

No longer will maimed, deformed, half-idiotic children, filled with the sins of the father and frailties of the mother, curse parents, pest society, or tax our commonwealth. No longer will thousands of divorce cases blot our court dockets as evidence of the rottenness of society and wrongs of mankind. Recognize this truth, and woman becomes woeful and man the woeed. 'Tis true, the law is in opposition to the Jewish code, and Paul, as interpreted by Todd and Lewis and other wonderfully wise ecclesiastical celebrities, full of dead languages and dead ideas; but as Paul was unmarried and never a lover of woman, it is possible, nay, very probable, that he, like Todd and Lewis, had imbibed the prejudice and customs of the dark ages—when woman was far below par (man being the standard of virtue, morals and intelligence) and upon woman's commonly recognized inferiority based his injunctions. Educated customs and prejudices, descending from parent to child through long centuries, are hard to eradicate from the minds of many even good men. There is not a low, lewd, licentious, selfish wretch, who looks upon woman only through lustful eyes, but welcomes Paul's advice to wives with as much fiendish satisfaction as Todd or Lewis; yet Paul meant that his injunctions should never be so misrepresented. If stupid, selfish, non-progressive theologians see fit to make the Scripture a savor of death unto death, instead of life unto life, don't blame Paul or Moses, but pity their stupidity and ignorance.

When a few uncompromising fanatics commence an exterminating warfare upon a system of barbarism, borrowed from drunken Noah and the dark ages, the universal Biblical argument howled in our ears by the meek, sanctimonious, cadaverous, white-necktied gentry was: "Cursed be Canaan! a servant of servants shall he be;" "Servants, obey your masters," while impersonated human devils, blackened with envy, crime, pollution, with every vice, armed with blood-hounds and raw-hides, took up the dismal howl and reverberated it throughout the land; and a stupid, cowardly, compromising pulpit, press and people in the North responded in ignominious silence, amen! And now, when 17,000,000 of American women, oppressed by cruel laws, taxed and misrepresented, flattered and favored only for sensual ends, working, toiling and starving on mere pittance (called by their oppressors "pay"), kept in cellars and garrets, loaded and fettered with a fashionable paraphernalia called "dress," with minds undeveloped yet capable of the highest development—when we witness this and plead for woman's enfranchisement as the means of elevating her, we hear the same old dismal howl from the same caverns of dry-bones wailing long and loud through a benighted ecclesiastical and political sky: "Let women keep silence in the churches;" "Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands;" and now the same sleepy pulpit, press and people, awakened by this clerical caterwaul, rub their eyes, shake their heads, look bewildered, and moan out the inglorious response: Be it so. Infanticide, idiocy, and prostitution, public and in wedlock, and infamous human degradation are but the outgrowths, the wormwood results of this malicious, libelous doctrine that woman was created inferior, subject to masculine will and dictation. Nature, science, inspiration, and all human experience repel the libel, in despite of the opinions of Todd, Lewis, or Osgood.

Ignorance of sexual physiology, and a false philosophy of our social relation, has led the world into many horrid beliefs concerning woman's origin, sphere, and character. A superstition borrowed from the Pagan world, founded in ignorance, developed into a belief, found expression in a law among the ancient Jews, which periodically excommunicated woman from society and its privileges, made her unclean, defiled and impure, just because a process of ovulation was being carried on by the secret, silent workings of the vital economy. Her touch was defiling to every dead and living thing. Her look conveyed and imparted only lust and obscenity. From these imaginary pollutions there was no escape. She was isolated from all the stunted privileges of her sex for one-third of her time, and only rendered fit company for male virtue and purity by offering a sacrifice. Such superstitions would make any race or nation susceptible of the most galling servitude, and the degradation of woman has its origin greatly in this pagan nonsense.

These hideous, deforming superstitions still exist in the minds of even many comparatively intelligent women, and never can be eradicated until the laws of the human system are taught in preference to crude doctrines and dogmas. So strongly impressed had these doctrines become on the minds of Biblical authorities, that even Solomon in all his wisdom could find no stronger language to convey an idea of defilement than the term "menstruous woman."

It is high time that such ideas of woman's defilement

and debasement should be rooted out, even if it does uproot much fossilized theology. We can spare such theology better than the purity and chastity of womankind. As the light of physiology dawns, the mists of pagan theology recede. Superstitions born of the perverted imaginations of pagans and heathen should have no place in the theology of true Christians. In the degradation of woman, we are reaping the bitter fruits of such ignorance. But more yet. Ignorance of physiological law led metaphysicians and shallow-brained philosophers to seek the establishment of woman's inferiority upon the false and funny doctrine that all ovum were originally male, and female sex was the result of "blast," during the process of development. Hence, woman is only a blasted man. This we should call a blasted idea, born of blasted brains and originated for blasting purposes. This makes woman a creature of chance, not developed by any fixed law in nature.

But why malign woman's character, purity or influence by such superstitious speculations? What woman needs, what human interests demand, is not superstition based upon the fanciful whims or foolish caprices of some benighted, undeveloped being, who presumed to write inspired philosophy; but she needs education, freedom, growth and development, physically, mentally and morally. Give her the opportunities for physical growth that you give man. Let her wield the plow, the axe, the hoe, hammer, or plane; let her employ the pen, the pencil, the brush or chisel; let her construct railroads and machinery; let her make and unmake presidents and legislators; in short, don't be hunting "woman's sphere," but give her every opportunity for the full and perfect exercise of every muscle and nerve, faculty or power of her being, and she will find her own sphere without masculine dictation or intervention.

If woman has any special "sphere," let masculine impudence, insolence and ignorance understand that it is the complete protection of her own person, virtue and posterity; and not the narrow, hampered, contractive circle of revolving around masculine will.

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### LIFE AND DEATH BY THE NEEDLE.

Editors of Revolution:

THIS pleasant 26th of March, three little orphans stood beside an open grave, into which was slowly lowered what was their mother. Six years before, and the mound beside her rounded over their father, leaving them entirely dependent upon her for daily bread. The needle was her sole resource, and, alas! like too many women in our land, she was comparatively unskilful with that.

Why, in this country, where the wheel of fortune is ever turning, and the millionaire of to-day is the beggar of to-morrow—why will mothers let their daughters grow to woman's estate without possessing some one accomplishment to which they can turn when reverses overtake them, and from it derive a tolerable support? If it is the needle, let them be expert, perfect mistresses of plain sewing in its various departments of hemming, stitching, overcasting, tucking, and felling. Then they may learn some variety of embroidery, in which they shall perfect themselves before undertaking another variety. If a piano is indulged in, let them be thorough musicians; if the pencil, insist that they understand sketching from nature, perspective, and the fundamental principles of the art.

This unfortunate widow took up dressmaking, in which, never having learned the trade, she could but hold a second-rate position. Of course, she could not command the highest pay for her labor. Finding she could earn more by going out to days' work, she left her three little children at home to take care of themselves, while she went out to earn the extra half dollar which they must have to be comfortable. Confinement in close rooms, breathing with only the upper half of the lungs, as she bent over the needle day after day, for six years; anxiety about her children, who, in her constant absence from home, could but grow up in habits of idleness and aimlessness—all these wrought upon a constitution of more than ordinary strength and vigor, and consumption added another to his fearful list of victims.

Who could stand there in the churchyard, as the minister repeated the solemn words, "ashes to ashes, dust to dust," and see those three helpless orphans weeping for sorrow they can yet so imperfectly comprehend, and not weep with them and for them?

But tears will not feed them, will not clothe them, will not prevent others from being added to their number. What shall be done about it? How shall we prevent these woes of widowhood and orphanage from multiplying? Women must have work, they must have better

wages. Shall we give it them, or shall we choose rather to be abettors in their destruction and then soothe our consciences by paying the board of their orphaned children in semi-charity schools? As I stood there weeping and thinking, I said to myself "three acres of land, and that woman had been alive and well to-day." A strawberry patch, an onion bed, a little garden, would have given her support, given her children employment; she could have been with them constantly, training them to habits of industry and thrift, and made them to quite an extent self-supporting, while her own daily life would have been passed in cheerful occupation, breathing pure air, and drawing from the great bosom of nature at once substance and strength. If, in the days of her prosperity, when her husband was alive, and plenty smiled around her, they had saved a little, enough to buy but three acres of land near market, these orphans had not been left motherless.

The average yield of an acre of land in onions is five hundred bushels, which, at \$1.50 per bushel the average price, would have brought \$750 income. By extra culture, eight hundred bushels could be raised and sold for a thousand or twelve hundred dollars. These the children could have weeded and gathered. Some labor perhaps, would have to be hired in spring to prepare the soil.

A quarter of an acre in strawberries would have netted from one to two hundred dollars a season. Currant and raspberry bushes, easily cultured, might have added to the family income. And thus, had she but known how to cultivate these simple crops, and any woman can learn easily, she might have secured life, comfort, happiness for herself and her children, instead of premature death and early orphanage for those she died to save.

True such out-door labors would have embrowned her complexion and soiled her hands, her knees might have ached as she weeded the onion bed, or her back ached over the strawberry patch; but she would have breathed pure air, slept soundly at night from healthy weariness; but how infinitely better this than

"Band and gusset, and seam,  
Seam and gusset, and band." L.

### IS WOMAN HER OWN?

Editors of Revolution:

THE short article on "Child Murder" in your paper of March 12th, touched a subject which lies deeper down into woman's wrongs than any other. This is the denial of the right to herself. In no historic age of the world has woman yet had that. From the time when Moses, for the hardness of his heart, permitted the Jew husband to give his displeasing wife a letter of divorce—ment—Christ, when the seven male sinners brought to him for condemnation the woman taken in adultery—down through the Christian centuries to this nineteenth, nowhere has the marital union of the sexes been one in which woman has had control over her own body.

Enforced motherhood is a crime against the body of the mother and the soul of the child.

Medical jurisprudence has begun to accumulate facts on this point, showing how the condition and feelings of the mother mould not only the physical and mental qualities of the child, but its moral nature.

Women keep silence upon many points, not breathing their thoughts to their dearest friends, because of their inner reticence, a quality they possess greatly in excess of men.

And, too, custom has taught them to bear in silence. But the crime of abortion is not one in which the guilt lies solely or even chiefly with the woman. As a child brings more care, so also, it brings more joy to the mother's heart.

Husbands do not consult with their wives upon this subject of deepest and most vital interest, do not look at the increase of family in a physiological, moral, or spiritual light, but almost solely from a money standpoint. It costs. Tens of thousands of husbands and fathers throughout this land are opposed to large families. And yet, so deeply implanted is the sin of self-gratification, that consequences are not considered while selfish desire controls the heart.

Much is said of the wild, mad desire of the age for money. Money is but another name for power, it is but another name for bread, it is but another name for freedom; and those who possess it not are the slaves of those who do.

How many states in the Union grant the wife an equal right with the husband to the control and disposal of the property of the marital firm? But two. [What two? Eds. Rev.]

How long is it since a married woman in this state