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by Marietta Holley**

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SAMANTHA  
AMONG THE BRETHREN.

BY  
"JOSIAH ALLEN'S WIFE"  
(MARIETTA HOLLEY).

*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.*



**SAMANTHA**  
**AMONG THE BRETHREN.**

BY  
"JOSIAH ALLEN'S WIFE"

(MARIETTA HOLLEY).

1890

Part 5.

TO

All Women

WHO WORK, TRYING TO BRING INTO DARK LIVES  
THE BRIGHTNESS AND HOPE OF A  
BETTER COUNTRY,  
*THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED.*

**PREFACE.**

Again it come to pass, in the fulness of time, that my companion, Josiah Allen, see me walk up and take my ink stand off of the manteltry piece, and carry it with a calm and majestick gait to the corner of the settin' room table devoted by me to literary pursuits. And he sez to me:

"What are you goin' to tackle now, Samantha?"

And sez I, with quite a good deal of dignity, "The Cause of Eternal Justice, Josiah Allen."

"Anythin' else?" sez he, lookin' sort o' oneasy at me. (That man realizes his shortcomin's, I believe, a good deal of the time, he duz.)

"Yes," sez I, "I lay out in petickuler to tackle the Meetin' House. She is in the wrong on't, and I want to set her right."

Josiah looked sort o' relieved like, but he sez out, in a kind of a pert way, es he set there a-shellin corn for the hens:

"A Meetin' House hadn't ort to be called she—it is a he."

And sez I, "How do you know?"

And he sez, "Because it stands to reason it is. And I'd like to know what you have got to say about him any way?"

Sez I, "That 'him' don't sound right, Josiah Allen. It sounds more right and nateral to call it 'she.' Why," sez I, "hain't we always hearn about the Mother Church, and don't the Bible tell about the Church bein' arrayed like a bride for her husband? I never in my life hearn it called a 'he' before."

"Oh, wall, there has always got to be a first time. And I say it sounds better. But what have you got to say about the Meetin' House, anyway?"

"I have got this to say, Josiah Allen. The Meetin' House hain't a-actin' right about wimmen. The Founder of the Church wuz born of woman. It wuz on a woman's heart that His head wuz pillowed first and last. While others slept she watched over His baby slumbers and His last sleep. A woman wuz His last thought and care. Before dawn she wuz at the door of the tomb, lookin' for

His comin'. So she has stood ever sense—waitin', watchin', hopin', workin' for the comin' of Christ. Workin', waitin' for His comin' into the hearts of tempted wimmen and tempted men—fallen men and fallen wimmen—workin', waitin', toilin', nursin' the baby good in the hearts of a sinful world—weepin' pale-faced over its crucefixion—lookin' for its reserection. Oh how she has worked all through the ages!"

"Oh shaw!" sez Josiah, "some wimmen don't care about anythin' but crazy work and back combs."

I felt took down, for I had been riz up, quite considerble, but I sez, reasonable:

"Yes, there are such wimmen, Josiah, but think of the sweet and saintly souls that have given all their lives, and hopes, and thoughts to the Meetin' House—think of the throngs to-day that crowd the aisles of the Sanctuary—there are five wimmen to one man, I believe, in all the meetin' houses to-day a-workin' in His name. True Daughters of the King, no matter what their creed may be—Catholic or Protestant.

"And while wimmen have done all this work for the Meetin' House, the Meetin' House ort to be honorable and do well by her."

"Wall, hain't *he*?" sez Josiah.

"No, *she* hain't," sez I.

"Wall, what petickuler fault do you find? What has *he* done lately to rile you up?"

Sez I, "*She* wuz in the wrong on't in not lettin' wimmen set on the Conference."

"Wall, I say *he* wuz right," sez Josiah. "*He* knew, and I knew, that wimmen wuzn't strong enough to set."

"Why," sez I, "it don't take so much strength to set as it duz to stand up. And after workin' as hard as wimmen have for the Meetin' House, she ort to have the priveledge of settin'. And I am goin' to write out jest what I think about it."

"Wall," sez Josiah, as he started for the barn with the hen feed, "don't be too severe with the Meetin' House."

And then, after he went out, he opened the door agin and stuck his head in and sez:

"Don't be too hard on *him*"

And then he shet the door quick, before I could say a word. But good land! I didn't care. I knew I could say what I wanted to with my faithful pen—and I am bound to say it.

JOSIAH ALLEN'S WIFE, Bonny View,  
near Adams, New York,  
Oct. 14th, 1890.

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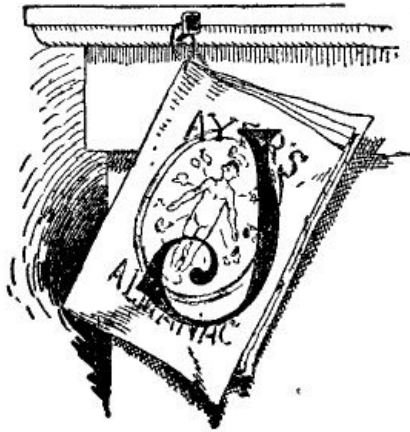
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## CHAPTER XVIII.



OSIAH'S face wuz smooth and placid, he hadn't took a mite of sense of what I had been a-sayin', and I knew it. Men don't. They know at the most it is only *talk*, wimmen hain't got it in their power to *do* any-

thing. And I s'pose they reason on it in this way—a little wind storm is soon over, it relieves old Natur and don't hurt anything.

Yes, my pardner's face wuz as calm as the figger on the outside of the almanac a-holdin' the bottle, and his axent wuz mildly wonderin' and gently sarcestickle.

"How a steeple would look a-pintin' down! That is a true woman's idee."

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Sez I, "I would have it a-pintin' down towards the depths of darkness that wuz in that man's heart that roze it up, and the infamy of the deed that kep him in the meetin' house and turned his victim out of it."

"I d'no as she wuz his victim," sez Josiah.

Sez I, "Every one knows that in the first place Simeon Lathers wuz the man that led her astray."

"It wuzn't proved," sez Josiah, a-turnin' the almanac over and lookin' at the advertisement on the back side on't.

"And why wuzn't it proved?" sez I, "because he held a big piece of gold against the mouths of the witnesses."

"I didn't see any in front of my mouth," sez Josiah, lookin' 'shamed but some composed.

"And you know what the story wuz," sez he, "accordin' to that, he did it all to try her faith."

I wouldn't encourage Josiah by even smilin' at his words, though I knew well what the story wuz he referred to.

It wuz at a Conference meetin', when Simeon Lathers wuz jest a-beginnin' to take notice of how

pretty Irene Filkins wuz.

She had gone forward to the anxious seat, with some other young females, their minds bein' wrought on, so it wuz spozed, by Deacon Lathers's eloquent exhortations, and urgin's to 'em to come forward and be saved.

And they had gone up onto the anxious seat a-sheddin' tears, and they all knelt down there, and Deacon Lathers he went right up and knelt down right by Sister Irene Filkins, and them that wuz there say, that right while he wuz a-prayin' loud and strong for 'em all, and her specially, he put his arm round her and acted in such a way that she resented it bitterly.



SISTER FILKINS.

She wuz a good, virtuous girl then, any way.

And she resented his overtoors in such a indignant and decided way that it drewed the attention of a hull lot of brothers and sisters towards 'em.

And Deacon Lathers got right up from his knees and sez, "Bretheren and sisters, let us sing these lines:

"He did it all to try her faith."

I remembered this story, but I wuzn't goin' to encourage Josiah Allen by lettin' my attention be drawn off by any anectotes—nor I didn't smile—oh, no I But I went right on with a hull lot of burnin' indignatin in my axents, and sez I, "Josiah Allen, can you look me in the face and say that it wuzn't money and bad men's influence that keep such men as Deacon Widrig and Simeon Lathers in the meetin' house?" Sez I, "If they wuz poor men would they have been kep', or if it wuzn't for the influence of men that like hard drink?"

"Wall, as it were," sez Josiah, "I—that is—wall, it is a-gettin' bed-time, Samantha."

And he wound up the clock and went to bed.

And I set there, all roused up in my mind, for more'n a hour—and I dropped more'n seven stitches in Josiah's heel, and didn't care if I did.

But I have episodated fearfully, and to resoom and go on.

Miss Henn wuz mad, and she wuz one of our most enterprizen' sisters, and we felt that she wuz a great loss.

Things looked dretful dark. And Sister Bobbet, who is very tender hearted, shed tears several times a-talkin' about the hard times that had come onto our meetin' house, and how Zion wuz a-languishin', etc., etc.

And I told Sister Bobbet in confidence, and also in public, that it wuz time to talk about Zion's

languishin' when we had done all we could to help her up. And I didn't believe Zion would languish so much if she had a little help gin her when she needed it.

And Miss Bobbet said "she felt jest so about it, but she couldn't help bein' cast down." And so most all of the sisters said. Submit Tewksbury wept, and shed tears time and agin, a-talkin' about it, and so several of 'em did. But I sez to 'em—

"Good land!" sez I. "We have seen jest as hard times in the Methodist meetin' house before, time and agin, and we wimmen have always laid holt and worked, and laid plans, and worked, and worked, and with the Lord's help have sailed the old ship Zion through the dark waters into safety, and we can do it agin."

Though what we wuz to do we knew not, and the few male men who didn't jine in the hardness, said they couldn't see no way out of it, but what the minister would have to go, and the meetin' house be shet up for a spell.

But we female wimmen felt that we could not have it so any way. And we jined together, and met in each other's housen (not publickly, oh no! we knew our places too well as Methodist Sisters).

We didn't make no move in public, but we kinder met round to each other's housen, sort o' private like, and talked, and talked, and prayed—we all knew that wuzn't against the church rules, so we jest rastled in prayer, for help to pay our honest debts, and keep the Methodist meetin' house from disgrace, for the men wuz that worked up and madded, that they didn't seem to care whether the meetin' house come to nothin' or not.

Wall, after settin' day after day (not public settin', oh, no! we knew our places too well, and wouldn't be ketched a-settin' public till we had a right to).

After settin' and talkin' it over back and forth, we concluded the very best thing we could do wuz to give a big fair and try to sell things enough to raise some money.

It wuz a fearful tuff job we had took onto ourselves, for we had got to make all the things to sell out of what we could get holt of, for, of course, our husbands all kep the money purses in their own hands, as the way of male pardners is. But we laid out to beset 'em when they wuz cleverer than common (owin' to extra good vittles) and get enough money out of 'em to buy the materials to work with, bedquilts (crazy, and otherwise), embroidered towels, shawl straps, knit socks and suspenders, rugs, chair covers, lap robes, etc., etc., etc.

It wuz a tremendus hard undertakin' we had took onto ourselves, with all our spring's work on hand, and not one of us Sisters kep a hired girl at the time, and we had to do our own house cleanin', paintin' floors, makin' soap, spring sewin', etc., besides our common housework.

But the very worst on't wuz the meetin' house wuz in such a shape that we couldn't do a thing till that wuz fixed.

The men had undertook to fix over the meetin' house jest before the hardness commenced. The men and wimmen both had labored side by side to fix up the old house a little.

The men had said that in such church work as that wimmen had a perfect right to help, to stand side by side with the male brothers, and do half, or more than half, or even *all* the work. They said it wuzn't against the Discipline, and all the Bishops wuz in favor of it, and always had been. They said it wuz right accordin' to the Articles. But when it come to the hard and arjuous duties of drawin' salleries with 'em, or settin' up on Conferences with 'em, why there a line had to be drawed, wimmen must not be permitted to strain herself in no such ways—nor resk the tender delicacy of her nature, by settin' in a meetin' house as a delegate by the side of a man once a year. It wuz too resky. But we could lay holt and work with 'em in public, or in private, which we felt wuz indeed a privelege, for the interests of the Methodist meetin' house wuz dear to our hearts, and so wuz our pardners' approvals—and they wuz all on 'em unanimus on this pint—we could *work* all we wanted to.

So we had laid holt and worked right along with the men from day to day, with their full and free consents, and a little help from 'em, till we had got the work partly done. We had got the little Sabbath-school room painted and papered, and the cushions of the main room new covered, and we had engaged to have it frescoed, but the frescoer had turned out to be a perfect fraud, and, of all the lookin' things, that meetin' house wuz about the worst. The plaster, or whatever it wuz he had put on, had to be all scraped off before it could be papered, the paper wuz bought, and the scrapin' had begun.



"APPEARIN' IN PUBLIC."

The young male and female church members had give a public concert together, and raised enough money to get the paper—it wuz very nice, and fifty cents a roll (double roll). These young females appearin' in public for this purpose wuz very agreeable to the hull meetin' house, and wuz right accordin' to the rules of the Methodist Meetin' House, for I remember I asked about it when the question first come up about sendin' female delegates to the Conference, and all the male members of our meetin' house wuz so horrified at the idee.

I sez, "I'll bet there wouldn't one of the delegates yell half so loud es she that wuz Mahala Gowdey at the concert. Her voice is a sulferino of the very keenest edge and highest tone, and she puts in sights and sights of quavers."

But they all said that wuz a *very* different thing.

And sez I, "How different? She wuz a yellin' in public for the good of the Methodist Meetin' House (it wuz her voice that drewed the big congregatin, we all know). And them wimmen delegates would only have to 'yea' and 'nay' in a still small voice for the good of the same. I can't see why it would be so much more indelicate and unbecomin' in them"—and sez I, "they would have bonnets and shawls on, and she that wuz Mahala had on a low neck and short sleeves." But they wouldn't yield, and I wouldn't nuther.

But I am a eppisodin fearful, and to resoom. Wall, as I said, the scrapin' had begun. One side of the room wuz partly cleaned so the paper could go on, and then the fuss come up, and there it wuz, as you may say, neither hay nor grass, neither frescoed nor papered nor nuthin'. And of all the lookin' sights it wuz.

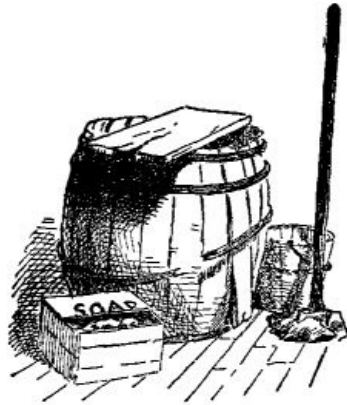
Wall, of course, if we had a fair in that meetin' house, we couldn't have it in such a lookin' place to disgrace us in the eyes of Baptists and 'Piscopals.

No, that meetin' house had got to be scraped, and we wimmen had got to do the scrapin' with case knives.

It wuz a hard job. I couldn't help thinkin' quite a number of thoughts as I stood on a barell with a board acrost it, afraid as death of fallin' and a workin' for dear life, and the other female sisters a standin' round on similar barells, all a-workin' fur beyond their strengths, and all afraid of fallin', and we all a-knowin' what we had got ahead on us a paperin' and a gettin' up the fair.



## CHAPTER XIX.



COULDN'T help a-methinkin' to myself several times. It duz seem to me that there hain't a question a-comin' up before that Conference that is harder to tackle than this plasterin' and the conundrum that is up before us Jonesville wimmen how to raise 300 dollars out of nuthin', and to make peace in a meetin' house where anarky is now rainin' down.

But I only thought these thoughts to myself, fur I knew every women there wuz peacible and law abidin' and there wuzn't one of 'em but what would ruther fall offen her barell then go agin the rules of the Methodist Meetin' House.

Yes, I tried to curb down my rebellous thoughts, and did, pretty much all the time.

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Yes, I tried to curb down my rebellous thoughts, and did, pretty much all the time. And good land! we worked so hard that we hadn't time to tackle very curius and peculier thoughts, them that wuz dretful strainin' and wearin' on the mind. Not of our own accord we didn't, fur we had to jest nip in and work the hull durin' time.

And then we all knew how deathly opposed our pardners wuz to our takin' any public part in meetin' house matters or mountin' rostrums, and that thought quelled us down a sight.

Of course when these subjects wuz brung up before us, and turned round and round in front of our eyes, why we had to look at 'em and be roused up by 'em more or less. It was Nater.

And Josiah not havin' anything to do evenin's only to set and look at the ceilin'. Every single night when I would go home from the meetin' house, Josiah would tackle me on it, on the danger of allowin' wimmen to ventur out of her spear in Meetin' House matters, and specially the Conference.



“EVERY NIGHT JOSIAH WOULD TACKLE ME ON IT.”

It begin to set in New York the very day we tackled the meetin' in Jonesville with a extra grip.

So's I can truly say, the Meetin' House wuz on me day and night. For workin' on it es I did, all day long, and Josiah a-talkin' abut it till bed time, and I a-dreamin' abut it a sight, that, and the Conference.

Truly, if I couldn't set on the Conference, the Conference sot on me, from mornin' till night, and from night till mornin'.

I spoze it wuz Josiah's skairful talk that brung it onto me, it wuz brung on nite mairs mostly, in the nite time.

He would talk *very* skairful, and what he called deep, and repeat pages of Casper Keeler's arguments, and they would appear to me (drawed also by nite mairs) every page on 'em lookin' fairly lurid.

I suffered.

Josiah would set with the *World* and other papers in his hand, a-perusin' of 'em, while I would be a-washin' up my dishes, and the very minute I would get 'em done and my sleeves rolled down, he would tackle me, and often he wouldn't wait for me to get my work done up, or even supper got, but would begin on me as I filled up my tea kettle, and keep up a stiddy drizzle of argument till bed time, and as I say, when he left off, the nite mairs would begin.

I suffered beyond tellin' almost.

The secont night of my arjuous labors on the meetin' house, he began wild and eloquent about wimmen bein' on Conferences, and mountin' rostrums. And sez he, "That is suthin' that we Methodist men can't stand."

And I, havin' stood up on a barell all day a-scrapin' the ceilin', and not bein' recuperated yet from the skairtness and dizziness of my day's work, I sez to him:

"Is rostrums much higher than them barells we have to stand on to the meetin' house?"



"IS ROSTRUMS MUCH HIGHER THAN THEM BARELLS TO STAND ON?"

And Josiah said, "it wuz suthin' altogether different." And he assured me agin,

"That in any modest, unpretendin' way the Methodist Church wuz willin' to accept wimmen's work. It wuzn't aginst the Discipline. And that is why," sez he, "that wimmen have all through the ages been allowed to do most all the hard work in the church—such as raisin' money for church work—earnin' money in all sorts of ways to carry on the different kinds of charity work connected with it—teachin' the children, nursin' the sick, carryin' on hospital work, etc., etc. But," sez he, "this is fur, fur different from gettin' up on a rostrum, or tryin' to set on a Conference. Why," sez he, in a haughty tone, "I should think they'd know without havin' to be told that laymen don't mean women."

Sez I, "Them very laymen that are tryin' to keep wimmen out of the Conference wouldn't have got in themselves if it hadn't been for wimmen's votes. If they can legally vote for men to get in why can't men vote for them?"

"That is the pint," sez Josiah, "that is the very pint I have been tryin' to explain to you. Wimmen can help men to office, but men can't help wimmen; that is law, that is statesmanship. I have been a-tryin' to explain it to you that the word laymen *always* means woman when she can help men in any way, but *not* when he can help her, or in any other sense."

Sez I, "It seemed to mean wimmen when Metilda Henn wuz turned out of the meetin' house."

"Oh, yes," sez Josiah in a reasonin' tone, "the word laymen always means wimmen when it is used in a punishin' and condemnatory sense, or in the case of work and so fourth, but when it comes to settin' up in high places, or drawin' sallerys, or anything else difficult, it always means men."

Sez I, in a very dry axent, "Then the word man, when it is used in church matters, always means wimmen, so fur as scrubbin' is concerned, and drowdgin' round?"

"Yes," sez Josiah haughtily, "And it always means men in the higher and more difficult matters of decidin' questions, drawin' sallerys, settin' on Conferences, etc. It has long been settled to be so," sez he.

"Who settled it?" sez I.

"Why the men, of course," sez he. "The men have always made the rules of the churches, and translated the Bibles, and everything else that is difficult," sez he. Sez I, in fearful dry axents, almost husky ones, "It seems to take quite a knack to know jest when the word laymen means men and when it means wimmen."

"That is so," sez Josiah. "It takes a man's mind to grapple with it; wimmen's minds are too weak to tackle it. It is jest as it is with that word 'men' in the Declaration of Independence. Now that word 'men', in that Declaration, means men some of the time, and some of the time men and wimmen both. It means both sexes when it relates to punishment, taxin' property, obeyin' the laws strictly, etc., etc., and then it goes right on the very next minute and means men only, as to wit, namely, votin', takin' charge of public matters, makin' laws, etc.

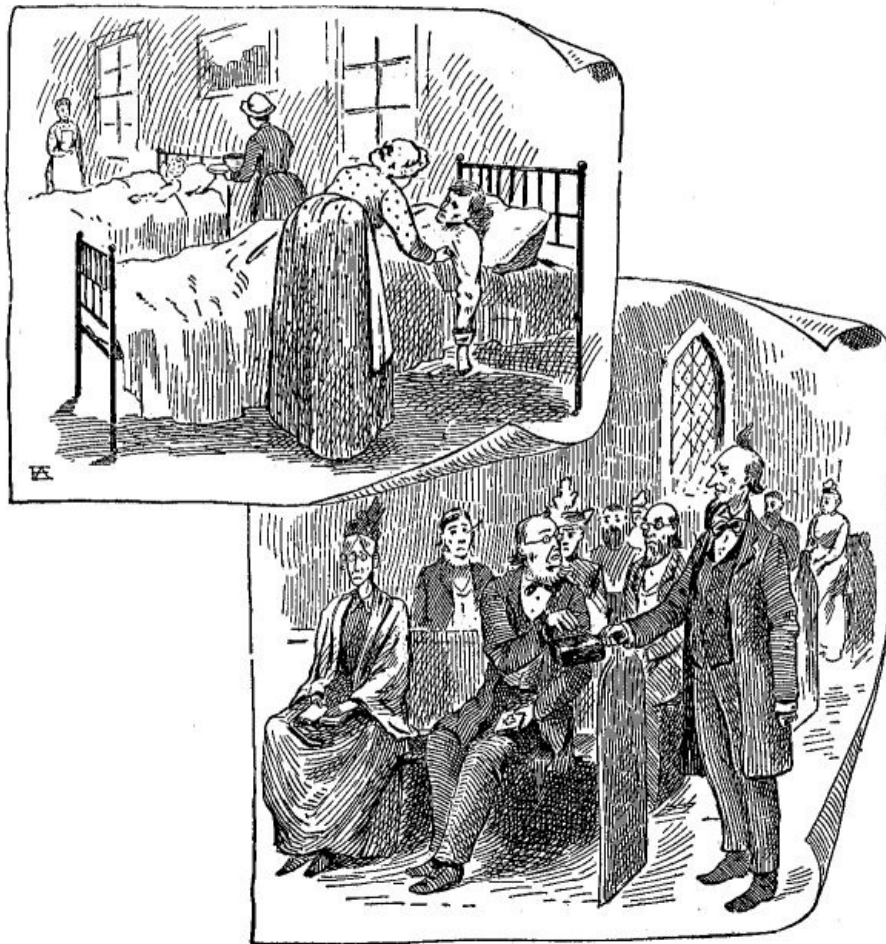
"I tell you it takes deep minds to foller on and see jest to a hair where the division is made. It takes statesmanship.

"Now take that claws, 'All men are born free and equal.'

"Now half of that means men, and the other half men and wimmen. Now to understand them words perfect you have got to divide the tex. 'Men are born.' That means men and wimmen both—men and wimmen are both born, nobody can dispute that. Then comes the next claws, 'Free and equal.' Now that means men only—anybody with one eye can see that.

"Then the claws, 'True government consists.' That means men and wimmen both—consists—of course the government consists of men and wimmen, 'twould be a fool who would dispute that. 'In the consent of the governed.' That means men alone. Do you see, Samantha?" sez he.

I kep' my eye fixed on the tea kettle, fer I stood with my tea-pot in hand waitin' for it to bile—"I see a great deal, Josiah Allen."



CHURCH WORK.

"Wall," sez he, "I am glad on't. Now to sum it up," sez he, with some the mean of a preacher—or, ruther, a exhauster—"to sum the matter all up, the words 'bretheren,' 'laymen,' etc., always means wimmen so fur as this: punishment for all offenses, strict obedience to the rules of the church, work of any kind and all kinds, raisin' money, givin' money all that is possible, teachin' in the Sabbath school, gettin' up missionary and charitable societies, carryin' on the same with no help from the male sect leavin' that sect free to look after their half of the meanin' of the word—sallerys, office, makin' the laws that bind both of the sexes, rulin' things generally, translatin' Bibles to suit their own idees, preachin' at 'em, etc., etc. Do you see, Samantha?" sez he, proudly and loftily.

"Yes," sez I, as I filled up my tea-pot, for the water had at last biled. "Yes, I see."

And I spoze he thought he had convinced me, for he acted high headedder and haughtier for as much as an hour and a half. And I didn't say anything to break it up, for I see he had stated it jest as he and all his sect looked at it, and good land! I couldn't convince the hull male sect if I tried—clergymen, statesmen and all—so I didn't try, and I wuz truly beat out with my day's work, and I didn't drop more than one idee more. I simply dropped this remark es I poured out his tea and put some good cream into it—I merely sez:

"There is three times es many wimmen in the meetin' house es there is men."

"Yes," sez he, "that is one of the pints I have been explainin' to you," and then he went on agin real high headed, and skairt, about the old ground, of the willingness of the meetin' house to shelter wimmen in its folds, and how much they needed gaurdin' and guidin', and about their delicacy of frame, and how unfitted they wuz to tackle anything hard, and what a grief it wuz to the male sect to see 'em a-tryin' to set on Conferences or mount rostrums, etc., etc.

And I didn't try to break up his argument, but simply repeated the question I had put to him—for es I said before, I wuz tired, and skairt, and gidddy yet from my hard labor and my great and hazardus elevatin'; I had not, es you may say, recovered yet from my recuperation, and so I sez agin them words—

"Is rostrums much higher than them barells to stand on?" And Josiah said agin, "it wuz suthin' entirely different;" he said barells and rostrums wuz so fur apart that you couldn't look at both on 'em in one day hardly, let alone a minute. And he went on once more with a long argument full of Bible quotations and everything.

And I wuz too tuckered out to say much more. But I did contend for it to the last, that I didn't believe a rostrum would be any more tottlin' and skairful a place than the barell I had been a-standin' on all day, nor the work I'd do on it any harder than the scrapin' of the ceilin' of that meetin house.

And I don't believe it would, I stand jest as firm on it to-day as I did then.

## CHAPTER XX.



ALL, we got the scrapin' done after three hard and arjous days' works, and then we preceeded to clean the house. The day we set to clean the meetin' house prior and before paperin', we all met in good season, for we knew the hardships of the job in front of us, and we all felt that we wanted to tackle it with our full strengths.

Sister Henzy, wife of Deacon Henzy, got there jest as I did. She wuz in middlin' good spirits and a old yeller belzerine dress.

Sister Gowdy had the ganders and newraligy and wore a flannel for 'em round her head, but she wuz in workin' spirits, her will wuz up in arms, and nerved up her body.

Sister Meechim wuz a-makin' soap, and so wuz Sister Sypher, and Sister Mead, and me. But we

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So we wuz all willin' to act accordin' and tackle the old meetin' house with a willin' mind.

Wall, we wuz all engaged in the very heat of the warfare, as you may say, a-scrubbin' the floors, and a-scourin' the benches by the door, and a-blackin' the 2 stoves that stood jest inside of the door. We wuz workin' jest as hard as wimmen ever worked—and all of the wimmen who wuzn't engaged in scourin' and moppin' wuz a-settin' round in the pews a-workin' hard on articles for the fair—when all of a suddin the outside door opened and in come Josiah Allen with 3 of the other men bretheren.

They had jest got the great news of wimmen bein' apinted for Deaconesses, and had come down on the first minute to tell us. She that wuz Celestine Bobbet wuz the only female present that had heard of it.

Josiah had heard it to the post-office, and he couldn't wait till noon to tell me about it, and Deacon Gowdy wuz anxius Miss Gowdy should hear it as soon es possible. Deacon Sypher wanted his wife to know at once that if she wuzn't married she could have become a deaconess under his drectin'.

And Josiah wanted me to know immegietyly that I, too, could have had the privilege if I had been

a more single woman, of becomin' a deaconess, and have had the chance of workin' all my hull life for the meetin' house, with a man to direct my movements and take charge on me, and tell me what to do, from day to day and from hour to hour.

And Deacon Henzy was anxious Miss Henzy should get the news as quick as she could. So they all hastened down to the meetin' house to tell us.

And we left off our work for a minute to hear 'em. It wuzn't nowhere near time for us to go home.

Josiah had lots of further business to do in Jonesville and so had the other men. But the news had excited 'em, and exhilarated 'em so, that they had dropped everything, and hastened right down to tell us, and then they wuz a-goin' back agin immegietly.

I, myself, took the news coolly, or as cool as I could, with my temperature up to five or five and a half, owin' to the hard work and the heat.



THE LAST NEWS FROM THE CONFERENCE.

Miss Gowdy also took it pretty calm. She leaned on her mop handle, partly for rest (for she was tuckered out) and partly out of good manners, and didn't say much.

But Miss Sypheris such a admirin'woman, she looked fairly radiant at the news, and she spoke up to her husband in her enthusiastik warm-hearted way—

"Why, Deacon Sypher, is it possible that I, too, could become a deacon, jest like you?"

"No," sez Deacon Sypher solemnly, "no, Drusilly, not like me. But you wimmen have got the privelege now, if you are single, of workin' all your days at church work under the direction of us men."

"Then I could work at the Deacon trade under you," sez she admirin'ly, "I could work jest like you—pass round the bread and wine and the contribution box Sundays?"

"Oh, no, Drusilly," sez he condesendinly, "these hard and arjuous dutys belong to the male deaconship. That is their own one pertickiler work, that wimmen can't infringe upon. Their hull strength is spent in these duties, wimmen deacons have other fields of labor, such as reliev'in' the

wants of the sick and sufferin', sittin' up nights with small-pox patients, takin' care of the sufferin' poor, etc., etc."

"But," sez Miss Sypher (she is so good-hearted, and so awful fond of the deacon), "wouldn't it be real sweet, Deacon, if you and I could work together as deacons, and tend the sick, relieve the sufferers—work for the good of the church together—go about doin' good?"

"No, Drusilly," sez he, "that is wimmen's work. I would not wish for a moment to curtail the holy rights of wimmen. I wouldn't want to stand in her way, and keep her from doin' all this modest, un-pretendin' work, for which her weaker frame and less hefty brain has fitted her.

"We will let it go on in the same old way. Let wimmen have the privelege of workin' hard, jest as she always has. Let her work all the time, day and night, and let men go on in the same sure old way of superentendin' her movements, guardin' her weaker footsteps, and bossin' her round generally."

Deacon Sypher is never happy in his choice of language, and his method of argiment is such that when he is up on the affirmative of a question, the negative is delighted, for they know he will bring victory to their side of the question. Now, he didn't mean to speak right out about men's usual way of bossin' wimmen round. It was only his unfortunate and transparent manner of speakin'.

And Deacon Bobbet hastened to cover up the remark by the statement that "he wuz so highly tickled that wimmen wuzn't goin' to be admitted to the Conference, because it would *weaken* the Conference."

"Yes," sez my Josiah, a-leanin' up against the meetin' house door, and talkin' pretty loud, for Sister Peedick and me had gone to liftin' round the big bench by the door, and it wuz fearful heavy, and our minds wuz excersised as to the best place to put it while we wuz a-cleanin' the floor.

"You see," sez he, "we feel, we men do, we feel that it would be weakenin' to the Conference to have wimmen admitted, both on account of her own lack of strength and also from the fact that every woman you would admit would keep out a man. And that," sez he (a-leanin' back in a still easier attitude, almost a luxurious one), "that, you see, would tend naterally to weakenin' the strength of a church."



"WALL," SEZ I, "MOVE ROUND A LITTLE, WON'T YOU, FOR WE WANT TO SET THE BENCH."

"Wall," sez I, a-pantin' hard for breath under my burden, "move round a little, won't you, for we want to set the bench here while we scrub under it. And," sez I, a-stoppin' a minute and rubbin' the perspiratin and sweat offen my face, "Seein' you men are all here, can't you lay holt and help us move out the benches, so we can clean the floor under 'em? Some of 'em are very hefty," sez I, "and all of us Sisters almost are a-makin' soap, and we all want to get done here, so we can go



home and bile down; we would dearly love a little help," sez I.

"I would help," sez Josiah in a willin' tone, "I would help in a minute, if I hadn't got so much work to do at home."

And all the other male bretheren said the same thing—they had got to git to get home to get to work. (Some on 'em wanted to play checkers, and I knew it.)

But some on 'em did have lots of work on their hands, I couldn't dispute it.

## CHAPTER XXI.



WHY, Deacon Henzy, besides all his cares about the buzz saw mill, and his farm work, had bought a steam threshin' machine that made him sights of work. It was a good machine. But it wuz fairly skairful to see it a-steamin' and a-blowin' right along the streets of Jonesville without the sign of a horse or ox or anything nigh it to draw it. A-puffin' out the steam, and a-tearin' right along, that awful lookin' that it skairt she that wuz Celestine Bobbet most into fits.

She lived in a back place where such machines wuz unknown, and she had come home to her father's on a visit, and wuz goin' over to visit some of his folks that day, over to Loontown.

And she wuz a-travellin' along peacible, with her father's old mair, and a-leanin' back in the buggy a

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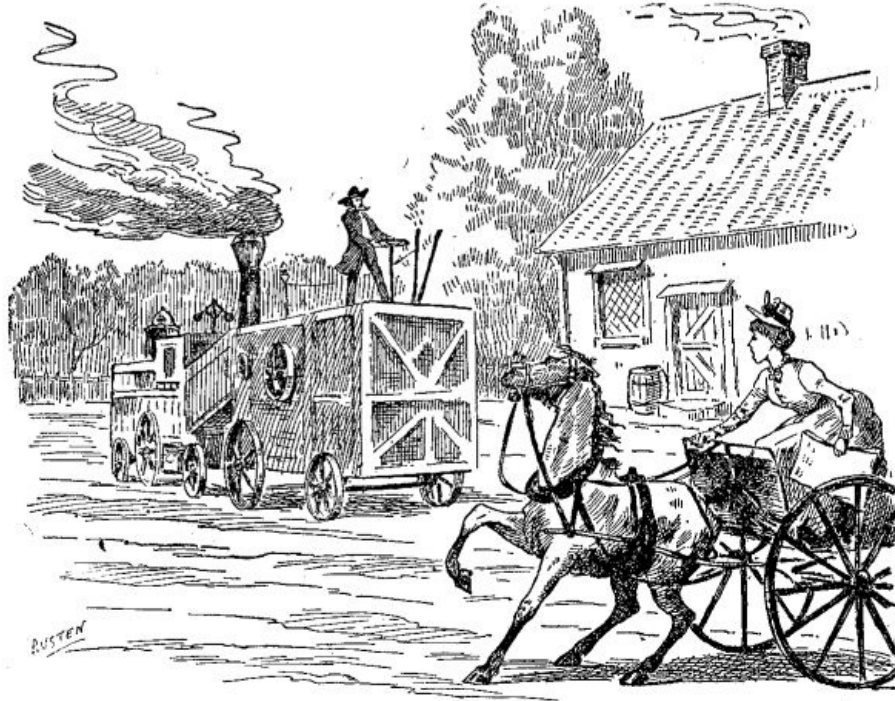
She lived in a back place where such machines wuz unknown, and she had come home to her father's on a visit, and wuz goin' over to visit some of his folks that day, over to Loontown.

And she wuz a-travellin' along peacible, with her father's old mair, and a-leanin' back in the buggy a readin' a article her father had sent over by her to Deacon Widrig, a witherin' article about female Deaconesses, and the stern necessity of settin' 'em apart and sanctifyen' 'em to this one work—deacon work—and how they mustn't marry, or tackle any other hard jobs

whatsomever, or break off into any other enterprize, only jest plain deacon work.

It wuz a very flowery article. And she wuz enjoyin' of it first rate, and a-thinkin', for she is a little timid and easily skairt, and the piece had convinced her—

She wuz jest a-thinkin' how dretful it would be if sum female deaconess should ever venter into some other branch of business, and what would be apt to become of her if she did. She hated to think of what her doom would most likely be, bein' tender hearted.



“ SHE SEE THIS WILD AND SKAIRFUL MACHINE APPROACHIN’.”

When lo, and behold! jest as she wuz a-thinkin' these thoughts, she see this wild and skairful machine approachin', and Deacon Henzy a-standin' up on top of it a-drivin'. He looked wild and excited, bein' very tickled to think that he had threshed more with his machine, by twenty bushels, than Deacon Petengill had with his. There was a bet upon these two deacons, so it wuz spozed, and he wuz a-hastenin' to the next place where he wuz to be setup, so's to lose no time, and he was kinder hollerin'.

And the wind took his gray hair back, and his long side whiskers, and kinder stood 'em out, and the skirts of his frock the same.

His mean wuz wild.

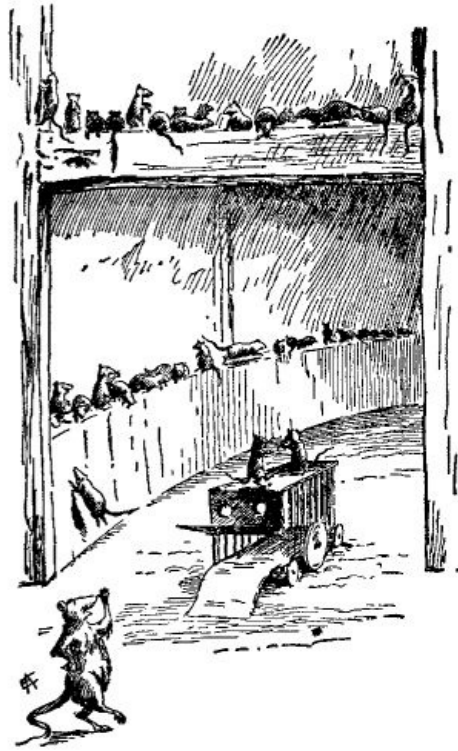
And it wuz more than Celestine's old mair and she herself could bear; she cramped right round in the road (the mair did) and set sail back to old Bobbet'ses, and that great concern a-puffin' and a-steamin' along after 'em.

And by the time that she that wuz Celestine got there she wuz almost in a fit, and the mair in a perfect lather.

Wall, Celestine didn't get over it for weeks and weeks, nor the mair nuther.

And besides this enterprize of Deacon Henzy's, he had got up a great invention, a new rat trap, that wuz peculier and unEEK in the extreme.

It wuz the result of arjous study on his part, by night and day, for a long, long time, and it wuz what he called "A Travellin' Rat Trap." It wuz designed to sort o' chase the rats round and skair 'em.



**DEACON HENZY'S RAT TRAP (LIKE A CIRCUS FOR THE RATS).**

It was spozed he got the idee in the first place from his threshin' machine. It had to be wound up, and then it would take after 'em—rats or mice, or anything—and they do say that it wuz quite a success.

Only it had to move on a smooth floor. It would travel round pretty much all night; and they say that when it wuz set up in a suller, it would chase the rats back into their holes, and they would set there and look out on it, for the biggest heft of the night. It would take up their minds, and kep 'em out of vittles and other mischief.

It wuz somethin' like providin' a circus for 'em.

But howsumever, the Deacon wuz a-workin' at this; he wuzn't quite satisfied with its runnin' gear, and he wuz a-perfectin' this rat trap every leisure minute he had outside of his buzz saw and threshin' machine business, and so he wuz fearful busy.

Deacon Sypher had took the agency for "The Wild West, or The Leaping Cow Boy of the Plain," and wuz doin' well by it.

And Deacon Bobbet had took in a lot of mustangs to keep through the winter. And he wuz a ridin' 'em a good deal, accordin' to contract, and tryin' to tame 'em some before spring. And this work, with the buzz saw, took up every minute of his time. For the mustangs throwed him a good deal, and he had to lay bound up in linements a good deal of the time, and arneky.



“ HE HAD TO LAY BOUND UP IN LINEMENTS A GOOD DEAL OF THE TIME.”

So, as I say, it didn't surprise me a mite to have 'em say they couldn't help us, for I knew jest how these jobs of theirs devoured their time.

And when my Josiah had made his excuse, it wuzn't any more than I had looked out for, to hear Deacon Henzy say he had got to git home to ile his threshin' machine. One of the cogs wuz out of gear in some way.

He wanted to help us, so it didn't seem as if he could tear himself away, but that steam threshin' machine stood in the way. And then on his way down to Jonesville that very mornin' a new idee had come to him about that travellin' rat trap, and he wanted to get home jest as quick as he could, to try it.

And Deacon Bobbet said that three of them mustangs he had took in to break had got to be rid that day, they wuz a gettin' so wild he didn't hardly dast to go nigh 'em.

And Deacon Sypher said that he must hasten back, for a man wuz a-comin' to see him from way up on the State road, to try to get a agency under him for "The Leaping Cow Boy of the Plain." And he wanted to show the "Leaping Cow Boy" to some agents to the tavern in Jonesville on his way home, and to some wimmen on the old Plank road. Two or three of the wimmen had gin hopes that they would take the "Leaping Cow Boy."

And then they said—the hull three of the deacons did—that any minute them other deacons who wuz goin' into partnership with 'em in the buzz saw business wuz liable to drive down to see 'em about it.

And some of the other men brethren said their farms and their live stock demanded the hull of their time—every minute of it.

So we see jest how it wuz, we see these male deacons couldn't devote any of their time to the meetin' house, nor those other brethren nuther.

We see that their time wuz too valuable, and their own business devoured the hull on it. And we married Sisters, who wuz acestemed to the strange and mysterius ways of male men, we accepted the situation jest es we would any other mysterius dispensation, and didn't say nothin'.

Good land! We wuz used to curius sayin's and doin's, every one on us. Curius as a dog, and curiuser.

But Sister Meechim (onmarried), she is dretful questinin' and inquirin' (men don't like her, they say she prys into subjects she's no business to meddle with). She sez to Josiah:

"Why is it, Deacon Allen, that men deacons can carry on all sorts of business and still be deacons, while wimmen deacons are obleeged to give up all other business and devote themselves wholly to their work?"

"It is on account of their minds," sez Josiah. "Men have got stronger minds than wimmen, that is the reason."

And Sister Meechim sez agin—

"Why is it that wimmen deacons have to remain onmarried, while men deacons can marry one wife after another through a long life, that is, if they are took from 'em by death or a divorce lawyer?"

"Wall," sez Josiah, "that, too, is on account of their brains. Their brains hain't so hefty es men's."

But I jest waded into the argument then. I jest interfered, and sez in a loud, clear tone,

"Oh, shaw!"

And then I sez further, in the same calm, clear tones, but dry as ever a dry oven wuz in its dryest times. Sez I,

"If you men can't help us any about the meetin' house, you'd better get out of our way, for we wimmen have got to go to scrubbin' right where you are a-standin'."

"Certainly," sez Josiah, in a polite axent, "certainly."

And so the rest of the men said.

And Josiah added to his remarks, as he went down the steps,

"You'd better get home, Samantha, in time to cook a hen, and make some puddin', and so forth."

And I sez, with quite a lot of dignity, "Have I ever failed, Josiah Allen, to have good dinners for you, and on time too?"

"No," sez he, "but I thought I would jest stop to remind you of it, and also to tell you the last news from the Conference, about the deaconesses."

And so they trailed down one after another, and left us to our work in the meetin' house; but as they disapered round the corner, Sister Arvilly Lanfear, who hain't married, and who has got a sharp tongue (some think that is why, but I don't; I believe Arvilly has had chances).

But any way, she sez, as they went down the steps,

"I'll bet them men wuz a-practisen' their new parts of men superentendents, and look on us as a lot of deaconesses."



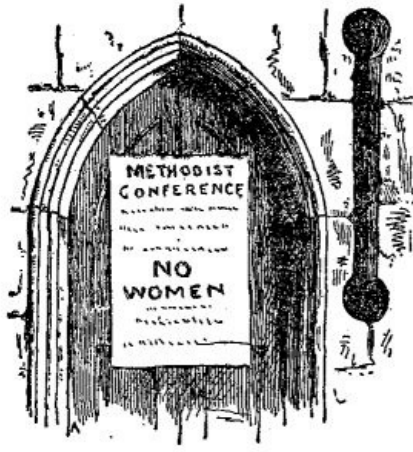
“JOSIAH ADDED TO HIS REMARKS.”

"Wall," sez Sister Gowdy—she loves to put on Arvilly—"wall, you have got one qualificatin', Arvilly!"

"Yes, thank the Lord," sez she.

And I never asked what she meant, but knew well enough that she spoke of her single state. But Arvilly has had chances, *I* think.

## CHAPTER XXII.



GOT home in time to get a good supper, though mebbe I ortn't to say it.

Sure enough, Josiah Allen had killed a hen, and dressed it ready for me to brile, but it wuz young and tender, and I knew it wouldn't take long, so I didn't care.

Good land! I love to humor him, and he knows it.

Casper Keeler come in jest as I wuz a-gettin' supper and I thought like as not he would stay to supper; I laid out to ask him. But I didn't take no more pains on his account. No, I do jest as well by Josiah Allen from day to day, as if he wuz company, or lay out to.

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He had jest got home from the city.

It happened dretful curius, but jest at this time Casper Keeler had had to go to New York on business. He had to sign some papers that nobody else couldn't sign.



**CASPER KEELER.**

His mother had hearn of a investment there that promised to pay dretful well, so she had took a lot of stock in it, and it had riz right up powerful. Why the money had increased fourfold, and more too, and Casper bein' jest come of age, had to go and sign suthin' or other.

Wall, he went round and see lots of sights in New York. His ma's money that she had left him made him fairly luxurius as to comfort, and he had plenty of money to go sight seein' as much as he wanted to.

He went to all the theatres, and operas, and shows of all kinds, and museums, and the Brooklyn Bridge, and circuses, and receptions, and et cetera, et cetera.

He wuz a-tellin' me how much money he spent while he wuz there, kinder boastin' on it; he had went to one of the biggest, highest taverns in the hull village of New York, where the price wuz higher than the very highest pinakle on the top of it, fur higher.

And I sez, "Did you go to the Wimmen's Exchange and the Workin' Wimmen's Association, that wuz held there while you wuz there?"

And he acted real scorfin'.

"Wimmen's work!" sez he. "No, indeed! I had too much on my hands, and too much comfort to take in higher circles, than to take in any such little trifles as wimmen's work."

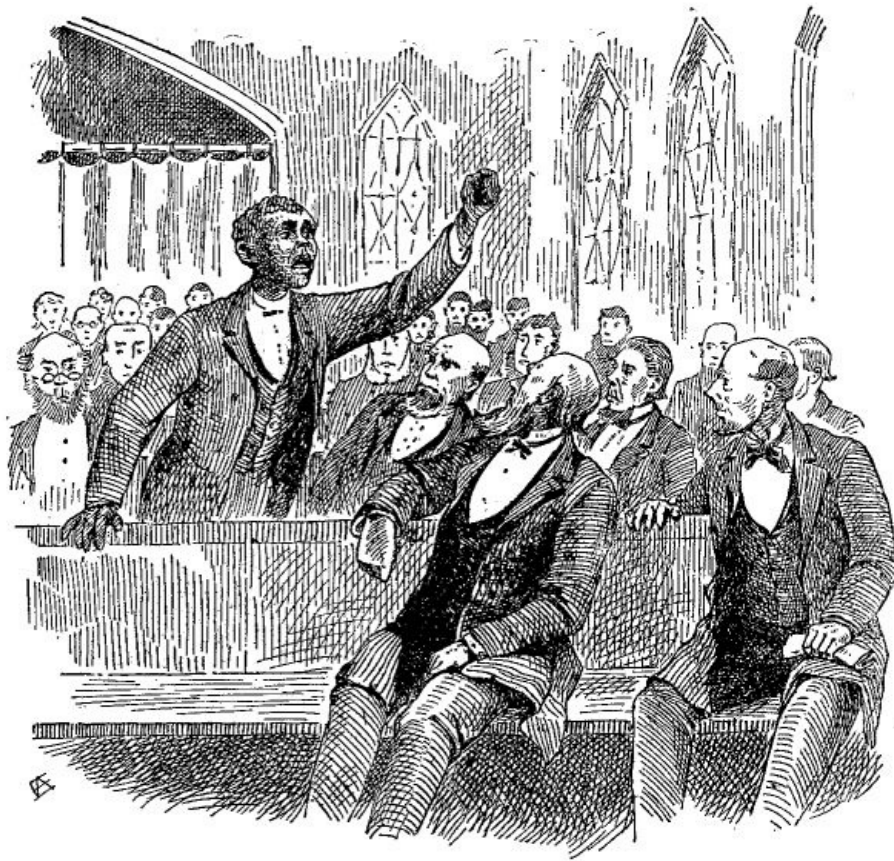
Sez I, "Young man, it is a precious little you would take in in life if it hadn't been for wimmen's work. Who earned and left you the money you are a-usin'?" sez I, "who educated you and made your life easy before you?"

And then bein' fairly drove into a corner, he owned up that his mother wuz a good woman.

But his nose wuz kinder lifted up the hull of the time he wuz a-sayin' it, as if he hated to own it up, hated to like a dog.

But he got real happified up and excited afterwards, in talkin' over with Josiah what he see to the Conference.' He stayed to supper; I wuz a seasonin' my chicken and mashed potatoes, and garnishin' 'em for the table. I wuz out to one side a little, but I listened with one side of my brain while the other wuz fixed on pepper, ketchup, parsley, etc., etc.





“ HE SEEMED TO HAVE A HORROW OF WOMAN A-RAISIN’ OUT OF HER SPEAR.”

Sez Casper, "It wuz the proudest, greatest hour of my life," sez he, "when I see a nigger delegate git up and give his views on wimmen keepin' down in their place. When I see a black nigger stand up there in that Conference and state so clearly, so logically and so powerfully the reasons why poor weak wimmen should *not* be admitted into that sacred enclosure—

"When I see even a nigger a-standin' there and a-knowin' so well what wimmen's place wuz, my heart beat with about the proudest emotions I have ever experienced. Why, he said," sez Casper, "that if wimmen wuz allowed to stand up in the Conference, they wouldn't be satisfied. The next thing they would want to do would be to preach. It wuz a masterly argument," sez Casper.

"It must have been," sez my Josiah.

"He seemed to have such a borrow of a weak-minded, helpless woman a-raisin' herself up out of her lower spear."

"Well he might," sez Josiah, "well he might."

Truly, there are times when women can't, seeminly, stand no more. This wuz one on 'em, and I jest waded right into the argiment. I sez, real solemn like, a-holdin' the sprig of parsley some like a septer, only more sort o' riz up like and mysteriuser. Yes, I held that green sprig some as the dove did when it couldn't find no rest for the soles of its feet—no foundation under it and it sailed about seekin' some mount of truth it could settle down on. Oh how wobblin' and onsubstantial and curius I felt hearin' their talk.

"And," sez I, "nobody is tickleder than I be to think a colored man has had the right gin him to stand up in a Conference or anywhere else. I have probable experienced more emotions in his behalf," sez I, "deep and earnest, than any other female, ancient or modern. I have bore his burdens for him, trembled under his lashes, agonized with him in his unexampled griefs and wrongs and indignities, and I have rejoiced at the very depths of my soul at his freedom.

"But," sez I, "when he uses that freedom to enchain another and as deservin' a race, my feelin's are hurt and my indignations are riz up.

"Yes," sez I, a-wavin' that sprig some like a warlike banner, as my emotions swelled up under my bask waste,

"When that negro stands there a-advocatin' the slavery of another race, and a-sayin' that women ortn't to say her soul is her own, and wimmen are too weak and foolish to lift up their right hands, much less preach, I'd love to ask him where he and his race wuz twenty-five years

ago, and where they would be to-day if it wuzn't for a woman usin' her right hand and her big heart and brain in his behalf, and preachin' for him all over the world and in almost every language under the sun. Everybody says that 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' wuz the searchin' harrow that loosened the old, hard ground of slavery so the rich seed of justice could be planted and bring forth freedom.

"If it hadn't been for that woman's preachin', that negro exhauster would to-day most likely be a hoin' cotton with a overseer a-lashin' him up to his duties, and his wife and children and himself a-bein' bought and sold, and borrowed and lent and mortgaged and drove like so many animals. And I'd like to have riz right up in that Conference and told him so."

"Oh, no," sez Josiah, lookin' some meachin', "no, you wouldn't."

"Yes, I would," sez I. "And I'd 've enjoyed it *richly*" sez I, es I turned and put my sprig round the edge of the platter.



SAMANTHA EXPRESSES HER VIEWS.

Casper wuz demute for as much as half a minute, and Josiah Allen looked machin' for about the same length of time.

But, good land! how soon they got over it. They wuz as chipper as ever, a-runnin' down the idee of women settin', before they got half through dinner.

After hard and arjuous work we got the scrapin' done, and the scrubbin' done, and then we proceeded to make a move towards puttin' on the paper.

But the very day before we wuz to put on our first breadth, Sister Bobbet, our dependance and best paperer, fell down on a apple parin' and hurt her ankle jint, so's she couldn't stand on a barell for more'n several days.

And we felt dretful cast down about it, for we all felt as if the work must stop till Sister Bobbet could be present and attend to it.

But, as it turned out, it wuz perfectly providential, so fur as I wuz concerned, for on goin' home that night fearfully deprest on account of Sister Sylvester Bobbet, lo and behold! I found a letter there on my own mantlety piece that completely turned round my own plans. It come

entirely unexpected to me, and contained the startlin' intelligence that my own cousin, on my mother's own side, had come home to Loontown to his sister's, and wuz very sick with nervous prostration, neuralgia, rheumatism, etc., and expected paralasys every minute, and heart failure, and such.



“SISTER BOBBET, OUR DEPENDENCE, FELL DOWN ON A APPLE PARIN’.”

And his sister, Miss Timson, who wrote the letter, beset me to come over and see him. She said, Jane Ann did (Miss Timson's name is Jane Ann), and sez she in Post scriptum remark to me, sez she—

"Samantha, I know well your knowledge of sickness and your powers of takin' care of the sick. Do come and help me take care of Ralph, for it seems as if I can't let him go. Poor boy, he has worked so hard, and now I wuz in hopes that he wuz goin' to take some comfort in life, unbeknown to him. Do come and help him for my sake, and for Rosy's sake." Rosy wuz Ralph's only child, a pretty girl, but one ruther wild, and needin' jest now a father's strong hand.

Rosy's mother died when she wuz a babe, and Ralph, who had always been dretful religius, felt it to be his duty to go and preach to the savages. So Miss Timson took the baby and Ralph left all his property with Miss Timson to use for her, and then he girded up his lions, took his Bible and him book and went out West and tackled the savages.

Tackled 'em in a perfectly religius way, and done sights of good, sights and sights. For all he wuz so mild and gentle and religius, he got the upper hand of them savages in some way, and he brung 'em into the church by droves, and they jest worshipped him.

Wall, he worked so hard a-tryin' to do good and save souls that wuz lost—a-tryin' single-handed to overthrow barberus beliefs and habits, and set up the pure and peaceful doctrines of the Master.



RALPH SMITH ROBINSON.

He loved and followed, that his health gin out after a time—he felt weak and mauger.

And jest about this time his sister wrote to him that Rosy havin' got in with gay companions, wuz a gettin' beyond her influence, and she *needed* a father's control and firm hand to guide her right, or else she would be liable to go to the wrong, and draw lots of others with her, for she wuz a born leader amongst her mates, jest as her father wuz—so wouldn't Ralph come home.

Wall, Ralph come. His sister and girl jest worshipped him, and looked and longed for his comin', as only tender-hearted wimmen can love and worship a hero. For if there wuz ever a hero it wuz Ralph Smith Robinson.

Wall, Ralph had been in the unbroken silences of nature so long, that the clack, and crash, and clamor of what we call civilized life almost crazed him.

He had been where his Maker almost seemed to come down and walk with him through the sweet, unbroken stillnesses of mornin' and evenin'. The world seemed so fur off to him, and the Eternal Verities of life so near, that truly, it sometimes seemed to him as if, like one of old, "he walked with God." Of course the savages war-whooped some, but they wuz still a good deal of the time, which is more than you can say for Yankees.

And Loontown when he got home was rent to its very twain with a Presidential election.

Ralph suffered.

But above all his other sufferin's, he suffered from church bells.

Miss Timson lived, as it wuz her wish, and often her boast, right under the droppin's of the sanctuary.

She lotted on it when she bought the place. The Baptist steeple towered up right by the side of her house. Her spare bed wuz immegietly under the steeple.

Wall, comin' as he did from a place where he wuz called to worship by the voice of his soul and his good silver watch—this volume of clamor, this rushin' Niagara of sound a-pourin' down into his ears, wuz perfectly intolerable and onbeerable. He would lay awake till mornin' dreadin' the sound, and then colapse under it, till it run along and he come down with nervous fever.

He wuz worn out no doubt by his labors before he come, and any way he wuz took bed-sick, and couldn't be moved so's the doctor said, and he bein' outside of his own head, delerius, couldn't of course advance no idees of his own, so he lay and suffered.

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