The Accident of Sex

Martha McClellan Brown

Follow this and additional works at: https://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/special_ms147_ephemera

Part of the Women's History Commons

Repository Citation

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Martha McClellan Brown Papers (MS-147) at CORE Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Martha McClellan Brown Ephemera by an authorized administrator of CORE Scholar. For more information, please contact library-corescholar@wright.edu.
THE

ACCIDENT OF SEX

BY

M. McCLELLAN BROWN.

1881.
THE ACCIDENT OF SEX

A LECTURE

Delivered before the National Woman Suffrage Association,
in Tremont Temple, Boston, Mass., May 27th, 1881,

BY

MARTHA McCLELLAN BROWN, M.L.A.

NEW YORK:
LOGAN & FIEGEL, PRINTERS, 584 TO 588 HUDSON STREET.

1881.
Public opinion is an inconstant function of society. Undisturbed, it assumes that whatever is, is right. Agitated, it becomes restless and irrepressible, until an equipoise is attained by compromise or reform.

Prejudice stands as a monitor to public opinion, and always insists the ancient custom must not be changed. Thus, public opinion and prejudice link hands in opposition to reform movements in society, and jointly constitute a bodyguard to conservatism.

That which is usual, or as Hume would say, “sustained by universal experience,” must be natural, and nature’s laws are unalterable. Woman’s inferiority being sustained by universal experience, the assumption of woman’s equal status with man is “a reform against nature,” and must be opposed.

The civilized world authenticates its data, its customs and its laws, civil and ecclesiastic, by the sacred Scriptures. A prominent author of these sacred writings is interpreted as putting the seal of the Divine authority upon universal custom and the natural philosophy of sex—as putting upon woman’s conscience the duty of soul-repression, and upon her lips the embargo of “silence,” and upon her life subjection.

These are the declared or implied bases of all opposition to woman’s exaltation. In the interval of years of perpetual agitation public opinion may change its bases by wiser interpretations. Agitation constrains investigation, defensive argument, application of untried principles, and demonstration of new phases of truth, together with comparison of similar facts and truths.
When public opinion has settled down into the formulated usage of centuries and becomes strengthened by the prejudice of ages, it requires a social earthquake of radical intensity to break up the solid strata—to submit the fossil impressions with all their glaring deformities to an investigation by eternal standards.

Such upheaval will always unsettle somebody's equilibrium. It may be Aaron's calf—Moses' permissive divorce bill—Peter's position on circumcision or Paul's concession to the ignorance and vice of Asia Minor.

Doubtless there were great lizards and frogs of the Mesozoic age which were opposed, on conservative principles, to the incoming revolution by which the mammals of the Cenozoic era were introduced. We can fancy an "old croaker," of the "upper chalk" philosophizing on the new order of mammals nurturing their offspring with lacteal nectar of life. "Ah!" he ejaculates, "the hardy tribes of reptilian power never knew such softness as this. Better be gathered to our fathers and memorialize our period in genuine fossils of our kind than succumb to such mucilaginous tribes as these mammals."

Later we find Mr. Chimpanzee preferring for his family the wilds of Africa to the advantages of modern civilization, even after Darwin's philosophy of the "survival of the fittest." To Chimpanzee there is something robust and grand in the old-time ferocity of life in the bamboo jungle, which could find no compensation whatever by development into the tragic life of "bulls and bears," in the world of exchange.

There are also whole generations of apes who would regard it a most fatal degeneracy which should permanently transform them into the most exquisite specimens of male butterflies in modern society, barbered, perfumed, caned, cigarred, stimulated, moustached and flattered within an inch of their puny lives.

We infer, therefore, that the physical evolution or revelation, whether by development or direct creation must have been a great "reform against nature." We may always expect to find some preferring to live behind the age in stalwart opposition.

History repeats itself at long intervals.

The psychological and social revolution which proposes the introduction of woman's soul-power and civil-power into all the affairs of life mutually with man, is now disturbing the
sensitive conservatives of the nineteenth century. Not even the perihelia of the planets with all their malific influence predicted by Prof. Grimmer, nor the famous prophecy of Mother Shipton disturbs the serenity of the times like a political metempsychosis in the interests of woman. The undertrend of this social avatara is sweeping the sands from beneath the throne of our so-called universal suffrage. The world trembles in expectancy! Grave divines fear for the virtue of the age. Experienced editors and authors scent scandal from afar. Honorable statesmen rise to discuss—where the next generation will find mothers? But the long, slanting spicules of the coming century already touch the highest souls with glorious promise, as the deep shades of mountainous wrongs portend the stronger light of the approaching day of liberty and justice.

No scientific investigation of the subject has ever discovered the origin of sex. It is one of the inexplicable accidents of human existence such as the color of the hair and eyes. There are evident traces of heredity in these accidents, often crossing the sexes from father to daughter, and from mother to son. But all such accidents, including the accident of sex, are far beyond the realm of controllable laws. Nor do any physical accidents afford safe basis upon which to predicate either character or ability. It would, therefore, be as just and equitable to establish differences of social and civil duties, and distinctions of reward and honor upon the birth-accident of hair or eyes, as to set up and keep up these distinctions upon the birth-accident of sex. In fact a distinction founded upon the accidents of hair and eyes might be even more equitable; for there is a degree of uniformity of temperament indicative of brain quality and power in people of the same class of hair and eyes. But it is accepted that there is no uniformity of brain quality and power in man or in woman, or in distinction, one sex from the other, all surroundings being equal.

The hereditary traits of families, mental, moral and physical cross over the boundaries of sex, name and blood, taking root in a new family, which rejoices or grieves as the accident may prompt. The boy-girl or the sire-child is begotten of the very seed roots of her father, with every coign of advantage or disadvantage in her mental, moral and physical make-up, and often so distinctively and forcibly reproduced as to elicit the remark of all observers.
So too, on the mother side, we find the strong hearted mother-boy, the exact counterpart of her soulical nature, making his place in the history of the world with no small sound of trumpets and flash of bayonets. There is no possible disputing these facts in heredity, and they are purely accidental, for thus far in human history they are ungoverned by any known laws. The continuous round of interchange from one sex to the other, of psychological, craniological and physiological indenture is a well established fact of science. These traits climb the acclivities of opportunity in both sexes, and are limited and circumscribed only by the popular prejudice against the accident of being born a female. The same noble traits which in the boy find the largest opportunity and the broadest play of liberty, and the greatest encouragement for development, when found in the girl, inherited from father or mother are regarded, or at least treated, as a lapsus naturae, which must be put into the iron shoes of custom, uniform for women. Thus cramped and crippled in all her vital energies, blighted in all her largeness of aim, she is sent into the narrow province of womanishness, to lean on the one only prop to her existence—a possible husband of possible character. If this prop fails her, down goes the promising structure into uselessness, dismay, degeneracy or crime. All this is entailed by the birth-accident of sex under the existing conditions of society.

If the theory of sexologists were correct the traits of the father would transmit only to the son and of the mother to the daughter. The distinction of the sexes would never be confused by the striking similarity in childhood requiring the bifurcate and surplisce pattern of clothes to mark the boy from the girl. And even the crown, which marks for sovereignty the head of every male child; (not born of American, Indian or Chinese parentage) the very similar crown of soft downy ringlets comes with birth upon the girl-baby's head also, and will come with equal sovereign power in the twentieth century. The physical difference between men and women essential to the reproduction of the race is not marked by any superior power of transmission or reproduction of kind in the man. Nor have we ever heard of scientists questioning the power of the female to transmit her traits to the race or to reproduce her kind. Indeed, it is rather the basic doctrine of evolution and the urgent theory of "selection from the fittest." So prevalent is the acceptation of mother-force in the race that biographers make it a specious argument in the character of
their heroes, that they are strongly typed in the mother-mould. Every reader will recall readily some celebrated mother-endowed hero of the times or of history; but few will remember reading of any great father-typed celebrity.

Just here we are reminded by the sanguine sexologist that it is the constructive processes of the lacteal nourishment, which imparts to the child so much of the mother-nature—that the mother-gifts are not prenatal, but derived from her life and blood-making nourishment, with which the child’s daily wants are supplied. If this be true, then those children fed on goat’s milk should be begotten of the goat nature and goat physiognomy. And a very great number of children would possess the gentle kine-nature and the meek-eyed physiognomy of a petted cow. Does not this argument prove too much for the imperious ambition of our “Lords’ of Creation”?

We cannot pass this question of transmission without calling in evidence a witness whose testimony commands the respect of all who know him, wherever the sun shines and reason rules. This witness is Jesus, of Nazareth. The high humanity of Jesus is the very acme of destiny for the race. All concur that He is the perfect type of man—man spelled with the great M. The transforming power of His high morality, and the exalted influence of His life are acknowledged by Renan, the talented French infidel, in these words: “Jesus remains to humanity an inexhaustible source of moral regenerations.” Carlyle says of this same character, “it is a height to which the human species were fated and enabled to attain; and having attained it, they can never retrograde.” Now history avers that the only human progenitor of this marvellous character was a woman. And yet he was in form, physiognomy and craniology a very man. His natural life was human in every respect. His natural affections, passions and temptations were of the same human order as those of other human beings, deviding only at the point where human weakness comes into the human life and turns it aside from absolute rectitude of character. His entire nature was under immediate control of his will or reason. While he displayed all the attributes of men he showed no traces of the moral defilement veining other men’s character through and through. All those attributes so grandly superior to his fellows, were without prenatal male germination. The mother-power under the blessing of the Divine Creator was able to reproduce all the human characteristics of her race in a very superior type. Let it be held
steadily in mind that we speak entirely of the human side of Jesus' nature, and that he was accustomed to honor his maternity by assuming the unique title "Son of Man." Since there was no human male progenitor his mother was in every requisite, generic sense, man; and Jesus, the Son of Mary, the Son of Man.

Thus we find theology confirming and corroborating science and observation in the averment that in woman physically inheres all the generic elements of the race, with power to reproduce or transmit into her successors all that pertains to the highest embodiment of human nature physically, mentally and soulfully. These facts all harmonize with that generic race-term, "man," in the Mosaic history of creation, where simply a feminine Hebraic termination is used to designate woman, while both are invested with the same God-image. "So God created man in His own image—male and female, created He them." Later He bestowed upon them all rulership and property-right, in common plurally. "Let them have dominion over all things." Thus the duality of the genus homo was set out without original disparity.

Our opponents will remind us here of the curse which came with lapse into sin by the first mother. We, in turn, remind the sexologist of the redemption and exaltation in Jesus, the only son of a mother without human father. The curse is more than lifted from woman by the Son of Man, as we have seen. "For where sin abounded grace did much more abound." To woman the promise was given; through woman the promise was fulfilled. By woman the announcement was first made, and upon woman comes the full glory of the original God-endowment.

A new spirit, the incarnate witness of what mankind was intended to be, is coming from somewhere into man, tiding up to higher levels of truth. Some are prepared logically, some ethically, and some practically, to accept the generic claims of woman—the second person in generic manhood who thinks it no robbery to be equal with man. And instead of being humiliated or in any sense disqualified by necessities of motherhood, is rather dignified and exalted through the likeness of her office to that of the second revelation of God, the Son of Man, who by the sacrifice of suffering provided for the life that is to come. The world has too long yearned up toward the height of this truth to be repelled by the selfish ambitions of the few who hold disinheriting power in Church and state.
The fountains of this high truth are opened through the hearts of thousands of women, like secret sources of lofty aspirations and renewed life, pouring fresh and free and full into the common reservoirs of society. The enlargement of thought and feeling makes way for purer liberty. The old hardness of superstition, and bitterness of persecution, and coldness of indifference yields to the touch of woman, and classes that stood asunder in antagonisms reach out hands to-day in personal friendship—milder but more potent types of character.

The warm philanthropic movements of the times are leading both men and women up toward the heights of the Golden Rule. Here the masculine character of feudal ages is no longer possible, and the strictly effeminate characteristics are naturally eliminated. When they stand and work together, as in the Christian Commission, Educational Fields, Missionary Work, and Temperance Reform, they come to understand and learn to respect their mutual powers. And thus many men are being drawn away from fealty to exclusive customs, love of chivalry, banquets and revelry; and many women are being drawn away from frivolity, indolent indulgences, and expensive pleasures, to the practical engagements of the times. Moreover, on this altitude, higher than Plymouth Rock and broader than Independence Declaration, classic cultured woman, domestic trained mothers, professional student girls and humble women of all work have opened a grand popular forum to all—the modern parlor.

This is the American Agora, where every man and woman of worth, without distinction of class or condition, may canvass the affairs of popular government, discuss social questions, and consider dogmas of religion with equal freedom and voice. Amid the glaze of cotton, the rustle of silks and the soft drapery of wool, character alone gives tone to the occasion, while current topics and events drop intelligently from lips to heart, and all are blended into one common human interest. Thus, step by step, the world has advanced to the acknowledgment that woman can display more than dress—life ornament; more than etiquette—conduct; more than knowledge—wisdom; more than intellect—soul; more than culture—character; more than charity—love, full-formed powers of being loyal to God and humanity. "The sentiment of justice," says Prudhon, in his sublime prayer for liberty, "is planted in the heart before reason comprehends it." And this sentiment in our popular forum parts the lictors of prejudice, cleaves the hurdles of conservatism, and extends the
myrtle of honor at the coming of Damaris, with the Dionysius, upon the American Bema, amid shouts of universal applause. The dual form of humanity is not only physical but soul-cal as well. The highest attainments of human success are reached by two mutual wings of flight—two blended souls in one great purpose—two minds with all their angular phases concentrated upon one great thought—two grand pillars for one magnificent arch. This doctrine will be antagonized, doubtless because new and obnoxious to the pride of successful men and women. But it is true, nevertheless. The failures of the world are largely chargable to the ignorance of this truth; and the great successes of the world, in many cases, have depended upon the fortunate accident of complemented psychological conditions. Take the lives of great men and women, and they will be found supplemented somewhere in social, or domestic, or reserve circles by a psychological counterpart. This apposition is not always of the opposite sex, and it is well for our general argument that it is not. But in the lives of great men it has usually been a woman's spirit-force that bore the toiler up, by apposition of steady wing, to victory and glory. Napoleon, the great Corsican hero, we find in his earliest career bivouacing on the beautiful mother-mind, and in after years counseled and sustained by the wifely Josephine, and, at last, with no competent counterpart anear his vaulting ambition, the better essence of life's purpose dripped from his soul as honey from the uncapped comb; he faltered, the sword was shivered from his iron grasp, and the diadem was torn from his majestic brow. Milton, the soul-visioned poet, leaned on the daughter-soul for the masterly completeness of his poetic life. The lion-hearted, hungry-souled Luther found his counterpart in the tender-souled Melancthon, and would not let him die lest the great work of the Reformation should fail. John Knox went wailing to his reward with a yearning incompleteness over all his majestic efforts. So likewise George Sands, grand and solemnly incomplete. In contrast how fragrant is the history of Whitfield, gathering great draughts of courage and inspiration from the devoted Lady Huntington. Wesley, the great father of lay ministry, might never have had the courage to spread the mantle of ecclesiastic authority over the multitude of laymen and women had not his heroic mother urged, "They are as much called of the Lord to preach as you, John." Mrs. Browning, whose superior powers are acknowledged even by the abnormal critic of her own sex, was
educated in ethics and literature accorded only to men of her
times, and habitually addicted to masculine modes of thought
so-called, and to the study of the larger questions of life. This
great woman was complemented during all the effective years
of her life by a sterling psychological counterpart. So also
Florence Nightingale, who, all her active life, felt the quicken­
ing pulse of an inflowing human supplement; and the same
may be said of the late lamented Lucretia Mott.

But we turn from the records of the dead to the more
thrilling testimony of the living. Our own great orator, Wen­
dell Phillips, with his dove-coted complement in the strength
and beauty of holy years of mutual helpfulness, saying by the
calmness of her spirit ever, as in the early days of anti-slavery
battle, "Don't shilly-shally to-night, Wendell." Mrs. Dr.
Clemens Lozier, with petite form and lovely child-like face, walk­
ing majestically up the rugged steeps to the highest medical emi­
nence, leaning on the steady, stalwart love of her brave and de­
voted son. Isabella Beecher Hooker, evolving motherhood's
holy mystery out of the oracles of life's experience. Lucy
Stone, radiating through the years of useful effort, the soft and
lustrous light of beautiful home-life, in melo-drama apposition
with the world-embracing career of her coadjutor Julia Ward
Howe. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, feeding her early years upon
the judicial erudition of a devoted father and the spiritual
nurture of a noble Scotch divine, afterward crowning her life
with the coronet of domestic glory and her public work with
the far-reaching ensignia of her executive head, Susan B.
Anthony.

We dare not pause to call the roll of honored statesmen,
whose mothers and wives have so supplemented their lives as
enabled them to scale the heights they have attained. Suf­fici­
ent to say that they are fairly represented by President Gar­
field, whose noble mother and cultured wife hold that mysteri­
ous power beneath the throne which lifts while it lightens,
which ennobles while it guards the ambition of the American
statesman. And from this position down, through all the
varied strata of public and private business, and even in the
very marts of life's toilsome and vexatious duties, there are
bright ministering spirits weaving their golden threads into
the mesh and woof of all temporal wants and mental ambitions
—"ministers, who show themselves approved by rightly divid­
ing the word of truth, to each a portion in due season." And
thus the soul-avenues are kept open toward the heights above,
and the shining ranks go up one by one to the desired haven of success. But frequently, alas! the bright ministering one who placed the ladders so carefully on the ascent, is left below, unhonored and unsung. Like the guardian angels of the "little ones," themselves unseen by the world, it is enough that they do always behold the face of the Father above.

No great modern author has compassed the scope of this practical fact, except the late Disraeli, who seems to have caught the first ray of the coming century. Perhaps, unintentionally, but as a faithful delineator of social events, he sketches the actual sources of social development. Treating woman to the ordinary surfeit of flattery, he nevertheless grasps the facts and presents their power with novel skill. Disraeli introduces the coming man of power as "that lady's brother." Endymion is master in nothing, save by the influence of his sister or some powerful lady friend, who keeps watch a little in advance of his movement upward. And no character of that whole era succeeded without the help of woman. The moral of the book is the lesson of the age, "No man, no cause succeeds anywhere without the influence and power of woman." The sooner the world comes to recognize this living fact, the better it will be for both men and women.

We are now prepared to look at the converse. If men cannot, or do not, climb the acclivities of success without helpful women, how is it the world requires woman to climb, not only without the help of men, but despite the antagonisms which meet her at every turn?

Great results are the sequences of great opportunities. If women have been wanting in great achievements, it is because men have not been helpful to afford the needed opportunities. Doubtless many men are blinded by long-established custom, and make honest admission of conscientious opposition. Lord Bacon said truly, "They only who have kept their minds open to the taking of new ideas are saved from the tyranny of customs." We can barely excuse such people as make no pretensions to "keep their minds open." But when we find men of modern times, and of great mental pretensions, becoming particeps criminis in the wrongs of woman, we cannot excuse, though, "Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward."

"The tyrants are but the spawn of ignorance begotten of the mother-slaves they trample."

Every man's opinion on this question retroacts upon the women of his own household. When Dr. Clark goes into a
rhapsody over the Syrian girls in a Turkish harem, our logical conclusion is that his mother and sisters, and even his wife, might have been better off in Turkish harems. When a public speaker, minister, or otherwise, vents his spleen in a burst of eloquent horror that public trusts and sacred places should be invaded by women, we conclude logically that his household female companions are not worthy of sacred trusts, and most probably on account of long associations with a coarse, unworthy, domineering man. And it is to be regretted that the conclusion of observation corroborates the logical conclusion.

Like the eyeless fish in Mammoth Cave, having lost the organ of sight from long disuse, men held in captivity under prejudice lose the faculty of discerning truth.

The lady who sat for her portrait before the seer, in the thirty-first chapter of Proverbs, was not circumscribed in her opportunities. She was the girl of the period and the woman of the twentieth century. As a girl, she must have learned all sorts of domestic work and acquired a book-education, which entitled her to the honorary degree of wisdom.

Then going into tapestry work and merchandise, furnishing her own ships and importing and exporting her own goods, she realized high success. Her real estate received her personal attention, in purchase, sale and improvement. She was generous to the poor and needy. Her tastes in dress for herself and family were elegant, and her wardrobes supplied with purple and fine linen. Her woman's sphere duties and domestic affairs were so well done that she was praised in the gates for her faithfulness—a mention at her times about as conspicuous as the newspaper mention of to-day. Her husband was honored for his fine personal appearance—no buttons missing.

The civil relation between men and women at the present age is one of support and service, or protection and fidelity. The women owe service or fidelity, and the men owe support or protection. If the vassal woman fails in service or fidelity she forfeits her lord's support and protection. But if the man fails to give support and protection, the woman, as in all absolute bond-service, is required to give her allegiance all the same. His lordship's seigniory is an hereditary benefice, and his set is the allodium of commendation by which his vassal is outlawed and outrun in the race for a livelihood.

It will be objected, doubtless, that the civil relations of women to men in America is not a relation of feudalism or
servility. Let our objector settle this matter by putting himself in the ordinary woman’s place, and he will find himself stripped of all that now constitutes him the proud, free American citizen that he is.

We are dealing with facts without sentiment. Our conclusion follows logically from the premises, and no sophistry. Franklin’s testimony will not be questioned in this era of Republicanism: “They who have no voice or vote in the electing of representatives do not enjoy liberty, but are absolutely enslaved to those who have votes and to their representatives.”

Servility superinduces effeminacy in both men and women. As applied to women, “effeminacy” is but another word for inferiority. This may be curiously proven by approaching a clump of men in conversation and calling one of them “effeminate.” The weight of the so-called “effeminate” fist will demonstrate you in response.

This fact accepted, all the movements of the social and political world are based on the hypothesis of woman’s inferiority. The only way to ascertain the relative value of woman’s powers is to compare them with the powers of men who have been subjected to the same humiliations and restraints which have marked the history of women.

Take for example the Greek helots under the reign of liberal government so-called in Greece. They were living amid the splendor of intellectual attainments which dazzle the very pages of their history to-day, and yet literature, philosophy, art, statesmanship and oratory were far above and beyond the attainment of the helots, however capable they may have been in individual cases, like Euphorus the noble slave-companion of the great Dio, the Athenian. No Hardaker of the helot class was able by measurement of skulls and weighing of brains to establish their eternal inferiority. No Parkman argued their generic incapacity, because they did not rise above their circumstances and shine amid the illustrious of the highest culture. Plato philosophized about them in the most patronizing language as the the manner of Bushnell concerning women. But Aspasia, the eloquent consort of Pericles, displayed her skill in statesmanship by raising Lysicles, her second husband, through careful education, from the humble doulos to the most exalted position in the Government—spanning the chasm between the classes, which Plato thought impassable by birth-accident. What Aspasia did for the Greek helot, Victoria did for the mercantile and manufacturing classes of Great Britain,
who formerly were cut off from any possible share in the Government by the birth-accident of non-inheritance in political prerogative, and by so doing she honored her kingdom with a Disraeli and a Gladstone.

Natural inferiority, according to Hume’s definition of the "natural," or to use a truer word, servility, like babyhood’s ignorance maintained through life, will always depreciate the relative value of the human life. Servility has depreciated as certainly and as deplorably the life of man in different ages as the life of woman. We may observe the very same traits and characteristics in men of servile relations to other men, which are now singled out, pointed to and complained of as characteristics only common to woman. In the effort to please his superior, the dependent loses those sterling qualities which mark strong character. He frequently becomes capricious, vacillating, light and flashy. He may even lose moral courage, become regardless of solid merit, unscrupulous in what he considers small matters, incredulous, unfaithful, untruthful. All these traits are marked to a greater or less degree in all servitude from the sordid slave to the petty ward-politician, who waits the bidding as he seeks the emoluments of his political superior. In so far as these traits are found in women they are legitimate effects of the same causes which produce them in men.

We must not fail to mention here another cause of degeneracy of equal force in men and women. Unearned subsistence always tends to reduce the moral force and the intellectual acumen. There cannot be assigned any other uniform cause for the change of great estates every third or fourth generation in our Republic. Inactivity, concomitant with abundant means, breeds degeneracy of that moral and intellectual power necessary to the care of large estates. Per contra, the enforced activity of others for subsistence quickens those powers by which not only a livelihood is secured, but wealth is accumulated. The inference follows that a similar degeneracy and supineness must be experienced in the lives of that class of women who sit deplorably helpless upon the lap of luxury, rejoicing in their effeminacy. This accounts, too, for the occasional failures which have come to the management of large financial interests by inexperienced women. While on the other hand, women of active habits and diligent productive energies have succeeded in devising and managing great plans, involving the production and expenditure of vast
sums of money. It must be acknowledged that, so far as equal opportunities with equal mental stimulant is afforded to women, there is a uniform absence of debasing traits. Responsibility will bring gravity of mind, steadiness of character and nobility of ambitions to be good as the best, high as the highest, and true as the truest.

Abject, indeed, is the reduction of that class which has reached the substratum of conviction that God or nature or devil has totally and eternally deprived it of receptive faculties equal to the noblest of its kind. That servility which spurns the possibility of elevation—as Miss Hardaker—proves a reduction of mind to an abnormal condition. She would have us "face the facts" accumulated from centuries of servility, and let the irons burn a brand of falsehood upon our inner consciousness, and feel "no discouragement." Ah, the willing martyr, to yield so gracefully to the inevitable! But there is no bravery in those words, showing the stuff of which real martyrs are made. They are the sycophant's cry for more "pap," the flunkey's manifesto of largeness, the vassal's fealty to a seigniory, which might well have graced a vassal of the eleventh century.

Twenty years ago, some kindly sons of humane masters essayed to teach the young slaves letters. Neither teachers nor pupils had confidence that the project was feasible. The African juveniles had come "to face the facts" of perpetual ignorance of letters, with "no discouragement," if not to regard their lot as a labor-saving boon. It was only a step to the rejection of the proffered knowledge with a hauteur equalled only by Miss Hardaker's facing the facts, "No, no; no use trying, Sambo's skull is too thick;" and the young martyrs' put hands to the turf for a somersault. In this eighth decade of the nineteenth century a woman still accepts for truth—as eternal truth evolved from an immense accumulation of "facts"—that woman is the inferior of the human race, and rejects every proffer of equality, crying, "No, no; no use trying; woman's cranium is too little."

These two incidents place a great fact before us—namely, that the world may believe a lie and teach the monstrous doctrine from physiological hypotheses in the mouth of its traduced victims.

The Anglo-Saxon race is continually surprised at the rapid development of mind in the African. The wondrous eloquence of Rev. G. W. S. Hammond, so recently liberated from slavery,
surprised a great Evangelical Court, where he pronounced the defense of his race in the hearing of several hundred learned divines. The very expressions of surprise evidenced the fact that the world is not expecting great mental vigor or attainments from this socially inferior race. The eminent powers of Fred. Douglass and Dr. William Wells Brown are no longer a surprise. The conclusion is plain. Long years of servility effects a social classification of inferior status by the ascendent classes. The natural avenues of growth and ambition being found barred, the crushed and cramped life, like the vine under such conditions, creeps for the light through such breaks, as the tyrant's grasp has not closed. But let opportunity take the place of servility—untrammelled and co-assisted opportunity for women as afforded men—and they will develop results to surprise the world.

Women have some advantages over the serfs and chattel slaves in the attrition with high culture. It is the refugees' liberty to take advantage of every open door toward freedom. Alas, that women in easy places of life, and women already fitted into some niche of opportunity, care so little to push the doors open wider for the admission of women less fortunate! The world pauses in the slow budding process of consciousness of responsible duty. Human growth, which takes so deep root in woman's nature, is sadly retarded by her indifference or ignorance of the only true philosophy of human betterment. The best production of the State is its people—not wealth, not improvements, except as these promote human progress, or the development of the highest type of human character. If it is good for the State to take every sane man for what he is worth as a factor in government, not only to fill vacant orders but to enlarge constituent power by the value of his life, it will be still better for the State to take every sane woman for what she is worth, not only for her constituent power but for the securement to Government of her character value in every generic and kingly sense.

The gain to the State in moral and physical development of the race would of itself be a sufficient reason for accepting this new factor in Government. Moral development would grow out of the new responsible activities, and physical development by a social reform in political economy, cutting off the prevalent blasphemies against woman's nature.

As we have seen, there are three great principles of human growth—attrition of mind, opportunity and responsibility.
These all being withheld from women in a greater or less degree, human growth is by so much impeded—the race by so much deteriorated. There being substantially but one great opportunity for women—marriage—its sacred office has become greatly corrupted. Girls hurry into marriage lest the opportunity pass forever, and life should be a failure. Thus rash marriages result in immature, weak and imbecile developments of the race. No more deplorable event could happen to the nation than this constant degeneration of the people by large classes. And this, doubtless, is going on in Massachusetts, where your Governor assures you women have no grievances.

There results from this cause an increase of this unproductive class of population, more rapid than the increase of production for subsistence. A large increase of population too weak or imbecile to be of any productive value to the country, becomes burdensome to the productive classes. Alas, that some ordinarily intelligent women should be of this class!

We are told that the State, or men representing the State, can extend the largest opportunity to women without the ballot. If the State can, doubtless the State never will. The modern State recognizes no force but political force. It respects no power but ballot and money power. It confers no honors but to voting constituents. Mrs. Belva Lockwood, Esquire, might knock at the cabinet door for a ministry pleni-potentiary until the day of doom without being heard inside until her knock shall represent a voting constituency behind her. Without the ballot, culture, character, business tact, executive skill, energy, diplomacy—all count for nothing in the person of woman as an applicant for a remunerative position of State.

The Malthusian doctrine known to scientists and political economists offers no suggestion of remedy which can possibly reach the evil until equal opportunity shall be accorded to women—opportunity to take care of themselves and their dependents, by equally easy access to every honorable and legitimate employment. Then the sacred office of marriage, so vexed and perverted, will regulate itself by natural laws. The social evil will be greatly reduced by the same beneficent opportunity. Willing or unwilling, many women must stand alone. They must make effort at self-subsistence. After trying this door and that, and finding them bolted and barred against them, they betake them—
selves to one of the few avocations open to women. These places are so crowded that the price of work is far below living rates. After repeated efforts and failures, oppressed with hardness of society, wringing from their very hearts the blood-value of their lives, the wretched victims yield at length to the destroyer's siren promise of ease and the kindly regard of at least one human heart—the first step is taken which leads to the last degree of infamy, and the world stands aghast at the crime—crime forced by the bitter necessity of ekeing out a meager subsistence—virtue slain in the unequal battle of life. Productive activities and money-earning opportunities would stimulate independence, foster industrial civilization, restrain destructive agencies and build character against adversity. God pity the men whose ballots protract soul repression. Merciful Father of women! who dost inspire within us the diviner conceptions of life, pity those heartless women, who themselves being secure, "let go the rescuing ropes and hurl the countless beings down from the upward path to light and joy." Oh, God of our being! God of love, who has created us Prime Ministers over all social interests, and put into our hands the scepter of authority over all human life, help us to stand at the stadium of the nation's morality, demanding justice, demanding freedom, demanding high character, until our royal deeds shall defy the laws of surveillance, and inheritance of dominant principles shall make long destinies of honor to the liberated race.

There never was a period in the nation's history which so urgently demanded the civil and moral co-operation of women as the present. The very earth seems yawning with the mighty roots of material growth, and the National Government trembles in the throes of majestic human growth, while the public heart leaps up for some diviner embodiment or personation of central-reforming power, some world-building truth, some character-moulding environment, some soul-empowering energy, around which to rally the wasting vital resources of the nation, flying now in destructive tangents in every direction.

Into this seething mass bring the centripetal mother-force, the essential cohesive element of controlling republican thought—The latent power of veto in moral and civil ethics—the root-nurture of the race in its growth—the vital blood-interest in all things human—the diviner God-image into the whole human
face—the holier Christliness into the whole human character. Then, and not till then, will human growth attain the God-ideal of earth-life.