

# THE FREEWOMAN

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## BONDWOMEN.

IT is a wholly pertinent matter that the temerarious persons who launch THE FREEWOMAN should be asked, "Who are the Freewomen?" Where are the women of whom and for whom you write who are free? Can they be pointed out, or named by name? There must be, say, ten in the British Isles. The question is pertinent enough, but it is difficult to answer, because its answer must of necessity become personal. We might, perhaps, hazard the name of one Freewoman who has become a sufficiently national figure to make her mention impersonal—Ellen Terry. There at least is one, and for the rest the inquisitors must be content with being enabled to arrive at the conception of Freewomen by way of a description of Bondwomen.

Bondwomen are distinguished from Freewomen by a spiritual distinction. Bondwomen are the women who are not separate spiritual entities—who are not individuals. They are complements merely. By habit of thought, by form of activity, and largely by preference, they round off the personality of some other individual, rather than create or cultivate their own. Most women, as far back as we have any record, have fitted into this conception, and it has borne itself out in instinctive working practice.

And in the midst of all this there comes a cry that woman is an individual, and that because she is an individual she must be set free. It would be nearer the truth to say that if she is an individual she *is* free, and will act like those who are free. The doubtful aspect in the situation is as to whether women are or can be individuals—that is, free—and whether there is not danger, under the circumstances, in labelling them free, thus giving them the liberty of action which is allowed to the free. It is this doubt and fear which is behind the opposition which is being offered the vanguard of those who are "asking for" freedom. It is the kind of fear which an engineer would have in

guaranteeing an arch equal to a strain above its strength. The opponents of the Freewomen are not actuated by spleen or by stupidity, but by dread. This dread is founded upon ages of experience with a being who, however well loved, has been known to be an inferior, and who has accepted all the conditions of inferiors. Women, women's intelligence, and women's judgments have always been regarded with more or less secret contempt, and when woman now speaks of "equality" all the natural contempt which a higher order feels for a lower when it presumes bursts out into the open. This contempt rests upon quite honest and sound instinct, so honest, indeed, that it must provide all the charm of an unaccustomed sensation for fine gentlemen like the Curzons and Cromers and Asquiths to feel anything quite so instinctive and primitive. With the women opponents it is another matter. These latter apart, however, it is for would-be Freewomen to realise that for them this contempt is the healthiest thing in the world, and that those who express it honestly feel it; that these opponents have argued quite soundly that women have allowed themselves to be used, ever since there has been any record of them; and that if women had had higher uses of their own they would not have foregone them. They have never known women formulate imperious wants, this in itself implying lack of wants, and this in turn implying lack of ideals. Women as a whole have shown nothing save "servant" attributes. All those activities which presuppose the master qualities, the standard-making, the law-giving, the moral-framing, belong to men. Religions, philosophies, legal codes, standards in morals, canons in art have all issued from men, while women have been the "followers," "believers," the "law-abiding," the "moral," the conventionally admiring. They have been the administrators, the servants, living by borrowed precept, receiving orders, doing hodmen's work. For note, though some men must be



servants, all women are servants, and all the masters are men. That is the difference and distinction. The servile condition is common to all women. Consider, for instance, the wife of the politician. She plays round irresponsibly, helping out the politician's work; the parson's wife—she is the hard-working, unpaid assistant of her husband; the working-man's wife ekes out a straitened existence for herself by allocating the modest wages which the workman, and not she, has earned. Women's very virtues are those of a subordinate class. Women are long-suffering, adaptable, dutiful, faithful, and with unlimited capacity for sacrifice. Even if in such matters as sex, where women are considered more "moral" than men, because women recognise intuitively that men *think* more, they pay their homage as from a lower to a higher authority, by allowing men to frame their standards even *in* morals. It is because woman is thus, and not otherwise, that she is so useful to man—his "comforter." For man, woman has become a kind of human poultice, or, more poetically, the illusion softening reality. This, coupled with the fact that she is also man's "female," accounts for all the poetic adulation which men have offered to women. But it is not to poetry, but to blunt prose, that one must turn to get at man's real estimate of woman's place in the scheme of things. Hear what he says in plain prose, when woman presumes to speak of equality and "freedom." Out of his own experience of her, he knows her to be a follower, one who has always been ready to sacrifice herself to him and his interests. He would have sacrificed himself for nothing, save his own ideas; but she has always revelled sombrely in sacrificing herself for anything or anybody, for duty, for peace, husband, parents, children. And this, after all, is what speaks far more eloquently than a tome of argument to the ordinary man. It tells him that nothing has ever crossed her mind regarding herself which has appeared to her too good to be sacrificed to anything on earth, itself excepting. He therefore quite naturally argues that she has acted like a second because she felt herself a second.

How women have fallen into this position is a moot point. It is yet to be decided whether they ever did fall—where man and woman have not been, from their creation, master and servant. If otherwise, and if woman did "fall," the reason why is yet to be assigned. It is quite beside the point to say women were "crushed" down. If they were not "down" in themselves—i.e., weaker in mind—no equal force could have crushed them "down." There can be no over-reaching *in the long run* with mind. In the long run, mind plays on its own merits. It can neither receive nor give quarter. Those who are "down" are inferior. When change takes place in the thing itself—i.e., when it becomes equal or superior—by the nature of its own being it rises. So woman, if ever equal, must have sunk on the ground of inferiority. Whether this inferiority arose through the disabilities arising out of child-bearing, or whether it arose through women giving up the game—i.e., bartering themselves for the sake of the protection of men—it is difficult to say. Probably in her desire for love continued, for protection, for keeping the man near her, she slipped into the rôle of making herself useful to him, serving *him*, giving him always more love and more, more service and more, until, on the one hand, she acquired the complete "servant" mind, and he, on the other, gained the realisation that her "usefulness" was of greater moment to him than the fret of the tie which retained him.

At the present time, when man's adventurous and experimental mind has made much of her

"usefulness" useless, woman finds herself cut off from her importantly useful sphere, equipped with the mind of a servant, and with the reputation of one. She thus finds herself in a position in which she is compelled to do one of two things—i.e., remain solely as the man's protected female, or, making what may or may not be a successful effort, endeavour to take her place as a master. It is this effort to find her place among the masters which is behind the feminist movement; and such a statement of the feminist case is a refutation of the arguments of all those who maintain that there is no duality of interest between men and women. At the present time, there *is* duality, and duality in this connection will cease to exist only when women sink back into the position of females with nothing beyond, or when they stand recognised as "masters" among other "masters," considering their sex just as such an incidental concern as men consider theirs.

But to return to the Bondwomen. It seems difficult to realise how the females of a virile race could have been content to remain in a permanently subordinate position. It can only be accounted for upon an understanding of the stupefying influence of security with irresponsibility. And this is what "protection" always means for the "protected." To begin with, by securing the "protection" of a man, a woman rids herself of the responsibility of earning her own living. Following upon this beginning, so many pleasures accrue that under their influence women are soothed into such a willing acceptance of their position that they are unable to see the unspiritedness of it. Moreover, besides having "protection" and maintenance, they achieve physical maturity; they have the great adventure of having children; they secure companions and avoid the loneliness of existence; they have the flattery which smooths it, and they live easily under a ready-made code and under the sanction of the communal blessing.

For this protected position women give up all first-hand power. Really, the power to work and to think. All the power they achieve is merely derivative. They allow to slide past them those powerful incentives which keep up the strain of effort—that is, individual public honour, wealth, titles, decorations, the bits of ribbon. These go to men. To women are offered the great soporifics—comfort and protection. How difficult and hard is a woman's choice made! It is almost too hard. Nothing but one thing—the sense of quality, the sense that a woman has gifts, the sense that she is a superior, a master—can give her the strength to slip the comfort and protection and to be content to seize the "love" in passing, to suffer the long strain of effort, and to bear the agony of producing creative work. Having this sense, they will learn that freedom is born in the individual soul, and that no outer force can either give it or take it away; that only Freewomen can be free, or lead the way to freedom. They will learn that their freedom will consist in appraising their own worth, in setting up their own standards and living up to them, and putting behind them for ever their rôle of complacent self-sacrifice. For none can judge of another soul's value. The individual has to record its own. A morality begotten in a community where one-half are born servants may glibly say that it is woman's highest rôle to be the comforter of men and children; but it is the truth, and men and women both must learn it, that while to be a human poultice is to have great utility, it does not offer the conditions under which vivid new life-manifestations are likely to show themselves, either in the "Comforter" or the "Comforted."



## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE chief event of this week is our own first appearance. The publication of THE FREEWOMAN marks an epoch. It marks the point at which Feminism in England ceases to be impulsive and unaware of its own features, and becomes definitely self-conscious and introspective. For the first time, feminists themselves make the attempt to reflect the feminist movement in the mirror of thought. That this can be done argues at once the strength of the movement, and the conscious knowledge of that strength. If at times to some the reflected images which appear in THE FREEWOMAN appear harsh and unfair, we would ask those to whom they so appear to show the tolerance and patience which we believe is the fair due of those who put into their work an utter sincerity and everything that is truest in their thought and experience.

Since the announcement that THE FREEWOMAN was to appear, and the price at which it was proposed to publish it, we have had communications from people, quite reasonable in other walks of life, protesting against the high price, i.e., three-pence. Our reply must be that if women's penny papers are wanted, these already exist in great numbers, and that we are not proposing writing for women whose highest journalistic needs are realised at a penny. The quality of each article we consider good enough to publish is far above anything that can honestly be expected in a penny journal. Those, of course, who do not require articles of such quality will not be among our subscribers, and those who do must be prepared to pay a market price for what they get. As our review will be the first attempt on the part of women to produce anything better in quality than can be obtained for a copper weekly, at the outset women will probably feel the higher price to be an obstacle in the way of its ready acceptance, not being, as men are, accustomed to accord a fair value to intellectual effort. We feel that if the paper cannot compare in what it gives of culture, thought, interest, and pleasure with a very fractional proportion of the price paid for the cheapest theatre ticket or the cheapest amusement, it is not worth readers' while reading it, nor the editors' while producing it; and it is therefore with the greatest confidence that we offer our review to the public, price three-pence.

Our journal will differ from all existing weekly journals devoted to the freedom of women, inasmuch as the latter find their starting-point and interest in the externals of freedom. They deal with something which

women may acquire. We find our chief concern in what they may become. Our interest is in the Freewoman herself, her psychology, philosophy, morality, and achievements, and only in a secondary degree with her politics and economics. It will be our business to make clear that the entire wrangle regarding woman's freedom rests upon spiritual considerations, and that it must be settled on such. If women are spiritually free, all else must be adjusted to meet this fact, whether physically, in the home, society, economics, or politics.

We believe in the Freewoman, that is, we believe in the spiritual separateness of woman. Because we are convinced of the sureness of her position we are strong enough to welcome criticism from those who are opposed to her conception. For this reason the case for the Freewoman can be put, placing the fullest emphasis on everything which militates against her. It is not for us as feminists to appear unable to grasp the fundamental reasons upon which our opponents' position rests, and if they have not understood their own position themselves sufficiently to state it, it is for us to state it for them. For this reason, in a leading article which appears in this week's issue, on Bondwomen, the anti-feminists are met on their strongest ground—which is prejudice, born of specific experience. No argument can overcome this prejudice. Nothing save new evidence in present and future experience will be able to obliterate that which they have met in the past. As practical people, we have to recognise the enormous power of prejudice, and to realise that if we are to deal with reason as opposed to prejudice merely, we shall not go far. Therefore we hold that prejudice is to be regarded as subconscious reason, and it is our business to bring out the reason latent in prejudice. Only then can we judge of its soundness and otherwise. So when in Bondwomen (in somewhat sweeping fashion, because of the necessities of space) we grant anti-feminists what is therein granted, we believe we are getting not only to the root of their opposition, but to the root of the prejudice.

After the foregoing it will be an easy matter to make clear what we mean when we claim to be an "open" paper. We do not mean "open" in the sense that we have no editorial point of view, but "open" in the sense that we are prepared not only to accept, but to welcome opposing points of view. We are compelled to recognise that the changes implied in the acceptance of the theory of the Freewomen are so momentous that they may pass unchallenged on the

authority of none. The evolution of Freewomen from Bondwomen is a change so great and revolutionary that by its side, a political and social Revolution, like that in France a century ago, or the industrial revolution in England, appear secondary in importance. We do not believe that many of our readers will here imagine that by this far-reaching revolution we refer to the political change which will be effected by giving women votes. "Votes for Women" are not integrally bound up with the conception of the Freewoman, although, considering the circumstances and conditions of things in England at this time, it is inevitable that feminists should insistently be demanding votes. "Voting" is no attribute of a "master" mind, nor even of a "free" mind. It is merely a rough and ready expedient, whereby the weak may be protected from the marauding instincts of certain ill-developed "strong." There is no reason, for instance, why Bondwomen should not have votes. Voting powers for the mass mean nothing more than an instrument of protection, and Bondwomen in particular should be given this means of protection, their more robust sisters being relatively less in need of it. Thus, we hold the vote should, like the air and a pure water supply, be free to all.

Granting that votes should be thus widely distributed, and that it is necessary to put forward strong efforts to get them, we may go on to say that we do not regard the vote in itself as even a symbol of freedom, nor do we find it easy to understand those who do. That there are many women who do so consider it is probably due to a confusion of thought following upon the multitudinous and contradictory reasons which have been given as reasons why women should have the vote. These reasons have been culled out of an unthought-out and nebulous feminism, and at most have amounted to nothing more than half-hearted and sentimental allusions, to prostitution, sweating, child-assault, race-deterioration, and what not. But all real understanding of what these things mean, and discussion as to how they are to be remedied have systematically discouraged.

It has been regarded as diverging from the straight and narrow path leading to women's political emancipation to discuss these matters seriously. Of course, an easy and sentimental reference to the prostitute or the assaulted child may be used when it is necessary to rouse an apathetic audience, but as to whether those who make use of these aids to oratory have any idea of the remedy and real causes of these things we are largely sceptical. The



vote automatically will do nothing to remedy or explain them. The vote will not present us with a ready-made code either of morals or of politics, and women will be largely at sea with regard to these matters should the vote be granted in the near future. This, in our opinion, accounts for the fact that interest in the political agitation has been kept up only with difficulty when extraneous interests, such as that of militancy, have not been forthcoming, and our explanation of this is that a mere limb of a great movement has been cut off from the main body, to the detriment of both limb and body. This is our reply to those who say that by raising the whole feminist question we are raising side-issues. We say that feminism is the whole issue, political enfranchisement a branch issue, and that methods, militant and otherwise, are merely accidentals. Therefore, for the sake of Votes for Women, it might have been understood that the movement was being impoverished by being cut off from its legitimate stream of human interest. It is this human interest that our paper will supply.



As we go to press we understand that a "militant" demonstration is in progress. As women who are not fundamentally opposed to violence, who would resort to violence on grounds considered sufficient and just, and as belonging to those who have already taken prominent parts in such demonstrations as these, we enter our strongest protest against such a move at such a moment. There are no grounds whatever for it (never have there been less), and it will effect nothing save enormous personal damage to those who are being called upon to take part in it. We regret we have to differ so strongly from Miss Pankhurst (whose political leadership we have followed since her spirited protest six years ago), but we feel that, at this moment, she has lost her political balance. She is making an unreasonable demand, which she knows will not be conceded, and she is urging others, who do not know this so well, to suffer seriously in a vain attempt to force its concession. We condemn her present move without reserve as lacking political insight and even common sense. There is nothing in the exigencies of the present political situation which calls for it, and nothing is to be gained by it. We venture to prophesy that in six months' time, after militancy has been pursuing its damaging and wasteful course, the line of action then being pursued by the Government will not have been altered one point from the main line of the policy which they are now proposing. It is now quite clear that the spirit in which Miss Pankhurst waited upon the Prime Minister as a member of last week's deputation was such as to make her a wholly unsuitable deputy. As this was her first opportunity of

gaining a first-hand impression of Mr. Asquith's temper and Mr. Lloyd George's intentions, one would have imagined that she would have been glad to seize the opportunity of forming a calm and reasonable one. Instead, we find that she had no wish to find out the real intentions of the Government, or to listen to and weigh their statements. Her intention was to make a demand so unreasonable that it was a foregone conclusion it would be refused. From some motive or other, Miss Pankhurst is determined upon resuming hostilities at the present moment on no matter how flimsy a pretext. The "Votes for Women" cause stands now in a much more favourable position than it has ever done previously, incomparably more so than, for instance, it did two years ago, when Miss Pankhurst, also on flimsy grounds, declared a truce of hostilities, offering terms of peace, unasked for, unaccepted, and wholly without guarantee of any alternative terms being offered from the opposing side. Votes for women at the present time stands in this position: Those Liberals in the Cabinet favourable to the measure are going to use their influence in the country and in the House of Commons to secure the passing of a wider measure of Woman's Suffrage than the extremely unsatisfactory and conservative measure which the Conciliation Bill would provide. To do this, they are prepared to concentrate their power and energy. No one can doubt this after realising the far from lukewarm temper now shown by Mr. Lloyd George. "We must get the amendment carried, and with the amendment we must push through the Bill next session." So says Mr. Lloyd George. After this, we fail to see how the Bill can miscarry as a party measure. In case it should, however, Suffragists might induce Mr. Asquith to introduce his Reform Bill prior to the Conciliation Bill. They would then be able to fall back upon that measure, and rally all support round it. This state of affairs we consider highly favourable. Yet, in spite of it, Miss Pankhurst declares that the Government have not moved one step towards Woman's Suffrage since Mr. Asquith took office. We say this is wholly untrue; but, conceding the point for the moment that Miss Pankhurst thinks it true, we fail to understand why she should be anxious to renew a policy which, according to her showing, has had no effect. She says, "Our methods of agitation have had no effect upon those whom they were designed to affect, therefore let us make no change; let us continue in them." Again we differ from Miss Pankhurst. The agitation—especially the militant agitation—has had the effect of calling into being a widespread movement, largely non-militant. The extensiveness of this movement has made politicians realise that it is now time to climb down from their position of aloof indifference, and, under cover

of a measure to remove certain anomalies from the male Franchise, to give votes to women in some form or other. Mr. Asquith's Government is composed of men who are sufficiently astute politicians not to commit the blunder of extending the male electorate upon the strength of interest awakened wholly by women, without having done anything to satisfy the demands of women. They are far too clever judges of human nature to go to the electors, who have at least the rudiments of sportsmen, with a trick so obviously mean. Miss Pankhurst has mistaken the sign of the times and her own position. The movement has moved rapidly past her. We are on the eve of success, though she would appear unaware of it. Her rôle should no longer be that of Parnell, it should be that of Mr. Redmond. Militancy now will provide a sensational interest in details of procedure, wholly divorced from the main practical and immediate issue of Votes for Women. It will, no doubt, add to the large number of those women who are at present suffering from the physical damage done by past militancy. It will also waste the money and organising energies of those who are invited to believe they are thereby forcing the Government, but it will not add to, nor subtract from, the weight of the politicians' decision, that they will now give Votes for Women its chance. We are glad to note that Mrs. Fawcett, of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Society, and Mrs. Despard, of the Women's Freedom League, have realised this. In view of what we know of the physical consequences of "militancy," we would like Miss Pankhurst to ask herself these questions: Does she believe that, whatever form militancy may take, it will induce this Government, with Mr. Asquith as its head, to introduce a Bill to give votes to women? Does she believe that, whatever form militancy takes, the Government will abandon their intention of bringing in an Electoral Reform Bill? Does she believe that, whatever form militancy takes, the Liberal party will demand the resignation of Mr. Asquith, because, while being prepared to allow his colleagues to bring in an amendment to this end, he is not prepared to assume the responsibility of bringing in a measure of women's suffrage himself, he being conscientiously opposed to Women's Suffrage? If her reply to these questions is in the negative, she has utterly no case for militancy; and if she replies in the affirmative, she stands convicted of political ineptitude. What, then, is her position?



We regret that owing to pressure on our space all literary and dramatic criticisms have had to be held over. Next week will appear, in addition to proposed articles—

"The Tragedy of the Happy Marriage," by Dr. Whitby,

"Women's Municipal Lodging-Houses," by Mrs. Mary Higgs,

"The Gospel According to Shaw," by Mr. G. R. S. Taylor,

"The Endowment of Motherhood," by Dr. Eden,

"Literary and Dramatic Criticism," which have been unavoidably held over this week.



## A Definition of Marriage.

THESE are three subjects on which very few English people can be trusted to speak sanely—marriage, Shakespeare, and the British constitution. With the second and third of these institutions we are not concerned here. As to the first, it is impossible to glance through the newspapers, to open any novel, or to peruse any modern law book, without perceiving how grotesquely muddled are our current conceptions of sex morality. In a recently published romance, a woman writer described the dreadful plight of a man and a girl stranded on a desert isle, who wanted to marry, but were, *of course*, unable to, because there was no priest or registrar handy. The author was quite serious. On the other hand, when the Bishop of London lately thought fit to condemn those married couples who refused to have children, a lady wrote to the papers, roundly telling his lordship to mind his own business, asking what on earth the Church or the State had to say in such a personal matter, and vigorously maintaining that married people had an absolute right to have or not to have children just as they pleased.

The views of these two ladies are, I think, pretty generally held by their countrymen and countrywomen. In their minds the divorce between marriage and parenthood is complete. They regard marriage as a licence to co-habit. To live together with this licence is moral; to live together without it, immoral. It is morality by certificate. The system is simple enough to appeal to the meanest intelligence—in which it no doubt originated.

It is, therefore, easy to understand the surprise and indignation of a duly certificated married couple on finding themselves reproached by a bishop with a breach of morality. They have obtained the sanction of the Church, and with that the Church ought to be content. Children—what has their presence or absence to do with Christian morality? There are plenty of unmarried hussies who have children, and do we not rightly speak of them as fallen creatures and, with a fine disregard of biological fact, of their children as the children of nobody? Does not the law of England regard the destruction of these offspring of sin and shame as a very venial kind of murder? What on earth (or rather out of it) can have come to the Church of England that it should talk to respectable married people in this way? It is the business of parson and registrar to marry us on demand, and not to ask why or wherefore.

Well, the registrar at least never asks why, and goes on coupling men and women together with no particular object in view. You may search the codes of Europe in vain for a definition of marriage. The very formula used by the civil officer in this country contains no word to enlighten the parties as to the nature of their new relation or as to their duties and rights towards each other and society. The State blithely took over matrimony from the Church as a going concern, and seems to have entirely forgotten its purpose and origin. It is a sort of a contract, unlike all other contracts, say our sage lawyers. By the multitude it is regarded as a sort of mystic formula with a virtue in itself. But the Christian Church still obstinately affirms that marriage was ordained for the propagation of the human race and the upbringing of children in the service of God.

Now whether it is the duty of every healthy individual to reproduce his species, I do not propose to discuss. Briefly, it seems to depend on the economic condition of the community. But this I maintain: that an alliance of a man and woman for any other purpose than that defined by the Church is a contract or partnership, what you will, but it is not, and ought not to be, considered a marriage.

That Phyllis and Corydon should decide to live together for reasons of their own, I consider quite fair and legitimate. But if they are resolved that their connubial bliss shall not be disturbed by what they would call a squalling brat, I fail altogether to understand on what grounds the Church or State is called upon to consecrate their partnership. By all means let them live together as they please and as long as they please. What has it got to do with anybody else? Society is in no way interested in the *ménage*, and why in the name of common sense should they wish to be bound in a matter affecting only themselves by an outside authority? In actual fact, of course, they are driven by impertinent and imbecile public opinion into a step which their sense of humour must condemn. The wilfully childless couple remind me of a man who takes out a gun licence without intending to keep a gun. Only where third parties are likely to be affected are safeguards required; only then can the civil or ecclesiastical power sanction a union.

The ceremony or licence, some will tell me, is not so idle in such cases as it looks. It has certain commercial advantages. By it the man secures the exclusive right to the woman's body, and by it the woman binds the man to support her during the rest of her life. This is unfortunately true, and a more disgraceful bargain was never struck. It would be more properly described by the term applied in Roman law to the union of slaves. Such "marriages" are a swindle and an imposture. The institution of marriage was designed to protect mothers and their children. The voluntarily barren wife avails herself of the mother's right without doing the mother's work. Yet the law is fool enough (and of what foolishness is not the English law capable!) to wink at the fraud and to extend to a man's housekeeper the protection it refuses to the unlicensed mother of his child. It puts a premium on sterility by putting the barren woman on a level with her who has risked her life to give citizens to the State. Here is morality turned upside down. A pretty mess European society has made of an institution declared by the Church to be of God's own ordinance.

For this the Church itself is largely to blame. By its foolish insistence on the mere form of marriage, it has helped men to forget the spirit and the purpose. When it denied the unwedded mother the privileges of a wife, it encouraged the belief that parenthood was excused by marriage and not marriage by parenthood. In its jealousy of its authority, it has consented to that authority being misapplied and abused. It has bade a man leave the mother of his child and turn to his childless wife. It has, over and over again, stultified itself by blessing unions from which it was evident no children could spring. It will "marry" a boy of twenty to a woman of eighty. The horrible, senseless legalism which passes in Europe for morality—which inspires our fiction and our stage—is the joint product of Church and State; and when the birth-rate drops to zero, they may shake hands over their work across the grave of a dead nation.

We need not turn, then, to the priest or the lawyer for a definition of marriage. There is one older than Church or State, one that is given us by Nature. Marriage does not consist in certificate or



wedding ring, but in the common parenthood of a man and a woman. The child makes the marriage.

On this definition alone can a sane society be built. The State is at last slowly awakening to the necessity of taking steps for its own perpetuation—the first care, one would suppose, of a rational community. Well, to victimise unlicensed mothers and to give protection to wilfully childless women does not seem the most direct means to that end. We must realise that marriage is becoming a mere trade for idle and unenterprising women. This, I imagine, will be recognised as an evil even by rulers as blind as the lawmakers of Europe. I suppose that even the lawyers will grant that the continuance of the race is more important than the succession to property. The State, at any rate, has no interest whatever in sterile alliances. It does not want husbands and wives, it wants parents and children. Yet so insane is our marriage law that it will not release the wife whose husband refuses to give her children, and will brand her as a criminal if she bears a child to another man. By denying all but merely nominal rights to the unmarried mother and the “illegitimate” child, it incites to murder and encourages men to shift their natural responsibilities on to the shoulders of the State.

The remedy for this monstrous state of things is easy. Make all marriage contracts void unless a child is born to the parties within seven or ten years of signature. I fancy we should hear less then of a declining birth-rate. Moreover, expired contracts should not be renewable between the same persons. It is our object to make men and women parents. If a couple are barren, they should at least be encouraged to form other alliances which may be fruitful. What of those who are sterile against their will? Either a hardship is inflicted by the continuance of the union on one of them, or else it is clearly one of those partnerships of which the powers should take no cognisance.

But this is not enough. The birth of a child should *ipso facto* create a marriage between the parents, whether or not there has been a preceding ceremony. I know the objections that will at once be raised. In this country, at all events, the first is not admissible. Our law admits that paternity can be established at need. With a more stringent application of the penalties for perjury, I suspect it could be established very nearly always. This having been done, father and mother are to be considered married in the sense that the mother and the child would have all the claims upon the father which proceed from an ordinary marriage contract.

This, it will be objected, will amount in innumerable cases to a recognition of polygamy. For that I care not one jot. Who will dare to deny that polygamy already exists, and always has existed, all over Christendom? Then since we cannot, if we would, suppress it, let us cease this fooling and recognise it. At present we punish the polygamist by relieving him from all responsibility towards his extra-legal wives and their children, and by keeping his name out of the newspapers. I propose to accord him the fullest recognition by insisting that he shall maintain all his children and their mothers, no matter who or how many they may be. I fancy my tolerance will restrain his licence more effectually than can the averted eyes of the purist.

If legal marriage is worth keeping at all, it must be also natural marriage. It must serve the interests of society, not the personal ends of those who shirk life's burdens. My proposals are not revolutionary, but reactionary. I want to return to the foundations of the family, and to restore to marriage its dignity and to motherhood its rights.

Those whom God has joined, I would not, indeed, put asunder; but I would certainly put asunder those He has plainly refused to join. Surely if any morality can be evolved from sex at all, it must lie in the selfish or unselfish use of the natural instincts. I hold, too, the unusual view that a father should be responsible for his children as society is now economically constituted, and that his housekeeper should not usurp the place of the mother. Abolish marriage altogether if you will, but do not consecrate deliberate sterility. As a citizen, I object to the State being so stupid as to unite people for no particular purpose, and to its affording protection to those who scheme to defeat its own ends. Modern marriage is typical of the State which fosters it—a coalition of selfish interests, taking no heed for the perpetuation of the species, protecting the barren and the libertine, and worthy of the millstone reserved for those who offend against the little ones.

EDMUND B. D'AUVERGNE.

## Der Bund für Mutterschutz.

### A GERMAN LEAGUE FOR THE PROTECTION OF MOTHERS.

IN these days when the advanced woman's movement is bringing to light so many of the disabilities under which mothers, and especially unmarried mothers, are suffering, an account of the remarkable movement for their protection which has existed in Germany during the last four years will doubtless be of interest. Not only is the position of women in general very low in Germany, but the proportion of illegitimacy is very high as compared with our own country, being 27.4 births per 1,000 unmarried women between the ages of 15 and 45, as against 8.5 per 1,000 in England and Wales in 1900-1902, and only second to Austria, with 40.1 per 1,000. It also showed very little decrease from twenty years previously, whereas that of our own country had fallen nearly 40 per cent. during this period.

It will be seen, therefore, that the problem of the unmarried mother is an even more serious one in Germany than with us, and this will explain the zeal with which this movement was instituted by Frau Helene Stöcker, Doctor of Philosophy, and the enthusiasm with which it has been carried to all parts of the country.

There is another reason, however, which has especially led to the phenomenal success of this movement. The strongly militaristic spirit of Germany calls for the greatest possible number of strong and healthy children; and although the military party have little or no respect for women, or sympathy for those who have “fallen,” they are profoundly moved by the suggestion that illegitimate children may be more virile and more “fit” on eugenic grounds. We thus have the remarkable spectacle of a country—notably backward as regards the political and social emancipation of women—viewing with equanimity a movement which now aims not only at protecting motherhood in general, and assisting illegitimate mothers in particular, but at securing complete equality of women with men as regards liberty in sex matters, of equality between legitimate and illegitimate children, and at reforming the whole basis of marriage and sexual morality.

The League has its headquarters in Berlin, and it has branches in Bremen, Breslau, Dresden, Frankfort-on-Main, Hamburg, Leipsig, Mannheim, Stuttgart, etc., and similar movements have



been started in Austria, Italy, Sweden, and other countries. The following extracts from the statutes of the parent League will be of interest.

The object of the League is to improve the position of woman as a mother in her legal, economic, and social status, especially to protect unmarried mothers and their children from economic and moral dangers, to remove the tyrannical prejudices against them, and, above all, to work towards a healthier tone in sexual relationships.

For this purpose the League agitates for (a) Governmental insurance for motherhood; (b) legal and social equality of illegitimate with legitimate children; (c) reform of marriage in its economic, moral, and legal aspects; (d) guardianship of mothers from overstrain during maternity.

The League endeavours to attain these ends by the following methods:—

(a) Propaganda of every kind, by speech and writing, holding of League and open meetings, dissemination of explanatory literature, and its organ, *Die Neue Generation*.

(b) Bringing action to bear upon legislative bodies and administrative authorities.

(c) Care of necessitous mothers, especially for those unmarried or deserted by their husbands. (Assistance towards the attainment of economic independence, especially for those who wish to bring up their children themselves; assistance in obtaining suitable work and lodgings; giving of advice before and after confinement; foundation and endowment of homes for mothers and children, etc.)

A large amount of literature has been issued by the League, of which, perhaps, the most interesting is the report upon the practical work. In October, 1908, a small Home was opened, with six beds, and from that time till April 16th, 1910, no less than 203 mothers were cared for during an aggregate of 2,218 days, as well as providing lodgings for one night on 322 occasions, with 359 extra meals. The accommodation of the Home was not strictly limited, and could be enlarged if necessary for days, weeks, or even months. It receives £5 monthly from the League, besides the furnishings and renewals, which are separately provided for. The mothers pay one shilling daily, but for completely destitute women some free places are provided. About £38 has been received from the mothers. On numerous occasions mothers and children have been taken in late at night, who have been discharged from the hospital after seven or eight days, and were wandering, without money or shelter, in the inhospitable streets of Berlin.

Thirty-seven mothers with children were taken into the house, some remaining a few days, some weeks or months. In the latter case, when the mother suckled her child, and it absolutely needed this, a position was found for the mother where she could take her child with her.

Numerous letters of thanks have been received from the fathers of children, whose mothers had been cared for in the Home. The care for the mother on the part of the father increases with the care which the mother receives, and many men who did not trouble themselves about the girls at first have returned later and taken good care of the mother and child.

Six solicitors have given their services gratuitously to the League, and to their efforts the credit must be given that a large number of fathers have come forward to undertake the guardianship of their children. Divorce and other proceedings are also arranged through these legal advisers.

Arrangements have been made with an insurance company, whereby the fathers can insure them-

selves in the interests of the child, to provide for the child at his death, or for the payment of a certain sum at the age of sixteen years.

A very important question is that of avoiding the publicity of illegitimacy in the neighbourhood of the girl's family, for the present law, which nominally arranges this through the agency of midwives, has quite failed in this particular, while allowing the midwives to extort large sums for the supposed secret registration. In the more serious cases this difficulty has been overcome by the matron of the Home undertaking the guardianship of the child, thereby avoiding all publicity for the mother's family.

Eight of these Homes are now in existence—the largest being at Hamburg, which has twelve rooms, with twenty beds for mothers and fifteen for children. A clinic has also been opened in Berlin.

The League has published many interesting statistics concerning the parents and their children.

In the monthly organ of the League, *Die Neue Generation*, the most fundamental questions concerning marriage, sexual ethics and eugenics are discussed.

During the last two years an organisation working on somewhat similar lines has been started, under the secretaryship of Frau Adele Schreiber-Krieger, with the name of "Die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Mutter und Kinderrecht." Its headquarters are also in Berlin.

The first International Congress of the Mutter-schutz movement took place in Dresden in September of this year, under the presidency of Herr Justizrat Rosenthal, when an International League was formed, with the object of extending the movement to other countries. The promoters are most anxious to see a similar organisation in Great Britain.

BESSIE DRYSDALE.

## Feminism Under the Republic and the Early Empire.

### I.

"GENTLE in words, graceful in manner, she loved her husband devotedly; she kept her house; she spun wool."

Such is the epitaph in which a Roman husband celebrated the virtues of his wife, and, in doing so, reflected with absolute clearness the Roman ideal of the period under consideration.

To be virtuous, to stay at home, to spin wool, was to give overflowing satisfaction to husband and sons; to meet, in short, with the approval of all men; and, in the early days of the Republic, while yet to be a Roman was to be a hardy soldier-farmer, skilled in the use of the plough as of the sword, leading that life of sadness and severity which was then accepted as being the glory of every member of the Roman community, this ideal of womanhood was happily fulfilled by thousands of matrons, the tranquillity of whose lives is marked by the absence of any history concerning them. Then, the fact that in her husband she must recognise her master, may have troubled the matron but little, for, while that husband was afield, caring for his crops, instructing his servants and sons in rural lore, guarding his cattle and tending his bees, she sat amidst her maids and daughters, spinning the wool for the garments of all, or in-



structing them in household work, in baking and brewing and in the art of preparing a comfortable welcome for a weary husbandman at sunset.

Such is the picture we gather from Virgil's pages, but that picture was subject to change. The Gaul or the Latin might drive all within the gates of the city. Then the father and his sons must fight and the women must urge them to the contest, sending them forth without a tear, seeking among the slain for their bodies, rejoicing that their wounds were all in front, trusting in the birth of other sons, equally brave, to the commonwealth.

A gallant old state, where lack of mental refinement and imagination was amply compensated by sincerity in an overwhelming purpose, austerity of life, and zeal for the commonweal!

All Roman writers join in praising these veritably good old times, and all equally join in attributing their decay to the same cause. Sallust, in his *Catiline*, equally with Juvenal in the *Satires*, speaks of the influence on the simple Roman mind of the over-sea campaigns in Asia and in Greece. From the time of the Second Punic War onward—that is to say, from the early years of the second century before Christ—the Roman theories of life underwent a tremendous upheaval, and later, when “conquered Greece led her conquerors captive,” Hellenism permeated the whole body politic, subduing and dominating, sometimes perverting, the old customs, and enduing the Roman with a mantle of thought and feeling which fitted him but ill.

“The conquered world,” says Juvenal, “has avenged itself upon us by the gift of its vices. Since Rome has lost her noble poverty, Sybaris and Rhodes, Miletus and Tarentum, crowned with roses and scented with perfume, have entered our walls.” Polybius, himself a Greek captive, echoes the same sentiments. And now the Roman wife began to chafe against her lot, and there began that curious and pitiful war of the sexes which marked the subsequent history of Rome, and which was accompanied by so much fierce resentment, anguish of spirit, and bewilderment on the one side, and by so much blank misunderstanding, sublime arrogance and rigid conservatism on the other. Asia and Greece had shown the rude husbandman from the Volscian hills or the Sabine country all the fascinations of a life of luxury and indulgence. The homely qualities of the Roman wife, cumbered as she was with much serving but with little intellectual attainment, seemed necessarily dull and limited when compared with the skilled allurements, both mental and physical, of the Asiatic, and particularly of the Greek women, with whom he had come into contact in Alexandria or Ephesus, Athens or Miletus. Moreover, the Greek *Hetærae* were not slow, leaving the impoverished Asiatic or Greek towns, in following the Roman, so obviously the destined conqueror of the more effete races, to his native city, and the establishments of this class of women began to appear in the vast tenements of Rome, not only in the *Subura* or *Argiletum*, the Roman Quartier Latin, but even in the more aristocratic quarters. It is not surprising that the Romans were conquered by the charms of such women, the curious product of an age in Greece when the cult of pleasure was brought to an unequalled pitch. These “courtesans” must not be confused with the ignorant and degraded products of the painful vices of the life of all great cities, nor did the Romans hold them in the disregard which, in spite of their often brilliant attainments, would be meted out to them in modern times.

Plutarch tells us that the picture of Flora was

placed among those which adorned the temple of Castor and Pollux; Propertius has immortalised his *Cynthia* openly and unashamedly. The thought of *Aspasia*, who, we read, instructed Socrates and Pericles, naturally presents itself; and though she may have been an exceptional character, yet we see in her the height of intellectual vigour and moral power to which such women might rise by force of that culture and education which they had gained, in most instances, from the instruction given them while they were still the property of the masters who had their early training in hand; for the production of this class of women, comprised as it largely was of girls captured in war or kidnapped from their relatives, was an organised feature of all Greek and Asiatic life. After a time many of them obtained freedom as a gift of some admirer and often became wealthy from the money settled upon them. Many were faithful and attached, as was *Aspasia*, and no doubt would have become the wives of the Romans. Some among the Romans must have desired it, if only that their children might not be shut out from public life, but though no moral objection to these unions was raised by the State, there was an insuperable legal one which had its basis in the stringent marriage laws, without some understanding of which Roman history must remain an enigma. Our space allows us to sketch these laws with no more than the utmost brevity.

Each civil household in the Roman State formed a unit in the whole political family. To preserve this unit was the religious duty of each head of a house. Every other consideration was sunk in that purpose. The object of marriage was never disguised by the ever-direct Roman mind. It was intended to replenish the legions, to fill the *Comitia* and the Senate, to find governors for the colonies. The blunt sensibilities of the early Romans demanded no other motive for matrimony. The possibilities of comradeship, or intellectual and moral sympathy, were ignored by them. Moreover, the ideas of marriage and religion were curiously blended. *Modestinus*, in the *Digest*, speaks of marriage as being “*divini et humani juris communicatio*,” and such it was to a degree attained by no other civilisation in any age. The sacrifices to the household gods—the *Lares* and *Penates*—made by the *pater-familias* and *mater-familias* equally, were regarded as being of the utmost importance to the family and therefore to the State. Marriage had, then, for its objects the maintenance of the sacred rites of religion and the production of Roman citizens. There were, however, various grades in Roman marriage ceremonies, all falling, however, under one of two heads, *matrimonium justum* or *matrimonium injustum*—that is, regular or irregular marriage. Only those children who were the offspring of the *matrimonium justum* could be Roman citizens, enjoying the privileges of that most enviable position: the right to vote in the assemblies, to become magistrates, to hold, inherit and transmit property; but, and here is the most vital point, only those people who were themselves the product of such a marriage could unite in the *matrimonium justum*. Therefore the children of a Roman citizen and a foreign woman or a freedwoman were handicapped politically for life, and thus such a family lost caste and fell out of the running for offices and dignities. Accordingly it is plain that the Roman, trained to reverence the family as part of his religion, was hopelessly tied by these restrictions, invented in a barbaric age to preserve the purity of the race, and left unaltered in the rapid march of civilisation in Rome.



But on the woman fell other additional limitations, peculiar to her sex. She was never a responsible being, never a citizen. Her sphere was entirely domestic, as is proved by her immunity from molestation during proscriptions. She existed but for her household functions. From earliest infancy till her dying day she was always in the power of some male relative—in tutelage, as the Romans expressed it. She passed from her father's command into that of her husband. Even her life lay in his hands, for he it was who summoned her before him as the head of the domestic tribunal, to receive judgment for certain offences. He might even put her to death. Indeed, Valerius Maximus tells us of a specific instance of a husband who caused his wife to be flogged to death for drinking wine. Her children were entirely in her husband's hands. He was not compelled to rear any daughter she might bear him except the eldest. The others might be, and often were, exposed to their death, which latter fact, as a modern historian points out, is proved by the terribly striking absence of prænomens among women under the Empire.

The wife's money was entirely at her husband's disposal. If he died she came into the power of her nearest male relative—her son, perhaps, or her brother. In short, she had no advantage over her husband's slaves except that he might not sell her—though he might sell her children—and that she inherited at his death as an adopted daughter, and, lastly, that she experienced any protection which public opinion or fear of her relatives might impart. She could not divorce her husband, but he might divorce her, and the wife in the play of Plautus bids her friend endure her husband's tyranny by recollecting the fatal words, "Begone, woman!"

Such was the state of subjugation of the Roman wife, and, in addition, when culture made its way into Rome, she was denied any advantages of the education which enabled her brothers to vie with the Greek and the Asiatic scholars. "Her mind remained undeveloped for any moral or intellectual purpose." Her masculine relations loudly insisted that she remained humble, ignorant and unlearned, while at the same time they flew for distraction from the monotony of her society to the cultivated Greek strangers in their midst, and to such of the Roman women who preferred to join the ranks of these rather than to endure the bonds of matrimony. Horace and Sallust both decry the educated Roman wife. Particularly illuminating is the latter's description of Sempronia, the wife of Decimus Brutus, as a woman who "could dance and play more elegantly than an honest woman should." She could likewise, to the disgust of the historian, write verses and talk brilliantly, and this doubtless, no less than any other knowledge he had of her, made him attack her reputation with such violence. We hear a great deal in Cicero's letters of his care and thought for the education of his son and his nephew, but never a single word of the education of his only daughter, whom, nevertheless, he seemed to regard as the apple of his eye; but it remained for Juvenal, who of all men who have ever lived has held woman up to horror and reprobation for her follies, levities, extravagance and wantonness, to voice this curiously short-sighted dislike to raising the Roman woman who might become his fully legal wife to the intellectual level of the Greek courtesan who might not. Alluding to his future partner, he says:

"Let mine, ye gods (if such must be my fate),  
No logic learn, nor history translate,  
But rather be a quiet, humble fool.  
I hate a wife to whom I go to school."

There were notable exceptions to this rule of

ignorance among Roman women—for instance, the women of the Scipio family win our admiration for their attainments. Of these we shall have more to say hereafter; but they do not disprove, rather, by the startling contrast they provide, do they prove the state of intellectual darkness of the majority of their fellow-women.

AMY HAUGHTON.

(To be continued.)

## Contemporary Recognition of Polygamy.

THE recent evidence before the Divorce Law Commission as to the proposed equality of the sexes in the matter of adultery brought to light some sturdy champions of inequality in favour of the male. On the other side, there were, of course, the austere moralists; but of late years there have been symptoms of a feeling that men ought not to possess privileges beyond female participation, such as hunting, shooting, or smoking, and licensed infidelity is, of course, in some sense a privilege. Whereas the older sentiment was frankly one-sided—whether we consult the Old Testament, the letters of Pope Clement VII. to Henry VIII., the writings and sayings of Luther and Melancthon, the 18th-century novelists, the Mormon revelations of the 19th century, or the tabletalk of the more ingenuous Victorian men of the world—the newer sentiment inclines more to such propositions as the endowment of motherhood or the necessity for every woman of having at least one child for the purposes of self-development, whether within or without the bonds of holy matrimony.

Under the head of polygamy it may be convenient, though not etymologically accurate, to include not only the maintenance of more than one establishment, but also those more sporadic outbursts of postprandial or orgiastic gallantry to which one or two of the witnesses before the Commission alluded with an almost genial tolerance. Yet, on the whole, public opinion has clearly altered in this connection to the prejudice of the male. On the one hand the wife has to risk the chance of disease, and on the other hand the unmarried woman has to face the chance of a child with only a legal claim for 2s. 6d. a week to support it, and, in the event of a public exposure, the further chance of outlawry as a common prostitute. Public opinion is certainly less hostile to women on these points than it used to be. It looks as if the State might insist one day on a man making suitable and adequate provision for his mistress and any children of the union, and on venereal diseases being publicly notified, like many others. A future generation may perhaps decline to drive a woman, in such circumstances, into the outlawry of prostitution, as we know it now, or to rely on prostitution as the keystone of public morals.

Meantime it may be instructive to note how far male polygamy is recognised by wives, by the other women, and by the world at large. The wife's attitude naturally varies according to circumstances. She may be genuinely hoodwinked, and come to discover one morning that her husband's income was much larger than she had supposed, and that she had received only a fraction of it to keep the house going. She may also find that her husband, having absolutely free powers of disposition, has provided more liberally for other ladies than for herself by his will; but it is by then generally too late to complain.



She may, on the other hand, be fully aware of what is going on. She may, for various reasons, acquiesce in the accomplished fact, and sternly repress what Lycurgus, according to Plutarch, called the "vain and womanish passion of jealousy." If she shares keen intellectual or other interests with her husband, she may shut her eyes to what she may regard as an unimportant physical aberration. Yet the "vain and womanish" passion is naturally strong, for it has been for centuries associated not only with the loss of her husband but also with the loss of her job.

Fifty years ago there were many wives who held really Christian views as to the duty of forgiving unto seventy times seven, and I have heard the story of a wife whose husband lived with his mistress in a neighbouring street and called at his wife's house every Sunday morning to take the children to church, which she thought highly edifying for him and, presumably, for them. But this type of wife is rather old-fashioned, and has given place to the wife who either connives, or consults her solicitor, or claims reciprocity.

The position of the mistress, however, remains unchanged. She has no legal or moral redress, and can only depend on a sense of honourable obligation, except that she is liable to be bilked by men who would not cheat at cards. Her view may, no doubt, amount to a conviction that there are not enough men to go round, that woman's labour is sweated, that she is entitled to improve a decreasing birth-rate, or that she is as worthy of her hire as any other self-supporting worker. The trouble is that society is not quite so sympathetic as she could wish.

The attitude of the world is becoming slightly more democratic. The elaborate degrees of tolerance, varying with the social status of the parties concerned, are less strictly marked nowadays than they were in the manners of the old school—though, of course, the poor are more harassed and interfered with in these matters than they ever were before, and the Insurance Bill will in most cases subject them to an intolerable inquisition. The immediate tendency of a noisy minority is to insist on monogamy at all costs; but that cannot last very long. The liberty of the subject will always remain fairly secure among the well-to-do, and the growing political influence of women is likely to result in better provision, not only for illegitimate children, but also for their mothers, in those cases where an easier divorce law does not cut the knot. Men can never be forced without exception into strict monogamy, and the result of any effort in that direction will merely be a compromise under which women outside the trade union of monogamy will obtain some measure of relief against the peaceful picketing of their more prudent sisters. Such a compromise will scarcely involve the complete recognition of polygamy, but it will certainly involve a substantial recognition of concubinage on more equitable terms for women than our ancestors (who frankly recognised concubinage as a purely masculine privilege) would ever have conceded. Economic and physiological facts are inexorable, and our present state of transition cannot last very long. The equality of the sexes in divorce will, no doubt, encourage monogamy. Yet it cannot break up the homes of those who prefer to make different arrangements, though, by promoting a standard of equality, it will probably assist in destroying the exclusive and privileged position of the male in relation to what is called monogamy.

E. S. P. H.

## The Spinster. By One.

I WRITE of the High Priestess of Society. Not of the mother of sons, but of her barren sister, the withered tree, the acidulous vestal under whose pale shadow we chill and whiten, of the Spinster I write. Because of her power and dominion. She, unobtrusive, meek, soft-footed, silent, shamefaced, bloodless and boneless, thinned to spirit, enters the secret recesses of the mind, sits at the secret springs of action, and moulds and fashions our emasculate Society. She is our social Nemesis. For the insult of her creation, without knowing it she takes her revenge. What she has become, she makes all. To every form of social life she gives its complexion. Every book, every play, every sermon, every song, each bears her inscription. The Churches she has made her own. Their message and their conventions are for her type, and of their Ideal she has made a Spinster transfigured. In the auditorium of every theatre she sits, the pale guardian. What the players say and do, they say and do never forgetting her presence. She haunts every library. Her eye will pierce the cover of every book, and her glance may not be offended. In our schools she takes the little children, and day by day they breathe in the atmosphere of her violated spirit. She tinges every conversation, she weights each moral judgment. She rules the earth. All our outward morality is made to accommodate her, and any alien, wild life-impulse which clamours for release is released in secret, in shame, and under the sense of sin. A restive but impotent world writhes under her subtle priestly domination. She triumphs, and we turn half expecting to see in her the joy of triumph. But no, not that even. She has no knowledge of it. All is pure fatality. She remains at once the injured and the injuring. Society has cursed her and the curse is now roosting at home.

The indictment which the Spinster lays up against Society is that of ingenious cruelty. The type of intelligence which, in its immaturity, conceived the tortures of a Tantalus might have essayed the creation of a spinster as its ripe production. See how she is made, and from what. She is mothered into the world by a being, who, whatever else she may be, is not a spinster, and from this being she draws her instincts. While yet a child, these instincts are intensified and made self-conscious by the development, in her own person, of a phenomenon which is unmistakable, repellent, and recurrent with a rapid and painful certainty. This development engenders its own lassitude, and in this lassitude new instincts are set free. Little by little, the development of her entire form sets towards a single consummation, and all the while, by every kind of device, the mind is set towards the same consummation. In babyhood, she begins, with her dolls. Why do not the parents of a prospective spinster give her a gun or an engine. If Society is going to have spinsters, it should train spinsters. In girlhood, she is ushered into an atmosphere charged with sex-distinctions and sex-insinuations. She is educated on a literature saturated with these. In every book she takes up, in every play she sees, in every conversation, in every social amusement, in every interest in life she finds that the pivot upon which all interest turns is the sex interest. So body, mind, training, and environment unite to produce in her an expectation which awaits definite fulfilment. She is ready to marry, ripe to marry, needing marriage, and up to this point Society has been blameless. It is in the next step that she sins. Did Society inculcate



nothing more, Nature would step in to solve her own difficulties, as she does where Society and its judgments have little weight. Among the very poor there is no spinster difficulty, because the very poor do not remain spinsters. It is from higher up in the social scale, where social judgments count, where the individual is a little more highly wrought, better fashioned for suffering, that we draw the army of actual spinsters. It is in the classes where it is not good form to have too much feeling, and actual bad form to show any; where there is a smattering of education, and little interests to fill in the time, that their numbers rally and increase. It is here that Society, after having fostered just expectations, turns round arbitrarily on one perhaps in every four and says, "Thou shalt not." No reason given, only outlawry prescribed if the prohibition is disregarded. And because Society has a dim consciousness of its own treachery—for its protection and like a coward—it lays down the law of silence, and in subtle fashion makes the poor wretch the culprit. (It is probably this sense of self-defection which keeps these cheated women from committing rape. Imagine an equal proportion of any male population under similar circumstances!) Probably, one will ask, What is all the fuss about? Is it all because a man did not turn up at the right time? Well, partly yes and partly no. Not *any* man; *any* man was not what she had been led to expect. She had, in fact, been specially warned against *any* man. It was the right man she was expecting, HER man. Rightly or wrongly, the theory of the right man has been dinned into the consciousness of the ordinary middle-class woman. It may be merely a subtle ruse on the part of a consciously inadequate society to prepare its victims for the altar. However that may be, the result is the same. The Spinster stands the racket. She pays the penalty. She is the failure, and she closes her teeth down and says nothing. What can she say? Is she not the failure? And so the conspiracy of silence becomes complete. Then, mind and body begin. *They* get their pound of flesh, and the innermost Ego of the Soul, the solitary Dweller behind the Mind, stands at bay to meet their baiting. Day by day, year by year, the baiting goes on. To what end—for what temporal or final good is all this? This is the question to which Society, in sheer amends, has to find an answer. This unfair war waged by instinct and training against poor ordinary consciousness can only be rendered decent by some overwhelming good accruing to someone or something. To whom and for what? These are questions to which we demand an answer as a right. Then, being answered, if any woman considers the benefit conferred upon Society great enough to outweigh the suffering entailed upon herself she may possibly undertake it in the spirit of some magnanimous benefactor. Because this inward warfare cannot truthfully be considered for one moment as benefiting the Spinster herself. Her character for instance, is not in need of that kind of tonic. For, be it noted, the Spinster does not overcome Sex as a Saint overcomes Sin. She does not, save rarely, crush out of existence that part of her which is threatening her life's reasonable calm. Driven inward, denied its rightful ordained fulfilment, the instinct becomes diffused. The field of consciousness is charged with an all-pervasive unrest and sickness, which changes all meanings, and queers all judgments, and which, appearing outwardly, we recognise as sentimentality. It is to this sentimentality that all reason and intelligence has to bow. It is by this means that we are all made to pass under the yoke. It is not, however, to be

believed that every spinster will thus suffer mind and body to enter into bondage. Some are finding a way of escape. Some women have taken this way, and more will take it. It is the final retort. It is the way of the Saint. It would be the right way in overcoming sin. But in overcoming the life instinct itself, who shall say it is right? The way is to destroy the faculty. With a strong will and a stern régime it can be done. Women are doing it with a fierce joy that would have gladdened the heart of some old Puritan. You take the body and tire it out with work, work, work. In any crevice of time left over you rush here and there, up and down, constantly active. And for the mind, you close down the shutters on that field. No image, no phrase, no brooding, nothing there which speaks of emotions which produce life. And this sort of Spinster, more and more, is bringing up the younger generation. Another unconscious revenge! But this is the way of the few. As for the many, they go the sentimental way. For there is no shuffling possible in this matter. The Spinster must either keep her womanhood at the cost of suffering inordinate for the thing it is, and be compelled to turn what should be an incidental interest into the basis of all interest; or she must destroy the faculty itself, and know herself atrophied. There is no alternative. To offer work, pleasure, "doing good," in lieu of this is as much to the point and as sensible as to offer a loaf to a person who is tortured with thirst.

Let the social guardians remember that in the fulness of time physical developments show themselves, and that as they appear, so must they be provided for. This social slaughter can no longer pass without challenge, and they may remember for their comfort that if prudence has slain its thousands, chastity has slain its tens of thousands. In this matter, it remains for Society to justify itself.

## The Fashioning of Florence Isabel.

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"BLESSED if she don't think the pavement's 'er long-lost feather-bed!"

"Wot d'yer call yersilf, a Siame twin or a blooming four-legged beer-barrel?"

These remarks came from a crowd of small boys who were following an ill-defined, staggering shape along the street. As I came nearer, the creature resolved itself into a stunted girl, who was propping up an absorbing bulk of tipsy womanhood. The girl's hands were too full for her to do more than scowl at her tormentors, but, meeting my pitying glance, she whispered hurriedly:

"Keep Mother stiddy a minute, will yer kindly, Miss? I'll teach 'em 'ow to treat a laidy"; and, giving the drunken woman a happy lurch against a lamp-post, she turned and fell on the harassing band.

There was a sudden shriek of "'Ere comes Florence Isabel!" and a wild stampede, all the boys disappearing round the corner except one little urchin, who had fallen, and lay in the mud howling dismally. I wondered if the girl would vent her rage on him, but she contented herself with jerking him to his feet and shaking him vigorously; then she returned, beaming, to her task. And that was my first meeting with Florence Isabel.

About three months later I was in need of a general servant. The first day my advertisement appeared, while I was still at breakfast, I heard, to my surprise, that there was a young person waiting to see me—"A most peculiar young person,"



added my severe domestic with evident disapproval. So I went into the hall, and there stood Florence Isabel! She certainly did look rather peculiar, for she wore a plush cloak of a strange fashion, and a skirt of her mother's, which trailed all round, while her white straw hat with lilies and red feathers looked a trifle airy for February. But in whatever guise she had come, her first remark showed me that she had come to stay.

"Oh, Miss," she began reproachfully, "I wondered 'ow long you was goin' to put up with thet gell you got from the registry. Yis, our basement mends your boots, Miss, so ever since thet day we met, I've a-been keeping a look-out." And I, who have long since discovered the futility of fighting the inevitable, reluctantly fell in with her arrangements.

The first few weeks passed with a certain amount of friction, for Florence Isabel had many things to learn, and so perhaps had I. I almost think that I learned the more. For instance, I had never guessed why all small "generals" go home on two consecutive days once a fortnight, instead of taking the usual weekly evening out, and it was not until I noticed the lank lines assumed by Florence Isabel's figure in the hours elapsing between these visits that I suddenly became conscious of the difficulties attending the washing of underwear that is simplified down to unity. Neither did I know before that in Florence Isabel's rank of life the other handkerchief is sacred for Sunday use, while stockings are thrown away at the end of the week, a new pair being bought for threepence three farthings—if you speak of darning them you are not understood, and your language merely considered doubtful. I was hardly even aware of the gross breach of etiquette in being seen without "curlers" before tea, only comparable with attending a levée in undress, or appearing *décolletée* at a matinée.

On one other point I learned that Florence Isabel's ideas were fixed, and that was the necessity of spending an hour every Saturday night in the Harrow Road, forming one of the noisy crowd under the flaring naphtha jets. "It kind er sots me up," she told me. It was then that she bought her pair of cheap stockings and her weekly penn'orth of literature, which took the form of three soiled novelettes.

"I allus picks out 'igh-class murderly ones," she said. "You can tell 'em by the picters on the cover. Choose 'em that's a bit stirrin'—a countess with 'er 'air 'angin' down, an' not finished dressin', an' a lord a-standin' by with a pistol an' a mustache, or somethink after thet style. They can be deceiving, though, at times. Onct I got six for a penny, thinkin' to 'ave a bargain, an' the picters all they should be, but there weren't scarcely a corpse to the lot. They might as well 'ave been tracts. But them 'tective ones is allus prime. 'Bob the Blood-'ound,' 'e's the one for yer money."

But in spite of this weekly excitement, as Easter drew near, Florence Isabel began to grow restless. I wondered whether she were ill, when one day she suddenly broke out:

"Oh, Miss, let me 'ave the day off Monday, Miss, an' sleep 'ome thet night! Oh, Miss, it's Benk 'Ooliday. I'll work twice as 'ard, Miss, I will indeed, an' git everythink straight an' come back early after. Oh, Miss, you means ter be kind, but it seems as if I must git away for a bit. Everythink's so smooth an' comfor'able, it makes me want ter scream. Oh, Miss, don't say no, Miss!" And I, recognising the malignity of Bank Holiday fever, unwillingly consented.

True to her word, early the next morning Florence

Isabel reappeared. She was radiant, and began at once to give me an account.

"Oh, Miss, you should 'ave been there. We 'ad next to no sleep all night, for the third floor got drunk, an' Mother an' me 'ad to 'elp 'em up, an' then they begun to fight, an' the laidy throwed a frying-pan at 'er 'usband, while I 'eld the baiby. An' every one were so jolly, an' Mother she gets a bit fresh, too, an' started singing an' carrying on like anythink. But it's nice to see you agin, too, Miss."

In spite of all this, I bore with Florence Isabel, for her honesty was unimpeachable, and her work satisfactory, save for an undue partiality for cleaning the bath-room. It was provoking to have waited expectantly for dinner, and then to find the kitchen cold and dark, and Florence Isabel in the bath-room polishing the taps in an ecstatic trance. Visitors, also, were disconcerted at seeing Florence Isabel's head emerge from the cupboard on the stairs and watch them with a wondering gaze as they made their way to and from their baths. One day I asked her casually if she would like a hot bath herself. She turned quite red and her eyes filled. "Oh, Miss," she said brokenly, "sich things ain't for the likes o' me!" I was almost afraid that the reality could not come up to her expectations, and asked her later, with some misgiving, whether she had enjoyed it. She hesitated, then softly answered, "Oh, Miss, it sorter made me feel good all over. It were jist 'eavenly, like to green fields."

But though Florence Isabel took kindly to soap and water, the washing of her clothes still remained a difficulty, for she viewed additions to her wardrobe in the light of an extravagance; and, after buying her weekly stockings, sweets, and penny shockers, she handed the rest of her half-crown over to her mother. In vain I pleaded and threatened, until one day she saw me opening a big dress-basket. "Oh, Miss," she cried, "that's a nice kind of box for keeping bits of things, like." So, acting on the suggestion, I gave her a modest tin trunk, and she forthwith bought clothes to fill it.

Indeed, her enthusiasm carried her to the opposite extreme, and after her purchase of three knitted shawls, at a reduced rate, as being filling at the price, I spoke to her seriously about putting something by for a rainy day. The next evening she came home with a new possession, a two-and-six-penny umbrella, with a gold and ivory handle. "I thought I'd best git it good, Miss," she explained. "As you sez, it's cheapest in the end. But it seems a lot, don't it, the money you'd give for near a 'undred 'Eartsease Romances."

Bank Holiday was chosen for the umbrella's début, but, to Florence Isabel's chagrin, the day for once was fine. In vain I sympathetically suggested that there might be other possible occasions for sailing along under its full expanse. Florence Isabel only shook her head incredulously. "Oh, Miss, d'you really think so?" she said tearfully.

She had again asked leave to spend the night at home, but the next morning she reappeared even earlier than before, and visibly depressed. I asked anxiously after the umbrella, and then wondered if perhaps her mother were ill, but she reassured me on both these points. That evening she came to close the shutters very early, and as she was going, remarked shamefacedly, "I don't think I'll stop the night at 'ome any more, Miss. There's such a noise, I can't sleep, an' it seems to git a bit close, too. Mother don't keep the place as tidy as she used, some'ow."

I think it was about this time that Florence Isabel took to fashioning her Sunday attire on the model



of mine. The style was a little old for her, but I think it was I who suffered the more, for Florence Isabel possessed twice my looks as well as half my years. However, I bore it uncomplainingly and rejuvenated my toilettes, although my friends grumbled at the frivolity of my new summer hat, ignorant of how well its counterpart would become Florence Isabel.

It was to this hat that I attributed the final subjection of the baker's boy, a stolid youth, whom I had long looked upon as an unimportant link connecting the baking of the loaf with its appearance on my breakfast table. When, however, he took to calling for orders five times a day, one was forced to accept him as a human entity. "'Is mem'ry's very short, 'e says, pore feller," so explained Florence Isabel, while I mused on the similarity in possibilities between an area-step and a ballroom stair.

However, the baker's boy went away, and I once more breathed freely. But though his memory was short, he remembered Florence Isabel. And he came back to her after two years, just when my friends were beginning to class her as a perfect treasure. Only, he was no longer called a baker's boy, but was spoken of with pride as "'Enery, my young man." He even contemplated marriage, this very ridiculous baker's boy, but, as Florence Isabel said, there was time enough to think of that, an' they'd best get to know something of each other's fam'lies first.

This led to an expedition to see 'Enery's married sister at St. Albans, for his parents were dead. I never heard much about the visit, but it was not a success, for Florence Isabel came home in a state of silent gloom, and her only remark was to the effect "that she never could a-bear people with not an 'air out of place, an' mats beneath everythink." She even refused to see 'Enery until her next Sunday out, when she had arranged to take him to call upon her mother.

As the day approached, Florence Isabel grew more cheerful. She had taken some money out of the bank, she confided to me, "So that mother can 'ave things a bit nice against we come, an' everyone knows she can be quite the lady when so she likes." And when Sunday arrived, they started out quite cheerfully.

About an hour passed, and then I heard someone moving in the basement, so I went down to see what had brought them home so early. But 'Enery was not there, only Florence Isabel was sobbing heart-brokenly in the scullery. "It's all over," she said. "'Enery's seen my 'ome an' my mother. I've run off an' left 'im there—that 'e might enjoy it proper. There's 'is sister, where one can eat off the floor. 'Is fam'ly's respectable, not drunkards an' beggars, like mother an' me."

And as she stopped a sudden memory flashed before me, and I saw again that staggering, ill-defined shape coming down the street on the day that I had first made acquaintance with Florence Isabel. And then I remembered the sum removed from the savings bank with such thoughtless care, and its alcoholic possibilities. And so before my eyes rose up a vision of a drink-sodden woman meeting 'Enery's slow and painful gaze, and of Florence Isabel's despairing flight from the dirty room. But because I saw all this, I was powerless to comfort her.

In the evening, weary of waiting for supper, I went down again. And there in the firelit gloom I saw two dim forms. And then the coals broke into a sudden blaze. Florence Isabel's face was hidden from me, but 'Enery's smile of stolid content was very good to see.

So I crept away upstairs. And presently Florence Isabel came in with jingling supper-tray, for her hands trembled. And her cheeks were red, while her eyes shone strangely.

"'Enery thinks," she began, "that p'r'aps we could 'elp mother in 'er trouble if we was to try together. Oh, Miss,"—and she knelt beside me—"it seems as if I was 'appier than I could bear. It seems as if no girl 'ad 'ad two people so good to 'er as you—an' 'Enery."

E. AYRTON ZANGWILL.

## The Illusion of Propagandist Drama.

THE theatre of late has been the favourite hobby of reformers; the ideal hobby, intended to combine work and play. Suffragist *matinées*, political Sunday evenings, social Monday afternoons and the like tread upon each other's heels week by week. The output of propagandist plays has become immense. Ever since the time of Ibsen, Socialists, Feminists, and advanced persons in general have cherished the superstition that they are gifted from the cradle with a sort of *ex-officio* understanding of works of art; and, in particular, that the theatre is their natural perquisite as a medium of expression. The dramatists themselves have most wilfully encouraged this fallacy. In his book on "The Quintessence of Ibsenism," Mr. Shaw travestied the Norwegian prose dramas to make a Fabian tract, and took the platform as impresario of a new dramatic art in which characters were reduced to intellectual ciphers, and Ibsen's poetry was lost in a supposed anti-idealistic philosophy. Mr. Shaw's own plays, it is true, gave the lie to this purely intellectual standpoint, for the simple reason that his wit has always got the better of his reforming instinct; but the mischief was done. Lesser wits adopted the old, dull routine of stage realism eked out with rhetoric. Lesser craftsmen prattled vaguely of a "drama of ideas," a "drama of discussion," in which craft and form were of no importance. And this in the name of Ibsen, the most accomplished craftsman the theatre has ever known.

The truth is, of course, that Ibsen's "message" had been wholly misconceived. The appearance of real and thoughtful plays upon a stage hitherto crowded with unreality and ineptitude led the reformers astray. Literally, Ibsen went to their heads. They grasped his intellectual meaning, but the art by means of which he conveyed it escaped them. Art is the concealment of craft. The method of the great dramatist always tends to appear simple.

In this question of craft lies the whole difficulty of propagandism in the theatre. Ibsen did not merely preach; indeed, he did not preach directly at all. He created notable men and women, and left them to speak for themselves through their very being. Since his series of social dramas there have been no notable individual figures in the drama of Europe; in short, no more heroes and heroines. We have been delivered over, on the one hand to the explanatory, critical theatre, where intellect is an end in itself, and on the other to the base realism of the everyday theatre, where the occupants of the stalls see themselves faithfully reflected upon the stage, precisely at life-size, as in "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" or "The Liars." Here and there a compromise is seen, as in "The Perplexed Husband," now visible at Wyndham's,



where Mr. Sutro supplies, glibly enough, the bourgeois commentary upon Feminist endeavour.

Heroes and heroines apart, there has been no lack of clever studies of character on our modern stage. Mr. Shaw has created his Broadbents and Strakers and old Father Williams, with even a Jack Tanner or so to simulate heroics. Mr. Barker has given us whole batches of intelligent people talking intelligently. The lack has been of stage characters visibly *living* their philosophy of life instead of explaining it; and that means a lack of the very essence of drama. It is easier to explain than to create, but the impression of creation alone is lasting. The greatest common measure of a play and an idea is not necessarily greater than the content of the idea alone. The mere statement of certain views upon the stage—whether they be political, or social, or moral—is of no more value than the statement of the same views in a penny tract, unless the playwright has the art to express them in terms of life: an art so commonly dismissed as "mere technique."

And so the real trouble with the "drama of ideas" at present is that the characters are not big enough for the views they utter. They cannot row their own weight in philosophy. They let off verbal squibs, and we titter. They weep, and we are indifferent. They declaim, and we are bored. They have forgotten what they should have learned at school: the advantage of example over precept. And in the end they make no difference to us or to life. They represent propaganda without progress.

For some time past we have heard that the theatre is taking the place of the church. This is only one of the superficialities of revolutionists who never go to church, and who imagine that there is nothing in the church but the sermon. The phase is passing, however. Just as the demand for

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realism twenty years ago was due to a revolt against the prevailing condition of theatricality within the theatre, so the cry for propagandist views in the "advanced" drama now springs from a revolt against political and social conditions outside. The method must be tried before it is found wanting. Our newer repertory theatres may transform themselves for the moment into parish council meetings, and debate Socialism or the Suffrage or the Poor Law Report to their head's content, but they will discover that life cannot be moulded in that way, and that the art upon which they depend goes deeper than opinion.

ASHLEY DUKES.

## The Psychology of Sex.

THE straight-line view of woman does not appeal to the modern psychologist; he prefers the triangular view. The former standpoint is that which divides the sex into two classes: one the old-fashioned housekeeper type; the other the "advanced" person. These two are regarded as extreme types; and women in general are supposed to approximate to the one or the other. By almost all our modern novelists and playwrights this view is taken for granted. It is admitted that there may be a mean between the extremes; but it does not appear to be thought possible that there can be any deviation from the line.

And yet the average view of women may be confuted by opposing the triangle to the straight line. There is another class—Cæsar, who knew them all, might have parodied himself: "omnes mulieres divisae sunt in partes tres"—and they may be classified according to their characteristics. The housekeeper type—i.e., the average middle-class Englishwoman—is not distinguished for her intellect, but for her purely sexual side. The "advanced" type—in which category we may reckon most of the Suffragists, the Fabian women, and so on—are distinguished by their intellect only: i.e., sexual pleasures do not appeal to them as a rule, and their "minds" are nourished on "advanced" literature. Women in this category look upon Mr. Wells as advanced, as no doubt he is—for England.

Neither of these classes of women lives life "in the full." "Im Guten," perhaps; "im Schönen," often; but "im Vollen," never. This is reserved for the class at the apex of the triangle, a class as yet so small that we have no name for it.

It is true that in a few circles an endeavour has been made to describe this last class as Feminists, a distinction being made between Suffragists and Feminists. This distinction, as I understand it, amounts to this: the Suffragists are those women who want voting powers for the redressing of economic grievances and for the purpose of raising woman to the level of man in a purely materialistic sense. The Feminists are those who pay less attention to the securing of the vote—who are, indeed, not particularly anxious to vote at all—for the reason that their grievances are not of the economic but of the spiritual order. They do not wish merely to elevate woman to the level of man for purely financial reasons. They do not wish for economic freedom merely; but for sexual freedom. This distinction admitted—though it is not yet generally admitted—it must be acknowledged that the forces of the Suffragists are much the stronger. There are thousands of women who "want the vote" for the purpose of securing a lien on their husband's salary for every individual woman who is willing to accept the suffrage as a means of securing



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that sexual freedom before which the woman of the Suffragist class would be horror-struck.

I hope it will not be considered as bizarre to suggest that the former, or Suffragist, class lives life "im Guten," and the latter (Feminist) class "im Schönen"; but that only the third unnamed type lives life "im Vollen." For assuredly if the Suffragist class is chiefly characterised by the *amoris delectationes* and the Feminist class by the pleasures of the intellect, the third class is distinguished for the manner in which those who comprise it combine these characteristics in a just proportion.

Perhaps it will be permitted me to say that it is the straight-line view which has led many a psychologist and sociologist to cease from taking any particular interest in either Suffragists or Feminists; for most women seem naturally to fall into one of these two categories. Anyone who wishes to bring about greater intellectual plus moral freedom for both sexes cannot look to the Suffragists for support. Imagine the suspicion awakened in the mind of the average woman by the very expression "moral freedom"! Her mind forms images of all sorts of tragedies behind these innocent words.

Neither, however, can we appeal to the Feminists for support in an endeavour to achieve a combination of intellectual and moral freedom; for the Feminists are merely "interested" in whatever happens to be the fashion at the moment—Bernard Shaw, the revival of Samuel Butler, Nietzsche, Bergson. In very few instances indeed do the disciples prove worthy of the masters they have chosen to follow for the moment; and in any case they cannot be persuaded to take an interest in the body. I speak generally: the few exceptions automatically come into the third and unnamed category.

It must be acknowledged, of course, that males may now, to a very great extent, be divided up in the same manner. The individual known to French newspaper readers by the expressive phrase *bête humaine* is no stranger in Teutonic and Anglo-Saxon countries; and he may be reckoned as the male equivalent of the Suffragist. Very common, again, is the strictly logical Christian male (he does not necessarily believe in Christian dogma, but he unhesitatingly follows the precepts of Christian morality—the distinction is vital) who abjures the body and develops a mind which is necessarily superficial, because he does not live "im Vollen." This category of male corresponds to the Feminists. Men and women in the latter class are generally distinguished by their intimate knowledge of Plato, since whose time they have gradually come into ever-growing prominence.

To the third class, those who live "im Vollen," naturally belong all creative artists of both sexes—all real creative artists, I mean; not mere romanticist writers; but men like Goethe. It is this third and select class for which there is at present no definite organisation; no definite organ. It is, indeed, sincerely to be hoped that there will never be need for any; for an organisation or a movement is a bed of Procrustes, a destroyer of individuality. But perhaps the facts as I have outlined them may be deemed worthy of discussion in these pages.

J. M. KENNEDY.

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## A University Degree for Housewives?

THE lectures are particularly adapted to the needs of women wishing to prepare themselves for the efficient management of their own homes, and for stimulating that interest which knowledge and thought can develop in the objects with which most women are more or less concerned, whatever their other purposes may be." So runs the circular issued by the University of London making known the existence and advantages of its new Course in "Home Science and Economics." Proceeding further with the circular, "The new grouping of studies within these Courses includes in a Three Years' Course, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Hygiene, Physiology, Household Work (i.e., Cookery, Laundry and Housewifery), Economics (including Book-keeping and Business Affairs), Ethics and Psychology." Still following the circular, "The organisation of these Courses is the outcome of a strong wave of public opinion." And further, "We may regard it (i.e., the Course) as the special contribution made by women to the general recognition of the necessity of specialisation in order to maintain a high standard of national efficiency." That is the tragedy of it! Women make a "special contribution" towards educational facilities for women, and it turns out to be this. The Course has secured royal patronage, receiving lavish endowments—rapidly amounting to £100,000. And in every town and village there are gifted girls crushing their rage in the folds of dish-cloths, to whom such money expended in ordinary educational scholarships would have opened out a new world. Not that they know much of this new "Course" which is to perpetuate the straitness of their lot. Unfortunately, these things take place very quietly. They are done before those whom they will affect are aware they have been broached. However, avoiding regrets for what might have been, it is more to the purpose to give attention to what is going to be unless the London University repents at the twelfth hour almost.

To establish a new University Course—a new Grouping—is a serious matter. The Course once being established, it is likely to hold the ground to the exclusion of another and better grouping for whole generations. Hence the seriousness, and the public duty of criticism.

Any new grouping of subjects of university rank, should, before it is even considered, undisputably fulfil two conditions: (1) Its subject-matter, as embodied in the centralising idea which calls for the new grouping, should be of such a nature as to demand a university standard of intelligence and training to be grappled with; and (2) the centralising subject-matter should allow of a natural branching into fields of knowledge which, though differing widely in themselves, form a whole so unified that, one being omitted, the whole would be seriously handicapped; as would be the case, for instance, with any one subject in a course of Medicine or Engineering. Applying these two tests to the proposed new course in Home Science, we find the latter inadequate in a hopeless and ludicrous degree. Applying the second test first, as the Course is termed Home Science, the unifying subject-matter is evidently Housework (i.e., Cookery, Laundry and Housewifery). The Course implies, therefore, that cooking, washing and cleaning-up demand for their adequate performance each and all of these subjects:—Biology, chemistry, physics, and hygiene, physiology,



economics, ethics, psychology! This in a circular which speaks of the "necessity for specialisation in order to maintain a high standard of national efficiency"! It is farcical, perhaps intentionally so, as the circular proceeds to add, in the self-same paragraph, "It *will thus be seen* that this is an endeavour to treat all subjects connected with the household, both *scientifically and practically*." Will it not, indeed!!

Now to apply the first test—i.e., that the centralising subject-matter should be of a nature to demand a university standard of intelligence and training. Does housework demand such a standard? Let one ask the most proficient cook, laundress, or housekeeper of one's acquaintance. The answer goes without saying. It does not. Housework is a craft. Like a craft, it should be done deftly and accurately, either by those who have a natural leaning towards it or by those who are unfitted for work demanding a greater degree of intellectual endowment. It is lower-grade work. Much of it will soon be done by mechanical contrivance, and would in all probability have already been so done had it been men's work and not women's.

There are no reasonable grounds for raising the estimation in which housework is held socially. This estimation is far too high already, and housework absorbs the energies of many intelligent women who, but for the social status which it is unfairly accorded, would be honestly ashamed of not attempting something better; and the new University venture commits the offence of using the prestige acquired by wholly alien subjects, through hard work and strenuous intellectual effort, to bolster up the artificial dignity of this mere craft. To use academic slang, this is intellectual immorality. This is done at once deliberately and yet with a certain naïveté, as is shown by the truth-telling circular, which says, "It will ensure *these* subjects taking their proper place in public estimation." It should have said "this" subject, not "these." For Biology does not need a lift-up in the intellectual and social world, nor do Chemistry, Physics, Economics, Ethics, Psychology, and the rest. These are to help lift up the only one which does—to wit, Housecraft. What subtlety! What support for the "Housewife," the woman who does not revolt from "wifing" a house! And what a provocation and a challenge to the women who, though being born women, refuse to recognise that they are thereby born into domestic service!

The aims of those who frame such a retrograde scheme are in radical opposition to those of the women who are desiring the freedom and development of women. They aim at perpetuating woman's inferiority by perfecting her in the rôle which puts the greatest difficulties in the way of her development. They train her for it at great cost, and introduce her into it with the prestige a university training gives to support her. They do it because they believe in it, and revolting educationists must oppose it because they disbelieve in it. It remains for these latter to oppose the scheme as strenuously as its promoters support it, and to insist upon housecraft taking its place as a craft, and a craft of a not essentially very high order.

Housecraft, by the way, is not home-making. Home-making is a matter of personality. Housecraft in sum and substance is the mere removing of the mess of living and the arranging of the disorder of it. It should be done quickly and efficiently, without anyone taking much note of it save the well-paid servant who is engaged upon it. As this well-paid servant becomes more and more highly evolved, her ideals of service will more and more approximate to those of the public executioner

—i.e., to be effective and swift. For the woman who is going to lend her whole mind to these things, to take them seriously, following up their details to their fundamental principles, is going to be an intolerable, excruciating bore. Her efforts to be profound on trivial subjects should therefore be met with studied disregard. She should be effectually suppressed.

The real danger of such a move on the part of the universities is shown very clearly by the success of this first move made by the University of London. The public appeal for funds has been met by a lavish and almost spontaneous response. This success is due to the heterogeneous aspirations which are implicit in the scheme. The scheme appeals to two very widely differing sections of the community, one section conservative and the other modern and quasi-advanced. On the one hand this invitation to enter the circle of the intellectuals of a university falls like balm upon the irritated susceptibilities of the "Home-is-Woman's-Sphere" section, the "Woman, Queen-of-the-Home" wing, who hold that a house goes with a wife—a section which has been a little badgered of late. On the other hand, it appeals to the modern would-be-advanced woman in the most fascinatingly downright fashion. Not only does the housewifery enable her to assume the air of the thoroughly efficient "womanly woman," but the extraneous subjects—carefully picked for just this purpose—just a smattering of each—will enable her to issue forth, the sacred duties of the house being fulfilled, to supply her due share in the patter of the amateur debating society.

Rarely in the history of education has there been such a deliberate pandering to the most sentimental sections of the community on the part of a disinterested public body such as the London University. It is a colossal scheme to train model

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ladies-bountiful, who, after "doing good" in their own homes, issue forth to teach the "poor" to do likewise. In matters so important women have to learn to make reforms slowly. To be at once trite and true, mere change is not reform. Nor does a movement, excellent, perhaps, in its original intentions, necessarily continue good if prolonged to its Nth degree. So the University Course of Home Science is far from being—to quote the circular for the last time—"the crowning edifice" of those excellent institutions the Domestic Training Schools, and tends merely to throw unmerited reflex ridicule upon their excellencies. It is an application of "a place for everything." Let the Domestic Training Schools and Continuation Schools go on with their own work. Let the craft of cookery be taught to cooks and domestic service to domestic servants. Innovating further, if need be (and there appears need), let a certificate of proficiency in matters relating to health and hygiene, personal and domestic, be demanded upon the issuing of a marriage-licence, failing the production of such a certificate from another person responsible for the hygienic condition of the prospective married couple's domicile. But let arrangements for all such things be enacted in their rightful places, which will be very far removed from the precincts of a University. EDUCATIONIST.

## The Sheltered Life.

THE myth-making tendency never dies, merely taking different directions with human change and growth. Thus, though we no longer "pray for Dryads to haunt the woods again," Erasmus Darwin and his greater descendant have taught us enough of the "loves of the plants" to fill the forest with strange hints of kinship; and Mr. Wells' "white passion" builds us new worlds instead of a lost Atlantis.

Given a certain development, we must dream these dreams; and, if their embodiment be Idols in Bacon's sense at all, they are common to humanity. But besides these there are symbols of men's dreams and desires connected with their separate callings and partial interests; though Bacon does not happen to note them separately, we can see that "idols of sex" are a natural construction. It is true that in due course the iconoclast threatens them; indeed, in these days the pedestals are sadly insecure.

It may be worth while, however, dwelling on the fine and touching need at the basis of the conception of woman, enshrined in the Home, unspotted from the world, above the dust of the arena—there are a hundred metaphors!

We are perhaps most familiar with Ruskin's treatment of the idea in "Sesame and Lilies," where "the man in his rough work of open world must encounter all peril and trial. . . . *But he guards the woman from all this.*" Chivalry is one of the most enjoyable virtues to its exponent. We find Milton's Adam learning it in Paradise before there was anything to protect Eve from except the length of the archangel's discourses. Knight-errantry exulted in the luxurious alternation between worship and protection of ladies. And the hard and arid lot of the peasant is illumined by Burns's outburst:—

"To make a happy fire-side hame  
For weans and wife,  
That's the true pathos and sublime  
Of human life."

For clearly man sees life for himself as a struggle; but, storm-tossed as he is, he builds "a

shadowy isle of bliss midmost the beating of the steely sea"; and, having little prospect of enjoying it himself in the immediate present, his almost extravagantly generous imagination gives it to woman as her sheltered sphere. And in many beautiful forms he has eulogised the exploit. (If woman's imagination has sometimes proved less vivid, and she has seen herself, instead of thus sequestered, rather as cabin-boy on the still struggling bark, her own reprehensible ingratitude has hitherto kept her silent.) With the same poetic instinct he has endowed the guardian of his magic island with all the virtues for which he has not time. As Mr. Chesterton has recently emphasised, the sex difference is one of attraction, not hostility; and man has believed with eager hopefulness in a mystic holiness, peace, and purity possible to this so different partner of his.

But since besides romance man desires solid comfort, and since Xantippe is as possible among women as Beatrice, man's ideal has been every now and then revised, and added to, or subtracted from, with an anxious eye for harmonising dreams and waking life, while the pedagogic tone of certain male exhortations hints at practical difficulties. Milton seems over-anxious about submission—even in Eden; John Wesley's instruction to his wife, "Be content to be a private, insignificant person, known and loved by God and me," is somewhat painfully explicit as corollary to the famous "he for God only, she for God in him."

In fact, the two motives naturally get confused, and a man's own womenkind have had to cultivate a meek and quiet spirit, partly because it is a Christian grace, and partly because, poor fellow! he *must* lay down the law somewhere.

Woman, indeed, is an adaptable companion, and will play the game that makes man happy for a long time without criticism. With a very good grace she has posed for the ideal figure. When she has pined for other parts, she has had the discretion to disguise herself, like the ballad heroines who risked shocking their knights' æsthetic sensibility by following them as page-boys.

But it is doubtful whether she has ever accepted the ideal in man's devout spirit. Assuredly the home for her—that "place of Peace," that "shelter not only from all injury, but from all terror, doubt, and division"—is one long contest, none the less actual in its strain and possible hardening result, because its perils and trials are different from man's. It is by no means "always afternoon" in the apparently still land, though in this light we are accustomed to see it. Even Burns thinks of the "weans and wife" in the glamour of the fireside

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glow, prolonging the brief hour's rest in imagination to shut out the day's demand in the way of lighting fires and cleaning grates, cooking, dusting, and sweeping, which preoccupies the hearth-goddess. Candida, in Mr. Shaw's play, indicates the price paid in sheer hard work by a man's mother and sisters and wife to preserve his fine ideals. A study from real life in that vivid, strenuous Wesley household overwhelms the reader with the picture of women sacrificed, now grudging, now enthusiastic, but quite inevitably, that the husband or brother may become "a sword of the spirit"—without domestic distraction. It is little wonder that John Wesley wrote, perplexed and injured, to a wife less devoted than his sisters: "Do not any longer contend for mastery, for power, money, or praise. . . . Of what importance is *your* character to mankind?"

Mr. Chesterton tells us to go back, back from the chain-making of modern industrialism to the security of the old home where woman was queen. Alas! was Guinevere herself secure? The very knight, Meliagraunce, who early in the "Morte d'Arthur" fights Lamorak to prove her "the fairest lady and most of beauty in the world," is found later bringing her to the stake for treason. We do not doubt the beauty of man's dream, but may be permitted a wary scepticism as to whether it *ever* corresponded to facts very closely.

In any case, woman's acceptance of the part is fast becoming a physical and mental impossibility. Hannah More gave her readers the solid comfort that "in their very exemption from privileges which they are sometimes foolishly disposed to envy consists not only their security but their happiness"; but the Industrial Revolution has in the long run made the old "plain path" the "forbidden road" to many; we are no longer *as women* "the lawful possessors of a lesser domestic territory." A modern Mr. Bennet can rarely keep his "five grown-up daughters" at home till an ingenious mother can find husbands for them. And the crèche and municipal lodging-house, if less poetic than the "fireside hame," are often the *real* help of the poor woman.

Perhaps it needed a woman drawn by Mr. Shaw to tell a man to his face that he *cannot* shelter her from life, that in fact she is doing a great deal to shelter him! Candida strikes us as unkind—it is the boy, not the girl, in our popular conception who breaks the doll.

But it might be suggested to man that he has really grown tired of this particular "idol of the sex," and is ready to break it himself. He is trying to break it in the passionate protests in "Sesame and Lilies" against the strange streak of bigotry "in creatures born to be Love visible"; in the fierce attack in Browning's "Numpholeptos" on the "mistaken and obtuse unreason of a she-intelligence," the tyrannous demand that "for sake of chivalry and ruth" man must subdue his rapier-edge of truth "to suit the bulrush-spear womanly falsehood fights with." Thackeray does not always love his good women. Indeed, not in literature to-day, but only in the average male sentiment, do we find true worship of the old idol.

It rests with women to show that, though the narrower limits of the home are disappearing, men may trust them to make the city more home-like. It is not a new ideal; Greece and Rome had their home-goddess, but the fire guarded by the Vestals was the hearth of the city. And, whether we regard the "white passion" as building or seeking, woman is waiting, eager to work upon those walls whose pattern is "laid up in heaven," or to join man in his quest of the "City of God at the other side of the road." WINIFRED HINDSHAW.

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