

Annie Brown Adams to [Alexander Ross]

s.l., circa 1870-1880s

Autograph manuscript signed, 4 pages.

The struggle for a married woman's rights will be a longer and a harder fought battle than any other that the world has [*inserted*: ever] known. Men have been taught that they are absolute monarchs in their families, (even in a republican country,) ever since the world began, and that to kill a wife by inches, is not murder, women are taught from infancy that to betray [*inserted*: by look or word] or even to mention to an intimate friend the secrets of their married life, is worse than disgraceful, There in lies the power of the man, He knows that no matter what he does, the woman will keep silent as the grave [2]

I could tell you things that have come under my observation, that would make the blood boil in your veins, And these things are going on day after day without let or hinderance. "Wives be obedient to your husbands in all things!"

Women are taught that their only hope of heaven, is to "endure to the end," That it is a religious duty to "submit themselves to their husbands in all things," I know a man who tells his wife "I own you, I have got a deed (marriage license and certificate) to you and got it recorded, I have a right to do what I please to you," And the law of a Christian land says she shall submit, to indecencies that would make a respectable devil blush for [3] shame, Man, who is said to have been created in the image of God, is the lowest animal in the world, and the most cruel. It shatters my faith in the goodness of God, so much that it makes me tremble for my own reason, at times.

I do not envy St. Paul the eternal privilege of hearing the agonizing cry, that is wrung from the hearts of so many wretched women, "How long oh Lord must I endure all this,"

"Wives obey your husbands!"

"Servants obey your masters!"

I wonder if he is proud of his work today?

I am glad that you link to tobacco with with [sic] liquor as intemperance. It seems to me that the damage [4] it is doing is almost equal to that of drinking. Its [*inserted: use is*] is spreading so rapidly of late, among the boys and women. Nearly all of our best writers put a cigar in the mouth of their heroes. Did it ever occur to you to think of the [*struck: damage*] [*inserted: mischief*] that the author of the “Tom Brown at Rugby and Oxford” books, did to the world, when he wrote those two popular works? By making his heroes continually smoke and drink?

I confess that I am unable to understand the old story, of God created a set of beings that he could not control, and then getting angry and revengeful at his poor handiwork. Why could not He have created them respectably decent in the first place? I keep asking. But this is enough too much, of this.