, unless accompanied by great self-control, will betray her into errors, which, added to the thorns that ever beset the path of human life, will cause her continual uneasiness and pain. Let fancy be the guiding faculty of her nature, and in what sins must she inevitably be involved. Its aerial flights will bear her above the beaten, common-sense, road of duty, and make her the prey of a fatal instability and its attendant mortifications, follies, and sorrows. Her acute feelings, and tender affections need a moral counterpoise. The sudden sickness of the loved will else overwhelm her, and unfit her for the service she owes them. In this world of casualties, if her heart be not braced by the power of good judgment, she will yield to disaster and

grief, with a hopeless inefficiency. Her virtues must be the result of reflection, inherent, and not incidental. There must be a Christian dignity, a calm repose, that beautiful balance of character, in which keen sensibility is sustained by a patient and firm self-possession. So fortified, let her add one grace more and

“The arched roof, * * * * *

By its own weight, stands steadfast and immovable.”

We may not omit, in this connection, the influence of Friendship, as a soother of woman's sorrows. Always susceptible of sympathy, and alive to the voices of kindred spirits, in her trials she feels their indispensable necessity. How are her affections knit to each relative, by adversity, disappointment, and death. In bereavement a family build, as it were, a single monument, each placing its tribute in the mournful structure. They lean on one another, and, thanks be to God, next to his own strong arm, there is none so dear in our grief, as that of a friend. Thanks for human love.

“When cold storms

Rack the worn cordage of the heart, it breathes

A healing essence, and a strength'ning charm,

Next to the hope of heaven.”

“The hope of heaven,” the prospects and supports of Religion, deep piety, these I name last, because they are the greatest, indeed, the only effectual solace, for the trials of woman. “Those wells of feeling,” says a female writer, “hidden in the soul, upon whose surface the slightest smile of affection falls, like sunlight, but whose very depths are stirred by the breath of unkindness, are too often unvisited by the kindly influence of kindred sympathies, and go wearing their own channels deeper, in silence and in secrecy, and in infinite bitterness,—undermining health, happiness, the joy of life, and making existence one succession of burden-bearing days. It is in this species of blight, that that merciful and compassionate faith, whose words are, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' becomes a refuge and a consolation. Woman may trust to other lights, in the darkness of sorrow; but they will prove transient, the meteors of midnight. It is the Sun of righteousness alone, which can shed true peace on her troubled spirit. Jesus Christ was 'a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.' He only can present to her, unfailing sources of consolation. She must follow him, and with him, 'glory in pursuing a path of steep ascent.'”

Let her set to her seal, that Religion, however received by man, is a gift which she can never, with impunity, decline. When piety presents its claims to the sterner sex, they raise doubts, and questionings, and comparisons with other goods. But woman may not hesitate for a moment. So does instinct teach us the fitness of female piety, that even the irreligious of our sex expect, and require, it in her.

I cannot but feel that the discipline of her trials was intended by Providence, to impress the first and most affecting lesson on her soul. It was designed that her pliant affections should twine round our divine Father, as a pillar of enduring strength. In almost the

earliest stage of her life, and onward to its latest hour, she is upheld by a little less than visible presence. Rescued by that Power in peril, enabled to pass through what was once her chief dread, how can she turn her eye off from him? "God has ever supported and saved me. He will do it in future." This language is a spontaneous utterance of the true woman. Thus, like Jesus, is she "made perfect through sufferings."

In this manner does religion become, with her, the medium of continual Improvement. Mental culture is one invaluable part of female education. The social graces are a chain of pearls about her neck. But her permanent being consists of a spiritual principle. Unless that be called into action she lives but an ephemeral life. Let her pious capabilities be awakened, let the love of God become her ruling motive, let submission to his high behest, be the joy of her heart, and she enters that path, which conducts, eternally, toward holiness in perfection.

She who has a true reverence for her nature, and who comprehends the powers of her sex, will never rest content with present attainments. She will study, and unfold her intellect, because God hath endowed her with Mind, and his glory calls for her mental progress. Her domestic duties will be discharged in the love of Him, who "setteth the solitary in families." No event will be lost on her watchful spirit. Each day's cares and trials will nurture in her a new patience, benevolence, and active piety. Thus will she build up a character, resting, like the pyramid in the East, on a basis so broad, and of materials so solid and enduring, that the ages cannot move its foundation.

Chapter XIV. ENCOURAGEMENTS.

What woman has done. Zenobia, Isabella, Pocahontas. The Catholics. Facilities for Improvement. Political Institutions. Growing Elevation of the Sex. Illustrious catalogue. Constitutional Susceptibilities. Domestic Habits. Means. Self-observation. The Scriptures. Prayer. The life of the soul, how glorious.

In approaching the conclusion of these Chapters, I cannot doubt that some of my female friends will inquire, "Who is sufficient for these things. How is it possible for me to reach the high standard now set before me?" We reply briefly, that the first thought to be presented in this place is,

That you should contemplate what your sex has actually accomplished in the Past. The Scriptures, the oldest records of our race, contain a long catalogue of female names, illustrious for the virtuous and pious associations, that cluster around them. Greece and Rome abound in examples of women of intellectual, and sometimes, of moral, distinction. Zenobia, queen of the East, stands forth a pattern of excellence, in whom were combined an enlarged understanding, singular refinement, courage, prudence, and fortitude. Modern Europe has exhibited more than one instance of this kind. The kingdom of Spain produced that female, to whom the discovery of this continent might be almost directly traced, one who had rare talents and strength of mind, yet no arrogance, or despotism, like the renowned queen of England; one "who possessed the grace, the

gentleness, and feminine accomplishments, of Mary Stuart, without her weakness, who joined to Castalian pride, as a queen, extreme sensibility and softness of deportment, as a woman.”

If we turn to the records of this country, we find, among the female portion of its aboriginal inhabitants, proofs of no despicable qualities. Looking at the red man's race, who can fail of admiring the noble, self-denying spirit of Pocahontas, the friend of our fathers, the victim, in her prime, of civilized life? Within the present century, when the men of the Mohawk tribe were debased by Intemperance, and embroiled in sanguinary wars with their brother Indians, the females called a council, by themselves, and so did they protest against these giant sins, as, for a season, to bring sobriety and peace within the borders of their people.

Such being the power of Pagan woman, what might we not anticipate from this sex, where the mild gospel of Jesus had appeared? It was for conscience' sake that females, like the lady Arabella, left homes of peace and plenty, and often families of noble rank, and came to these shores with the Pilgrim band. How many of this sex once fled to this land, from the religious persecutions of France, and chose danger, privation, and death, rather than subscribe creeds hostile to their faith. What sacrifices have they made in the Catholic Church. The Convent may be the fruit of erroneous opinions, yet it has shown forth gloriously the power of woman. Such self-denial, such unwearied devotion to prayer and the ceremonies of a church, such offices of charity, furnish proofs of the moral capacity of this sex, misled as they often have been, on which the Protestant believer may dwell with grateful emotions and inspiring thoughts.

Another encouragement to female effort may be found in the general Facilities for Improvement in our age. Education is receiving more thought, than in any former period of the world. She, who desires it, can enjoy higher literary advantages, better instruction, more useful manuals, and other aids in the school-room, than were ever before possessed in any community. The pulpit is emitting new light for the spiritual man, and the press is redolent with a moral fragrance. Such is the progress of society, that conversation, social manners, and the incitements of example, now combine in furtherance of personal culture.

Our Political Institutions present, likewise, eminent incentives to a higher self-training than has ever yet been witnessed. The republican principle not only gives scope for individual freedom of thought and action, but awakens associated effort. We have, hence, Female Societies for benevolent purposes, Maternal Associations to assist the female parent in her responsible tasks, and Young Ladies Circles for reading and intellectual sympathy and mutual enlightenment. These are a portion of the fruits of our free institutions. They create an healthful atmosphere, and, associated as they are with the memory of their noble founders, they utter to woman the inspiring summons,

“Through thy veins
The blood of Heroes runs its race!
And nobly shouldst thou brook the chains

That, for the virtuous, Life prepares,
The fetters which the matron wears,
The Patriot Mother's weight of anxious cares.”

The growing elevation of your sex in popular estimation should also encourage you, my friends, to untiring devotedness, and patient self-culture. She, who was once regarded as but the satellite of a proud planet, is now herself marked in the catalogue of heaven's luminaries. Already are the names of Madam de Stael, Edgeworth, Jameson, Martineau, and Hemans, abroad, and of Sigourney, Sedgwick, Child, Lee, and others, in our own land, enrolled on this bright register. Nor is the moral advancement of woman less remarkable than her literary attainments. The Alcoran may exclude her from Paradise, and teach her that she has no soul; practically, if not literally, it has done this. But Christianity places her in the same high rank with man. She is an heir of the Redeemer's kingdom. In the social edifice, she is viewed as the rich tracery of its massive frame-work; the more graceful and delicate part, yet as essential to the completeness of the structure, as its giant pillars and solid masonry.

In her Constitutional Susceptibilities woman should find motives for signal excellence. Philosophy teaches that sensibility alone will prompt to the kind offices of Christian beneficence. Why does man pass so often, in passive indifference, the helpless child of woe? Because nature has not gifted him with a tender heart. He was formed to buffet the storms of public commotion. Extreme sensibility would have made him shrink from the encounter. But woman was endowed with a sensitive spirit, that she might feel for the sufferer, and an active imagination, to picture his troubles, and an ardent love, to relieve them. How can she fail of perpetual charities?

Again, her temperament is friendly to piety. St. Augustine calls hers the “devout sex.” And meet is the appellation. For her weakness teaches her to lean upon an Almighty arm; and her trustfulness,—so striking, that to doubt, suspect, and despond, come, in her, only from peculiar physical infirmity, or from a most erroneous education,—leads her to confide in God. Add to these the earnest affection of this sex, and we have a moral predisposition to religious sentiment. To them is given a vantage ground, which they should joyfully and gratefully occupy. She, on whom the heavier burden is laid, is gifted with superior powers of endurance. Virtue is the prize of humanity, and she is placed nearer than man to its goal. Piety is the crown of our life, and for her brow is it pre-eminently fashioned. The divine Spirit, dwelling in all souls, is yet imaged to our minds, in Scripture, and in Nature, as “a still, small voice,” a gentle and quiet influence, which are peculiarly congenial to the soul of woman.

Her Domestic Habits furnish the final encouragement of woman to constant self-improvement. In the sequestered paths of home, having hours and days, in which the needle is her quiet employer, how may she meditate on the touching and lofty themes of human concern. Why should she wander from the ways of truth, integrity, and purity? She has her temptations it is true. In some situations they may be greater than man's. But, taking our whole mortal existence, and the usual occupations of the sexes, it will hardly be denied, that woman may, if diligent in attention, hear those voices of admonition,

which are drowned in man's ear, by the world. She may enjoy seasons for communing with her soul, and surveying the riches of the interior world, and for estimating the vanity of sensual, and the glories of spiritual things, such as are seldom granted to man. She walks, ever, as it were, beneath that moral arcade, which Providence has raised above us to proclaim his hallowed presence. Can she withdraw her eyes from it, and look downward, and become a servant of time? Will she,—will one thus nobly privileged,—surrender her birth-right? If she comprehends its value, she cannot be other than an aspirant for the prize of life eternal.

But how shall this prize be obtained?

Let the young woman understand that religion is not a strange thing, disconnected from this world, out of herself, and to be introduced by some mysterious influence. It is the unfolding of a principle within her. You must study self, and seek the kingdom of God in your own soul. There only will you ever find, and establish, it. Religion consists in giving the heart,—this very heart which beats with emotion at the objects around you,—unto spiritual pursuits. So directed, it will flow out on your fellow beings, and spring upward to the Father.

Search the Scriptures. Use them chiefly as a mirror in which you are to see yourself. Dwell on the writings of the Psalmist. They speak to human experience as few books, even in the sacred volume, address us. You will feel no joy, for which they have not the language to express your gratitude. No sorrow will so deluge your heart, that God will not, through them, send a holy wind, to assuage the waters. Peruse especially the life of Christ. There is your model, an incarnation of the Divinity. Rest not until you also have begun to grow in the image of God. Do you love what he loved? Are you living as he lived? Have you the same high purposes, to “please your Father,” and to “go about doing good?”

Pour out your soul before the Lord. Prayer is our spiritual aliment. It teaches us humility. For who can carry self-important and haughty feelings to the throne of Infinite Purity? Prayer will teach you to see the hand of Providence in all that befalls you. While you present all issues before Him, second causes will not disturb and distress you. Submission is the fruit of devoutness. “Thy will be done,” be this your petition, and it will not only reconcile you to those overwhelming events, which would else prostrate you in the dust, but it will be a daily sedative amid the disquieting cares of your lot. And, though you feel burdened with guilt, do not restrain prayer before God. He is the friend of the penitent. Nor let a cold heart keep you back from this service. The habit of being instant in prayer is indispensable to salvation. Besides, who can tell that, even while you are speaking, the cloud will not roll off, and the face of your Father, a view of his love, deep, unutterable, and divine, and the sense of his precious presence, revisit your soul?

You are now in the prime of your being. Commence to-day the life of the soul, and you will enter on that course, which leads to an immortal virtue. Time is short; why should you give to it your noblest energies? This world is but a passing shadow. Oh, do not consent to build your dwelling, as if the suns, that scorch and blast the soul, could not

strike you. That Being, in whose hand is your breath, has placed you, for a few swift-winged years, on a vessel, propelled by fearful elements. In an hour you least imagine, that, which now bears you brightly onward, may burst its confines, and scatter on the wild waves the black fragments of all that is mortal. Yet fear not death; FEAR LIFE. Live as you ought; leave the rest with God. Calmly may you then lean on Him; peacefully will you pass the strange ongoings of earth. Through tears, and through smiles, in the body, or parted from it, live as you ought, and heaven is gained. Wait upon the Lord, and while worldlings, living to earth's pleasures, dead while they live, shall faint and be weary, and many shall utterly fail, you shall renew your strength; you shall mount up with wings as eagles; you shall run and not be weary, and you shall walk and not faint.