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Josiah Warren
Positions Defined
1853

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Positions Defined

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An impression is abroad, to some extent, that the “Equity movement” is necessarily characterized by an unusual latitude in the Marriage relations—I as one, protest against this idea. “The Sovereignty of every Individual” is as valid a warrant for retaining the present relations, as for changing them; and it is equally good for refusing to be drawn into any controversies or even conversations on the subject. I find no warrant in my “sovereignty” for invading, disturbing, or offending other people, whatever may be their sentiments or modes of life, while they act only at their own Cost: and would again and again reiterate in the most impressive possible manner that the greatest characteristic of this movement is its “INDIVIDUALITY”—that the persons engaged in it are required to act entirely as Individuals—not as a Combination or Organisation That we disclaim entirely, all responsibility for the acts, opinions, or reputations of each other. The principles of “Equity are as broad as the universe, embracing every possible diversity of character: I therefore do not look for conformity, and therefore repudiate all combined or partnership responsibilities, or reputations.

I suppose the world’s experience to be its great instructor, and if it has not had enough of isms and follies I disclaim all

right to oppose experiment, while the “Cost falls only upon the experimentors.” But for myself, so far from proposing or wishing to see any sudden and unprepared changes in the sexual relations, I am satisfied that they would be attended with more embarrassments and more disastrous consequences than their advocates or the public generally are aware of; and farther, I wish to have it understood as a general rule, that I decline even entertaining the subject, either for controversy or for conversation.

I again caution all persons not to make me responsible for the acts and words of others; it is my right to have the making of my own reputation, and I wish them to remember, that no person either in his or her deportment or conversation, or as writer or lecturer is to be understood as a representative of me, unless my sanction is specifically given, to every idea thus advanced; and that no Newspaper or Journal is to be understood as an organ for me, except so far as it may have my signature to the articles it may contain.

Village of Modern Times, Aug. 1853.