Marriage. How much sorrow, misery, humiliation; how many tears and curses; what agony and suffering has this word brought to humanity. From its very birth, up to our present day, men and women grown under the iron yoke of our marriage institution, and there seems to be no relief, no way out of it. At all times, and in all ages, have the suppressed striven to break the chains of mental and physical slavery. After thousands of noble lives have been sacrificed at the stake and on the gallows, and others have perished in prisons, or at the merciless hands of inquisitions, have the ideas of those brave heroes been accomplished. Thus have religious dogmas, feudalism and black slavery been abolished, and new ideas, more progressive, broader and clearer, have come to the front, and again we see poor down trodden humanity fighting for its rights and independence. But the crudest, most tyrannical of all institutions - marriage, stands firm as ever, and woe unto those who dare to even doubt its sacredness. Its mere discussion is enough to infuriate not only Christians and conservatives alone, but even Liberals, Freethinkers, and Radicals. What is it that causes all these people to uphold marriage? What makes them cling to this prejudice? (for it is nothing else but prejudice). It is because marriage
relations, are the foundation of private property, ergo, the foundation of our cruel and inhuman system. With wealth and superfluity on one side, crime on the other, hence to abolish marriage, means to abolish everything above mentioned. Some progressive people are trying to reform and better our marriage laws. They no longer permit the church to interfere in their matrimonial relations, others even go further, they marry free, that is without the consent of the law, but, nevertheless, this form of marriage is just as binding, just as "sacred", as the old form, because it is not the form or the kind of marriage relation we have, but the thing, the thing itself that is objectionable, hurtful and degrading. It always gives the man the right and power over his wife, not only over her body, but also over her actions, her wishes; in fact, over her whole life. And how can it be otherwise? Behind the relations of any individual man and woman to each other, stands the historical age evolved relations between the two sexes in general, which have led up to the difference in the position and privileges of the two sexes today. Two young people come together, but their relation is largely determined by causes over which they have no control. They know little of each other, society has kept both sexes apart, the boy and the girl have been brought up along different lines. Like Olive Schreiner says in her Story of an African Farm "The boy has been taught to be, the girl to seem." Exactly; the boy is taught to be intelligent, bright, clever, strong, athletic, independent and selfreliant; to develop his natural faculties, to follow his passions and desires. The girl has been taught to dress, to stand before the looking glass and admire herself, to control her emotions, her passions, her wishes, to hide her mental defects and to combine what little intelligence and ability she has on one point, and that is, the quickest and best way to angle a husband, to get profitably married. And so it has come that the two sexes hardly understand each others nature, that their mental interest and occupations are different. Public opinion separates their rights and duties, their honor and dishonor very strictly from each other. The subject of sex is a sealed book to the girl, be-
than prostitution of the worst kind, with the only exception that the one is legal, the other illegal.

I cannot deal with the few exceptional cases of marriage which are based on love, esteem and respect; these exceptions only verify the rule. But whether legal or illegal, prostitution in any form is unnatural, hurtful and despicable, and I know only too well that the conditions cannot be changed until this infernal system is abolished, but I also know that it is not only the economic dependence of women which has caused her enslavement, but also her ignorance and prejudice, and I also know that it is not only the economic dependence of women which has caused her enslavement, but also her ignorance and prejudice, and I also know that many of my sisters could be made free even now, were it not for our marriage institutions which keep them in ignorance, stupidity and prejudice. I therefore consider it my greatest duty to denounce marriage, not only the old form, but the so-called modern marriage, the idea of taking a wife and housekeeper, the idea of private possession of one sex by the other. I demand the independence of woman; her right to support herself; to live for herself; to love whomever she pleases, or as many as she pleases. I demand freedom for both sexes, freedom of action, freedom in love and freedom in motherhood.

Do not tell me that all this can only be accomplished under Anarchy; this is entirely wrong. If we want to accomplish Anarchy, we must first have free women at least, those woman who are economically just as independent as their brothers are, and unless we have free women, we cannot have free mothers, and if mothers are not free, we cannot expect the young generation to assist us in the accomplishment of our aim, that is the establishment of an Anarchist society.

To you Freethinkers and Liberals who have abolished one God and created many whom you worship; you Radicals and Socialists, who still send your children to Sunday school, and all those who make concessions to the moral standard of to day; to all of you I
his wife is soon to become a mother, that she can not work, that
the expenses grow bigger, and that while he before managed to get
along with the small earning allowed him by his "kind" master, this
earning is not sufficient to support a family.

The girl who has spent her childhood, and part of her woman-
hood, in the factory, feels her strength leaving her and pictures to
herself the dreadful condition of ever having to remain a shopgirl,
ever certain of her work, she is, therefore, compelled to lookout
for a man, a good husband, which means one who can support
her, and give her a good home. Both, the man and the girl, marry
for the same purpose, with the only exception that the man is not
expected to give up his individuality, his name, his independence,
whereas, the girl has to sell herself, body and soul, for the pleasure
of being someone's wife; hence they do not stand on equal terms,
and where there is no equality there can be no harmony. The con-
sequence is that shortly after the first few months, or to make all
allowance possible, after the first year, both come to the conclusion
that marriage is a failure.

As their conditions grow worse and worse, and with the increase
of children the woman grows despondent, miserable, dissatisfied
and weak. Her beauty soon leaves her, and from hard work, sleep-
less nights, worry about the little ones and disagreement and quar-
rels with her husband, she soon becomes a physical wreck and
curses the moment that made her a poor man's wife. Such a dreary,
miserable life is certainly not inclined to maintain love or respect
for each other. The man can at least forget his misery in the com-
pany of a few friends; he can absorb himself in politics, or he can
drown his misfortune in a glass of beer. The woman is chained to
the house by a thousand duties; she cannot, like her husband, enjoy
some recreation because she either has no means for it, or she is
refused the same rights as her husband, by public opinion. She has
to carry the cross with her until death, because our marriage laws
know of no mercy, unless she wishes to lay bare her married life
before the critical eye of Mrs. Grundy, and even then she can only
break the chains which tie her to the man she hates if she takes
all the blame on her own shoulders, and if she has energy enough
to stand before the world disgraced for the rest of her life. How
many have the courage to do that? Very few. Only now and then it
comes like a flash of lightning that some woman, like the Princess
De Chimay, has had pluck enough to break the conventional bar-
rriers and follow her heart's desire. But this exception is a wealthy
woman, dependent upon no one. The poor woman has to consider
her little ones; she is less fortunate than her rich sister, and yet the
woman who remains in bondage is called respectable: never mind
if her whole life is a long chain of lies, deceit and treachery, she yet
dares to look down with disgust upon her sisters who have been
forced by society to sell their charms and affections on the street.
No matter how poor, how miserable a married woman may be, she
will yet think herself above the other, whom she calls a prostitute,
who is an outcast, hated and despised by everyone, even those who
do not hesitate to buy her embrace, look upon the poor wretch as
a necessary evil, and some goody goody people even suggest to
confine this evil to one district in New York, in order to "purify"
all other districts of the city. What a farce! The reformers might as
well demand that all the married inhabitants of New York be driven
out because they certainly do not stand morally higher than the
street woman. The sole difference between her and the married
woman is, that the one has sold herself into chattel slavery during
life, for a home or a title, and the other one sells herself for the
length of time she desires; she has the right to choose the man she
bestows her affections upon, whereas the married woman has no
right whatsoever; she must submit to the embrace of her lord, no
matter how loathsome this embrace may be to her, she must obey
his commands; she has to bear him children, even at the cost of
her own strength and health; in a word, she prostitutes herself ev-
ery hour, every day of her life. I can find no other name for the
horrid, humiliating and degrading condition of my married sisters