

# Transcription of the *Anomaly*, a manuscript newspaper written at Bradford Academy, November 1, 1854.

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The Anomaly Nov. 1, 1854, v.1 no. 3 "To airy nothing a local habitation and a name"

The Anomaly is published at Bradford, Ms. [MA] Semi-monthly

Editors: Mary Green, Sarah Kimball, Anne M. Sawyer, Anne M. Chase

The Importance of Intellectual Culture to Woman.

In this favored land and in this nineteenth century, the importance of intellectual cultivation to woman is universally acknowledged and, in some degree, realized. But the subject cannot receive too much of too serious attention, neither can it be too highly estimated. To this belief, and to acting in accordance with it, America owes much of her proud pre-eminence over the rest of the earth, for look where we will, we shall find that the prosperity, nay, the very existence of a nation, is coexistant [coexistent] with the recognition of woman's claims as the equals of man, to mental and moral culture. A single glance at the history of the past will confirm the truth of this statement. Among the ancient Jews the general condition of woman was one of degradation and servitude -- the exiled and proscribed remnant of that once powerful and favored race speaks loudly of their sins and the consequence. The introduction of Christianity exerted a powerful influence on the condition of hitherto down-trodden and despised woman. Jesus of Nazareth, by his teachings and example raised woman her to her proper place, and from that time unto the present, wherever the religion of the meek and lowly Savior has found an entrance and a welcome in the hearts of man, there has woman exerted her mighty influence, which can never be estimated until the day shall come which will reveal all secret things. Cast your eye upon the most degraded race of men which the world can show and what scene will meet your vision? Woman is there, but how miserable, how wretched, a mere slave a victim to the tyranny and caprice of her brutal master; but with the first dawning of civilization, the first beams of the Sun of Righteousness which scatter the thick darkness that shrouded the land, will the intellectual condition of woman rise to the elevated position which is rightfully hers. But the light of intellect alone is cold and cheerless; mere intellectual power is not always exerted for good, and an increase of knowledge only renders the facility greater for doing evil, if such be the disposition. The union of mind with heart, will alone produce a perfect character, and only when a well trained intellect is added the ornament of a "meek and quiet spirit," is the soul a fit temple for the indwelling of the Most High.

Home correspondence

My arm chair, Oct. 29<sup>th</sup> Editors of the Anomaly,

I noticed in your last paper a letter from off Gibraltar; by the way, do all your readers know where Gibraltar is? Because I have heard of people who didn't and therefore upon whom all that eloquence about Byron and benighted Africa would be in a measure lost for if they don't know the rudiments of Geography they can't be expected to dip very deep into Byron, and would very naturally wonder why a state room off Gibraltar should suggest thoughts of Ham's children. But that aside, it occurred to me that perhaps a few notes from a tourist in our own country might be interesting to you, though perhaps it was but the whispering of vanity for you must know that I quite pride myself upon my travels. At present, I am very snugly cloistered at home, like a nun in her convent, and my migrations though somewhat more extensive than "from the blue bed to the brown" are yet limited by the confines of the sister townships of Haverhill and Bradford, but I should be very happy in reminiscence to live over times I have spent wandering. Now don't think that I am going to tire you with descriptions of places that everybody has seen and read of to weariness, for these are the very places that I shun. You will hear nothing of Saratoga, and Niagara, nor even of "Plum Island" and Salisbury Beach. If it be agreeable to you, perhaps in another letter I will give you a short account of the winter I spent in the Queen's dominions, but in this I would like to call your attention to the ice caves in America, and if indeed it is a subject as new to you as it was to me four months ago. It was a very sultry day last July that with a select party I left New Haven for one of these caves, which is out of the city a pleasant drive of seven miles. The tints of the sky, the number and shape of the clouds, and the exact shade of the dusty road, I shall leave to the imagination of your readers, not that I was myself unobservant of them, but that I always dispense with flowery descriptions, which are only intended to fill out a piece, and not expected to be read, and indeed I stand somewhat in fear of those shears! However, I did not lean back in my seat with closed eyes till we should reach the place, or chat so freely as to forget to notice the scenery for I am altogether too much a child of nature. I have often heard the French and Germans laugh at the English, who in passing up the Rhine, and some of those famous rivers, are so completely absorbed in the study of their guide books as to glide along apparently unconscious of the thrilling realities around them, and who to all intents and purposes and certainly with very much less expense might quietly read the books at their own firesides, though perhaps the name of a "travelled gentleman" sounds euphonious to their ears. But I was in no danger from this source, for whoever heard of guidebook for New Haven or its vicinity? Surely no one, since the days when Gov. Winthrop on his journey thither, wrote his in blazes.

We left the carriage as we neared the place and after climbing down a steep ridge of trap rocks, came upon the cave at the bottom of the ravine. The air was cool and refreshing quite a contrast to that of the hot city or indeed of the open country. In the hottest summer ice is conveyed from this place to New Haven, adding not a little to the comfort of her citizens. A few days afterward I visited a similar repository between Hartford and New Haven. It is situated in a defile filled with fragments of rock through which runs a purling brook, and is only two hundred feet above the level of the sea. The thermometer was at 87°in the shade, but as we approached the cave the air felt chilly. The ice is very abundant and in many places quite near the surface and only protected by a slight covering of leaves. It is also quite solid; a piece of several pounds weight which we obtained from a cavity was not entirely melted on the third day. On hot summer days parties of pleasure often resort thither to enjoy its refreshing coolness, and it chanced that we found a party there in which was a gentleman from Virginia who very kindly described to me an "ice mountain" in Hampshire Co. in his own state. It has much the appearance of a natural glacier and lies against a steep ridge of lofty rocks. Fragments of sandstone of all sizes are loosely heaped together and in the midst of the ice. Such is its solidity that in the summer of 1834 a season unparalleled in the history of that country for heat and drought, the ice was found as abundant and excellent as usual at the depth of only a few inches. A thermometer lowered into it shows a difference of 55 between it and the surrounding atmosphere. The rocks are covered with dew and even snow if covered by a few planks, will remain crisp. A small building called the "Dairy" has been erected here and is thus used during the summer months. It presents quite a picturesque appearance, the roof being fringed with icicles and its sides often incrusted with ice. There is a spring near the rock whose temperature is only one degree less than the waters of the surrounding district. Even in the most scorching season the air is here balmy and cool. I was exceedingly interesting in the account but lest I weary your patience, I hasten with best wishes for your success to write myself Siri [Siri added in pencil].

#### Old Houses.

Who cares for old houses, or thinks of them more than to wish they were burnt down? There is not a village, no matter how small in New England that cannot boast of any number, and what are they that they deserve out particular attention? So may inquire the busy bustling world, hurrying by the gray old houses, but to a few they are precious mementoes [mementos] speaking in an eloquent language. The old homestead – who would exchange it for a palace, every nook and corner, every object is endowed by a thousand recollections. From garret to cellar, a whispering voice seems to follow you with its stories and legends of the good old times. I could listen unwearied four hours

to the tales of that garret, tales of my childhood, when we romped and played without a care or thought, and our grandmother would come and bring us nuts and gingerbread, for she said she did love to see the children enjoy themselves. How quickly those happy days have fled, no merry voices echo now through the old garret, the boards creak beneath my tread, and the wind whistles through the crevices sadly, as if sighing a dirge over the deserted mansion. And there is the room where the baby died. How dearly we loved that little one, and how gladly would we all leave our noisy plays to amuse her; she seemed to be the very sun shine of our existence. But one day we were told that she was dead, and I remember how softly we crept into the darkened room, and the chill that crept over me as the raised the coffin lid and I gazed at the pale cold face. That room we had loved so much always seemed cold and dreary after that, and so it seems now – it is the room of Death.

But there is the old sitting room, with out one gloomy association, the large old fashioned fire place [fireplace] can only tell of happy days, when we all gathered round the bright fire on the long winter evenings. They were never tedious as they sometimes seem now. Our father always sat in his large arm chair and read the paper, while our mother with her knitting entertained us with stories or assisted us in our studies. And sacred associations are mingled with happy ones, for here was our family altar, where morning and evening we met in prayer, and our father read from the old family Bible. But I must not forget the great parlor, even now as I write about it, a sort of awe creeps over me such as I felt on Christmas Eve, the only day in the year when we were admitted into that room. It was our mother's special cave, and most carefully did she guard it. In vain we sometimes begged to look in and see the old family portraits, the only pictures in the house. But our sister Deborah was to be married to the village clergyman and we had long anticipated the event, as we thought that year the parlor would be opened twice. But our mother had arranged differently. Deborah must be married on Christmas Eve, if she would be married in the parlor. In vain she begged on such a special occasion to have the parlor opening in the rosy month of June. Out mother said it would fill the room with dust, and so Deborah was married on Christmas Eve.

And then there's the kitchen, and its long tales of the candy scrapes; the great spare room over the parlor kept almost as sacredly as the parlor itself. The well too, and the moss covered bucket, the orchard, and the swing. Dear old house, as I gaze on it, I almost believe it is endowed with Life, it speaks to me as an animate being, and I wonder how any can hurry by with only a cold gaze. But the old house has a moral for us too; the soul of man will not long inhabit its house of clay; soon will I be a deserted

mansion, forgotten by the world carelessly hurrying by our graves, while they speak to but few of those once loved.

## Poetry.

There's a custom strange that Hindoos have, When a loved companion dies,
To deck with flowers the funeral boat
Where the shrouded sleeper lies.
And at its helm midst the perfumed flowers
To place a taper's light,
And on the Ganges silent flood
To launch the beacon bright.

Over the stream with its magic spills
The freighted boat floats on,
And anxious forms on the shadowy shore
Watch as it glides along.
For if the light from the taper there
Ere the bark has passed from sigh
Be quenched like the shadowed dead they think
Will the soul have endless night.

On the waves of Life when first we launch There's placed in our tiny boat, A taper's light whose glistening flame Shall guide us as we float. And from that burning of the light Friends on the shore may see How bright or dim illumes our bark This torch of Purity.

Then let us guard this beacon well, Nor let its flame expire, But with our noblest, purist deeds Keep burning bright the fire. What safer guerdon do we need For peace when life be past, Thank that the lamp of Purity

## Nothing.

Some may exclaim, what an insignificant subject to employ one's pen about; yet it may not be too much flattery to tell those very persons, who regard my choice so contemptuously and are ever careful to place a more dignified theme at the head of their writings, that they have frequently though perhaps quite unconsciously to themselves, done more ample justice to my subject than I can do with all my efforts. By what authority can it be called insignificant, when many a philosopher has puzzled his brains to conceive of this strange, invisible, indefinable something, which we call nothing. The astronomer can sense the winged messenger thought, to distant stars and planets and its return brings him some idea of their forms, magnitude, and motions, but when thought enter the boundless realms of space, where blank nothing reigns supreme, it is soon weary in the vain search after some object on which to rest its drooping pinion and gladly returns to him who sent it, as it went, bringing no conception of that strange region. Thus sufficient has been said to convince anyone of the dignity of my subject, but lest any should despair of comprehending anything so lofty and grand, it may be brought a little nearer their understanding by quoting a definition some one originated, who described nothing as "being a footless stocking without any leg." What more graphic description could we ask? Even a child can understand it, as a general thing, the first thoughts that tenant the youthful brain are about nothing and sometimes it is true that older heads can boast of <u>nothing</u> more. Ask that curly headed merry boy, pausing a moment in his gambols and putting on a demure quiet face, what he is thinking of, and what answer greets you from his laughing, roguish lips but the careless, "Oh nothing!" So when this same roguish youth, after looking with longing eye upon a forbidden article, at last yields to the temptation, and with it carefully concealed, hies him to a corner to escape the mother's watchful eye, and there in silence satisfies his curious wonder, until this very silence so unusual betrays him and when asked what he is doing answers, "Nothing." Surely a very innocent and delightful employment in his estimation but to one who understands the meaning of his answer, what a world of mischief does it reveal! And this same nothing which has so occupied the childish thoughts and employed the childish thoughts and employed the childish hands, is often times not abandoned for that which should employ both mind and body so advancing years increase their capacities. Thus we see some persons thinking hard all their life time [lifetime] about nothing and spending their time and energies about nothing until they become themselves a living, breathing, walking embodiment of nothing. They have no aim in Life, no purpose to be accomplished. Each day is spent just as the one before it, and the thought never enters

their head to move out of the beaten track, but to think of and do nothing, is considered their life-work. Though these "nothingarians" may comfort themselves that if they accomplish no good, they are doing no hard, the truth is far otherwise, and ere long the scales will fall from their eyes revealing the incalculable mischief they have done in the mere neglect of duty. But lest I should myself be classed among the persons above described, I will employ my pen about nothing no longer, but present what I have written without fear of the shining steel which threatens destruction to ideas too much expanded, knowing that it is quite impossible to make <u>nothing</u> less and hoping that it may meet the approbation of those whose object it is to "give airy nothing a local habitation and a name."

"Other People's Eyes."

Though it may seem very strange, yet it is a fact that the regard we pay to other people's eyes, causes us more trouble and expense than almost anything else. It would seem as if there were a magic spell in the eyes of the world, which influenced its people, whether they were willing or no, and strange and whimsical enough are the actions it sometimes makes them perform. Some people have a perfect dread of the eyes of their neighbors. Not an action can they perform, with their mind at rest, for they are continually asking themselves what such a person will think of it, and if they will success by this means in gaining their good opinion. Truly the desire of obtaining the good opinion of others is a laudable motive, in some cases, but as regards those who habitually interfere in their neighbors' affairs their opinion can be of very little consequence. What sums of money are squandered, what useless toil and vexation endowed by mankind, merely because their neighbors have the power of looking at them. They might escape much of this trouble and expense if they were not so bent on gratifying the eye-sight of their acquaintances. Benevolent weakness, this might be called, but it is to be feared. It does not always arise from a pure motive. The chief thing, after all, is to gratify their own vanity, or excite the envy of others. Of what a load of care and trouble people might relieve themselves, if they would only resolve not to be absolutely indifferent to, but less solicitous about the concern others might feel in their affairs. Very early in life this motive begins to influence mankind, Even the child rejoices in being thought superior among his play fellows, and takes pride in his tiny possessions as they render him a king among them. "Men are but children of a larger growth," which proves true in this case as in many others. The person who would not appear in a peculiar dress for fear of being ridiculed, would in many cases perform an act of dishonesty or wrong, when sure of escaping detection. There is also the advantage in this fear of other person's eyes, scrutinizing actions. Otherwise those acts of civilized society, which minister to more than the necessities of life, would soon be

lost. How little would be the regard for personal appearance. How much more frequent would cases of wickedness and vice become: ambition to do well would not exist in nearly so great a degree. Perhaps, on the whole, it is better we should be influenced thus, but the opinions of others, if not in so great a degree as to be made slaves to them. It is better to strive to do well, even if not from the purest motives, than it is continually to do Evil.

### Lost Nellie.

Part away the golden ringlets,
Press a last kiss on the brow;
For she may not longer tarry,
Nellie is an angel now.
Fold the white hands meekly over
Her pure heart devoid of sin;
As the petals of a flower
Fold at eve their fragrance in.

In the old church yard we'll lay her, Where the weeping willows wave; Where the wild wood warblers ever Pour their music o'er her grave. Winds of evening murmur gently O'er the spot where Nellie lies, Bear upon your wings a requiem Of a lone heart's bitter sighs!

Nevermore on earth to meet her, Spoken is our last Farewell: Death the golden chain has severed, And dissolved the magic spell. But beyond the darkling river Flowing on to Time's great sea In the angel world above us, Nellie, we will welcome thee.

Although Curiosity has been the parent of mischief from the time when the forbidden fruit was tasted, till the last secret was found out, it has yet done somethings to redeem

it from utter condemnation. The love of something new has led to many inventions, without which the world would be very far behind its present state. "Necessity is the mother of inventions" is an old saying but not always true, for it would hardly have led to the many contrivances for the comfort, care, and luxury of man, but many times indolence has sought a substitute for labor and care. He must have been an extremely Layman who could not even open an umbrella, but must have a self-adjusting one, and that poor lady must have been badly off who first contrived a needle threader, but fashion and the world turn over so much faster now than in other times, that only fast people can keep within sight. In days of "auld lang syne" the happy maiden and sturdy yeoman, seated on the same horse trotted off together thinking no other way half so happy or pleasant. Or again the only noise and bustle which disturbed a quiet village, was the shrill clear note of the postman as he warmed his horn on the brow of some hill and then the stage came rolling and rattling down the hill in a cloud of dust, up before the village tavern and into the midst of the crowd awaiting its arrival, who stood with eyes wide open and mouths agape at the unusual sight, and hardly dared to breath till having mounted to his seat again, with the air of a conqueror, the drive cracks his whip and is off. Now no one is satisfied without rushing through the world, at the rate of a mile in a minute, and it were better if it were two, and they are beginning to grumble at that. Formerly the spinning wheel and loom guided by the (not delicate) hands of mothers and sisters supplied the linen for the household, and then it was a matter of importance whether the blue checked dress was a trifle too long, too short, or too large, it being the only one the fair owner possessed. But these days have passed away and with them all these things. Among the relics of the past a spinning wheel may sometimes be seen, but they seem to all have disappeared, crowded or frightened away by the noisy hum of their successors, and the large piles of cotton cloth which glare at them on every side. Now everything from picking the cotton, to washing and ironing the cloth is done by machinery in scarcely more time than was required to arrange the pile of "rolls" for the days work. In every department invention and progress is the word, from the patent self-rocking cradle, in which the unfortunate baby is rocked and sung to sleep by machinery, to the patent locks that can't be picked. When they wash, dry, starch, and iron linen, and return it to their owners in ten minutes, it is probably only the slow beginning of what will yet be done. When the invention for stereotyping thought is ready, we may expect one to be forthcoming for making them. The improvements now talked of, are a telegraph to the moon, and an underground railroad to China. The great difficulty in the last case might be the want of way stations, but perhaps this will be obviated by using the patent engine which required only a ton of coal to go around the world. Would it not be well if our foreign correspondent should shorten her tour in Europe, that she might be in readiness to proceed by the first train to the scene of the revolution in China.

"The Eclipses of Faith."

The volume in question appeared a year or two since in England. It came forth anonymously but has since been ascribed to Mr. Henry Rogers. The author feels deeply the danger of the insidious attacks upon Christianity made by the modern Spiritualists, and arrays the chief force of his arguments against two of these objections. The first, the impossibility of a book revelation. The second, the improbability of miracles. At the conclusion of his reasoning the impossible is clearly shown to be possible and the improbable to be probable. The most prominent objection brought up by the followers of Parker and Newman against the truth of the Bible, is that such a revelation from Heaven is entirely unnecessary. They declare that God has written his will in legible characters on the heart of every man, and that this insight, or power of perceiving religious truth is present in the same degree in the heart of the savage, and the refined, that the Christian trusting in the merits of a crucified Redeemer, possesses a faith not more acceptable to the Great Father than the grim Calmuck whose hands are smeared over with the blood of human sacrifices. The immense difference in the moral and intellectual condition of the two examples is accounted for on the ground of varied external circumstances. In fact Mr. Parker himself says "the idea of God is permanent and alike in all.: Why then asks the Christian has this ide of God had the worst of the combat in the mind, and that awkward "conceptions" have ever ruled where the despised's book revelation was not known. As we view the infinite variety of "conceptions" we ask what proof have we that man ever has this "idea" really? When we say a thing is universal we mean that it belongs to the whole human race as hunger and thirst, seeing and hearing are universal. If one man saw black when another saw white, we should seriously doubt whether the sense of vision was one and the same. When we number the great rarity of creeds in the world do they help to assure us of the oneness of the "spiritual insight?" It does not answer for Mr. Newman to say that he has found this power in his soul, it is not the morbid pathology of his "soul" that we want, but the history of the spirit of men. Again the effect of this argument is weakened from the fact that even the leaders of this faith of "intuition" do not see alike. Mr. Parker declares that his soul tells him that man is immortal, which Mr. Newman says that his tells him nothing about it. And even if this absolute idea of God does exist, since these conceptions have had the best of the conflict is there not room for an external revelation? Admitting this faith to be true, we must adopt one of two theories, either that it is the most idle prerogative ever bestowed on a rational creature, or else as the Bible affirms it has been disabled. Another great fact as to the probability of a book revelation is that mankind have ever been distrustful of their interior revelation and trusted in a Veda [Vedas], a Koran, or a Bible. Its falsity only remains to be proved by the very inconsistence of its supporters. They do in fact declare that a book revelation is

clearly possible with man and impossible with God. Else why do Parker and Newman publish their works; they are certainly book revelations to their pupils in faith. Passing by minor topics, as the fallacy of the Spiritualist's distinction between faith and believe, the connection of modern and ancient Scepticism [Skepticism], and a most graphic account of the confession which such a belief brings on the mind, we come to the 2<sup>nd</sup> great point, the probability of miracles.

Some of the objections brought up against the truth of miracles are these: 1st that they are incredible, impossible per se. 2<sup>nd</sup>. even supposing they are possible they have not sufficient evidence to support them. 3<sup>rd</sup>. that they never could prove moral truth, but we might go on ad infinitum. The very fact that there are so many points brought up as objections, proves that there is no strong one to be found. The Christian grants that he has never seen a miracle performed and that he has to take them on the testimony of others, at the same time he declares that testimony reliable, and sees nothing strange when the Creator of the <u>laws of nature</u> deviates from the ordinary course. He contends that it is just as unreasonable to day that miracles are impossible because they directly violate our idea of the course of Nature, as it was for the Eastern prince to assert that ice was totally unlikely because he had never seen it. Another thing tends to confirm the exact truth of miracles; that is the eagerness with which they were received. The manner in which they were spoken of by contemporary historians convinces the candid inquirer that they were not considered impositions by the people. These are but the main points of the argument. Many things of intense interest and great importance lend strength to the weapon which the author wields. The work is written in the form of the Platonic dialogue. Many sketches are thrown in of much power among which are the "Blank Bible" and the "Paradise of Fools." The doctrine of a future life is most clearly shown, and Papal aggression is proved to be impossible in a most sarcastic and ironical manner. The three last points discussed are 1st. What Woman owes to Christianity. 2<sup>nd</sup>. The aspects under which slavery is presented in the New Testament and 3<sup>rd</sup>. The remarkable progress of the Christian faith under Constantine. The concluding chapter is an affecting and earnest appeal to the sceptic to throw off the dark shroud which holds his mind in thralldom and examine with the powers which God has given him, the way of truth. Even as the author powerfully says "He must conclude as he tells the deep misery into which he is plunged that our fabulous, is better than his true." The book will do much good as respects the young. It unmasks so clearly the sophistical doctrines of our modern Rationalists. One word respecting the style. We think it must strike sorry one that often times upon the most serious subjects the author descends to frivolity really painful. His motive we do not doubt but it is unfortunate for it produces a most unfavorable impression on a thinking mind. Since the publication of the "Eclipse of Faith" Mr. Newman has answered it and Mr. Rogers has reviewed his "Rejoinder." The review is said to be a masterly production.

#### Editorial.

We have occasion this week to contradict the statement made in our last, relative to the defeat of the Russian army, in the Crimea. It seems that no engagement has taken place and that therefore the friends of the Allies have rejoiced in vain and all the illuminations in Paris and Constantinople have been at last premature for the city of Catherine is yet standing. By yet standing we mean however that we have no knowledge to the contrary for at present we must speak of Sebastopol as something as we do of the fixed stars of which we can only say that they were shining three or six years ago. A very interesting rumor has also reached us relative to the fate of Sir John Franklin, but having believed one hoax, on the principle of a burnt child's shunning the fire, we wait for this news to be authenticated. Le Verrier it seems has been appointed to succeed Arago as President of the French Academy. Nearer home little of note has occurred. Enjoying bright sun and summer air, the approach of winter has been detected only by the disappearance of the Greenleaf. "Too bright to last," has been said each beautiful day, and yet they have lasted most delightfully. A complete holiday was observed on the 19th with high satisfaction. Our contributions this week have been most generous and our experience paradoxical for when "Nothing" was provided, we had an abundance.

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