

DR. KATHARINE C. BUSHNELL

A BRIEF SKETCH

OF

HER LIFE WORK

Written by herself at Shanghai by request of the
Editor of the "Biblical Recorder" of Australia,
and republished in England by her permission.

Hertford.

Rose and Sons, Salisbury Square.

FOREWORD

When my dear friend, Katharine Bushnell, sent me, from Shanghai, the copies of the “Biblical Recorder”, containing an outline of her life-story, I at once felt that such a record, brief and incomplete though it be, ought not to be allowed to be lost in the fleeting pages of a monthly magazine, but should be put in a more permanent form. Not without reluctance, Dr. Bushnell gave me permission to publish it in this country and, after many unavoidable delays, I at last have the privilege of giving it to an English public. Dr. Bushnell begs me to write a Foreword because, as she says, she and I are almost the only two left of Mrs. Josephine Butler’s “old guard” (referring in this case to the years from 1891 to 1906, when we worked intimately with her).

To say that Katharine Bushnell was one of Mrs. Butler’s closest and most trusted friends, held by her in the highest esteem for her great gifts of intellect and heart and for her devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the cause of suffering womanhood, is sufficient commendation. But since the “Home Call” of our revered leader in 1906, Katharine Bushnell has added another chapter to her eventful life and done the world fresh service.

Her illuminating and scholarly studies on the Word of God, notably her great book, “God’s Word to Women”, have been a source of mighty moral uplifting and enlightenment. It is in the hope of stimulating the Christian public to the study of that truly unique presentation and interpretation of the Scriptures of Truth relating to Women, that I issue the following record as my last labour of love and tribute of admiration for one of the noblest women of our time.

I humbly commend it to God’s grace and service.

Her long-time fellow-worker,

FANNY FORSAITH

Harrow. August, 1932.

To the editor of the “Biblical Recorder”,

of Australia. December, 1930.

My dear Editor,

You request me to write you a sketch of my life services, and my friends here in Shanghai encourage me to do so. I cannot write it as I might if in my study in my California home, where I could consult records – particularly the daily records kept by Mrs. Elizabeth Andrew, who was my companion in labour for close on twenty-six years. My memory now as to dates, etc., is very bad.

PREPARATION FOR SERVICE

After two years of the classical course, at Northwestern University, near Chicago, for reasons that I need not enter into, I cut short my literary course and began the study of medicine, and was graduated in medicine four years later, in a Medical School – The Woman’s Hospital Medical College – which was, after my graduation, purchased by the North-Western University, and since then I have been reckoned as an alumna of the University, by the purchase bargain. Finally that school was discontinued because the great Rush Medical College, closeby, opened its doors to women.

I was, by three years, the youngest student in the school when I was graduated, and immediately the Women’s Mission Board of my church (The Methodist Episcopal), wished me to go to China. This was not quite to my liking, for I wished more clinical work and post-graduate study, but I yielded to their wishes. I would say that this was the mistake of my life, excepting that “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.” So I went, in my twenty-fourth year, to Kiukiang, China, but not to remain very long. I was too young for the heavy strain that fell to my lot.

The climate at Kiukiang may almost be called atrocious. This was fifty-one years ago, and there were not a few discomforts to put up with. I recall the three summers that I spent there with horror. Everyone, both missionaries and natives, suffered, and most of them were seriously, some dangerously, sick with remittent fever and other pests. It was not till the third summer that we had any retreat from the intense, sickly heat; and then we built a little hut in the mountains, a few miles away, and took turns staying there for a few days at a time. I was sick myself during these summers, but compelled to keep active, looking after those worse off. We had no nurses of any sort in those days, and when I not infrequently needed to perform a surgical operation, I must give the anesthetic and do all the nursing that the patient had, besides.

My practice was very large, owing to the fact that robbers came to the Mission one July night, and KILLED the gateman, as they supposed; then they came on to our back door and were prying it open, when the gateman revived, and came screaming to us to save our lives, saying, “I am already killed!” His unusual courage, and the fact that he had “come to life” after he was supposed to be dead, frightened the robbers off. We took him into the house, and our servants and neighbors crowded in after him. Caution required that we let them witness everything that went on. The man was horribly cut up, but recovered. To our astonishment, the rumor went abroad throughout the city and surrounding country, that the gateman died seven times during that night, and I had medicine that brought him to life again. He had fainted several times while being questioned as to precisely what had befallen him at the hands of the robbers. We thought we must get his testimony then, for fear he would die.

I relate in part this incident in order to account for my having so large a practice. As the people were very suspiciously inclined and superstitious, we feared that my sudden notoriety might precipitate a mob uprising, since I could not live up to my reputation as one able to raise the dead. So I was spirited away into the mountains to what was known as the “Citizen’s Bungalow”, to be in retirement for awhile. None of the missionaries could be spared to go with me, but a kind lady accompanied me. This was before our own little hut was built.

I was inclined to be athletic, and was like a young colt let loose, in the beautiful mountainous surroundings. One day I seriously hurt my spine. I cut short particulars. I never knew a well day for years afterwards; and so my missionary career ended with my third year on the foreign field. A spinal curvature, not bad enough to be visible, has caused me suffering, off and on, to the present time.

STEPPING OUT IN FAITH

After returning home, I practiced medicine for two or three years. But I had not studied medicine for its own sake, but as a help in Christian work. I was too weak nervously for the work and discontented in it. And when my former Professor at the University, and close neighbor to my parents' home, urged me to come to her assistance as Evangelist of the Purity Department of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (I refer to Frances E. Willard, President of the Union), I consented.

I grew stronger in the lecture field, and was eventually asked by her to make a trip around the world in the interests of the World's Union of the same society, which was then in its infancy, with the understanding that "there was no treasury of the World's Union", and I could not expect the money for traveling expenses, or "for so much as a postage stamp." I consented, much to my own surprise when I thought the matter over, afterwards. But having given my consent I would not retreat. More about this trip later.

Before this proposition came up, I had been greatly exercised over reports in the daily press, of a horrible White Slave Trade up in the northern regions of the States of Michigan and Wisconsin, in our country; and when we could not find anyone to investigate the conditions and get reliable facts, I determined to investigate them myself. As those acquainted with our country know, there are valuable iron mines, and great forests in that part of the country, and these two interests, mining and felling trees, brought crowds of laborers to that northern region. To this was added the criminal industry of enticing young girls to go north under promises of lucrative work.

I went at some risks, penetrated into some of these dives under various pretexts and by other means got proof of the actual conditions existent.

This proof I got by what I saw and from those who had befriended girls in escaping, or attempting to escape. The report was that girls, after being enticed to go north, were held as prisoners in stockaded dens, with bull dogs to prevent their escape; and this I found to be true, and brought away sketches that I made of the more notorious places, both outside and one an inside view.

It was a terrible story, and when I held a not large meeting in Chicago and told it in part, a far greater sensation was made than I expected. Wisconsin newspapers abused me roundly for slandering their State; State officers denied, and all the rest followed that one might expect. I appeared before the State Legislature (but not when it was in official session) and told my story, with policemen about in numbers to see that nothing happened to me.

I was alone and trembling inwardly (for I feared I had not the wisdom to present the case effectually) as I ascended the platform to speak to a crowded house, in large part angry at me. There was not another woman in the room, as I looked about. (A new Governor was to be inaugurated at that time, and he had come to town for the purpose; but the newspapers exaggeratedly stated that he was quite in the shadow, the coming of "Kate Bushnell" absorbed all the attention. I had not cared for such notoriety, nor expected it). What should I do under such pressure? I lifted my heart to God, of course. Then the door opened quietly, and about fifty ladies of the highest social position at the State Capital filed in, and stood all about me. There were no seats for them; they stood all the time I talked—and I had plenty of courage as I realized how good God was to send them! To end the long story, there was a bill drafted after my own heart's desire, but not by myself, and passed by the Wisconsin Legislature and dubbed by the newspapers the "Kate Bushnell Bill." It has sent several men to long terms of imprisonment for trading in girls in the State of Wisconsin, where the worst of this iniquity had prevailed.

I have had an object in telling this. It led to my joining up, later, with the purity forces in England under Mrs. Josephine Butler. I was about thirty-three at this time.

A WORLD-WIDE CALL

The National Convention of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union was held that year, after my trip to Wisconsin, in the Metropolitan Theatre Building, New York City—a place which would hold four or five thousand people; and it was well filled--often crowded--at its sessions. Miss Willard did not put me on the programme, and this was reasonable enough. The main object of the Union was Temperance, and its interests must not be diverted. But the whole country was agitated on the White Slave question by the disclosures I had made.

I went home to think the situation over. There seemed no need of further work in the same direction, just then. What should I do next? I did not wish to keep an unhealthy sensation alive; legislation having been secured, I wished the matter dropped. Then what next should I do? If I went back to lecturing—indeed I had tried it—the audience wanted nothing else from me but sensational stories about Northern Wisconsin, and listened impatiently to plain moral instruction in the principles of purity, such as had been previously well received.

I recall a very warm summer afternoon when I was disturbed, and was praying for light on my future course. I took my Bible to see if I could get light. I opened it, and was reading about the young Joseph's dreams, and said, "Oh, this is not to my mood today." I turned to the New Testament, still praying in my heart for light. Now it was to the story of the Joseph who was warned in a dream to take the mother and young child and flee into Egypt, and I said, "There's nothing here to give me light," and almost impatiently turned the pages. This time, I had opened to the story of Peter's vision on the housetop of Simon the tanner of Joppa. I closed my Bible feeling I was getting no light on my future. But I said to myself, "Why could not I be guided by a dream?"

I was tired, and presently threw myself across the foot of my bed and fell asleep almost instantly, and awakened very soon. I said to myself, "Well, this is surely curious! I have been dreaming that I was

tossing on the waves of the ocean, going over to England to ask Josephine Butler what to do next.” Then it occurred to me that I had been reading about being guided by dreams, and after a little thought I wrote a letter to Mrs. Butler, telling of my perplexity as to what to do next, but as guardedly as one would write to a great personage about oneself.

I wish I had at hand a copy of the pamphlet Mrs. Butler wrote, in which she tells of the receipt of this letter, and of her first impulse to put it aside with only a casual glance; but in the end she became interested and wrote asking me to come to England and consult with her Committee with a view to my going to India to do some investigating work there that was very much needed. This proposal chimed with Miss Willard’s proposal, referred to previously, that I make a trip around the world for the W.C.T.Union—the journey which I had consented to take. It did not occur to me at the time the latter proposal was made (which was before the correspondence with Mrs. Butler) that Miss Willard had herself felt that it would be better for me to pursue my purity activities where it could be done with less sensation because of the Wisconsin episode. I now think that was in her mind. For the newspapers of the whole country had been stirred up, and the law passed in Wisconsin was doing the desired work.

THE ALL-SUFFICIENT GOD

All my lifetime I have been poor, and had I waited for money and time to do what I saw was needed, what God has accomplished through me would never have come to pass. I am saying this particularly for young Christian men and women who have a longing for a place of usefulness in God’s vineyard. My life motto has been, “I can do all things THROUGH CHRIST, who strengtheneth me.” I find that it is He and His strengthening that are needed, and the time and money is supplied to those who will go out with faith and courage.

It was decided that Mrs. Elizabeth Wheeler Andrew, a little older and far more accomplished and talented than I, should accompany me. She had consented, and was already in England when I began the journey from my Illinois home. I had made lecture engagements all along the route to New York, which I thought would give me enough money to cross the Atlantic and join Mrs. Andrew. But my throat failed me after I got under way, and I was obliged to lie up in hotels and the bills ate up all my profits. I reached Berea, Ohio, for meetings with an almost empty purse, wondering if I must turn back home and give it up.

I went to my bedroom, in the home where I was entertained, and shut myself in for prayer over the situation, as soon as my meetings would permit. The fact stared me in the face that it had been declared inconvenient for the two or three places to give me any other date than the time I had missed when my throat was disabled; and other places further on had been obliged to cancel their engagements with me.

I was fully satisfied that all this was according to a lesson the Lord had to teach me, for it was an unusual combination of seemingly unfortunate conditions. As I prayed there came a challenge to my faith, with the verse, “Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the Gospel’s but he shall

receive an hundredfold, now in this time, houses, etc., etc., with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.” It is possible that this promise, being cast in the past tense, may have reference to such forsaking in the crisis of that time, but it was meant for me also, when it came to me that day with such force. The struggle to believe and accept the terms for my future was sharp, but soon settled. I went forward, earning by the way barely money enough to reach New York City, and with nothing for my voyage to England. But I found on arrival money from several unexpected sources in letters awaiting me. God sends no one out to labour without wages. Although I have made no charge for my services (with a few reasonable exceptions) since that experience, God has never failed me.

MRS. JOSEPHINE BUTLER

What a wonderful event it was at last to go and see Mrs. Butler in London, at her request! We had a long talk, in which she explained the situation in India, and told us that she thought American women might go about in India with less notice taken of their movements than British women; and also she thought a woman physician might visit hospitals and learn facts that the two men commissioners who had gone before us to India, had failed to glean. A prayer and an embrace ended the interview, and we knew she had the conviction that we were sent for the purpose.

I shall not forget the sacred influences of that interview till we meet again in the other world. Her presence, her manner, her open Bible on the desk before her, all betokened that we had had the privilege of an interview with one who lived near to God, in holy converse with Him. As we drove away in the cab we uttered not a syllable to each other, to break the sense of the Divine Presence that we had brought away from her.

The situation in India, which Mrs. Butler and her associates were determined to correct, in a few words was this: the military powers had been in the habit of having procured from 20 to 30 native young women, to place with each regiment of soldiers for immoral purposes. Soldiers were forbidden to consort with other native women, and these, called in early days “Queen’s women,” were kept in health for the soldiers. To procure young and attractive girls, procuresses had been salaried, and given written credentials often, to the effect that they were diligent and enterprising in procuring girls. In the course of our investigations we read these letters of recommendation in the possession of procuresses, yet in the same business, signed by British captains, colonels, and other officers. But the system of paying a salary to such women had been dropped, as a result of the exposure of the practice in England.

Soldiers returning from India, and men in India, had reported, through the public press and in other ways, enough of the iniquity for the Abolitionist Workers to obtain a hearing in the House of Commons, and get a resolution passed, in 1888, forbidding the compulsory examination of women and other phases of the iniquity. But the evil only took on slightly different features externally, while the same practices were continued.

The task laid upon us by Mrs. Butler’s Committee (The British Committee for the Abolition of State Regulation of Vice), was this: When, in the course of our trip around the world, we came to India,

we were to hold no public meetings, but enter the country as quietly as possible, and make our investigations as cautiously as possible. Two commissioners, as I have said, had been sent out before us, but had not been cautious enough, perhaps, and for other reasons had failed to secure the desired PROOF of the state of things that existed. Information this British Committee had; they wanted the proof. We visited ten cantonments, some of them two or three times over, and sent home our report to the English friends, and continued on our way, going next to Australia and New Zealand, and holding public meetings. Soon we received a cablegram, "Silence concerning India imperative."

Not long after the cable came we received a call to return to England to give our evidence in person before a Government Departmental Committee appointed in the name of Lord Kimberly, but in reality by Mr. Gladstone, who expressed himself as "simply horrified" after reading our confidential report.

In due course we proved our statements in the face of General Lord Roberts' denial of the truth of the story. The gentlemen associated with Mrs. Butler in her crusade were nearly all members of Parliament, the leader being the eminent Sir James Stansfeld, who was twice a member of Gladstone's Cabinet, but who resigned to identify himself with Mrs. Butler's work.

We had given a description before the Committee that received our evidence, of certain books, hospital records, etc., from which we had gained much knowledge of the state of matters, and these were cabled for, impounded, and sent to London. We were able to place our evidence as recorded by a stenographer weeks before, alongside of statements in these books, and thus prove our case by prima-facie evidence.

Lord Roberts was brought before the Committee (he was in England at that time), and his effort to refute our statements broke down. He left the Committee and wrote to it an apology for having denied our statements, requesting that it be embodied in the report that went to Parliament. This apology made a sensational ripple around the whole world. We had plenty of evidence of this from the press reports and in the crowded houses that greeted us wherever we went, after we were set free to return and continue our lecture trip around the world. These events, with a campaign of meetings in the larger towns and cities of Great Britain, took place between 1891 and 1894.

"TO LOOSE THE BANDS OF WICKEDNESS"

I should like to linger to tell something of the pitiful cases of horrible outrage of human rights that we encountered during these investigations in India. We embodied them in a book, "The Queen's Daughters in India," which had a large circulation—some thirty-five thousand copies, if I remember correctly. The Departmental Committee sent its report to Parliament, and it stands embodied in a large Government Blue Book which can be procured. Our own book is out of print.

But may I here answer a question put to us, those days, wherever we went: "But how did you manage to get at the facts and secure the proof?"

We were recommended by the British Committee to a gentleman in Calcutta who could be trusted to keep our presence in India a secret. He advised us to go northward and take into our confidence a certain missionary who would be able to give us good advice as to how to begin, and who could be trusted. We went, and we interviewed him. He could not hide his impatience at two women who would undertake (to his mind) so unseemly a task; it was only fit work for men, and anyway was a “wild goose chase” on our part. But seeing he could not persuade us to give up the task, he demanded, “Well, how will you begin? What are your plans?” This moved me to righteous indignation, and I replied that since he was not disposed to help us, we had nothing to tell him, excepting that what pagan women had to suffer at the hands of men from a Christian country, certainly it was right and proper for Christian women to investigate, and if there was no human being to help us, GOD WOULD, and we should GET THE FACTS.

This interview brought us into the very place where God could answer our helpless cry, and prove the truth of my declaration that we would get the facts.

We left that station, went to another, and shut ourselves up for a day of prayer and fasting. We agreed together that we would not discuss projects, nor try to influence each other, but pray and fast till God, who had sent us out together, would give us each the same counsel, for “In the mouth of two or three witnesses is everything established,” and we wished to make no mistakes. We had already agreed not to play the part of detectives, and pose as something we were not or prevaricate if we were apprehended and questioned. We must act the part of Christian women.

At the end of that day, as twilight drew on, we announced to each other that we thought we had light. Comparing, we found to our joy that we agreed. We adopted the plan, and we worked daily in accordance with such plans (except, of course, the fasting), and had no serious difficulty. We appealed to a friend of yet another Station, telling her in part our object in India, and she secured for us an interpreter precisely to our liking. This latter person was not interested in anything beyond singing her Gospel songs and preaching the Gospel; she never understood any further motive for our going about. She could tell nobody anything more, though several questioned her who did not venture to question us.

We walked through the lines of encampments twice, and the sentinels stationed about to keep intruders out did not seem to see us. We went on to the little tents for women, at the back, and spent an hour once, perhaps less time at the other place, and no one disturbed us, while we took down the women’s own testimonies. We visited women in sort of barracks repeatedly, and took their testimony. Not that they understood it was testimony, but as soon as they heard the story of grace our interpreter told them, hearts melted, tears flowed, and they were eager to tell us how they had been brought against their will, or by trickery or thoughtlessly, into such a horrible life. More than once, pagans as they were, they would not let us go till they had gathered round us, and prayed to Allah, or the gods, or to our God, to help us to help them to get out of virtual imprisonment. We interviewed about 500 such pitiful creatures.

Once we drew up before the abode of the “Queen’s Women,” and sprang out of our cab before noticing what we were to encounter. To our dismay, it was surrounded by a high brick wall with pounded glass on top, and a tall Sikh guard was standing before the door, rifle on his shoulder, to keep intruders out. For an instant our hearts sank, for if he questioned the interpreter we did not

know what she might reply (we learned to trust her God-given wisdom later). But she saw in his presence only a chance to “win another soul”; and as she handed him a tract and began her story, we slipped past him into the place; and as these women (constantly associated with British soldiers) knew a little English, we got along very well till our interpreter followed. The guard had satisfied himself that we were “all right.”

Just as the door of the city gate opened “of its own accord” to Peter, so doors opened to us, and we sent back to England abundance of evidence of what we were asked to be able to prove. And no one was more pleased than the missionary who had pronounced our intentions “a wild good chase.” God did show both him and us that it was the legitimate business of Christian women to investigate what pagan women suffer, and He would give abundant help.

How pleased Mrs. Butler was! She said, “Among my friends are men of high political station, often brought in contact with the sordid side of life, so that their faith in God was almost gone. They have confessed this to me, and have added, “But the story those two women tell has restored it. There is a God who intervenes in human affairs, if we call on Him in our extremity.”

REST AND FELLOWSHIP

Somewhere, during those eventful years, we had a long time of beautiful rest in Switzerland. A lady placed her chalet at our disposal for the summer months. Two English friends went with us, and a third friend, class-mate of my own in Medical School, joined us. Then Josephine Butler came to spend a week at the hotel closeby.

Each day of that week, after Mrs. Butler had breakfasted and got off her morning mail, she came up the hill to us for the rest of the day. We watched for her to emerge from her hotel, and one of us would run down the hill to take her arm and help her up. Wonderful days! I shall never know such a treat again. We dined together, on very simple fare, took our “forty winks” of sleep, had our afternoon tea, then supped. After that we went into the gallery (an enclosed glass verandah, running the full length of the chalet), watched the sunset, the afterglow on the snow-capped mountain peaks, and, gathering about this great Mother, like children, listened in sacred quiet while she told us the deep things God had taught her in her eventful life. Then the day ended in her prayer that seemed to carry us up to the very throne of God for blessing. We accompanied her back to her hotel near the midnight hour, each time; and when she finally left us, hid by the roadside as the diligence passed, we almost smothered her in huge bouquets of wild flowers we had gathered for the purpose.

But Mrs. Butler was not always serious. It seemed to be the wonderful works of God in the sunset and Alpenglow, as well as the great towering, overshadowing peaks all about us, that solemnized us towards night. She had a very gay and joyous spirit. She seemed to have known almost everybody worth knowing, not only in her own country, but in France, Switzerland, Holland, and Italy, and she knew books besides, and art, and humble folk, and outcasts of both sexes. But others with more gifted pen than mine have written of her, and I will leave it to them to describe the greatest woman of God of the nineteenth century.

OTHER WORK IN THE ORIENT

About the time we finished our India work, a Royal Commission was appointed to examine into the Opium Trade between India and China, “to see if black was not white”—to use the ironic expression of the anti-opium agitators. The chairman of that Commission was believed to own large opium estates in the Orient, and the majority on it were said to favor the trade. The impression was given, in its report, that opium was beneficial to its users. There was a minority report, signed by two, against the trade.

An anti-opium organization asked us to make a private investigation for them, and for this purpose we entered many opium dens and dens of vice where opium was used (in a second trip to the Orient), securing much testimony from the victims themselves, as to the destruction of character wrought upon them by its use. We got abundance of evidence that opium fed the social vice, and that the two went hand in hand. We returned to England and were active in a campaign throughout the country, in which we told our story, and rejoiced greatly with our anti-opium friends that through the goodness of God this Commission’s report did not have as damaging an effect as had been feared.

We were also approached, through a confidential worker at the Colonial Office, London, with a request from the Marquis of Ripon, Colonial Secretary at that time, to make a quiet investigation into the slave trade in Chinese girls for immoral purposes, in the regions of Singapore and Hong Kong, with a view to his strengthening the law of those regions for the protection of women and girls. In the end, we carried the written report of this work in person to the Colonial Secretary, and later had a communication from that office as regarded the changes made. One “Protector” of the girls, at least, was retired from his lofty official position and went into business in London more in keeping with his station—he opened a cigar stand.

But it must be said that the change in the laws in India and in Singapore and Hong Kong, by itself, would have accomplished little; it was the dragging into the light of public intelligence the details of the wrongs committed, and the demand that such wrongs should cease; and the education of people in an unselfish interest in the welfare of their helpless fellow-beings, that did good.

WOMAN’S PART IN THE GOSPEL

Now to return to an earlier time. On my way to China, in 1879, on shipboard, I recall that I confidently asserted that it was neither desirable nor necessary for women to preach the Gospel; it was unbecoming—and this though I had gone against the same prejudices to study medicine, in those old-fashioned days. But I had only been in China a few months when my opinion began to undergo change, as to woman’s part in the Gospel.

Finding a sex-biased translation in the Chinese translation of the Bible, I one day asked a male missionary about it. He said that undoubtedly it was so rendered because of pagan prejudice against the ministry of women. I was shocked. It had never before entered my mind that such a thing could be. This led to my tracing other signs, both in the Chinese and the English Bible, that pointed in the

same direction, when I consulted my Greek Testament. Could it be possible that men allowed prejudice to color Scripture translation?

My interest grew; I devoted myself to more careful and critical study of the Greek New Testament, and later, of the Greek Old Testament; and I added the study of Hebrew for comparison in the Old Testament. But my knowledge of Hebrew is more limited than of Greek.

As years have passed I have become impressed that it was according to a Divine plan that the above-recited investigations in the Orient should have gone forward hand in hand, as it were, with my Bible studies—for nearly every moment of my many sea voyages and railway journeys was spent in these studies. (Fortunately my early training in a home crowded with nine children and little privacy had developed powers of detachment from surroundings, allowing mental concentration).

The question often confronted me: “How can officials of high standing as Christian gentlemen be so indifferent to the wrongs of women and girls, so complacent in dealing with the sensuality of men, and so ready to condone their offences against decency?” We had met this again and again in our work. Lord Roberts himself—and think of his noble record in other regards—had sent out his orders to under-officials to secure “younger and more attractive girls” for the British soldiers, so that they would not be attracted to the women outside cantonments.

Sir John Bowring, who wrote those beautiful hymns, “Watchman, Tell Us of the Night” and “In the Cross of Christ I Glory,” had, by his legislation at Hong Kong, brought into existence an ordinance making it punishable for any Chinese girl to go anywhere else to live but with her owner, who kept her for immoral purposes, and was known as her “pocket mother” because the old hag’s money had purchased her. A white-haired, old gentleman who was introduced and recommended to us at a missionary gathering for his saintly character and liberal support of missions, to whom we went and complained that we had found scores of little Chinese slave girls, from seven years old and up, tricked out as prostitutes, in training, in dens of vice for opium smoking also, merely replied, “Oh, I know it, but what can I do? I caught a whole handful of them once, and had the doctor examine them. He found them all virgins—so I could do nothing yet.” And what would this man have done had he found them not virgins? He knew very well, but he did not know that we had traced his record and knew. As an officer at the “Protectorate” for Chinese girls, he would have considered it his duty to see that they were placed behind bars by their “pocket mothers” in dens to which they would be consigned; that was all. That certain men should do such things is bad enough, but that such a man, after we had thoroughly exposed his tactics, and his conduct had become known and was believed, could yet be given public recognition as a Christian brother, and given by Christians a farewell reception when he left the Colony—this is what puzzled one. I had an argument, later, with one of the men missionaries, the very man who accompanied us in our investigations and knew the facts, and even he contended that the reception was only a due acknowledgment of what the Christian gentleman had done of good in the Colony.

I do not mean to imply for a moment that any of these men (and I could tell many more such incidents)—that any of these men were vicious in their PERSONAL habits; I am speaking of their OFFICIAL acts—acts which cannot but sweep hundreds, perhaps thousands, of girls into prostitution.

I had reached my own conclusion about the matter, and it was fully corroborated in the course of time by Josephine Butler, of whom it must be acknowledged that she penetrated with deeper insight into the problems of the social evil than any woman who has ever lived.

“GOD’S WORD TO WOMEN”

One day when we were holding meetings at Chester, England, we received a call from Mrs. Butler to come to London as soon as we could spare a day—she had a message from God for us, as to our future plans—and we went.

Since her message for Mrs. Andrew does not relate to the present line of thought, I will pass it by. But she said to me something like this: “The time has come for you to stop these purity addresses as you have been giving them; they are wearing out your nerves, but the public will keep you on them forever. Turn away from the painful details of your Oriental investigation, and refuse to talk of them. Hold some Christian meetings of a general sort. You are well equipped for such work by your Bible studies. Do not think of this change of plan as an abandonment of purity work; your record in that line will always carry its influence. But now turn your attention in a different direction.”

I am unable to describe with what joy I welcomed this advice. Then I opened my heart freely to Mrs. Butler, telling her how I longed to give Bible instruction on the lines of purity, and to show the importance of the freedom of women for the purification of society; and how I had been, all along, preparing for such activity. She entered most heartily into the plan, and after long discussion and prayer over the matter, we found we three, Mrs. Butler, Mrs. Andrew and myself were fully agreed that the social evil would never be got rid of so long as the subordination of woman to man was taught within the body of Christians. (Let me explain here, that “subordination” and “subjection” as a Christian duty were two different thoughts, in the mind of both Paul and Peter, as stands proved by the fact that both of these apostles enjoin “subjection” as a mutual duty of all Christians to each other—Ephesians 5:21; 1 Pet 5:5).

Furthermore, we agreed that we must have the whole-hearted backing of the Christian Church in our purity crusade, and that we would not have it until men—came to understand that a woman is of as much value as a man; and they will not believe this until they see it plainly taught in the Bible. Hence the importance of my carrying my work into the Christian body.

I came away feeling like a bird set free from long imprisonment. I had longed to get out into this very work, but had felt held to the necessity of these public crusades against vice. After a few meetings more, if I remember correctly, we returned to America, and I plunged into Bible study.

Later we re-crossed the Atlantic, but this time there was no Josephine Butler to greet. God had taken her to Himself. I went, this time, in order to conduct my studies at various libraries replete with Biblical literature. I spent seven years in these studies, and in conjunction with them embodied what I learned in Lessons for a Women’s Correspondence Class, which form the body of my book, “God’s Word to Women.” This is my conclusion of the matter, and the message God has called me to

deliver to His people: Just so long as men imagine that a system of caste is taught in the Word of God, and that they belong to the upper caste while women are of the lower caste; and just so long as they believe that mere FLESH—fate—determines the caste to which one belongs; and just so long as they believe that, for the marriage relation, the translation of Genesis three-sixteen is correct, where it is made to teach the wife, “thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee” in that relation—JUST SO LONG will lust (which seeks its own) displace love, which “seeketh not its own,” breed discord in the marriage relation; loose matrimonial relations follow; and the destruction of young women into a prostitute class continue. And for very shame of matrimonial abuses, parents will not know how to teach purity to their children, nor ministers know how to preach it from the pulpit.

But place Christian women where God intends them to stand, on a plane of full equality with men, in the home and in the Church, where their faculties, their will, their consciences are controlled only by the God who made man and woman equal by creation, and who is “no respecter of persons”—then the world will become much purer than it is today, and mothers will have much better control over their children. For why should sons, at any rate, reverence or obey their mothers—creatures that they are taught to believe are of lower caste than themselves?

But the great hereditary law which Sarah discovered, which God confirmed by His command for Abraham to act in accordance with it (Genesis 21:12), and which St. Paul reiterates (Galatians 4:30), is as true today as it ever was—that a low-caste woman can bring forth only a low-caste son, whatever the father of the child may be; and men will only elevate themselves by elevating their wives to an equality with themselves.

And furthermore, since woman will always be the sex that bears and nurses the children, there is no emancipation of her sex from the dominion of the masculine sex, except her emancipation through Jesus Christ, Who softens her husband’s heart and causes him to recognize that in freeing her he but frees himself and his sons after him from the dominion of sin.

The foregoing concludes the series of articles written for the “Biblical Recorder.” When the question arose of publishing them in England, Dr. Bushnell desired to add the following:

SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER

When America entered the World War, at once unscrupulous, ambitious and ill-informed doctors began to plan healthy vice for the soldiers, and that, through the destruction of the constitutional rights of women. All “suspected” young girls as well as immoral ones, must be treated with the greatest indignity, and their reputation for chastity, in many cases, cruelly sacrificed, so that, as it was declared “innocent wives and children” should not suffer from diseases due to adultery on the part of husbands and fathers. Be sure the purpose was put in much smoother language than the TRUTH warranted.

Outrageous falsehoods were circulated about the utter rottenness of the Canadian and British armies, as a warning that Americans must do as they did on the Continent of Europe for the suppression of

diseases due to vice. The whole campaign was tricked out as a “Josephine Butler” crusade in favor or “Abolition.” But the “Abolition” really meant the precise opposite of Josephine Butler’s work; it meant the establishing of what Josephine Butler had spent her life in attacking. It was known as the “Social Hygiene” movement, and was headed by Dr. William F. Snow, of New York City, co-operating with the Surgeon-General at Washington.

It was necessary for me to turn aside from my activities in the Bible work and combat it to the best of my ability. Three times over, I addressed the President of the United States, every member of his Cabinet, and every senator and member of the House of Representatives with pamphlets—many with personal letters—all sorts of people were flooded with pamphlets in protest. I traveled throughout the State of California gathering up ghastly, but well authenticated, evidence as to the abuses growing out of the system that had been inaugurated—all apparently to no purpose. The work was heartbreaking. I had almost no sympathy or co-operation. Financial help was sent me from the English Abolitionists. A generous friend paid the expenses of my investigations throughout California, and one periodical—The Light—stood true to Abolition. So far as I know, we were completely beaten.

It has been claimed that the World War brought a flood of iniquity into our country; experienced workers for the abolition of State Regulated Vice, understand very well, how this system pollutes a country.

And then the falsely-called Birth-Control movement had to be combated. The leader of that movement has put it on record in print that the way for this abomination was opened by the “Social Hygiene” agitation. And just as many of the churches had led in the first mischievous movement, they have followed on into the second infamy. Whatever I could do has been done to combat the Birth-Control delusion, which will accomplish none of the good things it promises, but encourage illicit relations among old and young enormously.

Had women been trained within the Church on St. Paul’s ruling that “in Christ there can be no male and female”(r.v.) instead of their self-respect being constantly and persistently discouraged from development by discriminations against them as persons of lower caste in Church matters than men, we are safe in saying that these two wicked measures would not have had the ghost of a chance of ever disgracing it. But as it is, women, in Church matters, are much more inclined to consider what men wish to have, than what is morally best; and it will ever be so till the Holy Spirit is accorded the controlling power wrested from him. May God hasten the day when women shall awaken to the rights of Jesus Christ in them! May He hasten the day when they shall see that the one to whom we yield our conscience and will is accepted as our god, and be able to spell the word with a capital “G,”—woman’s God. May they soon learn that “No one can serve two masters—it always was, and always will be a question of God or man,—which?”

Two years ago, and a little more, I left my home and returned to China, to see what more I could do for the help of these people I love. With my advanced years, not much can be expected. But there is heart satisfaction in the endeavour.

Yours for Jesus Christ’s rights in Women,
Katharine C. Bushnell

EDITORIAL NOTE— The stay in China, though of short duration, was very fruitful; it was brought to a close by the Japanese attack on China, when Dr. Bushnell was shut up in Shanghai, mercifully preserved from harm, and eventually enabled to return to her home in California.

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**I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST
WHO STRENGTHENETH ME.**

Phil 4:13