

Sirach June 10th. 1845

My dear May,

I thank you very much for the good and welcome letter received in April. It came just as I starting for a solitary walk to the mountains my unfaithful companion being for once detained by his chief in the hospital, and I could not forgive the fate which made it only a letter instead of yourself. For two hours there rattered through my brain things which I wanted to say and knew I should not be able to write until now. For I have had conscientiously to reverse the proverbial saying, and make it my rule to do nothing today which I can postpone until tomorrow as my only hope for finishing my translation and getting it out of my hands before the grand interruption of next month.

As I laid no restrictions upon my fingers you will doubtless have heard through key of my hope of a little for in late July I cannot write about it, I cannot see talk about it, I can only wait in silent silence a little while longer.

Now I shall bring out your letter and see how much I can remember of the things I wanted to say in my solitary walk of two months ago. First of all you mention having forwarded my essay to Mr. Curtis asking him to forward it to the Popular Science Monthly and then in turn to the Woman's Journal. I have not heard any thing further from any one concerned. Have you? I am interested in the fate of the essay as I have no duplicate copy.

Next as to the general sweeping charge of imagining that I have arrived at the last word upon the subject of vital science. That would be a melancholy state of mind at twenty five! But what I do say is this! That the next steps for the English

speaking publicists appropriate the German investigations of the subject in order to spare itself whole masses of experiments which have already either been tried practically or proved theoretically to be fruitless in the course of German experience and research. And why should you object to this? If I should assert that the Germans reformed their civil service a generation or two before we began to reform ours you would not object to the statement or if I should claim for the German universities a higher average standard than prevails in our own. Why then do you object to my saying that an immense amount of conscientious effort is being expended, in America, in doing over again, expensively, what has already been tried and found wanting in Germany? And all this for want of knowledge of the German economic literature. And there is nothing monochastic (or even self sufficient) in my saying that it is not profitable for men and women to puzzle their brains to find solutions for problems which have already been solved. It would be much more useful to take the solutions, thus supplied, under consideration and whether or not they can be applied to the given case in question. And it is what the American works now published show that our country men are doing, puzzling their brains over problems already solved, being ignorant of the solutions.

This the English Press is now awakening to and a translation of Roscher's model by a Dr. Taylor of St. Louis, almost unknown in America, has been recently received in England. Börsch's "Woman and the Past Present and Future" is translated into English and published in the modern Press, having just appeared. Marx's "Capital" is undergoing translation into English sixteen years after its publication in German, fifteen years after its translation into Russian, and eight years after its translation into French. My translation into English

English Working Class" will be published in London - I have not
yet declined to reconsider his adverse decision, and he probably
will so decide. And the English review speaks fairly that his
view that whereas England has long been accustomed to look to
Germany for the latest word in physical science, it has missed
for a generation the research of the German investigators in the do-
main of social science.

And what consequence could be more natural than this,
that whereas, in Germany, six hundred thousand working-
men form a political party and elect four and twenty repre-
sentatives to the Imperial Parliament - pledged to represent the
interests of the workmen of the nation, our most intelligent
organization, the English of Labor, are still back upon the primi-
tive plane of development involved in a secret society, pass
words and all the nonsense involved therein?

I cannot remember how I expressed myself about this.
Since but I cannot admit that my opinion of his attitude
with regard to social questions is unjust. I have heard him
preach several scores of times, and among these several scores
of sermons he discussed diverse social and historical questions
rarely laborably but always with that degree of authority which
is inseparable from the supposition that a man will not dis-
cuss, from a Unitarian pulpit, a subject of which he has
made no adequate study. And yet he has certainly made no
adequate study of social science as such. I doubt his having read
one single German work upon the subject. I know that he uniformly
declines, in my presence, to discuss economic questions with
my father on the ground of insufficient study, and I do not believe
that the three years since I heard him preach have been given to such

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study. Yet his essay on the two marriages of George Eliot shows
that he still ventures to discuss one of the most complicated
of all social questions, rendered in this case still more difficult by
the presence of personal motives of three persons none of whom
he has ever seen! In this criticism there is no personal attack
upon Mr. Ince. He is simply one of a large class of men who
occupy a most unfortunate position - the liberal ministry. The
more they abandon dogma-preaching within the narrow bounds
of theology, the more they are forced to discuss social questions
marriage, education, civil service reform, citizens' duties
temperance the "reciprocal duties of Labor and Capital" and a
score of others. But in the theological school (if they have joined
one) they have made no systematic study of social science. Ex-
cept H. H. Newton in New York and Stuart Redman, in
London, I cannot learn that any of them claim to have made
any such systematic study afterwards. I do decline to recognize
them as competent to teach or preach upon such subjects pre-
cisely as I should refuse to permit a surgeon to operate upon
me who had made no elaborate and systematic study of
anatomy, physiology, medicine and operative surgery but con-
tented himself with a hand book or two and some observation.
If you will take a year of the Christian Register and mark
with a red pencil each article referring to a sociological question
and will then ask yourself frankly whether the writer has made
any adequate systematic study of sociological questions such as
a mathematician, for instance, would be required to make before
undertaking to teach mathematics to adult classes, I think you
will come to agree with me.

Will you take a piece of trouble for the sake of doing me jus-

too, after being so much trouble to do me repeated kindnesses?
 Will you reread such of my letters as survive in your possession
 and point out into the context the statements which seem to
 you to be false? And if you think me blind to the work done in
 America, tell me whether you have both Henry George's books, *Practical
 Co-operative Commonwealth* and *Earth's Inheritance*, and
 whether you receive and conscientiously read as I do, all four organs
 of the workers' movement, the *Journal*, the *Triumph*, the *New Era*
 and the *Alpha*? Believe me, it is not self-sufficiency which
 makes me speak in this way but the honest wish to help you, whose
 work I respect, to see that work as it is, as part of a great whole
 such that you can make your own work more effective if you find
 clearly its complex relations. Without the broader insight, which can't
 be had without study and criticism, this same work may prove in
 the end what most philanthropic work always is, mere struggles
 patch and palliate an evil social system by propping up what ought
 to be taken down and rebuilt. And active social work is possibly an
 even more responsibility-involving task than mere pulpit preaching
 and demands, perhaps, quite as systematic study of social science.
 I am greatly rejoiced at having Rachel Foster Para, settled
 down for long quiet study before resuming her active work in America
 and it is too bad that, like myself, she has to spend precious weeks
 here in reading the American economist and the English classical econ-
 omic works, having plunged boldly into social activity without the
 most superficial theoretical preparation.

I wonder whether all the editors to whom I have asked to be to
 have forwarded you my manuscript. If any have done so will
 you be so good as to m.s., please?

We are back in the quiet honey pension where I spent last year, have the same rooms which I had then and the same gentle, friendly, kind family, who regard us as their youngest children and spoil us accordingly. The work, and wages, and all that, and make plans just as we did in our cosy Haxelberg life; with the difference that we have several friends here, and had only one friend and one acquaintance there. I have been perfectly well ever since the middle of January, working six to eight hours daily at translation, dissertation and newspaper correspondence; and I have not the slightest anxiety for the coming time. I wish you could see the quaint Swiss dress which is long waiting for its little wearer, not so dainty as our long-dresses but pretty and very practical.

Give my love to your mother, and cordial regards to our common friends and believe me with sincere affection

Yours

Florence Kelley Wischniewsky

Mrs Mary Thorne Lewis