

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting

OF

PROGRESSIVE FRIENDS,

HELD AT

LONGWOOD, CHESTER COUNTY.

1860.

"Serves best the Father he who most serves man,
And he who wrongs humanity wrongs Heaven."

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1860.

FROM OORA WILBURN.

HADLEY, Mass., May 29th, 1860.

Circumstances prevent my being with you in person at your annual gathering. I cannot this year clasp your hands, nor listen to the noble utterances of your good men and true women; but I can send my spirit's greetings, and through the distance join with you in soul for the cause of Truth, Purity, and Righteousness. And what it is denied my tongue to speak, the appeal that I would make to your manly pity, and your woman's tenderness, I will briefly lay before you in writing.

I plead for those to whom the Moral Teacher of the world said gently, "Neither do I condemn thee!" and it is to prevent their further sinning, through want, privation, and wretchedness, that I appeal to your Meeting for concerted action with the noble woman who devised the plan that is to rescue our sister Magdalen from degradation, shame, and ruin.

I send you a pamphlet containing the outlines of a plan devised by Miss Emma Hardinge for the succor of that unfortunate class, as well as for the homeless and destitute. Will you not aid, by your influence and such material help as you feel prompted to bestow, this truly noble work? When the vice of sensualism is swept from off the earth, we may hope for the inauguration of that millennial era so fondly hoped for and so ardently

desired. But while poverty tempts to sin, and hard and uncongenial labor fetters all the better aspirations of the woman's soul, we cannot hope for the growth of soul that is to make her angel-like. While she is doomed to starvation wages, to the requiem "song of the shirt," she cannot unfold in intellect or expand in goodness. Let us toil nobly and bravely, then, to render woman free and pure and spiritual.

All needful explanations will be given by the author of the plan; and all donations received by her or the named trustees will be acknowledged in due form.

CORA WILBURN.

FROM EMMA HARDINGE.

My duties as a public lecturer have brought me into constant intercourse with the suffering and sinful, and, amongst all the classes in whom this combination of misery most painfully exists, stand foremost the unfortunates who have lapsed from virtue, and who, driven by desperation to the streets, find there first a dreadful trade, next their only refuge, and often their only death-bed. I can hardly exaggerate the accumulated miseries and inevitable crimes to which these forlorn ones are daily led on in their isolated and degraded state. Man destroys and then turns from them with loathing, and when they weary of the dreadful trade and would fain return to the paths of decent life through the avenues of honest labor, society spurns them, and women in particular crowd them out of all the fields of useful labor, and spurn them back to the street, the gutter, or the grave. In the few Asylums, where the few who dare to touch them hide them away, the discipline is most generally too harsh and unpractical to meet their case. Their wounded and morbidly sick souls are not administered to with the right medicine, and when cast into the world again, to compete with the virtuous for bread, the reformation is not sufficiently permanent to strengthen them against the hard conflict with scorn and the bitter drudgery of the needlewoman; and so they go back, most commonly, to the streets.

Friends, I have thought on these things until I have felt called upon to devote myself to some effort, in the name and through the blessing of God, to do them good. I have resolved to found an Institution that shall be self-sustaining, and yet in its working combine a discipline of kindness with healthful, light, cheerful labor, and the knowledge of a business hitherto untried by females, thereby securing to those who quit the Institution a means of earning bread by a useful but uncompetitive trade. I hope I am not mistaken when I anticipate finding all these and many other advantages combined in *Scientific Horticulture*. My views concerning the special advantages of this occupation are more fully set forth in the little pamphlet that accompanies this letter, and it but remains for me to add that in order to accomplish my purpose, it becomes necessary that I should appeal in all possible directions to procure funds. From ten to forty thousand dollars are required to start with. I have as yet only raised a few hundred dollars—still I labor on, and propose to do so until success (of which I feel as assured as I do of Heaven's blessing and support) crowns my efforts. Any contributions you may be disposed to make may be deposited with Louis Belrose, of Philadelphia, Treasurer of the Association of Gentlemen in that city whom I have nominated as Trustees.

Should there be any amongst you whose benevolent interest may prompt you to farther inquiry in this matter, a letter addressed to me at No. 8 Fourth Avenue, New York, will always find me.

EMMA HARDINGE.

[The outline of the Plan referred to in the preceding letter is here subjoined.]

OUTLINE OF A PLAN FOR A SELF-SUSTAINING INSTITUTION FOR HOMELESS AND OUTCAST FEMALES.

SPECIAL DESIGNS.

1. To restore self-respect and a place in life to the fallen, a home to the destitute, employment and an available means of subsistence to the industrious

2. To remove friendless or outcast women from the temptation to sin for bread, until they can honorably provide for themselves; and while it is claimed that some special effort should be made in behalf of the utterly fallen sisters of humanity, who have too long been passed by, or devoted to penitential or impracticable systems of reform, leaving them with the stamp of that degradation which precludes their re-entrance into the arena of honest labor, it is by no means proposed to render vice a necessary qualification for admission; prevention and timely succor, no less than cure, being the aim proposed.

3. In order to remove them from the struggle of ordinary competition, and qualify them with a speciality for superior merit, it is proposed to instruct them in the culture of flowers, fruits, and vegetables, upon the most matured scientific knowledge of the subject, with the design of aiding in sustaining the Institution by the sale of its products, and advancing the character of its members to such superior use and excellence, as will create a respectful demand for their services.

DISPOSITION OF TIME AND MODE OF INSTRUCTION.

It is proposed to cultivate the lands of the Institution as exclusively as possible by the industry of its members; to hire qualified instructors and assistants during the first period of organization, until some members shall have advanced to the capacity of teachers; to give instruction in the theory and the practice of horticulture; allot to each of the members, in turn, exercises in the routine of domestic duties, under a qualified matron; to set apart stated hours each day for educational improvement, labor, repose, recreation, and meditation; to consult the best systems of horticulture, chemistry, and kindred sciences, with a view of developing yet undiscovered resources in the art, and advancing horticulture to a degree of perfection not yet attained; to stimulate moral, intellectual and physical effort by graduated degrees, and such rewards for superior excellence in the members as the funds of the Institute will allow; and to hold in prospective the formation of a horticultural school for females, not connected with the Institution.

DISCIPLINE.

It is proposed that the only discipline used shall be order, cleanliness, temperance, industry, and strict abstinence from stimulating drinks and harsh language; the encouragement, by precept and example, of intellectual emulation, and a universal spirit of sisterly equality, mutual forbearance and charity; that the aim of every member shall be to live *only* for a progressive future; that each day shall begin and end with music and reading of an elevating character, and that with every setting sun each member shall be exhorted to forget and forgive each other the trespasses of the day, making present duties and future aims the only theme of conversation.

LOCALITY, GROUNDS, BUILDINGS, ETC.

(Proposed.) To purchase a suitable piece of ground in such a locality as may hereafter be determined; to erect thereon a building capable of accommodating one hundred persons, with a view to provide for increase of members with increase of funds; to carry on horticulture in all its branches, both for the instruction and maintenance of its members, and to select the locality in the neighborhood of a large town and railway, with a view of facilitating a ready sale for produce.

MODE OF RAISING FUNDS, ETC.

It is proposed to raise the funds necessary for the purchase of ground, erection of buildings, laying in stock, and support of the Institution for the first necessarily unproductive year or years, by donations, subscriptions, and collections, through individuals, societies, or public meetings convened for that purpose, commencing the work of organization, building, &c., as soon as a sufficient sum is collected to justify action.

IMMEDIATE ACTION.

All humanitarian persons are hereby solicited to forward such sums as they can contribute towards this object, to the trustees, who will acknowledge the receipt of the same. Builders, horticulturists, financiers, &c., are solicited to aid it by suggestion and advice; and every true-hearted man and woman is reminded that this is the world's movement, instituted for the relief of the most hapless of its ranks; proposing not only progressive action in a universally useful science, but to rescue many a fair and gifted victim from that despair and heart-agony which too often leads to starvation, a life of degradation, or an untimely death. The design contemplates no limit within the bounds of party, place, section, or sect, and therefore claims from all humanity a humanitarian response.

It is resolved to appoint Trustees in the different cities of the Union, when a sufficient interest is felt to aid this work; such Trustees to hold the funds collected, receive subscriptions and donations, and aid the movement in every practical way, until there shall be a sufficient amount collected to commence the enterprise.

It is resolved that the members of the General Committee shall consist of donors of \$100 and upwards; also, that the donation of \$1000 and upwards, shall constitute the right of Direction within limits to be hereafter decided on. Temporary direction vested in the hands of Trustees for the city of Philadelphia, who have contributed and retain the sum of \$500.

TRUSTEES FOR PHILADELPHIA.

Louis Belrose, 807 Chestnut St.; Isaac Rhen, 917 Sansom St.; Henry T. Child, M. D., 510 Arch St.

TRUSTEES FOR PROVIDENCE.

Hon. John R. Bartlett, Secretary of State for R. I., Secretary's Office, Court House; Mrs. William Chase, Pleasant Valley; T. Searle, Esq., Ins. Agent, 7 Weybossett Street.

TRUSTEES FOR PORTLAND.

J. C. Woodman, Esq., R. I. Robinson, M. M. Blanchard, N. A. Foster.

Trustees for Boston, New York, and other cities will be appointed from time to time.

Suggestions, statistics, counsel, donations, or aid in any direction, to be sent in, either to the Trustees as above, or to

EMMA HARDINGE,
8 Fourth Avenue, New York.