

Women Should Read the Bible for Themselves.

BY ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

Many years ago we desired to establish a Homeopathic college for women. A friend of mine, having inherited a million dollars, I urged her to make a generous contribution for this purpose. She said she would consult her pastor, as she did in all her charities. After a few days I asked her what her pastor had said. She replied, "He said 'in all such matters, consult your bible; you will find there is no mention there of a college for women.'" I told her to read 2 Kings xiii, and there she would find the prophetess Huldah in a college in Jerusalem, thoroughly posted on great questions of church and state. For a full account of her great services rendered in the reign of Josiah, the king, read the third chapter in part two, of the Women's Bible and there you will find a most interesting account of the great prophetess.

Again, I asked the rich widow to contribute to the Woman Suffrage treasury, as we were holding conventions and having "hearings" before the legislatures of several states, but her pastor said, "This movement is all opposed to the Bible and God's laws. We have no account of women going before legislatures to plead for their political and civil rights; again I say be guided by your Bible in all such matters.

"Tell your pastor," I replied, "to read the 27th chapter of Numbers and there he will find that the five daughters of Zelophehad went before the Jewish congress in Jerusalem to plead for their rights of inheritance." (A full description of this great occasion will be found in part one of the Woman's Bible, Chapter five.) The arguments of these women made so profound an impression on Moses, the great Lawgiver, that he retired to his closet and communed with the Lord, who said, "The daughters of Zelophehad are right; give them their inheritance." At that time family property descended only to sons, and went to the church when there were no sons, thus it was to the interest of ecclesiastics to ignore the natural rights of all in the female line. The reader should take notice that on the first appeal of the daughters of Zelophehad, their demands were approved by the Lord and answered by their rulers, while the daughters of Jefferson, Hancock and Adams have appealed in vain for their civil and political rights for half a century. It would be well for our rulers to enter into

their closets and commune with the Lord as to their duty to the daughters of the Republic. Whether the daughters of Zelophehad were more logical and lucid in their arguments, we cannot judge, as we have no report of their speeches. As so many pastors are responsible for the action of women, it would be well for them to peruse their Bibles more carefully before thus misleading them.

As the widow above referred to soon after gave \$20,000 to Princeton college, thus benefiting men instead of her own sex, we can appreciate the danger of ignorant advisors.

Advent of the Church of the Holy Rollers.

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There is, therefore, not only no firmament or heaven above the earth for the personal creator God to live in, but there never has been, is not, nor can there be conceived of, a speck of space so big as a needle's point, in which an outside creator God could exist. "The All" is all there is; and that is God, if any God there is to be, all else is the "spook" of inflamed imaginations.

3. Science next shows us beyond doubt, that the human race is the natural growth and product of the Earth, and was never created in any way: that its evolution is human history; that it was never destroyed by water, and that the old religious notion of a destruction at a Day of Judgment with fire, by a God coming from the sky with a "New Jerusalem," is utter nonsense and just as childish and impossible, as the said heaven and hell illusions, out of which all of the old religions naturally originated, and upon which they really all rested for their original foundation.

4. And as to ourselves, Science shows that life, feeling, consciousness, memory, reason, will and action, are correlates of the changes in and around us, and that they only exist as properties of protoplasm, of which our bodies are composed. To keep on pretending otherwise AFTER the truth is known, is worse than childish. The "soul" is not an entity, spirit or butterfly of any kind, but the continuous process by which nature becomes conscious of herself, and our wills become a potent factor in the progress of the world, of our race, and, above all of our character, lot and fate. What then shall we do? In the words of our friend, James Parton, the historian, we shall learn "to pity, love and help each other," and rejoice grandly in the hope and forefeeling of that "Earthly Paradise," which our help to each other and

ourselves, will, under the law of evolution and heredity, inevitably produce, and of which the dawn is near.

Meantime, to help to stop these nerve tricks and trances, let us translate the chief names of the old religious mythes and spooks into their evolutionary reality. Science does this wonderfully and readily. Instead of God, it reads the All, the Cosmos, Universe or World. Instead of Christ, the Son of man, read Mankind, Humanity, Man, Society. Instead of the Holy Ghost, read the continuous human life and love collective and individual. Instead of the Holy Mother, read womanhood and the "blessed women" you know. Instead of Heaven above, read the "Earthly Paradise" we are here to create and forfeit. Instead of the Hell, beware of a wasted and unfulfilled life. Instead of the Bible, read the best books of the world. For the Day of Judgement, judge yourself every day. For spiritual edification, acquire the higher life of a real communion and co-operation of good men and women. Never forget—in all things Science is overwhelmingly affirmative and constructive. It even translates as above shown the old myths into a reality by fulfillment, far beyond all they could ever otherwise mean. Now all of the Beatitudes are well fulfilled in one, UNDER THE "DISPENSATION OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITY."—Blessed are those who learn to appreciate the "immeasurable blessings of conscious existence."

To do this we must stop mistaking abnormal nervous excitement and diseases for religion,—which consists of the healthy and beneficent relations of man to the world and his fellows, realized and expressed in act, word or feeling. In a word "to do good is our religion." Let us help to make the jerks and jumps, the quakes and gasps, the penances and prayers, the convulsions and conversions appear to be what they really are—no religion at all, but the worst diseases or disgraces of the human kind.

Come you "Holy Rollers," get up before healthgiving kicks reach you! Learn to love, realize and enjoy the now that is and the better HEREAFTER to be.



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