

the relations existing between the sexes are established by the Creator, and the true woman of genius—one who has learned to study and feel—would as soon dash a specimen of glorious sculpture from its pedestal, or fling discord into a strain of exquisite music as disturb one bud of that flowery woof which draws us to the heart of man for love and protection. Yet the woman who exhibits her person before a crowd of applauding men, or writes a book calculated to subvert religion and all the beautiful poetry which religion kindles in the soul, claims the same title with one who has exalted the sex by a modest exertion of high thought. Though with such minds true feminine genius can hold no sympathy, the delicacy of womanhood and the dignity of intellect are outraged by the association.

It is to be expected that the original and lofty mind will sometimes be coupled with pretension and ambitious weakness. The faculty of adopting ideas already created, and of tasteful combination, is frequently misunderstood for intrinsic mental strength. But if the women who possess mere talent occasionally receive the tribute due to creative genius, it is a harmless usurpation, and when divested of arrogance may well meet with indulgence. A desire for public distinction, though a coarse and unfeminine impulse when carried to extremes, and one which most frequently urges mediocre talent before the world, may be forgiven so long as the dignity and delicacy of sex are not sacrificed, though Sappho herself, would fail to render the feeling a gentle or lovely one.

While no false moral sentiments are inculcated, the exertion of superficial talent is but slightly felt in society, and if it were not productive of pernicious influence in the literary circle, the evil would scarcely be worthy a passing remark. But disappointment falls with harsh and painful force on the ambitious and thoughtless mind. The effort which takes its rise in vanity, alone, must ever recoil baffled and dissatisfied on the heart where it originated, and though the exercise of weak talent may in itself be harmless, it is by the evil feelings which arise from an over estimate of this talent in the possessor, and the disappointment which follows want of success, envy, heart-burning, and that hateful feeling, "literary jealousy," manifest themselves in the world of letters. But these are sensations that know their birth in mediocrity alone, and which never yet found a moment's rest in the truly great mind.

The successful are seldom envious!—to those who deserve success the passion is unknown.

Envy, and all its train of evil feelings are engendered in the strong thirst for notoriety, which goes with the ambition that has no power to sustain its pretensions. The baffled spirit, which finds that wings which were deemed shivering with the plumage of an arch angel have scarcely power to flutter from the dull earth, grows bitter as the lofty and pure make a steady flight upward, and are seen bathing in the sunshine which it has failed to reach. But the woman possessed of that depth of thought and feeling which, harmoniously blended, forms all that is worthy the name of genius, in our sex, is incapable of those selfish and bitter passions which can assimilate with no pure quality of her mind, no warm impulse of her heart.

There is a modest but certain consciousness of moral and intellectual power that accompanies genius, which lifts it above the petty competition of weaker minds.

The truly original spirit feels that it is invested with a power all its own, and unlike that existing in any other human being. It looks into the great eternity of thought, and feels that the stars burning in the blue bosom of the sky are not more independent, each in its sphere of light, than the faculty of creative thought which lives in any one human soul.—Minds which grovel to the dull earth may jostle each other, and make unpleasant discord, but the spirit that soars upward, finds no lack of space in the blue ether which lies between it and the sun, and though a thousand kindred spirits haunt the same golden atmosphere, each is distinguished by its own bright plumage and peculiar melody.

It is but a slight evil which leaves mediocrity to the woman of genius, though the infinites of one are sometimes thoughtlessly charged on the other. But it is unjust to couple the woman who makes an altar of her own hearthstone, who writes from the unconquerable promptings of her nature, whose soul, with all its treasure of thought, is poured, like jewels, into the lap of society; it is cruel and unjust to degrade her and the situation which she can do so much to exalt, by linking her even in a chain of words to that class of women who have dashed aside the sweet attributes of their sex, and plunged into the arena of masculine strife, drowning a coarse ambition under the cry of "woman's rights," and setting up a defiance which tinges the cheek of every true woman with shame and sorrow, that her sex