

Women

# CONDITION AND CHARACTER

## OF

### FEMALES

#### IN PAGAN AND MOHAMMEDAN COUNTRIES.

[The following pages contain a simple statement of facts. Their truth is attested by men of various characters and professions—by protestants, catholics, infidels, and pagans—by geographers, travellers, and missionaries; who all agree in representing the condition of the female sex in heathen countries as degraded and miserable in the extreme.]

It is difficult—perhaps impossible to describe the wretchedness of heathen females, without wounding the feelings of the benevolent, or shocking the delicacy of the refined. But the truth must be told. The remedy can never be applied, unless the disease is known. The sympathy, ever anxious to relieve, cannot be felt before the misery is seen. The charity, that kindles at the tale of woe, can never act with adequate efficiency, till it is made to see the pollution and guilt of 600,000,000, now buried in the death-shades of heathenism. Shall we then, however painful the sight, shrink from the contemplation of their real state? We shall only see what they endure.

#### I. THEIR CONDITION.

1. *They are despised.* The heathen female is viewed with contempt from the morning of her existence. The birth of a daughter, in most unevangelized countries, is an occasion of sorrow. Frowned upon by her parents and relatives, her sex is often a sufficient reason for putting an immediate end to her existence.(1)\* Born into the world with such unpropitious omens, if permitted to live, it is only to witness the gathering cloud of darkness and misery, which hangs over the whole course of her life. Women in all Pagan and Mohammedan countries are regarded as inferior to men, created only to be

\* The figures refer to a list of most of the writers and books, on whose authority these statements are made, which the reader will find on the last page.



subservient to their wants and pleasures. In some they are considered "a necessary evil," a disgrace to the world, unworthy the companionship of man. You cannot offer a greater insult to a Mohammedan in Persia, than to inquire after the female part of his family, even were they dangerously ill.(2) Such contempt for the female character, and such opinions respecting the design of woman's creation, are sanctioned by the Koran, whose doctrines command the belief, and determine the practice, of 120,000,000 of the human race.

The "sacred books" of Hindostan, whose precepts sway the minds of 100,000,000, speak thus, "In every stage of life, woman is created to obey. At first, she yields obedience to her father and mother. When married, she submits to her husband. In old age, she must be ruled by her children. During her life she can never be under her own control."\* "Women have no business with the text of the Vedu. Having therefore no evidence of law, and no knowledge of expiatory texts, sinful woman must be as foul as falsehood itself."(3) Are such sentiments confined to the pages of their "sacred books"? No. They live in the heart, and govern the life of every Hindoo. Facts in proof and illustration of this will appear in the sequel.

But are females less despised, where no "sacred books" condemn them to perpetual disgrace and subjection? Contemplate their condition in the Society Islands, before the introduction of Christianity. Men were considered "rah," sacred, while women were regarded as "noah," impure, or common. Men were allowed to eat several kinds of meat, cocoa nuts, plantains, and other articles of food offered to the gods; which females were forbidden to touch under pain of death. The fires also, at which the food of the men was cooked, the baskets in which it was kept, and the houses in which they ate, were sacred; females being forbidden to use the former, or enter the latter, under the same fearful penalty.(4)

2. *Their education is neglected.* This is true of every rank, wherever the Bible has not rescued woman from degradation. Indeed, must not this naturally result from the contempt in which she is held? Among rich and poor, in the families of princes and peasants, she is alike ignorant. Probably throughout the whole Pagan and Mohammedan world, there does not exist a single school for the education of females, except those established by Christian benevolence. In Mohammedan countries they are sometimes instructed in embroidery, music, dancing, and such other external accomplishments as render them fitter instruments for their master's pleasure; but not a thought is bestowed upon the cultivation of the mind. Reading and writing are to them unknown. The immortal soul is utterly neglected.(5)

In Hindostan, not twenty in as many millions are blessed with the common rudiments of Hindoo learning.

In Ceylon, when the American missionaries arrived, not one in a district containing a population of 200,000 could read. The

\* How different the precepts of Christianity. See Eph. v. 25, and 28-30; 1 Peter iii. 7, &c.

cultivation of the female mind is thought to be not only vain, but dangerous to the welfare of society; and the direst curses are denounced against the woman, who may aspire to the dangerous eminence of being able to read and write. It is supposed that the employments proper for woman do not require education. For she can sweep the house, cook the food, collect fuel, wait on her lord, and feed her children without it; and having discharged these duties with fidelity, the whole work of life is accomplished.(3)

A missionary, in conversation with some respectable natives, who were anxious to have schools established for boys, remarked that the Christian public were desirous of doing everything in their power to establish schools for the instruction of girls. The oldest and most intelligent of them replied, "What have we to do with them? Let them remain as they are." The missionary reminded him that females were passing into eternity ignorant of the way of salvation, and in danger of perishing forever. "They do not know how to go to heaven," replied the native, "but they know how to go to hell, and let them go."(6)

3. *They are not at their own disposal in marriage.* In some unevangelized countries they are betrothed by their parents in infancy, or childhood. In others, they are sold at a more advanced age, at prices varying according to their beauty, or rank. A Circassian female, fourteen years of age, who had been captured by the Cossacs, being told she was to be set at liberty, begged to remain their prisoner; because she feared her parents would sell her, and she might fall into the hands of masters less humane than the Cossacs.(7)

In some nations, custom, handed down from generation to generation, till it has become as strong as law, forbids a woman to reject proposals of marriage, from whatever man they come. Pleased, or displeased, she must leave her parents, and the companions of her early years, to drag out the remainder of her earthly existence, in subjection to the authority of a tyrant, whom she cannot but loathe and abhor.(5) In Hindostan, the greatest disgrace is attached to the character of any female, who remains unmarried after eleven years of age. So foul is the stain, that in order to avoid it, several who had passed that age, were married to an aged Brahmin, when his friends were carrying him to the Ganges to die upon its banks.(3)

4. *The practice of polygamy prevents them from enjoying the affections of their husbands and the happiness of domestic life.* This practice, so destructive of all conjugal felicity, prevails among the higher ranks in almost every Pagan and Mohammedan country. It is authorized by the Koran, which permits every man to marry four wives. But by the rich this limitation is commonly disregarded. With them, the number varies from the lawful four, to the three hundred, five hundred, fifteen hundred, or two thousand of the Grand Seigneur.(8)

In Hindostan, the Kooleen Brahmins, considered the most holy of the whole Brahminical sect, claim as a privilege of their order, the right to marry one hundred wives. Although they



do not often exercise this right to its full extent, the number of their wives is frequently not less than forty or fifty.(9) As in Mohammedan; so in Pagan countries, the number of a man's wives is limited only by his income or inclination. The evils resulting from this unhallowed practice can be better conceived than described. Totally destructive of domestic peace, it renders every female, within its influence, an object of constant and bitter persecution from the other wives of her husband, or a prey to the devouring envy, hatred, and malice, which continually rankle in her own bosom.

5. *They are liable to be divorced by their husbands at any moment, and left without means of support.* In Hindostan, the husband may divorce his wife at pleasure. Says the "divine Munoo," "The woman who speaks unkindly to her husband, may be superseded by another without delay." Let him address her by the title "mother," and the marriage covenant is dissolved. This is the only bill of divorce requisite.(3) When thus cast out by her husband, the customs of society prevent her from obtaining an honorable livelihood.(10) In other countries, divorce is equally easy to the husband, and extremely common.

6. *Among the higher ranks in Mohammedan and partially civilized Pagan countries, they are secluded from the society of men.* In Hindostan and China, the wife of a man of rank and wealth is continually secluded, and closely guarded. She is not permitted to eat with her husband. She never mixes with company, even at her own house; and is never seen abroad with her husband, unless on a journey. A Hindoo female seeing an European lady walking arm in arm with her husband, exclaimed in the utmost astonishment, "Oh! ma! what is this? Do you see? They take their wives by the hand, and lead them through the streets without the least shame!"(1)

In the houses of the higher class, the harem, or women's apartment, is literally a prison. It is usually so situated and constructed, that the inmates can neither be seen from without, nor enjoy any prospect, but that of an adjoining garden, surrounded with lofty walls. It is never entered by any male except the husband. The wife is seldom permitted to go abroad;—never without being concealed in a close carriage, or having her face so enveloped that she could not be recognized even by the most intimate friend. If she does, it is at her peril. Says Col. Phipps, in an address before the Church Missionary Society, "In Alexandria, [Egypt,] I have seen a Turk, at mid-day, in the open street, cut off a woman's head for no other reason, than because he saw her without a veil, and her person was not concealed in her cloak!"(6)

The strictness with which the inmates of the harem are guarded, may be learned from the following particulars respecting the women belonging to the seraglio of the Grand Seignior of Turkey. "Whenever they go abroad, which is very seldom, a troop of black eunuchs convey them to the boats, which are enclosed with lattices and linen curtains; or, if their excursion is on land, they are put into close chariots, and signals are made

at certain distances, that no one approach the road, through which they pass, under pain of death. When the Sultan permits them to walk in the gardens of the seraglio, they are cleared of every thing human, and a guard of black eunuchs, with drawn sabres, march on patrol. Any individual found in the gardens, even through ignorance, or inadvertence, is instantly sabred, and his head laid at the feet of the Grand Seignior, who bestows a large reward upon the guard for his fidelity."(8)

The same spirit of jealousy and dark suspicion, which dictates the conduct of the Grand Seignior, baunts the minds of husbands in Mohammedan countries generally. In some it is common in the lower, as well as higher ranks, and the women's apartment in the house of every poor man is a harem upon a small scale.

This close confinement and seclusion places the wife entirely in the husband's power. Whatever abuse she may suffer, who shall redress her wrongs? Says a traveller, while residing at Constantinople, "The body of a young woman, of surprising beauty, was found one morning near my house. She had received two wounds, one in her side, the other in her breast; and was not quite cold. Many came to admire her beauty; but no one could tell who she was, no woman's face being known out of her own family. She was buried privately, and little inquiry was made for the wretch, who had imbedded his hands in her blood."(11) The Pacha of Acre in Palestine, a few years since, put to death seven of his wives at one time, with his own hands.(7)

7. *In the lower ranks, and in barbarous Pagan countries, they are compelled to perform the most servile labors.* In Ceylon a recent traveller was surprised to see strong and healthy men engaged in washing, ironing, preparing muslin dresses, and other similar employments, while slender females were carrying heavy burdens through the streets, or laboring in the fields.

In China, where, on account of the vast number of rivers and canals, more business is done upon the water than in any other part of the world, women are obliged, in addition to what, in other countries, are considered their proper employments, to perform the duties of boatmen.(12) On land they may be seen performing the various parts of agricultural labor, frequently with an infant on their backs; while their husbands are gaming, or otherwise idling away their time.(13) Barrows asserts that he has frequently seen the wife dragging the light plough, or harrow, while the husband was performing the easier task of sowing the seed. A Jesuit missionary assures us, that he has seen a woman and an ass yoked together to the same plough, while the inhuman husband was guiding it and driving his team.

What labors are exacted of the wife among uncivilized Pagans, let the reader learn from one of their number, who in describing her own, has described the condition of millions of her sex. A missionary in South America, reproving an Indian mother for the destruction of her female infants, she



replied with tears, "I would to God, father, I would to God, that my mother had by my death prevented the distresses I endure, and have yet to endure, as long as I live. Consider, father, our deplorable condition. Our husbands go out to hunt, and trouble themselves no farther. We are dragged along with one infant at the breast, and another in a basket. They return in the evening without any burden. We return with the burden of our children; and though tired with a long march, must labor all night in grinding corn to make chica for them. They get drunk, and in their drunkenness beat us, draw us by the hair of the head, and tread us under foot. And what have we to comfort us for slavery that has no end? A young wife is brought in upon us, who is permitted to abuse us and our children, because we are no longer regarded. Can human nature endure such tyranny? What kindness can we show to our female children equal to that of relieving them from such oppression, more bitter a thousand times than death? I say again, would to God my mother had put me under ground the moment I was born." (14)

8. *They are held in the most degrading subjection to their husbands.* From what has already been said, who can doubt that the Mussulman female, immured in the harem, must acquiesce in the will of her master? Especially when we recollect that the precepts of the Koran direct the husband to chastise his wife for any disobedience to his commands.

In Hindostan, women are required, not only by the enactment of legislators, but by the still more binding precepts of religion, to submit to the most degrading bondage. The Padma Purana, a book regarded with greater reverence, and more strictly obeyed by many a deluded Hindoo, than the Word of the everlasting God by multitudes of nominal Christians, speaks thus—"When in the presence of her husband, a woman must keep her eyes upon her master, and be ready to receive his commands. When he speaks, she must be quiet, and listen to nothing besides. When he calls, she must leave every thing else, and attend upon him alone. A woman has no other god on earth than her husband. The most excellent of all good works she can perform, is to gratify him with the strictest obedience. This should be her only devotion. Though he be aged, infirm, dissipated, a drunkard, or a debauchee, she must still regard him as her god. She must serve him with all her might, obeying him in all things, spying no defects in his character, and giving him no cause for disquiet. If he laughs, she must also laugh. If he weeps, she must also weep. If he sings, she must be in an ecstasy. She must never eat, till her husband is satisfied. If he abstains, she must surely fast; and she must abstain from whatever food her husband dislikes. When he goes abroad, if he bids her go with him, she must follow. If he bids her stay, she must go nowhere during his absence. Until he returns, she must not bathe, clean her teeth, pare her nails, nor eat more than once a day." (10) By such impious and barbarous precepts, the Hindoo husband is governed in the treatment of his wife. He never speaks her name,

if he adhere strictly to his religion, but calls her, "my servant," or "my dog." Nor may the wife speak the name of her husband, but must call him "my lord," or "the master of the house." Liable to chastisement from her husband, she deems that a happy day, in which she escapes his cruel scourge. (1) A native convert to Christianity, speaking of the effect of the gospel upon his conduct, stated as the most decisive evidence of his conversion, that he had entirely ceased to beat his wife.

In Burmah, the wife and grown daughters are considered by the husband and father, as much the subjects of discipline as the younger children. Hence it is not uncommon for females of every age and rank, to suffer under the tyrannical rod of those who should be their kind protectors and affectionate companions. (15)

9. *Their lives are not valued.* In Greenland, it is customary to bury aged, helpless females alive. An Arab, in the north of Africa, asked his wife for his knife. She replied that she had lent it to a neighbor. "Do you not know," said he, "that you have no business to meddle with any thing belonging to me?" She acknowledged she had not, confessed her fault, expressed her sorrow, and offered to go immediately and bring it back. He replied, "I will see if I can't have a wife, who will obey my commands better. I always told you not to meddle with any thing of mine." Then levelling her to the ground with one stroke of his club, he repeated his blows till she ceased to breathe. Neither man nor woman went near them, though her cries were heard through the whole tribe. In the evening the neighboring women dug a grave scarcely of the size of her body, into which they laid the naked corpse sideways, trode it down with their feet till it was level with the surface of the earth, and covered it with a heap of stones. The only notice taken of this inhuman deed was, that the council of the tribe fined the murderer four sheep, which he was required to cook for their supper. He paid the fine, and in two weeks married again. (16)

Col. Phipps, whose name has been already mentioned, says, "The rich and powerful in Hindostan not unfrequently punish the females of their families by causing them to be sown up in a sack and thrown by night into a river, or well. I have seen a rich Hindoo who was known to have destroyed several women in this manner. When the magistrate attempted to bring the wealthy culprit to punishment, he found that the very parents and kindred of the victims had been bribed to depose in a court of justice, that they had died a natural death. I have seen taken out of large wells, several human skeletons, the remains of murdered heathen females; and I wish it to be distinctly understood, that what I relate are facts, which have come under my own personal observation." (6)

Such is the state of woman in unenlightened countries. Degraded in her condition;—exposed to continual persecution and insult;—deprived of all that is delightful in domestic or social life;—denied the blessings of education;—excluded from the knowledge of God and the hopes of heaven;—she is, in short,



treated as a soulless being, whose highest aim should be to gratify the caprice, and obey the commands of haughty and unfeeling man. But where in all the Pagan and Mohammedan world—where among the 600,000,000 of our race, to whom the Bible is unknown, is woman the companion of man? Where, the happy wife of the affectionate husband? Where, the honored mother of grateful children? Ask the islands of the sea, or the distant East. They cannot tell. Ask the native female of America. You have heard her mourn her unhappy fate. Ask the daughter of abused Africa. Her dying shrieks have told her tale of woe. She is every where *despised, neglected, afflicted, oppressed*.

## II. THEIR CHARACTER.

1. *They are destitute of female delicacy.* In many heathen countries, females, as if it were not enough to be destitute of those qualities of mind and heart, which are the peculiar glory of their sex, disfigure their persons in such a manner as to destroy their native beauty and grace. They seem not only incapable of distinguishing between beauty and deformity, but also to have lost all sense of female propriety. Proofs of this are given in the writings of almost every traveller, who has observed their customs. Among the multitude, which might be adduced, let one or two suffice.

At the Society Islands it was formerly customary for every female to provide herself immediately after marriage with an instrument set with rows of shark's teeth, with which, upon the death of any of the family, they cut and mangled themselves in a most horrible manner; striking the head, temples, cheeks, and breast, till the blood flowed profusely, at the same time uttering the most deafening and agonizing cries. This was their mode of expressing intense joy, as well as grief. Nor were their amusements more becoming the female character. One was wrestling; in which females, even of the highest rank, engaged in the presence of thousands of spectators of both sexes, not only with one another, but also with men.<sup>(4)</sup>

Who can, without disgust, describe the intolerable filthiness of their dwellings and food, and their want of personal cleanliness?<sup>2</sup>

2. *They are superstitious.* Is not this a natural consequence of ignorance? In Hindostan nothing is more common than to see females measuring the distance from temple to temple by falling prostrate every six feet; suspending themselves by hooks thrust through the muscular parts of their backs; and in a thousand ways tormenting themselves to obtain the favor of their gods. "As I was walking out on a certain occasion," says an American missionary, "I saw two women in the middle of the road, rolling through the mud, which was then about a foot deep. Upon my approaching them and inquiring their object, they replied, 'we were sick, and vowed to our god that,

if he would make us well, we would roll to his temple.' After expostulating with them some time, I was obliged to leave them, sick and weak as they were, to their infatuation, just at night, with three fourths of their journey still before them, and with a strong probability of their perishing before the night should be far advanced. Proceeding a few steps I met a Brahmin, and pointing to the scene, expostulated with him for keeping the females in such ignorance and in the practice of such superstitions, appealing to his conscience that he knew better. He coldly replied, 'Ah, let them alone, let them alone, that's worship just suited to their capacities.'<sup>(1)</sup>

Their superstition and ignorance render them the dupes of the most detestable and wicked impositions from the impious Brahmins. Among them, as among the ancient Israelites, barrenness is regarded as a calamity, and deliverance from it is often the subject of prayer to their gods; some of whom are believed to have power to remove it. Applicants are told to remain in the temple during the night, performing their devotions; and, if their worship is accepted, they will be visited by the god. They return home without the least suspicion of the horrid deception practised upon them by the Brahmins, supposing they have had intercourse with the deity of the temple. At other temples the same boon is promised on conditions *still more degrading and monstrous*. These present, during the festival months, one vast scene of impurity and wickedness.<sup>(10)</sup>

3. *They are GENERALLY guilty of transgressing the seventh commandment.* It is needless to dwell upon this topic. To assert the truth is scarcely tolerable to a mind of delicacy and refinement. Yet listen for a moment to what candid men have said upon the subject. "It is a fact," says Rev. Mr. Ward, "which perplexes many of the well-informed Hindoos, that, notwithstanding the wives of Europeans are seen in so many mixed companies, they remain chaste; while their wives, though continually secluded, watched, and veiled, are notoriously corrupt. I recollect the observation of a gentleman, who had resided twenty years in Bengal, and whose opinion on such a subject is entitled to the highest regard, that 'the infidelity of Hindoo women was so great that he scarcely thought there was an individual among them, who had always been faithful to her husband. A Brahmin, who would be far from disparaging his country, affirmed that 'he did not believe there was a single female in the large cities of Bengal, who had not violated the laws of chastity.'"

But in violating the laws of morality, do they not act in perfect obedience to the dictates of their religion? Many of the gods of India are gods of impurity. Their temples are brothels; their worship, unbounded licentiousness.

In consequence of their being married in childhood, thousands of Hindoo females are left in widowhood at an early age. Both law and public opinion take from them all means of supporting themselves in respectability. Driven to desperation by the miseries that overwhelmed them, hundreds have heretofore thrown themselves upon the funeral piles of their deceased

\* Let the reader who would know more of this, consult Stewart's Journal at the Sandwich Islands, Harmon's, or Lewis and Clark's, among the North American Indians, &c.



husbands. The fate of the surviving widow is often worse than death. She can never marry, although her husband may have died, when she was a mere child; but must remain in cruel bondage to her sons, or her husband's relations. Many, rather than endure the obloquy and servitude of widowhood among their friends, resort to the only means in their power of procuring support, and obtain a miserable subsistence by prostitution. Among these blinded, degraded beings, this mode of life is *honorable* compared with widowhood; and widows generally give themselves up to it, in order to avoid disgrace! (1)

4. They are "*without natural affection.*" "The very periods," says a well known missionary, "when the infant of the Christian mother is to her an object of intense solicitude, and of the deepest anxiety,—times of sickness and distress,—are those when the heathen mother feels that in her child she has a care and a trouble, which she will not endure. She stifles its cries for a moment with her hand, hurries it into a grave already prepared, and tramples to a level the earth under which the offspring of her bosom is struggling in the agonies of death." (17)

At the Society Islands two thirds of the children were murdered in infancy. Some mothers had thus consigned to the grave five, six, eight, or even more of their offspring. "I do not recollect," says Rev. Mr. Ellis, "meeting with a female in the islands during the whole of my residence there, who had been a mother while idolatry prevailed, and had not embrued her hands in the blood of her offspring." A similar statement is made by another missionary, who had spent thirty years on the islands. (4)

In India, frequent transgressions of the sixth commandment result from the disregard of the seventh. Mothers add to the sins already mentioned, that of destroying in the bud the fruit of their crimes. Not only the numerous widows in that country, but wives also procure abortion. Some are accustomed to do it annually. "The Pundit," [teacher,] says Mr. Ward, "who gave me this information, supposes that 10,000 infants are thus murdered in the province of Bengal every month; appealing in support of his opinion to the fact that many females are tried for these offences in the courts of justice in every zillah of Bengal, and that it was so common an event that every child knew it." Infants are also destroyed by offering them to the Ganges; burying them alive; suspending them in baskets on trees, to be devoured by ants, and birds of prey; or exposing them to be torn in pieces by crocodiles, jackals, and tigers.

In China this practice is scarcely less common. In the city of Peking, so great is the number of infants exposed by their unnatural mothers, that a person is employed by government to go through the streets every morning with a cart, and gather up the children thus exposed, and cast them, the living and the dead without distinction, into a large pit appropriated to this purpose.

Pause now for a moment, and reflect upon the condition of 300,000,000 of fellow beings, designed by their Creator to belong to the fairest and loveliest portion of the human race. Behold

them despised,—oppressed,—sunk in pollution and guilt. Compare their situation with the happy lot of the Christian female; and while you rejoice in the superior character and privileges of the latter, remember "it is only by the prevalence of the gospel, that man learns that woman has a soul of an origin as high, a value as precious, a destination as lofty, and a duration as lasting as his own." The respect, the intelligence, the purity, the every blessing of the Christian female, the gospel has power to bestow upon her sister in heathen lands. Is not this evident from its effects in times past? Look at the females of Greece and Rome 1800 years ago. Were they not as wretched and degraded as those of Hindostan and Turkey at the present day? were impurity and infanticide less common among them? (18) Heathenism in every age and every country is essentially the same. But wherever the elevating, purifying influence of Christianity has been diffused, it has rescued woman from her degradation and wickedness, making her blessed and a blessing. Mark upon the map of the world those countries where the Bible is known, and you mark at the same time the only nations in which the rights of woman are regarded.

Look also at what is now doing among some, lately sunk in the deepest degradation and wickedness. Tahiti, one of the Society Islands, affords an instance. The commencement of the year 1815, was distinguished in the annals of that island by changes in society affecting the intellectual, religious, and domestic character of its inhabitants generally, but especially of the females. The withering influence of idolatry began to decline and give way to the humanizing, elevating power of Christianity. The food was no longer regarded as sacred, nor the fires, as hallowed. In sickness and distress, the mother, the wife, the sister, the daughter, were no longer neglected. The social circle, the family board, the domestic altar, began to diffuse their life-giving joys. Instead of cruelty and contempt, the utmost tenderness is now manifested by the husband and father towards his wife and children. When the family carry their produce to trade with vessels, the first choice among articles purchased is given to the children, the next to the wife, and the husband takes for his portion whatever may remain. The female now enjoys the pleasure resulting from culture of mind, ability to read the sacred Scriptures, and write her native language. Having become a proficient in needle work, she has laid aside the native dress, consisting merely of a piece of cloth loosely thrown about the waist, and adopted the European style. Barbarous and masculine amusements are exchanged for visits of mercy to the sick and dying. The cruel mangling, dishevelled hair, and savage yell, are superseded by the solemn prayer, and the funeral procession. The mild influence of Christianity has effected the entire abolition of infanticide, and revived the parental affection and tenderness originally implanted in the human bosom. The mother, formerly guilty of destroying her helpless offspring, may now be seen coming into the place of public worship with her little babe in her arms, gazing with evident tenderness upon its smiling countenance;



or reading the Word of God, and kneeling in prayer with those children, who but for the gospel would have been ushered into eternity, ere their playful smiles had won the affections of the parent's heart.(4)

Does not this instance, in common with many others, satisfactorily prove that the gospel is to the heathen female "glad tidings of salvation" for two worlds? It delivers her from *present oppression and coming wrath*.

Such is a faint outline of the condition and character of heathen females. What ought the Christian, who contemplates it, to do? The sickly sentimentalist may turn away from the sight with disgust: the careless worldling may look on with indifference: but no heart, that glows with heaven-born benevolence, will be willing to sit down without an effort to relieve their wretchedness. *What then must be done?* What, to rescue Pagan woman from bondage? what, to light up in her soul the consciousness that she possesses an immortal mind? what, to inspire her with the hopes of heaven? All past experience—the history of woman in every age—gives but one answer. There is but one sun, whose rays can penetrate the darkness that envelopes these unhappy beings, and pour the light of life into their benighted souls. It is the Sun of righteousness. Is there not healing in his beams for *every nation*? But these beams have never shone upon the heathen female.

CHRISTIANS! she now appeals to you; she points to her wickedness, her ignorance, her superstition;—to her degraded condition in this life, her hopeless prospects for the life to come;—and pleads with you, by these thrilling motives, for the light you enjoy. She appeals to your sympathy, your charity, your benevolence. She urges upon *you* the question, upon the decision of which is pending *her happiness for time and eternity*,

WILL YOU GIVE ME THE GOSPEL?

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