

SHAFTS:

A MAGAZINE FOR WOMEN AND WORKERS.

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What the Editor Means.

Whither is the goal?

The old, old question! yet I do not shrink
From bitter truths; I do not fear to drink,
Even to the dregs, the cup that tears may fill:
I'd know God's truth, though it were hum in ill.

I have cast down the idols in my mind
Which sought to comfort me for being blind;
I need no pleasant lies to cheat the night,
I need GOD'S TRUTH, that I may walk aright.

—FREDERIKA MACDONALD.

MANY theories fill the world of Thought at the present time; there is a great striving after truth. Truth eludes us ever; yet ever lures us on to follow after her, to seek, though life be filled with seeking and death find the secret undiscovered. Courage! for every footstep means a gain to ourselves and those who follow on. Joy! for they who strive shall overcome; shall wear the crown. The earnest singlehearted strivings of each shall do all work that shall be done. What have we to guide us? Human Thought, that lives and is deathless. How shall we know our way? How distinguish good from evil, false from real? By the light that gleams from Human Thought upon the pathway, for there is nothing that is wholly evil or wholly good, all false or all true. Underneath all seeming, all supposing, lieth that which is a spark from the great fire of truth. Many theories seem strange to us; in many doctrines we see naught but what seems false teaching, absurd, strange, unwelcome. Yet it is well that we take heed, lest, in neglecting to entertain strangers, we miss the "Angel that cometh unawares." All earnest human utterance deserves our careful study, our close examination, that we may take the tiny specks of pure gold from the dross, and so build up for ourselves and others the great temple of TRUTH. But before we can do this as it must be done, self must be conquered, personal aims unheeded. We all feel that *our* way is right, *the* way, and this is well if not carried too far; for it gives us strength to utter our thoughts, which the world must hear. It is not so easy for us to feel that the ideas of others are right; this must be cultivated, for all form part of what will be the building of a newer and better world; the world of Humanity's dreams ever increasing in beauty. Finding within ourselves this great conviction of the importance of *our* idea, let us prepare ourselves to find the same conviction in our friends toward *their* ideas.

So shall we learn that every theory which leaps from the brain of inspired human thought is full of fire, of mighty force, of leading power, that though it may not be the only way, yet is one way. Truth is not to be reached by one way only, but by many ways. Read all that SHAFTS contains, in this spirit, and not even one paragraph, not one line shall have been written in vain. Read all that earnest souls write, listen to all they speak, in this spirit, and no word shall be written or uttered that shall not bring its precious diamond or pearl to our collection of jewels. Where then shall we seek for these precious stones for our building? Everywhere. In all that has ever been written, or spoken, or taught. In all religions, in all philosophy. In every human heart and brain, of the hidden divinity of which, these are but the outcome, the gropings which have been and shall be, changing and clearing as the ages have rolled, or shall roll, until that cometh for which we seek so imperfectly, the solution of the mighty mystery, which we know not yet, and therefore can neither weigh, outline, nor measure.

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It is the manifest duty of *all who are convinced of the justice of their cause* to work vigorously against those two HORRIBLE CRIMES, State Regulation and Vivisection, and of those who *are not yet convinced* to become so as soon as possible, by making themselves acquainted with the subjects. It is ignorance, and ignorance alone, which makes women apathetic, and lets them DARE TO LIVE and BE SILENT while evil works its will.

Immorality and cruelty, under which awful heading all evil is comprised, will flee in terror when women rise in their strength, and begin their united forward march, determined to subdue. A great power is rising to the help of the right, against the mighty power of Sin and Death. It is the power of women, which "shall crush the serpent's head." Why do they delay? Is this a time for sleep and rest, for faring luxuriously, for ease, and the enjoyment of all that is beautiful, when the air is sick with the cries of poor, mangled, tortured creatures, both animal and human; when in the vivisectors' cursed dens, every expedient is resorted to, every subtlety of scientific knowledge, not to ease pain, but to prolong it, and to intensify it beyond any power of imagination. What possible advantage is it to Humanity to know that a poor little rabbit can be placed in such a condition of

abnormal sensitiveness that it will scream in agony at the touch of a feather? Or that a living dog should have its head cut to pieces, bone, nerve and brain, inch by inch? Or that such experiments should be repeated *ad infinitum* on millions of sentient creatures in England and in many countries where there is not even the *pretence* of using anæsthetics? If only by such means as these humanity is to be cured of disease, then let us be without the cure. If only through the torture of others we are to experience relief then let us continue to suffer. If a man's health can only be kept right at the expense of the sacrifice of even one woman then let that man be without health. If our soldiers cannot be "kept well" forsooth, save by the holocaust of many hundreds of their sisters in India and elsewhere, then must they prepare to die, for women are gathering to the rescue and will none of these things. "STATE REGULATION," "VIVISECTION"—CRUELTY, IMMORALITY; these are the unparalleled horrors, resulting from men's single rule, and women's shameful acquiescence in that rule. In past times women may have with truth brought forward the excuse of fear; this is no longer so. We are governed by a woman who will head us surely, and more important fact still, women need fear no longer; for, *women will protect each other*. There are times in our life and race history when to raise the flag of rebellion is the highest duty we have to perform; and it has become the bounden duty of women now, to rebel, and rebel with a will that cannot be resisted, against all cruelty, all immorality, all that means the single rule of man, over the whole earth. English women must raise the standard high, all nations will follow. It is time that women no longer keep silence, but send forth their voices like a trumpet blast, which all the world *must* hear. For those women who will do nothing, who will still grovel under the heel of a tyrannical, one-sided dominion, their reward is before them; and those who work may safely leave them to it.

Women must strengthen each other first; then raise men; raise men to see clearly what they are and have been doing; raise them to the higher plane upon which we all must step; where women and men shall reign together in peace and equity.

Women must do this with justice and truth. There is little cause to fear that they will wrong their men fellow creatures, for women are the MOTHERS OF MEN and love their children equally. In any case Woman's

era is at hand, let her see that she use well the power coming to her.

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SHAFTS is reduced in size this time, as funds are very low. The Christmas Number will endeavour to make amends. I am asking each reader to send me the sum of £1—which plan has been proposed by several subscribers. If SHAFTS is unable to go on after my utmost efforts have been tried, then each kind sender of that sum will—much to my regret—be a loser by £1, but will have helped in the work, and will have proved that women do help each other. If SHAFTS attains the success I venture to predict, the money thus advanced will be returned to each sender, with the interest of 5 per cent. per annum. I hope to receive responses to this proposal as early as possible, for the need is urgent. May I also urge on each reader the importance of obtaining constant subscribers to SHAFTS. It is but 4s. per annum and this would really be the very best method of helping. In thus seeking help I am asking only that women should support an organ in which they can at any time express their opinions, and which shall show to the world and themselves the advance women are making. Prospectuses for the purpose of making SHAFTS known can be had by anyone who will kindly undertake to distribute them, among their friends and acquaintances.

The tales are held over till the December issue.

WHAT MINERS WIVES CAN DO.—The following letter is taken from the *Leeds Express*, and needs, we think, no comment:—“Sir,—I see in the *Express* that the masters are blaming the miners' wives for the miners not returning to work at a reduction. I am glad to know the masters acknowledge this to be so. It is the wives and mothers who understand the meaning of small wages, and the continual struggle to live and make ends meet. It is because of the lessons of the past that they will never willingly allow their husbands and bread-winners to return to the lower level from which they have sprung. I have heard some of the women declare they would rather take their little darlings and drown them than see them living the dreadful and miserable existence of past times. No one knows but the women themselves what have been their sufferings in the past. The masters are answerable for the piercing cry of the hungry children, and the rash acts of those who have done wrong under pressure of privation, misery, and wretchedness. I appeal to the wives of the miners to continue to help their husbands to be strong in a right and just struggle against tyrannical oppression. The masters have a different class of people to deal with than formerly. The working-men of to-day realise that they have a right to live as well as the masters, and not to starve for the want of a portion of that wealth which they help to produce. Let the miners' wives be firm.

Yours, &c.,
MINER'S WIFE.”

BOND OF UNION.

MISS FRANCES LORD'S Bond of Union Society met on the 2nd inst. at Porchester-terrace, in the rooms of Mrs. Woolcot Browne, one of the oldest friends of those who work against vivisection, and against “State Regulation of Vice,” also an ardent worker on both lines.

The members and their friends assembled in great numbers, and were full of the enthusiasm which so frequently brings forth earnest resolve in action.

MISS LORD who has long been an earnest worker towards the highest development of humanity spoke with her accustomed fluency. The following is an extract from the usual monthly letter sent to members:—

“The Right. Hon. James Stansfeld, M.P., our leader in the House of Commons on all questions of public morality, has called a conference on November 1st, as you will see by the enclosed letter from Mrs. Josephine Butler. It will but add to our conviction that we are passing through a very important and critical time. As to the importance of the occasion, we must all have felt at times that English History is what we make, quite as much as what we read in any printed page. Indeed, it is not possible to put before us, while we are young, the vast issues which underlie the words “Righteousness exalteth a nation.” But maturity shows us that we are trustees for our life and its powers, for the country which shelters our helpless youth and elder age, for the whole race and its destinies; that we have no choice but to be the makers of history; and that we must act as though all depended upon us. No ancestors, no aliens, no posterity can dispose of our Motherland; she is ours to honour. To be a “patriot” is not to feel this in order to take up arms against the children who speak other tongues and dwell on other soil, but as their sisters and brothers; and if we are freer than they, we are the more responsible for righteousness in decisions as they arise. Towards the people of India we should feel great responsibility; for shameful indeed are the deeds practised in their midst, in connection with State Regulation of Vice and Vivisection, and practised under English and even Governmental Sanction; while if we take these topics as Home Questions, there are equally terrible things to be told. It is not possible for each of us to take every opportunity of serving the righteous cause, but neither is it possible for us to miss every one and yet keep a good conscience in the matter. Mr. Stansfeld's conference and our Bond of Union meeting present occasions when important facts can be given, and by attending either or both we can do good.”

MRS. BOOLE read a clever and valuable paper which we hope to give later.

We have the pleasure of giving with but trifling abbreviation Miss Abney Walker's paper entitled:—

“FROM WHAT ROOT?”

The trend of our more earnest thought in the present day is towards the solidarity of things,—to grasp the connection which exists between the different efflorescences of evil, and to see what is their common root, that it may be pursued into its dark recesses and thoroughly eradicated.

Not content with cutting off the tops from our social weeds, let us find out the central root from which the creeping things spring forth, and wholly destroy it. It is a hopeful sign of the wish to do so when so many earnest people gather at meetings to protest against two of the most terrible evils of the present day, and to see whence spring their hydra heads—viz., Vivisection, or the dissecting alive of helpless sentient creatures, and the State Regulation of Vice, involving a worse than negro slavery for members of our own sex.

Both these horrible practices result from the oppression of the weak by the strong, and depend for their very existence upon the cuckoo cry of expediency, that dastardly plea of Caiaphas of old.

Our age is one of crass selfishness and softness of living, which, however, now most unblushingly justify themselves,—selfishness being positively elevated into the rank of a virtue. We are taught to do this by certain of our physiologists who call ‘evil good, and put bitter for sweet,’ when they say: “Let us torture hecatombs of animals, if it will save the smallest pain of but one man!” or when some go even further, and torture them, whether or no, for the sake of various motives, and even seem to feel these particularly virtuous sentiments; just as Indian authorities now talk pompously of their ‘prudent measures for protecting the health of our army’—by which they only mean the attempting to make provision for safe Vice, which they unblushingly profess to consider a necessity, and so actually incite to its practice by their deliberate arrangements for its use.

The spirit of the so-called “scientific” world is fast becoming an autocracy worse than that of any Russia, and most gladly would they consign those of us to a moral Siberia who are “fools or fanatics” enough to oppose the tyranny of this “new priesthood,” which claims the torture and sacrifice of innocent bodies, though for the most part carefully providing that their own shall go scot-free. This is somewhat after the fashion of an incarnate Moloch, without even the plea of the old inquisitors, that they were thus hoping to benefit the *Souls* of their victims.

Souls have gone out of fashion nowadays, and an imaginary physical benefit to the lower part of us seems now considered the chief good.

Old Purity workers, to whom he all honour, have long been dreading the attempted revival of the hateful C.D. Acts among us—seeing the insidious way in which the medical Press, more especially, has again begun to advocate their re-establishment, and to use ingeniously manipulated statistics to prove the disastrous conse-

quences of their repeal as to the health of our soldiers and sailors.

The decree of the House of Commons in 1888 has been set at naught, which commanded their abrogation by Indian officials, who, in order to retain them, have done so by the side-wind and new name of the Cantonments Acts, so that they are still in force, with the doctors' full approval.

The Commission of Inquiry appointed by Government authority has received terribly convincing testimony from those two brave delegates on behalf of Purity—Dr. Kate Bushnell and Mrs. Andrew—who have travelled hundreds of miles, and endured great hardships, in order to investigate this most sad question. Lord Roberts' recently-alleged ignorance of what Government officials were so systematically carrying out in India, when he was still Commander-in-Chief, could not disprove the testimony these ladies had gathered as to the abominable system being in full force among our hapless Eastern subjects, of which they hold the strongest documentary evidence, in copies of certificates officially authorising these unhappy victims to lead a shameful life; whereby the frequent and horrible compulsory examinations become an enforced thing (adding so greatly as they do to the degradation of the life itself), as many of the poor women testified with tears, and loathing of the whole wretched system.

It is a perfectly false impression that this life is their own voluntary choice, for young girls are frequently tricked into it without knowing to what they are being brought, the women superintendents, called “Mahaldarnis,” being actually paid a percentage by our paternal and professedly Christian Government for any bond-slaves of vice whom they thus manage to secure, the younger and more innocent the better!

Any breach of the fiendish regulations enforced, or any refusal to submit to the grossest requirements, means practical starvation, as they would then be at once expelled from the cantonment, when no one would employ them in any kind of way.

British officers sign these certificates for vice, guards in uniform are placed at the chaklas, or places where the hapless creatures are kept, while British army surgeons are told off for the most degrading work in connection with their enforced “examinations,” and callously maintain their necessity.

Yet, in spite of all these facts, the whole system was said to be abandoned in obedience to the Parliamentary decree of 1888, though (very roteworthy) an Official Report of the “Army Health Association” states that the Missionary Conference, by even proposing a resolution against the Contagious Diseases Acts was “attempting to hamper the work of the Government,” thus showing the utter falsehood of saying that no such shameless “work” existed. Since this, the logic of facts has proved too strong even for Lord Roberts, as he has made a public and unreserved apology to the earnest women who had “reported” in so contrary a sense from himself. (It was striking to hear lately that not until he had done so was a brave man's opposition withdrawn to his being given the proposed Freedom of the City of Edinburgh.)

The brutal treatment of the poor women themselves by the drunken soldiers, from whom they shrink in terror—being frequently subjected to their kicks and blows, as they told the American ladies with tears in their eyes and despair in their voices—ought surely to rouse every Englishwoman to work with heart and soul against this new form of “making the daughters of humanity pass through the fire to Moloch.”

The so-called “fanatics” who oppose this particular Hydra head from the poisonous root, can only hope that such “fanaticism,” (or in other words, the “enthusiasm of humanity,”) may mightily spread, and that now the Departmental Committee has confirmed the shameful truth of what was asserted to be going on in our Indian dominions, there may be such a righteous outburst of feeling throughout the land that the whole vile system may be overthrown.

Think what a degrading effect it must have on the thousands of British youths who enlist year by year—some of them, perhaps, carefully brought up by good mothers—to be suddenly brought face to face with this hellish system, which tells them in act, if not in word, that vice is a necessity, and that therefore a paternal Government makes careful provision for the flesh, so that their lowest passions may be safely indulged—that women are but their chattels and the instruments of their grossest instincts, whose life of misery and insult and degradation matters nothing at all, if it gives them but an hour's gratification—that, in fact, womanhood must be shamefully sacrificed to their so falsely called “manhood”! Think of the effect upon these ignorant boys and men when they come back to England—how it must lower their whole idea of womanhood, and utterly upset any little notions of morality they may possess!

Lady Henry Somerset lately said admirably of our national action in this matter, as regards the poor women themselves—that though we were so proud of having abolished Suttee, “that death was in comparison as a chariot of fire bearing them away from misery and degradation, compared to that pit of horror to which our English civilization has condemned them”!

Meanwhile her Majesty's army surgeons and doctors cheerfully perform the degrading work in connection with this system, telling the gullible public it would be very serious for the health of Her Majesty's troops if it were done away, and if no “Queen's women” were provided for their use; also that in England the consequences have been most disastrous already. The new Medical Priesthood, which has recently set itself up as the arbiter of Ethics, in addition to its more legitimate work of diagnosing disease, and, in former times at least, pointing out remedies with a view to rapid cure—now feels quite aggrieved that we refuse the dictum of the Hygienic Congress as to the “right of Science to dictate” and to exalt “expediency” to the place of a guiding principle.

Because Contagious Diseases Acts may seem for a time to lessen the Nemesis that must follow men's vices, they say it is morally right we should maintain these “sacred” provisions, though we rarely hear preached the simple remedy of self-control,

as the safe and only sure method of maintaining the health of our professional killers.

Of this system 21 years ago a doctor on the Royal Commission about it (Holmes Coote) said: “They are a set of penal laws (called sanitary) of a character sufficient to disgrace a despotic monarchy.”

The original wicked legislation of these Acts lies very much at the door of the medical profession, as appears from the shameless circular put forth by them about 1872. It was said to be for the welfare of society and family life that a certain class should be sold into the ghastliest slavery; and so for the public good their bodies must belong to the State and their souls to outer darkness (if, indeed, they have any)! but after Mrs. Butler's noble fight for such as are thus “blasted for the sins of the people,” surely no true-hearted woman can evade the sense of her deep responsibility on this terrible subject.

And now we come to the second division of our subject, namely Vivisection: including not only the dissecting alive of highly sensitive creatures, but their inoculation with virulent diseases, and other experiments causing great suffering. It is the utter violation of the Ethical principle which this practice involves, rather than its imagined utility with which we are now concerned, because it allows the torture of the lesser and weaker for any selfish end which may be desired, and springs from the old standard of the savage that “Might is Right;” which makes him equally merciless to his squaw and his beast.

There are so-called “sciences” which lead to the destruction of all right feeling, of all instincts of compassion, and to the negation of Humanity itself, as when the Materialists have regard only to blind force, looking upon every higher sentiment as mere fanaticism.

When Vivisectors talk loftily of the “welfare of Humanity,” the phrase should be defined, for Humanity is not the mere physical form of a higher ape, but a loftier condition of being, by virtue of a moral capacity; and physical benefit of any kind, real or imaginary, would be too dearly bought by sacrificing for it higher qualities or moral promptings, thus bringing down our standard to the mere animal instinct of self-preservation. As to the absurd idea that the doctors alone can judge as to the lawfulness of cruel experiments, we have yet to learn that a medical diploma confers on them a positive infallibility as to Ethics, any more than “the cowl can make the monk.” What has been condemned by our greatest moralists—very markedly including Shakspeare—cannot be now left for the decision of “experts” on scientific grounds alone.

Let us remember that it was neither to the Inquisitors, nor to the Clerical caste, that appeal was made as to the mediæval tortures of heretics, but to the lay conscience, whose verdict we do not now regret. A science based on torture is no more satisfactory than a religion founded on it, and a nation which could pride itself on holding an “auto da fé” for the so-called spiritual welfare of its people (to which we now feel so superior) is surely no worse than one which endorses by law the degradation of its subject

women, and the torture of dumb creatures, in the supposed interests of either health or science!

Mme. Adam says:—"The mechanism of a society founded on 'experimental science' can take no account of an *Ideal*. When science claims to be all-sufficient she makes an empty pretension. There is such a thing as the idolatry of facts, sacrificing everything to the play of forces."

Now, instead of the Jew or heretic, we have the dumb and innocent dog tortured, to wring from it the secret of life, which cannot be learned from any creature in an abnormal or agonised condition, any more than one could be sure of absolute truth from a victim on the rack. *Excellent* "motives" were pleaded in the Middle Ages, of "religious zeal" and "ardour for the good of mankind"—like this hollow modern plea of the high priests of science. But this did not avail to keep the Inquisition in existence—for the abuse of force is ever at last recognised as a crime, and the means must be worthy as well as the end!

When we reflect that acts which would otherwise be punishable by the law of the land, from their utter cruelty, are condoned and even praised, because they are misleadingly proclaimed to be done for "the good of humanity," does not this doctrine of expediency admit a very dangerous principle, which, if carried to its logical outcome, would cause us to endorse many an unlawful act in other matters? Dr. Rüffer boldly says in a recent paper, "If experiments were absolutely *useless* then they would certainly be *immoral*," showing that in his view, the morality of the subject cannot be disconnected from its utility; but we naturally ask, with a recent writer, "Why should the so-called morality in *cruelty* be inseparable from its utility, any more than in *theft*, for example?" To feed the hungry is as much a Christian duty as to tend the sick, and to accomplish this efficiently, some even go so far as to think it might be necessary to appropriate the possessions of the rich; but we should hardly feel justified as a nation in setting aside a class specially licensed to seize upon the goods of other people for the benefit of widows and orphans!

We must ever keep before our mind the *Unity* of the Divine Law when thus assailed with sophistries, remembering as an axiom of the deepest importance that "*whatever is morally wrong can never be scientifically right.*"

Vivisection and State Regulation of Vice play directly into the hands of the Materialists, because endorsing the idea that body is *more* than soul, and physical well-being than moral righteousness—that knowledge is an end which may be pursued regardless of moral limitations, and in a wholly selfish spirit.

George Macdonald well says—"Must we congratulate you on *such* a love for your fellows as inspires you to wrong the weaker than they, who have no helper? Shall we count *him* worthy who, for the sake of his friend, robs another too feeble to protect himself?—for no real good can grow on the soil of injustice. There is an unhallowed *lust* of knowledge, that for the sake of a

secret hoard of facts will say it is justified in breaking with torture into the house of the innocent life . . . and the greed of *knowing* thus casts out Righteousness, Mercy, and Faith." Can they know anything of the Central Love, "who use their inferiors in the scale of being, like a child his insensitive toys, pulling them to pieces to know what is inside them? . . . If the rights of animals are less than ours, this does not take them away altogether . . . for should we not thus be all the *more* honourably anxious that they have their *little* to the full? It is the weaker that stand most in *need* of justice, and every gain by *injustice* is a loss to the world and the social order."

Jeremy Bentham says:—"Men have discovered that the blackness of the skin is no reason why a human being should be abandoned to the caprice of a tormentor—and it may come to be recognised that the number of the legs, or the termination of the *os sacrum* are reasons equally insufficient for abandoning *any* sensitive creature to the same fate. The question is *not*, Can they reason? or can they talk? but can they *suffer*?"

There are two recent utterances of the vivisection school that throw a painfully lurid light on their present views and methods, which I would briefly quote—and, first, that of Burdon Sanderson as President of the British Association, just held at Nottingham—in his strikingly callous speech.

He there said:—"The leading idea in modern physiology, of which the methods are *wholly experimental* (i.e., vivisectional), is that vital energies may be *split into processes* identical in Nature with those of the *non-living* world—and so the *analysing of a vital process into the physical and chemical constituents*—to bring these into measurable relation with physical and chemical standards—is the *ONLY* mode of investigation which can lead to satisfactory results!"

If *this* be the standard now cold-bloodedly adopted by our scientists, we may well say, "God help the animals!" who are to be thus *deliberately* treated like stocks and stones—their living bodies to be broken up like geologic specimens, or used as hot-beds for disease, and their hapless brains for virus-gardens! There is *no* word here of their having *any* right to consideration, because they are *sentient*—indeed Dr. Wilks expressly states: "The fact of sentience cannot alter the mode of investigation," and it was he who signalled himself at the Church Congress by saying, "Cruelty was a thing dependent on the view of the majority!" What then becomes of all the special pleading as to anaesthetics, and the tender humaneness of physiologists? Cyon tells us frankly: "When it is a question of Science, I am stopped by *no* scruple. Science has a right to invoke the sovereignty of all its aims." We can well believe he holds this view, when he so glories in the ingenuities and "high art" of Cruelty, talking about the "*Artist* in Vivisection"—who seeks the key to life in the entrails of tortured brutes!

In contrast to Burdon Sanderson's state-

ment that *his* method alone can lead to satisfactory results, we are reminded of good old Cardinal Manning's words: "*Everything* about the result is uncertain, except the certain infraction of the first law of Mercy and Humanity."

And now let us hear what the new *Religio Medici* has to say for itself, as by the *Lancet* of last June—"If man is not entitled to gain from the necessary suffering of the lower creation some alleviation of his own and their (?) ills, that interpretation of the Universe which makes a Beneficent and Merciful Creator the Moving Spirit, must be erroneous." Thus this keeper of the medical conscience blasphemously holds that God's Right to be called "Beneficent and Merciful" rests on His approval of Vivisection! On the whole the French professor is to be preferred, for his absence of hypocrisy, who once stated to his class that, "though Vivisection had been of little practical use, they, as physiologists, insisted on it as a necessary protest for the independence of Science, against such crude and vulgar notions as belief in God, or the Soul, or Moral responsibility!"

There is no time now to go into minute details of horrible experiments, but *what* can we think of the motives actuating any callous being (whom we will not call a "brute," because it is derogatory to the brute creation) who could test the maternal affection of a dog by mutilating it with his utmost ingenuity—paralysing its hind quarters, destroying its spinal marrow, and doing many other horrible things, just to see if it would still try lovingly to nurse its puppies,—or of that other wretched man who found his dog with a litter of young just born, and when the poor little thing looked up at him with shining eyes in the joy of its first motherhood, he instantly and brutally cut away her milk glands to see if after that she would still try to gather her babies to her for nutriment!

Are these in any sense acts for the "good," and not rather the *debasement* of humanity?—as also to pour turpentine over a dog and set fire to it nine times in succession; to watch the number of minutes when creatures were baked to death in a specially constructed oven, or to remove a little dog's entire *stomach*, as one of our workers has just seen in Paris, with his own eyes—for the fiendish pleasure of watching how long the little mangled, moaning creature *could* contrive to live in this distressing condition! Yet Dr. Pye Smith has just said in his Harveian oration, Cruelty is *utterly repugnant* to his profession!! and he thinks it very *strange* we should try to shackle them in their full liberty of research and their gaining of knowledge; after which an honourable medal was awarded to Schiff, one of the worst of foreign vivisectioners, who had to leave Florence on account of his cruelties, and who so hypocritically said, "No cry of agony is ever heard to issue from my laboratory," though it was afterwards found he made a practice of cutting the nerves of the larynx, in the dogs on whom he experimented, lest they should utter any sound under torture, and so bring discredit, as he said, upon physiology.

Dr. Bell Taylor, on the contrary, plainly

states, "the portals to scientific research are like the gates of hell"; which, alas! seems much nearer the truth. Some moderns believe little concerning their souls, but have a "lively faith" in their bodies! albeit, the new "cult of the weather-cock," as the devotion to experimental science has been called, seems to have little regard for the bodies of poor hospital patients, who are naturally the *next* subject for experiment, or of Hindu women either, the one being openly called "*clinical material*," and the other regarded as *mere* instruments for the gratifying of the lowest instincts; the same *kind* of medical mind endorsing both these excrescences on Christianity and civilisation. Old Dr. Johnson said, even in his day, "Let all doctors condemn vivisection as discrediting their profession, and as extinguishing in them those sentiments which can alone deserve public confidence, the absence of which is *worse* than any physical evil."

Wicksteed well says of Vivisection—"We thus pollute the currents of our sympathies and lower our highest instincts—promoting disharmony in the Unity of the Cosmos. Human life is to be only served by sympathy with Nature, not through wresting it by monstrous and unnatural methods."

According to the materialistic philosophy, "Conscience is only a *nervous structure*, and Reason nothing but *phosphorus*." So *what* must Morality be with the school which thus degrades Virtue into mechanism, and seeks the key to existence in the "chamber-house of Physics"?

Did people but *realize* the horrors which are going on every day in laboratories both at home and abroad, and in the State-licensed dens of Vice in India, they would surely rise up with one voice, and demand the razing of these moral Bastilles to the ground!

No nation can lead the van of progress that does not contend for the rights of *all* the weak, and the protection of *every* sentient creature; while *no* class of beings, human or sub-human, can be righteously omitted; nor may we ignore what concerns the welfare of any. As workers for that *entire* Humanity which is formed of Soul as well as body—of Woman as well as Man—we protest against, and utterly repudiate the *false* moral standard of such professional "experts" as endorse these evil things; while we plead for our outraged fellow-subjects in India, as well as for the helpless lower creation—for our nation, and for the world—in the deep and solemn conviction that no blessing can be gained, and no true growth be possible—where a false and non-ethical standard is allowed or accepted upon any of these vital questions.

MISS WHITEHEAD said that reformers have no reason to fear losing any ground they gain, because their labours generate such a powerful leaven of thought, which, though small when compared to the mass of inert, and mistaken ideas around us, is like dynamite in its action, and must destroy the strongholds of error attacked by reformers.

MISS A. GORF said, that while the persons supposed by the *British Medical Journal* and the *Lancet* to be the best judges as to State Regulation and Vivisection, were also by those journals declared

to be "loyally obeying" the laws and "carrying them out in the spirit and the letter," they were really evading, disobeying, and using them for their own purpose. The views expressed by these publications represented the collective view of that portion of the medical and scientific world, which, on the ground of the possession of physical knowledge, posed as a moral guide. Vivisection and State Regulation were always accompanied by cruel and evil doings in the hospitals. Italy and Germany vied with each other in their ill-treatment of their patients; Switzerland also was tainted with this crime; while the methods adopted by France outraged, not only the physical, but also the moral nature of patients. In England scandalous treatment has been practised in hospitals. And the Brown Institute, founded with funds left expressly to promote *kind* treatment of animals, Miss Goff declared to be a den of cruelty, the head men of which have always been notorious vivisectioners. If not at present, quite recently at least, the most torturing experiments were going on there, and were published in the medical papers. Mentally and morally persons were corrupted by these cruelties, as also with the moral tendency of the C.D. Acts. Last year, a medical man of note (whose name the speaker gave) wrote in the *Provincial Medical Journal* an article on the necessity of these Acts (C.D.) "in language so gross, so coarse, so foul, that," she declared, "had I not read it myself I could not have believed that any doctor would have so degraded himself." Such teachings by such men had filled *even the Clergy* in India with distorted ideas on the subject of vice. There were only too many examples of the moral chaos thus produced.

By the practices of vivisection young men were demoralised and made ready for immorality. Mr. Asquith said he had carefully examined every case before granting a licence; yet a most appalling vivisection is reported by one of his Licensees who dissected, slowly cutting to pieces, the head of a dog, a long and difficult process where anaesthetics were impossible. This was a deep disgrace to all concerned. If the so-called *gain of Humanity* justified this, then were the Burke and Hare murders justified. Were we ready to follow this path to the bitter end? if not we ought not to dare to enter on it at all. If we tolerate the laboratories, we shall sooner or later have again State regulation of vice.

Pioneer Club.

ON Thursday evening, November 2nd, the usual weekly discussion was opened by Miss F. H. Müller on "A Code of Honour." Mr. Walter M'Laren took the chair, and, in introducing Miss Müller, referred gracefully to the happiness and increased wisdom he had experienced in, and through, his close connection with that lady. He then proceeded to say that women had not a sense of honour equal to that possessed by men; but whether he fully meant all contained in this bold statement, or was merely throwing down the gauntlet to the

Pioneers some of us could not readily decide. Miss Müller commenced by saying that, in order clearly to define what was meant by "A Code of Honour," she had spent some time with the dictionaries; but only with the result that she had been obliged, herself, to formulate a definition. The dictionaries had set forth the words, uprightness, honesty, probity, highmindedness as equivalents, some of them adding to the above, in parenthesis, "(for men)," and then stating that "(for women)" chastity and purity were signified. Miss Müller's own definition was, "a certain fineness in the texture of the conscience, by which we are enabled to recognise which way our duty lies." It might also further be defined as a tribute paid to merit, and as such was as binding as any ordinary debt. It followed from this that a "Code of Honour" was a set of rules fixing the mutual duties and obligations of one human being to its fellows. The lecturer's experience led her to the conclusion that between men and men there at present existed such a code, built up by the exigencies of their public life, first at school where a breach of honour was followed by a period of "Coventry," and later on in life when a bullet or a sword-thrust was often the consequence; between men and women, however, she could recognise no code, no honour—to take an instance from French law as between the sexes, not only was a man allowed to repudiate any claims on him of an illegitimate child, but anyone, including the mother, endeavouring to establish a claim, was punishable by law, and although in America and England it was not quite so bad as that, still the inequalities were very apparent; then, between women and women, the lecturer thought there could hardly be said to be any code at all—"what could one woman not say of, or do to, another woman with impunity?" In this latter case, Miss Müller wished it to be clearly understood that she did not mean to imply that women had no honourable dealings with one another; for there existed many brilliant and beautiful examples of most honourable dealing. But, as women, they had not yet learnt to stand by one another, and in their praise of one another could be detected a hesitation and a stiffness. This must be done away with. What greater bond can women have than their common womanhood, and, though many might at first experience some difficulty, it was their duty to refrain from saying anything to one another's disadvantage, to take every opportunity of giving to merit the praise it deserved, and to set up a rule never to disparage another woman. Such a silence would not close one's eyes to the faults of others, and would, as we learnt to know one another better, often show itself to be justified. When once women had learned to do this, the Code of Honour they would build up would be greatly superior to any at present existing among men, and it would then devolve upon them to lead their brothers up to their higher ground.

Several of the members spoke in the discussion which followed, some to the point at issue, others against. Mrs. Headlam in a racy and telling speech which brought forth ringing cheers from the Pioneers, defended

women from the charge of a want of honour by showing how vapid and uninteresting their lives had been made for them, owing to their restrictions; and by asking, Was the code of honour set up by men among themselves one worthy of imitation? She thought no code of honour worthy of the name had yet been established, among either women or men; but the time approached when women would give to the world a grander code and one worth following.

Mrs. Eva M'Laren spoke much to the same effect. While confirming to a certain point what had been said by the lecturer and the chairman she showed why this had been, and how it was to be avoided, also that new things were coming to women, created by themselves.

Mrs. Sibthorp questioned whether honour practised, mostly, from fear of the consequences of a neglect of its precepts, could justly be called HONOUR. Women had been taught self-sacrifice, which tended to dishonour both the sacrificers and the one to whom the oblation of another's personality and rights was offered.

Miss Shurmer agreed with Mr. M'Laren and the first statement of the lecturer, pointing out how almost impossible it was for persons in the existing state of things, in a Government capacity or any other, to act strictly on the rules of honour and retain their positions, or do well for themselves. Her own adherence to a code of honour had not tended to progress in her profession.

Miss Muller, at one time the Editor of the *Woman's Herald*, is well known as a true friend to women who when she uses the probing knife uses it to heal. She has an exalted idea of what a woman's power really is, and of what she will become. This she showed in the encouraging words with which she concluded her interesting remarks.

It is a *healthy* sign that in such a society of women they do not spare the faults generally attributed to women, but bring them out boldly to the light of discussion. It is an *encouraging* sign that these faults made out so heavily against women in the past, and by which they have been crushed and taunted; when they are brought under this microscopic lens, dwindle into motes and are found to be of so reducible a quality, that soon they will cease to be in their present form, and will have resolved themselves into virtues.

Mrs. Massingberd is still struggling bravely with her Pioneer Club. Its costs are heavy and she needs help. But help she will have. It grows and increases in strength; it is doing splendid work. The fee for membership is £2—in return for which each member secures a home where she can turn in at any time to rest, read, and refresh mind and body, where she meets with congenial souls, fellow-workers, friends, guides, helpers, where are books, piano, writing-tables, reading, social and silence rooms; also bedrooms for wayfarers at a slight charge.

The Club has a great and useful future before it, and each member ought to feel it a personal and serious duty to do all that in her lies, to help towards the Club's Present and Future.

REVIEWS.

REMINISCENCES OF H. P. BLAVATSKY, AND "THE SECRET DOCTRINE." By the Countess Wachtmeister, F.T.S.

This work gives a most interesting account of Madame Blavatsky and her book "The Secret Doctrine." It has been written, the Countess informs us, "by several persons," some of those who had the pleasure of knowing this remarkable woman, and of being her friends during the time she was busy with the book, of which "it must never be forgotten Madame Blavatsky was but the compiler. Behind her stood the real teachers, who taught her all the occult lore she transmitted into writing. Her merit consisted partly in being able to assimilate the transcendental knowledge given out; in being a worthy messenger, . . . partly in her marvellous capability of rendering abstruse metaphysical thought in a form intelligible to Western minds." The Countess also credits her friend, H. P. Blavatsky, with great moral courage in "representing to the world thoughts and theories at variance with the materialistic science of to-day." There is very much in Theosophy which explains the whys we ask ourselves, the reasons for much that is puzzling in our lives and life everywhere. This is not an age in which to reject without inquiry, and it behoves all who inquire to study carefully the theories presented before us on all sides, professing to explain why we are, from whence, and whither tending. When the different theories are studied it is surprising how little essential difference exists. This surely proves that some fundamental truth underlies them all. Still we are bound to find the best and surest guide to truth and this cannot be found without earnest, unprejudiced study. It is at least to be hoped and expected that this book will be carefully read in a spirit of fair consideration. It certainly deserves it.

M. S. S.

"A COMEDY OF MASKS." By Ernest Dowson and Arthur Moore. (*W. Heinemann*.)

The charm of the "Comedy of Masks" lies in the light and brilliant conversation of the players. "But sometimes," says old Lady Garnett, one of the best characters in the book, "guests steal away into a corner and they look into each other's faces. It isn't a nice sight and it mustn't happen very often else they wouldn't be back in their places when the music began." The authors have evidently an intimate acquaintance with artist life, from the rabid impressionists who foregather in a dingy little restaurant in Soho to the fashionable artists of St. John's Wood and Kensington who have settled down comfortably to cater for the great British public. "We never read critiques nowadays," says Mrs. Dollond, the wife of an R.A., "They're so dreadfully rude to Academicians, you know—suggest they should retire on their laurels. As if laurels were any good. One can't keep a carriage on laurels!" "No, by

Jove! it wouldn't be good for the horses," is the rejoinder. Handsome and clever Dick Lightmark early abandons the austerities of Soho, goes in for art that pays and marries Eve Sylvester, a charming girl, who has been long adored in silence by the noble and quixotic Philip Rainham. False to his art, Lightmark is also false to women. Philip takes upon his own shoulders the burden of Lightmark's guilt so that Eve may be spared the knowledge of her husband's past life and gain even a brief respite from the bitter disillusionment in store for her. Some glimmerings of the real truth begin to dawn upon Eve after Phillip's death but it is not until one night when the Lightmarks are giving a brilliant fancy ball that she learns the full extent of her husband's baseness. She draws him aside but he will not answer her. In despair she flies out into the night and goes to the lodgings of a certain Ascoyn, an "impressionist" who was Phillip's friend, and will know the truth. There is much pathos in the scene that follows. "Go back to your guests," says Ascoyn, "take up your part in the play. Underneath it all you are yourself with your beautiful sorrow, your transcendent happiness, nothing can alter that." "Happiness," she said. "Most happy. Haven't you an ideal which life with its cruelties, its grossness, can never touch?" Eve recognises that Phillip's devotion will be a light to her in dark hours, will be an after-thought against cynicism and despair. She goes back to her dancers knowing that her husband's facility for prevarication will have doubtless been usefully employed in accounting for her absence. With this peep under the masks the book ends. Some of the minor characters are exceedingly clever, and the young authors are to be congratulated upon the masterly way they work together leaving no "tacking threads" discernible.

E. W.

WOMEN AND WOMEN'S WORK IN FINLAND.

We have here a most interesting account of the work women are doing in this plucky little country. No greater evidence, perhaps, could be given of the advance women are making than the unmistakable improvements they are bringing about in different countries. There is no spot where the stir of their pinions is not felt more or less. Finland is happily placed for exercising a valuable influence on the independence of women. In it, we are here told, there are "36,000 more women than men. Its railways reach further north than those of any other country, and have a length of 1,900 kilometers. It has 30,000 lakes, and its commerce is carried on principally by sea. There are fifty-six women entered as students at the University." The ever-present danger which has surrounded the little country, from powerful neighbours, has made the people strong; and their difficulties have given them indomitable courage, so that we may expect great things from their women presently. Where there are hard things to contend against for men, there must be a double amount for women. So strength and capable endurance come.

The general culture is democratic as in the Scandinavian countries.

A concise and highly interesting and important account is given of the women of Finland. 1, Their position according to Laws, Marriage, Divorce, etc.; 2, In Municipal and Political Rights; 3, In Custom; 4, In Education—Women as Teachers (Note that in preparing for this position Psychology and Pedagogics are compulsory. The first school for both sexes was opened in 1883, and leads to the University. These schools have the largest number of pupils of any in the country. All these schools have been founded by private enterprise, and are maintained by companies or private individuals. The co-education question is much discussed); 5, Women at the University; 6, Women in Literature and Art (The first Finnish women who wrote on Woman's Emancipation were Frederika Runeberg and Adelaide Ehrnroth. Following this statement we find: "A strong protest against the oppression and injustice which have for centuries hindered the development of woman, and kept her, all her life, as if she were a unit, forms the keynote in Miss Ehrnroth's writings. Her *nom-de-plume* is 'A—i—a.' She has had conferred upon her the French Honorary title of *Officier d'Académie*"; 7, Women in Poor Relief Work; 8, In Municipal Service; 9, In Business and Trade; 10, In Agriculture etc.; 11, In Hygiene and Medicine; 12, In Philanthropic Work—Temperance—Social Purity—Female Servants; 13, Women in Associations; 14, In Government Service." The book is full of interest, it ought to be read and remembered, put into the hands of girls and used in schools. It is a fact worth noting that Psychology is a compulsory study for those who intend to teach. It is a remarkable, though very natural fact, that where people have few advantages and many difficulties, and are much thrown back upon themselves, they become psychological. This is why women have lived more of an interior life than men and it is this which will constitute their tremendous capacity for the work which lies before them, and for which their long subordination has helped to prepare them.

M. S. S.

DANGEROUS TRADES.—Towards the end of October Mrs. Charles Mallet gave an address on "Dangerous Trades," under the auspices of the Humanitarian League. Hardly anybody came to hear it, for people really do not care very much about sufferings which are not their own. Even those who vex themselves with the origin of evil and the problems of existence are not particularly alive to the fact that practical remedies are in their own hands. The tendency is to leave things, according to their belief or unbelief, to an all-wise or an all-unwise Providence. I wish to call the attention of both pessimists and optimists, who equally sit at home at ease, to Mrs. Mallet's lecture, which, after all, was not lost upon the desert air of Sackville-street, but may be had in material form as No. 9 of the Humanitarian League pamphlets, at 185, Fleet-street, for the sum of twopence.

The pamphlet deals chiefly with dangerous

trades as they affect women. Workingmen are also engaged in dangerous trades, but are not so much at the mercy of social conditions as their sisters. Women are not citizens, they have no votes, no means of influencing the House of Commons, and are, in consequence, paid at a low rate.

Among women's dangerous occupations Mrs. Mallet singles out the most dangerous, white lead making, and the making of phosphorous matches. "It is mostly women of the poorest and roughest class, who offer themselves to work in the white lead factory. . . . Poor and of impaired vitality, badly nourished, and careless of personal cleanliness, their constitutions are ill-fitted to cope with the poison, and they readily succumb to it. This industry represents for women very much what the dockers' industry is to men."

The processes of the manufacture are clearly described in the pamphlet. Suffice it to say that the workers are constantly exposed to the deadly white dust. They take it in at every pore. There is no escape from it. The result is always illness, often death. A girl is sometimes seized with convulsions or colic at the end of some months, weeks, or even days. "In one acute case, which terminated fatally, the girl had worked only ten days. In another, colic, with agonising pain, occurred after seven days' exposure to lead." Professor Oliver has calculated that 70 per cent. of the workers are likely at one time to be under the influence of white-lead poisoning.

"The physician at the white lead works is a salaried servant of the employer. When a woman is ill she comes to him, and he recommends her dismissal." There are so many women, and labour is cheap, and we must have white lead; it is part of our civilisation!

"Scarcely less perilous than work in the white lead factories," says Mrs. Mallet, "is the making of phosphorous matches."

White phosphorous, "even when kept under water, gives off deadly fumes, and nothing can protect the workers who handle it and those who work in the room with it, from their influence."

What happens to the unprotected workers? The first symptom of evil is toothache, toothache that cannot be alleviated, and only grows worse and worse day by day. The jaw, and then the whole face, swells; and "the jaw gradually becomes green, then black, and now the odour of the wound becomes offensive to those who share a room with the sufferer. . . . Both before and after death the jaw is seen, if examined in a dark room, to be alight and phosphorescent."

But what of this? Though the skies should fall, we must have cheap matches. Labour is cheap, women are plentiful, there are, in fact, too many women, and it is not a bad thing to clear them off at intervals by white phosphorous. The careful housewife, and the smoking man in the street, alike demand the sacrifice.

There are, however, a few foolish people who fancy that human life is worth more than cheap commodities. They assert that in each of these dangerous trades a remedy is to be found, and they call upon us all to rise up and insist upon its application. Each

remedy is quite simple. In the case of the white lead manufacture, prohibit the use of raw white lead; in the case of the match manufacture, prohibit the use of white phosphorous.

1. "Lead before being used should be fired, or changed from a carbonate into a silicate and rendered insoluble by burning, and thus comparatively harmless."

2. "The innocuous amorphous phosphorous" should be used instead of the white. It is "a much less inflammable substance, and in order that matches tipped with it should ignite quickly it is necessary that the match-box also should have a coating of the amorphous phosphorous."

There is only one firm at present which makes these safety-matches alone, and that is the Social Wing of the Salvation Army. In trying "Darkest England" matches, the consumer may assure herself for himself that no life has been sacrificed, no pain suffered, for the supply. Every match-box buyer may help in this way; but the best way of all is to go to the root of the matter and make an end of white phosphorous and carbonate of lead.

How shall we do it? We are not all Home Secretaries or even Members of Parliament: a good many of us have not even the Parliamentary franchise. We can all, however, help to create public opinion. First, the "Dangerous Trades" pamphlet should be bought and carefully studied. It should be passed on from hand to hand, talked about, written about. Its facts should be well hammered in at every opportunity. Every case in point which can be found should be quoted as proving the serious state of things, and at last an Act will be passed by Parliament, or a Home Secretary will issue a prohibition, and then manufacturers will have to accommodate themselves to amorphous phosphorous and silicate of lead.

ELIZABETH MARTYN.

[We earnestly hope all who read the above will without delay set themselves to help. Begin by buying Darkest England Matches and *buy those only*; this will stop the demand for others. We would also suggest that when such lectures are to be given they should be made known by every possible means. Very many persons who would have gone did not even know of it. There is a great want in this respect with all lectures.—Ed.]

HUMANITARIAN LEAGUE.

A meeting (admission free) will be held at 32, Sackville-street, Piccadilly, on Friday, December 8th, at 8 p.m., when Colonel Coulson will give an address on "The Horse; his Life, his Usage, and his End."

The chair will be taken by Colonel Colville, Director of the London Road Car Company.

Lady Florence Dixie is about to publish the 4th edition of her book, "Gloriana." The new edition will be issued in a cheap form, 2s. 6d. per copy. All orders must be sent to Lady Florence Dixie herself, at Glen Stuart, Annan, N.B.

“THE KEY OF DAVID: REVEALING THE MOTHERHOOD OF GOD.”—

It is the intention of the writer of this work to publish it in book form at 2s. per volume, when she has received a sufficient number of promised purchases, to cover the expense of publishing.

The “Key of David” is a remarkable book and in its outcome of deepest interest to women. Its outcome is the Revelation of the Motherhood of God. The author does not profess to teach anything absolutely new, but to have compiled from facts both new and old sufficient matter to support her own theory, which by following to its practical sequence results in a new reading of the Bible and one that if proved to be in all points, or even in most points, a true reading suggests the serious question, “Why has it not been seen before?” Is it, as has been asserted, that all that could exalt woman has been hidden from woman by those who were interested in so hiding it, that the truth has been suppressed? To examine, to weigh, before accepting is well, to reject without careful examination is an evil thing and unworthy of a matured judgment. All thought hath weight, and the more earnest, the more powerful it be, the more worthy is it of our consideration. In rejecting we often lose much that is of inestimable import. What have we to rest upon but thought? What are all religions, all beliefs? Are they not the formation of systems founded upon human thought expressed and written? So has it been in the past, so shall it be in the future, the Tomorrow, which will at least bring more light to those who can see, how, beyond all things important is Human Thought. We recommend the careful consideration and close study of this work to the readers of SHAFTS. It contains some wonderful revelations, leading certainly, in minds ready to receive it, to deeper thought, to determined inquiry, that will not be answered by sophistry, nor longer be content *not to know*. The best idea of the book will be found in the author's own words. In her preface she says:—

PREFACE.

The idea of the Motherhood of God has been gaining so much strength of late years that women, especially, are crying out that there *must* be a Divine Mother as well as a Divine Father. Many years ago I set myself seriously to study the Bible, determining not to believe anything merely because I had been *told* that it was so, but to search for myself, and prove, if possible, what was true and what false. On studying the character and teachings of Jesus Christ I came to the conclusion that they were essentially *woman*; and that the true attitude of each and every woman, whether married or single, to the world generally should be that of a mother to her children. I resolved to test it in my own intercourse with others, and the result justified my conclusion. Then I felt that if my conclusion was correct, there must be proof of it in the Bible; that if woman was really the equal of man, there would be equal reference to her in the Bible. I found the book, from beginning to end, full of womanhood and motherhood; but the

translators had misled readers by giving it as meaning, not woman in her individual self, but the community of believers in God called the “Church.” For some time I could not find convincing proof, but at last I obtained it. The proof came to me through music; and I hope to show that a knowledge of the meaning of the seven notes of the scale of music gives the key to the proof of the existence of a Divine Mother, explains the “mystery of God,” and shows the time of the ending of “this generation” by the releasing of mankind from the bondage to matter and the restoration of woman to her original position. I labour under a great difficulty as to words that will fully express my meaning. Believing as I do that “God” is a Dual Being, our Mother-Father, the pronoun “He” does not always harmonise; sometimes it should be “He,” sometimes “She,” and sometimes “They”: for the pure Spirit is like two jets of flame, able to separate and act individually, then blending and acting together. The same difficulty arises in speaking of Jesus Christ. When Jesus—the Man—is spoken of, the pronoun “He” is in harmony; but when the “Christ” is spoken of, the pronoun should be “She”—except in reference to the crucifixion. When man voluntarily sacrifices his body, killing it by entirely crushing his desires that he may free woman from her bondage to him, then, and then alone, is “*He*” “Christ.” Every woman who is a mother is a “Christ,” for she gives her body for the salvation of others; and every woman who adopts the attitude of “mother” to all, is also a “Christ,” for a true mother sacrifices her own worldly desires and self-advancement that her “children” may rise. The same difficulty arises also in expressing man and woman—or, as I shall show that the woman is the major, or greater, I will at once reverse the order that has held sway for so long, and say—woman and man. I need words that can express the two distinct individualities, each differing from the other, but together forming a complete whole; words that can express this, but with no suggestion of *sex*. Female and male belong only to three days out of the seven, and we are rapidly nearing the end of the last of those three days; the time is at hand when there shall be no female and no male. The words woman and man are nearer the truth, and when we dismiss from our minds all thought of sex in an animal generating sense, they answer our purpose fairly well, and for want of better I must use them. . . . The translators of the Bible have changed the gender of some of the words. The original word expressing the Holy Spirit is feminine. In Psalm 68, in the verse “The Lord gave the word, great was the company of those that published it,” the word expressing those that published it is, in Syriac, feminine—showing that women were, or were to be, preachers. The need of the feminine pronoun in some passages is so great that I cannot help thinking that it exists in the original books, but the translators have wilfully changed it into the masculine. In order to fully express my meaning I have used the feminine where necessary, putting it in italics that the change may be seen.

INTRODUCTION.

All nations are longing and striving for a religion or form of thought that shall enable mankind to conquer evil, and to rise to the higher, the real life. The different creeds are said to have all failed in their turn. The latest forms of earnest thought struggling for “more light” do not satisfy the inward craving for life, purity, and peace, nor give the strength required to gain them. What if music can show the rays of truth hidden in all forms of belief, and, gathering them together, throw the light upon the real meaning of what we are, whence come, and whither going! . . . If it can show this, however faintly, would it not be well worth the study? Let us, then, take up the end of the tangled thread of living, varicoloured music, follow it closely through all its intricate windings, holding it firmly lest it slip from the grasp, and see if it will show any or all of these things. But first let me explain how I came to study these things in connection with music. For years the similarity of sound, form, and colour has occupied the thoughts of many thinkers. Some have said that the whole solar system moves to music, but the sounds are so fine and high, and so great and deep that we cannot hear them. Lately some have asserted that all forms are created by sound, and experiments have been made by voice and instruments that seem to give colour to the assertion. That sound, form, and colour are all related or connected through vibration has, I believe, always been thought, but it has not been generally agreed as to which is the first or root. Musicians say that sound is the first, Sculptors that form is, and Painters claim that position for colour. Being born with an intense love of all three I have given much thought to the subject, not caring which should prove to be the root, if I could but find any hint pointing especially to one. . . . While in America, my thoughts, were again stirred on this question of the Triad by reading an article in a newspaper. At the same time I was earnestly trying to think out the problem of how one—a woman especially—could live in the world, and above all be married, and yet be “Holiness to the Lord”; for it appeared to me that the majority of women deteriorated in marriage, while men improved. It seemed as if the man absorbed from the woman some high quality which he did not replace with any other equal quality. One Sunday morning, after singing through the first part of the service in the choir of a Presbyterian church in the middle of America, I was thinking of these two problems and earnestly “asking” for the solutions, when church, pastor, everything seemed to vanish and I was alone in the very centre of the Love of God. It stretched above, below and all around me so far that even my imagination could not reach its limit. While full of wonder at the glory and meaning of it the “thought” came—“not by reaching up out of the world could one rise to spiritual heights, but by doing each simple duty in the world; and no woman could rise but by ‘touch’ of her husband, for they were *one*, neither could rise without the other.” Then

came the answer to my other problem in “words” clear and distinct. “Without sound no form, without form no colour.” . . . I accepted the order of the great Triad as sound, form and colour. . . . I was led to study other sevens with the seven notes of music. The colours of the rainbow with the meanings attached to them of old, the Days of Creation, and of the Week, parts of our creed and the Lord's Prayer are all seven in number, besides many others not necessary to add here. The spirit seen by John and described in his book of Revelation stood amidst seven golden candlesticks—which are the churches, states, or conditions, through which everyone must pass to regain everlasting life. The spirit held seven stars in the right hand, which are the angels of the churches; and the messages sent to the churches are, of course, seven. Hitherto these have been considered separately as not belonging to, or connected with, each other, but I soon found that the scale of seven notes beginning on “A” was really a “Key” to them all, and that all the sevens put together formed one scale of rich full harmony. Then thoughts in words began to rise within me so strongly that I had to write them on paper at once. This occurred mostly at night—but so imperative were the words that I was compelled to rise, and write, often till long past midnight. By day I arranged what I had written. I could not think of a name for the work; but as I had then fully realized that I was being led and taught by the Spirit of God. I asked, and then waited to be shown what the name should be. One morning soon afterwards I was impelled to rise and open the Bible at Rev. 3, vii., and there I saw the name for the book, “The Key of David.” David was called the “Sweet Psalmist,” and the “Key of David” is the dual one of “Song”—i.e., “Words” with the “Living Spirit of Music” within them. For some months I had perceived that the vital meaning of the words of the Bible, especially in the New Testament, had been lost; the words seemed mere dried shells with no life in them: but it was not till 18 months after I was shown the true order of the Triad, in the beginning of this year of 1893, A.D., that the thought arose with overwhelming force within me that this “Key” put into my weak hand should open the gates to readmit the Spirit of Life, that should quicken the dried shells into “The Living Word.” This “Key,” opening the Bible, showed me such curious, wonderful, yet natural meanings of its teachings, that, as there is a strong and intense feeling of expectation of some great change that must come to pass at the end of this century, and the study of prophecy is again occupying many minds, I would like to share it with all who are earnestly seeking truth. The subject is so sublime that I feel myself altogether incapable of doing it full justice. But, after all, a “key” is a very small part of a gate, and though the hand may be unskilled, and so the workmanship rough, what matter; if the key accomplishes its work of opening the gate? If I use, as some may think, too strong assertion that this or that *is*, I use it to give clear-

ness and distinctness of outline to what I wish to express; and as I do not give any of this book as from *myself*, I do not insist that a thing *is* or *shall be*, if it be proved *not to be*. I am led only to put all these things together, and then to cry to all who will listen to me—“listen to the song! do not the parts fit together in perfect harmony? judge ye for yourselves of the meaning!” I do not profess either to say anything *new*; many of the thoughts have been expressed long ago, some are only now being put into words; all I have to do is through music, to show a meaning in all these things that has hitherto been hidden.

Jesus said to Peter: “I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” It was said, not to the man Peter, but to the stone or Spirit of Understanding. It is the Understanding that binds, or looses in heaven as on earth; for as we understand here on earth, so far only do we understand in heaven—until we have had time to win clearer sight. And it is to the “Understanding” that is taught of God that the keys are given that unlock the gates of heaven. Peter unlocked the first gates, the “gates of Death,” with the Key of the Word. He was the first to preach the Gospel of Good Tidings. Jesus said that he would come again to reign in person over those who have passed through the “gates of Death.” But for Jesus to come again, the second gates, the “gates of Life” must be opened that the King of Glory may *come in*. The “Key of Words” was used by the “Understanding” that reasons and divides, and that is the understanding, or sight of man. As the second coming of Jesus is to be as a Bridegroom, to consummate the spiritual marriage, the second Key must be used by the “Understanding” that believes and joins, and that is the understanding, sight, or conception of woman. And to open the “Gates of Life” the Key must be dual—“Words” with the “Living-Spirit” of music within them, and that is Jesus Christ's own key—the Living Word—called the Key of David. The Key of Words could be given to man that he might open the Gates of Death; for it was through *man* that death came into the world, not through woman; and it is but just that as he opened the gates to admit “Death,” he should also open the gates from death. But the dual “Key of Song” could be given only to woman, for as, by her “conception,” she “led” the way to the angel's fall, and by her conception sin first, then the Redeemer from sin, entered the world, so it must be through the “conception” of woman that the way will be opened leading back to life. . . . The “spirit” of the “Word” is within her, the “hand” stretched out to “touch” closes on air, the spiritual meal is “eaten” in a manner no physical eyes can see. Once the appeal was to the outer “sight,” now to the inner. To “believe” because one “sees” is comparatively easy, but “blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed.” Olive Schreiner writes of hunters going through all kinds of peril in trying to capture the wonderful white “Bird of Truth,” but all

that each, even the bravest and boldest, could succeed in getting was one feather. The net to hold the Bird must be made of these feathers, for only truth can hold truth, and it can be woven only by woman when enough of these feathers have been gained. Hitherto, in order to obtain these feathers, men have had to analyse, dissect and pull to pieces: but the power of the Destroyer is passing, the time is come for all these feathers of truth to be gathered together, and for woman to begin to weave the net. It has long been said that the future salvation of the world must be the work of woman; but it has not been shown with any clearness how, or why it should be so. It is that man has been, and still is the “Destroyer”—but woman is the “Builder.” . . . The second coming of Jesus must be in spiritual form, for the power of the material will be destroyed by his coming. Yet must his temple be re-built before he comes—but this time it is the temple of the New Jerusalem, which is the state of perfect love, represented by woman spiritualised and restored. Woman herself is the temple, for it is her body that alone can receive, and contain the Spirit of Life: and it is woman, destroyed by man through her sin of corruption—that must be re-built in her perfection. But she alone can “conceive” the perfect Form of the Temple; and she alone can “build”; so she must re-build “herself.” . . . It is absurd, also terrible, that we have been taught for so long to believe in a Divine Father, and a Divine Son, while nothing has been said of a Divine Mother; and yet nature shows us there can be no offspring without a Mother. The result has been that motherhood has been degraded in every possible way, and child-bearing, if saved from actual disgrace by a form of marriage, is yet considered fit only for those who are not capable of higher (?) things. Yet history shows that several attempts have been made to prove the divinity of Motherhood through the earthly mother of Jesus; but only to be crushed by the scorn and horror of man, who, unable to see beyond the material, or to “conceive” a dual Being of perfect purity, sees only the sexual nature and feels it impossible to believe in a Divine Mother. It is for woman, when she has woven the net to hold the Bird of Truth, and re-build the Temple of the Spirit, to show that the Divine Mother is.

(To be continued.)

Dr. Alice Vickery read a paper at the London Diocetical Society, October 25th, on “Is the Economic Emancipation of Women Compatible with a non-Socialistic Régime?”

Dr. Vickery considered, that, *with a vote*, the *childless* woman would be industrially equal to a man. Marriage in the vast majority of cases leads to maternity, which means economic subjection. Unless special provision be made for maternity, a woman cannot regain her industrial position. The following four alterations for women Dr. Vickery considered necessary:—

1. Political emancipation.
2. Industrial and technical education.
3. Limitation of offspring.
4. Dower.

CONTRASTS.

AT the Central Criminal Court, in the latter part of October, three men were convicted of burglary, during which they assaulted a policeman, and received sentences varying from six months' hard labour to four years' penal servitude.

About the same time a man was charged at Bow-street with the death of his wife. The evidence was to the effect that they quarrelled, and that he knocked his wife down and brutally ill-used her. The magistrate, however, said he was satisfied no jury would convict, and discharged the prisoner.

On the 30th ult. John Alexander Lewis, who was sentenced to death for the murder of Mary Maria Adams, at Limehouse, was reprieved, and the sentence was commuted to one of penal servitude for life.

About the same time a woman was beheaded in Germany for poisoning her husband, after he had brutally ill-treated her and her children. She had hoped to be pardoned, owing to her miserable married life, but the Emperor confirmed the sentence.

Such are the newspaper reports. Perhaps they are too meagre. But the impression they give is unfortunate, and as they resemble previous cases in which it has been well-known that women came off the worst, we fear it is only some new chapters of an old story. We should like to hear what the "extenuating circumstances" were in the case of the Bow-street prisoner and the Limehouse murderer, and how it was none could be found in the case of the woman in Germany who had endured brutal ill-treatment at the hands of her husband, and who had doubtless a mother's feelings to be taken into consideration.

Since women are liable to have their heads cut off without mercy if they kill a man, however bad, and may be very frequently murdered by men with impunity, it strikes us it is time they had a hand in making and mending laws. Let justice be done, but let it be done squarely, and when drink is often urged as an excuse for killing in the case of a man let it be understood *per contra* that systematic ill-usage is at least an equal excuse for killing the perpetrator of it, in the case of a woman, who is so often described as the "weaker vessel" on convenient occasions. In no place are cultivated women of high character more needed than in the law courts. S. E. G.

If the great novelists draw a grand heroine it is only to overwhelm her with failure and despair; killing her off or sending her into a sisterhood at the end of the book, because there is actually no place for her on the face of the earth. Hawthorne, Goethe, George Eliot, Richter, De Staël, George Sand, Thackeray, Dickens, Kingsley, with the whole host of lesser ones, who echo the Paphcean strains on their small trumpets—they will all let no woman be happy or successful except the good and sweet little darlings who walk in the feminine orthodox path, and are not sure whether their souls are their own or their husbands'.—*Atlantic Monthly Review*.

Concerts, Theatres, Etc.

MISS MADGE E. CONROY'S "Grand Evening Concert" on Monday, Oct. 23, was a distinguished success, and afforded unalloyed pleasure to a large audience, resting the minds of busy, harassed people by the exquisite thoughts it called forth. "The crosses of the pilgrimage were for that hour forgot." Surely in this it reached its utmost expectations; for to what higher end can the recreations so cleverly provided by such talented artistes aspire than to turn aside to higher planes of thought those who are oppressed by heavy burdens and those who have hitherto perhaps not thought seriously of anything, a class too numerous, alas! but diminishing rapidly.

The world is becoming very serious, and takes its deep meanings even out of songs, so that even Miss Conroy's sweet, clear voice did not quite hide from us the false sentiment in the lines:

"And I am yours till death, Donald,
Body and soul and all."

Miss Conroy sings very sweetly, with also an additional and great charm; she gives expression just where it is due. This, with her distinct enunciation enabling the words to be heard easily, considerably enhances the pleasure she is able to bestow upon those who listen.

Miss Greta Williams sang two songs with great power and musical expression—"My Heart is wi' my Lassie," and "In the Chimney Corner." The singing was excellent, the songs themselves full of feeling, the singer entering into the spirit of both to the satisfaction—so far as we could judge—of all. The Whistling Solos were cleverly accomplished. Mr. Lawrence Kellie was in capital voice. It is not possible to distinguish between the artistes without possibly doing injustice to some, and tastes of course differ. Criticism, after all, is not more than a matter of taste. To us Miss Madge Conroy and Miss Greta Williams gave the greatest pleasure, but others may have judged otherwise: as we have said, tastes differ.

Miss Florence Bourne's "Dancing Ghost" was, as it always is, loudly applauded. It is full of grace, vivacity, and the music of motion.

For my own part, I love not criticism. When people's enjoyment is so kindly and so earnestly catered for as it was that evening what can one do but be pleased? 'Twere painful to find fault, yet it is a relief and a load off one's conscience to know that here there was no fault to find.

The Tempter.

THE THEATRE often is, and always ought to be, a teacher. We want amusement, certainly; it is a relief to the tired brain and hands, it is a necessity of life. Many people object to tales with morals (so called) or to plays with morals, but there is no story written, no play played, which does not carry with it its inevitable moral, whether we will or no. This, of course, to teachable souls: for the minute we do not write for souls unteachable. There are many of them, too

many, who see in anything that can be seen, or read, nothing but spectacular effect, or what may be so classified. Like the kitten which playful and romping after the movements of a broom along the floor, imagines that it is a something got up for its special edification; seeing neither the hand that holds the broom, nor the purpose for which it is brought into play, they gaze round-eyed and open-mouthed at the pictures the various lanterns throw upon the sheet of human life, and laugh "like parrots at a bagpiper." Their time is not yet; but to those whose time has come, everything that is, teaches some new truth. Underneath all that appeals to the eye and ear in this play—"The Tempter"—lie some wonderful truths; some stinging sarcasms which teach truths; suggested thoughts, arising from realistic *pourtrayals*, which drive home truths not always welcome; but truths we do well to heed. In criticising the parts, individual taste rules the judgment greatly; men as a rule prefer the sweetness of the Lady Avis, women the greater power of the Lady Isobel, whose part is taken by Miss Neilson, and well carried out. In the Lady Avis there is, as women see it, too much sweetness and too little strength. The part would charm still more were a little firmness infused as a background to the loveliness. All this is as said, a matter of taste, but the lessons underlying cannot be too highly prized. These are to be found principally in the utterances of Mr. Beerbohm Tree in his character of the Devil; especially when he gives his description of the actions and aims of man to the Lady Avis—the truest and finest point in which is

"He knows not whence he comes nor where he goes;
He bribes his fellow apes to flatter him,
Sniffs up the incense of their mean applause,
And calls it glory. He sets up an image
Of his lank, pitiable, monkey self,
And calls it God."

Also what a satire upon our misery-producing social system is the following:—

The Devil (to Lady Avis):
"Your pardon, lady,
This is too strong philosophy for maids.
I hear you're shortly to be wed. And girls
Who are to marry should know naught of life."

WOMEN'S PROGRESSIVE SOCIETY.

On October 28th an audience of the Women's Progressive Society of between 60 and 70 gathered at the Pioneer Club, to hear an address from Miss Kilgour concerning the forthcoming Parish and District Councils Bill. She said that this Bill was a continuation of the Local Government Bill of 1888. It was a democratic measure, and gave back to the people powers which they had had. It was also a simplification of the present state of things in local matters. It was a great gain that parish meetings were to be held in the evening. There was to be no proxy nor plural voting.

Our readers will have noticed that this Bill has now passed its second reading, and the amendments necessary for making women eligible as electors and elected will be moved in about a week, when the Bill will be in committee.

News From France.

DEAR MRS. SIBTHORP.—I thought the subjoined appeal might interest readers of SHAFTS as showing the special disabilities under which Frenchwomen labour. For much of the Code from which quotations are given they have Napoleon I. to thank, notably for the "Recherche de Pateraité" Article, which inflicts such cruel wrong on the mother of an illegitimate child by forbidding her to make *any claim* on the father. Monsieur Rivet, a deputy, has been working for some years trying to get this law altered, and has written a very eloquent book on the subject; but hitherto has met with no success. As regards minor grievances, I am not sure, on the subject of the guardianship of children, that our English law is more favourable to women; when I, as a widow, wished, in the event of my death, to appoint a guardian to my children, I was told by my solicitor that the law did not take any account of guardians appointed by a woman, and he referred to an old statute of the time of one of the Charleses in support of his opinion! I do not know if it is a matter of law, or merely a bye-law of the banks, but I believe no married woman in England can open a banking account without the consent of her husband!

These galling anomalies in the law are not realised by the greater number of women unless they are brought face to face with them in real life, and though much has been done in England of late years to improve the legislation relating to women, *much* remains still to be done.

With every good wish for the success of SHAFTS.—Yours most sincerely,
DORA B. MONTEFIORE.

To the Women Workers of France.

Brave and hard-working women, who by your incessant work and your bright intellect help so largely in the development of the industries and of the riches of our country, it is to you that we appeal, and we ask you to join us! Let us all with one voice demand our due, and cease not to demand it until we have obtained justice.

We are the slaves of society, we risk our lives to give it children, we work night and day to bring them up, and, as reward, what does this society, which owes us everything, give us?

Read the Code drawn up by men, and notice particularly the parts that concern us. Arts. 442, 443, 444 of the Civil Code.—Those who are disqualified for being guardians, or members of a family council: minors, outlaws, men of notoriously bad conduct, individuals who have been condemned to penal servitude . . . and WOMEN.

Only the mother left a widow, or the grandmother can be guardians; but an aunt, a cousin, a woman friend, are not allowed to undertake the guardianship of young children; only men are recognised as being capable of fulfilling this duty! A dying mother cannot confide her daughter to a devoted sister; the law obliges her to place her in the hands of a guardian who some day may abuse his position in order to

seduce the young girl, as has already happened many times!

Who does not revolt at this idea? A woman may be admitted as a witness in court, she may by her evidence convict for a death sentence, but she cannot certify to the identity of a person whom she has known for a long time; she is not allowed to give evidence of a birth or of a death, although these events always occur in her presence. The evidence of a constable or of the nearest wine merchant would be taken, although they had seen nothing; but their evidence would be valid!

If we turn to questions of property we see:—Art. 1421. The husband *alone manages* the family property. He can sell it, alienate it, mortgage it, without consulting his wife. Art. 1422. The husband may dispose of the furniture in any way he pleases. Which means that a hard working woman who has bought with her painfully amassed savings all her furniture, may see her lord and master sell it all in order to go to the public-house, or present it to his mistress, to the detriment of his legitimate wife and of her children! The wife can sell nothing without the authority of her husband! Not even what is her own by right!

Women work infinitely harder than men; yet whilst the man cries out loudly for an eight-hours day, he does not seem to notice that his companion, after a day's labour in the workshop, has, on her return home, to look after the house and the children, and that her working day often runs to 16 and 18 hours! Those who do not go out to work and who work from morning till night so that the husband, children, and house may be cared for, have no right to any salary, and are often reproached because *they earn nothing!*

The poor seduced girl whom misery forces to abandon her child is condemned to prison; but it being forbidden to inquire into the paternity of a child, the man may abandon as many children as he likes, and will run no risk of punishment! A widow or a deserted wife has to earn alone her own and her children's living, but for work equal to that of a man, she receives an inferior salary!

In prostitution there are always two guilty parties, but only one is prosecuted and punished—the woman.

We might go on indefinitely; the whole Code has been made *by and for men*.

Is this fair? No!
Let us unite together, then, to struggle against this injustice of men against women; join with us to strengthen the "French League for the Rights of Women," which will be powerful by numbers, and which will succeed in destroying the old abuses of the past! Women workers, come around us, give us your names, your addresses, and your good will. When women shall have conquered the place which is theirs by right in society, many miseries will be put an end to, and the reign of justice will commence?

M. LEON RICHER, President.
MME. AMELIE HAMMER, Vice-President.
MME. MARIA POGNON, " "
MME. MATHILDE POGNON, Secretary.
MME. MYRTILE REUGNET, Treasurer.

For all information apply to Madame Maria Pognon, 7, Rue Clément Marot, Paris."

CORRESPONDENCE.

[Writers are themselves responsible for what their letters may contain.]

RE "THE HEAVENLY TWINS."

DEAR MADAM,—Having been out of England for some months past, I have not seen any review of "The Heavenly Twins." I should be much interested to know what view is taken of the book by those specially interested in the cause of "morality"—technically so-called. That the book contains much that is true, no one can doubt. That the cause which the writer has at heart will be largely furthered by Evadne's story, is, I think, more than doubtful. What, indeed, is the special moral aimed at? Evadne spared herself much suffering and discomfort, lived a singularly self-absorbed, not to say selfish, life, influenced neither her husband nor anyone else for good, so far as appears in the story, and finally, having attained what Mrs. Grand appears to consider the *summum bonum* of existence and married her ideal man, she had two children, and went mad. I write in no sneering spirit, but I am honestly at a loss to see why her life should be proposed as a model for imitation—or even as an advance upon the life of the average woman whom she is to supersede.—A CONSTANT READER.

"CHRISTMAS CARDS."

MADAM,—I think a word of warning, on the subject of Christmas Cards, may not be out of place in your columns, especially as I address you on behalf of the thousands of women and children who for many years past have been employed in the manufacture and production of the hand-painted and beautiful designs generally resorted to at festive seasons.

Last year I found on looking over the many cards my family had received that most of them had emanated from printers' hands only. I myself followed the prevailing custom of having cards printed, thus tarring all my friends with the same message.

It had not occurred to me then, as it does now, that if we were all to give our orders to the printer we might be adding largely to the ranks of the unemployed and deprive in these already sufficiently troublesome times many a little maiden of her means of livelihood and many a woman-artist and designer of her source of bread for, mayhap, a family.

I prefer seeing something pretty and some joyous lines to the stereotyped expressions of the usual set greetings, and my preference is also based on the desire that we may not make the approaching time any harder for the women folk than it has been in the past.

Self-help is what we should all aspire to. Many say, "We only ask to be let alone to help ourselves." For the Master's sake let the avenues remain open for those many so to do. Don't print your cards, but select and buy them as of yore. It may involve a little more trouble; but it will be expended in a good cause.—Yours truly, F. M.

[It may be an appropriate addition to this most sensible and truly kind letter to mention that I have undertaken to try to

obtain some orders for Christmas cards or ornaments in seaweed and shells, suitable as an accompaniment to Christmas greetings. The work is done by a young girl in delicate health and a cripple, and is the sole means of support possessed by herself and a sister. Any order sent to Cards, SHAFTS Office, will be promptly attended to, and will bring gladness to these poor sisters.—Ed.]

THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS AT CHICAGO.

DEAR MADAM,—There appeared a short time since in the columns of a London daily paper two very interesting articles on the parliament of religions held at Chicago—the one from the pen of a Liberal clergyman of the Church of England, the other from a well-known lady Theosophist. There was, of course, a significant divergence as to standpoint, though both writers welcomed the *rapprochement* between teachers of different creeds, of which this phenomenal gathering was an evidence. I was especially struck, however, as I have been on many occasions when “Western civilisation” was the object of attack, with the calm assurance with which a sort of antithesis was presented between the materialistic degradation of the “Western” on the one hand, as compared with the lofty spirituality of the “Eastern” on the other. It occurred to me as I read of the “mild Hindoo” monk, Vivekananda, violently denouncing the results of British rule in India, that, at any rate, it might have been recognised that English public feeling had effected something in mitigation of the suffering caused by early marriage, and had stimulated the more educated natives to raise the age of consent, and that English medical women had devoted themselves, at the cost of their own terrible mental suffering, to relieve the miserable little child victims, often, alas! tortured to death. Yet this “spiritual” Hindoo had apparently only breath to denounce the “destroying of the precious life of animals” (not of little girls).

We have our own fearful evils, which are great enough, Heaven knows; but it certainly comes ill from any people who admit the legalised violation of little girls in what is termed “marriage,” to point the finger of scorn at any nation on the ground of either cruelty or sensuality. In both cases, Eastern and Western alike, cruelty and wrong have arisen through the exclusive dominion of the male principle; but to the minds of most Englishwomen I think, Oriental impurity is especially repugnant, as seeming to spring more directly from a contempt for womanhood, while the asceticism of the East appears no less to have its origin in the same root. I am inclined to believe too, that with the Oriental, “spirituality” is not sufficiently regarded as a thing to be used, but as something to be held and enjoyed for its possessor’s own sake.—Yours very truly, H.

CO-OPERATION AS A REMEDY FOR POVERTY.

DEAR MADAM,—Your able correspondent “Sagittarius,” in your issue for September, hits the bull’s eye with his shaft “Socialism.”

He draws a picture of the ideal State, alas, at present a Utopia—nowhere; but which might be *now here* if the people would combine for the purpose. Let readers of SHAFTS—who we are sure are enlightened women, and men too—resolve to join their forces for the attainment of at least some of the benefits to be derived from communistic life. The word is not very dreadful, it only means a high degree of what we are fully accustomed to under the name of co-operation, and as it is an expressive word, we use it to indicate what we mean. Already we have hundreds of examples of municipal socialism, or communism, in the many business undertakings that are now under the control of the corporations of our large towns, Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow, and many others. These towns make their own gas or electric light, run their own tram or cable cars, bring their own water from long distances, and dispose of their own waste and refuse. Let us get together, and lock to bow, and string, and shaft. All must work together to achieve the result.

By distributive co-operation vast sums have been saved to the workers of this country. By productive co-operation we are taking into our own hands the sources of wealth. Instead of co-operating as wage-earners to make the fortunes of manufacturers, we are combining as free women and men to make a living for ourselves. Heavier and heavier grows the pressure of the millstone of poverty, and every year many are sent under it that never were there before. What then are we to do?

Our proposition is that a number of ladies and gentlemen of small means should combine to take a fine estate and mansion in the country, either with their own resources or by the aid of capital subscribed by friends of the movement, on which a reasonable interest could be assured, and work this estate co-operatively among themselves, each doing what he or she best could and best liked to do, and taking in turns any disagreeable parts. For the hardest work labour could be hired, but the rule would be to do as much as possible among the members by using all the improved appliances and methods, and taking up the higher branches of fruit and flower culture, many of which are extremely attractive to ladies. Besides these, all kinds of “home industries” would be carried on, and plenty of scope found for art in every form. Ladies would be relieved from much of the work found so hard by “Millie Wilmott,” for the cooking would be done by a few members in rotation, all dining together, while the care of the children would be undertaken during several hours of the day by trained teachers of the Kindergarten and Sloyd systems. Everything would be done to share the work and lessen the labour and expense of mere existence, leaving time and energies for remunerative work and enjoyment. We are hard at work perfecting our plan, and have in view a most beautiful place on which we could carry it all out in first-class style.

We ought perhaps to add that we do not contemplate any sacrifice of the privacy of

family life, for families would be lodged by themselves in a series of pretty cottages scattered about the grounds, but near the main house, in which all would meet for meals, instruction, or recreation.

MARIE A. AND JOHN B. SHIPLEY.

P.S.—It has been suggested to us that in addition to the country home, above described, we should take immediate steps to open an Associated Home in London for the benefit of those who are obliged to obtain their living in town, and wish to be near the advantages offered by the women’s clubs. These latter often have applications for lodging accommodation far beyond what they are able to supply. There is also a similar demand from ladies visiting London, and not knowing where to go. We have therefore selected two adjoining houses in Bedford-place, beautifully furnished, and ready for immediate occupation. The charge for bedrooms would be from 10s. per week, or with board from £1. We appeal to your readers to signify as early as possible their interest in the plan, and to say what they will do to help forward the movement, either by taking rooms or by subscribing to the capital necessary for furnishing, &c., for which purpose a limited company will be formed under the name of “The Town and Country Associated Homes, Limited.”

WOMAN AND A “PRIEST.”

MADAM,—I congratulate “Ellen Keep” on her most vigorous and most logical onslaught on the well-meaning “Priest,” if priest he is. For a priest—a Catholic priest—should be the first to exalt Woman to her rightful place as co-equal with Man. Was not Mary the Co-equal of Joseph in the work of Redemption, and even greater? There can be no departure from the golden canon laid down by Paul (however it contradicts his *other* sayings), “THE MAN IS NOT WITHOUT THE WOMAN NOR THE WOMAN WITHOUT THE MAN IN THE PERFECT CHRIST. Words to be written in letters of gold—to be graven in the book for ever. And undoubtedly inspired, as they run contrary to his private utterances elsewhere. In a manual of Catholic devotion, “Basket of Fragments,” to be had at office of SHAFTS, it is contemplated that women should be ordained priests equally with men. Surely this is an advance which can only come from writers who are imbued with the spirit of these golden words. And why should not women be so ordained? Did not women perform the functions of priesthood in ancient Egypt, in the land of Osiris and Isis? Surely “A Priest” is a little behind the times, for sure as a recurring cycle these ancient times are coming round again on a higher plane.

A CATHOLIC PRIEST

LADIES WILL BOYCOTT THE STANLEY SHOW.

MADAM,—Returning home from lunch to-day, my attention was drawn to an advertisement of the Stanley Show which is an unprovoked and demoralising attack on lady cyclists, and I trust you will lend your columns to an appeal to all ladies not to visit the Stanley Show on that account.