

SHAFTS

A MAGAZINE FOR WOMEN AND WORKERS.

Edited by MARGARET SHURMER SIBTHORP.

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What the Editor Means.

WITH desolation this world is desolate; because woman has not thought aright; because the voice of woman has not been heard in our senate nor in our judgment halls: because woman has allowed her birthright of freedom to be wrested from her, has consented to be accounted only a creature of sex, a satellite of man; because woman has allowed her personality, her individuality of mind and body to be enslaved, to be made subject altogether to a creature like unto herself; because—shame of all shames!—she has permitted injustice, cruelty, immorality, to walk the earth rampant while she has lowered her head—which ought to have been lifted high, hushed her voice—which ought to have resounded through the earth, to the indignity and damnation of man-enforced and self-enforced silence.

Of all the grievous mistakes made by groping humanity since time began, none is so universal, or so fatal in its effects and in the desolation it has wrought, as the mistake of sex; that is, that one human being should dominate the other because of sex. It is a mistake so palpably absurd that we must in our saner moments—in those lucid gleamings which come to us occasionally through life's turmoil—wonder very much how it could ever have originated. One reason, if anything so foolish and reprehensible can be called a reason, is, that man has degraded the sacred power of reproduction into a demoralising overpowering desire, which could not gratify its incessant demands, save by the subjugation of woman; therefore woman has been subjugated.

Olive Schreiner explains it that, when woman stooped to give nourishment to her child, man laid heavy burdens upon her back. For this debasing state of things woman herself is not without fault, though not so severely blameworthy, inasmuch as the one who lays the burden of subjugation upon another, who accepts the rendering up of another's liberty of mind and body, is more to be condemned than the one who submits. From one usurped power to another men have passed, and have laid upon the shoulders of women heavier and more grievous burdens. Conscience being stirred through the centuries has excused base actions, self-condemning, by many ingenious devices. So men have posed as the protectors of women, from evils, be it remembered, man-made. Hence more and more unjustifiable has been the attitude assumed towards women; more terrible the evils from which she is sentimentally supposed to have been, and to be saved. History, both sacred and profane, ancient and modern, even up to date, when things are changing, shows us woman as the victim; the sufferer from these evil and erroneous views. She has been saved, sacred and set apart, only in theory.

The dominance of passion, the greed of power, have from over indulgence grown in the male human to a restless, unsatisfied craving; so that of all enslaved creatures he is the most enslaved, and has suffered really the greatest deterioration. The result of over-weening, irresponsible power, of too great freedom to indulge, unchecked by political or social ostracism, in any wayward demand of desire, has ever been

demoralization. Such conditions, as history teaches, have caused the decline and fall of nations, sects and individuals in all ages of the world. Who runneth let him read. Man has been unfortunate enough to have gathered to himself such conditions; have they been productive of the highest ideals in him, in his outlook or in his inner life? Women on the contrary have suffered much; yea, cruelly. Fault-worthy also, as it must be acknowledged they have been, still they have suffered, and suffering brings patience and wisdom; they have struggled, and struggling brings strength. Whatever may be said with regard to the sexual passion in woman—and it is not of moment to combat here any assertion however exaggerated—it cannot be denied that the maternal instinct, the mother love is stronger in by far the majority of women than sex love. This maternal instinct exists more or less in all women; and accounts for their attitude towards men, for their tender condonation of the faults of men and for the fact that they do not expect so much from them as they expect from women; or as men expect from women. Nearly all women know, if they will but acknowledge it, that the deference women apparently give to the judgment and knowledge of men is only on the surface. These are curious and remarkable facts of which we seek the meaning. Sex impulses are probably perishable, out of them we are evolving; but the mother power, it is imperishable. Is this the explanation? Is it destined to last even when it ceases to be called by that name? Is it not the creative power? Let us study this, for it will explain many things.

Woman is waking up to fearless using of her power of clear seeing; her intuition, the most Godlike power in the possession of humanity. She sees that to the single rule of man she owes evils innumerable; how much longer then will she allow man to legislate for her? how much longer permit the down crushing of woman beneath the iron tread of lust and the greed of rule? Why is it that men, sitting on usurped seats, dare to pass such Acts as the late Cambridge Corporation Bill which places a woman's liberty, and honour possibly—for, be it noted, she need only be suspected—in the power of the policeman? Have we any guarantee that our policemen are less corruptible than other men, that we so place women in their power? May not these policemen solicit, compel through fear, or levy blackmail as they may choose? Where are the male prostitutes whom their brothers so carefully guard? Is there a man in the House of Commons who will deliberately pass such an Act as this against his fellowman? Yet every member knows well that the male sinner is as much, generally more deeply, sunk in sin than the woman who alone suffers the consequences. Everywhere the woman is the scapegoat and the man goes free; everywhere men combine to shield each other and to destroy woman. How are such dastardly acts possible as have been detailed in one of our daily papers under the heading of "Human Vivisection?" Is it not because our doctors have been men? How is it that girls are continually condemned for infanticide? Because our judges are men and our juries men, all of whom are utterly incapable of comprehending the situation. Great power and strength is developing in woman, her heel is ready

for the serpent's head; how much longer then will she be silent while these execrable injustices are practised? She has been taught that most mistaken of all imbecilities, that she has been intended as a helpmeet to man; she has been trained till individuality has been crushed to abject submission in her soul. Individuality, however, is fortunately not a killable quality, and woman is awake with her work before her, the work which she will do. We do not claim perfection for woman any more than for man, both sexes have been seriously injured by their training; yet, not injured beyond repair. We claim only the natural action of a natural law when we say that they who suffer and struggle grow strong. Women have much to work for, many things to accomplish, among others these:—All children must be made legitimate: the birth of a child is not a sin, whatever opinion may be held with regard to the act which preceded it; the child is blameless and must bear no stain. No mother will kill her legitimate child. No woman must be ostracised by society for prostitution unless her male companion, equally a prostitute, is ostracised also. Women and men must receive equal treatment in this matter. Every woman who gives her hand in marriage, who takes to herself a partner for life, must demand from him a purity equal to her own.

All this will take time to accomplish, but it must and will be accomplished. In these pages no claim is urged of superiority either in the one sex or the other, yet might such be well excused. For centuries man has sounded the note of his supposed superiority over woman. He has filled mighty pop-guns with names—Shakespeare, Milton, Newton, Homer, etc.—and pelting such feeble bullets about her ears, has demanded their female counterparts, like school boys who bully, stamp their feet, and brag, because of fancied advantages, with a noise that prevents reply, easy though that reply undoubtedly is. How illogical, how blind is such conduct, how unworthy. Recriminations are, however, useless; and woman in the great work before her has no time for them. She makes no claim, save the natural one of "turn about." You have had your swing for a long time, she says to man, I have pushed you, and pushed you high. Now it is my turn and you shall push me. See you do it well, for I am going very high up. And man will do it presently, he will learn that it is of the utmost moment.

Poets seeing something of the degradation from which woman has suffered, have sung sweetly of a time when "these twain" shall sit enthroned together; but so far poets and prophets alike have failed to see the stage between, which is much closer upon us. Beyond this "stage between," the greatest and truest of thinkers see the more distant goal. The eyes of women and men alike are fixed upon it, though they see but dimly what it shall be. It is our "Ultima Thule," our "Uttermost West," but it is not the poet's dream.

For what may lie beyond our keenest outlook, we are content to wait, knowing that we are working towards it. Let us not fear lest we lift our eyes too high; there is no limit to our rising; we are but in the beginning of an end, the limit of which is infinity. What knowest thou, oh seeker, of end, or of beginning.

"Thou shalt know as mortals must, earth's shade and shine,
Another lot is thine,
To dwell among the gods in heights supreme,
Beyond man's guess or dream."

In reference to the disgraceful action taken by those who legislate for us, Mrs. Elmy, who has been at work for the emancipation of women for over thirty years, and who has gained much by her untiring labours, writes:—

"It seems incredible, yet it is painfully true, that the House of Commons has, within the last few days, passed through its several stages a measure, empowering the Cambridge police to seize and imprison any woman whom they may suspect of being an immoral person, even though she be walking quietly in the streets, and molesting no one. The Cambridge

Corporation Bill, Clause 6 of which inflicts this infamous injustice upon women, was read a third time yesterday by 145 votes to 112. On Friday, the 4th inst., when the friends of justice to women moved in committee the omission of that clause, they were defeated by 242 votes to 157. The newspapers, with one or two exceptions, have given no information as to the true character of the measure, speaking of it merely as a Bill to abolish the Cambridge Spinning House, and failing to point out the baseness of this unjust treatment of the poorest and most helpless of women, in pretended defence of the morals of the privileged male sex. For it should be remembered that the House of Commons has hitherto refused to protect women in the streets against the insolent and impudent accostings of immoral men. No more cruel and wicked thing has been done by the House of Commons since it sanctioned the Contagious Diseases' (Women) Act of 1869. And this after twenty-five years of boasted progress! I refuse to believe that even the cruellest of men could have assented to this thing, but for the melancholy blindness engendered by continuous class and sex privilege.

"Every woman and every man of heart and conscience, ought to take an immediate opportunity of ascertaining the action in this matter of the Member for the constituency in which he or she resides; of questioning him upon the subject; and of expressing just indignation at this fresh outrage upon womanhood."

"So long as women remain political pariahs, so long will every personal and civil right remain at the mercy of the hostile, or even the careless vote of a Legislature which has just given the plainest possible proof of contempt for women. I appeal most earnestly to every believer in justice, man or woman, to demand the immediate extension to women of that Parliamentary Franchise, which is, in these days, the sole safeguard of every other liberty."

Friends of SHAFTS will help the paper greatly by purchasing the back numbers of SHAFTS to bind into volume form.

Demonstration in Hyde Park.

IT is significant of the growing sense of justice that the May Day Demonstration in Hyde Park—convened specially to support the Eight Hours' Movement—inserted a clause in favour of Universal Suffrage in its main resolution, which ran as follows:—

"That this meeting earnestly supports the legislative enactment of eight hours a day, or forty-eight hours a week, as the maximum amount of labour in all trades and businesses, but pledges itself to work steadily on for the collective ownership of all the instruments of producing wealth by the whole community as the only method of completely emancipating the people from the industrial slavery of to-day, and further declares in favour of universal adult suffrage as a means of peacefully realising that emancipation."

Several of the platforms followed this example, the resolutions put and carried upholding the principle of "Adult" Suffrage; several speakers laying stress upon the importance of giving the franchise to women as well as to men. The old demand for "manhood" suffrage was conspicuous by its absence. At the more distinctly Socialist platforms a special resolution in favour of a dual suffrage was also moved, which was carried unanimously. Thoughtful women are at present watching with interest the action of the Socialist party, which will not fail to secure their active sympathy if its programme is seen to include the legitimate demands of women to a FREE entry into every field of labour, every walk of life.

WOMEN'S PROGRESSIVE SOCIETY.—A social gathering will take place at the Pioneer Club, 22, Bruton Street, Bond Street, W., from five to seven p.m., on June 9th, 1894, when Mrs. Homan will speak on "The London School Board."

MEETING.—In the small Queen's Hall, Langham Place, W., on Friday, May 25th, at 8.30 p.m., when Dr. Harriet Clisby (of Boston, U.S.A.) will speak on the Boston Women's Educational and Industrial Union, with the view of forming an International Women's Club by the Federation of all existing Women's Societies in Great Britain, America, India and Australia, on the system of the Boston Women's Educational and Industrial Union. The chair will be taken at 8.30 p.m., by Mrs. H. V. Stannard (John Strange Winter). Admission free.

Pioneer Club Records.

VERY few undertakings have prospered more rapidly, or shown more signs of being the need of many souls, than this club of earnest, hard-working women.

Upon the 3rd of this month was celebrated the opening day of the Club in its new premises, being the second time it has had to enlarge its borders since its commencement in Regent Street, about two years ago. The occasion was a glad one; the Pioneers amid all their joy felt somewhat serious, as there came to them the realization of all that the Club meant, and would mean for women; while both look and voice expressed their gratitude to the true-hearted woman and earnest worker, the President and Founder of the Club. When the visitors, so heartily welcomed, had departed, the Pioneers remained to hear from the lips of the President and one or two speakers, special and interesting facts about their Club and its future prospects. The President entertained high hopes in regard to her work in the present, and did not limit the outlook of the "Club of the Future." In this the Pioneers most heartily joined. The speakers in expressing the thanks of the united Pioneers to their President (Mrs. Massingberd), did not check their enthusiasm. Very eloquent were the tongues that spake, —eloquent of deepest feeling. It was a time which became the expression of such sentiments; the President was having her well deserved innings, and every one rendered gladly the full meed of her praises, pressed down and running over. It was indeed a day not easily to be forgotten; the beautiful rooms were crowded all the afternoon, with delighted guests, with each of whom the President shook hands and exchanged some pleasant words. "And now," she said, when the evening drew to a close, "we have our work before us; let us see that we do it well." A hope and determination which found its echo in every heart there.

Upon the 10th of May took place the first debate in the new premises, the subject being, "The Woman of the Future, and most appropriate to the occasion. The debate was opened by Mrs. Haweis, the Rev. — Haweis, her husband, being in the chair.

The Chairman in introducing the opener mentioned that she had written her address on board the Ostend steamer, amid the tumbling and the tossing of the waves. It was evident from that, that Mrs. Haweis was not under the dominion of that dread leveller "mal de mer."

Mrs. Haweis deplored the supposed need of chaperones in the case of young girls travelling, and urged upon women many reforms.

In the discussion following, many took part, but Mrs. Headlam struck the nail home when she stated, that the Woman of the Future must have an independent status in the matter of money. She declared that financial independence was the only cure for women's subservient position, that, attained, the difficulty would be over. Her speech drew forth hearty approval.

Another speaker assured her hearers that the woman of the future had her congener in the Club; that in fact, the Pioneer Club was engaged in preparing her, and would have much to do with the stature to which she would rise.

A disappointment awaited the rapidly gathering Pioneers on the 17th, owing to the much regretted and unavoidable absence of the debater expected; Mr. Fisher, who was to have spoken on "The Criminal Law." The President, however, was equal to the occasion, and in a few minutes a debate was decided upon: "Are Women Clubbable?"

The President from the chair maintained that to be absolutely clubbable, people must be absolutely perfect, must be just, charitable, pleasant, unable to take offence, &c. This being a standard not yet attained by humanity, she decided that women "were not clubbable." The newspapers had compared the Pioneer Club to a public school, and she thought it had in it many of the elements of public school life, where

people with silly fads got laughed at. She looked forward to the time when women would be "clubbable;" she deprecated unreasoning dislikes, and thought in a club there ought to be a perfect freemasonry among the members; no evil should be believed of one by another until there was absolute proof of its truth. She advocated less of personality and more of devotion to the general good. To work for the Club because it was a Club with a meaning, not a mere resort for amusement, rest, or the society of one's friends. Remarks upon each other's dress savoured of silliness; dress mattered not one farthing so long as it was neat, comfortable, and adapted to the wearer's needs. We must not look too much for results—results were nothing in this world. What mattered it if they did not come for 100 years, or that we—our little finite selves—were not here to see the results?

In conclusion, the President alluded to her grand hopes for the "Club of the Future," which, perhaps they might never live to see completed. This should not prevent them helping to start the structure, great without and within, which would live after them and remain, making a new life for many. Already over £200 was banked on the future club.

Many new members have been elected since the re-opening, amongst others:—

Madame Heritte Viardot	Mrs. Gilchrist Thompson.
Mrs. Scott Stokes	Mrs. Weed Ward
Mrs. Kapteyn	Mrs. Rainier
Mrs. Wilton	Mrs. A. Gordon
Mrs. Pears	Mrs. Montefiore
Mrs. Bulkeley Johnson	Mrs. Budd-Scott
Mrs. Stannard	Mrs. Reade
Mrs. F. Turner	Mrs. Peake
Mrs. Fox Pitt	Lady Macgregor
Miss Lensmann	Miss Drummond Baily
Miss Blandy	Miss Elder
Miss Berridge	Miss Everett
Miss Roberts	Miss Stewart
Miss Gay	Miss White
Miss Adderly.	

The evening of the 20th of June will be the first social evening held at Bruton Street.

The second birthday of the Club will be commemorated on May 25th by a dramatic performance at 8.30, in which the President and following Pioneers will take part:—Mrs. Theo. Wright, Mrs. Willard, Mrs. Holroyd Chaplin, Miss Dobbie, Miss Rose Seaton.

Pioneers only will be admitted to this entertainment.

SUMMER SESSION, 1894.

Thursday Evening Lectures, Debates, Discussions, &c., 8 p.m.

- May 31st.—"That Co-operation is desirable?" Debate opened by Miss Tournier.
- June 7th.—"Corporal Punishment a mistake." Debate opened by John Strange Winter. Henniker Heaton, Esq., M.P., in the Chair.
- " 14th.—"That Artistic Dress is possible under existing circumstances." Debate opened by Henry Holiday, Esq. Miss Jackson in the Chair.
- " 21st.—"Are women competent in money matters?" Debate opened by Mrs. Headlam. The President in the Chair.
- " 28th.—"Is what Tennyson upholds in 'The Princess' Freedom for Women?" Debate opened by Mrs. Sibthorp.
- July 5th.—"That women have nothing to gain by the spread of Socialism." Debate opened by J. H. Levy, Esq.
- " 12th.—"Art?" Debate opened by Bernard Shaw, Esq. Or, "Is the Needle in its Proper Sphere?" Debate opened by Mrs. Stanton Blatch.
- " 19th.—"Is Spiritualism worth investigating?"

We trust our readers will follow with interest and intelligence the doings of the Club. Much may be learnt therefrom. Its influence upon the position of women is already making itself felt, and will increase in power.

Some Practical Issues in Evolution.

By JANE HUME CLAPPERTON.

I PRESUME I may take it for granted that in a sense we are all evolutionists. We believe that organic life has developed—by a process of integration and differentiation—from simple to complex forms in obedience to Natural Law. We also believe that this order of Nature is not confined to the sphere of man's observations with eye or microscope. The innumerable stars, or planetary systems revealed by the telescope are manifestly correlated, also in obedience to Natural Law and everywhere the order of existence is one of ceaseless change—of inherent definite movement towards an inevitable goal.

Within the structure, as it were, of this Universal Evolution there are minor movements, the ebbs and flows of general life. Appearance and disappearance, birth and death, continually go on, not of beings only but of empires, nations, races, civilisations, continents, worlds, solar systems; yet these movements are subsidiary to the one great onward march. They are no contradiction to the Law of Evolution; they are enfolded in the embrace of that Law, and ultimately will prove to have played an unconscious part in the massive advance of triumphant progress. Nothing is ever still and stationary, from the minutest atoms vibrating within infinitesimally small molecules, up to the huge planets circling with unerring precision round central suns. Movement is everywhere, and if our minds are in harmony with this aspect of Nature—borne in upon us by modern science—we shall calmly anticipate change in every department of life, and only seek that our own individual life, however feeble, may send forth a little tributary stream into the *main* current of upward and onward Evolution.

In talking of politics I once heard an old lady say: "I hardly know what I am; I was brought up a Liberal, and I suppose I'm a Liberal; but oh! I want nothing changed!" That attitude of mind is pre-scientific—excusable perhaps in the aged—but we, if we are penetrated by the scientific spirit of the times, will *not* want nothing changed.

We shall want, however, that every change great or small may directly contribute to the mighty impulse of upheaval—an impulse destined to raise us out of the mud of degradation and misery and plant us on heights where the light of true knowledge shall be ours in the vital air of purity and peace.

Our collective life, with its institutions, habits and customs, is not to-day what it was a century ago, or even a few years ago. The character of change is stamped on society as upon everything else; and scientific investigation enables us to interpret some of the features of that change and note the stages of Evolution, from tribal life to feudal life, and again from feudal life to national life. Also the establishment of the great wool industry which lies at the root of British prosperity; the uprise of towns and the creation of industrial guilds. In political changes, the downfall of monarchical despotism and substitution of what is called Constitutional Government, *i.e.*, the rule of the country passing into the hands of the upper and a section of the middle or mercantile class; the discovery of steam-force and consequent application of machinery to production, upon that basis the uprearing of an industrial system of firm cohesion and tremendous power in two divergent directions, *viz.*, first, in the creation of national wealth and national ability to produce and barter for an unprecedented amount of the material necessities of existence; second, in the action of crushing down, and all but destroying the immaterial part, or finer qualities, of human nature in a large section of the community.

Wage slavery is no false or misleading term. It truthfully describes the position of workers to-day. They are—I mean the mass of them—literally slaves in the grip of a system

that grinds them to death with monotonous toil, and with wearing anxiety lest work should fail them. Callousness is naturally their predominant refuge. They must either lose self-consciousness in fits of drunken debauch, or grow hard and indifferent by ceasing to look ahead. Otherwise there is no escape from suffering. The unsatisfactoriness of this dull, uniform toil, the uncertainty regarding their own future and that of their children, their helplessness in face of forces able at any time to thrust them out of work into pauperism, combine to create periodic depression and often despair. I repeat, the wage-workers of to-day are rendered—by the outward conditions of their life—either brutishly callous or intensely suffering. Moreover, the suffering proceeds from the best side of human nature, their tenderest and noblest emotions. I make this assertion deliberately, for I have come into contact (in a small degree) with the revolt of labour against capitalism, and it is patent to me, that the *essence* of that revolt is nothing ignoble. It is not *primarily* from selfishness, or class hatred, that the movement has arisen, but from sympathy. A genuine brotherly-love for those of his own order stirs in the bosom of Issachar, and it is *that* feeling which, allied with hope, is daily creating more and more of the courage of revolt.

But, it may be said, wages rise and fall. There is movement here as everywhere else. Why do the workers not save when wages are high and so lift themselves out of slavery into freedom? I will answer that "why?" presently. Meantime—I do not deny that the working classes are thriftless, *i.e.*, they have no money-saving propensities. There are many exceptions of course, but general thriftlessness is the rule. I have two things, however, to say concerning this matter. First, the money-saving propensity in itself—apart from consequences—is not an admirable quality of human nature. It neither adorns individual character nor helps to shape character in conformity with progressive evolution. Second, although the money-saving propensity may still help individuals to prosperity, its consequences are no longer favourable to the community, and they are no cure whatever for general poverty. If saving up money in short were everywhere practised, things would not be better with us, they would be worse! We all know the difficulties now of investing money securely. There is a superabundance of capital seeking investment, and evil consequences flow from this fact in the shape of wars against savages, wars that are almost if not entirely due to eagerness in trade enterprise, *i.e.*, turning capital into channels that will make large profits.

The fact is, money-saving is a virtue belonging to the age that immediately precedes the present age. Its consequences are with us to-day in many cases fatally! Think of innumerable widows and maiden ladies of the middle class accustomed to luxury in youth and taught no industry or profession because their parents could leave them their savings in the shape of property, and believed they would live always in comfort on the income that property yielded. Banks fail, Liberator and other companies break up, interest falls, and will continue to fall. Hundreds, nay thousands, of these ladies are compelled to squeeze in somehow to the labour field and take what pay they can get. Their parents' forecast was a perfect delusion, and as one of them said to me the other day: "If a woman has to work for her bread at any period of her life, no greater misfortune could have befallen her than to be born and bred a lady." In face of this experience, is it possible for us to delude ourselves with the idea that money-saving will cure general poverty? Yet, if this denial of the gospel of thrift is new to you it is certain to be a blow. I remember how pleasant it was to my mind thirty years ago when the study of J. S. Mill's *Political Economy* led me to think that by strict economy and the wise management of my small income so as to save a trifle each year, I could feed two dogs with one bone, *i.e.*, I could pro-

mote my own interests, and at the same time help the poor by increasing the wage-fund of the country. Ah! that wage-fund theory was a blessed relief; for, in acting as a district visitor and a scout for the United Industrial Ragged School—I mean beating up truant children in their homes—I had already come to see that ordinary charity could be no cure for the poverty and degradation of our slums, and my heart was perhaps more tender than now. We can none of us escape the hardening process brought about by living in the midst of a miserable population we are powerless to save.

But the wage-fund doctrine was a fallacy as well as its corollary—the Gospel of Thrift. The early economists studied the questions of wealth-production and wealth-distribution apart from the question of general well-being. In noting the forces favourable to wealth-production in these our times—and among those the tendency to accumulate capital was one—they expected the same action to bring about the same results in the future. *That* was their mistake, and it arose from ignorance of Evolution and the law of periodic change as necessary to healthful existence. With increase of wealth and increase of population, fundamental or structural change in society becomes necessary for general welfare, otherwise movement is towards decay and death, not happy life. The up-to-date political economists of to-day see clearly that sermons on general thrift, books like old Dr. Smiles' *Self-help*, and such like, are as useless for real social reform as haphazard benevolence. If all the thriftless people who fall asleep to-night were to awake thrifty to-morrow morning and set about pinching and scraping together, saving and gradually investing or depositing in banks and companies, this is what would happen—expenditure would be checked and the market for commodities would shrink. A glut would take place until production became less; but that means workers would be thrown out of work. Meantime the increase of capital would create a fall in interest on money lent, and the increase of unemployed men and women seeking work would create a fall in wages, or if the wages were kept up by trade unionism capital would be removed to foreign countries. There is no escape from this vicious circle. The lesson is an unmistakable one. We must cease altogether to think of general thrift as any gospel of salvation for the poor; we must earnestly seek for effectual remedies in other and totally different directions.

Nevertheless I must answer the question "Why are the masses so thriftless?" I confess that I am an Evolutionist even to this extent. I believe that what we are accustomed to call the blind forces of Nature have been acting on the masses for the last half century in such a way as to prepare and mould them unconsciously for a coming change in the structure of society. It is because thrift can be no further benefit to the general life of the present or the future that no development of the money-saving propensity among the masses has taken place. Further, there is one aspect of thriftlessness that really spells generosity! Charity of the rich to the poor is as nothing compared to the charity of the poor to the poor. One of my friends who has lived fifty years in an English factory town, and been a constant dispenser of the charitable bequests that have pauperised and degraded many operatives there, has often expressed to me her feeling of astonishment at the ineffable goodness they show one another. They may impose on the rich, and they are very untruthful; but for kindly help to neighbours in sickness or in straits, no race or class can beat them. Then the patience of suffering motherhood and the gentle ways with children is another marvel, and my friend assures me that forty years ago rough brutality characterized that population. To her it has seemed that the close packing in brick houses, whose walls are like mere cardboard partitions, and secure no privacy from neighbours, develops the gentle,

social side of humanity. At all events a change in character has been rapidly going forward, and hard selfishness among the poor is exceptional, never the rule.

But thriftlessness on its bad side is visible enough too, and why, you still ask, are the poor so wasteful, so recklessly extravagant? When they have money it is thrown away on drink, tobacco, gambling by men, on adulterated foods and household rubbish by women, on tawdry finery by girls, and among miners, at least, one hears of champagne occasionally, and at Christmas the most expensive of turkeys. Well, there are two distinct causes for this aspect of thriftlessness. The first is the power of suggestion. It is only now when hypnotism has shown us how a person may be compelled to think, act and feel, according to suggestions made to his mind by another person, that we begin to appreciate the subtle bonds that unite us mentally, and to see how it is that suggestion works.

In analysing my own consciousness I find that my spontaneous actions are not prompted by an independent judgment, but by suggestion from the life around me; and when I consider the masses I see similar phenomena. Lavish expenditure, a life of frivolity, pleasure, glitter and glow encircles them. It is not *their* life, it is the life of the upper classes, but it holds them as under a spell. In all towns with many slums there is also a West-end—gay shops for the gentry, gay carriages, gay men, gaily-dressed ladies, and theatre, music hall, and ball room entrances at which to stand and gaze into as fairy peep-shows. Suggestion here plays its enthralling part; imagination is led captive, and our wage-slaves become mentally slaves to this magic ring. True, they cannot purchase velvet or silken garments or gold, but at least they can catch on to the glitter. Spangles and frippery are within their reach, and what matters genuineness to a public that knows not the false from the real? Of late years much has been said and written about the unconscious solidarity of all communities. People in the West-end cannot escape disease engendered by the vilely unwholesome conditions of life at the East-end. Poison germs are wafted from hither to thither, and on the physical plane the unity of class with class is fatally felt or distinctly recognized. But unity or continuity on the mental side is equally a fact; and ever since the application of steam powers to production about the beginning of this century, the life of the *Bourgeoisie* and *Nouveau Riche* has corrupted and vulgarised the masses. They have preached thrift to those beneath them, I grant that; but exhortation is powerless, and that by a natural law, as compared with example and with mental suggestion.

The guilt of the classes in this matter is appalling. Wealth was increasing by leaps and bounds, new industries were springing up everywhere, expansion was the order of the day, and vast opportunities opened up for placing society as a whole on a firm footing and securing general well-being. What happened? Did Free Education get established at once because national wealth was—not at an ebb, but at a powerful flow? Were innocent recreations organized to relieve the monotony of toil? Were the treasures of art and science put freely at the service of the people to elevate taste and enlighten the public? Did wages rise step by step with the rise of the profits from combined action of labour and capital? No, none of these things happened.

On the contrary, the toil of the workers was intensified, and their children, even infants of three, four, and five years of age were sucked into the labour vortex! Wages stood nearly still, while poverty and population grew apace.

The whole stream of newly created wealth was directed into the pockets and coffers of employers of labour, and money lenders or capitalists. The selfish greed of those men increased in proportion to its exercise and indulgence.

They emulated the aristocracy, built fine houses, and embarked on a career of ostentatious pomp and show. They reared their children in idleness, and for daughters especially,

deprived life of its natural dignity. Surely the birthright of every woman is to be properly trained to social usefulness, but *Bourgeoisie* women were for a long period simply parasites, living on the labours of others, and puppets upon which to display the wealth of husbands and fathers! We have been accustomed to boast of the shrewdness, the ability, the individual enterprise of our great middle class; but the direction these forces have taken has too often been the undoing of the classes below them. Shoddy clothing, adulterated food, magnificently alluring public-houses and drink-shops—these all witness to clever commercial enterprise, but they also explain the foolish expenditure of workers. This brings us to the second cause of general thriftlessness.

It was partly in consequence of the mistake of those early political economists that, as poverty grew greater, strenuous efforts were made by the middle class to instil habits of thrift. Trade enterprise joined hands with benevolence, and numerous penny clubs, benefit societies, provident societies, and so forth, were instituted to conduce to the saving and accumulating of small sums of money. In England especially, however, bankruptcy of these institutions was common, and instead of promoting the habit of thrift, the effect in innumerable cases has been quite the other way. I know that the view taken by common-sense people among wage-workers is: Better spend freely when you have the money, than jeopardise it in companies whose financial soundness you have no means of testing.

Then charity has steadily undermined thrift. A prudent man saves, but he exhausts his savings when thrown out of work. His thriftless neighbour, also out of work, is supported by charity. At the end of the pinch both are alike destitute, compelled to make a fresh start in life. What has the prudent man gained over the other? "He has preserved his self-respect" you say? Well, that depends upon his mental environment, and in the present day, when it is universally recognized that society ought not and cannot let a man starve who is willing to work, the taking of help at a pinch is not felt to be any disgrace. I think I have proved that the main causes of thriftlessness among the masses lie with the classes, that these have created thriftlessness in those, first, by suggestion or a fatal reflection from their own life, and second, by direct action, which although well-meant, has been disastrous in results.

(To be continued.)

Failures or Successes?

THE world is at present so intently looking out for the Coming Woman that it seems not to know that her congener is with us and has been with us for some time. The veiled figure in the distance will only prove to be a more perfect embodiment of the unveiled figure now under our eyes. It is the latter who is making possible the arrival of the former; the voice crying in the wilderness which heralds the coming of all great potentialities. Where are these voices? Everywhere; to those who have ears to hear. Wherever women are freely working out their own and the world's salvation, there we have types of the coming womanhood of our race.

As at present, in the unawakened condition of masculine feeling, only those married women are free to work for the commonweal whose husbands are as high souled as themselves, their numbers are necessarily small.

Many women who have lost their husbands are giving to society a valuable impulse born of experience gained either in happy or in unhappy married life. But their number being comparatively small as compared to the number of unmarried women, it is to the latter we look for numerous examples of

what we expect the woman of the next century will be. And when we look, what special characteristics do we find? Their being unmarried suggests an idealism which prefers to appear singular and to take a lesser share in material well-being, rather than stifle what they consider the voice of the highest within them. They are entirely free and therefore able to follow their natural bent. What that is, the sorrowing, the sick, and those who are ready to perish best know. They face life in a two-fold attitude; alone and responsible as men face it, and with more than the average complement of womanly feeling. They face it as women. Their idealism joined to their freedom, and both joined to the sympathy which has been increased by their double out-look at life, gives them an unique position in the world. They can act like men and feel like women, a heroic combination making for the good of all around them. Love of work, which characterises all active minds, not bound by the will of another, is a necessity to them, and the chart they draw out for their own guidance is worthy of them. A certain sincerity of mind is also inseparable from women who have never condescended to the little arts and artifices that are so successful in the marriage market. Had all women been so true, that repellent term "marriage market" would not disfigure our language, nor would the use of some of our dearest words, such as "mother," "old woman," "grandmother," be thought most appropriate when inanity or imbecility are to be implied, or old age to be insulted. Such use of words brings out more clearly than aught else, the fact that the respect we have all shown to the affectionate side of our mothers' natures has only been equalled by the contempt we have felt for their undeveloped mental powers. The coming woman will know nothing of this; she will begin her career with equal chances; she will be free and worthy of respect all the way round.

Do we wish to know what is the sum total of good being done by the unfettered ones at the present time? Let us look around. We see many who have wealth and leisure setting themselves heart and soul to destroy those three enemies of the race—drink, cruelty, and impurity. How far such women have helped us we may know, if we consider that such work, not so very long ago, was considered unbecoming to the more moral half of the race, whilst to faint at the sight of a mouse was *comme il faut*.

In the ranks of those who work for a wage what unselfish use is made of the hardly-earned money. It was lately said by one who has had a long acquaintance with working women, that she scarcely knew an instance where a worker did not maintain or assist one or more members of her family. This sometimes means the maintenance of a whole family of orphaned nephews and nieces. Aged parents are in thousands of instances entirely maintained by a daughter's work. And this, be it noted, not out of wages equal to work done, but out of wages earned with the depressing consciousness of a worker defrauded of her earnings for the mere fault of being a woman. Generally too, in the ranks of the very poor, their money is gained by excessive manual labour in competition with man's at present greater physical strength, not in lighter employments, where her quick wits would do better than his. By what amount the Poor Rates of the parishes are thus lessened no one seems to enquire, but doubtless these "failures," as certain feather-brains term them, add greatly to the successes of the rest of the community.

Contemplate for a moment the large class of unpaid workers, so varied in their usefulness as only to admit of being labelled by an inclusive name, that of burden-bearers. The reward these seek is not material; they invest their love and labour in those who, so far as human eye can see, will never repay. They seem unconscious of the great moral effect their example must have upon others. Of their economic value and their moral uses they seem to know nothing. Yet

it is very great, and these are the members of the community who are not "strong enough" to be allowed to vote! See the young man of the period with his slang, his cigar, and his enfeebled physique; he has by virtue of his *manhood* a voice in making the laws which govern these *weak women*. The times are out of joint. There is "something very rotten in the State of" *England!* What grudge can the world have against such useful fellow-creatures that it denies them so much? No portion of humanity is perfect: perfection is not claimed for these; but the world is railing at a shadow of its own cruel face when it points out spots here. Ibsen says the strongest man is he who can stand alone. What must be said of the woman who does so? And how many there are. The world in its heart of hearts admires the solitary man, but it has only sneers and gibes for the solitary woman. Of course, though persecuted now, she will be worshipped as the coming woman; this has been the way of the world in all ages, but it does not make the path of the pioneer easy, and all have not the seer's eye to perceive that their efforts will make peace and strength for their successors.

It may be said of the pioneer woman that by remaining single she does not transmit her superior qualities to posterity. This is much to be regretted, for though an increased population is not desirable, an improved people is. A keen-sighted member of the House of Commons recently informed his colleagues that as things are at present wisdom resides with the women who refrain from marriage, and he bade them believe that whatever disabilities prevented the best and the ablest women becoming mothers was a national disadvantage. As the remedy lies with the legislature, it is to be hoped these words were not spoken in vain.

On reviewing the whole matter, one comes to understand the feelings of Francis Galton, when he tells us that his blood boils as he thinks of our forefathers who, by enjoining celibacy on the gentle and refined natures, and by persecuting the intellectual, the brave, and truth-loving, left the rudest portion of the community to carry on the race.

Legal, social, and other disadvantages are fast making marriage distasteful to women of the highest type. With a black past behind us and a great possible future before, can we not take steps to prevent our country becoming the hugest of failures?

J. M. DAVIES.

As We Pass Along.

THE OMNIBUS AND MR. THOMAS SHAMWELL'S BARGAIN.

BY DIOGENA STUBBS.

I AM a lineal descendant of that dear old frump Diogenes. Perhaps I am also allied in some way to his tub, for we know nothing absolutely certain of matter, its transmutations and modifications. The modern family have modified the "tub" by the prefix and affix of "S", and so we call ourselves "Stubbs." Not elegant! no, but practical, and I, Diogenes Stubbs, am eminently practical, as you, my readers, will acknowledge when you know me better. I refrain from saying *dear* readers because I don't feel that way, and I won't say what I don't feel.

I have strange notions, my friends tell me. When I am not present, I know they call me an "eccentric, fussy old woman." According to my dictionary, "eccentric" means, that I do not like the conditions of things; "fussy" means, that I won't put up with them; "woman" means—well, I expect you to understand that, when I am done with my articles. "Old" I deny in "to-to." I have looked at the word all round, up and down, all my life. I confess I have arrived at no solution as to the meaning of it, that is in

harmony with public opinion. In spite of the surprised stares of my friends, who only judge from the outside, I declare that I am young; that my Ego—the thing that is I—is young evermore; young with the life that counts not age, young with the life that, burning strong and bright, has had no beginning and will have no end, young also with ever eager, vigorous, immortal youth; yet I am over seventy as they count years, but what are years? Wherein I differ from these half-awakened ones,—who, with what Carlyle calls "the insolence of youth," have so complacently dubbed me "old woman" with *their* meaning attached—is, that I have gained the experience and wisdom which the years bring. Understand then, please, that I am, always have been, and ever will be, young in the sense which the world attaches to the term; that is, I am strong, hopeful, undaunted, with my life before me. I assure you,

"The sun lies bright on the forward track."

Still, while materialising I have hindrances. I am lame, I am poor; my outer garment is wearing thin. For the first malady, I take the omnibus instead of walking as I should like to do; for the second, I have taken a position as writer on the staff of several different papers; for the third, I must e'en wait until my new garment be ready, when, donning it, I shall again be young in appearance as well as in reality.

This morning the weather is bright and bracing. It is early in May, yet the omnibus is crowded inside and out. Why don't these strong men walk? I ask myself. They seem unable to bear the fresh air, and grumble at my opening the little window in front, while I look at them lost in wonder. How I envy them their legs and their warm clothing. Well, perhaps even yet, I do not know half the feebleness of male humanity. A gentleman enters, with whom I am on omnibus speaking terms; he seats himself opposite and eyes me with apparent commiseration, placed as I am between two men of porpoise-like dimensions, exhaling tobacco from every pore, and every article of clothing.

But, as I have said, I may not fully understand the weaknesses of men, so I check myself in wondering why what so irritates my feminine nostrils and lungs, should be apparently such a delightful aroma to their's. Let me be thoughtful! tender, considerate, forbearing, that is the ought-to-be-attitude of the subjugated to the dominant, is it not? Yes, tender, kind, even when they spit upon the floor as they are doing now, and open their mouths so wide to yawn, that you wonder if it is the *truth about women* just dawning upon a benighted world, that they are trying to swallow. One young man is seated almost opposite, with a blond head, waxed moustache, and an inane expressionless face, from the lips of which, hangs inert and limp, the pipe he had been smoking before he entered. He and his pipe resemble each other in appearance; they smell like each other, disagreeably. Presently he removes his pipe and honours me with his exclusive attention; staring me in the face, with the same blank unmeaning stare he must have used when a baby in his mother's arms, only perhaps now with a trifle less intelligence. Someone having moved out, he comes opposite me, and I receive his odoriferous breath in acute doses, as he whistles straight into my face and stares, apparently under the impression that I have come into the omnibus for his special delectation. I have not, however, done all my journeys into town by omnibus for so many years for nothing. I have some cures for rudeness stored up. I bring one of them to bear upon him. Fixing my eyes upon him with an expression of contemptuous amusement, I begin to whistle also. I can whistle and I can stare if needs be, so I stare him now quite out of countenance, though it is some time before he has the grace to turn away. I think he will not easily forget how I laugh, how several others laugh, as he passes out. If he does not understand its meaning he may ask his mother when he gets home, she will enlighten him. If he has a wife, but, Heaven forbid!

He has a rocky road to travel, before he will be worthy of a wife. Who is?

It is a long drive for me each day, and a weary one. I breathe tobacco, I smell tobacco, I taste tobacco as it comes from the lungs, the skin and the clothing of "these others" who call themselves our protectors, yet I smile amusedly this morning as I mentally run this rhyme to the occasion:—

Observe our male protectorate,
Self-constituted stand,
They smoke, take snuff, expectorate,
Over all the pleasant land.

My omnibus friend leans forward and asks what I am smiling at, with so much zest. I look up at him innocently and reply "Tobacco."

"Tobacco?" he queries, puzzled.

"Yes; I was just thinking how few men, and even how few women, ever think what a friend to the women's cause tobacco is. How it helps them to fight their battle," I go on, answering the puzzled look in his eyes.

"How?" he enquires.

"Why, by demoralising the enemy," I reply, laughing at his face.

Then the omnibus gets on to the stones and I do not attempt to speak. I keep wondering if the other planets revolving in space can tell this one by its smell, as it rushes by. Surely it must stink the stars out of countenance.

I am disturbed in these planetary reflections by the sight of a gentleman, Mr. Thomas Shamwell, who does me the honour of calling me his friend. He is crossing the street, sweetly unconscious that my quizzical, disapproving eye is upon him. Mr. Thomas Shamwell some years ago made a capital bargain—even a man so shrewd in self-interest as he might well be proud of the bargain he made. I suppose he is, for he trades upon it yet. This was how it came about. He wanted a great many things; he wanted a place, a home, as he was pleased to call it, which he could enter at any hour he pleased; where he could throw his things about just anywhere, without fear of the landlady, where he could be out of temper whenever he pleased, and have someone to vent that temper upon; where he was to be absolute lord and master of everything animate, and inanimate, within the home, and of the home itself. He wanted something to gratify that physical passion grown in men to a morbid disease; and supposed in its constant demands to be within its rights when insisting on the sacrifice of one sex to the selfish desire of the other; preached as so by all male preachers, and consequently requiring its victim. He wanted a cook, a kitchenmaid, a parlour maid, a housekeeper, a bootblack, a shirt ironer, a washerwoman. He wanted a nurse for himself in sickness, and for those little ones to be brought into the world according to his decree; through weary months and years of suffrage endured by some other being, not himself, yet whom he would claim as his. He wanted a being who was so to create his children, to nurse his children, to toil for and love his children, to sit at his table, to make his house look a credit to him. Someone to bear with him in sickness, to amuse him in health, to cheer away all his troubles. So great a knave is man, and so great a fool is woman, that he obtained all these things in one person—his wife. Mr. Thomas Shamwell did not put the case as I have put it here, either to himself or to the young woman. What he said to the young woman was all a lie, though it sounded so sweet. He did not think it a lie, he thought it beautiful and true. He thought himself very magnanimous indeed in proposing to take this young woman from her parents' home—where she was supporting herself very comfortably and independently—and to make her all these things to himself. She should "be a drudge no longer," he told her, she should "be his wife." How grand it sounded! What visions she had, as she looked up into his face and believed every word! Now, she is the

mother of eleven children, and though she is but forty years of age, she has lost all her youth, her cheerful, winsome ways, her mental stature, which was so promising, her possibilities, all the might-have-been of her life. Body and soul she has been crushed under the burden of the juggernaut wheels of "conjugal rights," the body and soul destroying curse of constantly enforced maternity. Pitiful indeed is the look upon her face and in her eyes, but her husband does not see it, has not seen it. If he had, would it have occurred to him that self-restraint on his part was a duty, the neglect of which was a sin? No, for "man must be gratified in his desires"; "the Bible says so," he will tell you: "woman was made to suffer" is one of its precepts. Mr. Thomas Shamwell, who pays little attention to any of the other precepts in such pages, is well up in all that seems to inculcate woman's subjection to man. He is not "a bad man," as the world counts it; he does not go out into the streets, but by what name does he name himself, and his wife, and the life they live at home? So the man is a knave and the woman a fool, and both shut out from their lives the happiness and grandeur with which they might be filled. Mrs. Shamwell is dying; let us look into the future; we may do so safely. She will leave her children motherless, all untrained as they are, yet she would have made so good a mother. She was well fitted for the noble and important task of training the young for their life work; but she has been over-weighted. When she is dead her husband will have been her murderer. But no one will look upon him as such; he is still strong, hale, and hearty, he will marry again and go on his ruinous course, for the world is full of fools, and men are worse than mad.

So, sadly musing, I have reached my journey's end. You shall hear from me again, however. I have a rod in pickle for many evil doers, and I do not mean to spare.

Reviews.

"LYDIA." By Sidney Christian. (Sampson Low, Marston and Co.)

There appeared, very quietly, last season, a short story in one volume by Sidney Christian. *Lydia* is the title of the book, and Lydia is the main figure; pure, strong and suffering, it is she of whom you think first whenever the book recurs to your mind. Then, one by one, the other characters arise, and all the crevices are filled. First, Gertrude, the unconsciously selfish wife, who is part cause of all the sorrow in the book. Next, her husband—pure and loveable, but not blameless; one with his wife in this only, that he shares with her the guilt of bringing woe on the head of Lydia. An innocent sufferer is she, strong enough in her innocence to retain her hold on the man she at once loves and renounces; strong enough to win affection from his wayward and loveless wife, to hold in the grasp of her own warm heart, that heart which has never loved, to breathe into the woman the vital breath of her own love, and to seize from death her soul, while watching her fevered body droop and die. Brave, strong Lydia! Are there many women like her? I do not know. Womanhood is dear to me, and dear the thought of woman's strength and purity. So that I would gladly change into knowledge my belief that many, many, are the women, in this present day world, who can meet as Lydia did, the living agony of temptation, and like her hold duty higher than wrongful joy. Is it final loss to do this? Nay, I think not. To all it is indeed not given that the hour of trial shall be so short as Lydia's—but fifteen months did she need to sorrow, while the grief of many lasts for as many years, and more. But long or short, the victory can be gained, and those who have suffered, and striven and conquered, know of a surety that the peace of well-doing surpasses, beyond the compre-

hension of the thoughtless, the joy of yielding to temptation.

I am hoping that many readers of *SHAFTS* will see *Lydia*, that they may judge for themselves, whether I have spoken too highly of the aims of the writer. For this reason also, I hope that before long the book will appear in less expensive form, so as to be within the compass of the slenderly-filled purse. For authors do not put before us so many examples of temptation withstood, that we need leave unread the few there are.

I see that another book by the same author is about to appear called, *Sarah; A Survival*, and that a competent critic says of it, "I am very glad to be able to recommend this story in the warmest terms. It is a highly finished piece of work of an uncommon and elevated kind. Without being remarkably ingenious or complicated, the plot is striking in its completeness, and the slight skilful touches of its construction; but it is on the admirable character-drawing that I am particularly pleased to dwell. . . . There is no eccentricity, no exaggeration in any of the persons portrayed, but strong individuality in each."

PROFESSOR PEARSON ON WOMEN AND LABOUR.

To the readers of *SHAFTS*, a paper for women and the working classes, Professor Pearson's article in the *May Fortnightly Review* should be especially interesting. Every-one who is able ought to read it for themselves, as it is impossible to give much account of it in a small space. But putting criticism apart for the moment, we are glad to state shortly some of its leading ideas—even if we do not accept them all—being convinced that neither *women* nor *labour* could have a more sympathetic exponent, nor one who seizes more fully the significance of their present unrest.

We may perhaps, however, remark by way of preface, that we do not think Mr. Pearson does full justice to the pioneers of the woman movement. These may no doubt have been (and still are) exceptional women, and it may not be for such as they, that the legislation of the future will be needed. But all this acknowledged, it seems more than probable that they have helped their sisters to an earlier and more complete realisation of women's powers and potentialities than would have been possible without them.

The gain of "equality of opportunity" with man has only been effected after much fighting, and by this fight for individual development and the successes gained, surely all womankind must have been both encouraged and helped onwards.

Mr. Pearson endeavours to show us at the outset from history, how women and labour have always been related, the position of both varying with the nature of ownership. And how now, the connection between them being still continued, both are "seeking to throw off the slavery arising from economic dependence," though both still fail to recognise their "special social functions" and "the natural importance of their peculiar activities."

"The too great emphasis laid on the relationship to an individual has sadly obscured the social value of the work done" by both women and labour—"what wonder if in their common revolt they have occasionally over-estimated the claims of individuality and forgotten the real importance of their social activities."

It is for the good of society as a whole, not merely for the happiness of the individual, that we are all to work. So while women have been hitherto chiefly out-and-out individualists, seeking merely equality of opportunity with men, labour has been wiser, and has already recognised the need of legal and state protection as a means to development, a need which it is still hard for women to believe in. We are glad to notice that Mr. Pearson admits this must be so until they obtain through the franchise a voice in government.

They have yet also to recognise fully as well as labour, the necessity of organisation for special objects.

For to escape the tyranny of the individual, women as well as labour must be state protected, especially the mothers of the race, no longer contenting themselves either with the "idle dogma that the status of woman is an eternal necessity of her nature, and not a factor varying with each phase of civilization." For "assuredly we must admit that the old is passing irrevocably away, and that the woman of the future will have aspirations, and what is more, a power in the State to realise them, which was hardly dreamt of by her warmest champions a decade ago." The woman of the future then will not be content with equality of opportunity. This may certainly be all that women, not mothers, may desire—but for mothers, the women who will and should always be in the majority, something more is wanted—"she will demand such conditions for her labour as shall practically handicap the competition of the unmarried with the married woman, and of man with woman. . . . The justification for . . . this will be based upon the recognition that woman's child-bearing activity is essentially part of her contribution to social needs; that it ought to be acknowledged as such by the State; that society at large ought to insist exactly as in the case of labour, that the conditions under which it is undertaken shall be as favourable as possible, and that it shall be treated as part of woman's work for society at large."

Such, roughly stated, are some at least of the problems we are asked in this remarkable article to consider, and whether we like them or not, they are evidently worth consideration. And it is satisfactory to learn from a student, what many of us are keenly conscious of, "that for the first time in the history of civilisation there is arising . . . a strong feeling among women, of the solidarity of their sex . . . a strong desire to organise themselves for the protection of their common interests and a growing possibility of an independent woman's party which may ultimately become a decisive factor in social evolution." Meanwhile, let them learn the use of discipline and organisation, and to realise their powers; possibly avoiding some mistakes of the labour party, exactly because their pioneers were, and in great measure are still, drawn from the educated classes.

It is a curious coincidence that this article should have been published at the beginning of a fortnight of women's meetings—political, temperance, etc.—remarkable signs of the times. By means of such associations as these they train themselves, and through intimate contact of social classes attain that unity which each earnest worker already knows is essential to the advance of their common cause. The goal to which we look is the attainment for women, and with them for the whole of humanity (hitherto lop-sided) of the highest good, *i.e.*, the equal opportunity for each and all of us to be what we desire to be, and what we are fitted for, to place ourselves in the position from which we can see most clearly the work to be done, and the place in such work best suited to our aspirations and capabilities.

"The Religion of a Literary Man."

BY RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

TO ears grown weary of the sounding boasts of the nineteenth century, and its clamorous insistence on the possession of "new-born truth," a book that takes its stand on the simple and timeless verities of human life, is as an oasis in the desert. One takes up a volume, hearing such a title as the above, with a yawning expectation of some fatiguing novelty, and instead, one finds oneself carried back to the youth of the world. The restfulness imparted by Le

Gallienne's point of view is greatly due to the fact, that the love of a new sensation is no longer confused with the love of truth, but is throughout marked clearly off, and cast aside. As for the German commentators and Biblical research, he will none of them: the religion which he preaches in the name of philosophy and science is not new but old. With him, we need go no further than to nature for the truth of those religious dogmas, which at one time are exalted as divine, and at another are damned as less than human: they are of nature, natural; and as they have not been born with the birth of superstition, neither can they, or at least their essence, die with its death. The doctrine of conversion, the divine symbol of the mother and child, the spirit of prayer—these things are not the discoveries of priests, nor do the believers in creeds enjoy a monopoly of them. "What indeed is religion, but a synthesis of the natural sacraments?" says Le Gallienne. "Everything moved by the breath of life is sacred and symbolic."

As religion is not subject to the priest, neither is life to the scientist. We have been so busy dispelling illusions, that the question, What remains to live for? is beginning to undermine the moral strength. To this Le Gallienne is not afraid to reply, "Life is a reality, governed by illusions." Certain of his conclusions closely correspond with those of Schopenhauer, whom, nevertheless, he strangely calls "a small philosopher." Only the "how" and the "why" of things can be investigated by science: it can never touch the "what." The moment of creation for ever escapes the analyst.

So also with questions of conduct. Bigamy is right in one country, and wrong in another, "and morals," we are told, "are matters of geography." Just so: but this does not affect the matter. For true righteousness is to live according to our higher nature, "that spark of God which we feel ever brightening within us."

Perhaps one of the most striking assertions in the book (the expression of a truth hovering in the thoughts of many) is that certain of these so-called "religious" questions *do not matter*. "Suppose we have no free-will," says Le Gallienne, "what then? Is it so great a loss?" Face this phantom and he will flee from us. So many of our difficulties have their *raison d'être* entirely in that primitive egotism, which makes man the measure of the universe." In spite of Copernicus, "we still practically believe that the whole of the firmament is an immense candelabra for lighting this bit of an earth."

"When we no longer stand in the centre of things, but humbly take our place in that vast circumference, whose unknown centre is God, we shall see with different eyes. Then maybe we shall realise the deep meaning of the 'superstitious' old text, and count it enough explanation of the life of man to say that it exists 'to the praise and glory of God'—to the working out of His indefinable purposes; that we are the servants of His household, the soldiers of His army, and that the pay is life!"

Again, is the soul immortal? Without recounting the well-worn arguments on either side, the writer only insists, that whichever theory be true, it *does not much matter*. Do we really care for immortality? Personality is perhaps less precious to us than we imagine. Life somewhere in some continuation of qualities and forces is assured us. "What matter if we live again in our present individuality or a new one? After the dip in Lethe, we shall not know the difference."

A small point, but a characteristic one, is that he would retain the expression "God." The Great Unknown, and other abstract phrases are "cold and clumsy circumlocutions," which, while they deprive the conception of its most essential quality—its awful and mysterious majesty—desire in vain to escape anthropomorphism; for once put a capital

to a word, and personification is not far away. The one English word for the idea of a Supreme Being must ever be simply—God.

Simple and serious as the book is, it abounds in *bons mots* and remarkable instances of word-painting; as, for instance, the passage referring to those who in the midst of a world of wonders ask for "a sign," and the interpretation of the words "I have seen the Father," which could come only from a poet's pen.

The writer has his fling at the false prophets of religion, falsely so-called. Christianity, being a form of idealism, could not but become degraded in the hands of its exponents. "A throng of idealists is an impossibility." "Catholicism is simply average humanity in a surplice," and this is the secret of its hold upon the world. Curious is the logic of cause and effect "which, from a pure teaching of the spirit, a sweeping crusade against dogmas and formulae, has resulted in an intricate system of rites and ceremonies, narrow and unspiritual, as was ever enforced by Scribe and Pharisee: which, from a teaching of poverty, meekness, and simplicity, has evolved the proudest and most luxurious theocracy known to history." "Not by the persecutor, but by the priest has the world so far won the battle against Christ." But the truth is, the world was not yet ready. "It was still too occupied with Time and Space to waste either on Eternity." The more simple is a truth, the more profound it is, and the longer it will remain obscured by defective interpretations. "The complex may be a riddle, but the simple is a mystery." And in truth, the world has never yet tried the Gospel of Christ.

It is worth mentioning that Le Gallienne's catalogue of religious emotions includes that of humour: yet not the "new humour," which is "anæmic with over-refinement," but a humour which arises from a sense of disproportion, and is the parent of humility. It sees Nebuchadnezzar boastful and swaggering, "and turns its eyes upon the fixed stars, which have seen so many Nebuchadnezzars, and it smiles, but a tear steals into its smile." The sense of wonder is, of course, also religious: but "it is really least in that gaping populace which, at first sight, may seem to have most of it," whose sense of astronomical mysteries it needs a comet to arouse, while the loveliest fixed star will shine for them in vain. It was to those who are unmoved by the wonder of laws, but demand aberrations, that Christ refused a sign—for neither will they believe, though one rose from the dead. "Tomorrow his resurrection would be as commonplace as the telephone, and enterprising firms would be interviewing him with an eye to branch establishments in Hades."

The optimism of the book puts no strain on the moral faculties. It is equally removed from the sensational and the transcendental: it is as natural to our constitutions as country air. The writer reminds us that on the whole we are having a fairly good time after all, and that if there is an inky patch over Manchester on the weather-map, we need not therefore "pity the poor Manchester people, as though all the rain fell at once, and as though every 'inhabitant' of the town was out in it, without umbrellas." Manchester has always the chance of a fine day, and patience and umbrellas for a wet one, and the fine days are all the more welcome for their scarcity.

"Were a census taken of the happy people in this so-called age of despair, the number would, I fear, be shamefully large." The medicine with which he would heal the sickness of the time is "think less, feel more." The riddle of the universe can only be solved by giving it up. But we suffer under "the delusion that there is something new under the sun." The cry is for a "message." "All the great men are of one mind. Their message is simple,—so simple that we put it by. . . . Love God and love one another! Is that all? That have we known from our youth up. Yet is there nothing else to say." S. E. HALL.

SEX LOVE, by Edward Carpenter.

That which strikes a woman most forcibly in reading this little publication, is the extreme and apparently inevitable divergence that appears to exist between the man's view and the woman's view of the sex question. To the man, the physical aspect seems ever uppermost; it constitutes an abiding subject of strained reasoning and dissertation; while the woman, because she is of the mother sex, is mostly concerned with the question of justice and injustice, cruel domination or love. Mr. Carpenter's chief trouble, "uncleanness," is perhaps the most striking case in point; for surely there is no "uncleanness" in sex, apart from cruelty and sex domination; such at least is the woman's view.

It is, however, quite a different question whether women are not, to a far greater extent than most men conceive, thoroughly nauseated with the whole subject of sex. This aspect of the case points, we think, to a much more radical change than male writers on physical sex seem prepared for. It is probable also that the difference between women and men with regard to sex has always been felt, if dimly; for the motive which has led men through the ages to assign to women a position in which either marriage or prostitution must be their lot, would be unexplainable except on the hypothesis that without such subordination of the woman, men would not be able to gratify their desires. The supreme problem, therefore, appears to us to be, not a question of "wrongness" or "uncleanness," but rather *how are men preparing themselves* to meet and to face the new conditions, when not a few only but every woman will be self-dependent, free and inviolable?

[This Review and "Woman" by the same writer will be more fully reviewed in our next issue.—ED.]

Anti-Divisection Meetings.

PUBLIC feeling on this subject is being roused to the point that means resolve; concerted action will be the result; action which will lead in time to the utter downfall of this dread practice, this hideous torture, hiding itself under the name of science. We must have enthusiasm, we must also have good sense. Enthusiasm must not mean rashness of movement or indiscriminate blackballing; good sense must not mean the slightest condonation of evil. While remembering that much has been done from ignorance and want of thought, we must not forget that animals in torture inexpressible are while we write, while we read, while we think, and while we act, awaiting the result in almost hopeless agony. Let us, while using the knowledge we have, keep ever in our thoughts the consciousness of the things *we do not know*, the vast field that is merely conjecture. It is more than probable that the animals in their power of thought approach us more nearly than we conceive even dimly. Let us think what this must mean if it be true. It must mean an intensification of their already unbearable torture. There is also the question of the freedom of the animal. Every thing that lives has a right to its own life, and to the freedom of that life and its capacity for enjoyment. To deliberately deprive any living creature of its liberty is the action of the coward. To do so and then subject it to torture, even of the mildest description, is the dastardly act of a demon, though the person so doing may not realise fully that it is so. We all know when we are cruel, and we know that such cruelty is altogether wrong, unjust, and traitorous.

A meeting was held at Forest Hill last week to discuss this subject. The language of the speakers, though tempered by moderation and quiet earnest thought, was instinct with deep feeling, we might say passionate fervour, in the cause of the

animals. Such gatherings grow in strength as this Society is growing, and so the torch of light is carried along.

Yesterday, May 23rd, at St. James' Hall, was held the Eighteenth Annual Meeting of the London Anti-Vivisection Society.

The *Daily Chronicle*, reporting, says, "There was a fair attendance, ninety per cent. of those in the audience being ladies." What may be the exact idea of the *Daily Chronicle* in so reporting we may not say (tortuous are the imaginings of man); but we may certainly regard this fact as a good sign. It was good, also, to see so many medical men on the platform; but what is wanted most at present, because less supplied, is the power and strength of woman. We want WOMEN, not ladies, and women to the front. Women leaders, not followers. We have many, we want them in numbers.

An address full of power and reason was given from the chair by the Rev. Nevison Loraine. Mrs. Fenwick Miller, Mrs. Sibthorp, and Mrs. Pearsall Smith were among the women who spoke.

Annual Meeting of The Moral Reform Union.

MISS TOURNIER, whose self-denying efforts as a rescue worker have made her name honoured by all who know her, presided at the Twelfth Annual Meeting of the Moral Reform Union, held at 74, Addison Road, on May 16th, by kind permission of Mrs. Miers, Hon. Treasurer of the Society. Miss Ferguson, Principal of the Huguenot Seminary, Wellington, Cape Colony, and ex-Superintendent of the Purity Department of the W.C.T.U. at the Cape, drew a sad picture of the low state of morals in the colony. The Purity workers in South Africa were fighting against the C.D. Acts with all their strength, and were circulating a petition for repeal.

Miss Conybeare described how, when on a visit to South Africa three years ago, she discovered that the abominable system which had been abolished in England was in full force there. She was agitating for its repeal by every means in her power.

Miss Taylor (Hon. Sec. of the M.R.U.) moved a resolution which hailed with satisfaction the statement of the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army that it was impossible to re-enact the C.D. Acts in the British Isles, and adding, "But that in view of the serious danger to the honour and liberty of women involved in all such practices we hereby declare that we shall not be satisfied until they have been made penal in every part of the world subject to the British Legislature."

Westminster Town Hall "At Home."

THE "At Home" at the Westminster Town Hall, given by the Women's Local Government Society to the delegates, was a complete success. People conversed together freely and happily. The advance of thought, even since last year, was apparent everywhere; the women of to-day are not the women even of the immediate past; progress is putting on express speed. The meeting was addressed by several eloquent speakers, who also, it soon became evident, were in accord with the spirit of the time, and in the full tide of onward going.

Mrs. Sheldon Amos strongly urged upon all the desirability of doing everything in one's power to rouse up the rural population to a sense of what the local government franchise means to them; of the far-reaching possibilities of improvement in the conditions of their life that it will place within their hands. She suggested that all present, all who interested themselves in public questions, should, during the coming summer holidays,

combine duty with pleasure, and to whatever part of the country they might go, they should take with them plenty of leaflets calculated to open the eyes of those who sleep, that they should not fail to wait upon the inhabitants of the villages in their vicinity, and try to talk with them on such points. No doubt there would be difficulties to contend with, but such might be overcome by perseverance and kindness, and the women encouraged to take a firm stand.

Miss Agnes Slack gave, under a few brief heads, a survey of her experience as the only woman member of the Ripley Board of Guardians, which experience had strongly confirmed her previous conviction that the work devolving upon a Board of Guardians could be carried out with far greater efficiency and thoroughness where the Board was partly composed of women. A woman has often free time to devote to the superintendence of local matters at an hour when most men would be engaged on their business, and thus she is enabled to keep a watch upon things and detect flaws and drawbacks that would otherwise probably go undetected and unremedied. Not only this, a woman sees many points connected with the inner life of a workhouse with eyes trained to a keener power of observation than her men colleagues, and the presence of women on the Board would tend to a more thorough carrying out of such details of management as her own experience had taught her escaped the notice of men. Again, the women officials in these places require sympathy and encouragement if their work is to be as well done as it can be, and this encouragement and sympathy comes with much greater power and effect from another woman.

Mr. Walter McLaren desired to make perfectly clear the qualifications requisite for a candidate for a local office under the New Local Government Act which is to come into effect in November next—the only qualification needed being that the place of residence of such an one must be within the parish or within a radius of three miles of its boundaries for the twelve months preceding an election. It is not necessary either that the residence be taken in one's own name, or that one be a ratepayer. Thus any woman who resides within a Union is eligible to stand as a candidate. He urged that at least one-third of all local governing bodies should be composed of women. He paid a tribute of well-merited praise to Miss Browne and the Society, and declared that women should first seek their own enfranchisement, when all other things would be added to them.

Mr. Thorne, of the London County Council, gave an interesting speech, and the proceedings ended with a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

Correspondence.

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

THE SUBMISSION OF THE DAUGHTERS.

DEAR MADAM,—When my eye fell on "The Revolt of the Daughters" in the January number of the *Nineteenth Century*, I turned to it eagerly, and was surprised and disappointed to find it concerned West End daughters, and those, moreover, youthful, for during the past few years I have been more and more impressed by the grievances of daughters. But, heartily as I sympathise with the views expressed by Lady Cuffe and Mrs. Pearsall Smith, it is the restrictions under which elder daughters live—I might almost say old daughters—and many of these workers, that appear to me to be the most vexatious and mischievous.

One or two illustrative cases have come under my personal notice:—

A. is not less than fifty years of age. She has an income of her own, which leaves her only partly, if at all, dependent on her father. She is a clever, capable woman, who has the management of the house, and does it well. She is not allowed to have a latchkey. She must hide any book she is reading which deals with a subject on which her father disagrees with her, and feels it necessary, if she attends a lecture on the subject, to go by stealth.

Asked whether she did not think it unwise, both for herself and her father, that she should submit to such treatment, she replied, "You see, I have my mother to think of; I don't want to break up the home," adding with a sigh, "men are queer cattle!"

B. is forty-five, and she suffers from hysteria. The doctor says she would be much better if she were compelled to be more independent. "But," she says, "mother insists on doing everything for me. She's really *very* kind, but she's so strong-willed, and I am delicate; I yield because I have not strength to combat her. I don't know what you will think of me, but she even chooses the material my dress is to be made of."

C. is thirty-five at least. She is a daughter of a wealthy family. She has chosen Church work as the object of her spare time and talent. She begged an occasional visitor to her home not to refer to her beloved occupation. "It has been uphill work for me," she remarked, "to get and keep the right to work in this way, and my whole happiness lies in it. I think we are tacitly agreed now, at home, not to mention the disagreeable subject."

Cases like this abound on every side.

(To be continued)

INTUITION.

DEAR MADAM,—“Light comes to those who dare to think.” Women have dared to think, and continue the daring process of thinking. What are the results? We observe on all sides an awakening from apathy among women, whose dormant minds are roused by the tremendous efforts made by our well-known women leaders, who by their inspired writings and exemplary living show us the infinite possibilities and immeasurable potencies which are within the reach of all. Yes, each one of us is born with that innate divine life, which can fathom truths that appear incomprehensible to sleepers or dreamers, truths so simple and comprehensive to the awakened soul. Women everywhere must realise what only a few of our most advanced leaders have taught, that already there are women and men who have by the power of thought controlled, not only circumstances, but also their own lives. These have realised that thoughts control us to such an extent, that insurmountable difficulties have vanished before their efforts and a new vista has opened before their eyes, which they can but faintly indicate to others, who are unable as yet to grasp these marvellous revelations in their brilliant simplicity.

Control over our thoughts is of stupendous importance. If it be true that our thoughts make or mar our lives, we should concentrate all our forces in the direction for good.

But how do thoughts come? Can we ourselves contribute anything towards making good thoughts, or can we be taught to think? So many have lost the power to think, either from ill-health, from want of congenial surroundings, or from want of opportunities. How can these be made to think? How can their souls be reached?

These questions must be answered by those who have

IN RE "SHAFTS."

MY DEAR READERS,—I must here apologise for the late issue of *SHAFTS* this month. I have been seriously ill, and as I am both Captain and boy, the result has been disappointment to my readers. I am glad to be well again, and able to work with joy instead of pain; also, one great gladness has come to me through this suffering. I should not have known, save for the delay caused thereby, how many kind, earnest people were anxiously waiting for the re-issue of my paper. With my thanks and best wishes, dear readers, to each one of you,

I am, as I hope long to be,
Your Editor and friend,
M. S. SIBTHORP.

PASTEUR AND VIVISECTION.

DEAR MADAM,—The subjoined cutting will interest those of your readers who do not see the *Zoophilist*. Mr. Lees has since delivered a second lecture on behalf of our friends, the animals, and he has announced that he does not intend to desert their cause, thus winning the gratitude of those of us who, being equally earnest in the desire for justice for the helpless, are yet not in a position to influence a large body of people. It was my good fortune to hear the lecture alluded to below, and I heartily endorse the account. I felt that one great value of the address was its earnestness, and also, that while Mr. Lees kept his audience held, during the hour or more that he spoke, there was no exaggeration of the sufferings of the animals, neither did he dwell unduly on this point.

Every fresh field of labour in the cause that opens up, is a source of encouragement to those who suffer with the suffering animals, and therefore it is that I have troubled you with this letter.

“PECKHAM.—Mr. Robert James Lees, the president of the People's League, at the Sunday evening service at the Central Hall, High Street, Peckham, on April 8th, delivered a scathing address against Vivisection in general and the proposed Pasteur Institute at Chelsea Bridge in particular. During the entire course of the lecture he kept his audience interested with vivid descriptions of the sufferings that thousands of animals have to undergo at the hands of those who practise Vivisection. Mr. Lees strongly emphasized the necessity of the moral aspects of the question not being lost sight of, but kept rigidly in view.”

Yours truly, E. M. B.

A SUGGESTION.

To the Editor of *SHAFTS*.

DEAR MADAM,—I have been thinking over the financial difficulties of your valuable journal, and the desire to keep it afloat, until, through its own merits becoming widely known, it proves a success, impels me to offer a suggestion.

We know that in the "Salvation Army" a large revenue is derived from what is termed "self-denial week." For a certain period, something (luxury or otherwise) is dispensed with, and the cost of saving of same sent direct to the "Army" funds. In addition to your appeal for war pennies, why not ask your readers to give the leading woman's paper a "self-denial week"?

For example, we know that if one thousand refrain from a cab, or travel third instead of first class for a week, and send the saved shillings to you, you would soon have £50 in your editorial purse to expend in your good cause, calculating those saving at 1s. each only.

This, a crucial time with you, is one in which every one, who desires to see woman elevated to her proper status, should help, and help liberally.

Believe me,
Your old lawyer friend, J. R. R.

“dared to think” and to whom light has come, and in proportion as those thinkers can adjust unpopular, new subjects to dormant minds, without startling them into a resentful spirit, will come strength, influence and knowledge, by which the long deferred deliverance of woman from bondage may be attained.

We all have felt at some time or other that we could think better, more clearly; we have felt elated at times and again depressed.

Have we ever thought what was the cause of making us one day so joyful, and another so sad, without any apparent reason? Others and I have thought upon this question, and the result of these thoughts I now give.

We have found by adopting an intelligent diet, such as suggested by Dr. Bellows in his *Philosophy of Eating** we could at all times, under any circumstances, in any surroundings, be young, active, bright, happy, and above all have always a superabundance of good, useful thoughts at our command for helping others. We have closely observed that by abstaining from all tinned, preserved, salted and prepared foods, we ourselves could regulate, when examining Dr. Bellows' tables, which foods would supply us with heat, which foods would best nourish our nerves, or brain and muscles, which fruits would make us young, which nuts would generate spiritual magnetism, and so forth. We have also carefully noted, when tea and tobacco were not used—both destroyers of youth and beauty—we could notice in those who gave up taking the little dried sticks and leaves, that their appearance became again youthful and their minds receptive to new truths. Furthermore, my co-workers in Melbourne and I have noticed that elasticity of the limbs, so seldom found after twenty years of age, was regained in persons of advanced years, when abstaining from salt, water, and starchy foods, such as bread, cakes, puddings, pastry, etc. The most surprising results in the way of rejuvenating people have been effected in those who adopted a diet largely composed of fresh fruits and nuts. Fresh fruits such as apples, grapes, oranges, tomatoes, etc., which supply the necessary liquid for our system and which give us that irresistible charm, known by the name of spiritual magnetism electricity or vitality. Most especially, however, a force is being developed by those, who adopt an "intelligent" diet, known by the name of "intuition," which can become so powerful as to sweep all obstacles before it.

It seems to me that the power of diagnosing people should be a great help to those who work for humanity, because it enables us to see whether a woman or man is bodily, intellectually, morally or spiritually ill. Our power of observing becomes most keen by a careful selection of foods, that to the uninitiated our instantaneous decision as to the best way to proceed in case of the most complicated diseases, seems miraculous.

This power of "intuition" can be directed in whatever channel the individual wishes to lead it. No science is required for it, no book knowledge is needed. It is only a right combination of foods taken in right proportions for the requirement of each individual according to age, occupation, surroundings, circumstances, climate, etc.

"Intuition" is supposed to be possessed especially by women. Let us make use then of this wonderful power; let us cultivate it; let us think about it; let us realise that by eliminating all those unnecessary elements which have accumulated in our body and which have made us old, ugly and stupid, we can again be young, active, bright, clever, happy and intuitive.

Is it not possible that by continuing to think deeply and strongly on this question of food, we may retain in this life eternal youth, beauty and happiness?

SOPHIE LEPPER.

* Obtainable at Marshall, Simpkin & Co., Paternoster Row.

A REQUEST.

DEAR MRS. SIBTHORP,—Will you please forward copies of SHAFTS for March and April to Dr. Susan Winslow, of Washington. Over twenty years ago this lady started a magazine called *Alpha*; but, so strong was the feeling then against the doctrines it upheld, her opinions cost her the loss of patients, money and acquaintances. Dr. Winslow's idea was that children should be taught by their parents the laws of physical life and reproduction, not left to acquire such knowledge from chance communication; and though at that time her magazine failed, she still held firmly to her opinions, and now has the pleasure of seeing them gaining ground steadily in various directions. Please, also, send the same copies to Dr. Cora Bland—another pioneer in this matter—Whitman Osgood, W. Osgood, and Mrs. Miller, of New York, all of whom take the greatest interest in this question.

ALMA GILLEN.

WOMEN MUSTER.

DEAR EDITOR,—How I wish all the readers of SHAFTS could have been present at the Council Meetings of the Women's Liberal Federation held in the Chelsea Town Hall on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd of May. There were present about 900 delegates representing associations in England and Wales, and although they were nominally representative of one party section of the State, the matters discussed were of vital importance to the community in general, and to all women in particular. Such questions as Women's Suffrage, Peace and Arbitration, Women in Police Courts, the Appointment of Police Matrons, State Regulation of Vice, Anti-Vivisection, Temperance, and the Labour Question as it affects women, must be deeply interesting to all thinkers and feelers of whatever party they may be.

If I had a phenomenal memory, or, better still, if I were a shorthand writer, everybody should have a chance of reading some of the speeches on the above subjects. You will naturally ask, "Were there no reporters? Why cannot we read these speeches in the daily papers?" Yes, there were several reporters present; so I must refer you to them, or to the editors whom they represented, for an answer to your second question. The reply from an editor would be something like the following, if he spoke what he thought. "You see, madam, those delegates were after all only a roomful of irresponsible females, glad of a chance of hearing their own voices. It is true the Federation is useful as an organising body, and does at election times much hard work, which we are glad enough to leave to them; so we notice the meetings, copy the resolutions, and quote a few words from some of the speakers: but I assure you that some of the views held by these women are dangerous, distinctly dangerous. As I view with alarm the spread of these ideas I should not think of allowing the speeches to appear in the columns of my paper."

Perhaps I can remember some things which might interest you in the proceedings at the meetings.

The excitement rose high in discussing the resolution against University jurisdiction over women: not because opinion was in any way equally divided, but because it seemed almost incredible that any woman should be found to support so unjust a law. Mrs. Sheldon Amos proposed the resolution in a fine speech, exposing the tyranny of the existing law at Oxford, and giving several instances of the arrest of innocent young women while walking quietly in the streets. She pointed out that English law holds persons under arrest as innocent until they are proven guilty, but that this University law acts in direct opposition to this. She also shewed how the very wording of the law should condemn it as unjust; for it refers to women "found wandering" in the streets without being able to give a

"satisfactory account" of themselves, the definition of which vague term is left to the proctors who arrest. Mrs. Bateson, of Cambridge, opposed the resolution on the ground that it is necessary to protect the University students from the "droves of harpies" who come up to Cambridge from London in the term for the ruin of young men of wealth and position! The lady who followed her made an appeal to mothers to assist the law to protect their sons; she said: "I speak as the mother of a son at college." A delegate near me then remarked in an indignant tone, "she evidently hasn't a *girl* at college." Mrs. Ralph hit the right nail on the head and drove it home when she put the following question—"Will Mrs. Bateson inform the meeting whether the law as existing at Oxford and proposed for Cambridge deals equally with men and women; because we are here to promote perfect equality in law between men and women?"

This question effectually silenced opposition, and no attempt was made to answer it. In discussing a resolution on the subject of poor laws, a lady guardian gave instance of an honest hard-working old woman who was incapacitated for work and wanted out-door relief, but had saved £3. The guardian went herself about the case, to the relieving officer, who said he was unable to grant relief unless the applicant were penniless, but that if the money were spent the woman would be entitled to an allowance. So the lady helped her to spend the £3 on blankets and clothes. She then received parish relief. Thus does our poor law encourage thrift!

Strong resolutions were carried condemning the attempt made by the London School Board to revive so antiquated a tyranny as a religious test.

Anti-vivisection, in which many of us take so deep an interest, was unfortunately put off until the third day of the meetings, when many delegates had left London; but a resolution condemning the practice of experiment on living animals was passed with only two or three dissentients. Mrs. Stewart Brown made a speech on this subject which ought to be read by all. She ignored the much-discussed point as to how much or how little benefit humanity receives (medically speaking) from this brutal abuse of our superior strength, and she based her argument entirely on the grounds of justice and morality. Surely these are the only real grounds. What can it matter how much or how little benefit is derived? Unless indeed you say the more the benefit received through the sufferings of the weak, the more the shame for the strong. I think it was Mrs. Stewart Brown who said that, having heard from one speaker the words, "what is morally wrong cannot be physically right," she would say, "what is morally wrong cannot be scientifically right."

One lady reminded us of Lady Carlisle's noble words delivered last year on the Indian State Regulation of Vice (those who heard them are not likely to forget them). "If our army and our empire in India can only be retained under such conditions, *then perish* our army and our empire in India." These words, the speaker said, would apply equally to vivisection, if "health of humanity" were substituted for "army and empire."

Speaking of the Indian question, one delegate actually spoke up for the existing state of things in the cantonments! One could but admire her courage in facing a room full of such evident though suppressed opposition to her opinion; but wish such courage could have been exerted in a better cause.

Miss Florence Balgarnie proposed a resolution begging for the appointment of police matrons at all police stations, especially for night duty. It is hardly to be realised that in this country at the present time women who are arrested are imprisoned for a night, sometimes more, under charge of a police constable, and with no responsible woman on the premises; the only woman connected with the place being the searcher, who is sent for in cases of suspected theft, but

who generally resides at a distance. Miss Balgarnie made application to be allowed to spend a night in one of the London stations, but was refused on the ground that "it was not a fit place for a woman to go into!" In the U.S.A., where they have matrons on regular duty night and day, her request for admission was never refused. She caused much amusement by saying that the only way to do what she wanted in England was to get drunk or to steal, and get taken up in the ordinary way.

We were also made to realise how unfair it is that a woman should have to stand her trial in a court where there is no other person of her own sex.

A delegate speaking on this matter, said she once went to the trial of a young girl in whom she took an interest, there being five women present besides herself. At one stage in the trial the usher ordered all women out of court, but the speaker, knowing the law allowed it, and pitying the poor girl, stood her ground and insisted upon remaining, with the result that the other women who had got up returned to their places.

On the question of peace and arbitration we hope to hear more next year, when it will perhaps have a better place on the agenda. While we are at peace ourselves we do not seem to realise what war means, dearly as we pay each year for its preparation. As one speaker said, it does seem strange that duelling between individuals should be condemned as wrong, and yet an exaggerated form of it is the recognised means of settling differences between nations.

Mrs. Charles Mallet, in speaking of the sufferings entailed upon match-makers by the use of white phosphorus, told us how one firm of manufacturers gives its employees a pension when they are attacked by their dreadful enemy, phossy-jaw, but this is on condition that they consult only a doctor recommended by the firm, and that they do not make known their disease! Are there any lengths to which trade selfishness and greed will not go?

The Council was strongly of opinion that all regulation of trade should apply equally to men and women where both are employed; at any rate until women have a voice in such regulation. This brings us to Women's Suffrage, about which may be said that there was scarce any question before the Council which did not either begin with "suffrage," refer to "suffrage," or end with "suffrage."

There is a certain big house of many rooms, some of which are in a most dirty and untidy condition; and oh! the waste that goes on in the housekeeping thereof. We, as women, naturally want to get into that house with mops, pail, and dusters, in order that we may spring-clean a bit, and help to make the place more habitable. But the men who prefer dirt, and those who are afraid we shall soil and harden our hands, have barred doors and windows and kept us outside, where we have hitherto been content to remain, eating the half-cooked food which comes from that dark, untidy kitchen; and shouting complaints and suggestions to the inmates from time to time, which never get attended to. The men have a latch-key with which they let themselves into the house, and which they jealously guard from our sacrilegious hands. They tell us continually how *nice* we look, and how *good* we are! Good! do you call it? when there is house-cleaning to do and we do not do it. When a house, which belongs partly to us, wants light and fresh air, and we do not go and open the windows? We are not going to be good any more, thank you. We mean to have the use of that latch-key.

A DELEGATE.

"THE STRIKE OF A SEX."

DEAR MADAM,—I am glad to find that a second edition of this bright little novelette has been called for. Even if the heart of

By Mr. Noyes Miller. (Reeves and Co., 185, Fleet Street, London.)

man has not as yet been touched by the supreme wrong of woman, still it is a hopeful sign that through Mr. Noyes Miller's book such wrong has found voice and expression. It would be interesting to know which sex has been the larger purchaser; whether women whose lives have been made miserable by the large families, or men who, stricken by remorse, seek atonement and remedy for evils committed in their thoughtless passion and selfishness. Most persons have read this book, I write here for those—a very large number—who have not.

In the opening of the book, the writer describes how he suddenly found himself in the town of Hustleberg, and how the first thing he noticed was the extreme untidiness of the men's dress, the gloomy, careworn expression of their faces, and the general discomfort of the whole place. It soon dawned upon him, that since he entered the town he had not seen a single woman, nor even a little child. The total absence of buttons, and the prohibition of the sewing on of buttons, is amusingly described; but he is seized with horror as he realises the total absence of women, and he rushes after a gentleman passing at the moment, imploring him to explain this awful and mysterious calamity.

He is happy in his chance choice, for the gentleman to whom he speaks is Mr. Justin Lister (one of the principal characters in the story), who, being in possession of the facts, gives him the information that all the women have left the town "on strike." He himself was engaged to Allegra, the leader of the movement. Allegra has, however, put this aside for a time and gone to be the leader of all the women and young children, who are in a large building just outside the town. A fire in this quarter gives occasion for the display of practical wisdom on the part of the women.

Three days after this strike began the men had yielded to women every claim which is being agitated for, in the actual life of to-day. A great *omnibus* bill of Women's Rights was passed as quickly as legislation permitted. The question which women had selected as their Magna Charta was so new, so absolutely unfamiliar, that time was necessary before deciding that they (the women) were to have the principal voice in regard to the number of their children. This question being finally put to the vote and carried in favour of women by a triumphant majority, the climax was reached in a rush of joyful, tumultuous emotion, when after three months of painful separation, women and men were re-united. They resolved to build up a new and regenerate life on the basis of mutual freedom and equality. The discoveries of Yugasent are hinted at, but can be studied in other books.

He has, moreover, foreshadowed, though dimly, how much happier the lot of woman in every position would be, were this question treated with justice, righteousness and purity. The absurd reproach now laid upon what are called "old maids," would be taken away; the class called "fallen women" abolished; the heavy burden of endless child-bearing would be removed. Though there is some exaggeration in the paper by a "Miserable Mother," it is undeniably true, that unless she have good servants to help her, the life of an educated woman with many children is well-nigh intolerable. This book is published in America, where problems are faced more boldly than prejudice here permits; but Mr. Noyes Miller strikes at American as well as English young ladies, when he says he found them "preternaturally active in seeking and buying through marriage, the titled coronets of a profligate and imbecile nobility."

M. M. DANIELL.

[The book of which this letter treats, deserves to be carefully considered and justly criticised. If criticism is ever to be looked upon as a boon, it may be in such a case as this, for though the author looks pretty far into the matter, he is still too much swayed by sex ideas; and when he states that the women acknowledged in their turn that man was the head of the woman, and as such should be recognised by them, he is not only upholding one wrong while putting down another, but he

is upholding the wrong that is at the root of all the evil, wrong-doing and suffering in the world. We trust Mr. Noyes Miller will write with less of sex bias, when next he takes up the pen. This is really a woman's question, only she can settle it.—ED.]

“FAILURES OF THEIR SEX (?)”

DEAR MADAM,—In writing to reply to “Amy Montague's” question as to whether I agree with a certain utterance of Mr. William Morris, quoted from *News from Nowhere*, I may just say that it was not my correspondent's “defence of her unmarried sisters,” but her attack on her *brothers*—married and otherwise—which set my pen in motion.

The sentence quoted from *News from Nowhere*, taken merely as it stands, has no bearing upon the marriage question, and, to any thoughtful reader, is the veriest truism. It is manifest that “a child born of the natural and healthy love between a man and woman” *must be* “better in all ways” than the average progeny of the “respectable commercial marriage,” which, to put it mildly, does not *invariably* realize the conditions laid down. This is all that William Morris's statement amounts to, for his (parenthetical) assertion, “even if that love be transient,” cannot modify the original position, and is equally a *truism*; for if the child is better for being born under natural and healthy conditions, no subsequent separation of the parents can alter that *fait accompli*.

I agree with William Morris, therefore, upon the same grounds as have led me to the acceptance of the formula “two and two make four.”

If “Amy Montague” desired to prove that William Morris advocates libertinism, she has not selected a passage to the point. Even if we *read into* the words quoted such a significance it amounts only to this: that “natural, healthy” union outside the marriage sacrament is better for the offspring than the legal libertinism of our corrupt and mercenary marriage system. A proposition which few would dispute.

I do not know any writer of purer tone than William Morris; if by *purity* we mean something not always synonymous with conventional “morality,” and *News from Nowhere* is no exception to the rule.

Upon the very interesting and important question of the relation of the sexes under the coming Socialist *regime*, it is not possible to speak dogmatically. That the present conditions of marriage will be considerably modified may be admitted, and the *freedom of women* were impossible else; but present-day Socialists do not attempt any cut and dried solution of this, amongst other knotty questions for a future generation; which may well be left for hearts and brains better qualified, by progress in other directions, to deal with.

But where “Amy Montague” acquired the “impression” that Socialism “advocates, foreshadows . . . polygamy,” I do not know. These “impressions” are awkward, intangible factors in controversy, and I await something in the nature of proof.

In any case “polygamy” is a misleading term to employ in this connection. In a Socialist state—*based* as it would be on equal freedom for both sexes—polygamy must establish itself, if at all, by the sense of the majority (including women), and it in that case would mean also its correlative—polyandry, *i.e.*, *promiscuity*. I do not know *any* Socialist writer who would advocate such an institution; who would not, on the contrary, oppose it, if from no higher standpoint than that of national hygiene.

Under the present system immorality and impurity are as rampant *inside* the marriage relation as without. *That* is one end of the scale. Mere promiscuity is the other. Surely we may remedy the evils of the one without falling into the

other? I have sufficient faith in humanity and in Socialism to believe that the *via media* will be found; but I cannot “foreshadow” it, and mere speculation would only irritate Mr. and Mrs. Grundy and serve no useful purpose. This generation has “questions” enough of its own to deal with.

From the fact that “Amy Montague” is a reader of *SHAFTS*, I assume that her views on sex questions are characterised by a certain breadth and by human sympathy. She will recognise, I trust, that something besides a parson and a book is needed to consecrate the love of a woman and a man. In the inevitable readjustments of sex relations which must take place, it will be exceedingly well for the New Democracy if they allow themselves to be guided by so pure and gentle a singer as William Morris—clean in writing as in life. It is passing strange that *he* should have been selected as a peg on which to hang a suggestion of Socialist licence.

I am gratified to learn that “Amy Montague's” relations with my own sex are so entirely harmonious, but if “charity *begins* at home” it should not end there. I trust my correspondent will so far modify her views as to believe that her own experience is not singular, and in future deal out her condemnation less indiscriminately.

The suggestion to read *News from Nowhere* I, of course, heartily second. I might suggest, however, to those who have not taken a course of this kind of reading, that it should be prefaced by “Nunquam's” *Merrie England* (1s.), or the Fabian half-dozen excellent essays entitled *Socialism* (1s.), and by Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (6d.). *News from Nowhere* is a sketch of advanced Anarchy—a deliciously sweet and quaint sketch—but such a condition must be preceded by *Collectivism* (as no one recognises more fully than Mr. Morris). The book would not be understood or appreciated without some grasp of its (assumed) earlier stages.

Yours faithfully,
JNO. E. SKUSE.

The New Factory and Workshops Bill.

MEETING TO BE HELD AT THE MEMORIAL HALL, MAY 24TH,
AT 8 P.M.

A DEMONSTRATION has been organised, and may have taken place before we go into print, in connection with the above Bill. The Women's Trades' Union League and others interested in labour, demand the “Retention of the Clause affecting Laundries.”

They address the following words to the workers of London, *women and men*, with an appeal to them to attend the Demonstration, on behalf of the overworked Laundresses:—

“The new Factory and Workshop Bill introduced by Mr. Asquith, designed to amend the existing law and prove of inestimable benefit to the workers, is being met by the most strenuous opposition from employers of labour, and an attempt is being made to exclude laundries from the operation of the Act.

“There are few women's industries in which the work is harder, more poorly paid, longer continued, or done under more insanitary conditions than the laundry work of a modern city.”

“Contingents will start from the Triangle, Columbia Market, and Mile End Waste, at 7 p.m., meeting at Commercial Road, and marching through Aldgate to the Hall.”

We call special attention to this Demonstration, indicative as it is of the general advance among those who earn their daily bread by hard manual labour, an advance significant of a desire which is the beginning of the end. We most heartily wish the laundresses the success they deserve.