

SUGGESTIONS

W B Mann President
ON THE

BEST MODE OF PROMOTING CIVILIZATION
AND IMPROVEMENT;

OR,

THE INFLUENCE OF WOMAN ON THE SOCIAL STATE,

A LECTURE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

"YOUNG MEN'S ASSOCIATION FOR MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT

IN THE CITY OF ALBANY," JANUARY 24TH, 1837.

BY HON. SAMUEL YOUNG.

ALBANY:

FROM THE POWER PRESS OF HOFFMAN AND WHITE.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

ALBANY, FEB. 1, 1837.

TO THE HON. SAMUEL YOUNG.

SIR:—The undersigned, Officers of the "Young Men's Association for Mutual Improvement," respectfully solicit for publication, a copy of the Lecture recently delivered by you in the Hall of the Association, entitled, "Suggestions on the best mode of promoting Civilization and Improvement."

We believe, Sir, that the cause of moral and intellectual improvement, will be advanced by its publication; and we know that the members of the Association, and our fellow-citizens generally, are solicitous for its preservation. We therefore, Sir, earnestly ask to be permitted to present it to the public.

We are, Very Respectfully,

Your obedient servants.

CHARLES A. HOPKINS,	DANIEL FRY,
GEORGE M. BLEECKER,	HENRY Q. HAWLEY,
ROBT. L. KEARNEY,	MARSHALL PEPOON,
ROBT. H. PRUYN,	A. M. STRONG,
LANSING G. TAYLOR,	C. W. BENDER,
J. V. L. PRUYN,	JOHN M'HARG,
CHARLES M. JENKINS,	GEORGE B. STEELE,
JOHN V. S. HAZARD,	W. R. BUSH,
T. W. LOCKWOOD,	CHAS. D. GOULD,
GEORGE BRINCKERHOFF,	GILBERT C. FOWLER.

ALBANY, FEBRUARY 2, 1837.

TO THE PRESIDENT AND OTHER OFFICERS OF THE "YOUNG MEN'S ASSOCIATION FOR MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT."

GENTLEMEN.—I have received your flattering note of yesterday, requesting for publication a copy of my Lecture lately delivered to your Association. It was written after the commencement of the present session of the legislature, amidst the constant interruptions of business, and under the expectation that its publication would not be requested. Before leaving home, I had made a few hasty notes and memoranda from books, but they are so imperfect that they may have led me into some mistakes and omissions in my references. I mention these facts as an apology for any defects that may be found in my "suggestions."

I regret that I have no time for correction and revision: But, convinced by the reading, observation and reflection of several years, of the equality of female intellect with ours, and of the vast importance of its cultivation, I submit the manuscript, as it is, to your disposition, in the hope that its publication may awaken the attention of the intelligent and philanthropic to the importance of the subject I have so imperfectly discussed; and that it may induce others who have more leisure and ability to do it more ample justice.

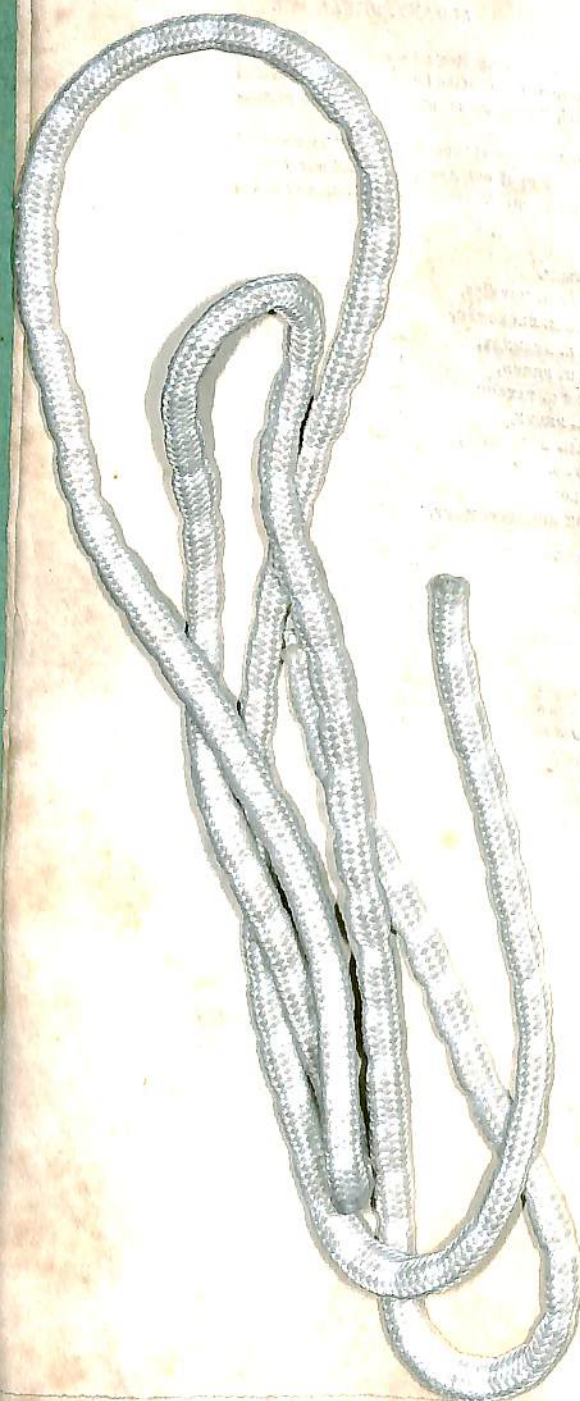
I am, Gentlemen,

With great Respect,

Yours, &c.

S. YOUNG.

Messrs. Charles A. Hopkins, George M. Bleeker, Robt. L. Kearney, Robt. H. Pruyn, Lansing G. Taylor, J. V. L. Pruyn, Charles M. Jenkins, John V. S. Hazard, T. W. Lockwood, Daniel Fry, Henry Q. Hawley, Marshall Pepon, A. M. Strong, C. W. Bender, John M'Harg, George B. Steele, W. R. Bush, Chas. D. Gould, George Brinckerhoff, Gilbert C. Fowler.



SUGGESTIONS, &c.

Among the multitudinous ends for the accomplishment of which associations are formed, none is more noble and praiseworthy than that which induces individuals to congregate for the elevated purpose of mutual improvement. To maintain a scientific communion,—to impart and to imbibe instruction,—to combine with others for the sole purpose of improving the intellectual powers, by a reciprocation of knowledge, are objects highly worthy of an intelligent being. And when associations, like the one which I now address, are formed and sustained by the young, whilst the memory is vigorous, the curiosity alert, and all the intellectual faculties in active operation; and before the cares of the world have thrown their torpifying influence over the mind, the best possible results may be anticipated.

When man, in early life, first begins attentively to regard surrounding objects, and to reflect and reason, he feels that he is a stranger in the universe. He perceives the canopy of heaven spread over him, and the earth extended beneath his feet. He is conscious of the possession of intellectual faculties: But of the laws which the author of nature has impressed upon mind, and upon organic and inorganic matter, he is ignorant. To understand these laws, which have been classified into moral, intellectual, organic and physical, should be regarded as one of the principle objects of his existence. He who understands them the best, is the wisest; and he who conforms to them with the greatest exactitude, is the happiest. I speak of temporal felicity.

Owing to our weakness and ignorance in youth, the consciousness of which is strongly impressed upon us by every

contact with external objects, and by all the phenomena of nature, we are necessarily thrown upon others for aid and instruction. Unable to discriminate between the true and the false, we imbibe implicitly whatever is communicated: and the labor of unlearning, in after life, even should we become satisfied of its necessity, requires too much time and effort for ordinary minds. Hence, gross errors and mischievous prejudices, being impressed upon youthful credulity, are perpetuated from generation to generation: and hence the crude notions, and ignorance, which have formed, in every age, the inveterate impediment to civilization and improvement. The passions and propensities, also, unless sedulously cultivated, and directed, in early childhood, are the permanent sources of unhappiness, and frequently the incentives to crime. No truth is more obvious, or important, than, that early and correct instruction is paramount to every other temporal consideration. And the easiest, most natural, and most efficacious mode of accomplishing this object, is a *desideratum* deeply interesting to the human race.

Animals have instinct for their guide; but man finds no safe conductor through the chequered scenes of life, but that cultivated reason which is founded on correct knowledge. The instinct with which each species of animal is endowed, is admirably adapted to its comfort and preservation. When the animal has acquired its full growth, all its powers seem to be perfectly developed; and in respect to all further improvement, in its habitudes of life; in its mode of procuring subsistence; in its system of attack, defence, or escape, it remains stationary. But man is endowed with faculties, which, although they require extraneous aid in their cultivation, are susceptible of almost indefinite improvement. Whilst young, many of the animals are docile, and capable of being taught to a surprising degree. The elephant, the dog, and the horse, possess wonderful capabilities. But like the human race, they cannot be effectually guided, and instructed, except in the early stages of their existence.

Among the domesticated animals the female is more gentle

and tractable than the male: The male, however, is larger, possesses more muscular power, and is inclined in a much greater degree to pugnacity. This, as a general remark, is true of all the more perfectly formed animals, including man. In all those animals which exhibit symptoms of memory, tact, sagacity, or cunning, these attributes are possessed in an equal degree, by the male and female. In the whole range of animated existence, no naturalist has ever made the discovery that the male of any genus, or species of animal, is endowed with instincts superior to the female.

But although this equality seems to be a universal principle in the economy of nature, with respect to all the animals whose habits and instincts are known; yet for more than six thousand years has the dogma been propagated, from age to age, that the human species is an exception to this rule.

It is my intention, on the present occasion, to submit a few suggestions as to the soundness of this dogma,—to advert to some of the prominent characteristics of the female mind,—to the absence of all proof of its incapacity for the highest literary and scientific attainments,—to the degraded condition, and the destitution of mental culture, to which the sex has been subjected in all former times; and to allude to some of the beneficial results which would necessarily follow, from an elevation of the moral, intellectual, and consequently, the social condition of females.

Woman has uniformly been pronounced to be “the weaker sex;” not physically merely, because such a truth is too apparent to need promulgation; but mentally also. Through the lapse of past centuries it has not been believed, nor perhaps hardly suspected, by the mass of mankind, that she possesses the same intellectual powers as man, with an equal susceptibility of improvement; that she is as well qualified as her self-styled lord and master, to learn and to appreciate all the laws of matter and of mind; and with as keen a relish, and as steady an eye, “to look through nature up to nature’s God;” and that with equal mental cultivation, she would have been the constant coadjutor of man in scientific and useful

discoveries, and in the diffusion of knowledge; thereby accelerating, in an incalculable degree, the march of civilization and improvement. This has not been believed; and the benign influence, which the cultivation of the female mind might have diffused, has been lost to the world.

Regarded alone for her personal charms; courted and flattered in youth; shunned and neglected after the decay of her beauty; reared in ignorance, and consequently incompetent to instil into the minds of her offspring the seeds of knowledge, and of correct principles, at the only period in which those seeds are sure to take deep and lasting root, woman has been destined to be the mother of savages and barbarians, who, in every age, have been immersed in ignorance, blackened with crime and stained with blood.

In some parts of the earth she is treated as a beast of burden. War and the chase are there regarded as the only legitimate occupations of men; and the toil and drudgery of a rude cultivation of the earth, together with all the household cares and labors, are imposed upon the female sex.

In countries subjected to the Mahometan faith, the fact that women have souls is not recognized, as the Koran is wholly silent upon that point. They are not permitted to enter the Mosques, and mingle with men in acts of devotion. Bought and sold as slaves, each Mussulman is allowed to procure as many as he can support. Uneducated, cut off from all communication with the external world; immured, under a rigid *surveillance*, within the precincts of a prison, they are subjected to the brutal caprices of a jealous tyrant.

Even in those countries which have made the greatest advances towards civilization, an equality of rights is wholly denied to women. On entering into the married state, their legal existence is merged, and the control over their persons and property extinguished. If single, and under the necessity of supporting themselves, the same amount and kind of labor and service performed by them, does not produce two-thirds of the compensation which it would if performed by men.

In every age, in every clime, woman has borne her lot with

meek submission. But although she has not remonstrated, yet the visitation for this injustice and neglect, has not been the less severe and signal. And it will be invariably found, by consulting the history of past ages, that the comforts of comparative civilization, or the insecurity, wretchedness, and bloodshed of savage life, may be very accurately measured, at any given time, upon any inhabited portion of the earth, by the degree of estimation in which females have been held, and the amount of influence which they have been permitted to exercise over the more ferocious disposition of man. In the same ratio that the social condition of woman has been ameliorated, has man exalted himself in the scale of freedom, happiness and civilization.

The interior of savage countries would probably now be unknown to us, had not the hardy travellers, who have explored those regions, been sustained in sickness, and in want, by the benevolence of females. But for this, Mungo Park, in his first tour, would have laid his bones in the interior of Africa. But for this, Ledyard, the celebrated American traveller, would have died, (if such a thing were possible,) a hundred deaths. In his extensive wanderings through inhospitable and savage regions, he suffered incredible hardships from cold, hunger, and disease; but he avers that in his utmost need he never addressed himself in vain to the sympathies of the female heart. In his account of his Siberian pilgrimage, he observes: "I have always remarked, that women, in all countries, are civil, obliging, tender, and humane: that they are ever inclined to be gay and cheerful, timorous and modest; and that they do not hesitate, like men, to perform a generous action. Not haughty, not arrogant, not supercilious. To a woman, whether civilized or savage, I never addressed myself in the language of decency and friendship, without receiving a decent and friendly answer. With man it has often been otherwise. In wandering over the *barren* plains of *inhospitable Denmark*, through *honest Sweden*, and *frozen Lapland*, *rude and churlish Finland*, *unprincipled Russia*, and the *widespread regions* of the *wandering Tartar*, if hungry, dry,

cold, wet, or sick, the women have ever been friendly to me, and uniformly so; and to add to this virtue, (so worthy the appellation of benevolence,) these actions have been performed in so free and so kind a manner, that if I was thirsty, I drank the sweetest draught; and if hungry, I ate the coarsest morsel with a double relish." Such is the testimony of a man who possessed a strong and discriminating mind; and who had, perhaps, as good an opportunity of observing human nature, in all its shades and varieties, as ever fell to the lot of any individual.

But the gentleness and humanity of the female heart,—its sympathies for human suffering,—its repulsion at the sight of blood,—its alacrity in ministering to the wants of the destitute, and in mitigating wretchedness and misery, wherever they are found, have been regarded by man as evidences of the weakness of female intellect.

The Romans made, perhaps, as great advances towards civilization as any of the nations of antiquity: And yet, among this people, the definition of virtue was, "bravery" in the field of battle. And he who had inflicted the most human misery, who had conquered and plundered the greatest number of nations, was esteemed the most virtuous. The exalted benevolence, the ardent patriotism, the generous self devotion to conjugal attachment, which were evinced by the matrons of Rome, on every great emergency, were not sufficient, in the estimation of a semi-barbarous people, to raise woman from her degraded condition. The eternal city was twice saved from destruction, by female interposition; once, in its infancy, from the fury of the Sabines,—and many years afterwards, from the vengeance of Coriolanus.

Instances of conjugal attachment were frequently exhibited by Roman ladies, which were altogether superior to any similar exhibitions from the more selfish disposition of the other sex. A few of these will be mentioned. Portia, the daughter of Cato of Utica, when she heard that her husband, Brutus, had been slain at Phillippi, called for a sword to kill her-

self. Not being able to obtain one, she swallowed burning coals, determined not to survive her husband. When Seneca was sentenced to death by Nero, his wife, Paullina, determined not to outlive him; and she earnestly solicited the hand of the executioner. Not gratified in this, she opened the veins of her arms; but Nero, fearing an aggravation of the odium of his cruelty, sent orders to have her life saved: and the slaves and freedmen, by force, bound up her arms, to prevent her dying with loss of blood.* When Paetus was condemned to death by Claudius, his wife, Arria, observing that he was much overcome by terror, in order that she might rouse him to meet his fate with firmness, and being also determined not to survive him, plunged a dagger into her own bosom, and drawing it from the wound, she held it out to him and said, "*Paetus, I feel no pain.*"† It should be remembered that suicide was not censured but encouraged by the moral code of the Romans.

By way of contrast to these examples, one or two of an opposite character, and from the other sex, may be mentioned. Cicero, the great Roman orator, professed the strongest affection for his wife, Terentia. When in exile, he pronounced her to be his light, his life, his desire, the most faithful and best of wives; *mea lux...mea vita...mea desideria...fidelissima et optima conjux*. Shortly afterwards, however, he repudiated his "light" and his "life," in order that he might marry a rich young lady. Julius Cæsar, after having, in all probability, procured rumors to be circulated against his wife, repudiated her, on the pretext that the wife

* Complectitur (Seneca) uxorem, et rogat oratque "temperaret dolori, nec aeternum susciperet, sed in contemplatione vitae per virtutem actae, desiderium mariti solatis honestis toleraret." Illa contra, "sibi quoque destinatum mortem," adseverat, manumque percussoris exposcit. Tum Seneca, gloriae ejus non adversus, simul amore ne sibi unica dilectam ad injurias relinqueret; "vitae," inquit, "delinimenta monstraveram tibi, tu mortis decus mavis; non inuidebo exemplo. Sit hujus tam fortis exitus constantia penes utrosque par, claritudinis plus in tuo fine. . . Post quae eodem ictu brachia ferro exsolvant. Tac. Ann. 15. 63.

† Praeclarum quidem illud ejusdem, ferrum stringere, perfodere pectus, extrahere pugionem, porrigere marito, addere vocem immortalem ac paene divinam, PAETE, NON DOLET. Plin. Ep. Lib. 3. 16.

of Cæsar ought to be above suspicion. The right of repudiating their wives was given to men by the Roman laws; but a similar right was denied to women, in whose hands, however, it would have been much less liable to abuse.

Female attachment is much more pure, refined and disinterested, and of a higher and holier character than the love of man. Every effort of superstitious education would be exhausted in vain to induce men to burn themselves on the funeral pile of a wife: And yet, for ages, thousands of females, in the eastern world, have voluntarily and cheerfully submitted to this self-immolation.

The timidity of woman, at the sight of blood, ceases when it is her own that is shed. Her sensibility to human agony disappears, when it is herself that suffers. She submits to pain, to amputation, to "all the ills that flesh is heir to," and to death itself, when they become necessary, or inevitable, with more composure, and less complaint, than man. In the horrors of the French Revolution, when hundreds of males and females were daily hurried to the guillotine, the contrast between feminine firmness, and masculine trepidation, was conspicuous to every beholder.

It is wonderful, that neither the Greeks, nor the Romans, the two most polished nations of former times, and both of whom were extravagantly fond of poetry, made any effort to cultivate the female mind. According to their Mythology the nine Muses were females: And they had before their eyes the most exquisite samples of the power of female intellect. Corinna, a celebrated lady of Thebes, obtained five times the poetical prize, with Pindar for her competitor. Sappho, another Grecian female, exhibited a poetic talent, which for energy, pathos, and harmony, has never been surpassed. Such was the effect of her soul-subduing numbers, that she was designated the tenth Muse. With astonishing powers in music, as well as in poetry, she invented the mixolydian mode. She was also the inventress of a new poetic measure, which ever since has borne her name; a measure which subsequent poets adopted; in which Horace delighted, and composed

some of his most beautiful odes, particularly one which no admirer of this poet can have failed to commit to memory,—commencing, *Jam satis terris nivis atque diræ*, &c. Unfortunate, misguided Sappho! Had she received, in early youth, proper moral and intellectual culture, and been taught to direct her wonderful powers to the good of the human race, she would have done much towards civilizing the world. But she lived more than six hundred years before the christian era, when the true principles of morality were unknown; when deities were worshipped, male and female, to whom were ascribed the vilest of human passions.

"Gods changeful, partial, passionate, unjust,
"Whose attributes were envy, rage, or lust."*

She flourished in a licentious age, when the multitude, doubtless, believed, that to be as virtuous as their deities, or rather, not to be more vicious, was all that could be reasonably required; and her poetry bore, in a striking degree, the impress of such a period.

With such splendid coruscations of female genius before them, it is strange that the men of succeeding times had not bestowed some attention on the culture of the female mind. Could they have doubted its capacity for the highest grade of intellectual improvement? Or, were they apprehensive that their own powers and performances might suffer a "dim eclipse," by female rivalry?

Men alone are responsible for this omission. It is they, who, in every age, have arrogated to themselves, and have exercised both the moral and political power of the world, and also a control, more or less exclusive, and despotic, over all the avails of human industry.

In the management of human affairs, woman has been passive and powerless. And even in those countries which have made the greatest boast of their civilization, females have been subjected to laws and institutions grossly unequal, and manifestly unjust, and oppressive.

It is true, that in a few instances, at different times, and in various parts of the world, they have been occasionally raised from their general political degradation, and placed at the head of nations as Queens and Empresses. And whoever will examine the history of female sovereigns, will be convinced that they have discharged their high functions with as much ability as men. No Nero or Caligula has ever been found among them. But, although they have been deemed competent to discharge the duties of the highest offices, yet they have been excluded from every subordinate station, and from all political power and influence.

No female writer of any eminence among the Romans, is mentioned in history; and this affords a strong inference of the neglect of the culture of female intellect, and of the low repute in which it was held. Through the dark ages which succeeded the fall of the Roman empire, the little learning that existed was confined to the cloister. The lazy monk was almost the only human being whose mind was not wholly submerged in the sombre shades of ignorance, and barbarism. And females must have been subjected to the same hardships and rude treatment as they have ever suffered among savage nations.

But after the institution of chivalry some partial gleams of light began to dawn on the social condition of woman. The knight was bound by a solemn engagement to relieve distressed damsels. It was, however, the young, the beautiful, and the rich, to whom his fealty was chiefly tendered. From among these, he selected his "lady love;" and for her he entered the tournament, and contended in mortal strife with his antagonist. The gallantry of knighthood, as manifested towards the fair sex, with some few exceptions, was a species of belligerent sensuality, perhaps a little more refined, but of the same character with that which is frequently exhibited by the males of many kinds of animals. And doubtless hundreds of females, during the middle ages, to whose personal charms, when young, the plumes of many a gallant knight had nodded in amorous obeisance, were, when old,

poor and decrepid, followed to the stake, by the same gallant knights, and burnt as witches.

Mrs. Crawford, a very intelligent writer, both in prose and poetry, has expressed herself so well on this subject, that I will make a short extract from her work.

"Let us take a brief review," says she, "of the state of woman as it was, in order that we may the more justly estimate what it now is. Look at the situation of the sex in the barbarous ages of the world: mere objects of a gross sensuality, and abject obedience to their rude and selfish possessors. As the nations became more enlightened, and men's habits less savage and lawless, the state of woman was somewhat improved. Yet, even among the far-famed Greeks and Romans, where the arts flourished, and the minds of men were illuminated with the rays of genius, and the light of philosophy, what was woman? Still but a mere object of the senses. Or, if she rose to any higher consideration, it was only by throwing aside the graces of her feminine nature, and arraying herself like Bellona. When a new era dawned upon the world, and chivalry made woman its sçeming idol, wearing her colors on its mailed arm, and her *faveurs joyaux*, or *emprises d'amour*, on its crested helm, going forth in her name alone to the combat, *la guerre des amoureux*, what then was woman? Nothing still but the mere object of sense; her charms, her youth, the only ties that bound man to her. Poets are fond of singing the praises of love, as it existed in chivalrous times; let us hear," she continues, "what the philosopher says upon this subject." And she quotes as follows:

"Among all the ages of chivalry, there is none in which it flourished to such a degree, at least in France, or that produced so many *Chevaliers des Dames*, as the fourteenth. Yet, in this very century, so great was the libertinism of the nobles, that scarcely a day passed, but that complaints were made at court by ladies, both married and unmarried, who had been carried off, and seduced by their powerful neighbors. The Marshall de Boncicant, with twelve other knights, at whose head was a cousin of the king, therefore resolved to

found an order for the protection of the fair sex, to which they gave the appellation of '*De la Dame Blanch à l'Escu Verd.*' The insignia of this order consisted of a golden shield, enamelled with green, containing the figure of a white lady."

"Thus we see," says the authoress, "that in the age most distinguished for a chivalrous devotion to woman, a few brave men were obliged to unite in the defence of innocence and beauty, and teach men decency and decorum towards that sex, whose charms (despite the boast of chivalry) inspired any thing, rather than a delicate and tender passion. And such, some will say, perhaps, is the case now, even in this reformed age of the world. Too frequently, we admit, but with many rare exceptions. That beauty will always be a lovely flower in the path of man, that youth will steal upon his senses like the first breath of spring, cannot be denied. Regret not then, ye young and fair romancers, the times of chivalry; nor sigh for the loves of those by-gone days. Trust to the voice of truth. Woman never rose so high in the scale of being as now, when her mind," (if cultivated,) "makes her the companion and not the puppet of man."

To these remarks of Mrs. Crawford, it may be added, that as society is now, and ever has been organized, the male sex is alone responsible for the improvement, or neglect, of the female mind. And how strange does it appear, to every one who reflects upon the subject, that greater and more general efforts have not been made for its culture, when it is so palpable from the whole history of past ages,—from the unvaried and impressive admonition of six thousand years, that man elevates himself in the scale of existence, and in the grade of happiness and improvement, as a social and rational being, in the same degree that he raises woman to be his moral and intellectual, as well as his physical companion.

Perhaps the exquisite beauty and symmetry of the female form, when contrasted with the rough and sinewy structure of man,—the ease and gracefulness of woman's motions,—the gentleness of her disposition,—the music of her voice,—the expressive loveliness of her countenance, and her sensitive

and retiring modesty,—perhaps these personal attractions may have induced man to overlook, and neglect the mind within.

The great poet, Milton, seems to have labored under this oriental, and semi-barbarous delusion. He bestows upon the mother of mankind every external grace and charm: but he gives her merely enough of intellect to understand, and implicitly to obey the commands of Adam. Adam is formed for "contemplation," and she for "soft attractive grace." To think, or to reason, would, in her, be a crime. Her whole duty, according to the poet, consists in perfect obedience, and unconditional submission. She is to regard her husband as her creator, her disposer, her law, her God. Without citing other passages, the following address of Eve, to Adam, will illustrate the mental degradation which Milton assigns to woman.

"My author and disposer, what thou bidst
 "Unargu'd I obey; so God ordains;
 "God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more
 "Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise."

If females possessed merely the imbecile mind which Milton has ascribed to them, they would then be well qualified to be unresisting slaves in a Harem, or Seraglio. But he, like other writers, both before and after him, was deceived on this subject, by ancient and obstinate prejudice. His error was evinced, not only by precept, but, also, by practice. With great care he educated his nephews, but did not teach either of his three daughters even to write. Johnson, in his *Lives of the Poets*, says of Milton: "His family consisted of women; and there appears in his books something like a Turkish contempt of females, as subordinate and inferior beings. He depressed his daughters by a mean and penurious education."

It is much to be regretted that in such a work as *Paradise Lost*, which is one of the most splendid efforts of human genius, sentiments so injurious to the improvement of the human race, should be found. Spots, however, are discoverable even on the sun's disk. The errors of such men as Milton, are con-

tagious, and are a calamity to mankind. Many other eminent writers, also, have treated females as "subordinate and inferior beings." Suggestions to this effect, are found in the writings of Dryden, Pope, the cynical Swift, the polished Addison, and other standard, English writers. The productions of Shakspeare, who possessed unexampled powers of penetration into the human character, are free from this defect.

Among the ancients was one man prëminent for his knowledge, and strength of mind.

"Great Socrates, for godlike wisdom fam'd,
"And wisest of the sons of men proclaim'd,"

This philosopher possessed the same opinion on this subject, which Shakspeare seems to have entertained. "It is manifest," he observes, "that the intellectual nature of woman is not at all inferior to that of man; and that she is deficient only in courage and bodily strength."*

Even French gallantry has not abstained from joining in the crusade against female intellect. And to undervalue its powers, and retard its culture, a species of holy alliance has been maintained by the male writers of modern Europe. Moliere, who possessed a greater fund of comic power than, perhaps, any other author either ancient or modern, has written one of his plays, *Les Femmes savantes*, for the express purpose of ridiculing learning in women. He exhausts on this subject his whole artillery of brilliant wit, broad humor, and withering sarcasm. Among his *dramatis personae*, he depicts one of his learned female personages as a stoic philosopher.† And he imputes to her, sentiments of stoical indiffe-

* ὁ ἄλλων ὅτι ἡ γυναικεία φύσις οὐδὲν χείρων τῆς τοῦ ἀνδρὸς οὐσα τυγχάνει, ῥώμης δὲ καὶ ἰσχύος δέεται. Xen. Sympos. Cap. 2.

† Moliere makes her pronounce, on receiving the news of the loss of the whole family property, the following sentiment to her husband, who had exclaimed on hearing the news.
O ciel! tout a la fois perdre ainsi tout son bien!

Philaminte.

Ah! quel honteux transport! Fi! tout cela n'est rien :
Il n'est pour le vrai sage aucun revers funeste ;
Et, perdant toute chose, a soi-même il se reste.

rence, similar to those which the Roman poet ascribes to his fancied perfection of stoicism;* an extract from Addison's translation of which is as follows:

Not the rough tempest that deforms
Adria's black gulf, and vexes it with storms,
The tranquil temper of his soul can move ;
Not the red arm of angry Jove,
That flings the thunder through the sky,
And gives it rage to roar and strength to fly,
Should the whole frame of nature round him break,
In ruin and confusion hurl'd ;—
He unconcern'd would hear the mighty crack,
And stand serene amidst a falling world.

Sentiments like these, the gallant Frenchman imputes to a lady, in order that he may hold up to scorn, contempt and mockery, the cultivation of the female mind.

But, as though the epic powers of Milton, and the comic tact of Moliere, and the varied contributions of a host of others were not sufficient to put an extinguisher on female intellect, every lady who strove to cultivate her mind, and treasure up a fund of useful knowledge, was denounced as "*a blue stocking*." And the learned male philosopher, as well as the addle-headed coxcomb, fulminated this sarcasm against every studious female. No wonder that the mere dandy should desire female heads to be as empty as his own; for, to such a *lulus naturae*, no crisis could occur, in all the vicissitudes of life, which would make him feel so palpably his utter annihilation, as to find himself in the society of intelligent and educated women. But, that men of understanding should have concurred in consigning every female to the rank of foolish virgins, whose mental lamp was not to be supplied, and trimmed, and made to burn with constantly increasing brightness, can be ascribed only to the blind and obstinate propagation of ancient and barbarous prejudices.

The blue stocking sarcasm, which originated many years since, in London, and was at first directed against a few ladies

* One of the Odes of Horace, beginning,
Justum et tenacem propositi virum.

who had quietly formed an association for mutual improvement in knowledge, soon spread and crossed the channel, and was deemed worthy of a translation into the French language: And *bas bleu* was said and sung by the *Savant*, and the *Petit-Maitre*.

But such unmanly barbarisms, although they may still linger here, have nearly had their day in Europe. It is there no longer believed by learned and intelligent men, that female ignorance, and female innocence, are synonymous. The conviction is established, from the numerous exhibitions, during the last half century, of the power and polish of female intellect, that nature did not design the mind of woman to be a dreary waste in the literary and scientific world. The few former examples of female excellence in literary attainments met, for a long period, with cold repulsion and obstinate resistance; but a brilliant "cloud of witnesses" has nearly dissipated every prejudice.

A few educated females in France, many years ago, in despite of the prejudices of the times, dared to believe that they possessed intellectual powers which might be beneficial to society. They dared to reason, and even to write books. And the mental powers which they displayed, created a respect, and an influence for the sex, to which must be ascribed the more rapid advance of civilization, in that country, than in any other portion of the world.

About a century and a half ago, one of the greatest ornaments of French literature, was a lady, madame Dacier, who was born in 1651. As a rare exception to the general rule, she had been carefully educated by a learned and intelligent Father. "At an early age," says her biographer, "she became known as editor and commentator of some of the ancient classics, in both Greek and Latin. Homer, Aristophanes and Anacreon, were all translated into French, by this lady; some of which have been frequently reprinted, and display great learning and merit. Notwithstanding the high reputation to which she attained in the literary world, she was far from laying claim to any superiority on that account. She

performed the duties of a wife, and mother, with exemplary affection; and exhibited, in the loss of a son of great promise, and a darling daughter, the fortitude of a hero, and the resignation of a true christian. She died," adds her biographer, "much esteemed, and regretted by all who knew her."

Fenelon, the celebrated archbishop of Cambray, a man preëminently distinguished among his contemporaries, for learning, eloquence, humanity and an ardent desire to promote the happiness and improvement of mankind, did not fail, even in his age, to perceive the immense benefits which would result from the cultivation of the female mind. Unawed by the almost universal prejudice, which existed on this subject, he wrote a volume, strongly recommending the education of girls, *De l'Education des Filles*; but he felt the pressure of public sentiment to be so strongly against him, that he deemed it necessary to state, by way of apology, that females constituted one half of the human race, and that they, as well as men, had been redeemed by the blood of Christ.

It is mortifying to our pride, to look back at the ignorance, the prejudice, and the barbarism, of our ancestors, even at so late a period as when Fenelon flourished. And it is devoutly to be wished, that a hundred and fifty years hence, a retrospection to the times in which we live, by those who succeed us, may be equally humiliating. We exult in the improvements of our age, as though nothing further was desirable, or could be beneficially accomplished; but we should remember that the same vainglorious feeling has been entertained by every preceding generation. Shackled by habit, and blinded by prejudice, the savage regards his existing, miserable condition, with the same self-complacency.

Had experiments ever been made to test the relative mental powers, and capabilities of the two sexes, and had the female mind been found inferior in any respect, man would then have had some cause to boast his superiority, and to apply to woman the humiliating designation of "the weaker sex." But such an experiment could be fairly made only by rearing both in the same manner, affording to them the same instruc-

tion, and holding out to them the same inducements to improvement.

If it were possible to deprive males, from their youth up, of the stimulus which is afforded by the prospect of obtaining lucrative professions, and places of trust, honor, or profit; to divest their minds of all the excitement and ambition, which are inspired by the anticipation of literary fame, or military, or civil renown; to make them believe that they are intellectually feeble; that they are subordinate and dependent beings, who are not to exercise any power, or influence whatever, in the disposition of human affairs; and that on entering into the married state, even their legal existence is to be merged, and all control over their persons and property extinguished: And if, with all this, an absurd, and injurious physical education, destructive to the health, should be combined, and an entire neglect of a proper moral, and intellectual one,—what, it may be emphatically asked, would be the probable consequence? Would men rise under such a pressure, and exhibit strength of mind and energy of character? Would they, through such shades, obstructions and obloquy, grope their way to literary and scientific eminence? Far from it. The great mass of males, under such circumstances, would hardly possess enough of intellect to sigh and to vegetate over a sentimental novel.

And yet all these impediments, and many more, have, for ages, been thrown into the path of females. The laws, institutions, habits, manners, and customs of society, which have been ordained by men, have withheld from the other sex that culture, and those inducements, whose combined influence alone can kindle into useful and noble emulation, the latent powers of man. To the great mass of females of all former times, no higher distinction has been offered, than, (in the language of Shakspeare,)

“To suckle fools and chronicle small beer.”

To break down all these barriers at once, and establish an equality of rights and privileges between the two sexes, could

not, in the present imperfect state of civilization, be endured. That the breath of woman should be put in requisition to blow the flames of political discord, in its existing state of exasperation, is incompatible with the native modesty and dignity of the sex. And whether the harsh and belligerent disposition of man will ever be so much softened and subdued by culture, as to allow to females an equal participation in all those public affairs and councils, in which their happiness, and prosperity are equally concerned with his, must be left to the future: And the adage, that “all mankind are entitled to equal rights,” must continue, perhaps, for one or two centuries to come, to be tortured, as heretofore, to mean, and to embrace only the male half of the species.*

But, in the mean time, let man, when he feels inclined to boast of his advancement, look at the condition of the other sex; and, whilst he finds woman deprived of any of the rights, and privileges, which he enjoys, let him lay his hand on his mouth and cry, “uncivilized.”

But enthralled as females are, by legal disabilities, and degraded to the rank of slaves, so far as relates to any control, or influence in the affairs of human government, it would seem to be the dictate of justice, even if it did not involve the best and highest interests of human society, that their minds should be cultivated and improved, and that they, as well as men, should participate in all the blessings and enjoyments of knowledge. That female intellect is adequate to every literary and scientific attainment, has, even under all the discouragements that have been cast upon it, received too much demonstration to be longer questioned.

No male writer, within the last fifty years, has shown more strength and comprehension of mind, or penetration of judgment, or greater powers of discrimination, than Madame de Staël.

* Perhaps the critic will enquire, whether it is expected that fleets and armies will ever be officered, and manned by women? The answer is, that women will never accept of any station which is repugnant to the native modesty, and delicacy of the sex; and that whenever the ferocity of man shall become softened and humanized by a proper infusion of female benevolence, wars will be impossible, and hostile fleets and armies unnecessary.

It is admitted, by the most competent male critics, that no dramatic author since the days of Shakspeare, has composed tragedies in which is manifested such an intimate, and profound acquaintance with the human heart, and human passions, and such subduing energy of feeling, and of pathos, as pervade the dramas of Miss Joanna Baillie. She is the lady whom Sir Walter Scott delighted to call "sister Joanna;" and whom, in one of his poems, he places in the same rank with the great bard of Avon.

"Till Avon's swans—while rung the grove
"With Montfort's hate, and Basil's love!—
"Awakening at the inspired strain,
"Deem'd their own Shakspeare lived again!"

Mrs. Jameson stands conspicuous in the highest walks of literary criticism. She has raised the veil, and disclosed mental beauties in the female characters of Shakspeare, which had never before been revealed;—beauties, which had eluded the ken of such men as Johnson, Hazlitt, Schlegel, Goethe,—the greatest names in this department of science, which England and Germany had produced.

Among the best astronomers now living, is Mrs. Somerville, an English lady. Her mind has been found competent to traverse the path which Newton trod;—to pursue the trackless comet; to thread the mazes of the stars; and to comprehend all the laws by which the ponderous tenants of infinite space "wheel unshaken through the void immense." Nor should a French lady, Madame Lepaute, be forgotten, who formerly assisted Laland, a French astronomer, in making the abstruse, the operose, and multiplied astronomical calculations, which are requisite to ascertain the effect of the disturbing causes resulting from the proximity, and consequent attraction of other bodies, by which a comet is retarded in its periodical return. She devoted six months to this arduous labor, with an intensity of application which nearly deprived her of sight, and with a skill and accuracy which extorted from the astronomer the confession that he could not have

succeeded without her aid, and which induced him to bestow upon her the flattering appellation of "*La savante calculatrice*."

The works of Mrs. Marcet, on Political Economy, on Chemistry, and on Natural Philosophy, have given her an enviable rank among those who possess the merit of improving and instructing the human race.

Miss Martineau, also, has illustrated, and rendered familiar, with great strength and perspicuity, the doctrines of that important and much neglected science, Political Economy.

In a lately published volume, entitled *Philanthropic Economy*, Mrs. Loudon, an English lady, has exhibited an originality of thought, and a strength of reasoning, which have rarely been equalled.

Thus, it is seen, that in the loftiest departments of human science,—those departments which require the most intense and continuous exercise of the reasoning powers, and the profoundest abstraction, the mind of woman has made brilliant exhibitions; and this too, under all the disadvantages which have been interposed by cruel sarcasm, and barbarous prejudice.

Nor is it certain, if in past ages the same care had been bestowed in the cultivation of the mind of females as that of males, and the same inducements to scientific pursuits afforded, but that the discoveries of Copernicus, Brahe, Gallileo, Leibnitz, Kepler, Newton, and other philosophers, would have been anticipated by women. One thing, however, is certain, that the lights of science, the enjoyments of knowledge, and all the blessings of social life, and civilization would have been vastly accelerated. There have been, in every age, as many females of leisure as males; and, secluded as they are, by disposition and habit, from the noise and bustle of the world, they would have had ample time to have instructed and polished mankind.

They, however, have been constrained to live in ignorance; and man has made but slow and unsteady, and feeble steps in emerging from barbarism. To the females of past ages, may

be applied, with the alteration of a single word, the beautiful lines of the poet.

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll,
Chill *ignorance* repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.*

Within a few years the female hand has successfully wielded, both the painter's pencil, and the chisel of the sculptor. The paintings of Angelica Kauffman, of Elizabeth Sirani, and Agnes Dolce, adorn some of the galleries in the city of Rome, and are viewed with admiration by connoisseurs. Elegant specimens of sculpture are also exhibited in that city, from the hand of Signora Teresa Benincampè, "whose beautiful bust of Caesino, and many of her other works," says a late traveller, "need only to be seen to be admired."†

During the last half century, numerous and brilliant examples will be found of female authors, in all the ordinary walks of literature. Beginning with the works of the late Hannah More, and it may be safely affirmed that the female pen in England, has done more than all the male writers, to teach the true principles of education; to illustrate and enforce all the doctrines of morality; to inculcate the love of truth; to pourtray the deformity of vice, and the beauty of virtue; to develope, expand and elevate all the social and domestic affections;—in short, to soften the human heart, to diffuse the blessings of civilization, and render mankind better and happier.

Time would fail in enumerating the works of all those whose volumes, both in prose and poetry, will long continue to be read with delight and instruction. In some of them, the gentle amenities of literature, and the most inviting pictures of

* Gray.

† Vide "Rome in the nineteenth century," vol. 2.

moral loveliness cluster as thick as the roses in a flower garden. Some of them have painted the etiquette of fashionable life, and all the conventional decorums, and elaborate courtesies of polished society. Others, as Miss Hamilton and Miss Edgeworth, have pourtrayed social life as it is found among the great mass of mankind, unsophisticated and sincere, and with whatever illumines, or darkens the landscape of social existence. In moral tales and novels, and indeed in every species of imaginative literature, some of them will be found to be preëminent. In depicting the awful and the terrible, in opening the charnel house, and exhibiting scenes which thrill the imagination with superstitious dread and repulsive horror, Mrs. Ann Radcliff occupies the first place. In her "*Mysteries of Udolpho*," she puts in requisition all the machinery of terror, with a skill that has never been surpassed. And it is a proof of the increasing prevalence of correct taste, that such works are now superceded by others, which are less pernicious to the susceptibilities of the young and the imaginative.

The much lamented Felicia Hemans ought not to be passed over, without a special tribute of respect to her memory. She, like the ancient Corinna, triumphed over every rival. "It ought to be remembered," says Allan Cunningham, "that in the strife of song, she vanquished all the male professors who entered the lists." Among many competitors, the prize of fifty pounds sterling was awarded to her, for the best poem on the memorable conference which ensued between Wallace and Bruce, after the fatal battle of Falkirk.

But I must not enlarge; but content myself with giving the names of a few of the most prominent female writers, who, within the last fifty years, have thrown a halo of light and of glory around English literature; omitting such as have been already named. Miss Hamilton, Miss Williams, Madame D'Arbly, Miss Barbauld, the Misses Porters, Miss Mitford, Mrs. Hall, Miss Austin, Mrs. Inchbald, Miss Ferrier, Miss Bowles, Miss Howitt, Miss Landon, Miss Reeve, Lady Morgan, Miss Seward.

Such emanations of intellectual power have been exhibited by the female writers, to which I have alluded, as to obviate prejudice, and subdue incredulity; and, intent only on doing good, woman has gently won her way, in spite of sneers, and sarcasms, to an enviable eminence on the rolls of literary fame.

We too, as well as England, have female writers, of whom we are justly proud. I will not attempt to enumerate, and to classify them, lest I might, through ignorance, or inadvertence, do injustice to some of my countrywomen. I will name two, however, who stand conspicuous among their sister authoresses. Miss Sedgwick in prose, and Mrs. Sigourney in poetry, and lately in prose also. Both of these ladies possess mental powers, and moral and intellectual attainments of a high order, as must be admitted by all who have had the gratification of perusing their varied works. Within a few years, productions from other female pens have occasionally appeared,* which are, also, highly creditable to our young and rising literature; and it is to be hoped that hereafter such "Angel visits" will not be so "few and far between."

Fortunately for succeeding generations, the impression begins to prevail that the female mind is worthy of culture. Colleges, Academies, Professorships and Schools have, for centuries, been maintained for the education of males; in which such courses of instruction were established as was supposed to be best calculated to discipline the mind, to improve and strengthen the understanding, and evolve all the latent intellectual faculties. But I am not aware that, until lately, Schools and Seminaries have ever been established, in which it was even proposed to bestow similar advantages on females.

The great mass of mankind have devoted vastly more attention to the instruction of their sons, than their daughters;†

* The intellectual and gifted Mrs. Child, authoress of "The Mother's Book," after a long silence, has recently delighted the reading community, by the publication of her work entitled, *Philothea, a Romance*.

† In testamentary distributions of property, fathers have heretofore generally bestowed much less upon their daughters than upon their sons,—as though the blight of poverty ought, also, to be superadded to the curse of ignorance!

and even the rich, to a very superficial, intellectual education, have merely superadded the fashionable accomplishments. Now, however, a few exceptions may be found. Schools and Seminaries begin to be established, in which females are taught to think and to reason. And the progress which they make, under these advantages, fully justifies the belief that their mental capabilities are equal to those of the other sex, even in the most difficult and abstruse branches of learning.

Indeed, at the same age, female scholars have more quickness, comprehension and strength of intellect, than males. The examinations and exhibitions of the pupils of the Female Academy in this city, for several years past, have established this fact beyond all reasonable doubt.* In natural and moral philosophy, in the higher branches of mathematics, in geometry, and trigonometry, in algebraical science, in demonstrating the most complex propositions of Euclid, it is not possible for boys of the same age to acquire the same skill, and make the same proficiency. In writing compositions, also, either in prose or poetry, they exhibit an intellectual maturity, a compass of thought, a correctness and cultivation of taste, and an elegance of diction, which are unattainable by males, at the same period of life.

Females, in general, enter upon the domestic duties, at an earlier age than males: And, in mercy to the human race, the God of nature has kindly bestowed upon them a mental precocity, in consequence of which, if the opportunity is afforded, their reasoning powers can be cultivated and developed, and their minds, in the vernal season of life, stored and fortified with sound principles, and useful knowledge, so that they may be fully qualified to give a right direction to the minds of their offspring. This seems to be a beneficent provision of nature, for the improvement and civilization of our race; and yet how little advantage has been taken of it,

* Competent judges, who have attended the examinations of the scholars in the Female Seminary of the city of Troy, have borne testimony to similar advancement, and to the same aptitude for improvement.

by all the generations who have preceded us; and how miserably slow has been the advancement of mankind.

If we consult the pages of history we shall find that very many of the greatest and best men that ever lived owed their eminence to the impulse and direction which was given to their minds in early childhood, by a tender mother. To correct in infancy, the first symptoms of pride, perverseness, obstinacy and the eager or indolent desire of self-gratification, to inspire noble and generous sentiments, to impress upon the mind the love of truth, and a horror for deceit and prevarication, to instil the great and leading principles of our duty to our Creator, to others and to ourselves, which form the basis of all moral culture, is most effectually and indelibly performed by an intelligent mother. She has a hold upon the filial affections that gives her a power and an influence, which no other being, to so great an extent, can exercise: And impelled by the ardor of maternal love, a flame which in her bosom burns ceaselessly, like the vestal fire, no pains, no cares, no assiduities are spared to promote the moral worth and future happiness of her children. It is thus, that, if females were carefully educated, and their minds imbued with correct principles, the influence of maternal love, and the sleepless exertions of maternal councils would impress those principles immutably upon the susceptibility of infancy; and the next generation would, at once be immeasurably elevated in the scale of existence. A mother, like the Saviour of mankind, teaches as never man taught! What a vast abstraction of ignorance, prejudice, superstition, suffering, poverty, ignominy and crime, would thus be made from the mountain of human misery!

A late English writer, in commenting on the subject of education, makes the following remarks, "We feel astonished that the most important objects of female education are so much neglected. Were they generally educated with a specific view to their afterwards filling some of the most important relations of domestic life, the next race, or, at farthest, that which follows, would be, without example, wise and good. If such were the views adopted in education, it would

then be a primary object to cultivate their *understandings*; to give them solidity, accuracy and comprehensiveness of judgment; and to store their minds with that correct and important information which would enable them, in their turn, to train up their offspring in that way which would give them the greatest probability of being vigorous, healthy and active in their bodily powers, and lay the best foundation for intellectual and moral excellence."

A recent French writer, L. Aimé-Martin, has given to the world two volumes on this important and interesting subject. This work is entitled, *De l'Education des mères de familles, ou de la civilisation du genre humain par les Femmes*. "On the education of mothers of families, or the civilization of the human race by the instrumentality of woman." The author has treated this subject with a force and an eloquence which will carry conviction to the mind of every reflecting reader.

The influence of the mother over her children, the untiring assiduity of maternal love,—the lasting, the indelible impressions made upon the infant mind, by maternal instruction and advice; and the consequent necessity that females should be educated, not merely by giving them light, and trivial, and fashionable accomplishments; but, by cultivating the higher powers, and faculties of the mind, by developing the understanding, and teaching them to think, and to reason,—are discussed in an impressive manner. This production has made a strong and favorable impression, say the English Reviewers, throughout France,* Belgium and Germany. A few short extracts will give some idea of the character of the work. "Teachers enough will be found," says the author, "to impart learning; the mother alone can impart virtuous sentiments. A good mother will seize upon her child's heart, as her special field of activity. To be capable of this, is the great end of female education; to be capable of this, females must be taken out of their present narrow circle of acquirements, and introduced at once to what makes human beings

* The French Academy awarded to Aime-Martin several thousand francs, as a prize for his work.

better and happier." At the close of the work, he observes, "I have reached the end of my labors. I have shewn that no universal agent of civilization exists, but our mothers. Nature has placed our infancy and youth in their hands. To this one and acknowledged truth, I have been the first to declare the necessity of making them, by improved education, capable of fulfilling their natural mission. The love of God and man is the basis of my system. In proportion as it prevails, national enmities will disappear; prejudices become extinguished; civilization spread itself far and wide; one great people cover the earth, and the reign of God be established. This reign of God is the happiness of man, secured by his increasing virtues; to be hastened by the watchful care of mothers over their offspring, from the cradle upwards."

The following extract from the original, is highly worthy of notice.

"Après un pareil tableau, est-il besoin de le dire, ce n'est plus la femme qu'il faut endoctriner par le mari, c'est le mari qu'il faut régénérer par la femme. Que faire donc? Rendre les femmes au sentiment complet de leur dignité, et leur apprendre à distinguer le véritable amour des fureurs qui usurpent son nom. Le premier point, c'est qu'elles veuillent être aimées et respectées; c'est qu'elles ne consentent, à aucun prix, au déplorable rôle que nos passions brutales leur imposent; c'est qu'elles apprennent, enfin, tout ce qu'il y a d'avilissant dans ces hommages qui les transforment en instrument de caprices et de volupté. J'oserai le dire, il n'y a point de progrès possible, pour la civilisation, tant que les femmes ne nous auront pas fait rougir de ces assimilations grossières que la bonne compagnie résume ainsi: le vin, la table, les femmes, les chevaux: triste catalogue des plaisirs de la brute, où l'homme fletit jusqu'au sein qui l'a porté!

"Mais comment nous en feront-elles rougir si elles n'en rougissent elles-mêmes? Que la délicatesse la plus exquise soit donc dans une jeune fille la lumière de sa pudeur, comme elle est dans une jeune femme la marque de sa dignité. Ce ne sont pas les grimaces de la pruderie, c'est la vertu que je demande. En rendant la séduction plus difficile, je rendrai l'amour plus idéal et plus pur, je lui laisserai les illusions qui viennent enchanter notre adolescence, et l'introduisent, pour la première fois, dans le monde du beau et de l'infini!

"Ainsi doit s'accomplir l'éducation des filles. Et quant à l'éducation du mari, pourquoi nous en inquiéter? Elle se fera simplement et naturellement par les vertus de la femme."

The Westminster Review, in closing a notice of the first volume, remarks: "It abounds in striking passages, and deserves to be *studied* by all who have at heart the best interests of society at large."

One half of the loveliness of the female character is eclipsed by our statutes. The system of poor laws which was the offspring of ignorance, in barbarous times, and which has been continued by unthinking prejudice, intercepts those gushings of benevolence, which would, spontaneously and perennially, flow from the female heart; which would feed the hungry; clothe the naked, and assuage the sufferings of the wretched; and which would elevate woman in the respect, admiration and love of mankind. But this barbarous system throws woman into the shade; a system which holds out premiums to idleness, intemperance and vice, and professes to relieve the victims of its own seduction, by grinding out charity from compulsory taxation; a system which imputes the barbarity to our Creator of having formed the human mind with a destitution of those charities which are necessary to relieve the wants of humanity; a system which is belied by all history, which is a standing opprobrium to man, a continuous libel upon woman, and a statutory blasphemy against God. Even the savage woman will watch through the night by the couch of the sick and homeless stranger. She will not allow him unrelieved to continue his wanderings, while suffering with hunger and thirst, or shivering with cold; and how vastly would her benevolence be expanded, were her mind illuminated with the rays of knowledge.

Such laws as those to which I have alluded, and some others which are a calamity and a curse to mankind, could not long resist the light and civilization, which would result from the cultivation of the female mind.

In a Republic, like ours, whose institutions and laws can be sustained, directed and moulded by public sentiment only, the diffusion of sound principles, and correct knowledge, throughout every portion of society, becomes a subject of paramount importance. And whilst the wise men of Europe

are now sedulously directing their attention to the cultivation of the female mind as the most efficacious, and the only general agent of civilization and improvement, it becomes us to follow such a meritorious example.

In Mrs. Sigourney's "Address to the guardians of female education," introductory to her excellent volume, entitled, "Letters to young ladies," she pleads and expostulates on this subject with a force and a feeling, truly characteristic of the head and the heart of a highly gifted lady. After expatiating on the present improved condition of the sex, compared with what it was, in former ages, she proceeds as follows:

"We are grateful for our heightened privileges. We hope that those who bestowed them will be no losers by their liberality. Still we believe that an increase of benefits may be made profitable, both to giver and receiver. We solicit them in the name of the blooming and the beautiful,—those rose-buds in the wreath of our country's hope.

"It is desirable that their education should be diffused over a wider space of time, and one less encumbered by extraneous objects; and that the depth of its foundation should be more correctly proportioned to the imposing aspect, and redundant ornament of its superstructure. Is it not important that the sex to whom nature has entrusted the moulding of the whole mass of mind in its first formation, should be acquainted with the structure and developements of mind?—that they, who are to nurture the future rulers of a prosperous people, should be able to demonstrate, from the broad annals of history, the value of just laws, and the duty of subordination,—the blessings which they inherit, and the danger of their abuse? Is it not requisite, that they on whose bosom the infant heart must be cherished, should be vigilant to watch its earliest pulsations of good or evil?—that they who are commissioned to light the lamp of the soul, should know how to feed it with pure oil?—that they, in whose hand is the welfare of beings never to die, should be fitted to perform the work, and earn the plaudit of Heaven?*

* "Oh woman! if you could only see one of the miracles promised to maternal influence,

"That the vocation of females is to teach, has been laid down as a position, which it is impossible to controvert. It is in the domestic sphere, in her own native province, that woman is inevitably a teacher. There she modifies by her example, her dependants, her companions, every dweller under her roof. Is not the infant in its cradle her pupil? Does not her smile give the earliest lesson to its soul? Is not her prayer the first messenger for it in the court of heaven? Does she not enshrine her own image in the sanctuary of the young child's mind, so firmly that no revulsion can displace, no idolatry supplant it? Does she not guide the daughter, until placing her hand in that of her husband, she reaches that pedestal, from whence, in her turn, she imparts to others the stamp and coloring which she has herself received? Might she not, even upon her sons, engrave what they shall take unchanged, through all the temptations of time, to the bar of the last judgment? Does not the influence of woman rest upon every member of her household, like the dew upon the tender herb, or the sunbeam silently educating the young flower? or as the shower, and the sleepless stream, cheer and invigorate the proudest tree of the forest?

"Admitting, then, that whether she wills it or not, whether she even knows it or not, she is still a teacher,—and perceiving that the mind in its most plastic state is yielded to her tutelage, it becomes a most momentous enquiry what she shall be qualified to teach. Will she not of necessity impart what she most prizes, and best understands. Has she not power to impress her own lineaments on the next generation? If wisdom and utility have been the objects of her choice, so-

with what noble pride would you enter upon that career which has so generously opened future ages to your endeavors! That which it is not in the power of any monarch, or any nation to accomplish, it is given to your will to execute. You alone can unite the scattered flock, and give it one common impulse. That which I have not been able to trace on this cold paper, you can engrave on the hearts of a whole people. I offer to you a feeble image of the truth, and you can bequeath the truth itself to the whole world.

Let each devote herself to the happiness of her own children, for in each individual happiness God has placed the promise of general happiness. Young girls, young wives, tender mothers, it lies in you much more than it lies in the laws of a legislature, to confirm the future destiny of Europe, and the destiny of mankind!" *Aime-Martin.*

ciety will surely reap the benefit. If folly and self-indulgence are her prevailing characteristics, posterity are in danger of inheriting the likeness.

"This influence is most visible and operative in a republic. The intelligence and virtue of its every citizen have a heightened relative value.—Its safety may be interwoven with the destiny of those, whose birth-place is in obscurity. The springs of its vitality are liable to be touched, or the chords of its harmony to be troubled, by the rudest hands.

"Teachers, under such a form of government should be held in the highest honor. They are the allies of legislators. They have agency in the prevention of crime. They aid in regulating the atmosphere, whose incessant action and pressure, causes the life-blood to circulate, and return pure and healthful to the heart of the nation.

"Of what unspeakable importance then, is *her* education, who gives lessons before any other instructor—who pre-occupies the unwritten page of being—who produces impressions which only death can obliterate—and mingles with the cradle-dream what shall be read in eternity. Well may statesmen and philosophers debate how *she* may be best educated, who is to educate all mankind."

After this earnest appeal of angel eloquence, I shall say nothing further on this vital topic, which is so deeply fraught with the future destinies of the human race. Whatever I might add, would fall cold, and dull, and unheeded on the ear.