

MEMORANDUM

TO: Rachel, Mary, Kelly

FROM: Frederica Mathewes-Green

DATE: February 4, 1991

RE: Stanton quote

Here is the best translation I can make of the Howe diary entry for Oct 16, 1873 (asterisks indicate uncertain words):

"Staid on the floor of the Hall* today, despite frequent invitations to come to the platform*. Quarrelled* with Mrs. Stanton, who examined* infanticide, on the pound* that women did not want to bring moral monsters into the world, + said that thru acts* men regulated by natural laws. I differed from her stongly, asserting that the moral law of man's being was harassment to the mechanical tendencies granted as natural laws (??), + that infanticide was usually a crime of gross selfishness, tho under some circumstances true struggles against it must be agonizing. Nature has a carn* horror* of the out*, I think. In the evening, went up on the platform, very unwillingly (sic). To lunch with Miss Haskell, Mr. Stanton, Churchleigh*, Tiormon*, a Mary Eastman. Met her Brother, who was at Miss Roberts' school when I went thru--we wend (sic) to sit by my sister Louisa."

The preceding and following pages also concern happenings at the Women's Congress. Obviously, the Stanton quote has not been transcribed into the diary, though it appears that Howe and Stanton had a dispute concerning the issue on that day.

It is my reasonable conjecture that Stanton wrote Howe a letter that same day, following their altercation, explaining her views, and that the quote occurs in the letter, not the diary. The letter would be dated "Oct 16, 1873". The letter, kept by Howe, was apparently tucked into the diary and found there, though who knows where it may now be. It may well have been removed and placed in a collection of other Stanton letters. It may still be physically inserted between these pages of the diary.

As this is one of our best quotes, one that we have disseminated widely, it remains urgent that we have an accurate copy of the context. I am unfamiliar with the protocol for research into rare documents like this--does anyone have any ideas on making the next step?

speak than instead of in the evening, if I chose. I was too much fatigued with attention, my head much confused. To tea at Brooklyn, B.E.W. Hene, where rested somewhat. Spoke in the evening, pretty well, but lost the preliminary meeting of the Congress, to my regret.

October 15th, Wednesday. Opening of the Women's Congress, at which all my misgivings were realized. A permanent Association was announced, with officers and constitution. I took exception, but was referred to the action of the preliminary meeting last night. I thought this insufficient to justify such a proceeding and maintained that I was a member of the Congress, but not of any association formed without due notice, which indeed was not given, nothing in the Call having implied that an Association was to be sprung in this manner upon the Congress. Mrs. Livermore president both of the Congress and Association, apologized for my captiousness - "These Boston women are so very exact." She is a Boston woman and I am a New Yorker. At last I read my paper on associations of women. Would not go on the platform. Peace meeting at Jacob Capron's(?) in the evening.

October 16th, Thursday. Stayed on the floor of the hall today, despite frequent invitations to go to the platform. Spurred with Mrs. Stanton, who excused infanticide on the ground that women did not want to bring moral monsters into the world, and said that these acts were regulated by natural law. I differed from her strongly, asserting that the moral law of man's being was paramount to the mechanical tendencies, quoted as natural laws, and that infanticide was usually a crime of gross selfishness, though under some circumstances, the struggle against it must be agonizing. Nature has a dark horror of the act, I think. In the evening, went up on the platform, very unwillingly. To lunch with Mrs. Haskell, Mmes. Stanton, Burleigh, Livermore, and Mary Eastman. Mrs. Brock who was Miss Roberts' school when I went there. She used to sit by my sister Louisa.

October 17th, Friday. Congress all day. Lunch with Mrs. Ryder. Executive session in afternoon, very short. A hard fight, I all alone. Sustained my ground against the constitution and officering of the new Association. No committee, I said, had been charged by the Congress with the duty of preparing a Constitution. Mrs. Wilbur said she had written the Constitution.

October 18th, Saturday. Visited dear Flossy. Sent to Stuart's where bought gloves. Uncle R. very feeble and fractious today. I dined with him, his Annie and Clara Dodd being present. After dinner played and sang the Battle Hymn and Rally round the Flag. He ~~likes~~ loves music still, and always loved it. Took affectionate leave of him, probably for the last time. Went down to boat in 'bus, carrying some heavy bundles. Forget the situation of Murray Street, and got out too soon. Had rather a grievous posting down Broadway. Found Mmes. Wilson and Levering, much delightful talk, in which my tongue ran on so fast as to rob my ears. Should have been glad to hear more from them!

October 19th, Sunday. Home safely and in comfort.

October 20th, Monday. # * * Must pack papers, etc today. Fear I shall have little time to study in the months that are to come.

October 23d, Thursday. Lectured at Bristol, R.I.

October 25th, Saturday. Sitting quietly with Chev over the fire, after a game of whist with Julia and Paddock, a hack driver knocked at the door of our little book parlor, saying that a gentleman was waiting at the front door for admission. I opened the door and found Dr. Alex. Volokoff, who heard in Boston that we were here, and had come down to stay over Sunday. The floors of nearly every parlor and bedroom had been newly varnished. We had no spare bedding. One clean sheet was mustered. I spared what I could from my ill-provided bed, and we made the guest as comfortable as

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