

SHAFTS:

A MAGAZINE FOR WOMEN AND WORKERS.

EDITED BY MARGARET SHURMER SIBTHORP.

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What the Editor Means.

All that is beautiful shall abide,
All that is base shall die.

“ONCE in a lifetime is uttered a word, that is not forgotten as soon as 'tis heard.” Once, ever and anon with intervals between, there cometh to the earth, some soul of divine mould, holding within herself, radiating forth from herself, divine truth; charged with messages of mightier and sweeter import, than we hear in the mart, the Stock Exchange, the workshop, the drawing room, or any of the daily walks of life. Blessed are they who hear, who see, who receive the words so priceless, the gems so precious, which such souls bring. But we shut ourselves up, we are cold, and Love, the Divine, hath no place in our hearts, for Love is an outgiver. Here and there a few receive from all things the message divine, the truths that fill the being with light and strength, they receive and they outgive. But how few are these. Over the depths of our innermost thoughts a great stone is rolled. The great deeps of our being no one sees but ourselves, and alas for us, not even to us are they fully revealed. We write, we speak, but no one understands. For what we have written, what we have uttered, is not what stirs within us, it is but the faintest echo of an exceeding glory. We are dumb and deaf and blind to the glory and gladness around us. Could we but see and hear! Could we but express the longing, the rapturous whisperings from within, could we but understand each other! Dumb beasts pass us on the streets hardly more dumb than we, their hearts full of the shadow of the same questions, their eyes filled with the same passionate pain. They seem to look to us, to solve some of the brooding half-formed askings within them, the WHY? of their lives of toil and suffering. And we? We look out far and away beyond ourselves for an answer to the ceaseless questionings. Yet we have that within us, which will reveal all things; an oracle we seldom if ever consult, a Divine wisdom which we have not known. Might it not be that learning to understand ourselves, we should learn also to understand others, that looking into our own deeps, into the Divine within us, the Spirit that will teach us all things, we should come to see the Divine in others; see the Spirit, the Divine everywhere? This would indeed make us free, free to think, free to act, free to understand. The clear light would shine and we should see. Seeing, we should be no longer dumb or deaf, or devoid of the power of understanding our fellows. If the working out of woman's emancipation is to be done, it must be well done, and that cannot be without showing where the evil lies. There are two principles at work in the world, the Masculine and the Feminine. The Masculine principle is not man. The Feminine principle is not woman. All that dominates, all that magnifies itself, all that seeks only its own, expressing this domination, this lording of itself, in oppression, in cruelty, in immorality, in injustice, in all forms of unrestrained passion, hatred, malice, selfishness, lies, careless disregard of the claims of others, is the spirit of evil. It is Anti-christ, wherever it be found, in man or in woman. The spirit of good expresses peace, love, wisdom, patience, progress,

truthfulness, purity, unselfishness, justice, all that tends to raise, to exalt, to equalise human rights and privileges, to promote concord and unity, to destroy war, to promote all good. This, wherever it is found in man or woman, must be cultivated and encouraged to strong growth, until the beautiful results are realised. Women in thousands have enrolled themselves under this banner and many men. Men have been taught to hold this banner in contempt, how then can they find courage to turn to it? By consulting the Divine within them, and acting up to its teachings.

Women have been taught too much sacrifice, which simply means self-abasement, too much dependence, no standing alone. So the truly “Feminine” has been submerged in woman also. But the long years of endurance have done their strengthening work, have developed the Divine within her, and prepared her for the work before her now, when she is everywhere demanding from man an account of his stewardship. The result no one need prophesy, for all shall shortly see it. Love is mighty, but love must be combined with power to be available. The love of the slave counts for very little, let it be the love of the free, then we shall indeed have consequences far-reaching and endless in their effects. Those who say “Let love only do the work,” forget that we are not warring against men, but against an evil principle, which having set up false ideas worships them. Is the spirit which demands that some may be the lesser so that IT may be the greater, the spirit of love, or true power, or true wisdom? Nay; for this is the spirit which has filled our streets with outcasts, our prisons with the idle and desperate, our towns with the starving poor, our unions with paupers, our homes with unhappiness, and our asylums with lunatics. There is no need of all this, it will cease to be as soon as women and men will that it shall do so. Can we alter the state of things? Yes; but only by exposing evil, and holding up the standard of good. Evil must not be hidden, we must not deny the existence of evil where evil is, nor must we shield the doers of evil whoever they may be, even if our nearest and our dearest. The arm that is strong to smite is also strong to save. “Out of the strong cometh forth sweetness.” No matter how keen the arrow, how sharp the sword, how probing the lance, if the arrow speed to the “point between the harness,” if the sword wound to the slaying of cherished sins, if the knife probe to the removal of the festering ulcer. Let women and men go forth together united, strong and free; drive all evil from its haunts; and “slay the slayer.” Even Love is balked when what fancies itself to be Love, would ignore the existence of the thing which renders its efforts futile. Love, at its greatest; all that is worth calling love, is not sickly sentimentality, but holds in its strong yet tender hand the sword that shall slay, if slaying be necessary to the destruction of evil. SHAFTS' arrows are sent forth against injustice, tyranny and selfish usurpation of all that makes life worth living; those who so act, are not under the domination of the Spirit of Good. These are composed of the men who have done and do such things, and the women who have weakly submitted, and do weakly submit, to be discrowned; to stand robbed of their birthright, and clad in the rags of that impotence which is degradation.

REVIEWS.

"MODERN MYSTICS AND MODERN MAGIC." By Arthur Lillie. (Swan, Sonnenschein. Price 6s.)

The above work is a useful contribution to the interests of our time, and will serve as a most convenient book of reference to some of the chief schools of Occult thought, beginning with Swedenborg and ending with Stainton Moses. In fact, a sketch of the latter is the chief *raison d'être* of the book, and in order to remove the startling resemblance of his life to a fairy tale—through its many well-attested psychical phenomena—Mr. Lillie leads up to him with a preliminary notice of modern Occultists and their interesting varied experiences.

His first subject is Swedenborg, who, he says, was really the one to start Experimental Occultism, just as Boehme a century earlier had given a mighty impetus to Intuitionist Occultism. Our author next deals with the Ecclesiastical attitude to this subject, in the case of Madame Guyon and others;—with St. Martin's Mystic thought in our own century, and with the wave of modern Theosophy, originating with that singular personality—Madame Blavatsky.

We have first, then, an interesting sketch of Swedenborg (1689—1772) the great Seer of the 18th Century, who lived to be 83. He had in early life published many good scientific treatises, and made valuable practical discoveries, being the first to start any theories of Magnetism, before Mesmer. When 51, he seems to have retired into silence and meditation; till at 56, he had a striking vision, wherein he was told he had a great mission of Interpretation to accomplish; and from that moment his Interior eyes were opened, and he devoted himself to the Spiritual world, having startling powers of Clairvoyance and Prophecy, announcing, among much else, that Colours in the Spiritual world could give forth music, just as sensitives say in our day that Musical Sounds have each their own colour, thus showing the Unity of the Cosmos. Swedenborg, however, warned his disciples to be very wary *how* they received messages from the Spirit world, as personation and lying were often rampant! and the most contradictory views of Truth were held, just as on earth, though he judged that all such communications should be treated on a rational basis (like the attempt in our modern Magazine, *Borderland*); and that the great laws and characteristics of the Seen and Unseen world must be identical; whether we consider the "husbandry of Heaven" or the Evolution of Earth, which he termed the great doctrine of "Correspondences."

The next chapter gives us another interesting character in Jacob Boehme, born a century earlier. While apprenticed to a shoemaker at 14, a stranger told him he should one day become a noted man, soon after which he was dismissed from his employment, and when in great straits, "for seven days he was lifted into a Sabbath of the Soul," as his biographer tells us, at which time he, like Swedenborg, received his Spiritual Call in Vision. At 35, he had an even fuller inward experience, being shown a panorama of the deepest mysteries, which he described under the title of *The Morning Redness*. The MS. of this was seized by a stern, narrow-minded pastor, Richter, and he was accused of dire heresy, when all his writings were forcibly taken away from him! After profound instructions from a Kabbalist, Walther, he wrote *The Way to Christ*, and for this Richter procured his banishment, though his own son became Boehme's disciple, and helped to spread his teaching! He suffered much for what he believed to be the truth; and his voluminous books still deeply attract certain mystical minds: though it requires very careful study and sympathetic insight to comprehend his singular style and elaborate conceptions. He sowed very valuable seed, however, making the conditions, as it were, by which other thinkers could do their great work for Humanity; and he probably prepared the way for Swedenborg; whilst, on the material plane, even Kepler and Newton owed him much as to their ideas both of astronomy and gravitation.

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After the Jewish and Christian Mystics of the first few centuries, with their miraculous gifts, a great coldness and Sadducean spirit arose, till the time of Louis XIV. (d. 1715), there was a marked crisis, when Molinos, Fénelon, and Madame Guyon were bitterly persecuted under the name of "Quietists," just as the hapless "Stundists" of Russia are now, as to their harmless beliefs. Married unhappily, as Madame Guyon was at the age of 15, at 18 she first heard from a friend of the "Mystic Union with God"; and after undergoing severe austerities in her hope to attain it by these means, she went for counsel to a young Franciscan Monk, Father la Combe, who told her impressively—"She was seeking that from without which was only to be found within, and that she must seek God in the heart." These words sank deeply into her mind, and seemed to give her a new life, opening her Spiritual Vision.

The final result of her Spiritual awakening proved to be the bitter hostility of French Ecclesiastics to her writings, who procured the condemnation of both King and Pope, as to herself and Fénelon, when he sought to defend her. Both being in prison in the Bastille, they were said to converse freely, despite the thick stone walls which separated them,—by Thought-transference, apparently!—just as she had previously done with La Combe, who ere this had been imprisoned for life, poor man!—on a charge of "Molinism"; ("the Method of Molinos" seeks to raise the Soul by devout Contemplation). Madame Guyon's history, with that of others, shows strikingly how gifts and powers transcending the mere physical, are given to certain temperaments, whether sought after, or otherwise, and are not dependent upon any individual views or ideas, as is proved by the long line of Mystics and Psychics in all ages. . . . The next chapter of our book gives some curious facts about Secret Societies and their deadly doings—the Illuminati, Freemasons, Jesuits, &c.—and also of Lavater, Cagliostro, Weissaupt, and Saint Martin—whose beautiful and devout "Letters to Kircherberger" have been so attractive to many minds; though *he* also repeats the warning of Swedenborg as to the dangers of "personation" and "assumed forms" by those entities who profess to "manifest" under certain names.

The second half of the book consists for the greater part of Stainton Moses' biography, who only died in 1892, which may, perhaps, appeal most of all to those who are interested in the Psychic movement of their own day, and the development of their own generation. His father was a Head-master, and himself a Clergyman and an Oxford M.A., a man of considerable literary attainment, clear-headed, logical, and eloquent. The history of how he came to be convinced of phenomena beyond the mere senses and of "communications" from the other world is a very striking one, as he was at first utterly indifferent to these ideas, or to their possibility. The wife of a somewhat materialistic doctor—Mrs. Stanhope Speer—with whom he was intimate, having entreated him to investigate these matters with her, an extraordinary series of events followed, happening to him personally; and these are minutely described by Mr. Lillie—many of them in his friend's own words—including Levitation, Clairaudience, occult Scents and Musical Sounds, Matter passing through Matter (recently called "Thought" in an interesting paper on the "Fourth Dimension" of Space, and dealt with logically and at length in Professor Zollner's "Transcendental Physics"). Though instrumental in getting up the Psychological Research Society for purposes of investigation, Stainton Moses left it later, when they took to materialistic interpretations—persisting, *e.g.*, that Psychography was principally "conjuring," and that Spiritual experiences could be chiefly traced to physical causes, "less used hemispheres of the brain," etc.

In like manner, when the celebrated 'Kiddle' incident arose, Stainton Moses left the Theosophical Society, which Mr. Lillie tells us, when started in 1875 was sympathetic with Spiritualism, its first paper being read on Egyptian Communion with the Dead, "as reduced to a positive Science"; though in 1884, one of its objects was announced as the putting down of Spiritualism; and the doctrine of 'Shells', (which virtually splits the

unit into two halves), was started! Our author is well known for his disbelief in Madame Blavatsky and her claims, the incidents of whose earlier life he does not sketch very flatteringly, setting forth the confused definitions and the jumble of oriental philosophies which he holds are to be found in the system that purports to be derived from infallible 'Mahatmas'! But for all this we must refer enquirers to his own volume.

Here, too, must be read the graphic details of Mr. Stainton Moses' gradual development of views, and what made this much more striking was the methodical nature of his own mind, delighting as it did in positive facts, though never refusing to listen when reliable evidence on any subject was offered. He had strong religious feeling, and his earlier convictions were much opposed to his later ones, only yielding very slowly to the latter; especially when his chief 'guide,' Imperator, propounded many things seriously at variance with orthodox belief. We must add, in fairness to readers, that this is Mr. Lillie's own attitude—his sympathies with Buddhism being well known from his works, though (strangely enough, as it seems to some) he rejects one Oriental doctrine which has commended itself to many 'Westerns' of our time as explanatory of Cosmic difficulties; and that is Karma or Reincarnation.

No one can doubt Mr. Stainton Moses' absolute sincerity of purpose; for his convictions involved him in the loss of many friends, of his Profession, and means of livelihood; so that his change of views was a severe "wrench" to him; while of late years his health became very bad, and his Editorial labours almost impossible. In a letter to Professor Elliott Coues only a fortnight before his death, he very touchingly signs himself, "Wearily your friend, W. S. M.!"

A few lines of Mrs. Barrett-Browning's (d. 1861), quoted by Mr. Lillie, seem appropriate wherewith to close. Speaking of Psychical Research materialistic theories, she says, "These seem a struggle on the part of the theorist to get out of a position he does not like at whatever expense of kicks against the analogies of God's Universe; and though 'sensible' men would rather assert that 2 and 3 make 4 than that spirits have access to them, we, Women and Poets, cannot be expected to admit that 2 and 3 make 4 without certain difficulties and hesitations!"

There is so much of varied information in this little volume that we strongly advise those who are touched by the present Occult wave of Thought to study it for themselves; and we could even have wished its picture-gallery of Thinkers could have been on an enlarged scale, so as to include other interesting names.

E. E. ABNEY-WALKER.

STAMMERING; ITS NATURE AND TREATMENT, WITH APPENDIX ON VOICE PRODUCTION." By Emil Behnke. (*T. Fisher Unwin*, 1893.)

Vocal Physiology has been the special study of this writer for more than twenty years, he informs us; and he has lectured upon it in leading medical, musical and literary institutions; amongst others in University College, in Glasgow University, at the Philosophical Society, Aberdeen, and several others. He has written several books upon it, and has been consulted by several persons, receiving many requests to publish his lectures. This being so, the book before us ought to be of importance as a scientific work, and practically useful also, which indeed it is. Many will derive benefit from the study of its pages, all who stammer, and all who have charge of those who do, should study what is here taught; and put into practice such teachings. Readers are warned that a child will not "grow out of stammering" though the defect may diminish. "The child learns speech by imitation." The habit of talking to children in "Baby language," as it is called, is condemned; mothers are adjured to be very careful how they speak to their little ones, and never to imitate a stammerer in the hope of curing. Sympathy and kindness are insisted upon, and the cowardice of making fun of "an affliction often worse than a curved spine" is held up to the contempt it deserves. The price of the book

is 1s.: which will prove to be a shilling wisely spent. Many instances of complete cure are given, and the gladness resulting from the removal of so painful a defect, so great an impediment to a useful life, is told with earnest feeling, on the part of the writer. Mrs. Emil Behnke is the glad physician who effected the cures here mentioned; and we are glad to find that she and her daughter carry on treatment for Speech Defects and Voice Culture for Singers, and Speakers. We wish these ladies and Emil Behnke the success they deserve, and which their earnest efforts will bring them. M.S.S.

"THE HUMANITARIAN" for this month contains much that is more than readable matter. Sarah A. Tooley contributes a well written and highly interesting interview with Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace on "Heredity and Pre Natal Influence" which would be a valuable aid to research were it only for the concluding sentence in the words of this clever scientist "You understand," he said to Mrs. Tooley, "we are only upon the threshold of enquiry and must wait results." We may safely listen to the words of a thinker who comes to such a conclusion as this because it is likely to be the conclusion of those who observe, listen, learn, not of those who would fain have all others listen to and adopt their conclusions because they are theirs, and so in their own egotistic opinions cannot err.—In the course of the interview Mrs. Tooley asks—

"In view of the iron law of heredity, which, it would appear, education has so little power to alter, Dr. Wallace, would you not think it desirable, in the interests of humanity, that the criminal classes, and diseased and deformed persons, were prohibited from marrying?"

"I am not in favour of any arbitrary law to regulate the most sacred relationship of life. I do not see how you could shut a reformed criminal, for example, out from social life. The difficulties in the way of such legislation are simply incalculable. And the same applies to weakly and diseased persons. . . . No! what we need are not prohibitory marriage laws, but a reformed society, an educated public opinion which will teach individual duty in these matters. And it is to the women of the future that I look for the needed reformation. Educate and train women so that they are rendered independent of marriage as a means of gaining a home and a living, and you will bring about natural selection in marriage, which will operate most beneficially upon humanity. When all women are placed in a position that they are independent of marriage, I am inclined to think that large numbers will elect to remain unmarried—in some cases, for life, in others, until they encounter the man of their ideal. I want to see women the selective agents in marriage; as things are, they have practically little choice. The only basis for marriage should be a disinterested love. I believe that the unfit will be gradually eliminated from the race, and human progress secured, by giving to the pure instincts of women the selective power in marriage. You can never have that so long as women are driven to marry for a livelihood."

Mrs. Woodhull Martin gives a few pages which it is to be hoped will be studied by many on "The Evolution of Government" a capital treatise of a difficult and engrossing subject, and well suited to the thought of the time. She shows how all the "really great things that have done the world most good have had their origin in some one great mind" woman or man; and that what this great mind created has been so indelibly impressed upon "the descent of the race and of civilisation" that it still lives in its creations. She mentions names which are immortal but states that "in government the list is blank." She brings names and facts to prove with "conclusive evidence the power of order and organization over mere numbers and brute force," and shows how one uprisen condition of things creates another. "Egyptian achievements were the culmination of an era of civilization of which Greece was the fruit."

"Rome would never have been possible, had not Greece been a fact."

Of Napoleon Bonaparte she says

"Behind all the ambition by which he was known to the world, and therefore not known,—he had a fixed purpose,—to raise the common people of Europe to their proper position." Bismarck she paints thus—

"Great as Bismarck may be, he is not great in the true sense of greatness; for, he has builded up a power, which the next fifty years will have to overthrow. True greatness works in the direction of, and not against progress; and its works live."

Another article, also of surpassing excellence, appears, "The Case of the Helots," by Miss Elizabeth Martyn, a zealous

worker for the emancipation of women, and for all progress, also making one of the band of thoughtful, earnest, resolved women, who compose the Pioneer Club, that school for the rehearsal of thought. All women and men should read this article, we might, perhaps, specially recommend it to the perusal of men who wonder "what it is that women want."

The "Helots" are of course the women half of the human race. The Woman who asks WHY she cannot have a vote, as well as the man who only pays the same rates and taxes as herself, is answered with that wonderful male logic—so supremely satisfactory to those who utter it—Well; don't you see? it's as plain as possible. "You are a helot." It is to be noted "He is not a helot." The writer, with clever and well-pointed satire, observes here—

"There is no other argument; yet the men who use it are accounted sane."

Remarking upon many queer inconsistencies, as she runs rapidly yet carefully through the existing male-created conditions, the writer's pen goes slowly a minute, as it would seem, over these serious words:—

"The Universities were shut against the Helots; so were many trades, and all the professions."

What a world of far-reaching, long-existing injustice, heavy with evil results, this suggests. Can any man read these words and say, "Yes, these things should be so—woman's place is home?" Manhood suffrage is mentioned—

"An outsider," Miss Martyn says, "might naturally consider that manhood signified humanity, but no, the helot part of humanity is still to be excluded." Helots might be supposed to be in a minority. No, "they number nearly a million more than the privileged ones." If these figures were the other way, she points out, "we should hear them quoted continually, as proof positive of the survival of the fittest." "The majority," of men that is, not helots, "have been asking for the franchise for twenty-five years. 'Twenty-five years!' goes on the clever caustic pen, that wounds to heal, 'is that all? Helots knew their grievances centuries ago, but were taught to believe them Heaven sent, good and good producing. Submission was enjoined upon them and beauteous self-abnegation. They were apt scholars, . . . they carefully impressed their beliefs on their children, . . . Little by little they began to ask is it right? is it just?"

Such thoughts come from the deepest inner consciousness of earnest thinkers, whose souls are tortured with injustice. Blessed are they who hear with the hearing of understanding the prophetic utterances which come from such souls as these; for the time is at hand when those who have been apathetic and blind, resting in their own easy life, will bewail bitterly their own foolishness. How slow is the upward movement, yet be of good cheer brave hearts, for it is also sure and steady. The article brims over with words of truth that will speed like winged arrows to the souls ready to receive them. Though it occupies eleven pages of this excellent magazine, every word is precious, and ought to accomplish the purpose for which it has been penned.

"THE MAGNETIC AND BOTANIC JOURNAL." Edited by D. Younger. 1894.

"The Magnetic and Botanic School of Safe Medicines Ltd." have recently opened their new premises, and seem to be proceeding on wise and safe lines, with a vigour and earnestness that promise good results. In the Presidential address a short and graphic account is given of the system, of its principles and modes of procedure, also a brief forecast of its future, written by the pen of an enthusiast, and full of the spirit indispensable in those who fight against error. There has been much that is rotten in the condition of things mundane in the past, and there still is in the present; owing to the arrogant assumption of three great monopolies, or rather four, State, Church, Law and Medicine. The State is not always wholesome Government; the Church is not always religion; Law is often anything but justice; and medicine has increased human

ills instead of diminishing them. When systems are found to be faulty, or altogether wrong, the manifest step to be taken is to remove them, and to put in their places something that is better. But let us refrain from hurling stones at fallen systems which have had in them much that was good mixed with their evils; also let us remember that much of the evil has been, not through wilful wrong-doing, but through mistakes. Wherever we find that a wrong system is upheld, through personal and interested motives, there must the sword of truth gleam sharp and bright, piercing to the dividing asunder of the whole structure.

In the Public Dispensary of this School of Safe Medicine the President informs us that all persons will be treated free of charge, that the only passport required is human need, and the sick person's willingness to conform to the treatment prescribed. NATURE is allowed to have its innings in most of the New Curative theories and practices; whereas in the systems of Allopathy it must be allowed that Nature "wasn't a circumstance" in the matter. Temperance and diet are regarded as of vital import in the M. and B. School—as in many New Schools arising to meet the growing sense of past failures—and we are told that every member "enters heart and soul into the movement" they "want no favours beyond a just and unbiased judgment from those who try the method"; they desire only the privilege of being left alone, at liberty to practise their *Safe System*. Surely this might be accorded them. Old systems, old creeds, old ideas of government are falling, new things are arising, let us "ring out the old, ring in the new." The preservation of Health, the prevention of illness, is surely better than the cure of disease, especially when that is effected by the introduction of another disease or by a lifelong invalidism. We recommend our readers to procure this little pamphlet which is full of instruction; and suggestive of thought, at the nominal cost of one penny. It contains a capital, very practical and easily studied article on "Red Sage" by Mr. Younger himself; many most valuable quotations, and much good advice.

May we ask why Mr. Younger after acknowledging the help he has received from the class he calls "old women" should put them last on the list? Also, why when stating the teaching of this School to be "neither immoral nor brutalising; and referring to a presence among them of a civilising and restraining influence, he should brand this influence with the title of "the fair sex"? All noble minded women hold this expression in contempt, we hope so large a heart and so powerful a mind as Mr. Younger's will erase it from his vocabulary. Earnest and thorough study is recommended; the great importance of Diet and Dress dwelt upon; and a strong objection raised to the healing art being controlled by Acts of Parliament.

A quotation is given from the speech of Mr. Morse which is well worth reading, and which deals with the matter of "Women" as Physicians, Healers, more generously, more thoroughly than anything of the kind we remember to have read.

THE INDIAN MAGAZINE AND REVIEW for February has a short, but interesting, account of a weaving school, established some 10 years ago, by Froken Wetterhof, at Javastahus, Finland. At first the object of the school was to teach young girls leaving the national schools, which they usually do about 12 years of age, the rudiments of many handworks—weaving, plaiting, knitting, and needlework. But quickly seeing that to be learned thoroughly, each subject must be taught by a specialist, she determined to focus her endeavours on one of these subjects only—weaving. Miss Wetterhof's charge for instruction being so low—60 marks, or about 2 guineas, a year—everyone could afford it, and her school drew pupils from all the peasants' and labourers' homes in the country. After a brief account of the method of training, the writer says, "The school answers another purpose. Doctors who in England order a nervous, hysterical patient a course of Playfair's treatment or of massage, here order a few months' weaving. The exercise of weaving itself is good, and the occupation keeps the mind from

resting on its own troubles. . . . Froken Wetterhof's name will be ever honoured in her own country, and her efforts for the good of the women around her will be remembered when the work she has done will have outgrown its present beginnings."

A Page of Gossip.

THE country schoolmistress has a hard lot in life, if the recent reports in *The Schoolmaster* are to be believed. The usual salary of £40 to £50 per annum can hardly be called "a living wage," and as in many instances there are no advantages such as "house, gas, and coals," it can easily be understood that the average country schoolmistress fails to fully appreciate the fine compliments occasionally thrown at her by newspaper men and others. This historically suitable work for women will perhaps some day be adequately recompensed. At present the misfortune of being a woman may be an efficient qualification for service, but it is a decided barrier to a fair remuneration. Besides this important question of salary, however, a country schoolmistress has many complaints to make. Her well-earned leisure is far too much trespassed upon. She is expected to take the harmonium or organ at the Sunday service, and a hundred similar tasks fall upon her. Worst of all *The Schoolmaster* reveals an insanitary state of accommodation in rural schools which we thought and hoped was impossible nowadays.

MISS ABRAHAM'S report on Woman's Labour has already been noticed in SHAFTS. Besides, however, the terribly low wages which women receive, it is important to bear in mind the fact that where women's wages are comparatively decent, there are underlying reasons which show how disgracefully the question of sex is exploited. At Halifax, for instance, women employed in the Brussels Carpet Mill are paid 20s. per week, but in this case they have replaced men who were paid 35s. per week for precisely the same work. The progress of women's trade unions in these districts is a hopeful sign and we sincerely trust that no system will be tolerated which will content women workers with aught but equal wages with men.

MR. JEROME'S paper, *To-day*, contains at least one feature which must interest all advanced women. For the first time, so far as we remember, a journal has frankly devoted a portion of its paper, to the regular discussion of men's fashions in dress, etc. The old ridiculous fiction that women never think of anything except dress, and that men never consider the subject at all, has surely had its day. We congratulate Mr. Jerome on his up-to-date "Club Chatter." Readers of Lord Lytton's delightful biography of that exquisite fop, "Pelham," and every frequenter of Regent Street and Bond Street, will recognise the importance of this feature of Mr. Jerome's paper; and it is difficult to over-estimate the value of having a column from which women can quote, when, as so often happens, one finds oneself in the society of men uninterested in art, literature, or politics. It is to be hoped that as these Fashion Columns for Men increase and multiply, the insipid Women's Columns (which no sensible woman ever reads) will give place for subjects of interest to all.

EPING FOREST is being improved off the face of the earth. The *Westminster Gazette* has recently described some "clearances" which have taken place in the fine old spot. The secret haunts of nature are being laid bare, and soon there will be no mystery of covered glade or woodland close. Londoners owe the Corporation some gratitude for giving them the Forest, although it can hardly be doubted that, but for the Corporation's generosity, the Government would have intervened on the people's behalf. If now, the Corporation intends to allow the spoliation of its gift, some other hand must interfere, and even this one poor frail memorial of a generous deed will bear a worthier donor's name.

THE *Photogram* states that just now women photographers seem to be coming to the front. Miss Alice Hughes in Gower Street, who has only been a short time in the profession, is said to have one of the most profitable businesses in London; and now the Misses Gray have opened in Bayswater, and mean to make a fight for the supremacy.

In the *Modern Review* for February is published the first part of a long article from the pen of Mr. Joseph Collinson, dealing with the alleged connection of vaccination with cancer, a disease that has assumed threatening proportions during comparatively recent years. In the compilation of his article Mr. Collinson has had the assistance of many well-known authorities, including Professor Alfred Russell Wallace, and Mr. William Tebb whose evidence has occasioned considerable discussion in lay and medical journals.

MISS FLORENCE HOLLAND, M.A. (Calcutta), has obtained the Premchand Roychand Studentship this year, by which the sum of Rs.8,000 is awarded by instalments. At the University of Bombay, Miss Matilda Hunt has obtained the degree of M.A.—the first lady who has gained that distinction. She took literature for her subject, and passed in the second class.—*Indian Magazine and Review*.

A DAUGHTER of Dr. Windscheid has just received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Heidelberg.

MISS CLARA BRETT MARTIN, a graduate of Toronto University, has been admitted to the Law Society, with a view to become a lady lawyer in Canada.

MAX O'RELL in his recent lecture says that "from the age of eighteen an American girl was allowed almost every liberty, and that she took the rest. In Europe women let the men decide what was proper; in America they do it for themselves. In the largest streets of America, at any hour, the streets were perfectly respectable. The influence of women was enormous, and morality profited by it. The respect that women seemed to inspire in America in men of all classes enabled girls to go about in security." . . . "They were the most natural and unconventional of women."

AN American physician, Dr. Simms, who has been travelling in China, states that tens of thousands of recently-born girls are slain there, as used to be the case in India. Near the joss-house (or place of worship), it is common to see a small stone tower from 10 to 30 feet high, and without a door, but a hole in the side leading into a pit in the centre. "The children that parents wish to get rid of are thrown into this hole, and quicklime soon consumes the lifeless little forms." Priests are said to take charge of this cruel work, and some 200,000 girl children are annually slaughtered. A Chinaman, it is stated, remarked, "The wife cry and cry, but kill all the same." Dr. Simms says that an Italian charity superintended by Mother Paula Vismara, has saved the lives at Hankow of from 30,000 to 40,000 children. "Sometimes they are buried alive by the father, but while yet living they are dug up by someone else and brought to this institution."

We are informed that it is intended to give a Ball at the Kensington Town Hall the first week in April in aid of the funds of the Women's Suffrage Society, with which Mrs. Wolstenholme Elmy's name is associated; a lady whose untiring efforts for many years on behalf of Women's Political enfranchisement are widely known and appreciated. It is hoped on account of the important work that the Society is doing and has done, that all friends interested in the cause will do their utmost to make the Ball a success. The Officials of the Society give their services gratuitously, and its funds are devoted entirely to promoting its objects.

Mr. Buchanan's Appeals for "Literary Freedom."

IT is a very common mental condition to remain blind to all sides of a question but the one which makes special and personal appeal to us. Such is evidently Mr. Buchanan's state, but notwithstanding that this is very patent to all who have read his recent letters in the *Daily Chronicle*, we should not have meddled with his opinions were they not characterised by the old offensive references to womanhood generally, as well as by extraordinary misconceptions with regard to the subject with which he essays to deal.

Mr. Buchanan wants to "free" literature from all association with reforms. He does not say so, but that is the plain intention of his efforts. He does not mind immorality, or what he calls "dirt," so long as it is merely incidental and picturesque, but attention must not be directed to it as a thing to be got rid of, its causes must not be inquired into, and, in fact, Mr. Buchanan subscribes generally to the feeling of that large section of society which considers that "anything may be done but nothing must be talked about," or that, worse still, if vice may be the subject of jokes on the stage and in literature, it must be entirely ignored as a serious matter for "mending or ending" in books. He quarrels with Ibsen, Björnsen, Dorothy Leighton, and no doubt Sarah Grand, confounds them with Zola, and says that "the secret of modern literary decadence and gloom is the *New Womanhood Invading—the half-emancipated* but still inept and ignorant *Femininity—venturing into the regions of thought once occupied and held by mighty Men.*" "The *New Womanhood*... is "morbidly curious" *... and "incapable of humour" *... It repeats the old fallacy that Woman is the Slave of Man, although it knows well that Man has been, ever since civilisation began, the Slave of Woman *... It is "prurient" and "calls to its aid all writers in whom, whatever their actual sex may be, the feminine qualities predominate; so that everywhere in Literature now a days we find, instead of great thoughts and noble aspirations and faith in the destiny of Humanity, only the mean phenomena of a suburban villa—the rinsing of tea-cups, the opening of dust-bins... and the washing of dirty linen... I am glad that the great story-tellers, from Homer to Shakespeare, and from Shakespeare to Charles Dickens, have had their noses in the air, instead of keeping them in the mud." (The italics are ours.)

Let us examine these positions for a few moments, and see whether they are frothy words, or real facts.

In the first place Mr. Buchanan says in effect that modern women-writers choose one set of subjects only, for their themes, that relating to social reforms. Mrs. Browning, Jean Ingelow, George Eliot, Mrs. Gaskell, Mrs. Thackeray-Ritchie, and a host of others, prove the absurdity of such generalising. Of humour, *Cranford*, by Mrs. Gaskell, exhibits some of the most exquisite touches ever given in the English language, and all these women-writers are moreover absolutely clean, a characteristic which is conspicuously wanting in the majority of the "great story-tellers" both before and after Shakespeare's time. We could furnish a long list of writers, ancient and modern, who were not only guileless of any attempt at reform, but who were unable to tell their "stories" or write their essays, without embellishing them with jests so foul, that were they collected in a single volume as specimens of masculine "humour," no firm would be bold enough to publish it. And Shakespeare's name would not be excluded from this entertaining selection.

In the second place, while this incessant reference to

* The time was when it was said that this or that book was "unfit for girls and women to read"; we think it is proper for women to become acquainted with anything that men may have written about them, so that what is vile may be denounced; and we also think that what is unfit for a woman to read is unfit for a respectable man to write. We have a shrewd suspicion that Mr. Buchanan is aware that women are not so "ignorant" as of yore, and that their knowledge is bearing the fruit of unpalatable medicines for the Old School of Men.

indeencies has died out in our English literature, the century which has been distinguished for social reforms has naturally and inevitably produced a school of writers which has dealt with the facts of life as they are with a view to change them for the better. The "opening of the dust bins" has been the prelude to clearing them out, and the "washing of the linen," a hygienic and wholesome necessity. When that business has been done, many a pen will enlist in the service of telling stories for pure art's sake, and sketching the humorous side of life, rather than the tragic, and because "great thoughts" will be more materialised than is the case now. The poet of our century, Tennyson, was one of those who dealt with the "Femininity" Mr. Buchanan affects to despise, and in which he at least beheld divinity. And there has been no purer writer than our Laureate. His "Princess Ida" was cast in a nobler mould than any of Shakespeare's "heroines," and the "Princess" voices many a noble thought and aspiration, and recognition of free Womanhood. In vain will you search his pages for the vile jest which has defiled the dramatists of past centuries and many another author. "Great thoughts" mingled with obscenities and contemptuous references to womanhood are like the grins of skulls—smiles from the midst of corruption.

But, what in truth was going on in the halcyon days of Elizabeth's time and onwards, when the "mighty men" of literature had it all their own way, and woman was still mute because the "blue-stocking" was regarded with horror? We see bloody heads stuck upon Temple Bar; religious free-thinkers burnt alive in market-places or imprisoned in dungeons; lunatics chained up like wild animals and scored with the lash; jails filled with a horde of persons as "dangerous as tigers" and as ignorant as babes; we note highway robberies, although men were hanged for stealing sheep; the persecution of dissenters, and the prosecution of "heretics" and "infidels"; and a condition of marriage in which women were the legal chattels of their husbands and possessed neither property nor children, combined with a totally uneducated and incapable womanhood. Meanwhile people were praising the cleverness of "Mr. Shakespeare," who ignored these little horrors, and had his "nose in the air," and later were reading *Clarissa*, *Tom Jones* and a variety of other productions in which immorality and indecency were prominent, but which from Mr. Buchanan's point of view are "saved" from "femininity."

Finally, we cannot help smiling over the one feeble and perhaps unintentional joke in Mr. Buchanan's letter—viz., that ever since civilisation began "man has been the slave of woman." If he had said that man had been the slave of his senses, it would have been nearer the mark, for his "enslavement" simply resolved itself into a great eagerness to do anything to gratify his passions, the objects of which his "laws," religious interpretations, and regulations generally provided should be left as much as possible at his mercy. Now and then a famous beauty among women, having many admirers, would hold sway over the men while her good looks lasted, but the majority of the women took a back-seat in the drama of human life and were hedged round with moral or literal seraglio-walls. The higher note of free and equal companionship was never struck; the prostitute was ever in the street; the wife was ever the chattel in fact or idea; the man was ever voicing in his "stories" and his "philosophies" his unceasing sexual desires, and his contempt for the "mere woman." A thousand quibbles will never blind us to the hard facts, and the Christ of two thousand years ago, in the face of the world around Him, was sad and earnest enough—no "humour" is recorded in the Gospels, nor are those pages given to the telling of fairy tales. There is room for literature as an art, plenty of room; and we welcome it as such; and there is room, more than room also, a need, for literature which confronts human life and its woes—chiefly due to sexual relations—as it is and as they are, and which will not be silenced, because woman who has chiefly suffered through this "enslavement"—let it be her own or man's to his senses—refuses to be cajoled by empty phrases any longer, and is begin-

ning to call things by plain names, and to see things pretty much as they are. Women do not mean to look on any longer while men compose "great thoughts" besprinkled with ugly jokes; they mean to get "noble aspirations" lived out, and to live them out themselves, because they "have faith in the destiny of Humanity," which does not comprise man alone, but Woman and Man. It is regrettable to see a man who has both genius and moral sense exhibit an impatience so puerile with regard to reformatory books which have done and are doing an excellent work in educating many through the avenues of tales and dramas to think on subjects which might otherwise have failed to appeal to them. It is the cry of the child who is being awakened from a dream which pleases him, but has no reality—of the art-lover who fancies a pretty picture may serve to hide the purgatories in which countless numbers of his fellows live. These dreams, these child-days are passing away, for let who will wring his hands—full-grown Womanhood, Manhood, await us, and are our birthright. Noble ideals must be lived, and to make this possible we need the thunders of Ibsen as well as the light zephyrs of Wordsworth and Mrs. Hemans.

Mr. Buchanan has only himself to thank for inspiring a renewed determination on the part of thinking women to resist the offensive observations with regard to Woman which form the shame of by far the larger portion of those who are considered the great writers of the past, and which form a part of his letters also. The provocation to incisive comments in return is once again on the side of men. Are these "great thoughts," and "noble aspirations," and large sympathies? We leave sensible folks to decide. For our part we think he appeals against the very thing he is helping to create. X.

The Co-operative Movement.

An Address given before the Bond of Union.

THE object of this paper is to create an interest in the Co-operative Movement in those who know little of it. Then Co-operators feel they can safely leave the rest to the persuasive eloquence of the already existing fruits of this Movement.

I always notice that when "Co-operation" is mentioned people seem to be confused, and no word is more loosely used. I do not intend to speak of such entirely misnamed affairs as the Army and Navy Co-operative Stores and other gigantic shops of that type. These have nothing to do with the Co-operative movement. They are concerns run neither for the benefit of the hands that make things, nor the hands that serve them over the counter, nor yet in reality for the customers that buy them. They are no more co-operative than cellulose is a tree. True co-operation is something much more Christian, beneficial, and ennobling, to all concerned—Capitalist, Worker, Distributor and Consumer. The history of the true Co-operative Movement is simply the history of an endeavour to engraft Christianity into our industrial and commercial everyday life. The world's way in all things, in daily life, has been, and still is, by competition. The Christian's protest has always been for Co-operation; but it was only now and then, as the centuries rolled past, that some souls more clear-seeing than their fellows, groped towards the discovery of anything like practicable and workable methods. After many ages of thought and of suffering from the competitive system, humanity slowly arrived at a more developed and rational conception of the Co-operative Idea.

The Co-operative idea starts with the postulate that any person who gets money by an agency work which could be dispensed with, without detriment to the ultimate object to be attained, is a cause of poverty. Thus, supposing you are in want of a pair of shoes. The man who rears, and the man who tans the leather, is entitled to an equitable share of what you pay for those shoes, but not the man, who by virtue of his superior cunning buys up that leather in order to rig the leather market.

Then again, the man who cuts and sews that leather, and the man who invented, made, and managed the machinery that helped the man to cut and sew the leather are entitled to their

share in what you pay for those shoes; and likewise the young fellow or girl who helps you to try them on, and to find the particular pair to suit your peace of mind; but not the man or woman who simply puts them behind a big plate glass window and demoralises you by letting you have that pair of shoes without demanding of you cash down for them.

Now, it is the function of the Co-operative idea to weed out those intervening individuals that at present swarm in every transaction of life, and further to see that every man or woman who can show claim to having given real help, either intellectual or manual, in the production of any article, or want of civilisation, shall participate in the profit obtained by its ultimate sale. The extent to which this has already been achieved by co-operators in this country only, is simply startling to any one who comes fresh to the inquiry.

A Co-operative workshop has been defined "as the government of the workshop by the workers in that workshop, for the benefit of themselves, the actual workers."

George Thompson, Woodhouse Mills, Huddersfield, converted his works into a Co-operative profit sharing mill under the impetus derived from Co-operative teaching. Mr. Thompson is manager and is paid his wages like everyone else, sharing in proportion with the other workers, but no more, in such net profits as he may assist in earning. There are some striking instances of success in this direction. At Paris, La Maison Leclair, La Maison Bord, at Guise the Familistère iron works, etc.

Nearly 60 years ago Henry Hetherington the editor of "The Poor Man's Guardian" himself a Co-operator, urged the Trade Unionists of his day to establish Co-operative workshops. He said: "Our aim is to render property more sacred. We will take from none. We will be satisfied with the legitimate fruits of our own industry. Hitherto we have worked for our masters, we will henceforward work for ourselves. Our object is not to rob employers in violation of law, but to prevent them from robbing us according to law." Carlyle had no doubt read these words, when he said some years later in one of his happier inspirations: "I know no better definition of the rights of man than, 'Thou shalt not steal, nor shalt thou be stolen from.'"

Of course in any paper, however short a one, Robert Owen, the great teacher of Social Ideas among the people of this Island, must be mentioned. The Utopian Dreamer as the world called him proved to be the most practical and sagacious manufacturer of his day. We, Co-operators owe a debt of gratitude to Owen. We often quote his words and his bust adorns our halls. But, it was a singular thing that Store Co-operation which alone was destined to carry forward the idea of the Co-operative City—Robert Owen's idea—should have to make its own way unaided and unapplauded by the founder in his day, and his chief disciples. Owen was a Community maker. He would now be described as a State Socialist. He was a patron, not a pioneer of self-help.

Co-operation is the peace of Industry, the opposite to Competition, which is the war of Industry.

Uniformity of opinion is a difficult undertaking, and, in my opinion not desirable, but the unity of industrial interests is possible, and this is the object of Co-operation. The Women's Co-operative Guild of the Movement is one of the purest democratic bodies of women in the United Kingdom, or out of it. I know that it numbers now 137 Branches with a membership of between 4,000 and 5,000.

I like the sound of the word Socialism, have always liked it even in my green days. Since then I have tried to understand it, and to reconcile and to group into something like order the many phases of thought in its disciples. But, I should like to point out that State Socialism is a system far off. In the meantime self-helping efforts are near at hand. I think there is truth in the assertion that State Control may prove a tyranny exacting and repressive. When Organisation is irremediable it becomes despotism. Socialism is to be respected for its aims, and may be trusted to do indirect good; but it has no pretensions which render Co-operation unnecessary.

Club Records.

THE Pioneer Club is again about to locate itself in larger and more commodious premises, its Roll Call having reached close upon four hundred members; among whom are some of the foremost women of to-day. It is a matter of great rejoicing to these, that the vigorous efforts of their President and founder, Mrs. Massingberd, have met with such distinguished success. The Club is a home to all, a place of meeting with friends worth knowing, also above all else a school for thought, and the discussion of the earnest movements of the time, whether they concern our social and political life, the arts and sciences, or dress, food, and domestic Reform.

Two women, earnest among the earnest, lectured at the Club recently—Mrs. A. Hicks and Mrs. Fawcett—on the speeches of whom the verdict of several non-members was to the effect, that the most inveterate foes to the advance of women, must have been shaken in their convictions, by the words spoken on both occasions, so shrewd and to the point were they; and by the sight of a Club so ardently supported by women, not for amusement and friendly associations only but for determined work.

Mrs. Hick's remarks were based upon facts drawn from her knowledge of the conditions existing in the clothing and cabinet trades. Under the present system of sub-letting, Mrs. Hicks said, that, from wage-books she had inspected, she had ascertained that the women who actually do much of the work contracted out by our Government earn, in many instances, an average wage of 5s. 1d. per week. One woman who, according to the books, earned 10s. per week, Mrs. Hicks questioned as to the reason of her receiving so large a wage, and learned that to gain it the woman had been obliged to say to her employers that she had someone to help her. She did not dare to let it be known that she did it all herself—though to do so necessitated her working from 6 in the morning until 10 or 11 o'clock at night; or else her employers would have said—as they always do—that 10s. was too high a wage to be gained by one individual, and would have reduced it. With this 10s. the woman had to keep herself and three children. Under this system a woman has certain garments given out to her to make; she is not told what she is to receive for making them, but when pay day comes her employers give her just what they please;—there is absolutely no wage-governing power. The responsibility connected with the paying of wages is put by the contractor on the shoulders of the foreman; and any complaint made to them on this subject is met by the reply that they know nothing about it. But, said the speaker, they should know something about it, since they amass all the wealth; and these contractors are all wealthy people, whose fortunes are built up by the unpaid labour of those who do the work. The foreman must, in order to keep his situation, see that a good margin of profit is got for his employer out of all work done. Another system, having much the same result, is that a factory is divided into so many rooms, each under a captain, whose duty it is to see that the room pays its own expenses—rent, gas, wages, &c.—and gives to the owner a certain percentage of profit. For making dresses which sell at 30 to 40 guineas each, girls get about 12s. per week; a very few—the exception—earning about 20s. It should be the duty of all purchasers of goods at these large places to find out where the goods sold are made, and to obtain permission to inspect the workshops, and question the workpeople. Those who would do this would gain an amount of knowledge of which they at present have no conception; and if all employers knew that they might, at any moment, be asked by their influential customers for leave to inspect their workrooms they would soon think it worth their while to have good, sanitary workshops, and to see themselves how their work was done. In strong comparison to the magnificent places where you order your furniture, are the garrets in the East End where all the foundation-work of couches, easy chairs, "what-nots," &c., are made. The large firms are, year by year, closing their own workshops and getting their work done at Bethnal Green and other districts, keeping on merely a few of their "hands" for the sake of saying that work is done on the premises. I have been told by a member of the London County Council that in the district he represents there are fully 2,000 of these "garret-masters" who make the foundations of all this furniture. These are brought in this elementary stage to the large

firms—not ordered by them, for they know well that at certain intervals these men will come round. I have known instances where the worker has obtained a price for the manufactured article only 6d. in excess of what he paid for the material out of which it had been made. It is to do away with these conditions of things that all thinking women and men must set themselves; for it is not safe to society that this state of things should be allowed to go on; it is not right that the lowest strata of society should live on in these conditions. Referring to the recent action of the Kensington Vestry in appointing two women sanitary inspectors, Mrs. Hicks said no fault could be found with such action in itself; but she understood that these two women had accepted a salary of £60 a year each, whereas for the same work men were paid £120. This accepting by women who had other sources of income of a lower wage than that received by men for equal work, the speaker considered to be a grievous wrong; declaring that unless women were prepared to stand up for an equal wage with men for equal work, they were doing a positive harm in entering the labour market, as the result of their competition was to lower wages all round, and in many trades has reduced wages below a subsistence level. If such women would only consider that this action on their part is forcing down the wages of girls who have nothing beyond their earnings to live upon, and would try to realise the inevitable consequences to these other women, they would surely refrain from working for so small a wage. Work should never be done for a remuneration which, should one be thrown to rely solely upon it, would prove inadequate for one's support. Never allow your labour to beat down wages; but demand for it a fair wage. The time is coming, I hope, when parents will consider it the right and most honourable thing to see that their girls as well as their boys have placed in their hands the means of gaining, independently of everyone else, an honest and good living; for each one has the right to live an independent life, and the means to do this should be placed in the hands of all while they are growing up. Many people object that women have no need of a systematic business training because they marry; but we know very well that many of them never marry. Everywhere employers are beginning to understand that women possess a ready tact and a quickness of grasping ideas that is often wanting in men, and were it not that they are men and do not like to admit women to an equality with themselves, trained women would have no difficulty in obtaining situations. It is, however, urgently incumbent upon women not to hold themselves too cheap, and, unless driven to do so by dire necessity, to keep aloof rather than accept work at a wage inferior to that paid to men for the same work. Work must be paid for as work; not according to who does it. It is no longer any use to say that the labour market is not the place for woman: she is there; she has come to stay; and we must make a place for her.

On Wednesday afternoon, Feb. 14, Mrs. Fawcett spoke with great fluency and an expression of eye and tone, which is lost in the printed report. She said:—

There was the most urgent need for the suffrage for women. She took the arguments of her opponents and shivered them to atoms with her keen lance, showing up to the ridicule of her hearers the shoddy manufacture of the weapons, forged to kill this movement. She alluded with keen irony to the saying that women have no votes and "may therefore be safely neglected." Men, and women, too, must take shame to themselves that a state of things capable of giving rise to such a saying has lasted so long. It could not have lasted if women had not acquiesced, women must combine, shoulder to shoulder. They were proving gloriously how well they could do what they undertook to do? "Women would lose men's chivalry and attentions if they obtained the vote." For her part she found that possessing a vote brought to the individual possessor a great deal more attention, not less. Women's wishes would be attended to, if they had votes. Cabinet Ministers, Members, would be found hastening hither and thither to hear what women had to say at their meetings, what their opinions were if they had votes. Now these "could be safely neglected." It was the most foolish of the legion of foolish arguments brought to bear upon the matter, and actually poured into the ears of sensible earnest women seeking for, *demanding*, their right to take a full share in the government of their country.

Very decided and marked improvements had already been the result of the granting of the vote to women in New Zealand, one was that men of good character had been elected. Let women think what a difference in the condition of

things this new element would make. Mrs. Fawcett then directed the attention of her hearers to the working women, with whose conditions of life she seemed to be thoroughly acquainted.

The working women were said to take no interest in politics. It was wonderful the interest they took. It might be excusable if it were otherwise, for how was a working woman cumbered with much serving—no time to read book or newspaper—to be expected to know what politics meant. Yet she was interested. We ought all to make friends with these women; a combined force of women in all classes was wanted.

Women not interested in politics! what then did the word mean, If women "don't care," whether we have war or peace; *don't care* about the conditions of our soldiers in India, their moral dangers, temptations, etc.; *don't care* about the state of religion in the country; *don't care* whether things are cheap or dear; whether there is employment to be obtained or no; then they *don't care* for politics. They cared for politics and for suffrage; it would give women a lift up. A large class of politicians, who simply ignore the existence of women would have to consider them. Mr. Asquith wished to have a Senate to represent the voice of the whole nation. She would honour this wish if it was meant. But he did not mean the whole nation; he only meant half the nation. We had many friends in the body of the Liberal party, also many foes. Had we even a measure of Woman Suffrage we should not hear the *whole* expressed where half was meant. The law regulating women's labour would bear no end of improvement; it would get it then. When Parliament did interfere it was to *restrict* women's work, not to make better conditions. When the hard toilers (women) went to put their case before the Home Secretary (as all the world knows) he asked one woman if her work *hurt* her. "No," she replied; "but if I hadn't it what my mouth missed would have hurt me." When the deputation filed out, one woman remarked to her (Mrs. Fawcett), "Very bad for him, poor gentleman; to have to make the laws and know nothing about them."

Men's restriction of women's labour, was like the mother who instructed the nurse, "Just see what baby is doing, and tell her not to." This was descriptive of the attitude of Parliament.

Making clothes was surely not *unwomanly*, yet they wished to turn women out. Mr. Courtney asked the question, "Have not women a right to live?" "Oh, yes," was the reply, "if they do not interfere with the men."

A typical instance was given of the impossibility of redress for women. A drunkard at Bethnal Green came rolling into his wife's tidy, neatly-kept parlour, pulled everything about and smashed the furniture all to pieces. "Did he strike you?" asked the magistrate of the poor woman who applied. "No, I shut myself up, I was afraid of him." "Then," replied the wise administrator of the law "I can do nothing." If women had the suffrage something would be done. Assaults on little children were not dealt with as they should be by male law makers. A terrible case had occurred. A lawyer appealed on behalf of the man, his position, the shame awaiting him and his friends if prosecuted; so for a crime worse than murder a fine of £5 was imposed; while a poor man got two months' imprisonment for picking up sticks.

A living for miners meant about £2 a week; for women far below. [Here many instances of shameful payment were adduced.] The suffrage would mean power to call attention to these things, to demand change, would open up more avenues of employment. Then the custody of children. Nature said every child must have two parents; the law, through the eye and voice of man, calls this redundant, every child only one. When the child brings joy and honour that parent must be the father; when it brings shame and disgrace that parent must be the mother.

Some time ago she (Mrs. Fawcett) had been robbed; it was described in the papers as money stolen from the person of Millicent Fawcett, the property of Henry Fawcett. All these things are insults to women; they break many women's hearts. But if women would love one another and combine together, success would be certain.

On Thursday, the 15th inst., Mrs. Holroyd Chaplin opened the usual debate with a discussion on "Coming Out," meaning the coming of age of a young lady and her introduction to Society. Mrs. Massingberd presided, and in introducing the lecturer and her subject, gave a very humorous description of her own "coming out," which drew forth hearty plaudits and much merry laughter. Mrs. Chaplin's address was full of pathos and humour. She alluded pathetically to the difference

which class makes in "coming out"; to the poor factory worker, who comes out so early as a "hand"; to the dissatisfaction and general feeling of warped capabilities among the girls of the "upper ten"; to their lives so often spoiled by fashion and its claims. She deprecated the regulation dress for that occasion, and considered the whole arrangement a "covert insult to womanhood." The factory-girl class suffered often from starvation of body, the other from starvation of mind. Why were such distinctions made between girls and boys? Both were born the same, and both while children led the same lives. The "rib" theory was a man's idea. We want a race of mothers who will not bring up their daughters merely for the marriage market.

Mrs. Stanton Blatch advised the lecturer, and all women, to read the *first account* of the creation given in the Bible, and note the difference. She gave a delightful description of "coming out" in America.

Miss Aldis said, young women were too busy with their studies, their exams, their cycling, boating, etc., to think of marriage before 24. They ought not to "come out" at least until after having reached that age.

This brave and natural idea not being the generally accepted one caused great amusement; but it says much for the Pioneer Club and for the advancing spirit of the age that so young a girl should courageously utter sentiments so fully in accord with the current of progress.

AT THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR.

The years have been fashioned by man; the work of his meddlesome hand;—

The landmarks he sets by the way that his blundering feet have trod,—

He has parcelled, and weighed, and appraised each pitiful atom of sand, And mapped out, and measured, and reckoned the gift of an infinite God.

So the breath of our lips, as we breathe it, is ever oppress'd by a fear:— "How many heart-beatings more ere the sum of our days shall be told?"

Are the sands already run down? Have we come to the end of the year? Then those others are nearer at hand that must number our lot with the old!"

All the same old symbols and sayings as when we were careless and young!

The new-born babe with his garland;—the grey-beard, wan, with his wings;—

All the well-known words to be said,—all the well-known songs to be sung,—

The symbols, and sayings, and songs that have turn'd to such sorrowful things!

But the well-known friend at the board? Ah, there is his empty chair!

So for us can the carols seem blithe, or the new year worthy his crown?

Ah, ye makers and marrers of Time! ten thousand-fold better it were To have left us in peace till the end, with our days neither numbered nor known!

For why, when our hearts may be brighten'd by Fancy, Affection, or Trust,

Should we say, "We are old by the years, so our days of rejoicing are done"?

And be no more esteemed in the land than those Indians with pitcher and crust

That are led out to wait for their doom in the wilderness under the sun?

The reproach of a year cometh not of an Autumn mellow with prime,

Of the bough bent down by the fruit,—of the husk thresh'd clear by the flail;—

But of barren and profitless Spring, like a Winter mistaken in time,

When the canker-worm gnaws at the roots, and the blossom is strewn in the gale.

So, although the Preacher hath said that our journey is only a span,

I will not be cast down by the way at these records of perch, pole, and rod,—

Our years may be many or few, they are marked out and measured by man,

Let us count by the years of the heart, for the heart has been fashioned by God.

—VIOLET FANE, in the *English Illustrated Magazine*.

Short Essays on the Woman's Movement.

By HENRY R. S. DALTON, B.A.

PRELUDE.

IT HAPPENED lately to be waiting in a chemist's shop at the corner of Orchard-street and spent the few minutes in observing a curious effect of the great blue and brown vases in the windows which act as subversive mirrors, showing the traffic of Oxford-street turned upside down. It was funny to watch men and women walking head downwards and omnibuses running likewise with their wheels above and their outside passengers below, as they do at the antipodes. The sight is so extraordinary that anyone who has not already noticed it may find it quite worth while to take an occasion. Well, the result of that study was to ask myself—Is not this a picture of the state of human society? At any rate the great Hebrew prophet thought it was; the same idea occurred to him. Whether our turning of things upside down is to be esteemed as the potter's clay or as a subversive mirror, the fact remains that we do turn the world upside down by means of the subjection of women. We call darkness light and light darkness, we put good for evil and evil for good, and then we wonder that with all our would-be civilisation, our philanthropic organisations and our expansive literature, human nature still remains pretty much the same as ever it was and resists all efforts to make it better. But now to detail.

I.

The Woman's Question, as it is sometimes called, can be divided into two chief heads, the Religious and the Secular. Most people nowadays would take little account of the first, but I do not think it is to be so easily put aside. We have all to face the inevitable change from these terrestrial conditions; and the instinct which impels us to make arrangements beforehand for that inevitable change can hardly be scouted as irrational. But brevity compels me to waive argument because it is as much as I can do to make even the most dogmatic statement of my views lucid enough for the purpose in hand. I will therefore plunge *in medias res* by explaining the principle of Divine Order.

Divine Order is the Procession of the Feminine through the Masculine to the Feminine; the former Feminine being the maternal principle, the latter the conubial. The Masculine is the medium of perfection, the "Word" of the Johannic gospel "through whom all things existed." And these Three are One, because the Masculine, the "Word" is but a means or mode put forward by the Feminine, to be recalled after being used, as a tool is laid aside by the worker. Thus Divine Order is Triune. It was symbolised in the Jewish sacred books by the Tetragrammaton, of which the first and third parts are feminine, the middle part masculine. To write it in the familiar English form—which, however, probably does not convey anything like the true sound of it—we have JH (fem.) HOV (masc.) AH (fem.). Probably the name of Joshua or Jesus is based upon the same general conception, which would account for the reverence traditionally shown to it. It is well known that in the synagogue the Jews read Adonai for "Jehovah" in order to avoid the common use of the ineffable Name. But why should they? What is in a name? But if a particular name be intended to be the means of conveying to the mind that the apotheosis of Womanhood is indeed "the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last, which is and which was and which is to come, the Almighty," then surely the mysterious awe becomes very intelligible. In like manner we may regard the terms Father, Son, and Holy Ghost as a cloak designed by the fathers of Christianity to veil decorously the Holy of holies, and then the Christian Trinity, equally with the Jewish, is no chimera of a religious body or sect, but a philosophical statement of the basis of the universe, a cosmic axiom. Further, the Christian Rood—the crucifix standing between two robed figures, commonly supposed to be the Mother and St. John—carries on the same conception of a Trinity; and the brazen serpent of Moses, twisted round a pole or a cross, indicates the two principles of the Trinity in conjunction.

This line of thought has the advantage of helping us to comprehend that greatest of puzzles, the Origin of Evil. Briefly, evil is misplaced good. The same fire which in some relations is a good servant becomes in other relations a bad master. It should be borne in mind, however, that whereas good, as such, is absolute, evil, as such, is relative. Good is eternal, evil is temporal. Good is the essence of the universe, evil is an accident of this or that part of the universe. Thus regarding evil as a means or middle term between the good which originally created it and the good which finally follows from it, we come again upon the Tetragrammaton, the Rood, etc., in short upon the Trinity; we come upon the Masculine or evil principle situated between the two good or Feminine principles, the first the universal Cause, the last the universal Effect. But it must also be carefully noted that the Masculine or evil principle when used by the Feminine Cause to produce a Feminine Effect, ceases, in that relation, to be evil. Being used by good for good, it so far becomes good itself, the fire becomes a good servant instead of a bad master, which illustrates what I said before that all evil is relative only, not absolute. To employ theological expressions, the masculine principle becomes anointed by good for good; hence the former good appears as the "Mother of the anointed," *Mater Christi*.

Moreover, on this system the vague ideas of Sacrifice and Redemption are brought into harmony with cultivated and enlightened reason. By

its final reabsorption into the Feminine, the Masculine is sacrificed in the most exact sense of the word. And by the performance of its duties in the meantime it earns or *buys back* that reabsorption. Let me sum up what has been said by reproducing a paragraph from a letter of my own which appeared some time ago in the *Woman's Herald*.

"My meaning will be clearer if I say that the main burden of Hebrew prophecy in its esoteric sense, which is the Hidden Wisdom, 'the mysteries of the Kingdom of God' darkly alluded to by Christ, is—as I understand it—the burden of woman's spiritual supremacy in the universe. By its doctrine the male sex is a temporal and temporary veil induced upon humanity to be used as an engine for the fulfilment of various purposes in the process of the evolution of the race. The veil is removed just in proportion as the human being re-ascends towards the Divine. In other words, as a woman rises in heart and intellect she becomes more of a woman; and in proportion as a man does so he becomes less of a man and more of a woman. Thus the correction of the countless imperfections, frailties, vices, corruptions, and crimes which mark both men and women in their passage through this life tends to convert both sexes into perfect women, the image of the Supreme. No doubt such perfection does imply the embodiment of all the masculine attributes and powers without exception—the physical included—in the women so perfected, so that nothing shall be lost to humanity; but the important point is that woman, not man, is the image of God; that to her, all masculine attributes and powers without exception are to be re-fitted, because in the male they are but borrowed attributes, to be hereafter resumed by the lender."

The reader may, if a Christian, be inclined to ask—Then what dignity does this view assign to the Christ himself? Does it not make the Son of God inferior to his Mother? I answer in the words of the much-abused Athanasian creed "In this Trinity none is afore or after other, none is greater nor less than another; but the whole Three Persons (or hypostases) are co-eternal together and co-equal!" The Divinity of the Messiah is His feminine nature. Or if the term nature be liable to be misunderstood, let me say that His soul or spirit, choose which word you prefer, is essentially and purely that of womanhood, that this inner and true self is the self of woman; the masculine or partly masculine terrestrial body being nothing but a temporal veil. We read in the gospels that at the crucifixion the veil of the temple was rent asunder from top to bottom. What does this symbolism mean? Let it be remembered that Jesus spoke of the temple of His body in connection with the resurrection. We may thence infer that the displaying of the Holy Place by the rending of the veil signifies the revelation of the womanhood within by putting off the manhood without. Let us further call to mind that He said the Kingdom of God is of little children and that it is needful to become as a little child in order to enter therein. But Christ knew, presumably, that the beauty, purity and simplicity of childhood are feminine characteristics. Presumably also the apostle who exhorted the early Christians as new-born babes to receive the sincere Milk of the Word for their soul's salvation was aware that milk comes from a mother, not from a father. Our Lord's mysterious reply to his Mother at the Cana marriage-feast, as well as the miracle itself, are doubtless parts of a symbolism of Divine Order. Why was His hour "not yet come" to deal with woman? Because when it should come, Divine Order would be an open secret, no longer a secret shut up in a Tetragrammaton, a Tabernacle or Ark of the Covenant, etc., etc. But if in the whole of the gospel history there is one saying of Jesus which is conspicuous for its clearness and directness, it is the declaration that His Church is to have an exoteric and an esoteric doctrine. To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but to others in parables, that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand? But why? Does not this sound harsh and unjust? It is not so, because Christ explains it in another saying, "Give not that which is holy to the dogs nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn and rend you." It was of no use in that age—it is barely of use even now in our closing nineteenth century—to attempt to give Womanhood its spiritual rights. It would have been trampled by the swine in a moment—it is as much as we can hope if it will fare better now. There is some hope, however, as I will endeavour to point out.

The hope lies in co-operation, the co-operation of women as the class directly interested and of men as the class indirectly interested, to carry into effect these new lights upon old religious truth. Secularists tell us that religion is no longer a power in the world, and as touching the Christian religion in particular, the expression in vogue is, I believe, that "the good Lord Jesus has had His day." Now it may be quite true that religion is no longer a power of fear; but every day (or at any rate every week) shows that it is still a power of attraction. People cannot be driven to church, chapel, or other place of worship, but they can still be led. And as for Christianity in particular being out of date, there is evidence that its better day is only now beginning. No educated person, I suppose, at this last decade of the nineteenth century believes that the Second Advent will be the appearance of a man sitting upon a cloud, surrounded literally with winged angels blowing trumpets, and descending on to the Mount of Olives near Jerusalem. Such an occurrence may be scientifically possible—I do not deny it—but even if it did take place how would it affect this globe as we now know our planet to be! No; modern society has surely done with puerilities of that sort; the Second Advent is a spiritual coming, the shedding abroad among the nations of the true Christian spirit, which somehow has not hitherto been altogether a

success. But such shedding abroad will not come automatically, it must come by effort and organisation. This is as good as saying that it must come by means of a religious body or Church. Now has any Church yet directed its efforts toward the establishment of Divine Order, the recognition of woman's spiritual birthright?

Yes, I think we may fairly allow that one has done so, and that one the most ancient of all. The cosmopolitan Church of Rome is steadily developing the doctrines and practices of Divine Order, the practices rather more as yet than the doctrines. The laity leads with the practice; the priesthood in its capacity of *Eccelesia Discens*, can only follow with the doctrine. The progress has been good. Look at what Lourdes was when a few years ago the story of the girl Bernadette was first circulated, to be half ridiculed by lay Catholics and wholly rejected by the clergy. Look at what Lourdes is to-day with the Church prostrate at its shrine! Nor is that the only shrine, although no doubt the chief, where the worship of Our Lady draws elaborate pilgrimages; there are now several in our own country. As for the worship of Our Lady being called "veneration of the Virgin Mary," I venture to think that by this time the Catholic body has come to estimate that piece of old-fashioned etiquette at its proper religious value. When you kneel before the gorgeous image of Our Lady and commit yourself to Her protection from the outermost of your flesh to the innermost of your spirit, when you implore Her to bestow upon you every good and keep you from every evil, to be the guiding star of your life and the end and reward of all its trials—well all I can say is that if that be not worship I am incapable of understanding what the meaning of worship is. It is best to face the truth, because it will assert itself whether faced or not. Anyone who will take the trouble to note the demeanour of the Catholic laity, women more especially, at the Lady altars of the continent, must, I think, be constrained to admit that modern Catholicism worships Our Lady as Divine, does not merely venerate her as a specially favoured human being. In other words, universal and eternal Womanhood, the "Ewigweibliche" is worshipped by the Roman Catholic world under the name of Mary Immaculate. By the way, why do the English and French rituals mis-translate the *Ave Maria*? The language of the Church is Latin, not English nor French, and its words are *Benedicta tu in mulieribus*, "Blessed art thou in women," not *inter mulieres* "among women." She is blessed, not as compared with other women, but in the whole race of women—that is what the Latin says. It may seem a small matter, but it is very important. The points at a railway junction are small matters but very important. Anyhow, the Catholic Church as a body is committed to woman-worship; it is a step which cannot be retraced, a reality which no forms of words can set aside. I am not impeaching Papal infallibility; but the infallibility is that of a *depository*, not that of a peculiar personality. The story of the barren fig tree shows that Jesus himself did not pretend to infallibility in the human and secular sense. The infallibility of the Pope is the centralised discipline of the Church, without which the heterogeneous communities of which it is composed could not cohere. Nor am I seeking to invalidate the exoteric doctrine, the historic reality of the gospel story; the spirit is not without the letter. But the glorious shrines of Our Lady which have been springing up of late all over the Catholic world are not photographs of the Mother of the Nazarene, any more than the figures on crucifixes are photographs of Her Son. We must distinguish between dry facts and the ideals based on them, and this can be done without involving any denial of the facts. Nevertheless it is the ideal, not the fact, with which religion by its very nature is chiefly concerned. And as society's ideals rise, the love of horrors becomes less. Accordingly we see that along with the cult of the Madonna that of the Christ-child is more attractive to Catholic worshippers than the melancholy and revolting crucifix. All the parts of the Gospel history have their appointed season; but the effect produced upon the mind by the beauty and sweetness of the Child is a pleasing one, because it dwells upon what is good; the Passion dwells mostly upon evil and tends to promote religious discord rather than peace and goodwill. And even if this were otherwise the fact would remain that forms of religion which do not attract the people cannot hold their own. No men are better aware, probably, than the present able head of the Church and his advisers that the strength of the Church is to win over converts and win back the cold and careless members of the faith. In former days religion had terrors to wield as well as attractions; it is not so now. The terrors are disbelieved in because they cannot be proved; the attractions are believed in because they are shown. To put it more bluntly, public worship costs money, and modern society is not content to have its money spent for it by paternal government. In the last resort the support of religion must be a voluntary support based on love and zeal alone. And the people will not love or be zealous for that which does not satisfy their cravings. The progress of democracy means the progress or the decadence of religious creeds just in proportion as those creeds meet actual wants that are felt, or fail to meet them. Dogma may stand or fall, but expediency must govern.

If this be so, the development of woman-worship in the Church of Rome needs no archaic justification. It is a matter of life or death for the Church to be up to date in spiritual catering for spiritual needs. It would no more be practicable to prevent Catholic women from joining in the woman's movement than it is to prevent Catholic men from being freethinkers in private. The solidarity of Catholicism is common sympathy and common action, not similarity of private opinions, which is no more attainable than is a fixed type and colour of eyes or hair.

The Secular Movement among women, has already been so well thrashed out on platform and in press—in the latter by the present writer among others—that there remains nothing new to be said. I can only reiterate once more my conviction that in all matters political, industrial and social, women have the right to be given perfect equality with men on a fair field with no favour. So far as this has been already done, they have acquitted themselves well, in spite of the difficulties and discouragements inseparable from a struggle to rise out of the old grooves of "weaker-vesselism." But on the other hand, women should bear in mind that they cannot successfully enter the arena with men in the old swaddling-clothes, whether figuratively or literally. In all physical matters as well as mental, in that of dress above all, the old notions of miscalled "womanliness" must be made a clean sweep of. Especially important is it that the notion should not get abroad among men that the emancipation of women will mean any injustice or tyranny that can make the last state worse than the first.

In re the Anarchists.

WHO are the Anarchists? is the heading to an article in the January number of *SHAFTS*; but the writer does so little to answer his own question that in the end we are still asking—"Who are the Anarchists?"—"What do they want?"

As against Socialism and Anarchism, there exists a confused idea which may be stated thus:—A person possessing only twopence desires the owner of sixpence to present him with fourpence; the amount between them is the same, it is merely in different hands. The owner of the sixpence declines to fall in with the arrangement, and, when this rather natural result is reached, the Socialist becomes an Anarchist, and declares war against all constituted authority. Mr. Keir Hardie, M.P., who occupied the chair at the second annual conference of the Independent Labour Party a few days ago, took some trouble to impress upon his audience that though the methods of the Anarchists might differ from those of the Socialists, the fact might only prove that the former were more zealous than the latter. The downward grade is traceable: the Whig of old developed into the Liberal, the Liberal into the Radical, the Radical into the Socialist, the Socialist into the Anarchist. Après? Perhaps the deluge. The first relevant and definite statement in the article is that "Anarchists are not necessarily assassins." That may, or may not, be. Certain doctrines produce certain effects, and we are entitled to hold the propagators of the doctrines responsible for those effects. Anarchy is an arché—no government—lack of government—and lawlessness is Anarchy pushed to its logical conclusion, since the Anarchist refuses to recognise the authority of law. Next we learn that "They (the Anarchists) are simply those who have come to the conclusion that as a family can exist very comfortably and happily with no binding tie save that of love, so the commonwealth might rest securely with no written law and no enforcing authority," followed by "Society has every right to protect itself . . . even if an epidemic of such crimes rendered necessary a large addition to our police and detective forces." No family does exist at all, either "comfortably and happily," or otherwise, "with no binding tie save that of love;" and the boldest imagination may well stagger at the picture of the vast and complicated commonwealth of the British Empire being able to rest securely with no written law and no enforcing authority. Finally we are asked, "Are our slums the breeding houses of virtue?" Who suggested they were so? "Is our unjust competitive system quite certain to produce fruits of justice, mercy, and love?" Our competitive system, just or unjust, was not intended to produce fruits of mercy, still less of love. It was adopted as an answer to the outcry of those who objected to berths being filled by favouritism—by the nominees of a "bloated aristocracy."

The concluding quotation from Ruskin comes rather as a surprise. "It is better and kinder to flog a man to his work, than to leave him idle till he robs, and flog him afterwards." Granted heartily by everyone—except perhaps by the man who has to be flogged in either case; but does not the sentiment tell rather against Anarchism. It seems to imply a great deal of "enforcing authority" somewhere. C. E. RAWSON.

MILLIE WILMOTT.

(CONCLUSION.)

MANY years had passed away before Millie returned to live in her native village. Her life since leaving home had not been an easy one. Her places of service had been hard; but her wages were good, and her mother needed the money, so she had held on without murmuring, hoping that some day her mother would need her more than her money, and they would finish, as she called it, under the same roof. After twenty years' absence the summons came.

For some years, Jack had been the village carrier. His mother had helped him till her strength failed, and so stranded poor Jack.

"Millie must come home," he said; "I can't get along no-how without help."

So Millie came.

It was Millie's first day at home. She stood at the gate, gazing dreamily across the meadow, and thinking of the changes that had taken place during her twenty years' absence. So earnestly was she thinking of the past that, when Mr. Samson, the agent, who had approached her unobserved, spoke, she gave him a strange, bewildered look.

"Glad to see you, Millie," he said heartily, "you haven't come a day too soon. Jack needs your strong will, besides your helping hand, to keep him in working order; he's no backbone. Things have all been going wrong since your mother's help was withdrawn. You see a great change in her, don't you?"

"Yes, sir," Millie answered sadly; "it's four years since I last saw her. She has altered very much in that time."

"It isn't the years that's brought the alteration," he replied; "it's overwork. If I had known," he added, "that your mother would have had all the extra work, I should never have urged Jack to take to the carrying business. I thought it would be a good thing for your mother and him. So it would have been if Jack—"

He paused, and Millie said quietly: "My mother doesn't complain, sir."

"Your mother's a foolish woman," he answered sharply; "she has robbed Jack of his manhood, and herself of ten years of life."

"It's as he was brought up, sir. It's my mother's way with boys."

"Will it be your way, Millie?" he said, smiling.

"I shall never have any boys. If I had, I hope I should make them respect me. I think if men were made to respect their mothers, they would respect other women more."

"You haven't left a good place to come home have you?" he asked anxiously.

"I am very glad to come, sir," she replied.

"If I could rule," he went on in a hard voice, "I'd sweep every man off the face of the earth that couldn't stand alone; I'd allow no room for weaklings."

"You'd make a pretty clean sweep, then, Mr. Samson."

"Do you mean me to understand that you have met more weak than strong men; is that your own experience, Millie? Do you really think that most men need a woman's help to keep them from falling?"

"I think there are many weak men, sir," Millie answered firmly. "Only they don't seem to know it; and women haven't the courage to tell them."

"You mean morally weak, I suppose, Millie? So there are. I am sorry it is so, but it is. And until women are just in their condemnation, treating the male offender as severely as they do the female, making it as fatal to the happiness of the one as to that of the other, things will remain pretty much as they are. When it means to the man the loss of everything that makes life beautiful as it does to the woman, then men will reform. I know men are often very cruel to women; but I know too that women are cruel to each other. When one of their number has

slipped aside, a barrier is at once raised, making it almost impossible for her to return. Help is withdrawn, except the help that is offered to a prostitute. The doors are all closed against her. There is but one way for her to take, she takes it, and becomes a demon in her misery. Relentlessly scorned and shunned by those whose help she needs, she turns to men for companionship, who soon finish the work they have begun. And the honest woman," he added scornfully, "receives the man, as before. She has no fear of the polluter, only of the polluted. She knows he is a villain, unfit to be touched, but she never dreams of closing her doors against him. Worse still, there are those who will sometimes accuse the poor woman of being the tempter. This, of course, only comes from the most vicious, or from women who are as bad, but whose sins do not meet with the world's condemnation. Don't misunderstand me, Millie, I shouldn't like women to think as lightly of this sin as men do; society is anything but pure now; it would be vile if women were as indifferent as men. It isn't so much the severity as the one-sidedness of the sentence that I complain of. Though," he went on, "I don't think a little mercy shown to the greatest sinner ever did any harm. A spoonful of honey will work more wonders than a barrel of vinegar. Did it never occur to you, Millie, that women were very hard on their own sex?"

"Yes, sir, often have I thought about it, and wondered why. I am puzzled at many things. I can't understand why things aren't equal all round. A man may spend his youth in the vilest sensuality, and yet in middle life be honoured and respected; may aspire to, and attain, a high position, without any dread of his past being a barrier. Can a woman? Men seem to throw away their past quite easily. A woman's past is always with her. It is her horror. However deeply she may have repented, she hides herself as much as possible from the world, and wonders who knows. She daren't do the little good she would like for fear of being misunderstood. Why is it so? I can't understand it."

"Neither do I understand it, Millie. Nor shall I now. I am an old man, and don't expect to see the problem solved in this life."

"But it won't always be so, Mr. Samson; do you think it will? I feel sure the dawn will break, the light will come. There will be a time when we shall understand each other, when the strong will not wish to oppress the weak." A beautiful light came into Millie's eyes as she spoke, and she looked far out into the western sky where the sun was setting in gold and crimson, as if she saw there some promise of this coming day.

MADGE.

DEBATES AT "SHAFTS" OFFICE.

WHAT DO WE THINK?—Debates are held at the Offices of SHAFTS every Friday, at 5.30 p.m. ending at 7 p.m. Any subject proposed for discussion can be laid before the meeting, previously, and the discussion can be opened by the proposer or by another as desired. The readers of SHAFTS are invited to attend and bring their friends. It has been suggested to have these debates in the evening at 8.30 p.m., or at 3 p.m. This is being considered.

Friday—February 23—Fraulein Lepper, on Food Reform.

Friday—March 2—Mrs. Gillon, on Divine Science.

Friday—March 9—Mrs. Sibthorp, on The Feminine and Masculine Principles.

Friday—March 16—Mrs. Marx Aveling is expected to lecture on Socialism for Women.

EASY AND HEALTHY DRESS.—So many letters have been received in re this dress, that it is difficult to answer all personally. We therefore state that the dress can be seen at this Office any day after March the 11th. It is simple, easily made, and can be modified to suit almost any taste.

NOTICE.—MISS MAUD E. ALDIS, Teacher of Violin, Viola and Pianoforte, Conductor of the "Studio Amateur String Band." Practices every Tuesday from 7.30 to 9, at 9 Victoria Grove, Chelsea. For terms of Concert and At Home playing or lessons apply, 67 Dieppe-street, West Kensington, W.

The Women's Liberal Federation.

THIS year Portsmouth has been the scene of the conference of the Women's Liberal Federation, which was held on Tuesday, at 2.30 p.m., and Wednesday, at 11.30 a.m., February 13th and 14th, in the Grand Jury Room, Town Hall, there being a very large attendance on both days. On Tuesday, Mrs. Fuller (West Wilts) having taken the chair, Mrs. Maitland moved the following resolution:—

"That this conference of the Women's Liberal Federation disapproves of the proposal of the London School Board to impose theological tests upon the teachers in the schools."

This, seconded by Miss Southall, and supported by Miss Balgarnie, was carried.

Mrs. Eva McLaren moved:—

"That this conference is of opinion that any future regulations, legislative or administrative, restricting the labour of adult women in dangerous and other trades, should apply equally to men in the same trades."

Miss Chaplin seconded the motion, which was supported by Mrs. Wynford Philipps, who said that to discharge women from employments now open to them was to incur responsibility for the dishonour and disgrace of those who were refused a chance of getting an honourable, even if a pitiful, livelihood; Mrs. Thomas, Mrs. Whyte, and Miss Balgarnie, spoke in favour of the resolution which was carried.

The following resolution moved by Mrs. Fuller was adopted:—

"That this conference expresses its satisfaction that the Government is about to admit women as members of District Councils, feeling that the Poor Law can only be perfectly administered by both sexes being represented on such councils. It hopes that the Government will take every opportunity of removing all mere property qualification of candidates for boards of guardians and District Councils, believing that this will enable many public-spirited women and men to offer their services in this capacity, who are now debarred from doing so."

Miss Balgarnie moved:—

"That this conference earnestly hopes the Government will use every endeavour to pass into law the principle of the Liquor Traffic (Direct Veto) Bill."

The motion was carried.

On Wednesday the conference met under the presidency of Mrs. Eva McLaren.

Mrs. Stewart Brown introduced the subject of women's suffrage. —Mrs. McLaren said they had received information from the Men's Federation that at that morning's conference at Victoria Hall women's suffrage had been spoken against. This must stir the women to fresh efforts; it was no use their working for Liberal candidates if such was to be the reply given to their claims. The following resolution was passed:—

"That this conference expresses its satisfaction at the fact that the Government propose to introduce a measure of registration reform, and trusts that this opportunity will be taken for dealing with the question of the Parliamentary enfranchisement of women; and that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Mr. Gladstone."

Mrs. Wynford Philipps opened a discussion on the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church of England in Wales.

On the motion of Countess Alice Kearney, it was resolved:—

"That this conference of the Women's Liberal Association, recognising the valuable work of women factory inspectors, petition the Government to increase the number now at work under the Home Office, and further urge the local authorities to use the powers conferred upon them by the Workshops and Factory Act, of 1892, to appoint women as sanitary inspectors."

A resolution was also adopted urging the need of legislation, that will put an end to the State regulation of vice in India.

In the afternoon, Mrs. Fuller said they hoped the day would come when the National Liberal Federation and the Women's Liberal Federation might not be so distinctly two as they had been this week; (Cheers.) when women and men would meet together, and so help each other to form a wise and correct judgment on questions affecting the well-being of the country.—Mrs. McLaren expressed the gratification of the Women's Federation that a rumour (which caused them some heart burning) as to an alleged reference to women's suffrage at the National Liberal Federation Conference in the forenoon proved to be a rumour only.

West Bristol W.L.A.

THE annual meeting of the West Bristol Women's Liberal Association was held in the Drawing-room of Redland Park Hall yesterday afternoon, Miss Priestman presiding over a numerous gathering.

The report for the past year was read by Miss Tanner; who, among other things, said that the committee had continued its earnest efforts on behalf of Women's Suffrage;—that it had sent a resolution to the Council meeting of the South and South-Western Counties Union, held at Plymouth, to the effect—"That this Council meeting considers that Women's Associations should not assist any candidate who does not support Women's Suffrage." The resolution was carried. She alluded with deep feeling to the death of Mrs. Cowen, of Nottingham, and said she was well known as an earnest worker for purity, for temperance, for education, and for Women's Suffrage.

Miss Priestman, the President, said they were met under cheerful circumstances, because the Home Rule Bill, for which they had worked as a measure of necessity and of justice, had been triumphantly passed through the House of Commons. The history of the Home Rule movement was a forcible illustration of the value and importance of political agitation. Strangely powerful and subtle was the viewless agency of thought, which, forming itself into public opinion, ruled the world. That marvellous union of simplicity and strength in politics gave to them their greatest fascination. There were new questions waiting to be solved, and on the answers given to them would depend the misery or comfort of thousands of lives. Had they any right to be indifferent? Questions such as whether men and women should be treated equally by law; to what extent the State might interfere with individuals; what power should be permitted to hereditary legislators; from what source the revenue should come, and how its wasteful expenditure could be checked; how could war be exchanged for arbitration—all those were questions which might well be followed up and studied by them. In conclusion, the speaker urged her hearers to think more and more about political matters.

Miss Robinson (Liverpool) maintained that the mass of the people were only interested in home affairs and failed to realise how the foreign policy of the nation affected home matters. In her opinion home affairs and foreign affairs were conducted on absolutely contradictory codes of ethics. Conquest was never justifiable, and the excuses advanced in its defence were untenable. Moreover, the relations of dominant and subject races were hurtful to both. She regretted that moral forces, which were stronger than physical forces, were not tried in the relations between nation and nation. Their aim as associations of Liberal women was to bring the foreign policy of the country into line with their acknowledged ethical code.

Women and Local Government.

THE first annual meeting of the Society for the Return of Women to all Local Governing Bodies since its re-organisation was held, by the kind permission of the Earl of Meath, at 83, Lancaster gate, on the 16th of this month. Mr. Walter McLaren took the chair. Mr. Theodore Dodd moved the following resolution:—

"This meeting expresses its satisfaction that the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill, 1893, reaffirms the parochial rights of women, and heartily thanks the President of the Local Government Board for his support of the principle that women should be eligible to serve on District and Parish Councils, Boards of Guardians, and Vestries in London, and trusts that the Government and the House of Commons will stand firm in rejecting the alterations made in the House of Lords with reference to the constitution and powers of the said bodies. This meeting urges upon Mr. Fowler to complete his good work in the coming session by enabling women to sit as County Councillors and Town Councillors, and enjoy all the same rights in local affairs as other citizens, including the right to be parochial electors on exactly the same conditions as men."

This was seconded by Mrs. Hutton, Poor Law Guardian for Wolverhampton, and carried.

Mrs. Pearsall Smith, in a most vigorous and amusing speech, dwelt upon the need of organization among women, and their awakening to a living, pulsing conviction of the duties and responsibilities which lay upon their shoulders in respect of the control of local affairs. The following resolution was then moved and, after being ably seconded by Mrs. Fordham, was carried:—

"That this Society, which has done much for the position of women in Local Government—both as regards the preservation of their existing rights, and in promoting the principle that neither sex nor marriage should disqualify for the rights of citizenship—is deserving of confidence, and, in view of the arduous work which is yet before it, should receive substantial support."

WESTMINSTER CLASS OF BUSINESS TRAINING FOR GENTLEWOMEN.

PRINCIPALS—Miss Cecil Gradwell and Miss Richardson.

PROSPECTUS—Full course comprises shorthand, typewriting, French or German, book-keeping, business or secretarial training. Any of which subjects can be taken separately, but if one subject only, the charge will be one guinea extra. Fees for full course, per term, £14 14s. Fees per term for each subject (paid in advance).

	£	s.	d.
Shorthand	3	3	0
Typewriting	3	3	0
Book-keeping	3	3	0
Business training (including simple accounts)	3	3	0
French	3	3	0
German	3	3	0

The second term of shorthand will be charged two guineas. Each term will be of three months' duration. Certificates of efficiency will be given. A commission of 2½ per cent. on first year's salary will be charged for procuring appointments for pupils.

DEAR MADAM,—Believing you to be interested in the subject of women's work, we venture to hope for your approval and encouragement in the following matter:—

We propose, should a sufficient number of pupils offer themselves, to start a daily class in the Autumn, for the purpose of giving a short and economical, yet thorough course of business training to ladies, who wish to qualify for Secretaryships and various business appointments, the course to include Shorthand, Typewriting, French or German, Book-keeping (by Single and Double Entry), and Business or Office training.

Any of the subjects can be taken separately. A preliminary Prospectus is enclosed, but will be subject to alteration to suit individual circumstances.

For Shorthand we have secured the services of a lady who is not only a most competent teacher, but has had some years' practical knowledge of Office work. Book-keeping, etc., will be undertaken by one of the Principals, who holds a 1st Class Certificate from the Society of Arts and who has herself had a somewhat exceptional and varied business experience.

Typewriting will receive special attention, the pupils having the advantage of doing practical work in connection with our Office here before the completion of their course.

French and German, especially as needed for writing and translating business communications will also be efficiently taught.

We consider that Book-keeping, Business training and Typewriting should be acquired in one term.

We have been urged to this undertaking by many friends who are in touch with this branch of women's work, and our own experience points to the fact that whatever may be the cause, a large majority of girls who offer themselves for Clerkships, etc., are very incompetent, and even if they have mastered Shorthand and Typing, they are quite deficient in knowledge of the meaning and application of business terms, while even the most simple form of account keeping is impossible to them.

Among the Owners of Typewriting Offices, the difficulty of obtaining competent Clerks is well known, and we believe it to be admitted that the present system of pupillage for 6 weeks is most unsatisfactory both to pupils and to offices, while the plan of taking improvers adopted by some offices is with the view of training clerks for their own requirements only and they learn nothing outside this routine.

It may be urged that the above subjects are already efficiently taught by some admirable classes held for women, and the well known Shorthand Schools. To the former we need not refer, as they are mainly held in the evening for those engaged during the day; hence the course is necessarily a long one and not suited to those who need a rapid training.

As to the latter we believe that there are many who do not care for the inconvenience and discomfort of attending the large schools and who prefer more private teaching with more individual attention to their difficulties, and have hitherto been debarred by the added expense and the difficulty of obtaining teachers, while we submit to those who are interested in the training of young girls for business appointments, that our projected class would offer advantages in that all the needed subjects could be studied under one roof, time and money saved in travelling from place to place, and the obvious objection avoided of their being so much about London alone, especially in the crowded centres where the large schools are situated. The numerous excellent Ladies' Residential Clubs now established in London offer safe and comfortable homes to this class of student.

We propose to prepare any pupil who may desire it for the examinations of the Society of Arts. We hope later to open an employment bureau in connection with our Classes. We shall be pleased to forward you any further information you may desire, also particulars as to the qualifications of the proposed teachers of the class.—Yours faithfully,

(Signed) CECIL GRADWELL.

OCTAVIA RICHARDSON.

Principals of proposed Westminster Class of Business Training for Ladies.

5, Victoria-street, S.W.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

WHO ARE THE PURE?

DEAR MRS. SIBTHORP,—I do not know how many of your readers will have seen the enclosed, which I take from the *Daily Chronicle* of the 7th inst.

A STRANGE CONFESSION.—Amongst the applicants at the Thames Police Court was a woman who told the magistrate she had deceived her husband. On being asked to explain, applicant said she got married on June 10 last, and just previous to that she had been unfaithful with another man. At the time of the marriage she did not say anything to her husband about her misconduct. She was now daily expecting to be confined, and having confessed her sin to her husband he had refused to have anything more to do with her. She had not now anything to eat.—Mr. Mead told the applicant her husband was under no obligation to support her. She had behaved very badly to him, and did not deserve any sympathy. If she had no home or friends she must go to the workhouse. If the applicant liked she could lay an information against the father of her child, but she would have to prove he was such.—Applicant left the court saying she was starving.

I do not think I have ever read anything more conclusive in proof of the demoralization of men by the present state of the law.—I take it that Mr. Mead is correctly reported; also that he would wish to be considered a Christian, and both assumptions are sure to be denied by him if incorrect. Does Mr. Mead find in the teachings of Christ any basis whatsoever for his most cruel treatment of this woman? Indeed he does not. Not to the veriest sinner would Christ have denied sympathy.

If this woman's sin is to be met with such severity, what then can Mr. Mead have to say to the violator of women, or of little children?—My opinion is that the man who could treat a woman in her last extremity as Mr. Mead is reported to have treated this woman, would find excuses for the greater sinner.

I am inclined to think the magistrate did not enquire whether the husband had ever been unfaithful—because he thought it of no importance. This, at a moment when men are seeking, by the re-introduction of the Contagious Diseases Act, to give almost unbridled license to their own passions, is not only an unspeakable insult to women, but it stands as an inconsistency ludicrous in its glaring folly.—Can men pollute one half of womankind and stand clean and untarnished, on their ruin, pushing them into the depths of the mire that they themselves may rise high enough from it to reach their hand to pure women? What wonder if women of the present day are learning what men are and what men do,—what wonder if they are embittered? What wonder if they withdraw themselves and stand aloof? And what wonder that men regard with resentful eyes, the unfolding of their own licentiousness—not so much that they are ashamed of it but that *they do not want it stopped!* Well, it will be stopped; women (and all good men) will stop it. Pure women do not wish to stand on the ruined souls and bodies of their sisters and brothers. It in fact, matters little whether Mr. Mead has been rightly or wrongly reported—except to himself. Women know that men support such ideas, that they have one standard of purity for themselves and another for women; and they know that very certainly while women remain unrepresented, this state of things will continue. How can some women be so indifferent about the suffrage? It is surely because they are still ignorant of all that is meant by it. They do not realise that to possess the suffrage is to possess power—power to enforce purity on men who now turn pitilessly from their door, the women who have fallen but once into that slough in which these very men steep themselves unrestrainedly.—Yours, etc. UNA.

BRUSSELS.

DEAR MADAM,—Till now I got SHAFTS from a friend in England. But as I see you are in difficulties I will take a subscription myself and use my friend's copy for making propaganda. Also I am ready to take two shares of one pound each.

I myself am the Editor of a Women's Paper; I am a Socialist, and I live and think principally for the working women of Holland and Belgium. My paper is a very cheap one, much too cheap. But I find a great help in our "Strydpenning." How to translate this word?—I think "War-penny" or "Helping-penny" expresses what it means. Here and there are ladies and working-women who wish to do something for our paper. They spare some pennies, or rather less, and send it to me. And so, penny by penny, we get every two weeks a subsidy of 30 to 50 francs, or more; which is a help, at all events. I recommend you to do the same. I see from the "Correspondence" that your excellent paper is much beloved by the women of your country, so, I think, no one would refuse to spare a trifle and send it to you in the form of stamps. For such a large country as England, all these trifles must give a much larger amount than 30 or 50 francs. You could try it. This method is indeed a very good one, for by giving whatever she can spare, the woman feels she is doing something practical for "her paper." In my paper each person who gives something, be it one or two centimes only, is allowed to insert a few words, and thus the most simple and timid little woman, who is not able to write an article, may sometimes utter an idea. Try it, Dear Madam. For the sake of solidarity, I wish you may be able to keep up your paper. It is a good, a kind paper; I feel that it is not only written with the understanding, but with the heart, and that is just what gives worth to one's work.

Excuse my English, I read it very well, but I am not accustomed to write it. And accept my kindest salutations and my best wishes for your paper.—Your fellow-worker.

N. V. V.

MRS. COWEN.

DEAR MADAM,—I am glad you think it a good plan to take two copies of SHAFTS. I am doing so, and will take any trouble to get it to be more known, as it deserves to be. But this is not all. I want to say a word about Mrs. Cowen, that brave, noble woman who has just passed away. I hoped someone better able to tell would have written to you. What we have lost by the death of that high-souled woman we can't yet realise. In religion a Unitarian, in politics a Liberal, but above everything else she was a woman, and gave her whole life to the service of women. Blessed abundantly with this world's goods, she might have passed her time in luxurious ease instead of incessant toil. Though herself placed beyond the reach of unjust laws, she would not rest while others were oppressed. Refusing to take the repose she needed and had well earned, hating every form of injustice, she bravely faced a number of Pharisees, and fought single-handed for religious freedom, demanding it for her people. Standing alone amongst a band of men that would crucify Christ over again if He were here, she held firm to her creeds. I never heard of her breaking a promise. She never thought of herself. Young in everything but years, she exacted from herself the service of a young woman, personal risk or inconvenience counting for nothing, exposing herself in all weathers, leaving her own beautiful home to go into stifling rooms, with not always a grateful audience, a smile ever on her face, and a cheerful word for all. Words fail when I try to describe such a woman. I can never do her justice.

NOTTINGHAM.

Re "FAILURES OF THEIR SEX."

MY DEAR MRS. SIBTHORP,—I am glad if the cheaper paper reduces expenses, I think it does very nicely till SHAFTS' "ship comes in." I should like to read "Barabbas" very much; it is splendidly reviewed.

I have been reading Amy Montague's letter on the "Failures of their Sex." It is possible to do much harm without being disposed to evil. You would not give up your faith in womanhood for all the world: I would not give up my faith in either WOMANHOOD or MANHOOD. The world seems to be cursed with all sorts of *wrong ideas* about things. The best

people confess to be mainly in the dark; thank God for the light of hope that we shall see clearly farther on, and for glimmers of truth which guide us erstwhile. I love women, and I love men. I do not blame the writer, only I think her words will not help to strengthen us. The responsibilities which women will shortly have to undertake are, to my mind, far the gravest and most important features of this equality question. To expose other people's sins is not so good as to set about being better people ourselves. Where did Amy Montague hear men suggest that they should not be limited to one wife? Being a woman, I know that women have a silent, spiritual power whereby to prevent low things being said in their presence; have not all women discovered it? And again, nothing but harm can come from the spirit which suggests that "a Bill for the extension of domestic felicity, according to Mormon principles, would be an extremely popular measure amongst the male members of the community." I am very grieved that a woman should have been so misguided and unbalanced as to pen falsest of all false words that "Every man is at heart a polygamist." No! no! But men are mainly what women have made them; and it will still be so, I think. If all women were wholly pure, high-minded, noble, and wise there would not be a fallen man, a sinning, selfish brother in our midst. It is wrong, wicked to make distinctions between man and woman; we want to wipe out the false distinctions that exist, but not to raise other evil ones.

After all, what men and women alike need, realising how far we are away from God, the centre of goodness, is individually to make quite sure of being ready to yield *everything*, lines of thought and action, to right—i.e., God's will. Will not God guide us to right? Man is our brother, our sturdy friend—though not infallible (neither are we!)—*not our natural enemy!* Only evil is worth fighting; let us join hands with our brothers, ever be ready to lend strength and courage to weak and stumbling ones, and thus make a strong front against our common enemy Sin, in every shape and form.

I hope I am welcome to my quotation from SHAFTS of October for my letter to the *Western Gazette*. I beg to thank "J. C." and SHAFTS for the same.

SUSIE HEBDITCH.

DEAR MADAM,—Not the least amongst the many excellent attributes of SHAFTS is the freedom of discussion which exists within its columns, and I venture on that account to offer certain criticisms upon the attitude of a section of women towards the other sex.

The exponent of that attitude in your last issue is "Amy Montague," and I refer to her remarks rather as indicating the line of thought to which I allude than by way of replying to her personally; for I apprehend that a lady, who—whether from ignorance or animus permits herself to classify one half of humanity as actual hypocrites and potential polygamists, occupies no common ground with one who argues from the standpoint of mere justice.

I have no desire to enter the lists on behalf of Mr. Gibson Bowles; there are few points, if any, upon which I should be likely to find myself in agreement with that gentleman,—in his views on the "woman question" probably least of all. But when your correspondent is "led to suppose" by Mr. Bowles' description of the Local Government Bill, as one for "turning women into men," that he recognised some connection between legislative enactment and the "control or alteration of the operations of Nature"! we cannot help observing the same critical acumen which has doubtless assisted her to arrive at her former conclusion. "Amy Montague" certainly enjoys the distinction of being the only reader of Mr. Gibson Bowles who placed a literal interpretation upon his, it must be admitted, fatuous remark. It is not very clear, either, how the question of *polygamy* can be *à propos* of Mr. Bowles' other misstatement as to unmarried women.

Surely, madam, the work of social progress, one of the most important phases of which is the removal of the utterly unjust

differentiations—legal and social—against women; can be carried on without this indiscriminate mud-throwing at the opposite sex. Although the "Amy Montagues" of the woman's party do not know it there are a large number of men who are proud to work hand in hand with their sisters in the up-hill struggle for justice. As a Socialist I should be false to my principles if I were not "instant in season and out of season" in working for the absolute equality of women. "Adult suffrage" is the widest plank in the Socialist platform, the very bed-rock of Socialism; and the fact that we regard "Payment of Members," "Shorter Parliaments," perhaps even "Manhood Suffrage," as the shortest cut to the goal, does not in any way alter our basis as to women, which is as integral a part of Socialism as Land Nationalisation. And we have no sort of quarrel with our sisters, if, disagreeing as to *method*, they strive to the same end via "Woman Suffrage" on the present property qualifications. We think that any diversion of effort *must* delay the final result, so that *we* have to work on our own lines; but we have neither the *power*, nor the right, nor the desire, to dictate to others in matters of judgment.

As a question of *argument*, however, for the purpose of proving our own point, it is delightfully refreshing to turn to the letter of your correspondent "Friend to Shafts," which, while keenly alive to the interests of women, is in generous sympathy with the forward movement *as a whole*, and recognises the fact that in the fight for the suffrage or any other reform it is a matter of *people* against *privilege*—not a struggle of *woman* against *man*.

And surely New Zealand has furnished a useful object lesson. That colony is far and away the most socialistic, as regards its legislation, of any part of the Anglo-Saxon world; but New Zealand has had to get manhood suffrage *first* and *adult* suffrage has been the next important enactment—delayed only by the capitalistic phalanx who opposed the former measure as long as it was possible—who oppose *all* reforms just so long as they dare. As a believer in *justice*—nothing more or less—I am glad to believe that the evident attitude of "Friend of Shafts" is characteristic of the great majority of our sister workers. Socialism stands for *justice*, and we are going for adult suffrage and human freedom by the shortest route we know.—Faithfully yours,

JNO. E. SKUSE.

WOMEN AS BARMAIDS.

DEAR MADAM,—In answer to the question, "Does the position occupied by this class of women-workers tend to raise or lower the moral and social standing of women?" I most decidedly say that it lowers, without a doubt, both the moral and social standing of women.

Drink is responsible for nine-tenths of the poverty, criminality, and imbecility of our land; therefore, dealing in it is helping to fill our workhouses, prisons, and asylums.

I honestly believe that if men and women would abstain from alcohol it would be the *death-blow* to all our social evils.

I am greatly interested in the sound common-sense articles that appear from time to time in your splendid SHAFTS. *There are a few* men who fully appreciate and recognise the equality of *women* as compared with *men*. The greatness and goodness of most men receive stimulus, and very often birth, from the purity and sound judgment of their wives and sisters.—Wishing SHAFTS every success,—Yours admiringly,

A MAN—ONE OF THE FEW.

A WORD OF PROMISE.

DEAR FRIEND,—SHAFTS is good, very good, and I am glad you try to bring those who know, to correspond with those who do not know. The distance to be bridged seems very great: does it not? The new time, however, is very near, when knowledge will pour in on people and be most readily assimilated by those who now know least but are pure and simple.—Yours faithfully,

B. W.

A Heart Throb for the Young.

"I am love! I bring with me fever and passion: wild, longing, maddening desire; restless craving and seeking. Many a long day 'ere this I heard you calling out for me; and, behold, now I am come."—THACKERAY.

WHEN this Love comes, why should not our young people be prepared to meet it—so far as it is in the power of one human to help another? Instead our young men are left in ignorance of the *real* danger to themselves and all connected with them, from living lives of sin—immoral lives. For themselves they run the risk of disease of the worst and most hideous kind; the fear of imparting this to those with whom they live; and the certainty of bringing with them from their low haunts impure thoughts, which surround their lives and make subtle barriers between themselves and pure lives, eventually dividing them altogether, in a most intangible manner, from such lives. Could not this truth be clearly worked out so as to be of real help to our young men? First, let the tangible laws of our being be made plain, and how through abuse of the same, however slight, we must suffer. Would not this be better told in the plainest words as part of our most necessary education, instead of our being left in the dark to find out the bitterness for ourselves? Why are subjects tabooed, which we all ought to know, as the most sacred conditions of our being? Every young mind desires knowledge. Could not classes be held in which should be taught the meaning of the passion and desire; the lawful use of them, and the awful result of abuse? Abuse results in physical strain; over indulgence in disease of the worst kind, the decay of our bodies, the paralysing of our mental faculties—the physical and mental being so much allied, to say nothing of the deadening of the spiritual. It is a terrible pain to see wonderfully gifted lives slipping down for want of this knowledge, which would certainly help even if it did not save altogether. I am convinced it would go a long way towards helping to strengthen many of our young men. The same teaching should also be given, certainly, to all young women; then one could help the other. There are certain experiences we must all glean for ourselves; still the making clear of these physiological laws would help all; make some purer; and others, who are stronger, would learn to help the weaker. None need wonder when barriers arise of their own making; but the inner voice will lead truly if we will follow it. It is strengthened by pure thoughts. Impure thoughts even in others tend to blind, and gradually we lose sight of that Guiding Light because we refuse to use it. It flickers dimly most times, alas! and is easily lost to our clear inner vision, which is the only Real. We need to make this outer material life a reflex of the inner spiritual; to do this, we must never lose sight of the Guiding Light. Let us teach our young people to surround themselves with pure thoughts; through them they will hold themselves strongly; they will become part of them and draw out all that is pure, more truly than any words can tell. These shadows we are constantly fighting—Shadows indeed!—Realities. Yes; this outward life is but a shadow in comparison.

DEAR MADAM,—Through your paper, this much-needed information might be given in the plainest of words to young people—young men, perhaps, especially, for their lives are thrown amongst so many temptations before they even know themselves. Fathers bring home to their children most undesirable thoughts—and so the subtle barriers rise up—the thoughts which draw them into the vortex. My teaching has come from bitter experience through lives close to my own, deeply loved, beautiful lives, swamped in terrible troubles. I seemed to learn all I wanted to know too late to help. I know the silence helps, but with knowledge the thoughts would have been stronger. This very imperfect thought may prove a suggestion for you, to be expressed by some more competent thinker.—Yours,

BEREFT.