307 S. Main St.,
Wichita, Kansas, 8/28/27.

Dear Miss Tarbell:

Since writing you I have reread your letter, and am annoyed to find that I have omitted to mention several things of which you speak, and so am taking the closing hours of this Sunday evening to remedy, in some measure, the defect.

No, I have not read "The Immoral Marriage", but hope to do so before many moons. I shall not be astonished to find that Miss Atherton and I hold like views on that subject. I think that the marriage of Socrates and Xantippe was such a marriage on the side of Socrates. Not so with Xantippe. The scene in the prison described in the Phaedo makes it clear that she loved him sincerely and deeply. She did not resent the intrusion of his companions, which was to rob her of the last day with her husband. Her remark that this would be his last conversation with them was full of sympathy for him. That could have been possible only in a woman of really fine character. I doubt if Aspasia could have done anything finer.

Socrates, on the other hand, had no appreciation of this human and intellectual sympathy in his wife. He was a kindly man in his way. He took a bath just before his death to save the women the trouble of thus preparing his body for burial.

Plato had none of that sense of aloofness from his wife. He and Aspasia were most congenial. Their union was unlawful only because the law of Athens made it impissible for an Athenian to marry out of his own country. As the writer of the chapter on the Greek Lasy, a chapter which the ass't librarian found for me, says, it was a perfect parallel to the case of George Eliot. And it is entirely possible that Aspasia appreciated Socrates more clearly than Xantippe did . That is not the point. X. loved S. because she saw those fine traits in his character that set him apart. No doubt that is just the reason why A. married Plato. Aspasia was trained through many years to fine discrimination and attreciation. Poor X. had no such training. But would Aspasia, if Plato had neglected her, have resented it as vigorously as Xantippe did?

Of course it all depends on the reason Xantippe had in marrying him. There may be nothing to my suggestion. But if she had married him without any such apptrciation, how could have continued to love him as she undoubredly did, and how could she have made the clearly sympathetic remark about the last conversationwith his friend? The Phaedo tells us that wjen his friends came in she was holding 'his child" in her arms. I have assumed that it was their child. If so, she could not have been much more than forty-five years old, while he was about seventy. A son is spoken of in the Phaedo, a youth, but it is not clear whether he was Xantippe's son or not. I have ignored the existence of both of these children, becouse I just didn't know what to do with them. No other mention is made of them in the Phaedo.

Now, granting these not unreasonableness of these assumptions, and taking into consideration the scene in the prison, and the deductions from them, I think that the "sweet reasonableness" of the interpretaion of Xantippe becomes moes evident. Haven't we all known women who have suffered much at the hands of their husbands to rember them with the tenderest solicitude? All their foults are forgotten, and their memory is hallowed. So it was with Xantippe.

Now that I have made this all as clear as mud, Good night.

Walter Graves.

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