

SHAFTS

A PAPER FOR WOMEN

THE WORKING CLASSES

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No. 15. FEBRUARY 11, 1893.

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WISDOM
JUSTICE
TRUTH

LIGHT COMES TO THOSE WHO DARE TO THINK

OH, SWIFTLY SPEED, YE SHAFTS OF LIGHT,
WHILE HOSTS OF DARKNESS FLY
FAIR BREAKS THE DAWN; FAST ROLLS THE NIGHT
FROM WOMAN'S DARKENED SKY.



Shafts.

EDITED BY MARGARET SHURMER SIBTHORP.
A Paper for Women and the Working Classes.
LONDON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11th, 1893.

WHAT THE EDITOR MEANS.

It seems that Mr. Lister, of Halifax, the first candidate of the Independent Labour Party, has lowered the democratic standard from *Adult Suffrage to Manhood Suffrage*, in spite of the fact that, at their recent Bradford Conference, they agreed on the following resolution:—

"That this party is in favour of every proposal for extending electoral right, and democratising the system of government."

If women are weak enough to allow such unfaithful departure from democratic principles to pass without notice, without determined protest, determined action, which will warn the party, and remind them of their resolution, so causing them to act up to it, it will culminate in placing the cause of women in greater jeopardy than ever. Is Parliament able to deal with the real evils of the social system? Are men anywhere able to cope with the evils their single rule has created? How much longer are women prepared to hold to their blind confidence in a power which, both in Church and State, shows itself more or less inimical to the interests of women? Women have been for so many centuries depreciated, and rated so far below par, that they have lost the knowledge of their own capabilities; and even in the matter of Lady Guardians they do not come forward as they might. Will a woman, then, any longer consent to such a position as this, that her son must be as her superior? Nature has placed the mother first, and first she must remain, or the order of things is overturned, as we can see it everywhere.

Women must stand shoulder to shoulder. They must help one another by their wisest judgment; by a counsel that is strong and fearless; by a determination that will not stir from its standpoint. It is only by the firm, unflinching fellowship and good comradeship of women that the battle of the world's struggle into light and knowledge can be fought. We must fight for the right, each one of us; so that an end may be put to the degradations under which all humanity groans, and especially the terrible, unspeakable degradation of women and womanhood all the world over. Are we evermore to transmit to our daughters and sons a legacy of impotence? Circumstances help our sons to rise somewhat above this legacy in some respects; though they sink in others. Our daughters have a harder fight still. One quality we have held our own—MORAL PURITY. The great evil of disability under which we have laboured has had side by side with it this one great good. Let us go forward in its strength and conquer all things. The more we act up to our ennobling instincts, which say, "Arise, for the time has come," the more we advance our development, physical, mental, and spiritual.

Virtue in men generally is much, very much, below what it ought to be; it consists principally, indeed, of a demand that the women related to themselves shall be virtuous; but what of the others? This WOMEN must change; they must bring in a new order of things. Two other great questions—great because their future results, have now to be closely considered by women—the extension of the Franchise to *Adult*, not *Manhood*, Suffrage, and the question of LADY GUARDIANS. It is seriously to be feared that covert measures are being taken, underhand means resorted to, to prevent the bringing in of a Bill for Adult Suffrage; to make it instead one for Manhood Suffrage. This, if allowed to be carried, will put the question of Woman Suffrage a long way back, and other urgently needed reforms along with it. Also, in regard to Lady Guardians, all sorts of side matters are brought forward to hinder their free action, and to prevent their usefulness or ability to make radical and necessary changes being brought to completeness. So even absurdly easy is it for women to change all this, to alter entirely the present legislation in all its conditions, that surely those who hold the power at present must wonder why it is not done. If only women would sink all their differences, and unite in one compact body, they would be invincible. When women are unfettered, free to think, free to act, their progress will be swift and sure, and it will mean the progress of all the human race, for women naturally take part with the oppressed. Some say it is against Christianity that women should take the same place as men. Is that so? Let women think, let them resolve! Let them, above all, have confidence in themselves and each other, for CONFIDENCE is a spirit so strong and pure in the cause of Right that it will bring all their efforts to a GRAND CONSUMMATION.

WOMAN IN ITALY.

(Continued.)

A marriage is considered the only possible situation for an Italian girl, when she does not find a husband her life is made most miserable, by the prejudices still existing that an unmarried woman has no social position whatever, and cannot either go out alone or do any thing, without it being regarded as improper.

I know of some who retired into Convents after all hope of finding a husband was fled!

When we consider the immense deal of good work done in England by unmarried ladies, who give up their whole life to high social or humanitarian ideals, we may well understand the need that exists to alter and improve public opinion in Italy, regarding this important class of women.

In the lower orders of society, even among the middle classes sometimes, unmarried women are expected to become if not the servants, the housekeepers and nursery maids of their more fortunate married sisters or still worse of their brother's wife!

When they are good, humble, and meek creatures, they submit to their fate; but if they are ill-tempered and disappointed in life, they become the plague of the family with their harsh disagreeable ways, and they make everyone about them miserable.

Except as teachers, there is scarcely any way open to the industry of women, when they have to provide for their own living, should their families allow them to do so.

Many who are kept as mere servants at home, would be considered degraded should they take to work.

Instead of becoming teachers, they may enter public business in the Post, Telegraph and Telephone offices, but competition in all these branches has become so great that many waste their whole life waiting to obtain a place in them.

And when they are so fortunate as to obtain it, their pay varies from two to six pounds a month, generally two pounds a month is the common pay for women's work, and it is only in the higher positions that they get four and six pounds.

Principals of the highest Government schools, inspectresses appointed by the Italian Government may obtain from eight to ten pounds a month as the maximum they may ever expect to gain.

If they rely on themselves and take to private teaching they gain more money, but greatly lose in public consideration, as a private teacher is looked upon by uneducated people as something little higher than a servant.

Many a sensitive woman has much to suffer from being perpetually wounded in her feelings of self-respect.

If a woman is naturally gifted she may write, but here again the prejudices against female authors are so unreasonable that if they were not absurd, they would be most painful.

Therefore, if they become authors they often drop their family name, just as if they were doing something to be ashamed of, and assume some masculine pseudonym.

Should they take to the dramatic career and go on the stage, unless they attain the highest standard, they are considered as out of good society.

Now, if they have the courage to face and overcome the many obstacles they find in a superior course of studies, they may follow medicine as a profession. Her Majesty, our beloved Queen Margherita, who, besides being the kindest hearted and most gifted Italian woman, is highly cultivated, and the best of wives and mothers, is fully aware of the want of refinement and culture among the women of her kingdom, and, therefore, she always encourages all that can tend to improve their moral and intellectual condition.

A young Turinese lady, Miss Mary Velleda Farné, courageously pursued all the studies to become a Doctor of Medicine; she obtained her degree, and was named by H.M. the Queen her medical attendant.

She now exercises her profession in Rome; is esteemed and admired; invited to dinners and parties; but her practice, owing to the existing prejudices as to woman's inferiority, is a very small one, notwithstanding the high patronage of a most beloved Queen, which in another and less prejudiced country would have certainly led to her becoming a fashionable doctor.

Some families consider it improper for an unmarried woman to be a doctor. It is considered that an unmarried woman, no matter how old she may be, should pretend at least to be quite innocent of all the mysterious of life.

When, many years ago, I used to visit a hospital in Naples, the way destined to young mothers was only open to male visitors or married women, and I cannot forget how amused I was to be allowed to enter a showing my wedding ring, whilst a friend who for her age might have been my grandmother, was kept out as she had not one!

These absurd ideas about the ignorance of girls are some of the worst prejudices in Italy, and cause an immense deal of sorrow and misery.

This sketch does not allow me room to linger much on the subject. I can only state that as on one side girls are kept in darkness about all the realities of life, on the other we have no proper laws, as you have in England, to protect innocence and obtain justice for the innocent girls and for the unfortunate consequences of their weakness.

The most cruel and painful facts came to my knowledge when I was publishing my Review, in order to promote the interests of women, and I was often besought to speak or do something to remedy such evils.

I regarded it all as showing such selfish and infamous conduct on the part of men, and I often asked lawyers and Deputies what could be done.

Nothing, until our laws are altered and the recognition of paternity is allowed!—was the only answer I could obtain.

However, I was much pleased to hear lately that a most promising young member of Parliament was going himself to propose this most important moral law.

FANNY ZAMPINI SALAZAR.

THE LEGAL VALUE OF THE UNREPRESENTED.

BY LIBRA.
I.

THE National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children has proved over and over, since its formation, the necessity of special machinery to deal with thousands of cases the law could not otherwise reach. Numbers of undesired children are born into the world, who are regarded by both parents as pests, to be ill-used at their will, or got rid of to save either further trouble and expense, or to obtain the miserable sums for which their wretched little lives were insured. It presents a picture of the sexual relations, and parental obligations in marriage (for numbers of these cases occur within the estate of matrimony), which must sadden all humane persons, and lead those who think to ask if there is not serious and urgent need for some wider knowledge on the subject of parentage and morality to be spread abroad than the feeble and erroneous teachings of ecclesiastics and the *dicta* of average medical men.

The sufferings of children have at last aroused the national conscience, and they are now protected in some degree by altered laws and an awakened public sentiment. But there are other and even more intolerable aspects of English "homes" and domestic life which call for investigation and comment, and amended laws quite as urgently, and these appear in the continual savagery of large numbers of men towards women, and women who are generally their wives. These cases meet the eye daily in the Press, and are most of them entirely passed over without comment. The laws are made by men, and administered by men, and since women have no voice in the representation of the country, there is no question whatever that sex-bias leads magistrates to the practical conclusion that quarrels which result in murderous assaults on women are of far less magnitude than, for instance, stealing a sheep or a five-pound note. This sex-bias may be unconscious, but it proves the necessity for the co-operation of women and men in national government. The man's view and experience, often indifferent, limited, or one-sided with regard to such matters, continually needs to be corrected by the opinions and experience of the woman. Then we might look for the even balance of the scales of justice. At present the records of the daily journals are a standing reproach to its name.

It may be well to enumerate a few of these cases, cut, be it noted, from *one provincial paper only**, and one or two London dailies during the last few weeks. What other provincial journals all over the kingdom contain may be guessed at—they probably report, daily, just such instances as these.

Some of these savage assaults have, of course, culminated in murders of the unfortunate women, of which of late there have been several instances—namely, that of John Boyle, tried at Belfast, who was in the habit of ill-treating his wife when he was drunk, and who was at last seen one night by a sister of the deceased kicking about something which proved to be the body of his victim; that of John Leonard, a coal-heaver, tried at the Liverpool Assizes, whose wife died from injuries to the head and body of a frightful character; that of David Kane, at Edinburgh, who was seen holding his wife by the hair and striking her, the body of the latter, together with a blood-stained hatchet, being found next morning; that of Peter Brannigan, of Liverpool, whose wife's body was found naked, with head and face battered, on the floor, the neighbours having

* It must be remembered that such cases almost all come before provincial magistrates, and are rarely reported in the London Press.

heard the ill-usage the night before and failed to interfere. In these cases, all of which have occurred within the last two months, the murderers have been committed on the capital charge, and have paid in more than one instance the extreme penalty of the law; but Kane was found to be guilty of "culpable homicide," and was only sentenced to fifteen years' penal servitude.

Now, how the assaults which frequently lead to such murders are punished by magistrates may be quoted by the following cases:—

About Christmas time a man called Nye broke into the room of a woman named Margaret Meadows, at Kilburn, with whom he had had a slight quarrel when hop-picking in the autumn, threw a lighted lamp at her, dragged her about the room, and kicked her and beat her with a celery-glass. The woman was fortunately rescued, but in a pitiable condition, by a policeman, and the magistrate sentenced the man to *two months' hard labour*.

At Plymouth, about a fortnight ago, Samuel Marshall, a labourer, was charged with a savage assault upon his wife, who was found by a policeman lying, covered with blood, on the floor, and unconscious. An iron bed-lath was found stained with blood in the room. Witnesses in the house heard the ill-treatment going on, which sounded as if the woman's head was being battered against the wall, and refrained from interfering until three in the morning, by which time she was almost done for. The man's cruelty it appeared was systematic and continuous. Marshall was sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour, which was reported as an "exemplary punishment"! The journal containing a report of this case did comment upon it, remarking that "on admission to the hospital the woman was found to be a mass of bruises," and that "the punishment in question might be considered 'exemplary' by some people, but that others would consider six years' hard labour none too heavy a sentence for a brute who had maltreated a helpless woman to the verge of murder." In June Samuel Marshall will be free to come out of gaol and kill his wife altogether, unless she is separated from him, and protected from his tender mercies for the future.

On New Year's Eve, a labourer named Keenan, of Belfast, lashed his wife with a heavy belt until blood flowed from her mouth and one of her arms, and she was in a condition necessitating removal to the hospital. When charged, he "explained to the magistrate that he was chastising his wife"! Only by adequate punishment can the vulgar and revolting belief that a man can beat his wife with impunity be removed from the minds of many of the men of the lower classes. That he has no such right has only recently been established by the highest judicial authorities in the land, who very properly scouted such ideas as an outrage on civilisation. But the practical lessons which are needed are not enforced by the magistrates who have these cases before them, and fail to see the issue of their decisions. We do not know what sentence by way of opening the eyes of Mr. Patrick Keenan was imposed on him, but in all probability it would be the usual mild "two or three months."

In the case of Duckworth, who was tried at Liverpool for the murder of a little girl called Alice Barnes near Blackburn, and who was subsequently executed, the jury found him *guilty*, with a recommendation to mercy. The unfortunate child was found with a handkerchief stuffed in her mouth; but, happily, her friends were spared the additional misery which would have been caused by outrage worse than murder, although the object—probably frustrated—of this crime does not seem far to seek. If he was guilty, on what grounds did this recommendation take place? We may not approve of capital punishment as a principle, but so long as it remains the law of the land, under no circumstances is it more deserved than when the victims of murderers are helpless and unoffending children, who have frequently been outraged before being despatched by the brutal creatures whom it is a mockery to call men.

A coiner or a forger is liable to a term of penal servitude. What is called "sacrilege"—i.e., stealing from a poor-box, or appropriating other ecclesiastical properties, incurs penal servitude; also perjury may be punished by a long term of imprisonment, and burglary is frequently visited with severe punishments. Property, as many have observed, is always adequately protected; not so the person, which surely is of vastly more importance than goods, especially when it not only involves life and death, but the honour of women and young girls. Yet assaults of the grossest character in England are only met by minor punishments of a character not deterrent, and not likely to be, and sometimes even fines. Why is this? Apparently they fail to excite in the men who deal with them judicially that sentiment of indignation which would lead to an efficient use of the legal penalties at their disposal, and a determination to stamp them out. No laws can enforce morality. That is a growth which can never be produced by external methods of any kind. But it is the province of the law to protect every human being, and by the most decided measures, from being forcibly subjected to another's lust and licence. That is an aspect of the question which calls for force in return, and such force as will restrain these invaders of the first and most sacred of human rights with a powerful hand.

What Working Women and Men Think.

LABOUR NOTES AND NEWS.

THE author of *Triumphant Democracy* has given utterance to a "statement" anent the recent troubles at Homestead. We are unable to congratulate Mr. Carnegie upon either the matter or the manner of his deliverance. Of the recent terrible conflicts he . . . "knows nothing. It should be banished as a horrid dream, and the lessons it teaches should be laid to heart for future application. . . . When employer and employed become antagonistic their antagonism can only be described as a conflict between twin brothers" (!).

Mr. Carnegie has retired from the business "to give younger men a chance," he has "no power to instruct anyone connected with the Carnegie Steel Company." Nevertheless Mr. Carnegie is still the holder of a majority of the company's shares, and his enormous revenues are still derived entirely from the Pittsburg Works. It is absurd, therefore, for this apostle of brotherhood and pseudo-democracy to suppose that he can wash his hands from responsibility for the autocratic and high-handed proceedings which led to the recent outbreaks and still heavier responsibility for the barbarous methods adopted for their suppression. A single word from Mr. Carnegie would have sufficed to modify the *régime* of the Company, a hint from him would have sent the Pinkerton men home, and have prevented the bloodshed which shocked the civilised world. Mr. Carnegie admits that he received "numerous appeals," and says with brutal frankness "I paid no attention." He eulogises the management, finds absolutely no fault in their conduct of the strike, declares they will be unanimously re-elected, and as to influencing them in a contrary direction to that which they have taken he says, "I could not if I would, and I would not if I could." We have no doubt that the workmen of America will accept Mr. Carnegie's advice and "lay to heart" the lessons of Homestead "for future application."

A public meeting was held last week at St. Martin's Town Hall, under the auspices of the Society for Promoting the Return of Women as County Councillors.

That veteran champion of the cause of justice for women, Mr. Stansfeld, M.P., took the chair, and was supported by a number of ladies, including Miss Browne (the honorary secretary of the society), Mrs. Charles Mallett, Mrs. Louisa Stevenson, and others. A letter from the Countess of Aberdeen, regretting her inability to be present, was read to the meeting. A resolution in support of the aims of the society was carried with unanimity and enthusiasm.

The new Labour Department has been got into shape; all the important appointments having been made. The two additional labour correspondents are Mr. Drummond, the erstwhile secretary of the London Society of Compositors, and Mr. Dent. The co-operative interest will be well represented in Mr. Dent, who is a member of the Co-operative Central Board and Parliamentary Committee. He knows something of labour, and we heartily congratulate the Government on his appointment.

Mr. Drummond's record is not, perhaps, quite so satisfactory from one point of view. He was a determined opponent of the "New Unionism," and is a Conservative. At the same time we recognise that the splendid organisation of the compositors was due chiefly to Mr. Drummond's energy and ability—it may be trusted to evolve itself into full accord with the newer aspirants of the democracy—and we have no doubt that Mr. Drummond will discharge his new duties with the ability and "go" which have characterised his past.

Mr. G. Bernard Shaw gave an address at Balham, on Tuesday, the 31st ult., on the subject of "Labour Politics." The meeting was well attended. The Queen's Speech came in for severe criticism, special reference being made to the absence of any provision for the taxation of London ground values, and also as to payment of members. A spirited discussion terminated a very interesting meeting.

Mr. Shaw dwelt, very properly, on the extreme importance to the Labour party of the State payment of members. We trust that he takes an unnecessarily pessimistic view of the intentions of the Government in this connection. As has been frequently pointed out, there is no need for any new legislation. Provision for the payment of Members of Parliament can be made in the Budget, and it will be a great disappointment and a serious mistake if a step so urgently needed in the cause of justice for the workers is not taken. At the same time, we are not too sanguine as to this or any other point in the Labour programme, being obtained very quickly. Mr. Gladstone will have his hands pretty full to pilot his heterogeneous majority through the "Aye" lobby for the Home Rule Bill, and Labour interests are likely to remain where they generally lie—on the shelf.

The Labour party are to be heartily congratulated on the result of the Huddersfield election—the return of Sir Joseph Crosland to the Conservative benches by a majority of 35. A perfectly fair and legitimate proposal was made by the Labour party that if Mr. Shaw would withdraw from the "running" at Halifax, leaving the field to Mr. Lister, the Labour vote should be given at Huddersfield to Mr. Woodhead, the Liberal candidate. This proposal was rejected.

It may be noted, by-the-way, that Sir J. Crosland, while opposed to Home Rule, will support an Eight Hours Bill.

An absurd *canard* has been circulated in some quarters to the effect that the London County Council intended to challenge the legality of the Sunday concerts arranged by the National Sunday League. An official contradiction has been published.

It cannot be too widely known in the interests of the poor, that *anyone* who sells bread is legally bound to weigh each loaf on delivery. An impression has existed that dairymen and others outside the bakery trade are exempted from this rule. Such is not the case. A dairyman was recently fined £4 6s. for selling bread other than by weight, and for failing to provide proper scales and weights in his shop for that purpose.

Mr. G. Somes Layard in the *Nineteenth Century* discourses on the subject of co-operative cookery, and claims to have shown that "there are many groups of 3,500 persons representing 270 households who are spending, in round figures, £50,000 per annum for the privilege of having the food cooked in their own homes." Mr. Layard goes on to emphasise the wastefulness and inconvenience of this system, and argues therefrom in favour of co-operation. Mr. Layard's criticisms seem just and also his deduction; but the great need for a co-operative commissariat lies not with households who are able to spend £50,000 on 270 separate *ménages*, but in the homes of the *workers*, where the spending ability averages nearer £1 per family than the £3 11s. per week on which Mr. Layard bases his calculations.

The Lancashire lock-out still continues, and, unfortunately, exhibits no signs of a speedy termination. It has now entered upon its fourteenth week. Great distress exists amongst large numbers of the operatives. The masters abate none of their *non possuntis* attitude. Public opinion is strongly in favour of the workers in this quarrel, which has been forced upon them. The prospects of their success are distinctly less favourable now that the masters are able to employ the sorry argument of hunger. But the determined attitude of the men—and of the women, the wives of these men—who are nobly bearing their share of the privation—is beyond all praise. Win or lose, the cotton operatives have fought bravely and well.

Mr. Vaughan Nash delivered the second of his valuable series of lectures on "The State in Relation to Labour," on Friday night, at Toynbee Hall. He dealt very ably with State duties and obligations so far as labour is concerned, quoting a number of statistics, which point eloquently to the need for further extension of State interference with "vested interests" and exposed once more the fallacy of the old *laissez-faire* school. As an instance we may quote:—Taking 1,000 deaths, 116 clergymen died from diseases of the respiratory organs, against 851 potters, 829 printers, and 779 file-makers! Again, the death-rate of children under five years for the whole country is 53 per 1,000 (in some places as low as 27); in Manchester, however, it is 103; in Sheffield, 91; in Bradford, 83; in Burnley, 80. Comment is needless.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE POOR.

CIVILISATION, like everything else, must be judged by its average result. If we intended to look merely on the highest possible achievement of such products of civilisation as Shakespeare, or Mrs. Fawcett, we should conclude that the results are a perfect justification of the system. It would be manifestly unfair to consider only the lowest human type as a sufficient reason for condemning our civilisation, but the fact remains that this would be a fairer test than the former, for the ample reason that there are more slums than centres of culture, and the masses of unfortunate toilers far outbalance the few cultured geniuses of the world. Average mortals may congratulate themselves on their distance from the lowest types of humanity, but they are indeed nearer these than to the highest types, and in order that they may approximate nearer the latter ideal it is necessary that a constant process of elimination should take place in the lowest ranks of life. Without considering in the present article how this elimination takes place, at what cost to the average type, and with what cruel

oppression towards the lowest types in the process of elimination, it is as well that, for once, the question should receive consideration, as to the directions in which the poverty of the poor is their destroyer.

The title of this article will be recognised as taken from the magnificently audacious phrase of the Jewish philosopher, who summed up the whole ancient and modern observation of all who truly reason about the problem of the poor. The destruction of the poor is their poverty.

"Locksley Hall Sixty Years After" was not needed to tell us how poverty acts upon morality. In the warrens of the poor, where a single room holds a whole family, and sometimes two or three families, where every delicacy of life, and every womanly modesty is rendered almost impossible, can it be wondered that morality is lacking?

A writer in the *Modern Review* has painted in vivid colours, which seem to glow with infernal light, the picture of what "home" can become when poverty is the presiding demon. Honesty is well-nigh impossible when every day the search for honest work is fruitless. Cardinal Manning, who knew what "life" meant to thousands of poor shivering wretches in East End and South End squalor, is credited with the dictum that a starving man is justified in stealing a loaf of bread.

Socially, too, the poverty of the poor is their destroyer. Who can fulfil the obligations of courtesy with those whom a hard fate compels us to fight for the standing place on the raft of life? The bitter hatred of the leisured class which exists amongst the poor can only be appreciated by those who have endured years of misery for the sake of earning a few shillings per week, while beholding the fruits of their labours enriching those who never knew the luxury of a day's honest work. To women and men in this degraded state of existence the suggestion of pure enjoyment and rational recreation is ridiculous. Their recreations are certain, in the majority of cases, to be as debased as their total life, and the excitement of betting, witnessing a prize-fight, and even worse pleasures, are welcomed as a delightful allurement from their ever-present woes.

Mentally, the poor have even fewer chances of development than socially and morally. Obviously, in the case of the extremely poor, mental emancipation is impossible. Toynbee Hall and Mrs. Humphry Ward's college are not for them. Thought is drowned in tears. Omnipotent ignorance has complete empire. They go down into the pit like unto the brute beast. In the name of average humanity, let us go to the rescue. We must abolish the conditions of labour which make these things possible before we can do a single helpful work. The existence of the evils here mentioned is a standing threat against the happiness, the wealth, and the morality of humanity at large. If we will not do the work for the love of our sisters and brethren, let us do it for our own sake. But it is not yet too late to appeal to humanity on broader grounds; we are awaking from our sleep, and if *wisdom* has lingered for so long, it has been mainly because *knowledge* has not come.

GEORGE BEDBOROUGH.

THEATRICAL.

THE Criterion Theatre, so long the home of mirth-provoking farce, comedy, has now been turned into a scene of serious, almost sensational, comedy. "The Bauble Shop" is a clever production by Mr. Henry Arthur Jones, and is clearly meant as a portrayal of social life at the present day. As such it is decidedly a genuine picture of men and manners, and as the House of Commons (to which, by the way, one act is devoted entirely) is introduced, one cannot help fancying that, despite the idyllic top-shop which forms the scene of another act, the baubles which Mr. Jones desires mainly to depict are pride of place, power, and rank, and a few of the trifles which men in general have not ceased to value or ignore.

No individual politician can be said to be hinted at. Nevertheless, the story recalls to mind the fate of a once mighty leader of a certain party in the House—with this exception—that the close of *his* Parliamentary career was marked by a tragic event, whereas Mr. Jones's hero's is *not*. Lord Clivebrook, the son of the Earl of Sarum, at the age of forty, is chief of the Constitutional party, a brilliant debater in the House, and a general favourite. A maiden, however, has crossed his path; one unequal in station and birth, but who has a hold on his affections. She is the daughter of a drunken toy-maker, with whom she resides, and is the ideal of a modest girl. Lord Clivebrook's affection is reciprocated with all the warmth of the girl's innocent nature. Stolen visits at unconventional hours can have but one end, and at length Lord Clivebrook is discovered at midnight in the company of the girl by the spies whom his arch enemy, Stoach, had set upon his track. With desperation and courage the noble lord tries to brazen out the matter, but Stoach, who is a most advanced Radical and a leading light of the Social Purity party, refuses to be satisfied unless on the most flagrantly insulting terms. On the following night, Lord Clivebrook has to speak on a bill which has for its object the promotion of social purity. Now is

Stoach's hour of triumph, and in the member's private room, in the presence of the Whips and other friends, the haughty leader is compelled to retire from power with his party into private life.

One thing only will free him from shame and dishonour—the marriage of the woman he has betrayed. Very genuinely he offers her his hand, but this she refuses, and it is only when she observes the heartless jubilation of Stoach over the downfall of his proud adversary that she relents. For a year or two the bride and bridegroom will enjoy peace and happiness far away from the Bauble Shop and the scene of their misery and joy; then Lord Clivebrook will return restored to health and reputation and lead his party to victory.

All this is very fresh and invigorating, and, judging by the manner in which it was received by the audience, will prove an attraction for a long period to lovers of the stage.

Of course, we all like Mr. Wyndham best in a comic character, but never within my recollection has he donned a serious *role* to such perfection as in Lord Clivebrook. Deeply tender and earnest in his love-making he stirred the pulses of the audience to enthusiasm, and his portrayal of the crestfallen leader was even more admirable. His sufferings were at times poignant, and such was the appearance of his blanched and haggard countenance that it is questionable whether tears of pity did not fall from many present; at all events it was sufficient to do so. Such a complete change had his feelings undergone during that stormy scene in the private room of the House that when at length he staggered to his own room, despair and shame gnawing at his heart, even his father failed to recognise him. Miss Mary Moore was delicately pathetic as the heroine, and the scene in which Lord Sarum placed her hand in that of his son was truly telling and effective. Mr. Somerset represented Lord Sarum, and Mr. Valentine, Mr. Aynesworth; Misses Enson, Moodie, and Jeffreys acted capably their respective parts.

"King Lear" at the Lyceum still continues to attract numerous audiences. When first placed upon the stage it was the verdict of not a few journalists that the piece was "a representation surpassing all precedence." Unsurpassably splendid in spectacular effect, interesting from a physiological point of view, and unrivalled as the realisation of a dramatic fable, it can be well understood how the special beauties of such a piece can with difficulty find expression upon the stage, and can, perhaps, best be interpreted in perusals. No dramatic scene is more tragic than that in which the King, maddened with successive calamitous waves, the assumed madman hiding himself from the persecution of his fellows, and the professional fool, together endure the blasts of the pitiless storm.

Of course, all interest is centred in King Lear, and as to Mr. Irving's interpretations of the character it may be said that his composure is much more marked than it was on his first appearance. Profoundly royal is his bearing as he sweeps across the stage to his throne with his sheathed sword clasped against his breast. A burning feeling of impetuosity, somewhat akin to fierceness, are evinced in the action as he goes through the subsequent gradations of feebleness of wit, combined with physical weakness slowly creeping into decrepitude, the scene is intensely impressive, and at times is almost poignant.

As to Cordelia, Miss Ellen Terry displays her wonted fascinating powers and her sweet womanliness of character. The caressing charms which she never fails to display are evident in her actions, and throughout Cordelia has a most faithful interpreter in the winsome actress.

The scenery is exquisitely picturesque, the scenes upon the heath being most effective. The whole piece is characterised by inexpressible sadness and dignity, and the costumes, especially of Regan and Goneril, are magnificent.

Miss Ada Dyas and Miss Maud Milton faithfully depict the latter, Mr. Wm. Terriss, Edgar; Mr. Frank Cooper, Edmund; Mr. Alfred Bishop, Gloster; Mr. W. J. Holloway, Kent; Mr. Gordon Craig, Oswald; Mr. Ian Robertson, the Gentleman; and Mr. Howe, the Old Man. Mr. Haviland's Fool is excellent.

M. M. A.

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