

**LECTURES ON THE SPHERE
AND DUTIES OF WOMAN,
AND OTHER SUBJECTS**

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Lectures on the Sphere and Duties of Woman, and Other Subjects by George W. Burnap

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SPHERE AND DUTIES

OR

W O M A N .

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Washington
By GEORGE W. BURNAP,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST INDEPENDENT CHURCH OF BALTIMORE.

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TO THE
LADIES OF BALTIMORE,
THESE LECTURES,
Written for their entertainment,
ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,
BY THE
AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

THESE lectures were intended as, in some measure, a counterpart to the course I gave the winter before the last to Young Men. It may naturally be asked why they were not all confined, as those Lectures were, to one class? The audience in the first case was unmixed, but in the second composed of both sexes; and although it was my intention to devote a greater part of the course to the Sphere and Duties of Woman, I thought it equitable to select such subjects for a part of it as would be equally interesting to all. I chose therefore for the last three lectures topics of a literary and philosophical cast, in which every mind has an equal interest, and which I supposed best calculated to improve the taste and cultivate the intellect. My only regret, on looking over these sheets, is to perceive how imperfectly my limits have permitted me to present some of the most important views. There is scarcely a topic I have treated, which might not be expanded into a volume.

The exhaustless resources which are opening upon society in public lectures, is a subject which is worthy of a more minute and extended development. This system is destined, I have not the least doubt, to work great changes in society. It will demonstrate what with me has ever been a favorite theory, the compatibility of daily toil with intellectual cultivation. Since writing these lectures I have seen a publication called the "Lowell Offering," composed entirely by the factory girls, which amply corroborates all I have ever thought or said upon this subject. No man can read that periodical, and say that daily labor has any tendency to degrade or enfeeble the mind, to debase or chill the heart.

There are some topics which I was obliged altogether to omit, the physical education of woman, and her political rights. The first of these may be said to belong more especially to the physician, and the second to the jurist. But they both belong to the philanthropist, and are to be discussed rather by appeals to common sense, than to the technicalities of science. The substitution of machinery for manual labor has superseded a vast amount of physical exertion, and exempted thousands of women from that muscular action which is indispensable to health. The inevitable consequence is a deterioration of health, and other

consequent evils of an alarming character. The attention of the community must ere long be called to this matter. The political rights of women have been often discussed, but generally without either wisdom or moderation on either side. That they ought to aspire to the right of suffrage, cannot, I think, be maintained, but that better provision ought to be made to secure to them their property, I have no doubt.

BALTIMORE, *May*, 1841.