

Private

Pall Mall Gazette  
Northumberland Street  
London.

AL/3008

Aug 5. 1885.

Mr Cobb.

Copy forwarded  
by Mrs Cobb

Dear Madam.

It is unpardonable that I should have been so long in acknowledging your priceless contribution to the controversy in which I have been privileged to take a leading part.

Believe me, it is not because I underestimated the inestimable service which such a chivalrous testimony has rendered, & will render, in the cause. I have simply had no time, to put two words together, for any body except printer's devils & such people as cannot wait.

And then I wanted to write you a nice letter, a letter that would say at least a little of what I felt when I read your generous vindication. This is the first night I have had half an hour's leisure, since your precious manifesto arrived.

Thank you for it with all my heart. I am pleased, more than pleased, overjoyed at the extraordinarily kind reception which ladies have given to the "Maiden Tribute". It fills me with new hope, for one of the great difficulties that stand in the way of dealing with this question is the extent to which good women cut off all the good influences of their sex from the women who have gone wrong.

If you only damned the men who corrupt women with one tenth part of the anathema you pronounce upon the women who are corrupted, what a change there would be. In the "Maiden Tribute", I do not see one hard word about any women, except those who made themselves agents for the ruin of women. I do not believe that there has ever been a popular movement in favour of purity before, in which fallen women were uniformly spoken of with real respect & admiration. Almost all previous movements have had a tendency to punish the crying woman. This at least is solely directed against the tempting man. It is a change for once to strike at the strong, instead of assailing the weak.

It was very good & kind of you taking so much trouble about the matter, & I am afraid that some of the unregenerate of your sex will have said many unkind things to you about it. But I think you will feel with me that the issuing of such a veritable manifesto was a great & telling blow dealt against the enemy at a very important juncture in the fight. Pray thank for me all those who helped you in the matter.

I feel ashamed, humiliated at the kindness with which I - so unworthy - have been overwhelmed by good women. I cannot thank you as I ought.

God bless you & help me to be faithful to the cause, which now more than ever is the cause of woman.

Believe me to be  
Yours very faithfully  
William T. Stead.