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# Infant Mortality

By  
Margaret  
McMillan.



Price  
One  
Penny.

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crowded areas. To take one or two more examples. Dr. Robertson, of Birmingham, reporting on an outbreak of typhoidal disease among infants, writes: "Practically all the deaths occurred in small houses. No deaths occurred in any middle, or better class houses during the enquiry." To take a great Scottish city, Glasgow. An outbreak of the same disease occurred a few years ago in that city. In a poor, crowded ward of the city, the death rate of infants was 1,698 per million. In a suburb area it was only 201!

'We must go back to the land,' say many reformers. Certainly, it would be good to send everyone into the country for ever, but it isn't clear how this can be done. How are the cities to be emptied, and the incoming tide of city-dwellers thrust back? The movement towards the city has gone on steadily and quickly for 50 years, even in such a quiet country as Sweden. In England nearly two-thirds of the whole population are now living in the stony wildernesses, "walled to the sky, and roaring like the sea." And it is well that the people have gathered thus in centres.\* Since they began to do so science of public and personal hygiene has advanced so fast that in spite of all the city risks the death-rate among adults has fallen steadily. But infants have not shared equally in our gains. Their fate is not quite so doubtful as it was two hundred years ago, when nearly half of all the children born died, though most of them were country bred, before they were five! We are learning how to live, by living in towns. But we are not learning so well how to keep infants alive, for, what is strange, though the death-rate among grown-up people has gone down fast in the last 50 years, yet, during this time, the mortality among infants has hardly lessened at all. Take the figures for the last forty years:—

Annual death-rate in England and Wales from certain diseases of infancy, per million persons living:—

|             |      |             |      |
|-------------|------|-------------|------|
| 1866-70 ... | 2685 | 1889-90 ... | 2180 |
| 1871-75 ... | 2414 | 1891-95 ... | 2101 |
| 1876-80 ... | 2320 | 1896-1900   | 2225 |
| 1881-85 ... | 2103 |             |      |

\*In 1801 in England and Wales 16.7 per cent lived in towns. Today, more than 59 per cent live in cities.

Strange to say, in spite of the steady high mortality among infants a great many of the diseases from which babies used to die are fast disappearing. The problem of infant-life and death appears indeed, in one sense, to be simplifying itself very much. There are now but three great fatal diseases from which infants die. These are: First, Epidemic Typhoidal Diseases; second, Pneumonia and Bronchitis; and last, Prematurity (including Defects, and Weakness.)

Two of these great illnesses, or causes of death appear to be alarmingly on the increase. On the other hand there is good reason to hope that if they could be fairly tackled and overcome infant mortality would go down at the run.

Mr. George Newman gives the following table showing how these causes of death have affected infants within the past 60 years.

Percentage on total Mortality of Infant's (children under one year) in London.

| Disease                                      | 1845-1849 | 1899-1903 | Per cent<br>Increase |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------|
| Epidemic Typhoidal Diseases ... ..           | 10.7      | 15.1      | 41.1                 |
| Pneumonia and Bronchitis ... ..              | 16.3      | 18.8      | 15.3                 |
| Prematurity (including defects and weakness) | 17.2      | 29.5      | 71.8                 |

The last mentioned cause of death—Prematurity and Weakness—is not a disease but a condition. And it is this condition, this "weakness," that is directly responsible for 30 per cent. of all infants deaths. A score of diseases have been got rid of—in vain! The children born are, many of them, so weakly that they cannot live even when so many foes have been beaten. They are born, many of them, free of any disease, with good heredity, and they come into a world where reforms have been carried out that make it easier than ever before to live! And why do they die? It is surely time to enquire.

To begin with let us take a nation whose child mortality is low, (and especially low as regards *immaturity*), namely Sweden. The Swedes certainly love the country as we do. They have made their capital, Stockholm, as like the country as possible, and they have spent money freely in order to make it healthy. The Swedes, like ourselves, are being drawn, however,



to the city life, but not so fast as ourselves, for whereas there are but 1,104,000 Swedes in Towns, there are still 4,032,000 Swedes in the country. Putting this aside for the moment however we have to note that the Swedish women *marries later than the British Woman*. The average age of marriage for the Swedish woman is 27. Dr. Cloustan, of Edinburgh has shown 26 and 27 to be the age when the woman of our zone herself ceases to be an immature being, when powers that have been waking for long years are at last coming into full expansion. It is as the French say a 'splendid moment' in life, the Wonder-week of May! But it is preceded by an epoch of doubtful days of instability. "Where premature marriages are common," says Emil Svenson, "there is a want of physical and spiritual strength in the offspring." And though of course, there may be many exceptions, yet this rule holds good. The number of immature infants in Norway and Sweden appears to be wonderfully small. During the whole of the last century the proportion of births has been 202 to every hundred deaths among the whole populace! And the death rate is still falling.

The ordeal of life in our world is very sharp in the beginning. It grows easier every day, every hour perhaps—but the younger the infant the greater his difficulty in managing as it were to sail the seas of life. The great majority of the deaths occur in the first weeks and months. A few figures illustrating in some degree though not by any means fully (since many of these victims were born strong and well developed) the equipment at birth, in various lands, may here be interesting. England does not stand where she ought to stand in the list, and strange to say, Japan, with all her passion for Hygiene, and splendid results to show in the health of grown-up people, and with all her love for children, too, does not take a very high place.

Number of children who die in infancy per 1,000 born, in 1903:—

|               |                     |                    |
|---------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Russia... 272 | Japan ..... 151     | Scotland ..... 126 |
| Hungary 221   | England..... 150    | New S. Wales 111   |
| Prussia 195   | West Australia 145  | Ireland..... 103   |
| Jamacia 173   | Switzerland ... 143 | Sweden ..... 99    |
| France 155    | Denmark ..... 130   | Norway ..... 93    |

New Zealand 80; and in 1904 only 71!

No doubt to different nationalities the problems of infant life present themselves differently. They are not the same in sparsely populated lands as in crowded places, nor are they the same for one class as for another. The death-rate of English babies is made to seem vastly lower than it is for the poor—it is veiled, in fact, by the lumping together of figures for all classes. But it varies in different counties and among the same class. Take for example the two counties—Westmoreland and Wiltshire—they stand out white and fair in every infantile mortality map of England. In Westmoreland, in particular, babies start with good prospects. The death-rate is low. And yet in the neighbouring county of Lancashire it is as high, and perhaps a little higher than in any other part of England. From the racial point of view there is certainly nothing to choose between the people of Westmoreland and Lancashire; they are the same hill country people. The average age of marriage varies little. If the children of one county show little power to survive as compared with those of another, there must be some other reason for it. Before going any further we may look at the Infant Mortality Returns for some Lancashire towns.

|             | Population—<br>1901. | Infantile Mortality<br>per 1,000 births. |
|-------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Burnley...  | 97,043               | 208                                      |
| Preston ... | 112,989              | 208                                      |
| Blackburn   | 127,626              | 183                                      |
| Oldham      | 137,246              | 170                                      |
| Bolton ...  | 168,215              | 166                                      |
| Bury ...    | 58,129               | 164                                      |

Percentage of Women engaged in 1901.

|             | Total. | Married or widowed<br>women. |
|-------------|--------|------------------------------|
| Burnley ... | 75.4   | 33.7                         |
| Preston ... | 73.8   | 30.5                         |
| Blackburn   | 76.5   | 37.9                         |
| Oldham ...  | 70.4   | 20.0                         |
| Bolton ...  | 71.1   | 15                           |
| Bury ...    | 73.7   | 25.1                         |



If now we turn to places where women do not go out to work, the death-rate of infants is lower, though still very high.

|                          | Mortality of Infants. | Total percentage of women workers. | Percentage of married and widowed women working. |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Sunderland ... ..        | 166                   | 38.2                               | 7.7                                              |
| Swansea ... ..           | 160                   | 42.1                               | 8.7                                              |
| Lincoln... ..            | 157                   | 47.2                               | 7.8                                              |
| South Shields ... ..     | 155                   | 34.9                               | 7.4                                              |
| Newport ... ..           | 153                   | 44.4                               | 7.0                                              |
| Cardiff ... ..           | 147                   | 43.6                               | 8.4                                              |
| Barrow-in-Furness ... .. | 144                   | 40.7                               | 5.8                                              |
| Burton ... ..            | 119                   | 41.8                               | 6.9                                              |
|                          | 150                   | 41.6                               | 7.4                                              |

Thirty per cent. of all these infants die, as we have said, of sheer weakness—of unreadiness for life. And even in Westmoreland *this* is the cause of a great percentage of deaths, and one must allow that women labour in mills is not the only cause since the death rate is high even when women labour doesn't exist. Still, even when all this is admitted the evidence is heavy against all kinds of strain and long hours of toil in the months before or after child-birth. In Dundee, where children of wage-earning and non-wage-earning mothers were weighed at birth, the following results were found:—

Infants of mothers working up to time of birth weighed on average 3000 grms.

Infants of mothers resting during last weeks weighed on average 3290 grms.

Infants of mothers leading home-life with no hard labour weighed on average 3368 grms.

It is plain that many children begin life with a deficit. They might make it up perhaps later, but the chances are that they go on losing. In some places, Kearsley, in Lancashire, for example, the death-rate from immaturity is rising. In 1883 the infant mortality was 143 per thousand; in 1904 it was 229 per thousand, and 34 per cent. of these died from immaturity.

It is said that hard labour does not harm the expectant savage mother. The answer to this is first that no savage mother's work is so hard, so strenuous, so monotonous, so long as the civilized factory worker! But let that pass—the point is that the civilized woman is not a savage. Very hard labour is,

for her, at certain times, race suicide, or in any case it is race mutilation. It is race mutilation, not so much because it drains the strength, but because it *prevents* the storage of energy. In the civilized child there is a great deal that remains latent for a very long period. His childhood is long. Power is stored up in cells that will not function for twenty-five years! This is the capital of the race for its son or daughter. It is race-capital banked up for it in ages of human progress. If the child loses it he dies—for it is life. It is quite clear that a British mother cannot revert to primitive motherhood. The immature child dies as we see, instead of growing up a healthy little savage.

But to the person who writes of child mortality there is *one* cause above all others which stands out and to which he is always drawing nearer and this is—wrong feeding. So much has been written about it, and to such small purpose as it seems! It is hard for the average mother to see why her infant cannot take what older children take in the way of food. She sees he has no teeth—so she does not offer him bones or meat. But she does not see or know that he has no ptyalin in his mouth, and that therefore he cannot deal with starch much better than he can deal with bones—that he does not yet create the acids and ferments that deal with such foods as bread, or 'pobs' and is therefore obliged to fall ill, or pine away on such a diet. The study of baby-mouths is not carried on by many mothers. And so, alas! there is a large crop of badly-made mouths in our elementary schools. Most of these were shapely enough to begin with. But they have been spoiled with wrong feeding—and then mothers often give infants "comforters" to suck, and these do their share of mischief. It is pretty certain that they not only carry germs into the mouth, but the constant sucking pushes *up* the roof of the mouth into a vaulted shape—and prepares the way for nose and throat troubles. To be sure there are many simple mothers who know nothing about such matters and who yet save their children alive by keeping close to nature. The Irish women are poorer than the English or Scottish but they have a lower death-rate among babies than either. Infant mortality in Ireland is only two-thirds that of England, which, taking into account the smaller number of rich parents in Ireland, is an enormous difference. The death-rate among Scottish



babies is lower than in England, and we are pretty safe in saying that they owe this to natural feeding. Thirty-five infants in every thousand die in England from convulsions, whereas only six per thousand die in Scotland from the same cause. The figures showing the *fatal* effect of bread and other foods other than human milk are so numerous that one can hardly turn a leaf on Infant Statistics of death without finding them. The tables of hand fed and naturally fed children who have been weighed during the first seven or eight months of life are evidence that must convince anyone. The hand fed child fails from the beginning and right on, and it is he who swells the death tables. Seebohm Rowntree says that of 100 Infants deaths at York only 16 were naturally fed, and even five of these had had starch! At Stockport in 1904 it was found that of 116 Infants dead 95 per cent. were hand fed. Of 977 naturally fed children only 2 per cent. were delicate. Of 363 hand fed children 65 per cent. were delicate—which brings us to a new point not often taken into account.

It was usually held that where many die only the strong survive. That there is not only natural selection, but that everything is on the side of the strong. That the race, therefore, is to the strong—and everything, in the end, for the best! This, it appears, is a great mistake. The same causes that kill a great number of children cripple those that are left. Moreover, it is not the weakly and unhealthy who always fall victims. As far as typhoidal epidemics are concerned, the strong healthy fit child is as ready a victim as the ailing.

“Do the weakly children get killed off, and only the strong muddle through? Or do the evils that slaughter one in five have a maiming effect on those left?” This question has been asked and answered recently by the school doctor.

Dr. Kerr has shown in his last Report (for 1905) that in any district in London where the infant mortality happens to be low, the children born in that district in that year have a good physique; that, for example, the year 1902, which was an excellent year, was excellent not only in that few children died, but also in that those who lived were of much better physique than ordinary. But the children born in the years of high mortality had a poor physique.

In the health tables for every year the disease line dips with

the mortality line, and *vice-versa*. In schools, says Dr. Kerr (naming some) “the children show a slight increase in height when they are born in a year of lower mortality.” The same fact was brought out not only in London but also in Manchester in 1905, where the weights of certain children were given, together with the infant mortality of the years in which they were born. It is now resolved that the birth year and its mortality of infants will in future be compared with the school records of physique; but already it is proved that these must correspond.

Thus the “Survival of the Fittest” among babies is a fiction!

The dethroning of the infant begins when cow's milk is offered for human milk. Cows' milk is an ideal food for calves, but not for infants. When, however, the ideal which is also the natural food, cannot be had, the cow's milk must be doctored and treated so as to be as like the human as possible. Moreover, when an infant is nine months old cows' milk becomes an ideal food, and remains so for older children. For the infant, however, born in a city, this alien food is a thing that has to be watched and guarded as carefully almost as if it were an explosive or a wild animal instead of a means of life. How to keep it clean enough—that is the problem. One must think of the soil, of the drains, of the walls, of the gutter, of the farm buildings hundreds of miles away, of the dairy-pans, and the smock and hands of the dairyman. One must think of the cows and their grooms, of the milk pails, and railway waggons, of the waiting-stations, the milk shops, the milk-boy, and the place where the milk stands in the crowded house-tenement rooms. Everywhere death is waiting in the form of dirt—invisible or visible impurity. That is the enemy.

Overcrowding in towns has forced us to look to our drains, our water supply, our ventilation—more or less.

The love of offspring will force us to go further. The Innocents will not thrive unless we go *much* further.

So at this point we are brought face to face with a great many questions—and, to begin with, we have to look into the Housing question. If one goes deep enough one always comes to roots—not to one root, but to many. Lo! here are nearly all the items in the Labour Reformer's programme crossing and



intertwining in the underground. An unclean soil, a faulty system of drainage, and pools and settles of waste and refuse heaps, these must be cleared away before we can indulge in any new hopes of saving infant life. Unclean and damp walls, too, and the absence of any place where food can be kept safely covered and cool, are things that cannot be forgotten. They may be, and are forgotten by the poor Irish mother, who is certainly not so "particular" as the Englishwoman. But then, *she* does not attempt, as a rule, to supply artificial food to her infant.

Then the milkers and cow-houses far away—who is to overlook them? Of course, a certain amount of inspection there is even to-day, but after all, what does one know of the milk that comes, after a long journey, into one's home. The average person knows very little about it. There are persons, of course, who take means to know—who know the dairy from which the milk is sent. There are people in Finsbury, for example, who know that their milk comes from a model dairy farm of 70 cows near Epping Forest, and that everything, to the smocks of the milkers and grooming of the cows, has been arranged so that death in the form of bacteria shall not slip into the baby-bottle in which the milk is sealed. But it is only here and there in England that we can know much about the staple food of children.

Meantime other countries are leading the way. In 1893 the Hon. Nathan Strauss established a milk depôt at New York, supplied by a farm on a good hygienic basis. From 1891-95 the infant death-rate in the area he supplied fell suddenly to 90 per thousand. It is now only 61·2 per thousand—lower than the average death-rate of the country.

America and Denmark are the two countries which seem to lead in the matter of a pure milk supply. Denmark is becoming the model dairy country, and is starred all over with sweet and wholesome farms, with well-kept cattle, radiantly clean milkers, and pure, damp temples of cleanliness. America is going ahead, as usual, very tempestuously. Not by Acts of the Legislature, but by a great demand from the trade, has she got the railway companies to ensure rapid transit, refrigerators, specially prepared vans, and waiting stations—a whole department, in fact, of the company sacred to the carriage of milk. In Britain there are

willing helpers in the form of doctors, and here and there a dairy-farmer. But we are lingering, hesitating still. What is wanted is a new application of Socialist principle—co-operation among farmers and milk-producers for the carriage of milk on a large scale by the railway companies: and co-operation among consumers to secure the purity of the supply.

"See," wrote Elihu long ago,\* "how private enterprise supplies the street with milk. At 7-30 a milk-cart comes along and delivers milk at one house, and away again. Half-an-hour later another milk-cart arrives and delivers milk first on this side of the street, and then on that, until seven houses have been supplied and he departs. During the next three hours four other milk-carts put in an appearance at varying intervals supplying a house here and another there, until at last, as it draws towards noon, their task is done and the street is supplied with milk."

Six men, six horses and carts rattle along one after the other all over the district through the greater part of the day." It is a waste of time and labour. But beyond this there is often a loss which perhaps no one can estimate. Who knows who may have perished? There is a pedestal somewhere of the Fates—one with her face to the sunrise—the Fate of Birth and Young Life holding a thin golden thread aloft. That thread is often broken before, long before it reaches the Fate of Age. It is a pretty figure—and poetic. But after all the real, certain means of laying the foundations of other evils are beginning to disappear in the neighbourhood of some crèches! New ideas on the value of sleep, and the infants' right to a quiet room, and his unfailing "goodness," if goodness is only suggested to him by those in whose hands he is as helpless and responsive as clay. All this is beginning to filter into certain areas where formerly there was no knowledge of the kind before crèche came.

Who can tell what great men have died in their cradles. To think of the victims as weaklings—alas! Is not that the beginning of all our folly: the first stumble of the blind! No, they were not all unworthy! In the twilight, beyond the glare, rises a cloud of dream-faces; glows with mystic beauty, one and another nameless Star. Quenched ashes! Débris of the race, cries a semi-barbarian thinker in a hurry. But the eyes of the

\* "Talks with John Bull," post free 6d. from publishers of this pamphlet.



men and women of the future, will not thus read the legend on on myriads of tiny graves.

Meantime, something is done for infants by men and women outside the narrow circle of mere home interest. In England, Mr. Broadbent, the Mayor of Huddersfield, has made an experiment which promises to bring home the truth about baby-neglect in a very startling way. It is said that under his system the baby deaths in Longwood are reduced to 35 per thousand births. If this be so, then England has, after all, outdistanced every other land already, by a single effort! Other countries, however, are awake. Crèches are founded in every quarter of Paris, all of them under the jurisdiction of the City authorities. Those I have seen are very pleasant places. The nurses are devoted to the babies, and the little ones, clean, bright little Parisiennes begin at a surprisingly early age to take an interest in the toilette of visitors! Every European country, even Russia, has now its crèches—and middle class crèches too are opened for the relief of well-to do mothers!

No crèche can take the place of home—yet, we may as well remember that a crèche may be, and is, very often, a school for home makers. Infant life is studied in many crèches—there, dependence on instinct is impossible, and thus, the value and meaning of many things concerned with life is lifted out of the shifting wave of mere instinct, on to the firm rock of consciousness and real knowledge. The crèche-nurse knows that she has a harder task, in a sense, than that of any mother. She cannot afford to be careless, because the results would be frightful, and what is more, would alarm everyone. One cannot see death spreading in the crèche without horror—in single deaths occurring in homes it is different. The nurse has to plan and contrive to get perfect conditions under difficulties, and she learns perforce. So the death-rate falls in the crèche, as in the city, and the crèches and cities become, if not homes, at least schools of life.

Nevertheless the crèche is, of course, only a palliative (if indeed we can say that anything which educates is ever merely a palliative). The real reform must take place in homes. It must extend, however, to farms, shops, dairies, and to the business operations of entire communities and even of nations. And who should join in bringing about this reform if not the Labour Party? Here is a piece of real Labour legislation waiting to be

done. Not waiting to be begun, for it is begun already, but waiting to be continued vigorously by many and carried to a triumphant end. There is no item in the Labour programme which should be merely lumped with the others. There is not one of them whose success does not depend on being singled out and followed up vigorously. Our political success can be assured only by a series of concentrated efforts, our labour successes by the selection by one and another question, into which some will throw their heart and strength, till practical difficulties are overcome, and the cloudiness that involves many of our proposals is stricken through with the level beams of positive knowledge. Such Reforms once carried are a fine kind of Propaganda. People who do not go to lectures will consider them. Mere specialization some will cry. But the charge of mere specialism will disappear if the specialist is thorough enough. He cannot make for one great end without meeting all the others *en route*. Thus the friend of Infants will learn much about the Housing Question, much about wage-earning problems, much about education, much about the importance of nationalizing railways, much about the conditions of rural life.

And if this question is worth the attention of men and women as all-round reformers, much more is it worthy their attention as parents. The love of offspring may have been chilled for a moment by the cold breath of our present industrial system. But it is bound to revive. And it is love that will save the myriads who embark on the rough seas of life from going down so soon into the dark waters.



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## Women and Socialism.

"The legislator ought to be whole and perfect, and not half a man only; he ought not to let the female sex live softly and waste money and have no order of life, while he takes the utmost care of the male sex, and leaves half of life only blest with happiness, when he might have made the whole state happy."—PLATO.

"There has never been a labour question without a woman's question also."—KARL PEARSON.

**A**T this moment, when the woman's movement has reached its present advanced stage, and when certainly the justice, if not always the expediency, of granting women's claim to possess equal political power with men is admitted by all intelligent persons, it may seem a little unnecessary to write further pamphlets, or revise old ones, on the subject. But it appears to me extremely important that just at this acute stage of the battle the absolute expediency for the welfare of the State, as well as the justice, of granting the vote to women should be made perfectly clear, and most particularly to those who desire to understand the Labour movement and what it really stands for, because unless the relation of the Labour movement—or perhaps it is better to use the wider term of the Socialist movement—to the Women's Movement, be clearly recognised, the real inner meaning of Socialism itself cannot be understood, for the two movements have the same common origin and the same aims.

**The Meaning of Socialism.** There are many people, even those in the Socialist ranks, who apparently forget, or perhaps have never quite realised, that Socialism demands more than that we should merely import Socialistic institutions into our midst, such as free meals for children, municipalisation, &c., and consider that they will regenerate society and turn us all into Socialists. It insists on a moral regeneration of society of the most complete and searching kind in order to make a lasting foundation for the political and social changes we many of us long to see.

Justice is to be the foundation on which we must build, not the kind of justice we have hitherto considered as sufficient for us, and which many countries pride themselves is their watchword and standard, but a justice that demands freedom for all. "All men are free and equal," declares the United States of America, but in only four of those States are women free, the industrial condition of the workers is not by any means one of freedom, and in the South the race question is still in a state of frightful chaos. Socialism, when it says that in order to have a great nation we must build on this sound foundation, also says that so long as any section of a State be left ignorant and fettered, and therefore powerless to help this immense work forward, that State will be incomplete, for its foundation will be incomplete, for since each and all of us alike are members of the State, it demands from us all an equal share of service. All hands must be on deck if we would save the ship.

Those who are left in voiceless ignorance and darkness cannot grow up lovers of justice and liberty, for having received

neither they can understand neither—slaves proverbially love their chains, and shrink from the burden of responsibility which freedom brings them,—and the whole State can therefore only attain to the puny undeveloped idea we now possess of justice, and which now passes amongst us as the great goddess we imagine we worship and love. Her real image is graven on the hearts of some—of a few,—but the mass of the earth's peoples do not know her; they still worship a figure whose face they cannot really see, for, like themselves, she is blindfolded. The justice of Socialism will see all things, and therefore understand all things.

**The Importance of the Home.** Now the relationship between men and women forms the core, the centre round which society grows, for the family, the home, is the very heart of a nation. If that relationship be founded on justice such as I have described above, then we shall have a knowledge growing fuller and more complete as experience teaches each generation, of how to build our state out of this moral regeneration which Socialism calls for, since the two who form the home, understanding it equally in their own lives will teach each other and their families how to undertake it. As things are now, neither understands it,—(the man as occupying the more ignoble position, that of the oppressor, even less perhaps than the woman,)—for they stand in a false position of inequality towards each other, and that falseness spreads, as a fungus spreads its evil growth, into their relationship to others. Hence we have the world as we now see it; founded not on justice, not on freedom, but on a make-believe of both.

Socialism goes straight to the home, to the heart of the world, in its cry for freedom. Free the home, let the woman be no longer in political subjection, and free the worker, it says; bring light into all the dark homes of the earth so that each one like a torch may spread the light throughout all the world, and by that light we shall then see wisely and clearly how to bring about the social changes we so ardently desire. Reforms coming thus from the heart of a nation, must be and will be, of the strongest and most enduring kind.

**Connection between the Woman's Movement and the Labour Movement.** But now how is the woman's movement and the labour movement connected besides in this common demand for a State founded on the highest justice and the consequent

reform of the home? They both arise from the common evil of economic dependence, or rather, economic slavery. They represent two sides of the very same question. As Karl Pearson puts it: "The status of woman and the status of labour are intimately associated with the manner in which property is held and wealth inherited, . . . the position of woman is in the closest correlation with that of labour, and both vary with the nature of ownership. During the years of child bearing and child rearing, the woman in any but the most primitive stages of civilization (where ownership is scarcely known), must



be dependent upon the owner of property for subsistence."

**Early Civilizations.** To show this connection a little more clearly let us see what, as far as we can tell, was the condition of women and the workers among early nations. All recent discoveries tend to show that before the owning of property became a nation's greatest ambition, neither women nor labourers were enslaved. If we carefully examine the most recent records of early Egyptian civilization, we find (about 6000 B.C. or earlier) no slavery, no impoverished class, and the women holding posts of equal responsibility with the men. There is no trace of the mothers of the nation having been classed with lunatics and imbeciles, as is the case in this enlightened age.

From the early histories of other nations, we find as a rule their women were more or less free and their workers prosperous. With increase of territory and wealth, came slavery, poverty, and a downfall in the position of women.

Plutarch gives an interesting account of the Celtic women. He says: "There arose a very grievous and irreconcilable contention among the Celts; the women, placing themselves between the armies, took up the controversies, argued them so accurately, and determined them so impartially that an admirable friendly correspondence and general amity ensued, both civil and domestic. Hence the Celts made it their practice to take women into consultation about peace or war, and to use them as mediators in any controversies that arose between them and their allies."

The Romans were much struck by the high position held by the women amongst the Britons. Cæsar says that the British women were made use of in Court, in Council, and in Camp, and that no distinction of sex was made in places of command or government.

The general prosperity of these nations also struck these early conquerors as remarkable.

**The Guilds.** When we come down to the 15th century the connection between the two movements is plain to read, for industrialism was becoming an important factor in the world's history.

The Guilds were then in their most prosperous stage, and the condition of the workers consequently in many ways superior to what it is now. So also was the position of women superior. As far back as the 12th century we find records of women members who held positions and traded on equal terms with men. Mrs. Green, in her *History of Town Life in the 15th Century*, says: "Married women might become merchants on their own account and carry on trade, hold property and answer in all matters of business before the law as independent traders." There are records of trading Guilds consisting of women members only.

Women also took a considerable part in the educational movement of this prosperous time, and the very first day-school of which we have any mention was founded at Wotton-under-Edge, by a woman, in 1385. The grammar schools (both free and otherwise) which were founded during this period, very often (if not mostly) were for girls and boys alike. Some of the

colleges at Cambridge and Oxford were founded or endowed by women. When one sees how jealously these Universities continue to exclude women from obtaining the degrees they have rightfully earned, and from holding fellowships, one cannot help thinking of those women to whom, in part, they owe their very existence!

With the decay and final extinction of the power of the Guilds by the Crown and the Church, came a like fall in the position of women, and in James the First's reign we find the lawyer, Sir Edward Coke (whom James describes as "the fittest engine for a tyrant ever was in England,") classing women as "minors," and announcing that "all women having freehold or no freehold must be henceforth excluded from voting for Parliament." After this and similar pronouncements which eventually passed into law, began our gradual exclusion from all public affairs.

The position of the worker was, as we all know, permanently undermined by the destruction of the Guilds, and it was then also that both the poor and women began to lose their share in the educational institutions of the time. Until within comparatively recent years the knowledge even that girls were generally included in the foundation of our grammar schools, had vanished from people's minds, and there are few who know that Eton was originally founded for "poor and indigent" scholars, yet such are the words in the foundation.

**Beginning of the Capitalistic Era.** Later again, during the 16th century, these two movements even more strikingly show their connection. The old organisations of labour and capital were, as just stated, being gradually destroyed, and the worker was falling into deeper and deeper poverty, for capitalism was beginning its "long years of labour exploitation;" and it was during this very time that prostitution increased enormously and came to be recognised in some countries as a regular part of a nation's life. This was, of course, largely due to the decrease in the marriage rate which always follows on an increase in poverty. Capitalism always has been, and is now, a worse enemy to women than it can be to men for this very reason. Prostitution is chiefly—there are some who say entirely—an economic question. How terribly this evil corrupts the life and heart of a nation we all know and recognise in a general sort of copy-book fashion, just as we all know that "unpunctuality is the thief of time," or any other motto on which we do not act, but why is it that we do not as a nation rise up and insist that from every pulpit and lecture hall it be taught that every person who makes a living or a fortune out of the degradation of women be absolutely boycotted,—that he shall never write M.P. after his name, and that his statue shall never be erected in any public place? We can have no socialistic state till this moral battle be begun, and it is women only who can begin it.

The dissolution of the monasteries also during this century, by turning adrift whole bands of men and women who possessed no means of livelihood whatsoever, struck another blow at the



position of both the poor and women. Mrs. Green says of the labourers, the most destitute of all in those terrible days, "their brotherhood was reinforced by the waifs and strays of town and country, that flocked into their sad fellowship on the dissolution of the monasteries."

**Martin Luther's Influence.** Martin Luther, by his teaching in his later life, was one of the worst enemies women (in Germany particularly where his influence was strongest) and the workers have had to contend with.

His attitude towards the peasants may be gathered from his tract entitled "Against the murderous and rapacious rabble of Peasants," in which he says "a rebel is outlawed by God and Kaiser, therefore who can and will first slaughter such a man does right well, . . . O Lord God when such spirit is in the peasants, it is high time that they were slaughtered like mad dogs."

This was written when the peasants, oppressed most intolerably by the nobility, rose in rebellion, and Luther, by his writing and preaching helped immensely to aid the oppressors during the ensuing 30 years of war. Of all wars it was one of the most wicked and cruel, and ended in such a complete repression of the peasantry that to this day the effects of its success are felt by the working-classes in Germany.

Of the position of woman he says "where he (man) is there must she be, and bend before him as before her master whom she shall fear and to whom she shall be subject and obedient." And of marriage he says, "it is an outward bodily thing as any other worldly bargaining." "I must forsooth confess that I cannot prohibit any man from taking several wives."

Witch superstition was rife at this time, and Luther spread it far and wide by his teaching. He says, "No one should show mercy to such people, I would myself burn them."

Witch burning and torturing spread rapidly all over Europe, and in later days reached America. Of all the world's sad pages this was one of the saddest. In France alone, during the reign of Francis I., more than 100,000 witches are said to have been put to death, and in Louis XIII.'s reign the proportion of witches burnt to wizards, is reckoned at 10,000 to one. From the pulpit people were exhorted to bring the witch to justice. The destruction of the peasants was also, as I have pointed out, preached from the pulpit.

An accusation of witchcraft served as a good excuse for weeding out any woman who was troublesome. A woman who was too clever, too ardent about reform, who refused to submit quietly to a husband's oppression or cruelty, who stood above her fellows in any manner to which the Church or her men-kind chose to object, was accused of witchcraft and her doom was sealed. This extermination of the cleverest and most original minded women, women who dared to raise their voices, while it left mostly untouched the "domestic doormat" species, and those who though rebels at heart became skilled in hypocrisy and deceitful silence, has undoubtedly

degraded women and retarded the spread of their movement for education and freedom. It is largely responsible, more largely than we perhaps realise, for the type of domestic woman who says that submission to everything is "womanly," and also for the political woman who cares nothing about a vote, but who regards that dangerous and impure thing "influence" as her noblest weapon (in those dark days it was her only hope, and how continually it failed her if she were poor or obscure!) and who cannot see that every time she refuses to push forward her claim for freedom she most gravely injures the State she professes to love so well. By her refusal she is helping to keep half the State, her own half, bound in the old bonds of servitude, and is thus causing the whole to suffer.

Let those who love to rail at women for their foolishness, their ignorance, their submissive susceptibility to the opinions of others and so forth, be patient with us if they can, remembering that these were the very faults which were so bitterly enforced on our unhappy female forbears in those old days.

We have carried on the same process with our domestic animals, and with a complete success. In order to obtain a race of docile, brainless creatures, whose flesh and skins we can use with impunity, we have for ages past exterminated all those who showed signs of too much insubordination and independence of mind.

Karl Pearson describes this page in woman's history as her "last struggle against complete subjection." In Germany, just as in the case of the peasantry after the 30 years' war, the woman's struggle was entirely crushed. Woman became silent, for the dark waters of despair had closed over her, and in that country it is only within very recent years that she has really begun again to stir in good earnest.

**The Present Day.** Let us now turn to the present day. Is this connection between the movements, Labour and Women, still apparent, are the same powers still hostile to both?

In America, in the year 1830, when the anti-slavery movement was beginning, two sisters called Grimke, freed their slaves, left their homes, and retiring to the Northern States, began to fight for women's freedom as well as the negroes'. The clergy raised their voice in indignant protest against both doctrines. "The enslavement of the negro and the woman," they said, "were alike the ordinance of God."

In 1840, the great Anti-slavery Convention was held in London, and, with a few exceptions, our clergy took up the same line of argument, and announced their knowledge of the Almighty's views on women and negroes and their proper place in the world with a like explicitness. As we all know, they said it was "in opposition to the plain teaching of the word of God," that "females" should sit and deliberate in the Convention. It was because of this exclusion of women, some of whom had been his noblest colleagues, from the Conference, that Lloyd Garrison refused to take any part in its proceedings, and sat alongside the despised "females" behind the bar and curtain erected for them.



It was from this Convention that the Women's Suffrage movement arose in its present definite shape. Women began to see and understand the uselessness of trying, or even hoping to serve the State effectively, to give the nation their best work, unless they could do so with the same responsibility and power behind them that men possess. To depend on what is called "woman's influence" was, they saw, to depend on an unworthy, and, in times of real stress, a useless, weapon; occasionally it might ameliorate a few of the lesser evils of the world, but it could never really touch or change them. They therefore made from henceforth the definite demand of an equal enfranchisement with men, their basis.

When the negro's claim for enfranchisement was heard, the women's claim was thrust aside.

At the present moment the connection between the women's movement and the Socialist movement seems closer than ever. Before the last general election the ruling classes extended the antagonism they have always shown to the woman's cause, in an even more decided manner than usual to the Trade Union cause, and whole Labour movement. The woman's cause received several blows too of a worse character than it had received for several previous years. Now, in Parliament, the Labour Party has definitely and decidedly espoused the cause of women's political enfranchisement, and the two causes are, therefore, in the House of Commons at least, distinctly joined together. Partly through the spread of the socialist trend of thought, partly through the slow upward growth of the women themselves, and the public work which they have achieved under immense difficulties, but chiefly through the terrible economic conditions which women wage earners have now to endure, the Labour Party realises that there can be no economic freedom for a country in which one half of the workers have no political freedom. The denial of such freedom to any one class must of necessity, as explained at the beginning, act disastrously on the progress of the whole community, and the more so when, as in this case, this class includes half the whole nation. The whole state, as Plato says, must be made happy, and not only half.

**Women's Reform Work.** The next point we come to is to show that women by their public work, both in countries where they have the vote and in those where they have not, make the same demands and have the same objects in view as the Labour Party.

In England on all public bodies on which women sit, they are insisting on proper cottage accommodation and a good water supply in rural and urban districts. They are urging that the lives of those who live in workhouses shall be made happy and useful, and that the children there must be trained to be good citizens, and that no "taint of pauperism" be attached to them hereafter. They are asking that women shall receive equal pay with men for equal work. They have refused on more than one important occasion to support a candidate whose moral character was known to be bad.

These are all part of the Socialist creed.

If we turn to countries where women possess full political power we shall find this resemblance between the aims of Woman and Labour even still more apparent.

In Wyoming, where women have exercised the suffrage since 1869, in Utah and Idaho, where they were enfranchised in 1896, and in Colorado, in 1893, the women's vote raised the age of consent to 18. In this country it is still 16. In Wyoming women teachers must (by law) receive equal pay for equal work and when equally qualified, as men teachers receive. Excellent legislation against gambling has been passed. The employment of boys and girls in mines, and of children under 14 in public exhibitions is also forbidden there. Free Libraries, free Kindergartens, the proper treatment of children, and also of animals, the cleanliness of streets, and the care of the aged, the feeble-minded and insane, industrial conditions, and a host of other matters equally important, including temperance measures, have all been traced to the women's vote.

In New Zealand, as we all know, Old Age Pensions were obtained in 1898, *i.e.*, five years after women had obtained the franchise, and, as everyone agrees, it was their vote mostly which passed it. Industrial reforms also of an important kind, both there and in Australia, have resulted from the women's vote. The presence too of women at the polling booth in those countries has been productive of nothing but good, as all the authorities combine in telling us; men have taken more interest in recording their votes, the public houses are closed on the election day in some parts, and neither the husband's shirt buttons nor the baby have been in the least neglected. Sir John Cockburn says, in referring to South Australia, and the effect of the women's vote there, "In the first place, legislators have to lead decent lives. Women won't put up with any nonsense. . . . The woman's vote in South Australia has been a vote for health, physical and moral, in the highest possible sense."

Everywhere in England we see women fighting for reforms of the same kind as those for which the Labour Party is fighting, and arousing therefore the same opposition from those who prefer stagnation to reform. The women are, of course, generally unconscious as yet of the connection between their cause and the labour cause, and of the similarity of their respective aims, and, doubtless, the larger reforms we in the Socialist ranks desire, they do not always understand or wish for. Probably, the word Socialism arouses in some the same dread that it arouses within many men's minds. But, nevertheless, it was a non-Socialist woman Parish Councillor, the late Miss Jane Escombe, who first led the way in the direction of land nationalisation in rural districts. She made her Council build and own cottages on their own land. Women's work is awakening people to see that society must be responsible for the welfare of the individual, because the individual, each one of us who fulfils a duty to the State, is the State (each for all, all for each, we say), and I am convinced they have thus helped immensely,



even though unconsciously, to prepare the way for the growth of a Socialism of the best and most enduring kind. Unconscious reformers have sometimes achieved the strongest results. Mary Carpenter, who began the idea of reformatory schools for the young, was no more a Socialist than was Lord Shaftesbury.

**Liberal and Tory  
Attitude to Women  
and their Work.**

The other two political parties know perfectly well that behind the women's demand for the vote lies the demand for a great economic and moral reform, and a reform which will immediately take its place amongst the practical politics of the day. Old-age pensions will not be left any longer on paper, adult suffrage will not have to wait another forty long years, temperance reform will mean something besides mere tinkering, industrial reforms will come which will, doubtless, end, as in New South Wales, in a material improvement (unpleasant to the capitalist) in the conditions and wages of working women, when the women's voice is heard in Parliament.

In the struggle for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts, women and the then Labour Party (the trade unionists and the co-operators) joined hands, and won an immortal victory. Some of our opposers probably remember that great triumph. They know, in spite of denials and quibbling, that the women's suffrage agitation has never meant simply a demand for a property vote, otherwise, in their own interests, they would have granted it long ago.

Women are called conservative, but has there been any great struggle or revolution in which women have not taken a prominent and important part? What would the Russian revolution be without the women: whose women stood more nobly beside their men, even in the trenches, than the Boer women? Politicians know that when once the women of a nation come into political power, their day of quiet slumber or gentle obstruction is over, for, as Sir John Cockburn puts it, "women won't put up with any nonsense." The extension of men's vote, even if it be to manhood suffrage, they apparently do not dread at all, and one supposes they must argue from experience.

At the heart of every woman who now asks for the vote in all seriousness, lies the conviction that until women possess this power, the deepest moral evils against which the world is perpetually battling can never be crushed or even touched. This is chiefly due to the increasing knowledge of industrial life and conditions which women have gained through their work as Guardians, Factory Inspectors, Sanitary Inspectors, and so forth. It has shown them with a fearful distinctness, that the barbarous state of our marriage and divorce laws, of our laws concerning the custody of children, illegal motherhood and fatherhood, the condition of our streets and factories, etc.: all press most heavily on the lives of *poor* women. It is this knowledge which has stirred in so many women's minds an enthusiasm strong as a religion—to many it is a religion—and a desperate determination that these things shall no longer continue, and, therefore, they have

brought the question forward in such a manner that it now has acquired a position of enormous importance in all thinking minds.

The Labour Party has found its political voice, the women insist that theirs be heard, too. The Labour Party, understanding economic slavery as no other class can, understands the women's need, and the two stand together now, in this demand for political freedom, which alone brings economic freedom. This is what the other two political parties have to recognise at this moment.

**Effect of the  
Franchise on  
Women.**

So much has been said about the manner in which women have used their vote, on progressive lines, in those places where they possess political freedom, that it hardly seems necessary to describe what the effect of the vote will have in England on women themselves. But there is one point which is at times overlooked. Wherever an extension of the franchise has been granted, increased facilities for education have followed. It is, I feel convinced, only where women are citizens that the importance of training and educating the mothers of the nation in their duties as such, will be recognised.

A man is trained for his trade or profession; nature is not considered as a sufficient guide for him if he wishes to be, for instance, an engineer. A woman receives no special training when she undertakes the fearfully important rôle of motherhood. Nature is supposed to teach her everything. She is taught neither chemistry nor hygiene—nor domestic economy, except in a most incomplete and desultory manner. Consequently we have our present high rate of infantile mortality, an increase of anæmia amongst our growing girls particularly, and our miserable housing conditions.

The supreme importance of teaching physical control of every kind to their children is never explained or mentioned to women, and therefore we have certain moral evils increasing, instead of diminishing, and to an alarming extent.

It is a little misleading, too, to say we trust to nature. We have lost all connection with nature through our industrial life, and we no longer understand her. The mother wild animal, as those who read Long's\* books will see, teaches her children how to conduct themselves, and how to avoid the dangers and difficulties of life. Our mothers, particularly those in the poorest classes where life's dangers are most keenly felt, cannot do this. The instincts which free wild animals possess they now know nothing of, and we have not given them any training which can take their place.

**Attitude of the  
Labour Party to the  
Women's Movement.**

In the past, and indeed in some measure at the present day too, there has been a prejudice against the woman's movement amongst Socialists on the ground that it owes its origin and growth, mostly, if not entirely, to middle-class women. Surely it is anti-Socialistic and futile to argue in this position. Our present Socialist party

\* "The School of the Woods," etc.



was in the beginning formed chiefly by middle-class men and women. William Morris was a middle-class man. Lord Shaftesbury was not of the "working class," as we term it, but the Factory Acts he initiated nevertheless marked the beginning of a Socialistic industrial era. The very reason why the Labour movement of the present day is superior to all similar movements in the past, and why it has before it a future of endless growth and development, is because it has swept into its great current followers of all classes. It has got beyond the earlier stages of mere class warfare, it has lost that old provincial spirit, and is now international, cosmopolitan in its demands. It aims at binding the workers of all nations, regardless of sex or race or caste into one great whole, and in that word Workers it includes all who contribute their share of service to the world. Mutual service is an imperative condition. It appeals to all to join its ranks, solely on this condition.

Just so is the woman's movement now expanding out of its narrow origin and appealing to all classes of women to take their share in the crusade. The Trade Union woman sees that she is entitled to political representation in return for her political fund levy. Discontent is everywhere spreading amongst women workers, and they are desiring to put their case themselves before the world, in their own way. Their standard of living has been slowly raised by the sanitary and housing and factory reforms the middle-class woman has been ceaselessly advocating since she attained a place in the local government of the country, and they are therefore beginning to wish for better conditions in their lives.

The middle-class woman, as I have pointed out, bases her demand for justice, primarily on the needs of the working woman, now that her knowledge of those needs has grown clearer.

It is impossible, therefore, any longer to brand the woman's movement as only a middle-class affair.

**Women's attitude to the Labour Party.** It is perfectly true that hitherto women have mistrusted the Labour Party. It is only recently that the latter has really understood what the woman's party is fighting for underneath its cry for a vote. The working women's economic demands and needs have made them see its meaning and its connection with their own aims. Before this, women have seen that each time an extension of the franchise has been granted to the male workers, their own claim, on even the most modest scale, has been pushed ruthlessly aside, and all promises to the contrary broken unhesitatingly, because the safety of the Bill, they were told, must not be endangered by the addition of less important matter. Now no one likes to be described as "less important matter," especially as none of the State's pecuniary burdens are lifted from our shoulders on that ground, but only its privileges, and a distrust of the working class voter has grown up in many women's minds, particularly since the last Reform Bill of 1884. The steady decrease in women's local government powers since that date has produced this mistrust. The Judge's decision

that as the word "person" did not include women, they could not sit on County Councils, made these suspicious-minded ones conclude that an extended male franchise must continually bring them further loss of liberty. Moreover, the socialist cry of Adult Suffrage (the word Adult now does not include woman), which when put into shape as a Bill for Parliament shrinks into Manhood Suffrage only, makes them think, and naturally I hold, that Socialism means nothing more for them than Liberalism has ever meant, with its empty cry of "no taxation without representation," or Toryism, with its "property vote," which has always ignored women's property claims.

Manhood suffrage in Germany, in France, in America (excepting always those four States where women possess the vote) has not brought freedom to women. In all these countries the position of women, industrial and otherwise, is inferior to their position in this country. In New South Wales women waited ten years before manhood suffrage was altered to adult suffrage. In some of the American States it took it away from them, and in Victoria in Australia, where, since 1857 men have had manhood suffrage, even yet women are not fully enfranchised. Manhood suffrage they have dreaded here, believing it would, as things are now, and looking at these countries as an instance, deliver them even more completely into the hands of the capitalist and exploiter. Those who desire a true adult suffrage consider that it will come infinitely quicker when together men and women can work for it. Men alone have certainly not achieved it here as yet.

To destroy the justice of sex disability will, many of us hold, so immensely help to clear the world's vision, will sweep away so many old superstitions and foolish prejudices, that we shall then be able to see how to establish a true enfranchisement for all, and bring an ever widening justice, in which we shall then include love of the human race, into all the relationships of life. As I said at the beginning of this pamphlet, if justice (and love) be brought into our home life, it will become part of the whole nation's life.

**Result of the two movements working together.** We must I think, surely gather from a clear understanding of the common origin and aims of these

two movements, that the more they work alongside or together, the more each will strengthen the other. The Labour party will always keep the economic side well to the front, and this is a side women are apt to overlook since all women do not yet grasp the intimate connection between morals and economics. Women will help to keep more clearly before our eyes, than is perhaps always possible now, those great ideals for the accomplishment of which Labour representation is only a means. History shows us that no cause can be far reaching or eternal that has not within it a religious enthusiasm, using the word in its very widest sense. The loyalty of women to priest and parson, for which they are continually ridiculed, has its foundation (distorted as is its shape at present) in a dim, unconscious recognition of this. Turned into wide and wholesome channels this enthusiasm will be invaluable to the Labour movement.



We think now that we understand and worship love, justice and compassion, but our present understanding of them is a mere blurred vision compared with what, in the future, it will be when men and women stand together, helping and teaching one another as equals and friends, instead of as now often living alongside one another as strangers, sometimes even as enemies. Our lives at present are mostly quite different from our ideals, poor as our ideals are,—we worship poverty in our churches, and we scorn it in our daily life and our laws, which class the lunatic and the pauper together; we reverence woman and motherhood in our poetry, whilst we underpay and enslave women, and motherhood leads to untold misery and degradation in the lives of innumerable women; we talk much about the beauty of compassion for the weak and helpless, and at the same time think we are justified in torturing animals, of all things the most helpless, for our own use and comfort. All this, and infinitely more of a like nature, we do in a stupid, blind fashion, not knowing that we do it. Slowly our eyes are opening and we begin to feel our lives are wrong, and we long to do better; but it is not until woman, strong and free, stands beside man, helping him to reach this better life, and not as now often holding him back from it, that we shall begin in real earnest to walk towards the full light of day.

“May it not be that this very subjection has in itself so chastened, so trained her (woman) to think of others rather than of herself, that after all it may have acted more as a blessing than as a curse to the world? May it not bring her to the problems of the future with a purer aim and a keener insight than is possible for man?”

#### APPENDIX.

GUILDS.—In 1388 (12 Richard II.) an order was given that all Guilds and Brotherhoods should give returns of their foundations. Women appear as founders of some of these Guilds, which were partly of a social and religious character, and which taught an equal moral standard for both sexes. This is a remarkable indication of woman's influence in those early times.

The large trading Guilds, Clothworkers, Drapers, Brewers, Fishmongers, Weavers, besides many smaller ones, admitted women members. In Edward IV.'s reign we find mention of a Guild of “Silkewomen and Throwsters,” consisting of women only. (See “British Furwoman,” by E. C. Stopes. Also Mrs. Green's “History of Town Life in the Fifteenth Century.”)

“Prostitution began to play a great part in the social life of the mediæval cities. It must also be noted that at the same time the line between capitalist and worker became more prominent, and a town proletariat made its influence felt.”

(See “The Sex-Relations in Germany,” by Karl Pearson. Also “Martin Luther,” both in “The Ethic of Freethought,” by Pearson.)

WITCHCRAFT.—The following is an account of materials and other expenses attending the execution of two witches in Scotland. These matter-of-fact records bring the horror of the whole thing clearly before one's mind.

|                                               | £ | s. | d. |                                                                             | £ | s. | d. |
|-----------------------------------------------|---|----|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|----|----|
| For ten loads of coal to burn the witches ... | 3 | 16 | 8  | For one to go to Tinnmouth for the Lord to sit upon the assize as judge ... | 0 | 6  | 0  |
| „ a tar barrel ...                            | 0 | 14 | 0  | „ the executioner for his pains ...                                         | 8 | 14 | 0  |
| „ towes ...                                   | 0 | 6  | 0  | „ his expenses there ...                                                    | 0 | 16 | 4  |
| „ hurdles to be jumps for them ...            | 1 | 3  | 0  |                                                                             |   |    |    |
| „ making of them ...                          | 0 | 8  | 0  |                                                                             |   |    |    |

The clergy and kirk sessions appear to have been the unwearied instruments of “purging the land of witchcraft.” Many women were driven to suicide in fear of the tortures in store for them, for tortures of the most atrocious kind were applied to make them “confess.”

In Germany, during the reign of Duke Heinrich Julius, “10 or 12 witches were often burnt in one day, so that the place of execution, before the Lechenholz near Wolfenbüttel, the stakes stood like a small forest.” (Pearson's translation of Tittmann.) Two of the signs of a witch were, “a strong intellect, or remarkable beauty.”

These accusations laid against women, partly (if not chiefly in France) arose from the horrible feudal claim, called Marquette, a claim in most countries invariably enforced. This was the right every feudal lord possessed to the first 48 hours of every bride's life on his estate.

So desperate were the women, “God Himself seemed to have forsaken women,” says one writer, that they, together with their husbands, met together secretly at nights, to pray to God for help, and with their prayers they presented offerings of corn, etc.,—the remains of early Pagan offerings of fruits of the earth. These offerings were attended by old rites of a harmless character, but which were construed by the feudal lords and the church into “Black Acts,” and the poor worshippers were denounced as witches.

The Pilgrim Fathers took the idea of witchcraft over to America, and the prosecutions there were terrible.

For the attitude of the early *Christian Fathers* towards women, see the prayer of St. Chrysostom, in which he describes women as a “necessary evil, a natural temptation, a desirable calamity, a domestic peril, a deadly fascination, and a painted evil.”

“In the Laws and Resolutions of Women's Rights” (London 1632), we find: “The reason why women have no control in Parliament, why they make no laws, consent to none, abrogate none, is their Original Sin”!

NEW ZEALAND.—Women had a long fight to gain their enfranchisement, after Manhood Suffrage was established.

A National Council of Women was established 1896, three years after the granting of the Franchise. This Council considers all political matters, and draws up Bills for the Legislature.

A resolution was passed by it in 1896 urging the need for Old Age Pensions, subject to the following conditions:—“(1) The cost to be a charge on the consolidated Revenue; (2) the qualification of the recipients to be 20 years' residence in the country and a certified age of 65 years.” This meant universal Old Age Pensions, and was objected to in the Legislature, and the present Bill, which has an income limitation, was passed. The women continue to urge their Bill, because by it no stigma of pauperism would be attached to the recipients.

The Women's Temperance Union is affiliated with the National Council, and the subject has been in evidence at every Council meeting. The abolition of licences in five fresh electorates at the last Licensing Election is attributed by “the Trade” to the women's vote.—Mrs. Sheppard.

Sir John Cockburn says, “I believe the success of that measure (Old Age Pensions) was largely owing to the influence of the women's vote.”

The “Lyttleton Times” (New Zealand) says in 1903, “One good effect of the extension of the Franchise to women is seen in the increased activity of the male electors. When the men had the field to themselves it was a rare thing for 60 per cent. of those on the rolls to record their votes. It is now about 78 to 79 per cent.”

Women are paid in factories, etc., for all public holidays.

AUSTRALIA.—Women were enfranchised in South Australia in 1894. In Western Australia in 1900. In New South Wales in 1902, *i.e.*, ten years after the granting of Manhood Suffrage. In Queensland women obtained full suffrage in 1905.

Sir John Cockburn says of the women's vote in South Australia, “With regard to Temperance, that cause has had a great accession of strength. A Bill providing a greater measure of local option has been passed into law. Sunday closing has been made more effective. It was the law before, but it was not strictly observed, and the women said, ‘We are going to have it kept.’ Women have set their faces against gambling and betting.”

TASMANIA.—Women obtained full suffrage in 1903.

An interesting report published in America of a Committee on the Judiciary House of Representatives of the United States throws light on the effect of the



women's vote in America, where they possess it. They have made the mothers the co-equal guardians of their children. Very stringent laws for the prevention of cruelty to children and to animals have been passed. The insurance of children under 10 is forbidden in order to prevent the murder of babies.

It is a criminal offence for any person, parent or otherwise, to encourage, cause, or contribute to the delinquency of any child.

Between the ages of 14 and 16 no one may work more than 8 hours a day.

Free kindergartens, in Utah, are provided in all school districts having a population of 2,000.

The report shows that the "corrupt vote" is biggest in those districts where are the fewest women voters, and it goes on to state that in the States "11 per cent of the total male voters cannot read their own ballots"—they are entirely illiterate. These are the persons, it is considered, who continue to withhold the franchise from women.

In 14 States women have no suffrage of any kind whatsoever, for any local affairs even. In 1807, in New Jersey, women were deprived of the vote. In Massachusetts also women were turned off the register in 1820. Previously, they had voted in these States.

GERMANY.—No property qualification exists for voters for the Reichstag. Women have no vote.

FRANCE.—No property qualification for male voters. Women have no vote.

FINLAND.—Women now vote on equal terms with men, since 1906.

ENGLAND.—The first petition in favour of women's suffrage was presented in 1832, and was from Mary Smith, of Stanmore, Yorks. In it she stated that as women were liable to all the penalties of the laws, including death, they ought to have a share in making those laws.

In May, 1866, a petition of 1,499 signatures was presented by John Stuart Mill, and received in the House of Commons with shouts of laughter.

1868. A petition of 21,000 signatures, headed by Florence Nightingale and Mrs. Somerville was presented, "a heavy but delightful burden which Mr. Mill could hardly carry to the table."

1873. Memorials from 11,000 women presented to Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli.

1881. Suffrage granted to women in the Isle of Man for the House of Keys.

1888. A memorial signed by 169 Members of Parliament, presented to the First Lord of the Treasury asking Government to give a day for a Women's Suffrage Bill. From 1870 to 1897 Bills or resolutions have been brought before the House of Commons almost annually. In 1897 1,285 petitions were presented.

1901. A petition presented signed by 29,300 Lancashire textile women workers; and a memorial signed by 1,168 workers.

1902. A petition presented signed by 33,184 women textile workers in Yorkshire, and one signed by 4,300 women textile workers in Cheshire. A petition signed by 750 women graduates of Universities.

1903. Petition presented signed by 8,600 tailoresses in West Riding of Yorks.

Petition presented from 71 Trades and Labour Councils and 62 Trade Unions, representing over 100,000 working-men.

Petition presented from the I.L.P.

1905. Petitions bearing 25,708 signatures.

1906. Deputation representing over 100,000 women to Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman.

Petition from 8,000 women in the Rossendale Division.

In 1874 and 1875 petitions of 845,965 signatures were presented. In 1895 250,000 women signed one petition.

Before the passing of the Local Government Act, there were about 200 women Poor Law Guardians, but after 1894 the number immediately rose to 850, and is now about 1,000, of whom about 100 are Rural District Councillors, and two Urban District Councillors. Of women Parish Councillors there are about 100. No complete list has ever been compiled. There are 212 women physicians, surgeons, or general practitioners. Of women schoolmasters, teachers, professors, and lecturers, 171,670, as compared with 58,675 men.

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# WOMAN

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By T. D. Benson.



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## Woman—the Communist.

THERE is much in science to-day which is mere theory and guess work and in no department of science is there more theorising than in that of the early history of mankind. As an instance of how small a discovery can upset whole departments of science, we may take the recent discovery of radium. Previous to its discovery, it was certain that the sun was losing its heat, which could only be maintained by the falling in of worlds for its consumption. It was equally certain that the earth was becoming so cold that in measureable time it would be uninhabitable and serve only as fuel for the sun. This cooling process of the earth limited its habitable age in the past and decided its mission in the future. Now it is stated that there is sufficient radium in the sun and in the earth to enable them to maintain their present temperature practically to all eternity. This discovery destroys at once the necessity for the cataclysmic theory of the universe. We have now, so far as mankind are concerned, an eternity in the future for our dreams and an eternity in the past for our theories. I would by this example point out that science is not, as yet, infallible, and that if it can be so fallible in departments where it has been so sure, it may be equally wrong in statements which are still admitted to be but theories. I refer to the early history of mankind. More particularly as a socialist do I demur to the condemnation of those early ages of man as states of pure barbarism, those times when communism was the system of society and private property\* was unknown. So far history has been written by those who believe that private property is the rock from which humanity has risen to higher things, as though humanity could rise on the subjection and prostitution of women and the enslavement and martyrdom of men. As a socialist I believe to the contrary, that the desire for power and wealth has been

“The fruit  
Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste brought death into  
the world  
And all our woes.”

Instead of being the rock on which man has risen, I believe it to be rather that Tower of Babel, which divided man into men and which instead of soaring upwards towards high heaven touched the deep hell of child slavery in the nineteenth century. Humanity cannot rise on stepping stones of inhumanity to higher things and nobler states.

\* By private property is meant the private ownership of the means by which others have to live, such as land and machinery, etc.

## THE BOOK OF NATURE.

Nature has fortunately a valuable habit of writing her own history, which men are but beginning to spell out and read. In this book of nature, nothing is too great for her to inscribe, nothing too minute for her to note. She records there equally the overwhelming of the world by ice, and the footprints of a bird, thousands, perhaps millions, of years after it lived on earth. On each frail human form she prints the past history of mankind and we have the long ages of man's evolution recorded and recapitulated in the nine months' life of the foetus before birth. We see there the various stages repeated, through which life made its way upwards and onwards, growing ever more and more complex, the stage of the fish, amphibian, reptile and mammal. Like fossils in the rocks these early stages of man's career are preserved for us to see and in seeing learn to read and understand. “Science,” says Mr. Bagehot,\* “tries to read, is beginning to read in the frame of each man, the results of the whole history of all his life, of what he is and what makes him so, of all his forefathers, of what they were and what made them so, . . . if we could but see it.”

Nature, however, does not cease inscribing her records on man when he is born, but on the frame of each one of us after our entrance into the world she has impressed the history of mankind. These later records, however, are not fully explored and when noted are not understood. We see and understand the facts of the evolution of man as contained in the foetus, but the equally valuable records of men after they have emerged from the animal stage into the human, have so far received but scant attention. Yet these early records written in the human frame are full of interest, for they tell the story of primitive man before the historical civilizations arose, they tell the story, which is still recorded in the myths and legends of the early peoples, of an age before the lust of power got hold of men and demoralized them, of a time of communism and peace and fruitfulness.

In the body of the child during the first three years of life are preserved nature's records of these early ages. From this age onwards, on men there is also written the story of the loss of this earthly paradise. “The human infant,” Mr. Havelock Ellis states,† “presents in an exaggerated form the distinctive characteristics of humanity, in the large head and brain, the small face, hairlessness and delicate bony system. By some strange confusion of thought we usually ignore this fact and assume that the adult form is more highly developed than the infantile form. In man from the third year onwards further growth . . . is to some extent growth in degeneration and senility.” These first three years of high development, as we shall see, are a fact of immense importance to women and to socialists generally. They have so far been generally ignored by writers on anthropology. If the nine months' epitome of the creation of man in the foetus be the

\* “Physics and Politics.” † “Man and Woman.”



recapitulation of the pre-human life on earth, then these first three years after birth record no less definitely a stage of high human development where peace and plenty reigned, when the animal passions were in subjection as in the animal kingdom, and bloodshed and strife and wars were unknown, of an age when humanity attained a higher level of genius than it has ever attained since. It was no mere ephemeral epoch when man's first innocence quickly passed, for if nature can condense the long period of man's evolution into the nine months' life of the fœtus, then the period that requires three years for its recapitulation must be infinitely greater.

#### THE GOLDEN AGE.

In confirmation of this strange revelation by nature we have, in all the great civilizations of the world, curious myths and legends of a golden age of mankind, when the earth brought forth its fruits spontaneously, an age of happiness and innocence, free from calamities, crimes and diseases, an age of communism and fraternity. These myths and legends, taken in conjunction with the impress of such an age left on each one of us by nature, render it highly probable that the golden age is no mere fancy of the poet, but an actual reminiscence of the facts of social life in its primitive organisation of village and house communities.

So far, we have no history of mankind written from the socialistic standpoint. Such historian would point out that the records of all civilizations are but the history of mankind since the early communism was broken up, since the lust of power and possession entered in and destroyed primitive society. The history of all civilizations is but the history of individualism, when man separated himself from his fellow-men, when each for himself became the guiding principle of conduct, when equality gave way to princes, principalities, and powers, and fraternity ended in slavery. "It is just here," says Sir Henry Maine,\* "that archaic law renders us one of its greatest services. It is full, in all its provinces, of the clearest indications that society in primitive times, was not what it is assumed to be at present—a collection of individuals. In fact, and in the view of men who composed it, it was an aggregation of families." Even here, when law began,—and law only begins with private possessions,—mankind had not yet been separated into individuals, but only into families. When our historians seek, to-day, to discover what our early parents were like, they search out the most debased and bestial tribe, and point in pride to it as the beginnings of the human race. If the records of the first three years of our childhood have a meaning at all, they prove that this debased tribe does not represent the beginnings of man's evolution, but the end of a long period of degeneration and decay. Darwin points out that the licentiousness imputed to savages, points to a period when man had retrograded in his instincts. Man, to-day, after thousands of years of civilization shows no

\* "Ancient Law."

higher type than those skeletons of primitive man, which have been discovered in the Diluvial period. "All those human beings," says Dr. Moriz Hoernes,\* "of whom we are in a position to form an opinion, were well formed men, who, judging from their physical structure, could have mixed with us to-day, without being in any way conspicuous. They had no simian racial indications, their skulls were no smaller, and their face had no animal formation. They were fully developed in every way." Whether these skeletons and skulls of early man show a higher development is not recorded, but in any case, this is not the result that we should obtain if civilization produced a higher human type. The knowledge we now possess emphasizes the fact that the foundations on which civilizations have been erected will not permanently sustain them, will only permit them to reach a certain height, and then they perish from their own inherent weakness.

We find each civilization starting fresh from the hearts and minds of a semi-communistic people, full of the energy and virility of a moral race, but as the concentration of power and property into ever fewer and fewer hands proceeds apace, luxury enervates the race at the top, and slavery at the base, till it passes as others before it. It is stated that when the Babylonian civilization perished 2 per cent of her population owned all the wealth; when the Egyptian passed 2 per cent owned 97 per cent of the wealth, and that when Rome perished 2,000 people owned all the Roman world.

This view of man's decadence is strongly emphasized by Mr. E. Carpenter.† "With the advent of a civilization founded on property, the unity of the old tribal society is broken up. The ties of blood relationship which were the foundation of the gentile system, and the guarantee of the old fraternity and equality, became dissolved in favour of powers and authorities founded on mere possession. The growth of wealth disintegrates the ancient society, the temptations of power of possession, etc., which accompany it, wrench the individual from his moorings, personal greed rules, each man for himself becomes the universal motto, the hand of every man is raised against his brother, and at last society becomes an organisation by which the rich fatten upon the vitals of the poor, the strong upon the labour of the weak." Civilization, indeed, from its beginning, has been but the cult of power, and the worship of wealth. Letourneau takes the same view of the disintegrating effects of private ownership. "In fact," he says, "in all civilized societies which have preceded our own, the absolute supremacy of the unrestrained and selfish rights of private property has been the forerunner of decadence, the main cause of ruin."‡

#### WOMAN.

Woman could play but a very minor part in this struggle for possession of property and power. In fact, like all the

\* "Primitive Man." † "Civilisation—Its Cause and Cure."

‡ "Evolution of Private Property."



weaker members of the race, she succumbed, and became subject to her stronger mate. "She was," says Bebel, "the first human being that tasted bondage, was a slave before the slave existed." From that early time to the present, the mothers of the race have been shut out from the strife of the world, its victims always, but rarely, if ever, its partners. This curious fact is not omitted by nature from her wonderful book. Whilst the history of the degeneration of the race is strongly impressed on the male child from the third year onwards, when, as Wordsworth says:

"Shades of the prison house begin to close  
Upon the growing boy,"

woman, strangely enough, bears but few traces of this degeneration. She, through life retains those high human attributes that the child possesses. "When we have realised the position of the child in relation to evolution, we can take a clearer view of the natural position of woman. She bears the natural characteristics of humanity in a higher degree than man, simply because she is nearer the child. Her conservatism is thus compensated for and justified by the fact that she represents more nearly than man the human type to which man is approximating."\*

Not only, however, does woman still bear the impress on her form of a golden age, and embody the high characteristics that raised it in human dignity above all succeeding ages, but she represents, along with the child, the type toward which the human race is now tending. Thus Dr. Chamberlain† states, "That the child, the woman, the best types of men of genius, and the best types of men in civilized society (cities especially), where the arts of peace outweigh the arts of war, and where industrialism has sustained the amelioration of toil due to modern invention, are the best representatives of the race type, the promise, in one way or another, of the man to be, is a view held by many authorities. Moreover," he continues, "women possess those child-like characters which the highest geniuses of the most intellectual races of mankind exhibit in all ages." "The female type," says Dr. Talbot,‡ from the standpoint of nervous and bodily development, most nearly approaches the promise of child type." Physiology thus agrees with the poet who says that "Woman is not undeveloped man," and caustically adds what the poet never thought, because man is a degenerate from that high human type of which woman is emblematic, the type towards which all that is best and noblest in the male sex is approximating.

This is a curious and unexpected revelation in the book of nature which shocks our sense of masculine superiority, but one which no amount of explanation will explain away. Yet it is one which is exceedingly comforting to the Socialist, when we see the explanation. As we have already seen, civilization has always been founded on power and possession. These necessitate constant war and turmoil, either to hold or to increase, even in the

\* Havelock Ellis' "Man and Woman." † "The Child."  
‡ "Degeneracy, its causes, etc."

more intellectual competition of to-day. Competition between individuals and wars for trade, markets, mines, bonds, etc., are still the mainsprings of the civilization of the twentieth century, and the font of its inspiration and imperialism. They produced a system of society alien to woman's nature, in which she was unable to play her part. Being enslaved by the male in all ages, and even when not absolutely enslaved, yet out of harmony with her surroundings, she has been shut up in the home, secluded from the world. Here, in a small communistic settlement of her own, in an environment akin to her nature, woman has lived countless ages, and the high human type has been continued, for "perfect environment gives eternal life." Family life has been the nearest approach to those primitive ages before man fell, and the home has been, as Professor Drummond says, as between mother and child "a secluded shrine where the culture of everything holy and beautiful was carried on."

Undoubtedly, woman, in continuing the communism of the first ages in the home, has rescued man from absolute degeneration, and has been the salvation of the race. "To woman," says Reclus, "mankind owes all that has made us men." She will be the most potent factor in the coming socialistic state in helping man to regain those high human attributes of which she is the modern representative. "Abundant evidence" says Dr. Chamberlain, "is now forthcoming that the child and the woman, which in the best sense is nearest him physically and mentally, are the real bearers of the evolution of the race. Not soulless, as some ancient theologians and some savage tribes have believed, but bearing the soul of the race, woman the surrogate of the child, has been shaping man physically and mentally in her image, as the man of genius (not the insane genius), and the typical urban adult (not the weakling or the degenerate) demonstrate. The future humanity lies more with woman than with man, and the child is full of its prophecy." The curious part of the references of these physiologists to the high human type of woman and child is, that no explanation is forthcoming of its presence in these two. Do coming events indeed cast their shadows before in this manner? It is curious that this high development of the child should be "prophetic" of that which is to come. No theologian has, so far, ventured to suggest that fossils are "prophetic" of the time when they shall be created. The book of nature does not record dreams of the future, but facts of the past. Fossils are records of what has been. So the child recapitulates a stage in human history that has been. The degeneracy of the man also records a stage that has been and still is. The man will regain his fallen greatness as he gradually moulds his social system to conformity with that environment which has preserved in the frame of woman the early achievements of the race, the communistic life of the family.

#### CIVILIZATION AND COMMUNISM.

It is often urged that socialism will be a return to the



barbaric communism of primitive man. Of this primal communism we know nothing; a high human development does not depend on mechanical science nor do its achievements necessarily leave permanent marks on the earth. The highest culture and greatest intellectual achievements are compatible with a simple life. Many of us think that our civilization, notwithstanding its inventions and instruments, shows a very low human development, that in fact it is inhuman except to property\* and its owners. If we make nature the arbiter, she seems to select primitive communism as productive of the higher type. Physiology holds up the child as the record of a first stage of high human development and the degenerate form of man as representative of the loss of this state in civilization. Nature again presents us with woman, the present type of the old communism, with her greater powers of love and sympathy, finer instincts, swifter perceptions and deeper intuitions than man. Comparative anatomy finally proves the high type of woman and child, in the approximation to them of the man of genius, the atavist, and of the more cultured types of men generally.

As against nature's declaration in favour of communism, what has civilization to show in the uplifting of mankind. True there are great engineering works, wonderful mechanical inventions, many scientific discoveries, marvellous instruments for slaughtering each other, wealth beyond compare. But its benefits for mankind at large, in this as in all previous civilizations, are still in the future, unrealized dreams as yet. There is no wealth but life, and civilization here is poor indeed. It presents us to-day, as in former times, with an enslaved, starving people, a slaughter of the innocents unsurpassed in any age by the most barbarous tribes, prostitution and the subjection of women, Chicago stock yards, a few cultured people, few indeed compared with the mass, a wonderful organisation of society with its police, its armies and navies, organised not for the protection of life but for the greater security of power and property. Truly the achievements of civilization cannot be found in the development of human life nor in the uplifting of mankind, but founded ever on the martyrdom of men and the sacrifice of their bodies and souls, every civilization has so far been a curse and a burden to that vast majority whose shoulders have had to bear its weight.

#### WOMAN IN PRIMITIVE TIMES.

It is a curious and suggestive fact after what has been stated to find that the position of woman at the dawn of history was higher than it is to-day or has been in any succeeding age. We should naturally expect this to be the case, for the harmony between her nature and the earliest civilizations had not become so completely estranged as in later times. In Egypt where written records give us some idea of their life, we find that women were nearly the equals of men. They were not then

\* Note the current phrase "the rights of capital."

secluded in a harem, but sat at meals with the husband, father, brothers; they had equal rights before the law, which to-day they have not. They served in the priesthood and ascended the throne. The earliest deities of the human race bear testimony to woman's position, for they were equally male and female. Juno was to women what Jupiter was to men, and women performed the holiest rites of religion. Diodorus points out that the queen received more power and respect than the king in Egypt. Among private individuals, he says, women rule over men and it was stipulated between married partners that the man should obey the woman. She was often richer than the man, and was responsible for the maintenance of her parents, showing that she, rather than the sons, had the wealth. The right of inheritance was through the mother, and not as to-day through the father. Letourneau states that "Uterine affiliation continued in unchanging Egypt down to the Ptolemies, and, placing the woman in the position of an heiress, secured to her many privileges." It was late in Egyptian history that the power of woman to hold property was taken from her and not till the glory of the old civilization had waned.

In the historic clans of Greece maternal affiliation was first established, the paternal family followed the maternal. This descent of wealth through the woman was of infinite value to her, it saved her from enslavement when nothing else could do. Letourneau points out, "Upon the whole, in every country and in every time, woman, organically weaker than man, has been more or less enslaved by him, unless in some case where legislation has permitted her to use an artificial force to serve her as a shield. This fictitious force before which virile brutality has lowered its flag has been money, wherever the laws have permitted women to raise themselves to the dignity of proprietors." Economic independence was the factor which saved women in the past from entire enslavement. Economic independence is the factor which socialists propound to-day to the workers of the world as their only salvation. In this way the problem of the worker is the problem of the woman and the solution of the one is the solution of the other.

Under the Roman civilization, women who had money attained great liberty, greater than they have ever enjoyed since. According to Mr. Lecky "they had been at first in a condition of absolute subjection or subordination to their relatives. They arrived during the Empire at a point of freedom and dignity which they subsequently lost and never altogether regained. . . . With the exception of the dowry which passed into the hands of the husband, she held property in her own right. A very considerable portion of Roman wealth thus passed into the uncontrolled possession of woman. A complete revolution passed over the constitution of the family. Instead of being constituted on the principle of autocracy, it was constructed on the principle of co-equal partnership. The legal position of the

\* "Greek View of Life."



wife had become one of complete independence while her social position was one of great dignity." Once again we see it was the slavish adulation of wealth by the male which secured woman her freedom. It would, however, be but a small fraction of womankind to whom this liberty was accorded, for the possessors of wealth are always few in number.

<sup>HYGONIA</sup> If we look briefly at the relations between the sexes before the fight for wealth had completely enslaved woman, we find them on an infinitely higher plane than they subsequently became or even are to-day. "We might conclude," says Mr. Dickenson,\* "if we had only Homer to give us our Greek view of life, that they had a conception of woman and of her relations to man, finer and nobler in some respects than that of modern times. But in fact the Homeric poems represent a civilization which had passed away." Thus once again we find a decadence from the early ages of man. Mr. Lecky confirms this view—"It may be fearlessly asserted that the types of female excellence which are contained in the Greek poems while they are among the earliest, are also among the most perfect in the literature of mankind." Luxury and power in those early times had not yet coarsened the finer instincts of men nor forced woman to withdraw into her innermost nature the power to love, which even to-day can rarely be the guide to the altar.

#### WOMAN UNDER CHRISTIANITY.

It is, however, in the Christian era that the subjection of woman became complete, notwithstanding that Christ's teaching destroys all mastership and authority. Christianity at the outset was a communistic fraternity. Men and women were equal and held all things in common. The influence of women was paramount in the great work of the conversion of the Roman Empire. "In no other movement of thought was it so powerful or so acknowledged. In the ages of persecution female figures occupy many of the foremost places in the ranks of martyrdom."\* Christian communism did not last long, and was succeeded by Christian theology, under which Christ's teaching and women still suffer. So disastrous have been the effects of theology on woman, that Sir H. Maine states,† "No society which preserves any trace of Christian institution is likely to restore to married women the personal liberty conferred on them by the Roman law." In its first conflict with the pagan religions of Europe, the Christian church was forced to bow down to their customs and adopt most of their ceremonials and rites, feasts, and gods (under Christian names). We find, consequently, that women ministered in the church in its early years, and the goddesses, Kybele, Aphrodite, Venus, Edda, and Freya, re-appeared in the image of the Virgin Mary. As the control of the church increased over the minds of men, the female officials of the church were gradually excluded. The Council of Laodicea in A.D. 365 forbade the ordination of women to the

\* Lecky "History of European Morals." † "Ancient Law."

ministry, and again in 824 the same Council complains that women still serve at the altar, and even give the communion.

The whole tendency of the church in its worship of asceticism was against the woman. Led, at first, by a justifiable revolt against the loose morality of the Roman world, and then by a passion of asceticism, woman became the representative of all that was evil and vile. Virginity alone was holy, marriage was debased. Poor Eve was the cause of man's fall, and her descendents became the recipients of all the invective that the Fathers of the Church could hurl at her. "Woman," says Mr. Lecky, "was represented as the door of hell, and the mother of all human ills. She should be ashamed of the very thought that she is a woman. She should live in perpetual penance on account of the curses she has brought upon the world. Women were even forbidden by a provincial council in the 6th century, on account of their impurity, to receive the Eucharist in their naked hands." She was thus reduced in the eyes of the Church to the same low level that she occupied in Mohammedan countries, where the law forbids pigs, dogs, women, and other impure animals to enter a mosque. In the Decalogue we find that the neighbour's house is worthy of a command to itself, but in the reference to the neighbour's wife, we find her classed with the horse and the ass, and other details. The Ten Commandments themselves are addressed to men, women evidently being unworthy of notice.

Chivalry and the troubadours, and the cult of the Virgin Mary somewhat raised woman's status in the middle ages, but it was rather the worship of her sex than the recognition of her equality. We have in Grimm's Household Tales, a fair picture of the new view of woman. St. Bernard once went into a cathedral to pay his devotions to the image of the Virgin Mary. He fell thrice on his knees before it, and, full of fervour, uttered the words "O gracious, mild, and highly favoured mother of God!" Hereupon the image began to speak, and said, "Welcome, my St. Bernard!" But the saint, who was displeased by this, reproached the queen of heaven for speaking, in these words. "Silence! no woman may speak in this congregation." This is a fair sample of the worship of woman during the middle ages, which, whilst pretending to worship her, denied her rationality, or as Havelock Ellis caustically sums it up, regarded her as a cross between an idiot and an angel.

The Reformation finally closed all avenues to woman's freedom. Previously, she had a career as abbess or nun open to her. With the Reformation, she was shut up in the home more completely than ever before, her one escape being marriage. Even here, it was not the fault of Luther that polygamy was not added to the other crimes against woman. It is said that Melancthon urged Henry VIII to take another wife rather than divorce the wife he had. It was Luther, who with six others, gave permission to the German Elector Philip, Landgraf of Hesse Cassel, to marry a second wife, his first wife being still alive.



It was more the action of the civil authorities than of the Church that spared woman that crowning degradation in our civilization. Her position gradually sank lower, till she was unable to hold property, could not even demand the wages that she had earned; they belonged to her liege lord and master and could be demanded from her employer by him. Of the present view of the Church on woman, we may take Canon Knox Little as the spokesman. "Wifehood," he says, "is the crowning glory of a woman. In it she is bound for all time. To her husband she owes the duty of unqualified obedience. There is no crime a man can commit, which justifies his wife in leaving him. It is her duty to subject herself to him always, and no crime that he can commit can justify her lack of obedience." Even this year, in Anglesey, we have seen the priest ordering the woman out of church because her head is not covered, that Eastern sign of subjection.

#### EMANCIPATION.

It was not until the nineteenth century that there arose the possibility that the long subjection of woman was drawing to a close. The invention of the steam engine and machinery lightened labour, and reduced in industry the inequality between man and woman. The greed of the capitalist at once seized the woman and the child as cheaper instruments of production than men. Competition forced woman from the home, and brought her out into the open. It was a curious counter revolution. It was the lust of wealth and power, which, in the first instance, produced a system of society in which woman had no share, and which consequently confined her to the home. It was the lust of wealth which seized her again, and forced her into line with men. Morgan states that the failure of classic civilization was due to its failure to develop woman. What will be the effect on our civilization of this sudden development of woman? Already, there is practically no sphere of work that woman has not entered, or will not enter soon. So far, this has been largely from necessity, and marriage is still looked upon by most women as a means of escape from the necessity of earning their own living. This arises mainly, I believe, from the bad conditions and low wages of woman's work. Necessity, however, often starts a fashion. It is becoming customary among women of all classes, whether forced by economic conditions or not, to enter some profession or undertake public work of some kind or other. The desire to escape from the monotony of home life, now that all the home industries have been taken over as public businesses, is a factor of great strength in this change. The increasing opportunities in public life for women, are helpful in preventing the rising generation of women becoming mere pleasure seekers and parasites. It may be taken for granted that in the future, for one reason or other, women will take part equally with men in shaping the destinies of the race.

On the other hand, whilst woman is being compelled to forsake the home and become once again a part of our public

life, there is a rapid growth in society of a sphere harmonious to woman's nature, a preparation as it were for her reception, into which she can enter without violating the fundamental principles of her nature. In looking around us, we find that society has ceased to be composed of individuals, or even of families. The individuals of the nations are being gathered into groups with similar interests, co-operative, and often, to a great degree, communistic. When a move is made in any given direction, it no longer consists of single persons, but of masses of men, of tens of thousands, as witness the growth of the Labour Party. In every direction we see society being welded into huge aggregations, and these again uniting into one composite whole. There is a unification of interests proceeding, which promises soon to make the interests of the people as homogeneous as are the interests of the members of one family. At the same time, there is growing a sense of communal responsibility for the weaker members of the community, the feeding of school children, provision of work for the unemployed, a humanising of the poor-law system, old age pensions, etc. There are also numerous free communistic services arising, free education, free libraries, art galleries, parks, baths, museums, and many more. We see, in fact, a growth in society of the ethics of the family in every direction.

The two greatest movements of the nineteenth century have been the preparation for the reception of woman by the growth of socialism, and the emancipation of woman herself.

Is it a mere chance coincidence that they should be simultaneous in their public appearance? Is it not rather a natural sequence that, as industry prepares a socialistic environment, woman, the survivor of the old communism, should enter in and take possession, as of her kingdom, by right. It is but another instance of the truth of Darwin's doctrine of the survival of the fittest. A change takes place in the environment, and immediately, a different flora and fauna are produced, the more harmonious at once enter in and possess. Woman has not yet grasped the idea that her entrance into public life is permanent, and not merely an episode in her career that will soon pass. She will, however, realise it before long, and is even now demanding those rights which her services to society entitle her, and which men shrinkingly withhold.

#### ENFRANCHISEMENT OF WOMEN.

Some socialists are apt to look askance at this demand of women and consider her a conservative force which is to be feared by them rather than welcomed, but still admitted to equal rights, because justice demands. The conservatism of woman is, however, not the conservatism of man, of individualism; it is rather the conservatism of the old communistic spirit which will find, in the individualism of the day, nothing that appeals to it. The conservatism of woman will be a revolutionary force in a society still founded on individualism, competition and private property, a combination which has secluded woman in the home,



shut her out from life, and subjected her to degradation unmentionable. "This organic conservatism," says Mr. Havelock Ellis, "may often involve political revolution. Socialism and nihilism are not usually regarded by politicians as conservative movements, but from the organic point of view, they may be truly conservative, and as is well known, these movements have powerfully appealed to women. The establishment of Christianity, the most revolutionary movement that has ever been seen in Europe, was, to a considerable extent, furthered by women." Women take part naturally in any revolution which is meant to overthrow our man-made civilization, and it would be hard to name a revolution in which women have not played their part. We need only think of the women martyrs in the Russian revolution of to-day, their heroism and self-sacrifice.

In granting the franchise to women, we now see that it is no mere extension, in kind, of the voters' list, it is the introduction into our national life of an entirely new element. The increase in the electorate by manhood suffrage would be an act of justice which must, sooner or later, be granted. It excites little discussion, and less enthusiasm. Its only effect would be to increase the already overwhelming working-class vote. The enfranchisement of women, on the other hand, would be the introduction of a force which will greatly strengthen the humanitarian movements of the day. "Woman," says Darwin, "seems to differ from man in mental disposition, chiefly in greater tenderness and less selfishness . . . .

Woman, owing to her maternal instincts, displays these qualities towards her infants in an eminent degree; therefore, it is likely that she should often extend them towards her fellow creatures." Let us not forget that the communism of women is fundamental, and that in leaving the home for public life, she will carry it with her till it embraces the nation, if not the race. She will insist that the ethics of home shall be the ethics of public life, and the morality of man not lower than the morality of woman. The entrance of this communistic force into a semi-communistic society will quickly bear fruit. Society still retains the two elements antagonistic to woman's freedom, competition and private property. Both are nearing their end, and the influence of woman can but have the effect of limiting their last stages and intensifying the rate of progress towards a complete communism.

It is not, however, likely that woman will follow men in their arduous task of building up a collectivist state founded on a profound study of economics with its formulæ of nationalisation and municipalisation of every thing, and its herculean task of converting the mass of the people. Such a method is alien to her nature, and would, indeed, be as likely to land us into a sterile state-capitalism as into a communistic society. Women, as is their nature, will go straight to the heart of things—the immediate formation of a communistic state—with that sure instinct and intuition which, according to Darwin, are more strongly developed in woman than in man. She will force a rapid extension of the free services in every direction, especially

for weakness and necessity. In building up the new commonwealth, men need the quick perception, ready help and keen sympathy of women. Man has, so far, built up his social systems on a foundation of brute strength, from which woman has been excluded, and they have been a mere replica of man himself. But, in the new civilization that is arising to-day, there must be no suggestion of the exclusion of woman, but a true comradeship, not waiting till we have reached the promised land, but, together, moulding and shaping the destinies of the race. The society of the future must be no mere representative of the man, nor of the woman, but of both. It must include the love and intuition of the woman, and the genius and strength of the man.

#### MARRIAGE.

Whilst the advent of woman will intensify the trend towards socialism, she stands to gain much from the growth of a socialist state. It has been the economic independence of the fortunate few which has saved women in the past from absolute subjection. There is but one system of society which can guarantee to every woman absolute freedom from dependence on another for home and maintenance, and that is the socialistic state. Under communism alone will each one's independence be guaranteed. In all ages, woman has been obliged to rely upon the husband during her times of weakness, during the period of maternity. The enslavement of man and the subjection of woman in all ages show that no human being can be trusted with this great power over another. No circumstance will intensify the revolt of the wife against the power of the purse in the husband more than the growing economic independence of the girl before marriage. Having once tasted the forbidden fruit of freedom, she will unwillingly enough become dependent on her husband for every penny she requires. Once the way of escape to independence through socialism is seen by her, there will be no more ardent exponent of, nor enthusiastic worker for, the coming state.

Among the free communistic services already referred to, the right of the wife to maintenance during the period of maternity will quickly find a place. The special service for which her maintenance will be secured to her by the community can only be decided by experience. She must find her real sphere and function by the widest liberty and utmost freedom of choice, neither protected in one vocation nor forced into another. Nature alone can determine her contribution to the community.

This dependence of the wife on the husband is no more beneficial to the husband than to the wife. It has produced a marriage system which is aptly described as monogamy tempered by prostitution. The power of the purse gives a moral license against which woman is powerless to make an effective protest. If at the present moment it were possible to secure to every married woman maintenance for herself and children, we should quickly see either a wilderness of homeless husbands or such a moral reform in men that the doors of the public house and the



brothel would be closed for evermore. Charles Kingsley stated there would never be moral equity between the sexes till there was civic equality. In this he was wrong. Civic equality will give equality before the law, but it will not give moral equality in the home. Nothing can do that but the economic independence of the wife. It has been a strong defence in every age, which has permitted woman to hold property. Economic freedom is the basic freedom from which all liberty arises, whether it be social, moral, religious, political, or industrial.

When men and women stand forth free under communism, each meeting the other on terms of the most perfect equality, every trace of the present mercenary motives in marriage will disappear. The present marriage system, founded more on the legal bond than on affection, cannot be claimed by any one as a success. In the holiest of all relationships the legal bond is to-day considered the more important factor, and is the natural effort of the State to regulate marriage founded on the subjection of woman. With the growth of independence in women, the number of divorces is increasing rapidly, testifying to the unsatisfactory nature of so many marriages. The complete economic independence of women will, however, solve the question by enabling them to consult their feelings rather than their material interests in marriage. Will and affection will prove far more stable bonds than have the legal, but they can only be established on a foundation of co-equal partnership. Under communism will and affection will be supreme and legal registration but a subordinate matter like the registration of the birth of a child. Love and marriage will largely be in the hands of woman in the future, for she possesses greater powers of intuition than men and her maternal duties give greater powers of love. As both these functions will be exercised absolutely free from every trace of subordination to and financial dependence on man, marriage will be infinitely holier and more permanent than it is to-day. Under such a marriage system only, founded on affection and equality, will the sexes be able to attain that ideal state of chastity when the man will be able to look upon every other woman as through the eyes of his wife, and she will be able to look upon every other man as through the eyes of her husband.

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This tract is issued with the endorsement of the Council of the Independent Labour Party, but for the opinions expressed therein the author is responsible.

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