

PS 2156
.K6
Copy 1

A POETIC LECTURE

ON

W O M A N H O O D :

INSCRIBED TO

"ANGEL WOMAN."

"WOMANHOOD: What is it? Let Virtue tell,"
"A Sister Cherub, sent on earth to dwell,
A gen'rous heart, a soul that's filled with love,
Fresh flowing from Elysian Courts above."

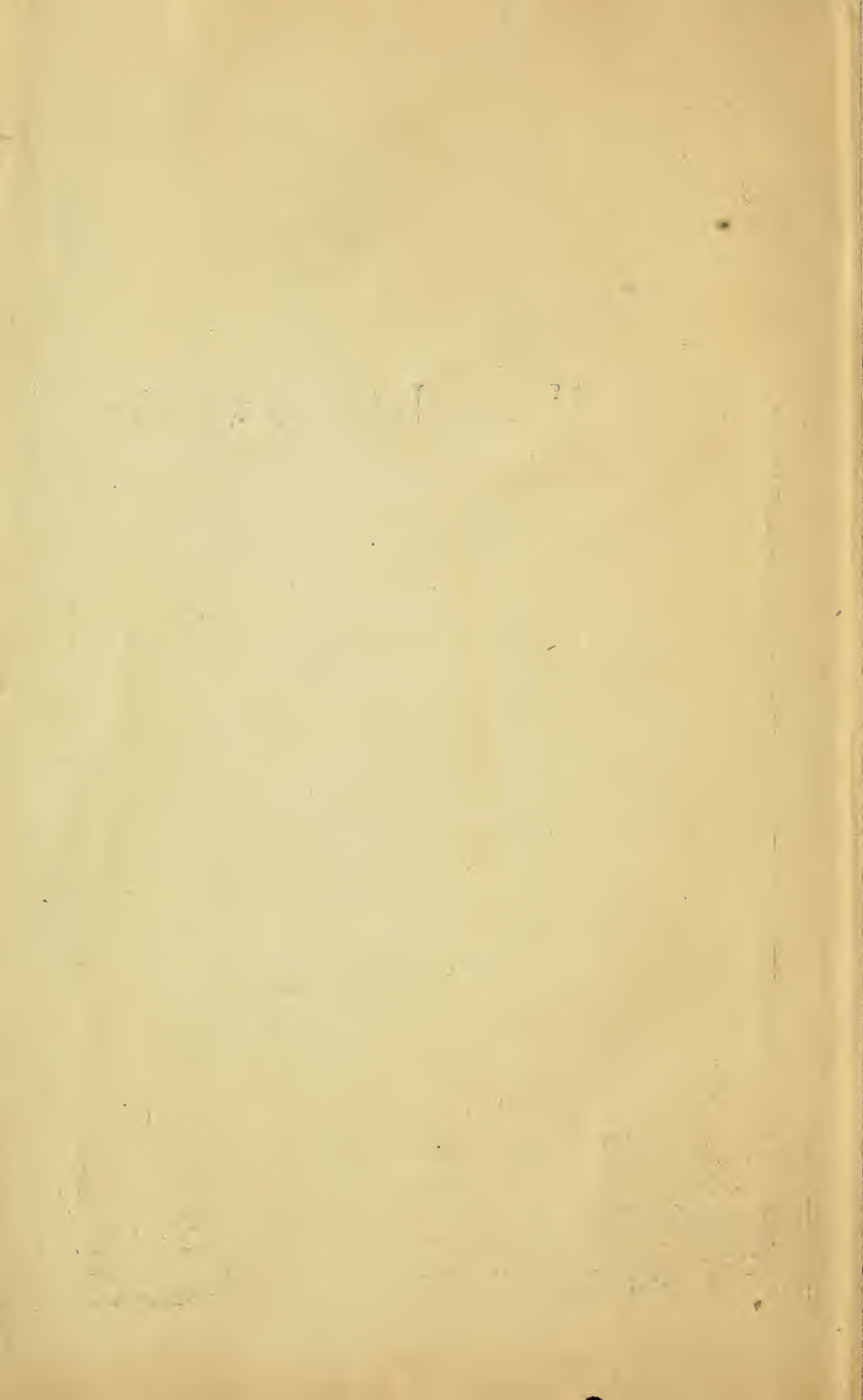
BY WM. W. KARSHNER.

Cincinnati:

Printed for the Author by MOORE, WILSTACH, KEYS & CO.,

25 WEST FOURTH STREET.

PRICE, 25 CENTS.



A
POETIC LECTURE
ON
W O M A N H O O D .

33 /

BY
W M . W . K A R S H N E R .

“WOMANHOOD! What is it? Let Virtue tell.”
“A Sister Cherub, sent on earth to dwell.
A gen'rous heart, a soul that's filled with love,
Fresh flowing from Elysian Courts above.”

CINCINNATI:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,
BY MOORE, WILSTACH, KEYS & CO.
1858.

PS2156

.K6

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1858, by
WM. W. KARSHNER,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the
Southern District of Ohio.

~~~~~  
Stereotyped by Hills, O'Driscoll & Co.,  
141 Main St., Cincinnati.  
~~~~~

INScribed

TO

A N G E L W O M A N ;

AS WELL THOSE WITHOUT

AS

THOSE WITHIN THE UNITED STATES ;

HOPING

THE FORMER WILL EVER REMEMBER,

U N I O N

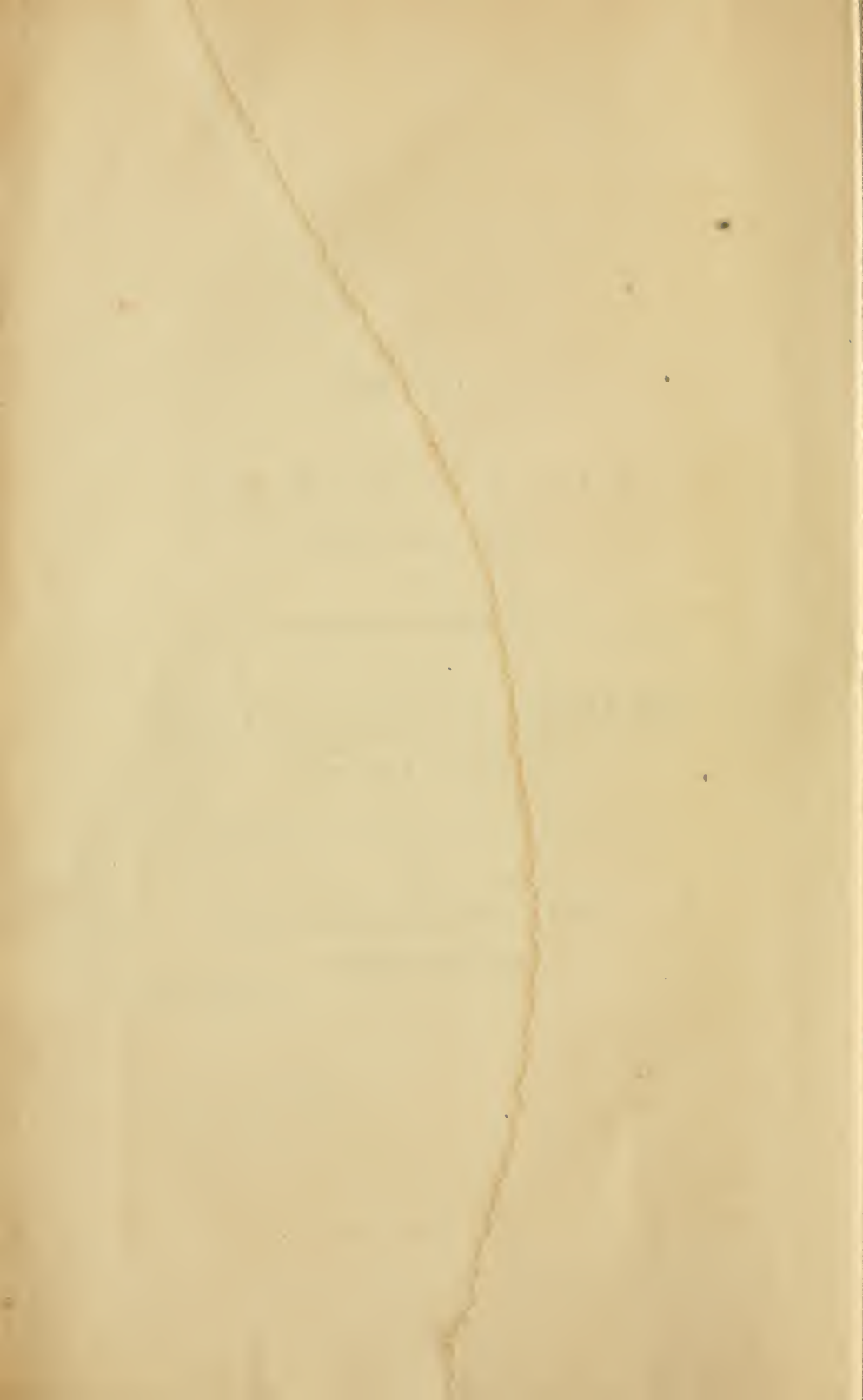
GIVES BIRTH TO THE SONS OF FREEDOM,

AND

THAT THE LATTER WILL CONTINUE TO ROCK

THE CRADLE OF LIBERTY.

BY THE AUTHOR.



INTRODUCTION.

I'M not a Pollock, Byron, Pope, nor Steele,
Nor have I traveled o'er the world a deal;
Nor many grave and pond'rous books have read
About the living or the ancient dead;
Nor do I much of good or evil know,
Save what I learn while through the world I go.
But, then, if this or that, or that or this
I've not yet learned, it may not be amiss
T' simply state t' my indulgent hearers
In *these*, my first POETIC BEARERS,
That I've many things and grave truths to tell,
Whether 'bout men, or devils, heaven or hell,
Which neither Pollock, Byron, Pope, nor Young,
Nor any other Poet ever sung.
But what these things are, and what these truths,
I'll not tell to Sires, Matrons, Maids, nor Youths,
Faster than my rhymes they hear and ponder,
Lest I cloy their taste and sate their wonder,
And thus my rhymes, quite stale, aside be laid,
My hearers vexed and *bored*, and I not paid.

For, do not *deign* to think I'll write for nought,
Or tax my brain for rhymes 't will not be bought;
For, this is one of many things I've learned,
That, if you work for nought, your labor's spurned.
Who so dull and stupid, now-a-days,
To sweat and toil at work that never pays?
E'en the ox and ass should not be muzzled,
And of their corn and water guzzled;
Much less should those who "Tread the *Press*,"
And write for other's pleasure, profit, and delight!
Therefore, now, the first grave truth I say thee,
Is, I'm bound to *write*, (and you must pay me).
The next in order, is, I'll please myself,
In all I write, regardless of the Pelf!
Nor will I forge my rhymes, too, very nice,
For, then, 't would spoil some (would-be) Critic's spice.
And, if my hearers treat me pretty clever,
I'll give them *more*, anon; if not I'll never,—
My subject, now, must come, though bad or good,
For 't is not "WOMAN'S RIGHTS," *but* WOMANHOOD.

POETIC LECTURE
ON
W O M A N H O O D.

“WOMANHOOD! What is it? Let Virtue tell.
A Sister Cherub, sent on earth to dwell.”

WOMANHOOD! What is it? Let Virtue tell.
“A Sister Cherub, sent on earth to dwell.
A gen’rous heart, a soul that’s filled with love,
Fresh flowing from Elysian Courts above.
A Ship of mercy on life’s boist’rous sea;
God’s own likeness, heaven’s epitome.
Love’s purest fountain, her holy tower,
A cluster of grapes from Eden’s Bower.
A Church symbolic, a Temple of Grace,
Virtue’s home, sweet Charity’s dwelling-place.
A hidden song, a secret, crystal spring,
Virtue’s theme, not that Bards, but Angels sing.”

If, then, as Virtue’s Muse doth now declare,
True Womanhood is this exotic rare,
With heaven’s own pavilion ’round her flung,
Virtue’s theme, not by Bards, but Angels sung,

“O God! Shall I sheathe my pen; let it drop?
Because the theme's so holy shall I stop?!”

Oh! when, or where, or how shall I inspire
My thoughts, my pen, my soul with living fire?
To write, and teach, and plead her sacred cause
'Gainst men, 'gainst devils, and 'gainst broken laws!!
I must not, dare not touch the holy theme;
My heart, my pulse stands still, my thought's a dream;
My vision fails, my eyes grow dim;—'tis all:—
I can no more; I tremble, reel; I fall!!—

O God! Shall I sheathe my pen; let it drop?
Because the theme's so holy shall I stop?!
Give thou a pen from out thy Angel's wing,
Dipped in *thy* love, and then, yes, then I'll sing!
Since thou, O God! doth grant,—I'll now resume,
Sing, boldly, Virtue's song and Vice's doom.

Ah! here's a theme the world has never known;
No Bard, no sacred Muse hath ever shown
The deep, pure fountains of a woman's heart,
Unmixt with blinded faith and human art.

Many sing of love, human and divine,
But sing for each a dark, mysterious shrine.
The former, passion deified, refined;
The latter, intangible faith, and blind.
This, by the *would-be* wise, is sniffed and sneered;
That, by the sensu'list, is always jeered.

“But pause! Cast thine eye to Mary, there see
Womanhood robed in sweetest majesty.”

Thus, this clashing theme 'genders clashing schools,
That keep thus clashing 'mongst their clashing fools.
Much write these schools of sound Philosophy,
But more, a deal, of unsound Sophistry.
But, we'll let them write, and talk, and wrangle,
And weave up their webs in error's tangle;
For errors belong and go together,
Fight, and slay, and thus destroy each other.—

Hold! Critic, hold! thy Lyre must be deferred,
Till of true Womanhood, we first have heard.
Go, then! Search the pages of Sacred Lore,
Leaf, turn and read, and scan them o'er and o'er,
And see if ought in Holy Writ ye find,
That gives description, true, of Womankind.
If nought is there to sanction what I say,
Then turn thou thy ear from my song away.

But pause! Cast thine eye to Mary, there see
Womanhood robed in sweetest majesty.
Behold her run, with gushing heart, to meet
A Man she loves, The Lord, and at his feet
She falls, she weeps, and washes them in tears:
He gently buoys her up, and quells her fears.
She loves her brother, sister, she loves HIM, too;
He loves her, HE *weeps!* 'Tis all that HE can do!

“The Church, a Bride, the Wife of God, is called ;
Pure, chaste, and must from lust be disenthralled.”

Behold, now, here, this meeting scene of love!
Then ask—Was it of earth; or, from above?
Two human hearts, male and female, these were,
And Mary loved the one, and HE, too, loved her.

Query you here what kind of love this was?
Then query thou 'bout all God's holy laws!
But still this doubting query may be just;
Therefore, to tell thee what it was, we must.
It was the love that binds two hearts in one;
The love of heaven thus on earth begun.
And a love at once Divine and human
'TwiXt a PERFECT MAN and loving woman.
This love—and *lust*, (believe us when we tell,
Compares with each, as heav'n compares with hell.
And those whose hearts in union are with one,
(Th' former,) t' them alone, we'll now sing on.
The latter, though, may listen, there's yet room,
They may repent, if not, should hear their doom.

The Church, a Bride, the Wife of God, is called ;
Pure, chaste, and must from lust be disenthralled.
Now why is this? Why called a Bride? Why chaste?
Why not harlot, with lustful passion graced?
Grave questions these, in womanhood to solve,
But must be probed, her nature to evolve.

“Think not, kind Sisters, “*Woman’s Rights and Sphere*”
Is now the modern theme that you shall hear.”

Think not, kind Sisters, “*Woman’s Rights and Sphere*”
Is now the modern theme that you shall hear.
Nay, verily ! ’Tis a theme of higher source,
One, (as sung above,) that Angels might discourse.
The question, then, Why call the Church a Bride ?
’Tis simply this : a Bride, to be a Bride,
Must love her Spouse at heart, must love him true,
Must sacrifice her all, his will to do.

“What !” says one, “Woman bow to man at will !
The mandates of his wishes to fulfill ?”
Yes, ’tis so ; it must, yea, it *must* be so,
As we shall truly, plainly, clearly show.
When woman gives herself to man, she there
Gives all—body, soul, life—and doth declare
That he and his, and he and *his* alone,
Is her affections’ true devotion’s throne.
Nor is this a matter of chance, *per se*,
But stern necessity, Heaven’s decree.
In this decree of man’s and woman’s suit,
Woman becomes a Bride or Prostitute.
The former, when in *love* she gives her heart ;
The latter, when lust ’r mammon is the part.
Herself, too, she *gives*, when her heart is chaste ;
But *sells* herself, with heart in evil cased.

"Lustful man, (of course we'll call him human,
Always knows just how to buy a woman."

We'll now return, our promise to redeem,
That woman must and *does*, (though strange it seem,)
Give or *sell* her all, pays her constant vows
To man, *one* man, her chosen, worshiped Spouse.
If she *sells*, she sells herself in evil,
And worships him, as the Church, the devil.
Worships him, (but not thus the loving Bride,)
Because he feeds her passion and her pride;
And just as soon as these, with him, should fail,
She'll sell herself again, if chance avail.

Here, too, a double part is always played;
For twain, you know, it takes to make a trade.
Lustful man, (of course we'll call him human,)
Always knows just how to buy a woman.
And, as the market is most always flush,
They're purchased, often, with but little cash.
Now-a-days, but a little shining dust
Will pay the price; if not, they'll trade on trust.
And each will give a promissory note,
That all they have, or are, they will devote
To each other's comfort, good, and ease,
And *each* the *other* always strive to please.
Thus the bargain's made, and struck, and won;
A life of *true* devotion, (*false*,) begun.

"All men cannot receive all truths, of course,
(As Christ hath said,) 'bout marriage and divorce."

About these dupes we'll say no more just now,
But by and by we'll stop and tell you how,
And why it is, this class so well compares,
In Scripture language, with the Kingdom's tares.

All men cannot receive all truths, of course,
(As Christ hath said,) 'bout marriage and divorce.
Think not 'tis strange that to some is given
The power to see the truths of Heaven,
Which others in their blindness cannot see,
'Cause they, forsooth, in love of darkness be.
The truth, to such, is like the sun to owl,
They cannot see its light without a scowl,
And hence they'll sniff and blink, and sneer and snuff,
And call all sacred truths but trashy stuff.

But Virtue's Muse pure truths must ever sing,
E'en though they harsh upon gross ears doth ring.
And as the subject now in grandeur floats,
She calls her Bard to strike on higher notes,
And tune her harp in union with the skies,
To sing the song of Heaven's sweetest prize.

Behold once more the true, devoted Bride!
T' revere and love her spouse is all her pride;
There's nought for him that she can say or do,
But that is freely done, because she's true.

“ Why loves the Church her Lord ? Does he not woo ?
And does not man, through love, woo woman, too ? ”

She loves, too, the Man,—she loves the human,
And he, too, loves her, because she 's Woman.
Thus, twain in love's true union now are twined,
And, each to each, and God, their life 's consigned.
Here, now, a Church we have, an emblem pure,
In love united, ever to endure.
Scan close this union, ponder o'er it well,
And see if ought of myst'ry 't will reveal.

Why loves the Church her Lord ? Does he not woo ?
And does not man, through love, woo woman too ?
But neither man, nor woman, loves nor woos,
Save as to guide their lives they virtue choose.
If in their hearts, true virtue hath no place,
Likewise, true love their hearts can never grace.
A passion, though, there is, the world calls love,
Quite much in vogue on earth, but not above.

Here, now, the myst'ry lies, ungilt with art,
True Womanhood is but true Virtue's part.
But Virtue ! O Virtue ! Child of Heaven !
Why so rare on earth to mortals given ?
Hold, Muse ! thou wrongst her much ! she 's born in all,
And but for gold to sell her, none would fall.

Here, then, the curse ; but not by God decreed :—
Man, from this curse, the curse of God hath freed.

“By sweat of brow, delicious fruits shall eat:
In love and virtue, share thy husband’s meat.”

Bold language, this ; but not more bold than true :
God’s worst curse, is, to toil, to sweat, to do.

This, the curse on man. But, what on woman ?
“Curse that makes her both divine and human.
Thy desires, *only* to thy spouse, shall be,
In reverence, love, truth, and chastity.”

Where, now, the curse on man ? ’T is vanished all ;
His greatest *blessing*, in his greatest fall.
“By sweat of brow, delicious fruits shall eat :
In love and virtue, share thy husband’s meat.”
Kind curses, these, (opines derision’s nod),
No other curses ever came from God !!
Thorns and thistles yield their place to roses,
Wife and babe, on virtue’s couch reposes.
Emblem pure, this triune band, of heaven,
None more pure, could e’er by God be given.
Husband (father), wife (mother), cherub (son),
Three, distinct in person, in love but one.

Wond’rest thou, still, why man’s to sweat and toil,
Labor hard, to subdue and till the soil ?
And more : why woman’s to revere the man,
And love him, too, and help him all she can ?
That wonder stay, and hear the truths I tell ;
Which truths, not true, earth herself’s a hell.

“ Husband (father), wife (mother), cherub (son),
Three, distinct in person, in love but one.”

Did not strong man subdue the mighty waste,
And were not woman, in her nature, chaste,
The world a wilderness of thorns would be,
And virtuous homes, a lawless anarchy.
Nay, more! Man would be a savage, *devil*,
All mankind in basest lust would revel;
All earth would be a dire hell; yea, *worse!*
E'en life itself would prove the vilest curse.

What need we more peruse this theme at length,
Of woman's virtue, or of manhood's strength?
Enough is said, the case already clear;
The sexes *are*, and are to be co-workers here.
Thus premised firm, a few bold truths of yore,
Modern truths and errors will now explore.

Divorce, “Free-Love,” and so, must have their turn,
For each, true Womanhood, doth much concern.
Divorce! What means the term; and what its use?
“The Legal Bonds of marriage to unloose!”
But, what these marriage Bonds, and who them made?
Are they but Laws of commerce, barter, trade?
If trading-laws they are, to buy and sell,—
Then, 'sooth, indeed, to change them might be well.

But, is marriage a creature of the law?
A shifting gos'mer, feather, brittle straw?

"But, what *is* marriage? is the question now,
A Code of Statute Laws, do you avow?"

Marriage, made of such fragile, rotten stuff!
 A cob-web thread, or less, a gaseous puff!
 If *this* is all, and marriage but a sham,
 A mock-law, nay, a Liliputian *damm*,—
 Then let it go, in Lethe let it rest,
 And in pure virtue's laws let man be blest!
 Yes! If marriage is but a trick of trade,
 For money profit, or convenience made;
 And has no higher, deeper, purer source;
 For *Heaven's* sake! let nature take her course!
 But, what *is* marriage? is the question now;
 A Code of Statute Laws, do you avow?
 If Statutes make the marriage, bind the two,—
 Then love, with marriage, 'n sooth, hath nought to do.
 But *what is* marriage, pray?—I urge it still;
 If not of law, is it of human will?
 If but to will to wed, is all we need,
 Then why such fools, to use a Marriage Creed?
 The *question*, then, with all its quibbles, flaws,
 Lies deeper, still, than will, or Statute Laws.
 If laws controlling marriage, thou wouldst find,
 Then closer scan the depths of human mind.
 The myst'ries deep, that doth the whole control,
 Lie deeply buried in the human soul.
 But not so deep, but that the mind may scan,
 And make them plain to both the sexes, man.

“Love, wedded love, pure and silent flowing,
Hath her oral language, outward showing.”

But why to argue more, or try to prove
A human code to guide a virt'ous love ?
What written language, or plainer, clearer,
Than within the heart of every hearer,
That wedded love is not of law or will,
But purer, finer, subtler agents still.
Who that loves, or hath e'en a human heart,
Dares once think, or thinking, dares once impart,
That love, pure, virtuous love, and *this* alone,
Is not *true* marriage, merging two in one ?
This truth, then settled, that love is marriage,
Little more remains to clear the rearage.
Love, wedded love, pure and silent flowing,
Hath her oral language, outward showing.
This oral language, if thou wouldst it read,
Thou'lt find it plainly writ in marriage creed.
The language, too, is simple, plain, and clear,
Hark, a moment ! The language thou shalt hear :
“I love this woman, as I love my life,
Hence, her I choose to be my wedded wife.”
“This man I love ; I know he loves me, too,
Henceforth to him, I'll be forever true.”
Thus speaks each wedded heart, and thus they tell
They love, and with each other mean to dwell.
These solemn vows in volition given,
Witnessed by man, Angels, God, and Heaven,

“Where now, I pray, that hackneyed theme, Divorce?
And how, I pray, wouldst thou that theme discourse?”

Are now on record, to the world revealed,
And the true marriage-bond forever sealed.

Where now, I pray, that hackneyed theme, Divorce?
And how, I pray, wouldst thou that theme discourse?
How then, or whence, camest the thing, who can tell?
Is it from God or man, or heaven or hell?
Or, but a branch, or twig, or blighted seed
From heathenish, or barbarian creed?
Perhaps it is; let Holy Writ define,
And let *Her* genial rays upon it shine.

No Divorce, saith Christ, at first was given,
Nor knowledge of the thing in earth or heaven.
In Eden's golden times the twain were one,
What God had sealed, could never be undone.
Whom God in love had joined, were joined forever,
And no human laws could them ever sever.
But in came lust and mammon, hand in hand,
The same in Christian as in heathen land.
Marriage, a trade was made, of lust and pelf;
Man bought, and woman freely sold herself.
When lust became the tie, mammon the prize,
Love was banished and Cupid closed his eyes.
And each one went it, yea, and went it blind.
Taking, of course, the best one each could find.
But jockeys oft get bit, or burnt, or cheated,
However oft their artful skill's repeated.

“Thus, in haste, ten thousands wed and rue it,
But, more proud than chaste, will oft stick to it.”

And in making marriage a thing of trade,
Strange, indeed, were not some bad bargains made.
Thus, in haste, ten thousands wed and rue it,
But, more proud than chaste, will oft stick to it ;
While others, reckless both of honor and pride,
Seek law to have the marriage-knot untied.

Hence comes Divorce, or pleading for the same,
Without, but should be *with*, deep blush of shame.
Hear but the language, the forensic spar,
Of every case that grace' judicial bar :

“I never loved that man ; or, that woman,
(As the case may be, for both are common,)
But married, simply, for convenience sake ;
But now, alas ! have learned my sad mistake.
Married, of course, as others often do,
To get a home, or wife, and so and so.
And then again, to use a Scripture turn,
Better far to marry, of course, than burn.
In marriage, too, there 's honor, saith the Book,
For all, on marriage, with complaisance look.
And wished I, too, to be ranked with others,
With legal Fathers and legal Mothers.
Attractions, (“passional,”) too, too strong to sate,
Induced to choose a Matrimonial Mate.”
This the language, (excuse it if too [blunt] strong,)
Of fair Divorce's bold, unblushing [front] throng.

“Free Love, *Free* Love—What! Love *free*? Wondrous strange!
As well FREE LIBERTY, a term arrange!”

Having Divorce and Marriage now dispatched,
Satire on lust and mammon 'neath it scratched.
The Muse will key his harp an octave higher,
Or hang it by and tune fair Virtue's lyre;
Or woo fair Virtue's self from courts above,
To warble forth her ode on pure—Free Love,—
Free Love, *Free* Love—What! Love *free*? Wondrous
strange!

As well FREE LIBERTY, a term arrange!
Free Love! What mockery this of sacred terms!
Free Heav'n, as well; or, God: if free confirms.
FREE *Love*! God, Himself, is Love! *Free* is He?
Yea! And Love makes every human soul as free.
That Love is nought *but* free 's so glaring clear,
No argument or proof the theme will bear.
Why all are not thus free, as it doth seem,
Is ready seen in scanning “Free Love's *Dream*.”
In scanning close, wilt see, if truth 's thy aim,
The doubtful theme, “FREE LOVE” and Lust 's the same.
That Moderns may not think the Muse too harsh,
We 'll deeper probe this gilded Stygian marsh,
And plainer show this triple Gordian band
Of *Lust*, *Divorce*, “*Free Love*,” go hand in hand.
Divorce, as seen above, doth well imply,
What Free Love claims; that is, to cut and try.

" All, too, to LAW must bow, creation nod,
From Man, Angel, wrapt Seraph, up to God."

And if, perchance, a marriage blunder 's made,
To make another, or, a better trade.
Thus lust and mammon, first, their fruits unfold ;
Divorce comes next in turn, with pleadings bold,
Then comes " Free Love," her antidote to lend,
Strives hard herself, and all the rest to blend.
And still further goes, pleading hard the while,
That pure " Free Love " will purify the vile ;
The golden times of yore will reinstate,
And each will find a Matrimonial Mate.
But this pure state, she vows, can never be,
Until from legal bondage all are free.
What nonsense this, how blind to reason's laws,
And blinder still to all her subtler flaws.
Take but a glance, one passing glance 's enough,
To show the cobweb strength of all this stuff.
Around, above, beneath, and everywhere,
Antipodes are etched in blazing glare.
However deep we delve, or high we soar.
Law, too, is writ in deep creation's core.
Nor less extensive is the golden creed,
That law controls each thought and human deed.
All, too, to LAW must bow, creation nod,
From Man, Angel, wrapt Seraph, up to God.
And Freedom, too, as bondage, hath her laws,
To plead, and test, and prove her legal cause.

“Wouldst thou then be free, Freedom's noble heir?!
Then, too, thou Freedom's golden chain must wear.”

Wouldst thou then be free, Freedom's noble heir?!
 Then, too, thou Freedom's golden chain must wear.
 This golden chain hath links, in number three,
 Cemented close: Truth, Love, and Chastity.
 And on (within) whose breast these links are found,
 Though galling shackles threat, can ne'er be bound.
 Tyrannic thongs, alike, of law and lust,
 Before them fall and crumble into dust.
 No fetters strong, within, around, above,
 Can ever bind the soul that's freed by Love.
 But bondage, triple bondage, still we have,
 From which no Statute laws can e'er relieve.
 Blot every law from every page and leaf,
 Laws yet remain to bind the felon, thief.
 The law of bondage etched in every heart,
 Who dares from paths of strictest virtue part.
 Fast binds and holds, and leads the culprit on,
 Before the bar, God's great tribunal throne;
 The throne of truth, of virtue, and of love,
 As plainly hinted in the text above.
 To this bar, this retribution bar, all, *all*,
 Must come, must plead, must bow, must kneel,
 must fall.
 At this eternal shrine, and this alone,
 Must each vile culprit for his sins atone.

“Go, sin no more! *This*, Heaven’s stern decree!
On *no* condition else canst thou be free.”

Go, sin no more! *This*, Heaven’s stern decree!
On *no* condition else canst thou be free.
Take, then, the gentle hint, the voice obeyed,
Will back to freedom lead, from whence ye’ve strayed.
Do thou thy first works o’er, commence anew,
Go love the one you’ve sworn to love; be true.
Atonement make to whom ye’ve wronged, deceived;
Full restitution pay to th’one aggrieved,
And if that one ye never loved, but *lied*,
Thy crime more griev’ous still, and deeper dyed.
If from those broken vows thou wouldst be freed,
On thy bended knees, not in public plead!
In public! There thou pleadest thy burning shame,
Unblushing say thou’dst do agin the same.
Where now that witching dream, “Free Love?” ’Tis
gone!
Vanished like gilded rays of morning dawn.
Those who plead it, plead but their own disgrace,
Should plead it, too, with crimson, blushing face.
Didst not stern duty call, and truth implore,
The Muse would hush, be still, would say no more;
But all endearing ties and holy loves,
Prompts still the pen, and onward, upward moves;
And weeping Virtue, distorted, broken laws,
Still harder urge to plead their sacred cause.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 016 117 779 9

