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REPORT

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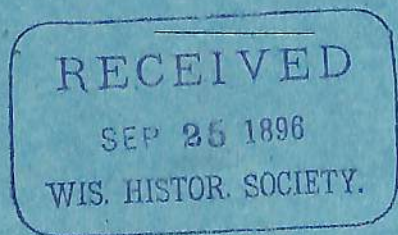
5th
THE ASSOCIATION

FOR THE

ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN.

1877

1878—1879.



BOSTON:

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1879.

REPORT.

THE Fifth Annual Congress of the Association for the Advancement of Women, met at Cleveland, Ohio, Oct. 10th, 11th and 12th, 1877. The President, Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, being in Europe, Miss Abby W. May, of Boston, was called to the chair. At the opening session the Association was cordially welcomed to the city by Mayor Rose.

Nine public sessions were held, at which papers on Educational, Literary and Social topics were presented; many of them were ably discussed by members. The audiences were large, no less than one thousand reported at the day sessions, and three times that number crowding the hall in the evening, till the doors were locked, as a precautionary measure by the Insurance agent's officials.

The Cleveland School Board adjourned the schools on Friday, that teachers and older pupils could attend. The courtesies of the citizens were unstinted, and the reports of the press were full and able.

The daily papers reported that "the Women's Congress, which closes its sessions in this city to-day, has been characterized by intelligence, dignity and harmony, and has signally proven the fact that sensible women can come together in the interests of their sex without increasing the censure or the ridicule of those who listen to their deliberations. No better evidence is needed of the power and influence of womanly intelligence, and modest dignity, than the respectful consideration that has been awarded to this congress." * * * *

"The proceedings have been marked for dignity and earnestness. Most of the ladies who have spoken have a decidedly pleasing address, and not a few of them are very eloquent. Whatever opinion any one may have as to the wisdom of women participating in such movements, which are usually considered as belonging to men alone, no one can fail to admire the manner in which these deliberations have been conducted. The debates have been characterized by moderation and judgment, and ideas have been advanced well worthy the attention of male scientists and philosophers. When these ladies return to their homes, they will have left a most pleasing impression on our citizens."

The Sixth Congress of Women assembled at Providence, R. I., Oct. 9th, 1879, at 10 A.M., at Low's Opera House.

There were three executive sessions of members of the Association, six public sessions, to three of which an admittance fee was charged. Members from eleven States and District of Columbia were present, Mrs. K. N. Doggett in the Chair.

The opening address of the President set forth cogently the Educational, Industrial, Civil and Political necessity for such an Association. It was followed by papers and essays on "Dress;" "A plea for the study of Botany in our Primary Schools;" "Co-Education;" "Women's Clubs;" "Motherhood, physiologically considered;" "Women in the Grange;" "Journalism;" "Where do we get our characters?" "The importance of National Training in Domestic Economy;" "Bee Culture;" "Our Deadly Friend; or, our False Methods in Education;" "Harvard Examinations as a Test;" "An astronomer's view of the Eclipse at Denver;" "Leonardo da Vinci."

Interesting reports from the committees, and from the Vice-Presidents of States, and District of Columbia, were presented. Foreign letters from members were read.

As in other cities where the Association has met, the Public Schools were adjourned for a day, that the teachers and older pupils might attend the sessions of the Congress. Here, as elsewhere, most cordial hospitality was extended to members, as well as to the officers of the Association. The recognition of the Press was uniformly appreciative. The Providence *Journal* regarded the Congress "as notable in wise and bright thought, and practical suggestions."

The Providence *Bulletin* summarized the three days' work as follows:—

"It was equally creditable to the good citizens of Providence, and to the women from abroad who have come among us as teachers, that Low's Opera House was so completely filled yesterday afternoon by an audience attentive, intelligent and appreciative. There were vigor, purpose and plan on the platform; respect and an almost thou-pursuadest-me feeling on the floor. In one matter, at any rate, the speakers were worthy of imitation by all who address the public; they were brief, pointed, explicit; they knew what they wanted to say, said it and stopped. When a woman who reminds one of the ideal female Quaker preacher, with a low, soft voice, denounces a given practice as 'senseless, tasteless, vulgar and extravagant,' and each word impinges the intellect as being exactly appropriate and entirely true, it is worth while to listen. Nor was there wanting the lighter graces of rhetoric, nor the subtle sarcasm wreathed in but not hidden by a charming utterance

and a lively wit. Yet if one were to characterize the sayings of the afternoon, one would simply say they were marked by common sense, the most uncommon of all things in a mass meeting. The subjects discussed were important, of general interest, and so diversified as to retain attention, and there were no vain repetitions nor wild extravagancies. As a purely literary entertainment, the hearers were treated to high thought, expressed in pure and forcible English, and as a means for the advancement of women, this meeting must be held to be a healthful, elevating, suggestive and potent agency."

The Congress was made the topic of pulpit discourse on the succeeding Sunday. The Rev. Mr. Staples said, "Those who have attended the Woman's Congress, which has just closed, must have felt that here was a company of noble women, striving earnestly to do what they could for the elevation of life, and the best interests of the race; women of large views and large culture, having no poor ambition for notoriety, but with seriousness of heart, with a solemn sense of responsibility to God, studying the great evils that afflict society, striving to alleviate and cure them."

"No one could have heard or read the papers on the sources of character, and the causes that are making education a deadly peril to the health of the body, without believing that these women comprehend the dangers, and earnestly propose to overcome them; that they have an intelligent perception of what education should be, and of the sources of national power and glory. These papers deserve to be read and pondered by all our people. There is no man or woman who will not be wiser for their counsel, none who would not be nobler and more Christian for their spirit."

"This Congress carries inspiration to pure living into any community where it meets. While such a band of cultured and consecrated souls are dealing with the great questions of moral and social evil, and working for a higher civilization, every patriot, philanthropist and Christian has reason to thank God and take courage."

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THE NEED OF WOMEN IN SCIENCE.

BY MARIA MITCHELL.

In our inquiries in regard to the opportunities afforded to women for the study of science, we are not surprised to find them meagre and unsatisfactory. Nor, with one exception, are we surprised at the localities in which the little culture of science is found; they have the range of latitude and longitude which we expected. The light shading on the map of the world which in the old school books used to divide the enlightened from the barbarian countries, might be used to-day to designate the scientific and the unscientific.

Taking our whole country into consideration, there is very little attention paid to science. The same influences which deter men in scientific research, operate only more forcibly upon women; the want of leisure, and the unremunerative character of intellectual pursuits. And yet the fact that a few women give themselves so determinedly to scientific studies, and that so many make a beginning, would seem to show that they have a decided fitness for its demand. Young girls almost all study the natural sciences in schools, and quite a moiety of them take up the abstract sciences. I do not believe it is because the science of the ordinary schools requires little brain work, although that is true, but because it is the work to which they instinctively incline. I should like to urge upon young women a course of solid scientific study in some one direction for two reasons.

First. The needs of science.

Second. Their own needs.

The needs of science. For the very reason that a woman's methods are different from those of a man, are women needed in scientific work. All her nice perceptions of minute details, all her delicate observation of color, of form, of shape, of change, and her capability of patient routine would be of immense value in the collection of scientific facts.

When I see a woman put an exquisitely fine needle at exactly the same distance from the last stitch which that last stitch was from its predecessor, I think what a capacity she has for an astronomical observer; unknowingly, she is using a micrometer—unconsciously, she is graduating circles. And the eye which has been trained in the matching of worsteds is specially fitted for the use of prism and spectroscope. Persons who are in charge of the scientific departments of colleges are always mourning over the scarcity of trained assistants. The directors of observatories and museums not infrequently do an enormous amount of routine work which they would gladly relinquish; their time and strength are wasted on labor which students could do equally well, if students could be found who would be ready to make science a life work.

Women are needed too, as lecturers in schools; it needs only the supply, and the demand will come.

Persons who are known to be in a line of scientific work, are continually besieged with applications to give lectures, to write short articles for periodicals, to translate foreign works. Such lectures and such articles would do little directly for the advance, but much indirectly in forming taste and arousing interest.

I am far from the intention of encouraging young women to scientific study on account of its outward utility; at best, its wages to-day are little above those of manual labor, and were they those of royal revenues, I should still raise the objection that it

OUR MUSEUMS AND OUR INVESTIGATORS.

BY SARAH P. MONKS.

In every important city, from Boston to San Francisco, there is a Scientific Museum or Academy of Natural Sciences. These vary in contents from the promiscuous collection of stuffed skins, stones and curiosities brought home by sailors, to the valuable array of type specimens, and representatives of all branches of the animal kingdom, stored in the rich cabinets of Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Washington.

The chief museums, founded many years ago,—that of Philadelphia, dating back to 1812—have accumulated materials, which naturalists from all parts of the world are eager to see and study.

All these museums, I believe, are open to the public, most of them freely, very few charging any admittance fee; and they are generally under the control of a society which meets regularly and publishes scientific papers and periodicals.

The good influence of such institutions cannot be calculated, and every year increases their value by adding to their collections. The item of instruction and amusement which the general public gets, would be sufficient warrant for their support and continuance without considering the amount of knowledge given to the world through their proceedings.

The collections are generally contained in fine buildings, the specimens are beyond price, many of the members of the societies are able and earnest; still, very grave fault can be found with our museums. They are at a stand still. They are behind the age—they are huge giants stupefied, not able to do to the fullest extent the great work of which they are capable. They are not educational enough. Either from fault of management or want of means their influence is very limited. Too much space is taken up for exhibition, and none is left for work-rooms. Connected with our museums, there are no organized classes, no instruction, no lectures, and in many cases no facilities for study except from books. There are no study or dissecting-rooms where the vast collections can be freely examined and studied, or, if there are a few unsuitable rooms, there is no provision made for such study, and no professor to aid the student. There are no endowed professorships, and, as far as I know, only one scholarship, and that yields four hundred dollars a year and supports two students. In fact, our museums are brilliant in negative virtues.

For the student, especially the young student, they are places of longing and inspiration, not of work. The cases are closed. If a member of the society, or very much in earnest, he may get permission to examine the specimen under the eye of an officer. If he has done good scientific work, or brings good credentials, he may have the specimens taken out for sketching and examination, for the officers, generally, as far as they can be, are helpful and generous. But, it is rare that a student begins scientific studies with a full-blown scientific reputation, or is born with accurate anatomical knowledge, so that, too often, his "open sesame" to the museums is too late and of little benefit. And the good the public gets is only a half-way good, for, many times, the specimens are not named, and rarely is there an attempt made to educate by teaching general facts, even in our most popular museums. They are found wanting as educators of the people, and sadly wanting in furnishing advantages for the special student.

These places wherein are stored the riches of nature from all lands, should be centers for the radiation of scientific knowledge—places where investigators could spend their whole lives, if need be, in the discovery of truth.

Every encouragement to original research should be given in the way of rooms and apparatus. Germany and England can afford to pay investigators,—why cannot America?

Were our museums of more use, we would not have to look in vain for an American Darwin, Huxley, or Herbert Spencer. True, we need not be ashamed of such names as Cope, Leidy, Draper, and a host of others, who stand fair as scientists; but who is to be praised for it? Only the men themselves, not our museums for offering opportunities; not our government for encouragement,—not our society for saying "seek for us, for you are worthy."

Connected with all the scientific societies are men who are true investigators; who are so "infested" with what Huxley calls "the endless malady of thought" that without aid they have made themselves famous. They have found ways and means, but the world has lost so much in actual results as they have expended in overcoming obstacles. These men give freely with a generous hand to the young student. Never have I found a scientific man who has not been kind, polite and helpful, and never have I met one who has not cheerfully given me abundant aid and information. But the work they have done is often the result of hours snatched from the duties of a busy life. Our best workers cannot choose. They must do as they can. The work at hand must become the pleasantest. And "virtue is its own reward;" but often the virtuous would feel happier, if, in addition, he was not compelled to wear a rusty coat.

When a person has the ability and range of experience necessary for correct investigation of nature, it is waste of time and talent that he must, for bread-and-butter reasons, drudge in the college, or university, or the ordinary routine of professional service. Other men could do that as well. He should be devoted to an original research and to helping others to investigation.

There should be endowed life-professorships for those who are worthy. It is useless to try to enumerate the many ways that are open for investigation.

The solving of those purely practical questions of fungoid growth in vegetables, diseases of domestic animals, as "pip" and "gapes" in chickens, and cattle epidemics; and the so-called malaria or miasma that devastate certain regions; and of countless other common plagues, whose causes are unknown, would save the nation millions of dollars yearly. Then, too, there are those studies and experiments in pure science, so dear to the heart of the worker, which bear no immediate practical result, but which, sooner or later, send down their golden roots of life into the heart of every-day affairs.

There is an abundance of work—more than can be exhausted by many workers. Our houses are badly built and ventilated; our cities are badly drained; we are a scientific people, and still our waste products are causing death and disease instead of adding to our wealth.

We suffer countless ills because of our ignorance. We shut our eyes, or give our pittance to avoid some ugly fact, and wonder at the mysterious ways of Providence, when the whole trouble might be removed by the application of scientific knowledge.

The United States Government is doing some good for science in developing its territorial resources. Much more could be done if, each year, sums were appropriated for the discovery of some useful and important fact. Mediocrity would not compete for the prize. Compel good work and pay a good price, and the successful competitor would be no charlatan. Aid should be given in the way of ample paying of expenses during the experiments and a suitable reward if the results were commendable.

To fashion and control these forms and animate them with a soul, is the task of art.

Music has of all arts, the most subtle and ethereal form. It consists in tones which must be beautiful and sonorous, in order to be fitted for the expression of every variation of feeling. To set forth the natural laws by which such tones are produced is the business of science, and thus science is an indispensable aid to the art of music.

If a singer, inspired by the most delicate and ideal emotion, endeavors to give expression to it by disagreeable tones; *i. e.*, in a bad form, he will surely fail to produce an artistic effect, as he would by singing without expression and animation, with tones of the greatest beauty and cultivation.

What science has done of late for the knowledge of the human voice, and its management and development, it is my object here to explain as fully as time will permit.

Through the laryngoscope it became possible to observe and determine the mechanism of the human voice and the natural limits of the registers or tone groups into which the voice is divided. With every one of these registers the *modus operandi* of the vocal organs undergoes a change, which change the singer can easily feel, and an educated ear can detect by the difference in the timbre or quality of sound, which is most striking in the transition from chest to falsetto in the male voice.

In the female voice there have been found five such registers and in the male voice four, of which only the two or three lower ones are used in singing. In consequence of the male larynx being one-third larger than the female larynx, its registers have a larger extent.

Observation proves moreover, that a visible and sensible strain shows itself in the vocal organs, as soon as a singer attempts to transgress the upper limits of a register in ascending the scale. The fact that, in the writings of the old celebrated singing-masters, the limit of the chest register is placed much higher in the scale, and that our present singers can only with the greatest effort and with much harm to their voices, reach those limits, have led to closer investigation of a fact which had up to a recent time almost entirely escaped notice. This fact is, that because of the better sound of the stringed instruments when tuned higher, the orchestra pitch has gradually risen, until at present the *a*, which is taken as a standard, has between 454 and 459 vibrations, while at the time when vocal art was at its height, it had only 400 vibrations per second. It is therefore some 50 vibrations higher now.

But the human voice is still expected to sing this *a* with the chest register as it was when the pitch was more than a whole tone lower. And people are astonished when it succumbs in consequence of the continued strain.

The mechanism of the first four registers had been known a long time before that of the head tones, the highest register in the female voice, was discovered. This discovery, over which the scientists had studied in vain for the last century, was made in 1860, and finished the complete knowledge of the physiology of the human voice.

I may further remark, that the knowledge of the mechanism of the head tones led to the discovery of a pair of cartilages and small muscles, which had formerly not been noticed by anatomists. It is strange that this discovery, which is of no direct advantage to the voice, created a greater sensation among scientists than others of much more importance. The reason may be that this discovery in anatomy was made in a more familiar field.

When we hear the remark made that our best vocal artists, as well as the old singing-masters, knew nothing about the physiology of the voice and, nevertheless, could

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