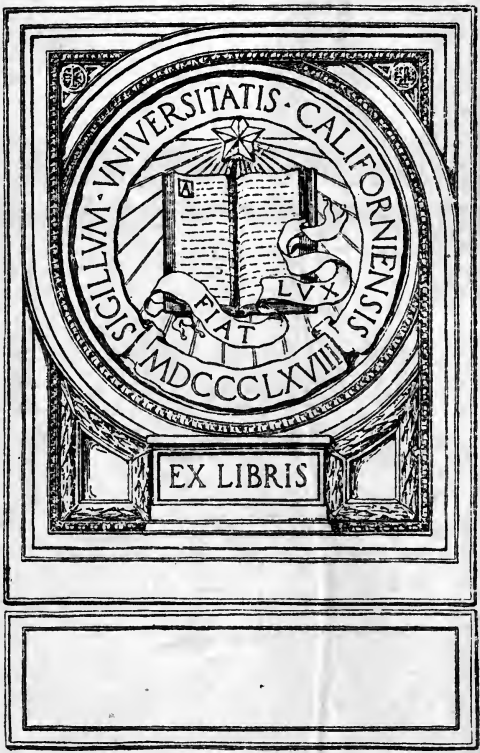
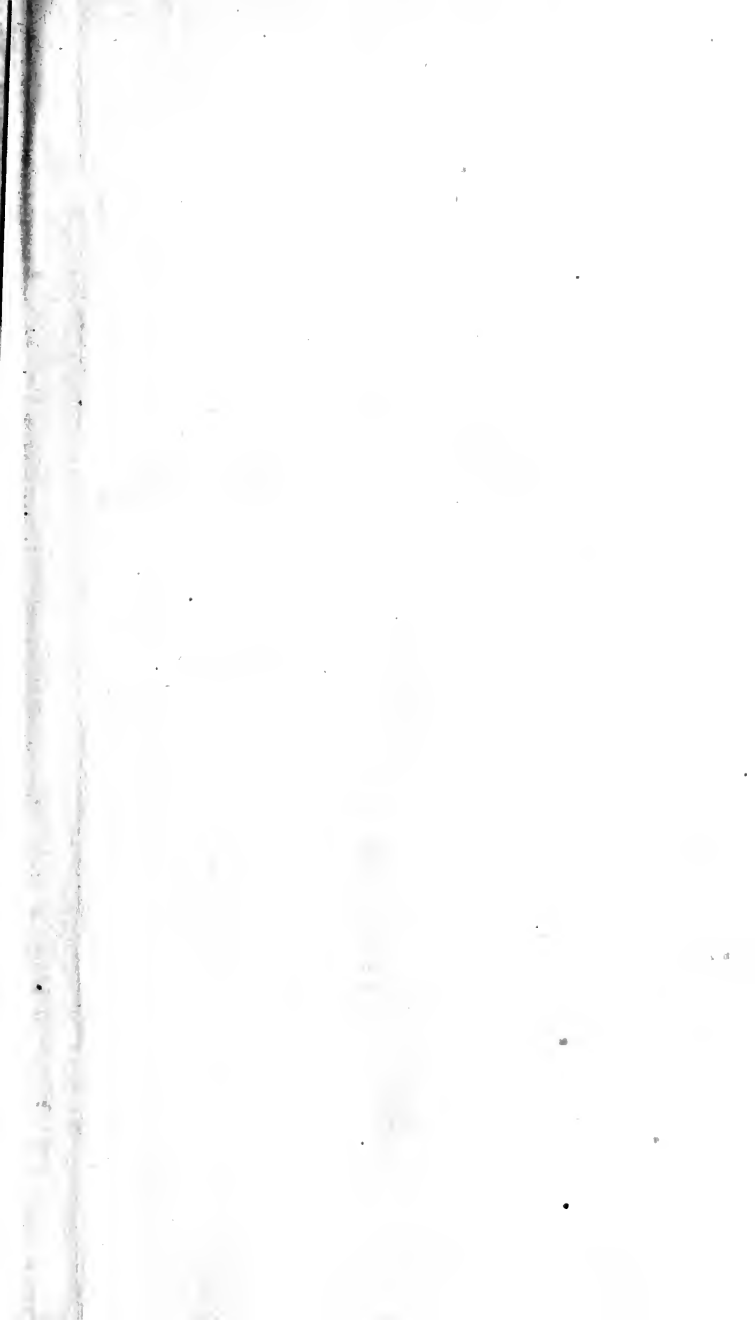


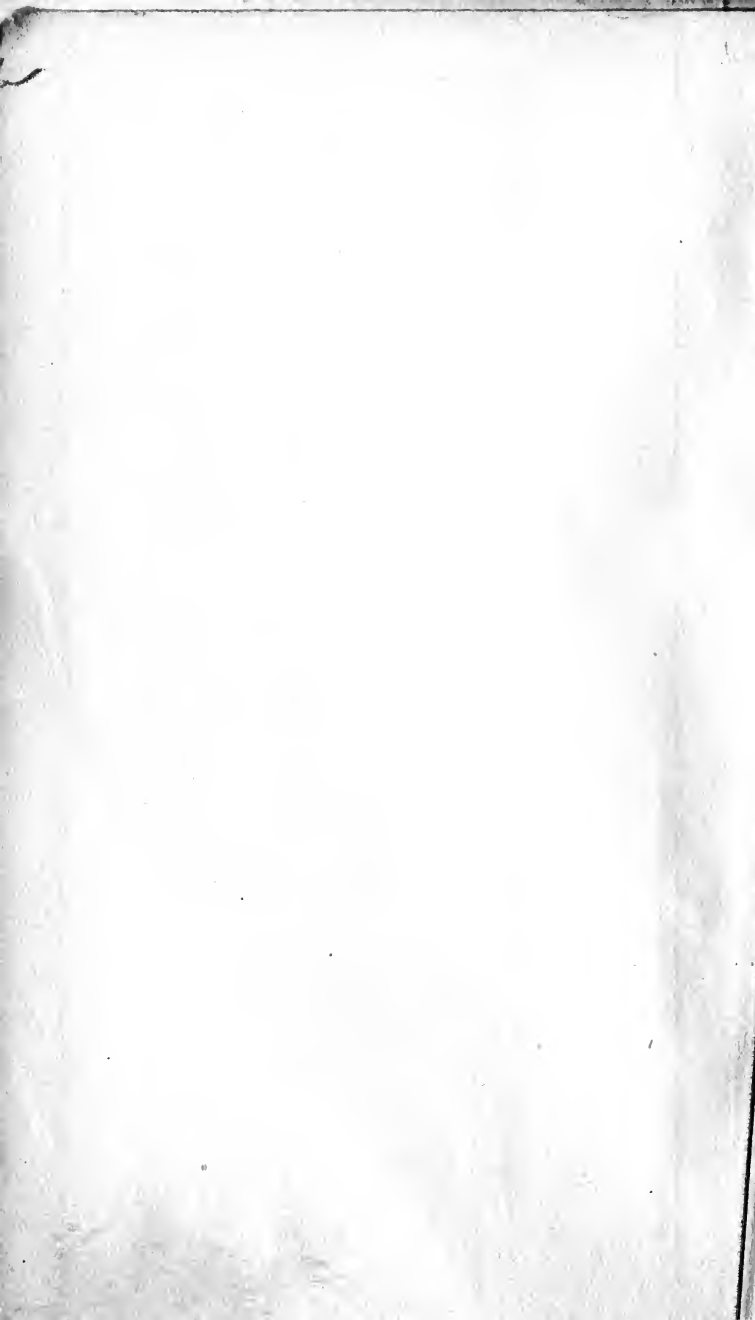
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WOMAN ADRIFT

THE MENACE OF SUFFRAGISM

BY

HAROLD OWEN

Author of "Three Octobers," &c.

Mistress Page: ". . . Why, I will exhibit a Bill in the Parliament for the putting down of men."—*Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act II.

"I entertain very strong hope that if the case were clearly and cogently presented to the public opinion of the country, it would be found that some of the jubilations which are already being heard from the supporters of the Suffrage movement would be found to have been premature."

—*The Prime Minister, December, 1911*

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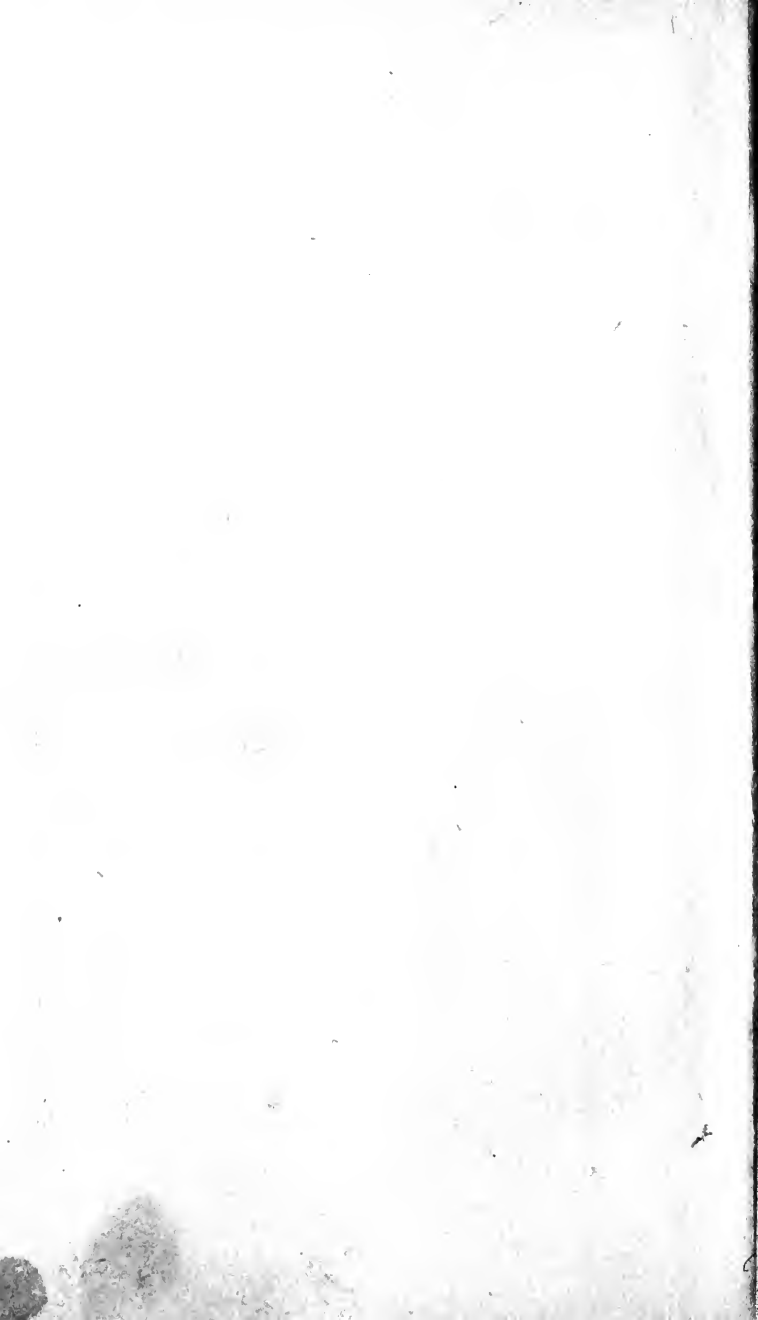
To
MY MOTHER'S MEMORY

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

Concerning The Readiness Of Politicians To Betray Their Trust.

PARLIAMENTARY SELF-SUFFICIENCY—THE PARTY SPIRIT—STEREOTYPED POLITICS—PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNTRY—A MARCH HARE THEORY—THE PARTY MACHINE—A CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE—A SPEECH FOR SUFFRAGISTS—THE SUFFRAGIST CAUSE—THE AWAKENED OPPOSITION.



WOMAN ADRIFT

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

Concerning The Readiness Of Politicians To Betray Their Trust.

MY chief reason for writing this book is that someone else should have done it—and if you think that that paradoxical statement is intended to hint at the identity of the unnamed person, I hasten to complete the sentence by the words : “but has not.”

It would have been a fitting thing, however, if one of the greatest minds amongst us devoted to social service by the consideration of social problems had written a full and reasoned vindication of the faith he holds that Votes for Women is attaching too much importance to votes and not enough importance to women ; though that is my own unauthorised distillation of the essence of his views rather than his own concrete expression of them.

However, a book was badly needed by somebody or other to explain some of the main considerations that govern the most vital question now current, upon which Parliament, with an enviable omniscience, has apparently made up its mind before more than the fringe of the question has been touched in public debate. And that book I, *faute de mieux*, am writing ; for speeches, pamphlets, leaflets, and the miscellaneous contributions of propaganda cannot triumph over their own limitations to such an extent as to present a comprehensive and organically complete view of the question.

But there are some compensations for the performance of the task by a humbler pen, for in making a

popular appeal there is a positive disadvantage in going too deeply into causes and considerations that lie below the immediate question to be considered. One may, indeed, by going too deeply throw up so much earth that what one sought to disclose becomes covered up; and by too much delving one may reach an antipodean conclusion. And so the great service to be rendered at this juncture to the cause of manhood and womanhood and therefore of humanity—for that is the cause and the issue—may even be frustrated by going to too great a depth. It may be true that the vote is receding in importance and that parliamentary institutions, working with almost a mechanical precision, are evolving a type of parliamentary mind working almost as mechanically. But when the question is whether Woman shall have the Vote or not, and when so many vital things depend upon that issue of itself, it is profitless—or, at any rate, profitless for the purposes of a popular appeal—to adventure beyond without first trying to close the door on that issue. And so, in this effort to make a popular appeal for a full consideration of the question concerned, I have confined myself strictly to it. Yet it goes deeply enough, in all conscience, into the facts of human life and of itself presents sufficient problems for the average intelligence to resolve.

Parliamentary Self-Sufficiency.

But half the need for this popular appeal would have disappeared but for the truth there is in the proposition, as it appears to me, that the tendency of parliamentary influence and thought is to feed rather upon itself than upon the nation, and to find itself a little too self-sufficing. The rigours of the party system, the doctrine of the collective responsibility of the Cabinet, and even the rightful impatience for social reform are all factors in producing this effect of the "representative" representing primarily his party, secondarily himself, and subordinately his constituents; but it is not the factors that concern me—their inevitability or their desirability or otherwise—but the effect itself.

I spoke on the first page of one of the greatest minds amongst us devoted to the consideration of social problems, and perhaps I need hardly say that that mind is not to be found in the House of Commons. The too facile notions concerning politicians, their motives, actions and limitations, I do not share. It is true that one need not be engaged in actual parliamentary politics to know that all Cabinet Ministers do not love each other, that politics is often a matter not of honest compromise but of compromise dictated by the cross-currents of personal ambitions and actions; and that parliamentary eminence and ministerial responsibility are not always attained by the men of the highest principle or ability, or the strongest devotion to the public service. But those defects have nothing to do with parliamentary institutions—they are inherent in unregenerate human nature. And against them the wise and just man sets all the evidence that English parliamentary life affords of fine talents unsparingly spent in the public service, and knows that the balance provides an overwhelming justification for the esteem in which our parliamentary system is held.

But the vitality of parliamentary thought, and therefore the authority of Parliament itself, is being threatened by the suppression of independent thought. The suppression is, in a great measure, a voluntary act on the part of the individual member. The fervour of his own faith in himself hardly survives the speech he makes to his constituents when "the great battle is won," and as soon as he enters Parliament he finds himself absorbed in a mill. I suppose nothing can touch the comic spirit more keenly than the contrast between the new member's sense of his own importance—and a very healthy sense it is, too, within limits—and the discovery he speedily makes of his relative unimportance when he enters upon the scene of his parliamentary activities. Only a man of strong individuality and force of character, and of really commanding ability, can survive and emerge from the de-individualising process to which the private members of the House are

subjected, and still command the respectful fear of the party Whip—for so officialised have politics become that the party Whip does, in fact, represent the castigatory function of the instrument which has given the functionary his name, though it was bestowed in the huntsman's sense of the word.¹ And the general experience that the man who does revolt is distinguished rather by a cranky obstinacy than by any positive ability to justify his detachment, or even by any intention to vindicate a right principle in the right place and at the right time and to the right effect, deters members better worth listening to, and better capable of exercising influence, from asserting that independence which is really the most valuable quality in a parliamentarian, but which has come to be confused with crankiness.

The Party Spirit.

And just as parliamentary thought is stereotyped into hasty formulas, so members of Parliament become intolerant of, and even indifferent to, any expression of outside political thought (apart from that of their own constituencies) which is not born in the full panoply of party parenthood. They come to conceive of political thought as almost the preserve of the parliamentarian, and if they do not actually resent they are certainly contemptuous of any extra-parliamentary political opinion except again, of course, as it may be expressed in that particular corner of the electoral map where their own personal parliamentary fate has its lodgment.

¹ In proposing a resolution in support of Woman Suffrage at Holborn Town Hall on Nov. 27, 1911, Mr Thomas Lough, M.P., said: "We have not now got a House of Commons in the old sense. We are called together to obey the Whip, who is the Patronage Secretary of the Government. We in the present Session are not allowed to whimper. When the Government holds up its hands now, it calls us in or sends us home to bed. In the sense of a free assembly, we have no existence at all." Mr Lough, of course, is in a position to see both points of view, for he has been a minister. But perhaps that only adds zest to his grievance and a certain piquancy to his lament.

Occasionally, it is possible for the political outsider to be favoured, in social intercourse, with the views of parliamentarians of varying degrees of eminence, but the spirit of parliamentary caste then manifests itself by the suggestion that political opinion outside the House of Commons is always interesting in the Parliament man as a relaxation from that serious and concentrated political thought which taxes the intellect in the House of Commons, but that real political inspiration is provided only by the party spirit, breathing upon the de-individualised phalanx, and wafting them into the right lobby.

And the effect of this party cohesion and of this development of parliamentary caste, is that men who respect their own individuality, and are not content to see it absorbed into a machine on whose levers they could not lay a hand, stay outside Parliament—or at any rate do not seek to get in—and are content to occupy a relation towards the political life of the country which gives them greater influence and much more freedom. But so strong is the spirit of parliamentary caste that even the aspirants for parliamentary honours—even those who hope some day to be absorbed into the machine that may some day grind out a position of honour and profit for them—look with a mild tolerance upon the men who have not fallen a victim to parliamentary ambition (or who have risen above it), and they have more respect for their own political influence “upon the country,” when they address a chairman and forty rustics under the swinging lamps of a village schoolroom, than they have for the man who in one morning addresses more minds than they can reach in a year.

But even so the influence and freedom outside Parliament are circumscribed by the exigencies of the party Press, which perpetuates, outside Parliament, the devastating work of the party spirit within, and as newspaper proprietorship is remoter than Heaven from the average writer, and is an engine of oppression for the baser kind of proprietor of the working brain, the independ-

ent view is largely left to such organs of public opinion (not to advertise them by any specific mention) as those advocating "a government of business men," organs which owe their existence to the nimble manipulations of capital beyond the capacity and the scruples of the average writer, and that feed democracy with a charlatanism that is worse than any poison.

Stereotyped Politics.

And the cumulative effect of this tacitly organised if not altogether deliberate conspiracy against free political thought (a suppression which extends through all official channels till it flows into the very constituencies) is that the political thought which is in the most intimate relation with political action—that is to say, parliamentary political thought—is degenerating into a series of formulas that have lost their vitality as principles by the process which passes them through the party machine—just as the printed word seems to lose something of its authority and meaning when you see it being reeled through a printing press at the rate of so many thousand copies an hour. I am not, it so happens, a Tariff Reformer; but I believe that Tariff Reform has undergone this de-vitalising process. I do not here attack the creed—I should even greatly respect the intellectual powers of the man who would convert me to it—but I believe that its formulas have become such an obsession to some of those who believe in the creed that it is not unusual for an absent-minded supporter to say at table, "Will you kindly pass the Tariff Reform?" and to enquire, "And how are all the little Imperial Preferences?" when he meets the wife of a friend in the Park. And on the other hand there are those who are so hypnotised by the word democracy as to interpret it as meaning those men who at the moment happen to be out on strike; though the men on strike may illustrate very imperfectly and partially either the problems or the nature of democracy.

And in nothing is this power of hypnotism by a word, in nothing is this tendency of parliamentary thought

to glue itself to a phrase, more markedly shown than in the parliamentary attitude towards the question with which this volume deals. I am not so foolish as to deny that with many members of Parliament their faith in it may be a reasoned creed, sincerely held; though I do venture to doubt whether they have not reasoned the matter out upon a false premiss and upon a false interpretation of what democracy means. And judging both from the case they have made out in parliamentary debate, and their less public justification of the faith within them, I venture much further to say that they are content to view the whole question more from the standpoint of regarding it as a matter of political and electoral mechanics, than from the wider, more important, and vastly more enduring considerations of ultimate social effect. They have, in short, surrendered their judgments to a preconception, and decided the question by the test of a single political watchword.

And so we have an excellent illustration of how principles that have become embodied in a phrase escape challenge at a fresh application, and also of how principles come to be accepted regardless of the form taken in practice to give them effect. One may, for instance, support entirely the plan of Payment of Members, believing it to be a practical application of the principle that parliamentary representation should be made possible for men otherwise disabled by poverty from entering Parliament. But if, in practice, it were found that the plan of payment of members resulted in the entrance into Parliament of a set of purely adventurous politicians, more versed in the arts of Cheap Jackery than distinguished for their public virtues, then we should (assuming we were a sane people) come to the conclusion that the principle which that plan was supposed to have embodied had better be secured by other means (or abandoned altogether, if other means were not available), rather than degrade our parliamentary life and political service to the low level to which the presence of such men in Parliament had brought them down.

Parliament and the Country.

But it is the nature of political change that the full effects of its operation are seldom seen by those who bring it about, and this fact should make us careful and critical in examining not only the nature but the possible consequences of each change proposed, especially when we consider that the evil effects cannot show themselves until they have so incorporated themselves into the political fabric that they cannot be withdrawn. Hasty legislation, prepared in obedience to a "principle," and not investigated by any mature consideration of its consequences, thus becomes one of the most evil possibilities of a parliamentary machine which accelerates its pace by precluding full discussion; for we may hand down to our successors a bad inheritance from which they may vainly strive to set themselves free when it is buttressed round about by correlative legislative acts.

But how great is the responsibility of those who, eagerly acquiescing in a measure because it seems to fall in with a principle, but giving no matured consideration to the all-important point of where the application of that principle to the measure will take them, are prepared to thrust their country into such a vast change as that which is involved in the question of the enfranchisement of women—a question which is not to be judged by its immediate effects only, but, as Mr Gladstone said, by what it entails even more than by what it enacts. I marvel at the composure with which the probability is contemplated of such a measure becoming law within the lifetime of a wearied if not exhausted Parliament—a Parliament which has been given no competence to deal with so vast a revolution by the only authority from which it professes to derive its power. There are those who contend that they are unaffected by this criticism, because they have never given their assent to the theory of the electoral mandate. If that negative of the theory means merely that Parliament need not get a specific electoral man-

date for *everything* it does, no reasonable man will contest it. But if the question of Woman Suffrage is to be rushed through Parliament under cover of a rejection of that theory, then that theory in its negative form means that Parliament need not ask for an electoral mandate for *anything* it does, and so a given Parliament would have no relation whatever to "the will of the people," except to secure, and after it had secured, its own election.

A March Hare Theory.

Now, there are some people who hold that things are not what they seem in regard to the political support of this question. The quidnuncs and know-alls of the parliamentary backstairs tell you dark things about it. They whisper that of course the Liberal Cabinet is not only undivided on this question, but that it is simply adopting a clever, tactical campaign to defeat it. According to this theory, Mr Lloyd George and Sir Edward Grey and the other Liberal supporters of the Suffrage are only playing a wonderfully deep political game, with the connivance of Mr Asquith and the other opponents of the Suffrage; and the quidnuncs will point to the fact that the Suffragists themselves distrust Mr Lloyd George altogether, and instead of seeing in that fact a proof of the irrationality of the Suffragists, they hold it to be a corroboration of the theory that Mr Lloyd George's "game" is merely to pretend to the Suffragists that he is supporting them in order to "smother" the question and to "get it out of the way."

Well, I do not know whether I am a particularly simple-minded and unsophisticated person anachronistically living in an age of intellectual roguery, but I confess that I do not see how this mysterious process is supposed to work, or how a cause is to be "checked" and "defeated" and "smothered" by being supported so vehemently and recklessly that its chief supporters are apparently prepared to split their party and drive themselves from office rather than hold their peace

about it. I will say nothing of the appalling duplicity which this theory attributes to prominent politicians. It may or may not be that they are capable of it, though even I doubt their capacity for such turpitude. But they are at any rate not so incredibly insane as to suppose that they are going to defeat a cause by super-subtle "tactics" that sound like Machiavellianism with straws in its hair, nor are so lunatic as to believe that the whole country would discern the vigorous wink which, according to the theory, must really accompany their speeches upon the matter. Even if one were to suppose that the entire Liberal Cabinet has taken leave of its senses, and has itself become mentally affected by some of the bewildering absurdities of this amazing campaign, you cannot inveigle a whole country into a dark conspiracy; and if the country still believes the Liberal Cabinet to consist of reasonably sane and honest men, then their speeches and positions on this question can only be taken to be exactly what they express; and in the name of sanity we can only assume that Mr Lloyd George and Sir Edward Grey support the Suffrage because they believe in it, and not in order to "defeat" it, and that Mr Asquith and those who agree with him oppose Woman Suffrage because they are opposed to it. The theory is worth noticing only because it makes some attempt to excuse the infamy, as I venture to think it, of this Parliament contemplating the early passage of Woman Suffrage over the heads and wills of the people, but those of us who are still labouring under the illusion of our own sanity would still prefer the infamy of the one intention to the Broadmoor lunacy of the other. If the masculine mind were really incapable of defeating Woman Suffrage by the frontal attack of reason, and were driven to such burrowings in the earth as this theory suggests, then indeed would masculine government be nearing its term and a gynæcocracy be at hand.

The Party Machine.

To those who believe Woman Suffrage to be merely

an extension of the democratic principle which is now the basis of our franchise, and who think that therefore the question is already prejudged in their minds by the assent they give to that principle, I can only plead for a reading of this book with a mind at least open to the conviction that the question cannot so easily be disposed of. To those who deny one's own democratic faith because one refuses to be hypnotised by a word, and insists on looking it in the face, I have nothing but my indifference to offer for their bigots' arrogance. But I reserve my worst Billingsgate (to quote Mr Gladstone in another connection, though I hope I am as little addicted to it as he) for that class of parliamentary politicians who dislike the change by an instinctive dislike, and who have not put themselves to sufficient mental exertion to ask upon what reasons their instinct may be founded; but who are willing to assent to the change through an intellectual sloth and cheerful servitude, because they think "it is bound to come," and who will risk no disfavour by challenging what they think to be the prevailing temper of their party, though the party may include many men like themselves. Such moral cowardice and mental indolence, such criminal readiness to betray their trust, are almost sufficient to justify a fresh enquiry into the working of the principle which gives them any political existence at all—the principle of parliamentary representation itself.

The case I wish to make out in this prefatory chapter is that the present Parliament has no authority whatever, morally or by any rational interpretation of the negative form of the theory of the electoral mandate, to advance Woman Suffrage a single inch towards actual realisation by enactment. Putting aside altogether the special virtue and obligation of this very Parliament—that it exists to ensure that the will of the people shall prevail—putting aside altogether the ignoble irony of the situation that a Parliament which owes its existence to its determination to uphold "the will of the people," is prepared to ignore it upon a matter more vital to it

than any it could touch, let me merely summarise, as fairly as briefly, what is the actual position of Woman Suffrage as a cause commended to the country.

But in preparation for that task it will be necessary to say a few words further upon the effect that the system of party politics has had upon the extent to which Woman Suffrage has been debated. The defects of the party system are many and obvious, but it has one great merit: it ensures that most political questions are adequately debated, even if the party spirit often unfairly debates them. But against the merit is the defect that unless a political question is adopted by one party and opposed by the other, in a regulation party way, the country gets little or no education upon it. For public opinion can only be reached through party channels—through the whole organisation of party, from leaders' speeches and policies pronounced in Parliament down to the tiniest village meeting addressed by speakers connected with the political organisations, and (outside the official party organisation) from the chief party organs in the London newspaper Press down to the local sheet in which the M.P. for the division or the local party has "a controlling interest."

And so any independent political opinion can hardly make itself heard. If you speak through the mouth of party, you speak through a megaphone; but otherwise you must be content to whisper. In the one case, you can speak to audiences (by the written or spoken word) by thousands, and have a vote besides; otherwise you must be content to reach only tens—by doing that which I am doing now, because I am apparently to be deprived by Parliament of any chance of using my vote upon this question.

But whatever one party does not take up as a party, and whatever the other party does not oppose on the same cohesive principle, gets very little discussion indeed. That, however, may not matter when the question is some simple and non-contentious question that antagonises nobody in particular, though it then

escapes challenge merely because it happens to raise no principle sacred to party faith. But by a strange combination of circumstances, this one question of Woman Suffrage, which is as highly contentious as any subject can possibly be, threatens to escape even the benefits of the party system by the fact that it does not happen to divide parties against each other, but only as against themselves, and therefore the ordinary party mind is only anxious for it to be quickly huddled out of sight.

I do not suppose that any bigot could be found, on one side of the fiscal controversy or the other, to deny that the question of Woman Suffrage, "by what it entails more than by what it enacts," greatly transcends in its importance the fiscal policy of the country, highly important as that policy is. Tariff Reform and Free Trade involve an economic question of far-reaching importance, but Woman Suffrage involves economic and other questions of an incomparably more far-reaching character, for it involves the entire range of relations, by what it entails, between man and woman: first in the State, then in economic rivalry, and next in the home itself. That is to say, short of the actual sexual relation between men and women, and not even short of that relation if marriage be a part of it, there is no relation between men and women which Woman Suffrage does not touch and affect. If that be so—and anybody who has thought about the matter knows that it *is* so—words are dead things if Woman Suffrage is not a vastly more important political question than Free Trade or Tariff Reform.

A Conspiracy of Silence.

But consider the education which the country has received on one question and what is being denied to it on the other. Three years of steady and fierce debate upon the fiscal question—three years during which no political speech was made that was not almost entirely devoted to it—preceded a general election upon the issue in which every politician strained nerve, intelli-

gence and physical endurance in a strain that had never been known in any parliamentary battle. And in the six years that have elapsed since then, the education of the country on each side of the question has hardly been relaxed by the party organisations, official and unofficial. Even though the battle was "won," the defeated party still keeps up its policy to fight another battle upon it. Yet upon Woman Suffrage—which, if it wins once, wins the kind of political victory that can never be undone at all—there has been less educational work done than upon the most minor of political questions ever submitted by a party to the electorate.

Ordinarily, the party Press supplements the enormous work of the official party propaganda; principles and measures get adopted by the parties and the party newspapers know where they are and what to do, and the biggest educational influence exerted in political questions is wielded by the party Press. But upon this question the party Press is either silent,¹ or takes

¹ Since those words were written, the most influential portion of the London Liberal Press, waking up to the fact that if this Liberal Parliament were to pass Woman Suffrage it would split the Liberal party from top to bottom for good, has wisely begun to realise that the conspiracy of silence can no longer be maintained. Its advocacy of the Referendum is the first sign of the awakening perception to the danger, but the proposal for the Referendum has other merits than that it would save a political party. It would also save the honour of a Parliament elected to uphold "the will of the people," even though it created for the Prime Minister the "embarrassment" of releasing him from a promise thrust upon him by the force majeure of the Suffragist members of a disunited Cabinet, backed by a House of Commons that has voted for Woman Suffrage without thinking what it was doing.

But to those Suffragists who are so concerned for the Prime Minister's honour that they object to the Referendum, the answer may be made that Mr Asquith's promise surrendered the control of the situation to the House of Commons. If, therefore, the House of Commons decided to adopt the Referendum in order to escape the peril of a "victory" by a vote, we should get rid at once of the need for any Suffragist solicitude for the Prime Minister's honour, of which in any case he is himself a very competent custodian.

But Suffragists, of course, object to the Referendum because

the battle as already won and devotes its attention only to the matter of parliamentary tactics that shall make the victory certain ; or it "crabs" the subject as far as possible because it does not quite know what ought to be said about it and prefers to leave it alone—a preference that extends not only to its own expression of opinion, but to the expression of that public opinion which is striving to express itself, but is denied any effective medium. Miles and miles of leading articles alone must have been written upon Tariff Reform and Free Trade, but I question whether the reasoned leading articles in consideration of Woman Suffrage, which have appeared in the ordinary party organs, would reach from one end to the other of the division lobby in which the battle will be won. On the fiscal question the public is so completely educated that if a Free Trade speaker were to go to the wrong hall and deliver a speech to an audience of Tariff Reformers by mistake, he would get a howl for every sentence he uttered. But when he had found his own meeting he could deliver the same speech word for word and get a cheer for every sentence. That is what education by party means—each side at any rate knows its own side of the case, and it cannot do that without knowing a great deal of the other. But so *unformed* is public opinion on this question, that I would guarantee to compose at half-an-hour's notice a speech in favour of Woman Suffrage, to be delivered to

they know it would be very decisive against their cause, judging by all the indications we possess of the present state of public opinion. But, as a fair-minded opponent, I would suggest that even that difficulty might be met. For if the Suffragists think that they would now infallibly lose by a Referendum, and that therefore a Referendum would not be "fair" (a characteristically feminine notion of the chances and fortune of war), then it might be postponed *sine die*, until they thought they had a sporting chance to win. If, on the other hand, they think the country is at the present moment quite prepared to say its Yes or No to the abolition of the sex disqualification for the franchise, then Anti-suffragists are quite ready for the Referendum to be taken at the first convenient opportunity.

a mixed audience of Conservatives and Liberals, or to an audience composed exclusively of followers of either party, which should receive a general assent throughout, although that speech should be merely a recapitulation of all those fallacies and sophistries which it is the aim of this book to expose.

A Speech for Suffragists.

If the practised politician doubts the possibility of that feat, I beg him to think of what magic could be worked upon the Liberal part of the audience by such phrases as these: "I stand for the great and imperishable principle of democracy!" . . . "In a democratic country it is impossible permanently to exclude one half of the population from a system of popular government!" . . . "Look at all those questions concerning the home—the household—the pantry—with which Parliament has to deal! And are women, the very guardian angels of the poor man's larder,¹ to be denied expressing in a strictly constitutional manner . . .?" And so forth. No more would be required than the right rhetorical extension of those catch phrases to rouse a Liberal meeting—in the present uninstructed state of its opinion. And upon the Conservative part of the audience the magic would work by such phrases as: "Women, the most conserving element in the human race—those who have most to gain by a settled government which allows for no violent upheaval or reckless change—women, the upholders of the home—and let me remind you, gentlemen, that every home is 'like a little state . . .'" And so on. And the two sections of the audience would be united in a common sentimental enthusiasm by: "After all, gentlemen, what are we asking? We are only asking that your mothers—the

¹ Just to show that I knew quite well what I was talking about, within three days of those lines being written Mr Lloyd George, "with arms outflung," was converting a big Liberal meeting at Bath by: "All we ask is that the custodian of that cupboard shall have a weapon to defend her children's bread!"

mothers who bore you—at whose knees you have knelt in your infancy—your mothers and your sisters of to-day—the weaker half of humanity, shall be allowed to take some small share in the government of that empire on which, for good or ill . . .”—and here the speaker might exercise his option between “has adopted the system of parliamentary government!” or merely “the sun never sets!”

Now, why is it possible to do with the question of Woman Suffrage what could not be done with any of the questions dividing orthodox parties? It is merely because on Woman Suffrage they have an open mind—that is, a mind not committed or educated into one reasoned belief or another—and that on the other questions the education has been complete. Parties are interested in Home Rule and Free Trade and Tariff Reform as party questions, and their entire resources of machinery and organisation have been devoted to educating the public and the parties on those questions. But Woman Suffrage is not a party question—it is merely a big, uncomprehended, and almost illimitable question which is an embarrassment to one party particularly, and a very doubtful quantity to the other. If the Liberal party had taken it up as their policy it would no doubt have been opposed as a matter of course by the Conservative party, and the battle—and it would be a very long battle indeed—would then be fought out. The Press would range itself on its party sides, the headquarters of each party would begin to pour out its pamphlets and leaflets, and gradually the truth would at least have a chance of emerging from the fray. But as it is—a prickly question for both parties to touch officially in the narrow official party sense—it is nobody's child, and therefore Parliament, in a fit of sentimentality, is apparently about to adopt the foundling thrust upon its step, heedless of what a monster it may grow up to be. And so on a supreme question when the virtues of the party system would be most desirable, the party system fails.

And now we can consider more immediately how

Woman Suffrage stands as a cause commended to the country.

The Suffragist Cause.

I think no one will dispute that after Mill had put it upon an intellectual footing, the cause went to sleep for a generation. His advocacy of the cause did not impress the leading men of his own day, not even those in general or close sympathy with his political views. During the eighties, it was left to the championship of politicians who largely accepted their mission as a sinecure, who seized upon the cause as a means of identifying themselves with some particular political activity, and who were content that the cause should make fitful parliamentary appearances, receive the polite kind of applause that is given to a musical débutante who does her best to please, bow, and retire.

During the nineties, it made no definite progress, except perhaps among those political circles which are ready to take up any fresh cause and activity, without enquiring too closely into them, rather than risk the reproach of being reactionary or of even being satisfied with anything as it is. During this period Woman Suffrage continued to make its parliamentary appearances, and it was supported by politicians, some of whom were no doubt sincere enough, but most of whom believed that they were giving a parliamentary promise which they, at any rate, would never live to be called upon to redeem¹ and who were the precursors

¹ Mr John Massie, writing in *The Standard* in November, 1911, said:

“When I was in the House of Commons, and Woman Suffrage began to make pushful use of its second reading majorities, it was common talk of the Lobbies that, in spite of the proportion of its sincere advocates, it would have short shrift if the vote upon it could be taken by ballot. Some members openly confessed that their support was given in the belief that the proposal would be academic for years to come. A large number were afraid of losing the work or inspiring the hostility of certain active women in their constituencies. Others spoke with bated breath about their own domestic peace or their personal dread of the multiform horrors of exasperated militancy.”

of those supine fatalists who now support it merely because they dolefully think that it is "bound to come."

But the attitude of Parliament generally, and of the country as a whole certainly, was fitly represented by the pallid funniments which Mr Labouchere was allowed to lavish upon a theme so congenial to his vein of humour. And no one paid it, in short, the respect of treating it seriously—the "opposition" to it was as silly and undignified as the occasion demanded. It may truly be said, indeed, that no real opposition was ever offered to it, for those who would have opposed it if it had been seriously pressed, joked about it as people joke about Death, thinking it too remote to inspire any present fear.

And so the cause wobbled on, and was kept in a state of suspended animation, galvanised into life by the annual meetings of its own promoters, and then silenced by the cheap derision which was then quite sufficient to abash it. In fact, from the time when Mill commended it down to six years ago Woman Suffrage was, so far as the country as a whole was concerned, esteemed on very much the same plane as the bad but recurring jokes of the comic papers.

Then came the eruption of the militant "Suffragettes," and by the sheer force of the attention irrelevantly drawn to the cause by their excesses, a wholly factitious advance was made—an advance quite out of proportion to the argumentative and reasoned propaganda that to some extent went on side by side with the militant antics. No one denies that the cause has since made progress. If it had not, we should not now be discussing it. But it has only progressed out of its academic obscurity into that light of the practical day when serious attention must be paid to it.

The Awakened Opposition.

And the opposition to it has also become organised. But for the same reason that Mr Labouchere scoffed at the cause, hundreds of thousands of its opponents have remained silent. They did not wish to begin

to exert themselves in fighting an enemy that, it seemed reasonable to suppose, would not compel a pitched battle, either in or out of Parliament, until at least some other serious issues had been dealt with and the ground cleared for the fray.

Consider what a crowded scene the political theatre has been since Woman Suffrage first reasserted itself six years ago. We have had three general elections. Issues of supreme importance have kept Parliament and the political world in a state of constant upheaval. *Two elections* were necessary to settle a constitutional question that had been simmering for ninety years, and that reached boiling point a generation ago; that was spoken of as the dominant issue by Gladstone in his last words to Parliament sixteen years ago; and that has been in the very forefront of political agitation ever since. And on the top of this constant upheaval we have had an unceasing and unparalleled strain—the political machine has been groaning with the burden of its work, and crises, alarms and excursions have kept all parties (which means the whole electorate) in a state of constant tension.

And where has the cause of Woman Suffrage been in the mind of the country, during all this amazing political preoccupation? During the election of 1906 it was so much a novelty to the general mass of voters that the organised disturbances of the "Suffragettes" came to remind people that there was such a cause as Woman Suffrage. And it is safe to say that, in the two general elections that succeeded the election of 1906, the question of Woman Suffrage was no more in the minds of the general body of the electorate than the partition of the Moon.

During this political turmoil the general opposition to Woman Suffrage held its hand and saved its breath. Societies to oppose it came into existence and began to establish those nuclei of organised opposition round which the forces of opposition could rally when the time came; but it is safe to say that not one elector in a million at the last two elections dreamt that in

voting for or against the issue submitted by the Liberal Government he was forwarding, retarding, or influencing the fate of Woman Suffrage in the remotest degree.

But with the promise of the Government to give full effect to the voting of the House of Commons a new and amazing situation has been created. For it is possible—and according to the Chancellor of the Exchequer practically certain—that a Parliament which does not contain one single member who has acquired the authority to vote one way or the other, as a representative of the will of the people, for the most vital political and social revolution an electorate has ever had to consider, will actually achieve that revolution over the heads of the people it exists to represent.

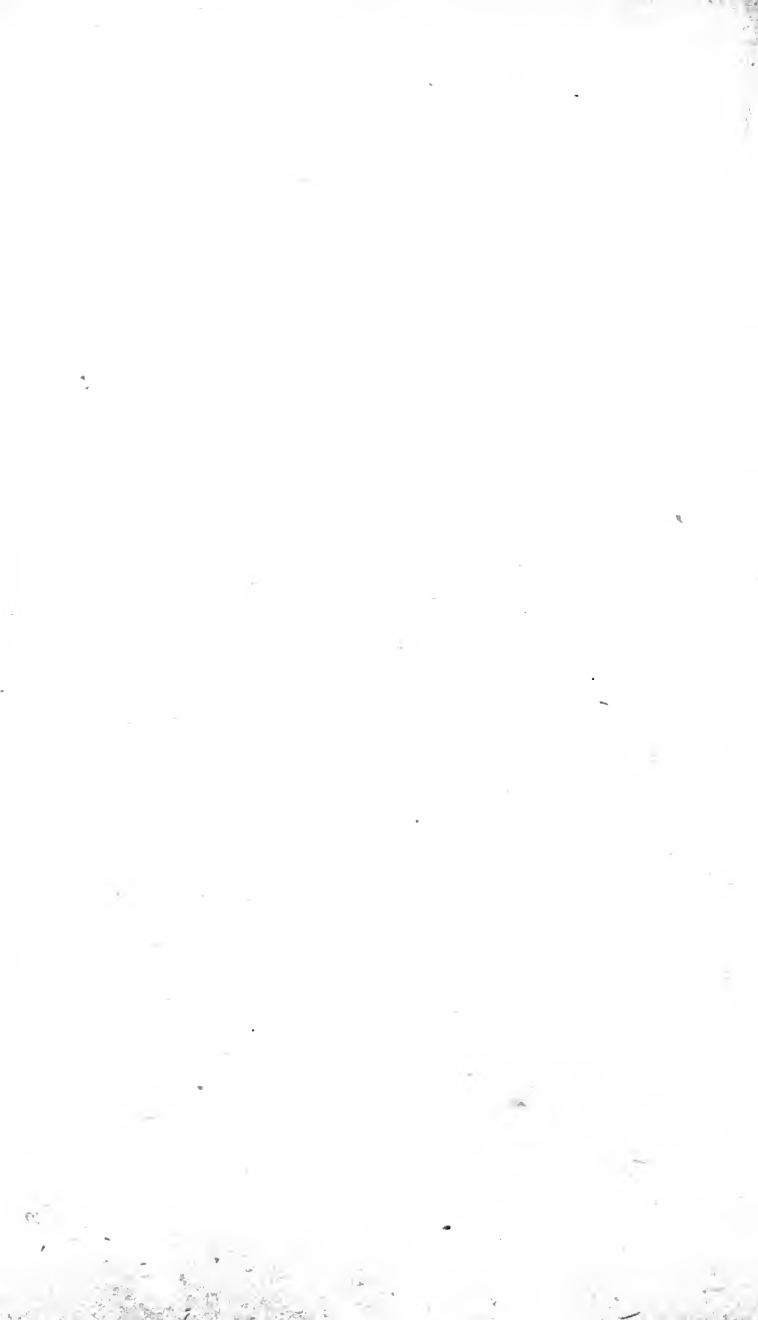
It is, first, to do something to check such an irresponsible and tyrannical use of a parliamentary majority, and secondly, to endeavour to present the case against a revolutionary proposal which is infinitely, supremely, and profoundly more vital in its consequences than any political question with which Parliament has hitherto had to deal, that this volume is written.



CHAPTER I.

The Scope Of The Question.

THE "SHORT-CUT" TO SAVE THINKING—THE SUPERFICIAL VIEW—THE "DEMOCRATIC" ARGUMENT—THE "DEMOCRATIC" BIGOT—MAN AND THE RACE—MAN AND NATURAL LAWS—THE LONG VIEW.



CHAPTER I.

The Scope Of The Question.

THE fundamental difference of opinion between those who support and those who oppose the extension of the franchise to women is that the former regard that step, with its implications, as one of progress, and the latter look upon it as at best a dangerous experiment and at worst a positive retrogression. In one sense of the word—the merely locomotive sense—the supporters are right. To move from any given point to a point beyond is undoubtedly to progress, in the sense of going forward. If A and B are on a cliff, and A remains where he finds himself, fifteen yards from the edge, but B progresses fifteen yards and a bit further than the unprogressive A, he is certainly going forward and leaving A behind. But when B is tumbling over the precipice he might just have time to reflect before he touched bottom that he had not progressed in the beneficent sense of that word.

The modern movement among women has reached a stage when I venture to believe it threatens to become a progression of very much the same kind, and it will be the effort of this book to establish that truth. But to begin with it is not necessary to make that full contention. A preliminary point to be made clear is that, in the development of human political and social institutions, the same law of a false progress may hold good as in the physical world—when illustrated by any example, such as that which I have just given, showing that safety lies in refraining from going forward.

The "Short-Cut" to Save Thinking.

There can, I think, be no denial of the statement that a large proportion of those men who support Woman Suffrage do so, not on the particular ground that they believe the extension, in and of itself, to be desirable, or because they have sufficient enthusiasm for it to overcome their misgivings, but because they regard it as part of a general political progress. To satisfy their minds on this ground they do not need to carry them beyond the Reform Bill of 1832. Then the lower middle classes were enfranchised; in 1867 and 1884 the Franchise was further extended; Manhood Suffrage is now almost as good as an accomplished fact; and the extension of the franchise to women thus seems to them to be merely the completion of the movement of political enfranchisement and the last stage in the realisation of a perfect democracy—or, I should say, of a perfect democratic form of government.

This is a short cut to an approval of the creed, and undoubtedly accounts for the majority of conversions among men. But this view obviously ignores altogether the consideration that permeates the entire case against the creed—the consideration that man and woman are as different in their social functions as they are in their physical structure. The short cut which allows for no foot to be put upon this widely disputed territory of sexual difference is clearly an entirely untrustworthy path to take. It is as though two persons, debating whether they should each take part in a walk to Brighton, took notice only of the fact that other men had performed the same pedestrian feat, and ignored altogether their own particular and relative fitness for the ordeal—their age, training and physical efficiency. And to the man who does not allow himself to think of what is involved in the assertion that woman is entitled to the franchise because man has secured it, that short-cut is the obvious and easy way to a whole-hearted support of the case.

The "Superficial" View.

But the same short-cut is taken even by those whose function it is to instruct such people as do not stop to think. A writer in *The Nation*, dwelling on the difficulty of discussing social-sexual questions because of the passions they arouse, remarked (May 27, 1911): "Even the comparatively superficial issue of the political franchise, which might appear capable of discussion and solution on plain principles of democracy without any stirring of the social depths, is seen to excite counter-currents of emotional excitement exceeding any other of our time." Well, the counter-currents of emotional excitement aroused by those who oppose the cause are nothing to those currents of emotional excitement produced by those who stand for the cause, and for that at any rate we can be thankful. But it is not the issue that is "superficial," comparatively or otherwise; what is superficial is the notion that it is so. The fact that it stirs such emotional depths is rather for its supporters to apologise for than complain about, but assuredly the state of mind which regards Woman Suffrage as a superficial issue is not going to stir any *intellectual* "depths," though those also have to be sounded before we touch bottom.

But to the plain man who takes this short-cut on his own initiative, and not through the instruction of more intellectual authorities, I would merely commend, at this stage, the reflections: (1) That if political power were as natural an attribute of women as it is of men, they would not have had to wait until so late in the day for an acknowledgment of it; and (2) that the causes, whatever they be, which have hitherto excluded women from political power, may still justly operate in continuance of that exclusion. No one will be so fatuous as to deny the arguable quality of those propositions, but once they are admitted to be even debateable, away at a breath goes the "superficial" theory. For the answer is not (to anticipate the only answer I can imagine to either proposition)

that woman has been kept out of political power until the twentieth century for the same reason that the working man was kept out of political power until the end of the nineteenth, viz., the fact that political progress had not before reached him. That is at best but arguing in a circle, but that answer is vitiated entirely by the fact that political power has resided under many *different* forms of government, in the hands of men as a sex; and the establishment of democratic forms of government has only distributed power more fairly amongst the social classes of men.

The "Democratic" Argument.

But the argument that the extension of political power to women is now the next step in the march of democratic progress has to be met. It might be met in one direct way (if a man could now be found with the courage of anti-democratic sentiments) by denying the necessary virtue of democratic forms of government at all. But this is not an age in which such a denial could be profitably made in controversy, for the man who made it would put himself out of court. An oblique answer, however, might be made by the man who though faithful to the democratic principle of government so far as his experience of its operation enabled him to approve of it, nevertheless put forward this reservation: that a democratic principle which involved the admission, and the eventual predominance, of woman in the control of the State would be a worse evil than a form of government which fell short of the democratic principle. Or, to put it in another way: if the democratic principle, carried to its logical human conclusion, is to land us into a state of society which, whether it be on a democratic basis or not, would not be a good state of society, then the democratic principle had better not be carried to its logical conclusion.

But there is a third position to be taken up, and it is not a dogmatic one, opposing the dogma of democracy by a dogma of any other kind, but an agnostic position

It simply submits the proposition for calm consideration that everything which is new may not be progressive, in the beneficent sense of the word, whether it be done in the name of the democratic principle or any other; and that it may be possible, in political development as in every other human activity in which Free Will can operate, for human society to take a wrong turn. For the use of the word "progress" may in itself create an illusion. The human race cannot *see* whither it is going—it moves only from one expedient to another in search of ultimate happiness and final truth. But can we be sure that every road which has never been trodden before, though it *seem* merely an extension of a given path, of necessity carries us onward? May we not be diverging when we think we are progressing? Are we to accept the Socratic idea that all good is voluntary, and so argue that the mere fact of voluntarily conferring political power on women, in the name and in the intention of progress, establishes that proceeding as a salutary step?

The "Democratic" Bigot.

That attitude of mind is at least an unprovocative attitude. It eschews dogmatism and the confidence of partisanship, and speaks only in the accents of a consciousness of common human frailty. Nevertheless, I fear there are many to whom that attitude will not appeal, and who will view with the contempt of loftier minds any controversialist who does not share their cocksure faith in the saving grace of Predestined Progress, and who allows himself any questionings of whether human error may not creep even into "progressive" politics.

The case of such zealots is, from my point of view, blankly hopeless. But there is one advantage about a hopeless case, and that is that you know it is beyond your skill, and you simply give it up. To the man who is hypnotised by the very words "Democracy" and "Progress," so hypnotised that he cannot distinguish the thing from the name, arguments are useless. He

holds an impregnable position, buttressed by his own outworks of unreason. There are, as we know, certain evangelists who go into the gospel "not for their health," but frankly for the dollars, frankly enough, and anyrate, for the discerning. But these men escape criticism because timid people are afraid to distinguish between what is religion and what is business. As they speak in the accents of orthodox religion, they remain unchallenged by people who think it impious even to expose hypocrisy practised in the name of religion which is supposed to sanctify even those who make a mockery of it. So it is with those people who think it impious to look the words "Democracy" and "Progress" in the face. You may be challenging the thing; but you touch the sacred names, and henceforth are among the unprogressive and undemocratic damned.

And perhaps it is natural that those people who reduce the science of life mainly to political terms, and who register progress only by parliamentary enactment should be impatient at the suggestion that the extension of political power to a hitherto unenfranchised body of human beings is not necessarily a progressive act, and that there may be restraining considerations that transcend even the importance of feeding the political machine. By those who live mainly in a political atmosphere, and who apply the standard of concrete legislative accomplishment to human progress the diffidence and humility that question even some applications of one's own creed are looked upon with much less indulgence than direct and inveterate opposition. All the odium of being what is picturesquely called "a backslider" attaches to you. And if you make any reservations about wherein "progress" lies and of what democracy consists, and where we are "progressing" to, you are told that at last you have revealed yourself as the fearful reactionary you have always been suspected of being, and really ought to go and live in Russia. You may deny not only the wisdom, but the very existence of God; but you

question at your peril the omniscient beneficence of the "progressive spirit" in politics.

Nevertheless, that impiety must be risked in considering the case of Woman Suffrage. It may be that it is purely and simply the development of political freedom, as Mill thought; but what is certain is that no man can say it is that, and nothing more, with any confidence. What is equally certain is that it is quite as possible that the extension of the franchise to women, with its sanction for fresh departures by women in so many directions, may have far-reaching consequences that will induce some future generations to stampede hurriedly on a deliberately reactionary path, and seek, perhaps vainly, to undo what has been done in the blind pursuit of progress by people "animated with the zeal of the progressive spirit."

Man and the Race.

Of course, it is really a question of Free Will and Predestination all over again, but in the secular sphere. Is it given to man in the political community to have the same responsibility of choice in his political actions as is given him as an individual? We know that the individual man may make false steps that ruin his individual career or character. Is it not possible that political man may take false steps that will injure and even ruin his race?

I see no reason to doubt the possibility; or to doubt that the false step may be taken even in the name of progress. It is in fact much more likely that such a step would be taken from good motives united to bad judgment than in any other way. Indeed, one cannot imagine man, considered as society, hastening the doom or decay of the race by any conscious and deliberate intention. But the question is whether he may not have it in his power to affect adversely the course of the human race by adopting some rash and heedless experiment such as is involved in changing the position of woman by giving her political power and encouraging her to gain economic independence

and to take an equal part with him, on equal terms, the "struggle for life."

One ultimate consequence of this "liberation," would be the evolution of another type of woman than that of to-day. For it is impossible to suppose that woman is going to follow man's pursuits and take her part in the rough and tumble of the world—not only the world of politics, as we shall see—without approximating herself to his characteristics. Even to-day there is a new note of masculine strenuousness and assertiveness in woman as the result of her freer movement in the world, and it is only reasonable to suppose that after, say, three centuries of "equality" with man she would have developed masculine traits up to the point where Nature bars the way by the final and essential fact of sex. And side by side with this approximation to masculine characteristics there would be a corresponding decline of those traits which now we speak of as "womanly." We may go even further, and say that it is highly probable that there would be a corresponding variation in the characteristics of man. A race of men born of several generations of mothers competing with men and each other in the struggle for life (which even an optimist may expect to be still in progress three hundred years hence) and a race of men, moreover, who are no longer the protectors of women, but their rivals and "equals," is not likely to be a race of men that has altered for the better, judged by our standards of the qualities that constitute masculinity. We may therefore arrive at the production of a race of men and women who are utterly unlike the men and women of our conception and experience to-day.

Several answers may be made to this exercise in forecasting the possibilities of a modification of men and women by the operation of all that is implied in Woman Suffrage and that lies beyond it. There is, first, that of the man who regards the modern woman's movement as a "superficial" issue, a mere matter of franchise; of marking a ballot paper; of reading the political leaders in the newspapers; of making occa-

ional speeches ; and of joining one or two of the thousand and one societies and leagues that will spring into existence, as the first organised step in the general and political regeneration of society that is to follow woman's advent into the political sphere. But that answer need not detain us. The mind that does not grasp the possibilities of the forces that would be liberated by a wholesale change in the status of woman is too shallow to be considered—though it is really a dangerous type of mind—in any serious argument.

Man and Natural Laws.

Another answer is that whatever type of man or woman may be evolved by the operation of sex equality will be evolved in accordance with Nature's own plan ; and a third is that if it be found that the new order contravenes Nature's plan and threatens the race, Nature will reassert herself, and we shall beat a hasty retreat, and shall have had our lesson. In a matter whereupon no man may dogmatise, we can only say that the latter contingency is at least probable. There has never before been a campaign of feminism such as that which to-day spreads from Russia over Northern Europe and from Turkey over the Latin countries to the United States of America. And the human race has absolutely no experience to guide it in endeavouring to estimate the consequences, immediate and remote, of the political equality and economic self-sufficiency of woman. But it is quite likely that the experiment may have to be made as part of the general sardonic plan, so that the theories of men may be rebuked. It is quite likely that the race will have to pass through the experience in order that it may gain the knowledge.

But, in speculating upon forces and conditions concerning which there is no precedent or knowledge to guide us, we may also wonder whether man will have the opportunity to retrace his steps, and to repair the mischief after Nature's admonition. Nature is not a kindly old dame who preaches homilies to man and

reasons with him on his perversity. She is a ruthless force, exacting her penalty ; and her lessons are learned only when it is often too late to profit by them. The notion that no race of men and women can be evolved which is not in accordance with Nature's plan is a cheerful form of fatalism which overlooks altogether the ability of man to break Nature's laws. Yet this argument is often used that any fear of woman's enfranchisement producing a race of men and women who will depart *unnaturally* from the present type of the race, is grotesque. Anything within the realm of Nature is "natural," is the contention, and Nature's purpose cannot be perverted by man.

A thousand examples in the physical world confirm that notion, which is just the notion on which Suffragists rely when some of the possible changes in the race that may result from woman's general "liberation" are speculated upon. One has only to think how often and in what connections the word "unnatural" is used, to realise that everything which is within the realm of man's physical possibility is not in accord with Nature's plan, if we are to assume that her plan is that her laws should be obeyed and that her prime object is the preservation of the race.

If, then, the result of women's enfranchisement with all its sanctions and implications, and the enlargement of woman's activity, is to interfere with the perpetuation of the race, we have an example of how man, by his own action, may be interfering with the course of Nature.

The Long View.

The point to be decided is whether that enfranchisement is likely to have that effect ; and it is too wide a question for discussion in a preliminary chapter. But one indication alone will suffice for the present purpose. Economic independence is as much the objective of the movement as political equality and power. But it is certain that economic independence and still more the struggle to attain it, will diminish

enormously both the opportunities and capacity for the exercise of woman's maternal functions and duties. Let us assume that the woman's movement in England makes headway and succeeds in all its aims. Inspired by such an example, feminism in other countries will assert itself to the same degree, and it will be only a question of time for the movement to prevail among all the white races, that is amongst the most progressive and civilised portion of mankind. The result of this widespread independence of woman would be, with absolute certainty, the numerical decrease of the white races; and this would coincide with the increasing efficiency of coloured races all over the world, brought about by the adoption of the industrial and scientific methods of the white man. These methods, however, are more easily adopted and put into practice than the new ethical and political principles of the white races, and many generations of coloured people would live and die before any change took place in their own social and racial characteristics and customs. To copy the design of a battleship or an aeroplane is an easier thing than to copy either the political genius or the social institutions of another race; and material efficiency is more easily imitable than moral or political principles. Hence it might well be that just when the white races were numerically declining rapidly, through the operation of the white woman's economic independence, the coloured races were gaining a predominant position on the strength of the white man's—and not the white woman's—inventive and mechanical genius.

Enough has now been said to achieve the purpose of this early chapter, that purpose being (1) to negative the idea that the woman's movement, even so far only as it confines itself to the demand for political equality, is a "superficial" issue to be decided only by the principles of a democratic franchise; (2) to show that there is no question concerning which it is more imperative to take the long view; and (3) to show that within a movement superficially considered

as one of mere political justice is the germ of many far-reaching consequences to the race. What some of these consequences may be, viewed not speculatively but upon the positive evidence of the aims of the woman's movement, will be seen hereafter.

CHAPTER II.

The "Right" To A Vote.

THE SUFFRAGISTS' "DEMAND"—GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE—WHERE VOTES COME FROM—MAN AND THE VOTE.



CHAPTER II.

The "Right" To A Vote.

WHEN Mr Asquith made his announcement to a deputation in November, 1911, of the intention of the Government to introduce a Manhood Suffrage Bill, and to leave to the sense of the House of Commons any amendment that might be moved extending its provisions to women, there were many protests from the Suffragists. Indeed, not only was their language concerning the Prime Minister more violent and more insolent than it had ever been before, but the window-smashing campaign of a few nights afterwards touched high-water mark for rowdiness and destructiveness. It would seem that the nearer they get to their goal, the more valuable the concessions made by politicians to their cause, the more insensately violent they become; and when perfectly sane people see this sort of thing, and note that prominent and indispensable supporters of Woman Suffrage like the Chancellor of the Exchequer merely continue to support the cause as though nothing had happened, sane people get so bewildered that they begin to doubt their own sanity in relation to a world which has seemed to have lost or changed or mislaid entirely the ordinary standards of reason. So I will not pursue further the extraordinary situation that the announcement by the Prime Minister that nothing stood between Suffragism and accomplished Woman Suffrage but a Parliament that had already voted in its favour, was the signal for the wildest outburst of disorder that the militant section had ever conducted.

The Suffragists' "Demand."

But their attitude in reasoned speech towards the Prime Minister's concession is worth considering because it throws into relief two important points: the first is, the same lack of restraint in speech in action, the same aberration from reason when they are discussing anything as when they are merely damaging property; and the second is, their wholly mistaken notion that they have a "right" to a vote at all. Miss Christabel Pankhurst will be recognised as having the authority to express a representative opinion. "The Prime Minister suggests," she said, "that a Woman Suffrage amendment may be moved to the Manhood Suffrage Bill, but this suggestion is absolutely unsatisfactory, and is regarded as an insult to the intelligence of the Suffragists. We *demand* that the Government should assume the same responsibility for giving votes to women that they now extend to votes for men." It is not difficult to insult the intelligence of Suffragists; what is difficult is to flatter it. But it is obvious to any ordinary intelligence that in leaving it to the decision of the House of Commons whether woman should be given votes or not, Mr Asquith was offering the opportunity of conferring them to the only body in existence that could directly confer them. When it is further considered that Mr Asquith himself is inflexibly opposed to granting votes to women at all under any suffrage, limited or otherwise, and when it is further remembered that the Government of which he is the head includes at least half-a-dozen men who are exactly of his opinion, any ordinary intelligence will realise that Mr Asquith was going to the limit not only of personal effacement, but of practical politics. And any ordinary intelligence would also appreciate the fact that Mr Asquith was going much further than the principles of his own Government warrant, for that Government came into power to ensure that the will of the people should prevail; and upon this supremely vital question the will of the people has never expressed itself in any

form that would give not merely a mandate to Parliament, but any indication of what its opinion of the principle of Woman Suffrage is, one way or the other. And therefore Mr Asquith, himself an opponent of the creed, was even straining the tactical position against his own convictions, to say nothing of straining it against the unnumbered voters who are waiting for an opportunity to express their convictions outside the House of Commons altogether.

But Miss Pankhurst not only described a magnanimous and even chivalrous, and as the event may prove, even a Quixotic concession, as an insult to the intelligence of the Suffragists, but said that they *demand*ed that the Government should take the same responsibility for giving votes to women as they took for giving votes to unenfranchised men. They demanded, that is to say, that the Government as a collective body should introduce a Woman Suffrage Bill on their own responsibility, although the Government, as a collective body, is reduced to impotence on that question by the mere fact that the individual members composing it are divided in opinion, and the head of the Government himself, who holds the life of the whole Government in his own hands, is himself a determined, and, I hope will prove, a deadly opponent of the whole movement.

Government and the People.

Now, if a male voter were to demand that the same Government should introduce a Tariff Reform Budget, or if a male voter were to demand that a Unionist Government should introduce a Home Rule Bill (even though some of its members might be Devolutionists), he would be looked upon as a person of imperfect intelligence, but such demands would be only slightly more off the plane of rationality and reality than that Suffragists should demand that a Government of which the head himself is an opponent of Woman Suffrage should bring in a bill to grant it. It is the nearest

mundane equivalent to asking for the moon—though the moon, unhappily, is at any rate being dangled within their reach.

But what can be said of the sense for politics of women who "demand" from a Government that which that Government by the very factors of its composition, cannot give? Any ordinary intelligence realises that there is only one supreme power that could make that demand of the Government, and that is the supreme power of The People, who have never yet been asked to say a yea or a nay upon the subject; and even that supreme power could not enforce its demand upon that Government, for the obvious reason that the head of the Government, by handing his resignation to the King, might dissolve the Government into thin air at any time he pleased. Moreover, even the supreme power of The People could not formulate that demand until the opportunity had been given to it to formulate a demand of a totally opposite character. And the homely proverb, "You may lead a horse to the water, but you cannot make him drink," exactly and sanely answers the Suffragist "demand" that the Government shall take a Cabinet responsibility for commending a measure upon which the Cabinet has no collective mind. But, leaving for further discussion and enlightenment the naïve ideas possessed by the Suffragists on the parliamentary procedure and political practice of their country, in which they wish to bear a predominant part, let us pay some little attention to the word "demand," in connection with the claim to vote.

There are two kinds of demands—that of the highwayman who demands your money, and that of a workman who demands wages legally and properly due for work done, or a tradesman who demands money for goods supplied. One is the demand that has nothing but temporary physical force behind it, and the other is the demand of a moral right, sanctioned and converted into a legal right by the law of the land. The demand for a vote, however, may partake of something of the nature of both of these demands. It may be backed by

such force as would overawe a Government unsupported by the sovereign people (though no amount of force could overawe a Government supported by the people, for the people itself would also have to be overawed), and it may be backed by such an expression of the popular will as would make even the threat of force absurdly unnecessary in a political system such as ours, in which rebellion by the executive against the sovereign people is no longer practical politics. But the demand of any section of the population for a vote, unbacked either by force to overawe a Government or by the moral support of the sovereign people, is a demand made to the winds—apart from the almost inconceivable yet apparently probable contingency that a Parliament elected to vindicate the will of the people might ignore the will of the people altogether. Votes have been demanded, and secured, when both these elements have been present—the one implicit and the other actual—but no votes can ever be secured, whatever be demanded, if neither of these elements is effectively present—short, again, of a Parliament willing to sell the pass.

Where Votes Come From.

And now, after showing that votes can be got only where votes come from, we have cleared the ground for considering the proposition that nobody has an abstract right to demand any vote whatever.

Let us think for a moment what a vote is. It is the expedient adopted for securing the participation of many minds and men in a Government—that and nothing more. In our own country (which is the only country that need concern us in this matter at all) a vote is the outcome of centuries of struggle—against monarchical absolutism, against feudal and aristocratic supremacy, and against class privilege. But no Englishman was born with a natural right to a vote any more than he was born with a natural right to a job in the Civil Service. Even when manhood suffrage is an

accomplished fact he will be born only to the statutory right to have a vote when he attains adult age. He gets his vote, in short, by statutory law, that is to say, ultimately, by the will of the people. And that statutory right might be statutorily taken away from him—still by the sovereign people. If he commits a felony, for instance, the statutory right is taken away the moment he is convicted of it. The concession of a vote to adult male citizens is now so admittedly the principle upon which a democratic State should be built up, that a proposal is to come before Parliament to extend the vote to all adult males, and men have had to wait for a vote, as a statutory and not a natural right upon attaining an adult age, until the first Parliament of the fifth George, although the political instrument called a vote has existed in England for some seven centuries.

But just as a vote is the expression of a democratic state, so a democratic state—a state in which supreme power is conferred upon the voters—might at any time take away the vote from any section of itself not strong enough to outvote the rest. Democracies, like autocracies, have their caprices, and if the English democracy were some day to take it into its head that red-haired people were unfit to exercise the franchise, no power in the constitution could secure to red-haired men (who, I believe, are in a distinct minority) the continuance of a vote. But in a democratic state, sanely conducted, the giving or the withholding of a vote depends in practice upon the will of the people, as affected not by caprice but by the rational consideration of the desirability or otherwise of conferring or withholding the privilege. And that is just how the matter stands with regard to Votes for Women. If Suffragists want votes, it is of the sovereign people that they must ask them, and not of a Government which has not the collective willingness of its own wisdom either to grant or to refuse them; and not of a Parliament elected to vindicate the will of the sovereign people, which has no moral right whatever to bestow

them, though it may bestow them by an act of treason to the people.

Man and the Vote.

But not only is a vote the artificial creation of centuries of political evolution—it is the special creation of men. It is through the direct action of men alone that such a form of government has been evolved as to bring into existence such a thing as a vote. If it be said that women may claim an indirect part in the long struggle which has produced such a thing as a vote, because they helped to produce the men who created it, the answer is that they may still go on playing the same indirect political part, and that they may still go on, as man's helpmate, doing for him and through him for the State now that he has a vote, just those things they did for him and through him for the State whilst he was engaged in the political and material work which has culminated in the vote. But it is of the men that women must demand their votes.¹ If a plebiscite of the women of England revealed that every woman demanded the vote, it would still be a reproach to the masculine mind of man if he conceded that demand against his own convictions of its desirability, though it is certain that he would concede it even if his misgivings went along with it. But the assumption that a small section of women, of unascertained dimensions, but extreme persistence, can "demand" the votes over the heads and behind the backs of the entire male electorate is an assumption (even though it be sanctioned by the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself) insufferable to everything but the meekest masculinity. But the Suffragists do not appear to have grasped the function of an electorate in a democratic state. It may be willing to be convinced, but it is not willing to be ignored.

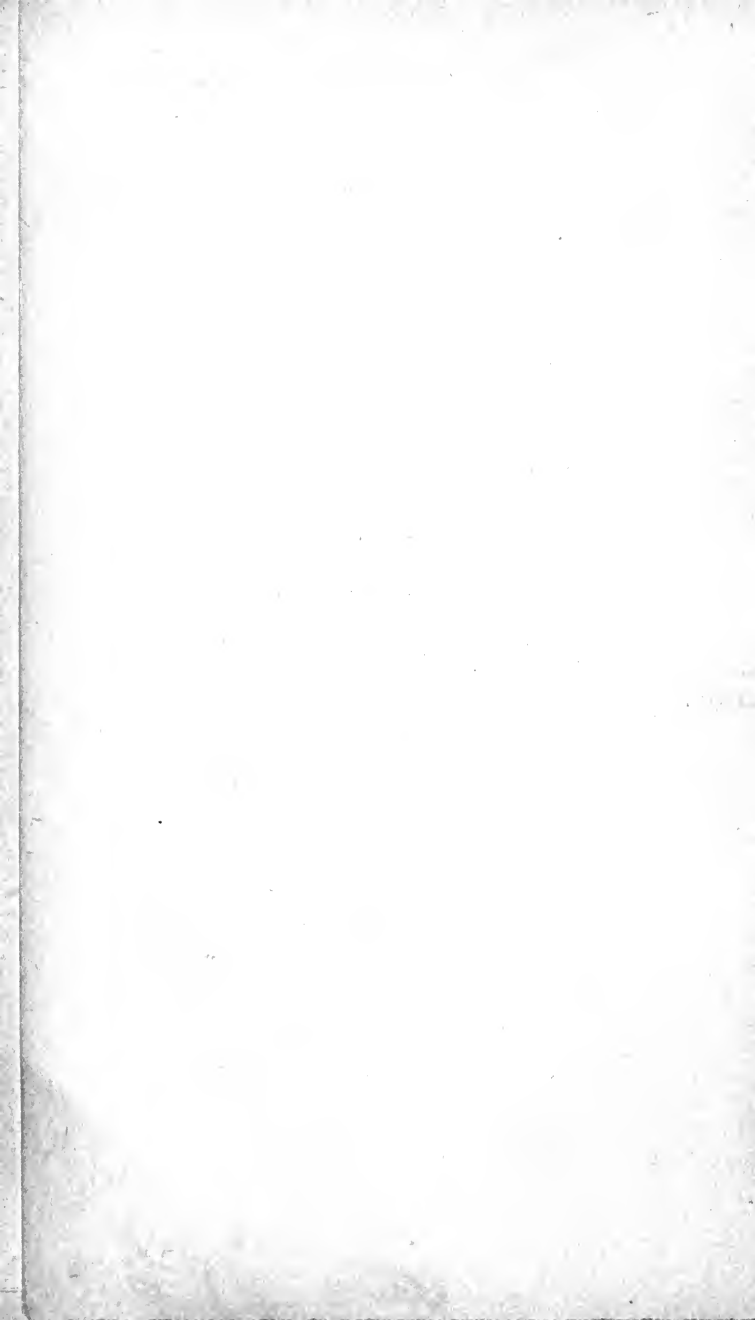
¹ At Dublin Miss Christabel Pankhurst said (October, 1911) that Suffragists did not admit that they had to ask men for the vote at all.

Three points, I hope, have now been made clear with regard to the vote. The first is that it is nobody's natural right, but a right created only by law, the power behind the law in a democratic state being the power of the vote itself; the second is that it is the creation of the struggles of men; and the third is that it is the existing holders of the vote who are men, who alone have the power to say whether it shall be extended to women. But the right acquired in a vote implies certain duties to be performed. If it has been confined to men hitherto that has been because men, by their nature, achievements and services to the state, possess an aptitude and a qualification for the discharge of the duties concerned with a vote which justify their possession of it, though the fact that they created it and conferred it on themselves is their original justification for possessing it. And the next stage of the matter is to consider whether women possess, as a sex and not exceptionally, the same aptitude and the same qualifications for exercising the vote as the men, and the same justification for possessing it; or what are the differences between men and women which make it desirable or otherwise that women should be admitted to the right that man has won for himself.

CHAPTER III.

The Road Begun By The First Step.

VOTES FOR ALL WOMEN IF FOR ANY—WOMEN IN
PARLIAMENT—WOMEN ON THE BENCH—THE RE-
ACTION.



CHAPTER III.

The Road Begun By The First Step.

THE vote is claimed for women chiefly on the ground that it is a logical extension of the vote given to men. Logic, however, is not always to be trusted in human affairs, for nothing is more illogical than human nature, which is the parent of all human institutions, even political ones. And there is a sanity of things more trustworthy even than the logic of things; as we may often find by the mere expedient of carrying a given line of conduct to its logical conclusion, and seeing into what a bog of difficulty it lands us.

But the claim that women are entitled to a vote as a consequence of the fact that men possess them depends, even as a logical proposition, on the correctness of the implied premiss that men and women are, in respect of political aptitude, the same sort of human being. "Man," said Aristotle, "is a political animal." But is woman? The first thing to do, then, is to establish the difference between man and woman as political animals, and if that can be done to the extent of showing that the political aptitude of the one has no corresponding existence in the other, then the fact that men have votes gives no support whatever to women's claim to have votes. So that if woman be given a vote, it will have to be given on other grounds entirely; but if there are no other grounds in reason and expediency to justify it, then the claim falls to the ground even when shifted on to another leg.

Votes for all Women if for Any.

And in considering this question there is only one assumption upon which it is reasonable to proceed,

and that is that if any women receive votes, all will receive them, and that women will not end their political activity as voters, but will extend themselves over the whole political and official sphere, just as men now do. Any other assumption is futile and profitless, and is looking only to the next two or three years instead of the next twenty and fifty.

I know that many men in favour of granting the franchise, and many women who claim it, endeavour to reassure themselves and the prudent that all that is involved in this claim is that a woman should take a fairly intelligent interest in the general drift of politics, and make a mark on a piece of paper once in every three or four years. But, pointing out in passing that this fanciful limitation in itself constitutes an admission that men and women are *not* the same kind of being, let me proceed to make it clear that that limitation could not be maintained for more than a few years after the first critical step—the step that counts—had been taken.

If one woman receives the vote, as a woman, every woman will eventually get it. Already its advocates have passed beyond the stage of asking that women of property only shall be enfranchised. The Conservatives would naturally be content—if they looked only to base party advantage—by a partial solution

¹ Happily the indications are that the Conservative party will take a perfectly honest attitude on this question, and not degrade itself by fishing in troubled Liberal waters. Mr F. E. Smith, writing in the January number of the *Oxford and Cambridge Review*, promises to support Mr Asquith "in any circumstances against any combination of politicians who attempt to establish Female Suffrage in any form, modified or extreme." That spirit is echoed by Liberal anti-suffragists. The position of anti-suffragists, in fact, whether Liberal or Conservative, is that all other political divisions and questions become subordinate to this question, which transcends even the division between the Liberal and the Conservative mind. And if a Liberal Parliament passed Woman Suffrage whilst in possession of a majority given them to uphold the will of the people, then every honest Liberal would be driven to admit that the absolute veto of the Lords was destroyed by a Parlia

of the matter that reinforced their own strength ; but they know quite well that once the principle of sex-equality in the franchise is allowed, women will receive votes on the same terms as men ; and men are doubtless about to receive votes on the strength of adult age. If women get votes at all, then all adult women will get votes ; and at the time of writing these words the Chancellor of the Exchequer has intimated his willingness himself to move the amendment that will secure an adult franchise to women. But it would be impossible, indeed, to defend for long any anomalous differentiation between the two franchises. For logic alone would then guide the course of the stream, once logic had made the first breach through which the waters burst. It is clear as day that if women are to receive votes because men have got them, they will receive votes on precisely the same technical qualification as men possess. The end of the first stage would therefore be adult suffrage for women.

Women in Parliament.

The next stage would be the claim and clamour of women to enter Parliament. No argument could stand a year's attack of the anomalous distinction which excluded women from the House of Commons or even the House of Lords. They would say, and rightly, "Our wisdom is consulted by candidates for Parliament ; we are allowed to make the candidates into members of Parliament ; but we are denied the choice of a single member of our sex to represent the interests of millions of women in Parliament itself ! How much longer are we to be asked to endure this insult to our intelligence, this degradation of our sex, this crying

ment lost to all sense of honour. He would also be driven to admit that when the Conservatives contended that the subjugation of the Lords left the way clear to the Commons to *betray* the people, the Conservative knew better than the Liberal. But even the Conservative did not warn us that the betrayal might come from the very Parliament that scorned that general warning as a malignant party cry.

injustice to our interests, this musty survival of a fly-blown sex prejudice, this last remnant of man's arrogance?" What could any one say in reply to such a case, when the original position of political equality had once been conceded? There would be nothing whatever to be said. I, at any rate, cannot think of any conceivable answer to it, once the vote were given, that I could make with any respect for my intelligence. Nay, not only should I be unable to oppose it, but I should give it my positive support if only that, after the deluge, I might derive what sardonic satisfaction I could from the development; and, feeling that posterity might look after itself so far as I was concerned, since my own generation had ignored its claims, I should settle down to extract out of the situation the compensation of a spectacle that would cynically divert me in my declining days.

The second stage, then, would be the admission of women into Parliament.

Thereafter, the tragic-comedy would move swiftly through its succeeding phases. Once in Parliament, women would claim to enter the ranks of the Ministry itself—candid Suffragists already say that that, and a good deal more, is what they are aiming at. That might be resisted for a while, but militant methods at work in the House of Commons, and inspired by the humourless ingenuity of the militant methods outside with which we are already familiar, would soon make that claim good. And each irresistible step taken would make the next easier and more irresistible, so that women would then be admitted to the higher offices of State, and would permeate the whole official body of the State, which threatens according to present tendencies, to be increased enormously. The claim to positions in the magistracy, Recordships, and finally the Bench of the High Court, would be then made good; for there would be no answer to the same contention that all artificial distinctions of sex in the State must be swept aside. Moreover, it would no longer be merely a power of argument, of persistence,

of arrogance, of passive resistance, and of all the resources of the feminine mind that would be employed. Beyond these resources women would possess a concrete political power—every male parliamentary candidate who was compelled to ask their suffrages would be at their mercy, and would—from what we know of the weaker kind of parliamentary candidate—make promises right and left.

Women on the Bench.

Let me pause to dispel an illusion on this point of women attaining the higher offices of State—the illusion created by the comic perception. If the fact of a woman as Prime Minister, or as Lord Chief Justice is now conveyed, either pictorially or literally, you laugh at it as an absurdity. The masculine mind, even though it be of that type which says, "Let them have it!—what does it matter?" nevertheless recoils in derisive laughter before the notion of a woman presiding at an Old Bailey trial, or introducing a Budget, or threatening a foreign Power with the displeasure of Great Britain. The laughter, of course, is only the instinctive expression of the difference that is instinctively realised between men and women. But that difference must be realised, not by laughter and the comic spirit, but by reason and intelligence; and realised at the beginning and not half-way through the journey. If laughter is to be dethroned by logic to begin with, it will find itself laughed at by logic later on.

And if we now laugh at the notion of a woman as a King's Bench judge, it is only because the logical conclusion of a step logically taken in the first place, startles us by its unfamiliarity now. But it would not startle us ten years after Woman Suffrage had been granted. We should have become so familiarised with each successive invasion by woman of man's sphere, that we should not even have the assistance of a sense of novelty and incongruity to help us to frame an answer to this claim: "There is not a single woman

judge upon the High Court Bench! Day after day criminal cases arise in which our sex—the majority of the voters of these islands, pray remember—is vitally interested. Laws are no longer man-made, but those who administer the laws are still men. How long shall we be asked to endure this affront to our sex, how much longer shall we be expected to tolerate this withered branch still lingering on the dead tree of a blasted sex supremacy?”

The Reaction.

And so, rolling on like a snowball, the movement would irresistibly progress until all departments of State administration were permeated by women. And then would come an interesting development. For it would gradually dawn upon men that women were filling positions of honour and profit in the State but were not filling the positions of arduous labour for which physical qualifications are needed. It would occur to men that though women were Home Office inspectors of confectionery shops or State inspectors of nurseries, it was from the ranks of men that State inspectors of coal mines were drawn. It might occur to men that though women collected rates and taxes in comfortable offices, they did not collect customs at ports. It might occur to men that though women were medical officers of the State nursing homes, men were the medical officers of the Board of Trade who went out on unpleasant little tugs to board liners. It might occur to men, indeed, that women were securing “the soft jobs,” but leaving men to do that work which was still “a man’s work.” And as in little things, so in big. It might occur to men that if no woman had yet been First Lord of the Admiralty, that was merely an accidental circumstance that might at any moment be remedied by a little extra political pressure; but that it was nevertheless absurd that a woman should be a First Lord of the Admiralty when no woman was an admiral; and that it was ridiculous for a woman to be Secretary at War when no woman was enrolled as a soldier; or

that a woman should be at the head, as Home Secretary, of the Metropolitan police, when no woman had enrolled herself as a policeman to protect life and property in the city and suburbs in the small hours of the morning.

And when these things had dawned upon men, they would realise that the first step taken in the second decade of the twentieth century was the step from which had proceeded the wholly impossible situation that women were given a position of equality in the control of the State without being called upon to perform these functions which are the final and fundamental guarantee of the very existence of the State, either externally in relation to other States, or internally in relation to the maintenance of law and order within itself. It would, in short, dawn upon men that women were, in relation to the State, a privileged class, having complete power without final responsibility.

What would happen then—and that point would be inevitably reached—I do not know. Possibly, the male portion of the race would have lost so much of its virility under feminine influence and predominance that they would only have enough masculine courage left to propose that it was time women should take their full share of the work of the State and the nation. But if that degree of emasculation had not been reached, then the vigour of men, confronted by this culminating conclusion of a logical proceeding, would more probably assert itself again. Brought face to face with the position that women must either be granted a privileged position of power in the State, or be soldiers, sailors, and policemen as well as politicians, judges, and comfortable bureaucrats—colliers, navvies and dustmen as well as clerks, inspectors and doctors,—the probability is that men would rise up to end the impossible situation we had prepared for them, and would come to the conclusion that Nature was wiser than the theorists had been, survey a hard-bitten and unlovely womanhood with pity, and establish once again the

political dominion of man, whilst restoring woman to her old position of social dignity and domestic grace.

And now we can return to the point wherein lies the main difference between men and women, in order to shew that the difference between them, despite all their likenesses, just makes the difference between Woman Suffrage being wise and inevitable and being foolish and chimerical.

CHAPTER IV.

“As It Was In The Beginning.”

THE LEGENDARY WOMAN—NATURE'S FIAT—MAN
THE WORKER.



CHAPTER IV.

"As It Was In The Beginning."

A CHAPTER dealing with some of the essential differences between men and women is a convenient place for uttering a certain warning and a certain protest. The protest is against the indignation which plain language concerning the sexes incites among Suffragists. The warning is that if it be necessary to use plain language about the essential facts of sex, plain language must be used. It is indeed an odd thing that although women are now the most audacious breakers of convention, and although women novelists are the greatest offenders in the production of erotic fiction, a man is rebuked for calling attention to some of the plain facts about the phenomenon of sex even in a serious discussion by which they themselves have raised the whole question of the difference between one sex and another. I have known cases in which men, dealing straightforwardly and reverently with some of the fundamental truths about the sexes, have been rebuked by Suffragists for being "coarse-minded." It may or may not have been that the modesty of the protestants was shocked. But what chiefly concerned them was that it is an extremely easy thing to cover a man with ignominy by pretending or asserting that he has shocked sensitive female ears, and so that prudery was, in some cases coming within my own knowledge, merely a characteristically mean way of taking advantage of one aspect of that difference in sex which they deny.

But that epithet need not deter anyone from raising proper and relevant points connected with sex, for truly modest people are not affected by a straightforward presentation of relevant truths. Doctors are

not coarse-minded men—rather the opposite—and the question of decency no more arises in relation to a serious discussion of this matter than it does in a surgical operation or in a lecture to students in the theatre of a medical school. The man who faints at the sight of blood should not go in for boxing. And the woman who shrinks when confronted with some of the vital truths about sex should not raise a question which is a sex question and no other.

The Legendary Woman.

Now, it is generally implied by Suffragists that the relative positions of man and woman as they now are, are not what they naturally should be and once were; but that at some point in the far backward abysm of time woman was strong, self-reliant, "man's equal, and not his slave," and as good a man, in fact, as her male partner. But, in the course of the ages, by brute force and physical superiority—so the argument runs—man acquired a tyrannical empire over woman, subjugated her, made her his domestic helot, and began the process of subjection which ended in her having no Vote. And woman is now going to throw off these chains, and resume her rightful—and as I understand the argument, her original—relation to man, and become a free, enlightened, and self-sufficient and independent being. Now the point at which this subjugation of woman took place is wropt in the mists and mystery of unrecorded time. As is the case with the Social Contract of discredited political philosophers, no man can put his finger on the time when woman was the equal of her male mate. And the difficulty in both cases is the same: There never was a time when man, in "a state of nature," was a simple charming savage, living a life of idyllic felicity, subject to no laws but those of Nature, and unhampered by the superior force of any form of government. And there never was a time when woman held an equal position as man's mate, doing exactly what he did, and being "subject to no limitations of sex," and realising the

ideal condition which Suffragists wish to see her now resume. For though she was once a beast of burden and toil, conforming herself like man to primitive conditions, it is not to that state of nature that Suffragists wish her to return but to that wholly mythical state when she was a free, glorious being, in every respect the equal of man.

But man's sphere and woman's sphere have been substantially the same throughout the ages, and the reason for that is that the two spheres have not been delimited by the tyranny of man but by the tyranny of Nature. Even the contention that woman has been subjugated by man's physical superiority is an admission of the nonsense of the natural-equality theory, for if man and woman started as physical equals in the human race (and in the dawn of things physical strength and not moral grandeur would be the sole test of superiority) why did woman not hold her place? Why, indeed, did she not subjugate man?

Nature's Fiat.

The simple truth is that woman started the race (if the idea of rivalry is to be allowed at all) horribly handicapped by the fact that Nature assigned to her the function of giving birth to children; and Nature, moreover, inconsiderately ordained that the human gestatory period should be nine months—probably a very senseless arrangement, but there it is—and so the race could only be perpetuated by woman being *hors de combat*, so far as any violent physical struggle for life was concerned, for a considerable portion of each year during each effective use of her fecund period—that is to say, during the most active years of her life. Moreover, Nature ordained that even when woman was not engaged in the work of perpetuating the race, she should be subject to physical phenomena during those same years, which amounted to physical disabilities when considered in relation to man's freedom from anything of the kind, and so impaired her physical efficiency compared with his.

These inalienable features of her sex may not be desirable, but as they are there, and are naturally incidental to the perpetuation of the race, and exist even apart from it, they must be accepted.

Man the Worker.

But man was placed under no such disabilities. The act which put woman out of the combat for at least three months of the year did not lay him under any such prolonged physical disability. If it had done, how would men and women have lived, seeing that there is no human neuter to look after them? And so Nature herself, and not man, doomed woman to an unequal physical relation with man, and it is an inequality from which she cannot escape, except to some extent by the evasion of Nature's intention concerning her, in avoiding maternity altogether—which is the direction in which the extremer doctrines of modern feminism are tending. But even by that deliberate evasion of her duty—an evasion which contracts woman, as will shortly be shown, out of the only sphere in which she is biologically or socially essential—she cannot wholly escape from the ban of physical inferiority. For woman's physical structure, confirmed by the ages during which she has discharged her maternal duties as a matter of course, has become unsuited to such violent physical exertion as man can sustain, and Nature has decreed that even if she avoids maternity, her physical constitution is subject to ravages and changes which have no physiological counterpart in man.

And so, although we know really nothing historically of our very earliest ancestors, we know that even their relations to each other, as primitive man and woman, must have been determined for them. The first woman on earth was no doubt a stalwart, sinewy, hairy and uncouth creature—very different from the refined product of our civilisation and of the long process of female differentiation in social function which began even then. But we can see how the

differentiation must have begun. When the first man discovered that his mate was with child, he saw that he was born into a scheme of things in which he would have to do the hardest work, and that his mate would have to remain behind in whatever was their dwelling whilst he adventured forth in quest of their common elemental wants; or, if they were nomads, that he would have to bear the heavier burdens and shield his mate from what physical fatigue he could spare her. One cannot suppose that the primitive animalistic man carried his tenderness and care to the same pitch as that which he exhibits to-day, but he must have learnt the elements of a crude chivalry even then, or the race would hardly have got a start at all. And the arrival of the offspring, and then its successors, would naturally confirm her in her domestic status. The offspring had to be nursed and nurtured during its helpless years (and the human child takes longer than any other young animal to arrive at maturity), the slain birds and animals brought home by man had to be prepared for food and their skins prepared for clothing; and so without any inherited experience or traditional knowledge, the first man and the first woman found their spheres delimited for them—mapped out by Nature herself. In short, the beginning of the difference between the social functions of man and woman *was* in the beginning.

All this, of course (and a little more to follow), is very elementary truth, but the point is that it *is* the truth. And though it is elementary it is all-important. Or rather, because it is elementary it is all-important. The elemental facts are what should guide us in dealing with so general and broad and deep a question as that of sex, the prime and elemental facts of which will always remain defiantly true. And so it is more important that we should consider the inalienable, inherent, and elemental facts of sex than such abnormal or accidental modifications of them as may be furnished here and there by ancient or modern examples.

Having now seen how and when woman's social relation to man was determined; how and when the natural spheres of man and woman were delimited; and why it comes about that woman is man's physical inferior, and at a disadvantage with man in confronting the external world, we may now begin to consider whither this physical inferiority of woman has led, and how far it governs her aptitude, not only as a human being in her personal and domestic relations with man, but in her relation to all those activities which build up and maintain the State.

CHAPTER V.

Superfluous Woman.

THE STATE INDEPENDENT OF WOMAN—INDUSTRIALISM WITHOUT WOMEN—WOMAN AND THE ARTS—WOMAN IN LITERATURE AND SCIENCE—TWO HYPOTHESES.



CHAPTER V.

Superfluous Woman.

IN the previous chapter it was parenthetically stated that the function of bringing children into the world was the only function which made woman *essential* to the State.

That may seem a very surprising statement to those who have not thought the matter out beyond the "logical" or "democratic" basis of women's claim to vote. But it is strictly true. A modified form of that statement would be, however, of wider truth, and if we say that woman is not essential to the State except in so far as she is essential to the Home we have said all that can be said for woman's essentially necessary place in the social organism.

If we first consider the State as a centralised government, and examine woman's relation to it; and if we then consider the State as limited not only to a centralised executive government, but including also those material and moral activities which make up a modern community of human beings, not touching the family life, we shall see that it is equally true, whether the first limited or the second wider view is taken of what constitutes the State, that woman is wholly superfluous to the State except as a bearer of children and a nursing mother.

The State Independent of Woman.

It is obvious that the State, considered merely as a government, has no need of woman at all, and that *is* the State into which she wishes to penetrate by the legal key of a vote that will afterwards unlock all other doors. The State does not need woman, first, as

soldiers or as sailors, that is for its defence. I need not linger on that proposition, as it expresses a self-evident fact. Nor does the State, considered as government, need women as statesmen, ambassadors, civil servants or police. That statement also is self-evident, for it is the statement of existing fact. And the whole machinery of government could still go on working if the direst calamity that ever could afflict man fell upon him, and woman ceased to be. To give no opportunity for a debating point—or rather to close it right away—I admit it is clear to the lowest intelligence that the State, in such a case, would not need to provide for any remote contingencies, but that is because the function reserved to woman, making her by that alone indispensable to the State, is that she should bear children (although, as we shall later see, maternity serves the family rather than the State just as paternity does). But for the time being, and for the purposes of its current existence, woman could be dispensed with entirely, so far as the State is concerned. That proposition also requires no proof. For as things actually are—save for a few women officials in the central administration—the whole machinery of the State into which some women wish that all women may enter, at the present moment goes on absolutely unimpeded and unassisted by women. There are also women outside the central administration—in the Post Office, for instance, and as workhouse and infirmary officials, and as school teachers. But they are there not because they are *sexually* necessary, and they could be replaced by men to-morrow (with those few exceptions where women are preferable because of the domestic nature of their occupations) without materially affecting the efficient working of the machinery of government—central, subordinate, and local. So that almost at the outset of considering this whole question, we are confronted by the fact that the sphere into which woman wishes to enter is a sphere that has no need of her whatever.

**Industrialism
without Woman.**

And now we have to consider the relation of women to the State in its less restricted aspect—viz., the general community, into which women may penetrate, if they wish, without the vote at all. We are now considering the State as the general community, outside the Home altogether, and therefore as regards its non-domestic activities ; and we are supposing that women are not immured in their homes, but are left to their own devices, but that they have nothing whatever to do with any trade, profession, or occupation outside the four walls of their homes.

Well, the transport services of the country, to begin with, would still go on exactly in the same way, for the simple reason that the transport services of the country by rail, tram, 'bus, or boat, as things are, receive no assistance whatever from women—except a few wives of a few bargees, who are not indispensable to working the canal-boats, however, though they occasionally take a little exercise along with the horse on the towing-path, but who use the canal-boats as dwellings, so that they are still at home. And the iron and coal industries of the country would continue in the same unhindered way, for just the same reason. For though there are, in the case of the coal industry, a few pit-brow women (concerning whom Suffragists are not quite sure whether man ought to be ashamed of himself for allowing them to work at such an unwomanly occupation, or ashamed of himself for contemplating such an interference with woman's freedom as to stop them working at it)—though a few pit-brow women are to be found in Lancashire, no one will contend that if they all went to the Isle of Man to-morrow their places could not be filled, I will merely say adequately, by masculine muscles. Nor would the building trades, the shipping, the docks, and the engineering trades be affected in the slightest degree if women remained at home and only emerged to do their shopping, for the simple reason that as far as those trades are concerned

the women already stay at home. And all those trades are the most wealth producing and the most essential industries of the country.

In the next group of trades, such as the textile, dressmaking, and pottery trades, there would be for the time being an absolute stoppage if women remained at home; and the trades would be entirely dislocated. But the stoppage would only be temporary, and the dislocation would last only as long as was necessary to adjust the trades to the fresh economic conditions involved by the increase of the cost of production due to the higher rates of payment to men, but if the purely economic condition is ignored, these trades also would be entirely unaffected by woman's withdrawal from them. If women clerks were withdrawn from the Post Office counters, the male substitutes that would be found for them would, in the opinion of some people—not necessarily a right opinion, but it is not very far wrong—improve the service. In the whole banking and brokering world the withdrawal of women would disturb merely the clerical machinery, and restore to something like "economic independence" the poor male clerk who now goes to the wall mainly because girls who live at home, and hope some day to marry, are willing and able to do his work, more or less efficiently, for a less reward. Take the whole body of industry from end to end, and there is not one of the chief wealth producing industries that depends upon women for its existence, if we delete the economic advantages of female labour to the employers in certain industries. The fact that in these industries women are employed—always in a subordinate capacity—must not confuse the fact that they are there for capitalistic economic advantage, and not because as a sex they are necessary for the work to be done; and if their places were supplied by men and boys to-morrow the industries could go on just the same as before—temporary economic disturbance apart.

Woman and the Arts.

Leaving trades, and coming to professions, the same rule holds. No woman is needed in the legal profession whatever—a fact which is proved by its own self. No woman is needed in the medical profession—a fact which is not affected by the fact that the medical profession includes women. If every woman doctor retired to-morrow, the practice of surgery and medicine would continue unimpaired—and unassisted by any contribution to medical or surgical science that women have ever made. To say that no woman is needed in art and literature would be too sweeping a statement, so crudely put, but we can nevertheless bring it without any difficulty within the scope of the hypothesis that no woman need leave her home, and yet the State, in all its activities, could go on. But when I say that no woman is needed in art and literature, I have my mind on this fact: That the whole body of literature and art left after subtracting from it the best that women have contributed to either branch, would be just what would be left if the same number of second-rate male artists and literary men had never been born. There would be a gap, but the body of art and literature left after woman's contributions had been taken away would be quite enough to go on with—no gap would be made by the withdrawal of any work of the first rank. But somebody will say that, in talking about art, I have forgotten the dramatic art and actresses. Well, even the word "actresses" has no terrors for me, for the English stage flourished in Shakespeare's day when women were forbidden by law to take part in stage plays, and boys took the female parts. But I concede the wholly immaterial point so far as the dramatic art is concerned, that though no woman has yet written a play that the world will ever want to resurrect, it is desirable that actresses should still charm us on the stage and bore us (as I am afraid we must say they sometimes do) in the illustrated papers.

But no single work of art of supreme genius has been produced by a woman since the world began, though the whole realm of art has been open to her since Sappho sang, and though neither her domestic subjection nor her political inequality can have restrained her if she had the impulse within her. But perhaps I had better here take Mill's own words on the point. They were included in that chapter of his book, "The Subjection of Women," in which he was, broadly speaking, trying to prove the contrary of what is being maintained in this chapter. For he was endeavouring to prove the fitness of women to share in the work of the State, and not what I am endeavouring to show, that so alien is the State to woman that, apart from her maternal functions in the home, the State does not *need* her at all. And Mill admitted: "But they have not yet produced any of those great and luminous new ideas which form an era of thought, nor those fundamentally new conceptions in art which open a vista of possible effects not before thought of, and found a new school." And though woman's activities in literature and art since Mill's day have enormously and amazingly increased, that admission still holds good: even the highest and best of them only attains a place in the second rank.

Woman in Literature and Science

In literature she could be deleted with more loss and regrets than in art, and in contemporary fiction especially she would be missed; but neither art nor literature would be sensibly affected. We should be sorry to have to miss "Jane Eyre," or "Aurora Leigh," or "Adam Bede," or "Robert Elsmere," but though a few women writers have attained a very high rank, even the best of them lack that quality which *transfigures*. And if we have to compare what would be missed by woman's withdrawal from art and literature, as compared with man's, we may say that, in the case of woman's accomplishment, it would be like

missing five hundred pounds out of a very big fortune indeed, but that in the case of what man has accomplished it would be like missing an arm or a leg, or even a head, from a body. And art and letters do not depend on voting power or even economic independence—they are the media of self expression. Amongst the arts, music is that which owes least to culture and most to the possession of original powers. And as far as creative music is concerned, woman would not be missed in the slightest degree, for she has created no music whatever that comes anywhere near the first rank. In executive music she is out-distanced by the great male performers; and we have to come to vocal music and to the contralto and soprano voices of women before we stumble on a single instance in which woman is *indispensable* in the State (considered, moreover, in its widest possible aspect as the general community)—and even so we have the choir of St Peter's and our own memories of the angelic voices of boys in our own cathedrals to show us that still woman would not be indispensable even in that class of work and achievement which it becomes a mere fanciful exercise to exclude her from.

To science—mechanical, electrical and physical—woman has contributed nothing of essential importance. I dodge two stock brick-bats thrown at me—one, Madame Curie, who shared with her husband a glorious discovery, and the other, Mrs Ayrton, who has made some researches into the behaviour of the electric arc which are no doubt important, though I am scientifically incompetent to say how important. But for these two solitary examples of any original achievement performed by woman in the realm of science to be made to disprove my point so far even as science is concerned, it will be necessary to prove that the *collaborated* discovery made by Madame Curie, and the original researches of Mrs Ayrton, would not have been made by a man, if not thereabout, then very shortly after.

And even if we include domestic occupations

outside the domestic sphere—cooking and sewing for instance—the best journeymen in these occupations are still men and not women, and as for what it is a pleasure to call *la haute école de la cuisine*, the name of M. Soyer just now is quite enough. But the significance of M. Soyer deserves, I think, a chapter all to himself. In short there is not a single relation that woman holds either to the State or the general community, outside her maternal functions, in which she is indispensable.

Two Hypotheses.

That surely is not merely a very significant but a stupendous fact. For it means, if we care to conceive the horrid possibility, that if women were limited merely to the purposes of reproduction, the State and the nation could still continue. Nay, deprive her even of her duties as a mother, once a mother, take her own offspring off her hands, and delete all that is meant by a mother's care, and still she is not indispensable to the material needs of the State. Deprive her, in fact, of the priceless part of her—her place in the Home itself—deprive her of all relation with the outside world and the world would still go on. It would not be the same world if the priceless part of woman were suppressed. For it is impossible to estimate what the race of man owes to the work of woman in the home as wife or mother—even as that marred soul, the housekeeper. But nobody but the Suffragist wishes to cheapen or weaken the priceless part of her. But what we could deprive her of without loss to the State or the nation in any single material particular is all that work which lies outside the home.

And if we want really to find out what woman's place in the world is, let us imagine two things. Let us first imagine that the woman's movement had taken her away from the home altogether, leaving it just the sort of thing it would be like if every man were a bachelor looking after himself. The picture will hardly bear being looked upon. And now let us suppose that

the woman's movement had been not what we know it to be but its very opposite—and there is indeed such a movement, only the other and more strident movement drowns the voices of those who are going more quietly about their work. But let us suppose that the woman's movement as we know it had taken quite another turn, and that "Back to the Home!" was the modern woman's cry, and that women threatened that they would withdraw themselves entirely from the outside world if man did not do something or other, and would henceforth do nothing but mind their own homes and babies. If that threat were held over our heads—if we were told that we should have to carry on the State and the industry and all the professions of the country without woman's assistance—with what composure should we receive the announcement, nay, with what relief! And that will help us to realise how far woman is unnecessary in the State—not only the governmental State into which she wishes to penetrate, and in which she is, at any rate, no more necessary than a man in a nunnery, but that wider aspect of the State which means the whole community outside the home.

Now reverse the case. Consider, if you can, an outside world in which man took no part, and in which its work was left entirely to woman. You must not conceive a race of women so changed in nature as to be able to perform man's work in some fashion or other. You must conceive of woman, as we know her to-day, doing man's work as we know it to-day in such a world as that in which we live. The difficulty of that conception, and its contrast with the ease with which we can conceive an outside world in which woman takes no part (a conception *actually realised* so far as the State into which she wishes to enter is concerned, and sufficiently realised in regard even to the State considered as a community) that contrast, I say, is the result of our enquiry into the question stated in the last chapter, viz.: How far woman's physical inferiority to man has carried her. It has carried her to the point that she has no necessary relation whatsoever to the

work of the State and the community—except in so far as she contributes to the only kind of state and community we can pleasantly imagine, by her duties as a wife and mother in that little kingdom of her own, the family home.

The rest of this book is really unnecessary. That truth is the unanswerable answer to the “demand” of woman to share in the control of the State. She is utterly unnecessary to the control of the State.

Nevertheless, we may as well proceed.

CHAPTER VI.

The Two Hemispheres Of Mankind.

MAN AS THE COOK—MAN THE ORIGINATOR—WOMAN'S
DOMESTIC FUNCTIONS IN THE COMMUNITY—THE
CHANNEL THAT DIVIDES SEX—COMMON GROUND.



CHAPTER VI.

The Two Hemispheres Of Mankind

IN the last chapter a passing reference was made to M. Soyer. But he deserves, for what he has done, rather more attention than a passing reference. He has not only invented a system of cookery for which women have been expressing their gratitude to him, hailing his system as a boon and a blessing, but he has established some claim on the gratitude of his fellow men. Greater men have done greater things than M. Soyer, but it is the timely significance of his accomplishment that makes it stand out in relief. As far as the women are concerned he has only done that which man has done from the very beginning—show them how things should be done. But for men M. Soyer has done something infinitely greater. For he has—or he ought to have done—restored men's own faith in themselves at a time when a little fillip to our esteem was very badly needed. For these are the days when women allude to us as "You men . . .!" derogatively, derisively, even contemptuously. It has become a difficult thing in these days to raise one's voice in praise of one's own sex. I have found that merely to contend that man has, after all, not done so badly with his opportunities has been to lay myself open to the rebuke, "Oh, evidently you are no democrat!" And in certain feminine circles in which I have found myself occasionally marooned, I have gathered that it is no longer considered good form to have a manly opinion of the masculine sex, but that one was expected to assume, between shy nibbles at cake, that we men are a dreadfully decadent lot, just as to be a "good Imperialist" you must too often

assent to the impotence and decadence and backwardness of one's own motherland.

But unfortunately I have not the subtle temperament that is necessary for that polite acquiescence in a fashionable opinion; and I decline to subscribe to the prevailing heresy that my sex should now adopt an apologetic attitude and humble itself diffidently before its betters. I have steadfastly refused to effeminise myself by joining in the tenor chorus that has exalted woman by dispraising man. I have had no sympathy with the male adulators of the female sex who have been so assiduously discovering the miserable shortcomings of their own. Nevertheless I have spoken of them in terms which should have pleased them, for the terms have implied that they had in some measure contracted themselves out of the sex whose demerits they have sung.

And so I had nothing to recant when M. Soyer came upon the scene to show woman that she had to wait for a man to teach her how food could be cooked in the most effective fashion. Having preserved my faith in man, in his achievements and capacities, having realised that most of the good work done in the material world has been man's and must continue to be his, the timely and portentous advent of M. Soyer did not astonish me—I could have predicted that with the hour the man would come. And he came not to surprise me, but to vindicate my faith in my own sex. But to others less stalwart in their faith, impressed by all the chatter about man's muddle-headedness in the management of the affairs of a world ridiculously easy to manage on a gynæcocratic plan, M. Soyer came to rehabilitate them in their own esteem. For consider what M. Soyer did.

Man as the Cook.

Throughout the ages woman has cooked food. It is a function, so they say, thrust upon her by "the tyrant." And I have no doubt that when she began her culinary duties man showed her how to perform

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them. I have no doubt that in some prehistoric cave some domestic drama was enacted that would seem quite modern: "Excuse me, my dear, but the next diplodoccus cutlets I bring home I'll jolly well cook myself, and you shall just watch how the thing should be done, these are simply uneatable!" And I have no doubt that long before Prometheus stole the fire of the gods some primitive male person, sitting down on his haunches outside his cave, rubbed two pieces of wood together while his wife stood at the cave entrance wondering why he did not come in to his raw and cold collation, and wondering what devil's game he was playing at with two sticks. And man, who invented fire, unquestionably told woman to what purpose it might be put and how to apply it. And then he left her to her work—having other things to do himself—and for countless generations he has been satisfied with her cooking—though taking care to do it himself when it was necessary to excel for the palates of kings, and emperors, and such. But though woman has had a virtual monopoly of the cooking art she has invented nothing—not even a frying-pan—to improve and further it. To each man who has cooked there have been a million women who have tried to. The kitchen has been her domain—so much her domain that she revolts against the tyranny which keeps her there, wasting her valuable time and trifling with her unused talents. And yet—and yet—into her own domain it is reserved that a man shall enter and show her again how things shall be done.

So she is not supreme even in her own sphere. She must be a disciple even in her own school. Even on her own ground she is beaten. M. Soyer's very name suggests, not fancifully, the supremacy of man. Between "Soyez!" and "Soyons!" there is all the difference between to will and to wish—between man and woman. He is the dynamic force, the creator, the originator, the imperative voice. She is—sometimes charming!

Man the Originator.

And so it does not surprise me that a man has again come along to remind us that man is still the originator. He has not only taught the housewife—he has filled her with a new enthusiasm for her duties. He has even been hailed as the benefactor of the Bachelor Girl—that summit of female emancipation and independence, that defiant exemplar of “the cause”—the woman who was to make an Adamless Eden out of a chintz-covered three-roomed flat, and show man how unnecessary he was to her existence. And now a man has come along into this Adamless Eden to show her how she can cook her lonely rasher!

But, as I say, it did not surprise me. It is all of a piece with everything else that man has accomplished. Supreme in his own sphere—in war, in ships, in coal mines, in the building of bridges, in the City Police, on the Stock Exchange, in the arts, philosophy, and ethics—he also has found time not only to make love to woman, and to provide her with a home, but to furnish her with the indispensable aids for running it—to help her to accomplish the one task he has “assigned” to her. Woman has used the needle for a good many ages, but man invented the sewing-machine to save her fingers. She has been washing clothes for many, many years, but man has invented magic soaps and wringers and mangles, and has equipped laundries with electrical machinery to save her knuckles. She has been sweeping carpets for many generations, but man has provided her with carpet-sweepers and vacuum cleaners to save her back. He has given her patent mops to save her from housemaid’s knee—potato peelers to save her from cutting her fingers. He has compounded wonderful baby foods to save her offspring from her own deficiencies. He has designed her dresses, and distilled perfumes for her to exhale. Supreme in his own sphere, he has shown her that she is dependent on him for a good many things even in hers. He has taught her everything she knows, except what Dame Nature taught her—and what Eve taught Adam!

Woman's Domestic Functions in the Community.

Well, after that pleasant little interlude with M. Soyer, if anybody any longer talks of equality between man and woman in the physical and material sphere, at any rate, he or she has to answer the question of how it comes about that, outside the home, the world can be carried on by man entirely without woman's assistance; and that even in her own domestic sphere woman must go to man if she wants a thing done better than she could do it herself. The two spheres do, then, overlap—with this important difference: that in the case of woman's entrance into man's sphere, she is merely a superfluity, an intruder, and there because she wants to go into the sphere and not because the sphere needs her; but in the case of man's intrusion into the sphere of woman, he goes there, if at all, only as a benefactor.

But, in considering all those industries, professions, and occupations lying outside the home that man can manage for himself, is there not one that woman could do even better? Yes, there is one. At a pinch, man could do it himself, if woman insisted upon it and absolutely shut herself up in the home. But as a just and candid being man will admit that there is certainly one thing, outside the home, that woman can do better than he. It is not any handicraft, demanding a delicate touch—the most wonderfully delicate mechanism like certain scales used in research work, and such work as very fine filigree or diamond cutting, is made by man. There is one thing, however, that woman can do better, and what is it? Nursing. And nursing is a domestic and even a maternal duty. If you thought of the occupation which next to medical nursing she might do rather better than man, you would say: Teaching—at any rate, teaching children and girls. And that, too, is a domestic and a maternal function. After nursing and teaching there is nothing else that I or any man can think of that woman would do better than man, outside the home—not even

charing and cleaning city offices. That, too, is a domestic duty, but men perform it quite competently and much more quickly than the poor creatures to whom it is really often a dreadful drudgery. We find, then, that in the sphere that "man has assigned to woman" man can even enter with advantage; whilst in the sphere that man has "taken to himself" woman is inessential to it altogether, but is of advantage to him in two occupations, and those two occupations are really her own domestic occupations carried out into the external world. Could any proof be clearer that the sphere which man has "taken" to himself and that which he has "assigned" to her are not a fanciful or arbitrary delimitation, but are in strict accordance with each other's natural capacities? We are justified, then, in saying that man is rightly supreme in his own domain and woman rightly supreme in hers, and that whatever individual men and women may do the sphere of duty in life for each sex is mapped out as clearly as England is marked out from France on the map.

The Channel that Divides Sex.

But the Channel that flows between England and France, though it divides them, yet unites them. It enables Englishmen to pass into France, and Frenchmen to pass into England. We do not find that absurd or unnatural—it is well that France and England should meet on common ground (if the Channel may be so alluded to) and though the Englishman is rather more at home on the common ground than the Frenchman, both often cross over into each other's domain. So it is between man and woman in our own land. The channel of sex divides them, but their common humanity and race unites them, and each meets on the common ground of their human needs.

But just as we cannot conceive Englishmen migrating in a body to France, or Frenchmen performing the

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counter feat, just as we cannot conceive Frenchmen and Englishmen in a body de-nationalising themselves, so we cannot conceive men and women as interchangeable parts in the social mechanism. England *might* migrate to France *en bloc*, and France *might* perform the reciprocal action, but it would then be hard to say what names should figure on the map, and whether ancient Gaul should not compromise by calling herself Anglo-Francia and England call herself something or other like it, the other way round. And man and woman might so invade each other's domain that it would be difficult to say whether the very names that denote sex would not have to be compromised to describe the horrid hybrid product. But both Frenchmen and Englishmen, and both man and woman, are by the conditions of their existence prevented from committing any such act of topsy-turvydom. To do them justice, neither the Frenchman nor the Englishman wants it—each, in his different way, is proud and satisfied with his own nationality. And man and woman—in the mass—are just the same. Each recognises the territory of the other, and each respects his and her natural state. There are exceptions, of course. Some Frenchmen have become anglophiles by long residence in England—but the woman who covets a dwelling in man's territory is, perversely enough, not an androphile, but, if anything, an androphobe.

Common Ground.

We may carry the analogy a little further without straining it. Though Frenchmen and Englishmen have their own separate pride of nationality—just as normal men and women have their own natural pride of sex—and though they differ in many ways, and have even quarrelled at times, yet happily there is an *entente cordiale* between them which maintains the happiest relations, and there is much common ground that they occupy in relations that are neither French nor English, but relations of art, science, and even politics wherein both are of accord.

So it is between man and woman. Lying in the gulf between sex, even encroaching here and there on each other's territory, is a field large enough for their common action and the association of each with the other. But woman can no more become man—in any conception we can make of life—than France can become England in any development of cosmopolitanism that we can foresee. The true Frenchman, I am sure, never wishes to become anglicised—no Englishman I ever met wished he were a Frenchman; and nothing so bizarre, one hopes, can ever come to pass as that man should wish to effeminise himself and woman should try to make herself a man.

Now it is possible that a rare Frenchman sometimes asks himself, "Why on earth am I a Frenchman and not an Englishman?"; just as one has sometimes heard a young girl say, "Oh, why am I not a man!" In each case the explanation is simple—they were both born so. And just as the geographical difference is the deciding factor of nationality in the Frenchman's case, so physical difference is the deciding factor in the case of sex.

We have now seen how far physical difference has carried man and woman—it has delimited their spheres. And the physical difference has thrown into relief the quality of physical force, making man superior to woman in the exercise of force, solely because his physical difference happens to make him stronger. Having now seen how man's physical difference from woman has produced the outstanding fact that in his relations to the State he is independent of woman altogether, we have now to consider whether the quality of force has any necessary connection with the State, making the exercise of it inherent in government. In other words, What has force got to do with the vote?

CHAPTER VII.

The Man Behind The Vote.

POWER ESSENTIAL TO A VOTE—MORAL FORCE AND PHYSICAL FORCE—THE MORALITY OF FORCE—THE NEED FOR PHYSICAL FORCE—A WORKING MODEL OF PHYSICAL FORCE—MALE MILITARY SERVICE—IDEALISTS AND PHYSICAL FORCE.



CHAPTER VII.

The Man Behind The Vote.

IF we want to understand what relation force has to a vote, the obvious thing to do is to consider what a vote is. A vote, say the Suffragists, is an opinion; and that is quite true. It is as true as saying that a gun is a piece of mechanism. A vote is an opinion, certainly, but the difference between a vote and an opinion merely is that one is merely an opinion, but a vote is an opinion that can be enforced. The difference between a vote and an opinion, in short, is the difference between a charged cartridge and a blank cartridge. They both look very much the same, but the similarity ends with the outward appearance. And a parliamentary vote looks a very harmless, peaceful, and amiable way of saying, "This shall be done!"—any woman or child could mark the paper—but the value of a vote depends not alone on the intelligence which expresses the opinion (as to which much might be said) but upon the force behind it that gives it any validity. The force may be in reserve and not apparent, but the point is that it *is* in reserve, if needed.

Power Essential to a Vote.

Even a shareholder's vote is a vote only because of the power behind it. At a turbulent meeting of shareholders you may sometimes see a motion proposed and seconded to the effect that some policy or other shall be forced upon the Board. Hands are held up, a poll demanded, and the superior force carries the day—the force employed in this case being the number of pounds sterling possessed respectively in

the concern by the victors and the vanquished. Each man backs his opinion by the power of his purse—and hence his opinion becomes a vote.

But the matter does not end there, though it appears to do so. It really appears as though mere money carries the day, but in reality it is physical force that wins, even in the peaceful vote of a shareholders' meeting. For suppose the vanquished refused to accept defeat—suppose the directors, though outvoted, persisted in ignoring the policy thrust upon them by the vote. Such things rarely happen, but the point is that they may, and they do not happen often only because of that ultimate factor in government—force. The shareholders then invoke the law of the land to aid them, and the judge (in such a case no jury happens to be necessary) gives his vote that the directors shall carry out the policy voted by the shareholders, even if it involve the removal of the directors from the Board. And again the judge's vote has validity only because of the physical force held in reserve to enforce it. Still the directors might resist, and it might then be that their physical expulsion from their own works and offices became necessary. But, to the very last, the physical force held in reserve is really operative all the time, for a shareholder's legal vote is held up by the law of the land, and the law of the land is upheld by the physical force at the disposal of all governments that effectively govern, and the physical force which the government controls and moves about is that of men.

It is true that in practice the process does not work out by a series of defiances met and overcome at each stage by superior force; and it is true that the shareholders, in giving their vote and the directors in accepting it, take the vote as the end of the matter. But that is because we live under a system of settled law and government, upheld in the last resort by force; and the vote goes through only because both shareholders and directors know quite

well—so well that they do not stop to think a second about it—that a legal thing will be supported by the law of the land, and that the law of the land will be supported by sufficient force to compel its obedience. Thus we may say that even the vote of a shareholders' meeting (which in itself is a vote only because it represents one kind of force) depends for its real validity upon physical force.

Moral Force and Physical Force.

But, say the Suffragists, that sort of argument may be all very well for some South American republic, but in our country we are governed by public opinion, by moral force. Public opinion—an unstable and very unascertainable quantity—may influence the giving of votes, but it has nothing whatever to do with the validity of the votes given. One shareholder's speech may influence another shareholder to vote in a given way, but it is not the first shareholder's speech that makes the vote of the second shareholder a valid and effective thing. And moral force is merely a factor in the formation of public opinion—though that does not mean that public opinion is always a moral force. It may be merely an hysterical and irrational clamour.

But moral force and public opinion undoubtedly influence votes, often for good, and in the formation of that general influence women have their share, and may beneficently exercise it, though they do not possess the vote—and that for the excellent reason that they stand entirely outside that power which is called upon to enforce it. And a vote without the power behind it to give it force is merely an opinion; but if it is an opinion that *pretends* to have behind it a force it does not possess, then sooner or later, in some sudden crisis, the vote which is really nothing more than an opinion falls into contempt.

It is obvious that moral force, though it may influence a government, does not govern. If it did, we should need no government at all, but each man would

be a law to himself—and that would no doubt be an excellent thing, except that one man's view of what was morally right would come into conflict with other men's, and they would come to blows, and the victors would form a government, and the vanquished would have to accept the inevitable, and so we should soon come back to where we are already, except that it would clearly be understood that when the majority said a certain thing should be done, by voting for it, they meant it to be quite understood (to save a pitched battle for every fresh law) *that they meant exactly what they said.*

The Morality of Force.

But the opinion is nevertheless held that if moral force does not actually govern the world, it ought to—which is not the same thing, however. But that opinion is held in strange places. Mr Cecil Chapman, for instance, who is a London stipendiary magistrate, as well as a Suffragist, recently uttered the aphorism: "So far as the world is governed by physical force, it is wrongly governed." It is a tenable opinion, but strange in the mouth of a magistrate, who daily has to listen sympathetically to a policeman telling him: "As the prisoner would not go away, and became very abusive, your worship, I took him into custody!" and who daily has to utter the formula, "Ten shillings or fourteen days!" The opinion is to be respected, no doubt, but the man who sincerely holds it must certainly feel that he has been too complacent towards the unkind fate that offered to make him a stipendiary magistrate in a London police court.

But it is doubtful whether the opinion is entitled to more respect, in a world of realities, than one gives to any other amiable delusion. It belongs to the same order of opinion as that which would hold, "So far as the day is divided into day and night, it is wrongly divided." For we cannot well conceive of a world in which physical force did not prevail. Physical force is not an immoral force—it is merely a non-moral force,

capable of being set in motion by both moral and immoral impulses. Before we condemn an act of physical force, we must enquire into the purpose for which it is used. And it so happens that not only mankind as a race, but man as a sex, can wield physical force morally. Man is a very fit person to exercise physical force, because he is also a morally perceptive being, and combines the two forces, at their highest in combination, in his own personality. If he has produced Samsons and Sandows, he has also produced Platos and Tolstoys—moral giants as well as physical giants.

Moreover, physical force does not necessarily mean brute force, as Suffragists so often try to make out when they answer the physical force argument by saying that that means that a navy should rule men like Herbert Spencer. For physical force does not necessarily mean brute and primitive physical force—the strength of an elephant is laid low by a bullet not as big as one of its little eyes. And though if, by kind permission of the Rev. F. B. Meyer, Mr Johnson had defeated Bombardier Wells in an elemental bruising match, the black people of the earth would have embraced the illusion that the black man was proving himself as good a man as the white, the result would not, as we know very well, have justified that conclusion. For physical force can be directed by intelligence just as much as it can be inspired by morality, and the white man would not fight the black man with his fists any more than with a bow and arrow. Man has produced not only his Jem Maces and J. L. Sullivans, but his Napoleon and Napoleon's victor. Chief Superintendent Wells of the Metropolitan Police—a familiar personage to Suffragists—could have done much physical damage to the militant ladies if he had not so intelligently disposed and controlled his forces that the militant ladies were enabled only to do the minimum amount of damage even to themselves. Man is therefore an excellent repository of physical force, for allied to that capacity are the capacities of intelli-

gence and morality to direct and inspire it. And so though the world is governed by physical force—*i.e.*, by man—there are safeguards against its improper use, so that we may vary the magisterial aphorism and say, "Though the world is governed by physical force, man's intelligence and morality help to make it rightly governed." The brute who beats his wife governs, for the time being, by physical force; but so does the policeman who takes him into custody; and so does Mr Cecil Chapman himself, who, I hope, suffers no spiritual agonies when he gives him a good stiff sentence.

The Need for Physical Force.

It is not merely clear that physical force governs the world, but so clear that even those who least like to admit it do admit it. But the Suffragists nevertheless contend that while the rest of the world may be so governed, Great Britain is not. "Great Britain is merely governed by votes, and as we are a law-abiding people, physical force has nothing to do with the matter in practice, whatever it may have to do with it in theory." So they contend. But, as we have seen what a vote is, that contention is merely the repetition of a fallacy already demolished. Still we will test the question on the facts as well as by theory.

To begin with, we are not all a law-abiding people—every criminal in gaol is a personal illustration of that fact. Nay, even the Suffragists are not law-abiding. There is, at the moment of writing, a ridiculous league in existence called the Taxation Resistance League. It is founded on the assumption—which will be examined later—that as women do not possess a vote they should not be called upon to pay taxes, and so they refuse to pay inhabited house duty, income-tax, or a dog license. One of these ladies was unfortunately sent to prison for her contumacy, under a law which apparently does not explicitly say how long such offenders should be kept there. After a week she

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was liberated, and since her release her relations and sympathisers have contended with quite a comical vehemence that the moral victory lies with her. "For the Government must have spent five pounds at least to recover four shillings and sixpence, and she was let out of prison in a week!" The moral victory may or may not have been hers—as she did not pay the four-and-sixpence after all, I think it was—but the physical victory (which is the final test) undoubtedly rested with the Government; for the point is not whether they let her out of prison when they decided to do so, but that they sent her to prison when they wanted to do so, and so vindicated the fact that government rests on compulsion by physical force.

And herein arises the crowning absurdity of the Suffragists in their dilemma over this subject. They deny that the Government is based upon physical force, and yet (often times in the same speech) they go on to defend the physical violence of the militant school, and not only to defend it, but to threaten its renewal if their demands are not met. I allude to that point here merely to show that physical force is always so near the surface of any human struggle that even those who deny that moral force rules the State, reach out, in the most natural manner, to seize the weapon of force and destructiveness against the State.¹

It is such trifling with reason—so characteristic of the

¹ A Suffragist who was sent to prison from the Old Bailey in January, 1912, for the crime of attempting to set fire to the contents of letter-boxes, addressed the judge in defence of her action, and said: "It was felt that the original methods of the Suffragists could not be allowed to continue on account of the injury which resulted to the women concerned; and it was therefore decided that attacks should be made first upon Government property and then upon the private property of individuals." And Miss C. Pankhurst, at Northampton, Feb. 10, 1912, said: "We are going to pester the Government as we have never done before, but we shall not sacrifice precious bodies of delicate women to be battered by police, for it is better to break windows than women." Suffragists are constantly justifying their physical campaign on the ground that men obtained their freedom by physical violence. But violent demonstrations that are abandoned because the demonstrators are themselves afraid of getting hurt, become mere wantonness.

puerilities of argument and action marking the Suffragist campaign—that has driven to the side of their opponents many who might otherwise have supported them (that is to say, people who have paid no respect to the fundamental objections against Woman Suffrage) but who, seeing so many absurdities and excesses, have taken *the other* short-cut of saying that whether it would be a democratic thing or not to give women the vote, it would certainly be a very foolish thing, since those who make most clamour for the vote have given the most evidence that they are the last people to use it wisely.

A Working Model of Physical Force.

To return now to the immediate point, it is precisely because all people are not law-abiding that it is still necessary to retain, deliberately, a form of government that depends for its control upon force. But there is force in revolt as well as in government, and the events of the second week of August, 1911, came (in timely fashion enough) to shock us with the *proof* that so long as the muscles and passions of men endure, just so long must they be reckoned at their potential value. There is no need to dwell upon the actual events of that week—not the fact, but what the fact revealed, is all that concerns us here. The best evidence of the gravity of the events of that week is that though the Government—a Government as little inclined to panic and to a distrust of the populace as any we have ever had—took precautions that appeared to cover the gravest contingencies, nobody felt that the precautions went an inch beyond the proper provisions and prudence of a Government determined to maintain the reign of law and order and the public safety. It was a week that weakened and cheapened even the prestige of the Vote and that brought us, with a sudden realisation, up to the blank brick wall that Force—in revolt or in government—is the ultimate factor in politics. Who thought of Woman Suffrage

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that week? Who cared twopence that week for the argument that women would purify politics? Where, indeed, did women come into any essential relation with the State during the week when England stood on the verge of a precipice below which lay the abyss of civil war?¹

That week was a working model of the essential function of government—which is to govern—and of the instrument of this final and essential function, which is the disposal and control of armed forces of men. And where did women, who “claim their full share in the government of this country,” then come in to take their share in the very vindication of government? Woman was not in the ranks of soldiers and police who were stoned and pelted with bricks and bottles, and yet the soldiers and police, and they alone, were the instruments of the Government’s will and power. Yet though she was not in the ranks, she was represented there, and the work done by soldiers and police was just as much in the interests of women who have no votes as of the men who have. And it was not women who were sworn in as special constables—though I am surprised that some enterprising Suffragist did not present herself for enrolment for the *réclame* of being refused. But the Suffragists kept very quiet indeed that week, for that week brought us down to the bed-rock of what a government and the State really mean, and theory was confounded by fact.

Now, we are as entitled to consider what would have happened if the situation had become graver as we are entitled to recall that the situation was grave. It might easily have become so grave that all the forces of government and all the orderly portion of the nation’s manhood would have been engaged not only in resisting force by force, but in securing the distribution of food under the protection of force. We should then have seen no longer a working model, but the fact

¹ See the speech by Mr Winston Churchill, then Home Secretary, at Dundee, September, 1911, for his view of the gravity of the situation.

itself, of the relative functions of men and of women in the State as discussed in an earlier chapter, for the men would have been outside the home securing food, and the women and children would have been staying at home, anxiously waiting for it. We did not come to that actual pinch, but that is what was involved, and our intelligences may bridge the slight gulf there was between possibility and reality.

Male Military Service.

But before leaving the "physical force" argument, some attention must be paid to the objections to its validity that are raised by Suffragists. It is first of all objected that "the battlefield of maternity" counterbalances man's military capacity and service, and that contention will be dealt with in the next chapter. And then it is pointed out by Suffragists that all men do not fight, and that therefore the *exclusive* possession by males of a vote on the strength of military capacity must fall to the ground. But the sex that wields physical force, at the instance of the State and to uphold the State, is *exclusively* male and not female. And the objection to the validity of the physical force argument on this ground can be also met even by the statement that if the sex which is called upon to perform the function of physical defence and control, cares to excuse certain members of it from the actual performance of those functions it may logically do so without depriving them of the vote, on the sufficient ground that they belong to the sex which *is* called upon to perform those functions. Or, again, we may say that the sex delegates the function, in normal times to certain specialised members of it, as a matter of sub-division of labour, but that the liability rests upon the sex as a whole in case of ultimate need.

So that if it is said that all men do not uphold the State by physical force, the reply is that that is only true because all men are not ordinarily necessary at one and the same time to uphold it;

but the sex that does uphold the State, the sex that vindicates its law and order internally, and which defends the State externally, is the male and not the female sex. Moreover, those men who are engaged in the task of upholding the State act merely as the deputies of the rest of the manhood of the nation, but could not act for a day except by its assent—unless they were acting as the representatives of the State against a revolutionary movement on the part of a portion of the manhood of the State, in which case we should see the function of male physical force exhibited in its two capacities—the capacity that upholds government and the capacity that destroys government. Moreover, it is at any rate within the bounds of possibility that our own nation may some day be driven, either by the force of external circumstances acting suddenly, or by the votes of the electorate given deliberately, to assume national military service; but a State in which all men were liable to military service, but in which the political power had passed over to a majority of women, suggests a picture of an ill-balanced constitution that is too grotesque to be thought upon.

Idealists and Physical Force.

Then there is another objection made by Suffragists to the physical force argument—an objection to the argument itself. It is repugnant to the type of mind that is most favourable to Suffragism; and I can even sympathise with the repugnance, considered ethically as a civilized emotion, though I have no sympathy with it considered in relation to the rationality of the matter. For the mistake made by these objectors is that they confuse two things in their condemnation or repugnance: they confuse a mental recognition of the fact as a disagreeable necessity with a moral sympathy with the necessity itself. But it is not exalting physical force, or falling down ecstatically before it, to point out its function in connection with the State—it is merely recognising

facts as they are. The only point to consider is whether there is any relevant connection between the claims of Suffragism and the fact that government still depends upon physical force; and though I respect the pacific ideals of the Suffragists to whom that recognition is abhorrent, I cannot respect the mind that will not confront the rationality of this recognition as an argument against Woman Suffrage. Herbert Spencer hated physical force so much that he took no pleasure, he tells us in his Autobiography, in reading that sanguinary epic, the Iliad; but, nevertheless, as one possessing a rational mind, and also a first class intellect which, at any rate, cannot be treated with contempt, he recognised and affirmed the validity of the physical force argument when he said ("Social Ethics"): "Unless, therefore, women furnish contingents to the Army and Navy such as men furnish, it is manifest that, ethically considered, the question of the equal 'political rights,' so called, of women, cannot be entertained until there is reached a state of permanent peace. Then only will it be possible (whether desirable or not) to make the political position of men and women the same."

That time, unhappily, is not yet reached, and whether it will ever be reached no man can say. The present signs, at any rate, are not favourable to the mind that denounces the Anti-suffragist who uses the physical force argument as a blind worshipper of force. Indeed, excluding altogether the international and racial problems that still show the nations of the world to be in a state of flux and unrest, we may turn our eyes much nearer home to discover, if we have a discerning mind, in the increasing unrest and complexity of our social existence, and in the consequences that may immediately follow upon the duty of Government to uphold the social order and keep open the vital avenues of its daily needs, and in the slackening of allegiance to all forms of authority that we may see on every hand—in these ominous signs we may discern sufficient indication

that the reign of a millennial peace amongst us is not yet at hand, and that "man's work" in the world, or in our own kingdom, is not yet done. No one but a savage could rejoice at the fact—nobody but a fool can shut his eyes to it. And when one comes soberly to think of some of the problems that may at any time confront statesmanship in our land, the demand for Woman Suffrage here and now must strike the reflective mind with a sense of the aloofness of Suffragists from all the realities of life, just as the indignation caused by the alleged shortage of soap in the concentration camps of a war-ravaged country struck the sober mind as evidence of a total absence of rationalised imagination in all those who made it a complaint.

We have now seen, I think, (1) that though women claim to take their full share of the control of the State, they are wholly inessential to it; (2) that the validity of a vote, as an instrument of government, depends upon the physical power to enforce it; (3) that the whole burden of enforcing it falls upon men, and consequently (4) that though women claim to have a control of the State equal to man's, they are ruled out absolutely from the function of upholding the very existence of the State.

These should really be the final considerations to decide the claim of women to vote, if we are at all to consider the claim to a share in the control of the State as needing a corresponding power of service to the State.

But are there any other considerations so overwhelmingly strong in themselves, and on quite another plane of consideration, as to over-ride those fundamental objections? Though the vote is not woman's "right," and it is a misuse of language to "demand" it, though the State has absolutely no need of woman at all outside the Home and its allied social functions, though government rests ultimately on the physical force which she does not exercise, and though votes

for women would therefore be paper shams, just like bank-notes issued by a bank that had not the gold reserve to meet them—yet, notwithstanding these objections, *in themselves a complete and final answer*, are there any other reasons for giving votes to women which should justify us in giving them as an act of grace—a concession from the strong to the weak? It must be admitted, I think, that they must be very strong reasons indeed, and that they must first overwhelm whatever answers there may be to them in themselves, before we are called upon to weigh them against those fatal and final considerations hitherto presented. But to consider them will bring us to closer quarters with the arguments of the Suffragists, after giving (as I think has now been done) that part of the case of their opponents which they are compelled to leave wholly unanswered.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Three "Rights."

VOTES AND TAXES—A CLAIM AND A DELUSION—A POLITICAL WATCHWORD—THE RIGHT OF FREE SPEECH—THE FIRST SPEECH BY A CABINET MINISTER—PANDEMONIUM—THE SQUINT OF SUFFRAGISM—THE BATTLEFIELD OF MATERNITY—MATERNITY AND THE RACE.



CHAPTER VIII.

The Three "Rights."

IN the last chapter, the concession of votes to women was spoken of as an act of grace. But before coming to the consideration of the question on that plane, notice must be taken of one claim that they make to the vote as a right, and it is the only right that they attempt to prove, so that it is worth while devoting a brief chapter to demolishing that proof. The particular claim now referred to is that their payment of taxes in itself entitles them to votes, on the principle of "No Taxation without Representation," and the Taxation Resistance League exists specifically to vindicate the right that is claimed to a vote from the fact that some women pay taxes just as most men do. And it is well to answer it because that ever-green fallacy, "The lady and her gardener," is involved in this question—the lady who has not got a vote and pays taxes (though she probably derives her wealth entirely from some male source) whilst her gardener, whom she employs, does possess a vote.

Votes and Taxes.

In November last a lady doctor, writing in *The Daily Chronicle*, raised this question specifically in an article which asked, in its heading, "Should Women Pay Rates and Taxes?" seeing that they have no vote. On the face of it, it looks a very simple and reasonable question, but when it is examined it is seen really to belong to the order of such silly-season questions as "Do Bachelors make Good Husbands?" and "Are Wives Happy?" *For it all depends.* And the answer to the question, "Should Women Pay

Rates and Taxes?" even though they have not a vote, is that it all depends upon the woman.

If she is a sensible, fair and just woman, she will say: "Yes. For the benefits I receive for the payment of rates and taxes are ample return for the money asked of me. For my rates, I receive all the advantages of a wonderfully organised municipal community—the streets in my town are lit, the roads are paved, the sewage from my house is taken away in drains that I could no more command, except as a ratepayer, than I could command the supply of water which is brought to my house from distant hills; and the sinks and pipes of my house are linked up with a wonderful sanitary system. The police patrol before my home and guard my property; the dustman calls to remove the refuse that, if it remained, would poison the atmosphere surrounding me even worse than it would poison the atmosphere surrounding my neighbours. I have a free library if I want a book, and a cheap bath if I want a swim. I have a thousand advantages which I could not obtain if I were an isolated unit not paying rates, and if anybody tried to shut me out of these advantages by declining to take my rates, I could invoke the law of England to enforce my share in them. And, in addition to these advantages, necessary to the last degree in modern life, and all the results of the exertions of men, I also have a municipal vote which interests me so little that I can with difficulty be persuaded to go to the poll, so satisfied I am with what is done for me." That is what she would say in answer to the question so far as rates are concerned.

A Claim and a Delusion.

And as to taxes, she would say: "Yes. For the little I pay is little enough for the protection it affords me; for the dignity it gives to me, wherever I may be, as a citizeness of the best ordered and most respected State in the world; for the security of its laws, the best administered of any laws in the world; and

for the thousand amenities and conveniences which the State provides. And, finally, I receive the protection of those physical forces of government in which I take no share and have no part whatever beyond the infinitesimal sum I contribute to their financial maintenance."

That is how she would answer the question if she were a sensible, fair-minded, just and rational woman. But if she were none of these things, but the victim of an overmastering idea that warped her judgment, she would then join the Taxation Resistance League, and refuse to pay taxes. And she would base her resistance on the formula relied upon by the League. "No Taxation without Representation." And she would imagine that that phrase gave her a right to something she did not possess—a parliamentary vote. So that if she kept a dog or a carriage or lived in "an inhabited house" in Great Britain she would claim the right to have a voice in the government of an Empire that comprises one-fifth of the inhabitants of the globe.

But she would, nevertheless, be basing her claim upon a delusion. The maxim, "No Taxation without Representation," no more means that those who pay taxes have a right to a parliamentary vote than the Liberal watchword of "Peace, Retrenchment and Reform" means that every man has the right to live in a world in which no wars, extravagance, or unreformed abuses shall flourish. The maxim never has meant what the Taxation Resistance League thinks; means it less than ever to-day, when the franchise is not based upon the payment of taxes at all; and is negated at every turn.

If it meant what she thinks, every boy who buys a packet of cigarettes could make out a case for a vote; every alien who lives in an inhabited house could make out a case for a vote. But it does not mean what she thinks. Many people pay taxes who can have no vote, and who do have no vote, and who never will have a vote. Not only does every

alien resident in this country pay taxes without having a vote, but even if he lives abroad he is liable to the British Government for income-tax on that part of his income which comes to him from the United Kingdom when he is alive, and is liable to the Government for death duties on that part of his property which is situated in the United Kingdom when he is dead. It is the property, in fact, and not the person, that is taxed.

A Political Watchword.

Moreover, thousands and thousands of men pay taxes who have no vote; and even if we regard Manhood Suffrage as an accomplished fact, there yet remain many males under twenty-five years of age who will still pay taxes without having a vote.

But what does the maxim mean? It means, and meant, simply this: That no taxes shall be levied by a King without the consent of Parliament. It did not mean, and never could mean in a rational State, that no taxes should be levied without the consent of every individual who paid them. The framers of that maxim no more contemplated that it would give every taxpayer, and therefore every woman who pays taxes, the right to a vote, than they meant that it would entitle them to three acres and a cow. It is not a part of the British Constitution, as the Tax Resisters seem to think, but merely an assertion of one of the most elementary attributes of parliamentary government. It is a political watchword merely—a watchword of parliamentary government against kingly despotism, and has no more to do with the basis of the franchise than it has to do with the right to a commission in the Salvation Army.

Yet the principle does find expression in our Constitution. And where is it found? It is found in the Petition of Right which Lords and Commons and the threat of armed men forced upon Charles the First. And what is the form in which it finds expression? The words are:—

"That *no man* shall be compelled to make or yield any gift, loan, benevolence, tax, or such like charge without common consent by Act of Parliament."

The Taxation Resistance League is therefore marching to ridicule under the grotesque battle cry of a sheer delusion. And though the Taxation Resistance League marches under the John Hampden banner, that banner has no more to do with their cause than "No Taxation without Representation" has to do with the basis of the franchise. For John Hampden was not a voteless man protesting against the payment of taxes because he had no vote. John Hampden was a member of Parliament—a member of the very Parliament that forced the Petition of Right upon Charles the First, and he protested against the Ship Money being levied by the king *without the consent of Parliament*, as every schoolboy ought to know. So that both banner and watchword of the Taxation Resistance League have "nothing to do with the case."

On the wider question I believe that the State would so little miss the contributions that women make to it, except by indirect taxation (which is shared by every youth who buys a screw of tobacco and every girl who buys an ounce of tea, and for whom, at any rate, votes are out of the question) that the State could relieve every woman from direct taxation without imposing any further burden upon men than men would be willing to bear, if that price were necessary to keep the control of the State within their own hands. But that price is not necessary, for rates and taxes are paid for value received. Moreover, if that grievance were removed, its removal would only create a fresh one. For somebody, no doubt, would then form a Taxation Insistence League. But if women still insisted on paying taxes they could send the amount to the Chancellor of the Exchequer as conscience money. And if they then insisted on being *compelled* to pay taxes, well, no doubt most of us would by then be out of this mad world altogether.

But if women were relieved altogether from the payment of taxes, they would still persist in their claim for a vote on other grounds than that payment of taxes gave a right to vote. To which we should reply that we oppose giving them votes on other grounds than that a payment of taxes gave no right to a vote, so that we should start afresh all over again. Which is just what we now can do, after clearing the ground of the claim that the payment of taxes gives a woman the "right" to a vote. That claim being now demolished, and being the only specific "right" brought to support the demand for a vote, we are now free henceforth to consider the granting of the vote to women merely as an act of grace.

For although there is another claim made to the vote on the ground of a special qualification, and that qualification, strangely enough, is maternity, it hardly amounts to a claim by a "right." But it is worth while giving some little attention to the maternity claim, because so many people seem to think they are exercising their minds logically by making that claim, when as a matter of fact they are simply allowing their reason to remain in abeyance and are surrendering their minds to an unreasoning sentiment.

The Right of Free Speech.

But before we come to consider the "battlefield of maternity" fallacy, the chapter which exposes the senselessness of the "No Taxation without Representation" cry is a fitting place for considering another aberration of reason in this strange controversy, for although it has little to do with granting the vote, it has a great deal to do with the rationality of those who ask for it. It concerns the right of free speech.

There are certain people who strangely imagine that the noisy "Suffragettes" who interrupt public meetings, and who specially delight in interrupting speakers entirely favourable to their cause, are "vin-

dicating the right of free speech." But to any ordinary intelligence (though I fear that what we call ordinary intelligence is really a rare thing) it must be obvious that, so far from vindicating free speech, those who make it impossible are positively preventing it. Nowadays people seem to allow themselves to be hypnotised by a phrase without examining what it means. "No Taxation without Representation" does not mean what those who use it think; and "the right of free speech" does not mean the right to prevent free speech. But so dismal is the outlook for our national sanity that it is possible to find men and women who believe that those who prevent a speaker speaking freely are vindicating the very thing that they are really killing. "The right of free speech," it should not be necessary to explain, means the right of any Englishman to express his opinions (not in themselves treasonable) publicly upon any public matter without fear of the Crown or Government. John Wilkes and Sir Francis Burdett were, of course, almost the last vindicators of free speech, with which principle is linked the doctrine of "the freedom of the Press." But apparently there are people so invincibly ignorant and so devoid of any power of reflection that they imagine that if those who make free speech impossible are ejected from a public meeting to which they may not even have been invited, "the right of free speech" is being denied to them, that is to say to the very people who are denying it to others. And in such inversions of all reason, in such perversions of all sense, this Suffrage campaign is so rich that it is worth while paying a little detailed attention to the most conspicuous example of the denial of free speech that has marked the campaign.

The First Speech by a Cabinet Minister.

On December 5, 1908, Mr Lloyd George was announced to deliver an important speech to a meeting convened by the Women's Liberal Federation in the

Albert Hall. It is important to notice that the meeting was convened by a certain political body, which paid for the hire of the hall and went to all the trouble and expense of convening the meeting. But nevertheless it was expected that women who had nothing to do with the political body convening the meeting would secure admission and would endeavour to "wreck the meeting"; and that is exactly what happened. But circulated in the hall were leaflets addressed to the militant Suffragists by the chairwoman, then Lady M'Laren, in which this appeal was made:

"We have cast aside physical defences, and fair play at this meeting rests with you. For ourselves we ask nothing—for our guest and friend we request a hearing. If you wreck this meeting you strike a cruel blow at women, their organisation and their cause. Shall it be said that when a Cabinet Minister stood for the first time on a Suffrage platform to plead for woman's freedom women would not hear him? In the name of our common womanhood and our common cause, I entreat your courtesy. Whatever you do, we renounce all retaliation.

"NORA M'LAREN."

Now, no person could be found alive and sane to doubt that if such an appeal had been addressed to men—an appeal so courteous, so unprovocative, so reasonable, so perfectly unimpugnable as an appeal to manners and the barest intelligence, an appeal, in fact, so abject—no man in any audience would have defied it, for he would have felt that he was put upon his honour to behave properly, even though he were an interloper. But it is also perfectly certain that to no assembly of men would an appeal for order have been made that renounced all retaliation. And it is further perfectly certain that if any man had defied such an appeal to the most elementary sense of honour and decency, he would have found himself outside the Albert Hall more dead than alive. And, finally, it is certain that no voice in the land would have held that he did not richly deserve his contusions. And now what happened at the meeting of women, to a hundred of whom (out of some five or six thousand) this appeal for self-control was made?

The meeting was no ordinary meeting. For the first time in our history, as Mr Lloyd George himself also reminded the interrupters, a Cabinet Minister stood on a Woman Suffrage platform. So little advanced was the cause, so far was it from being a fully debated issue, so far is it still from being a cause sufficiently commended to the country to condone violence if it be not at once conceded, that it was not until the last month of the year 1908 that any responsible politician had ever consented to appear on a platform of its supporters. And Mr Lloyd George was not there merely to support it, but he was there to make a most important pronouncement of the intentions of the Government in regard to the cause—a statement of intentions, by the way, that Mr Asquith ratified to the very letter, and then beyond it, in the same month three years later. And, again, what happened? Well, it would be necessary to quote column after column of the full descriptive reports to do justice to that unparalleled scene. But the barest facts must suffice.

"Pandemonium."

Mr Lloyd George, for anything the meeting knew, might have been ready to announce that he had resigned from the Liberal Government as a protest against the opinions of his chief, and would forthwith stand or fall by "the cause" alone. He might have been ready and prepared to say anything, for anything anybody knew. But before anybody could know anything of what he was going to say, before he had left behind him the bare opening words of his speech, the interruptions began. Other speakers had already spoken, had been uninterrupted, and had sat down. A resolution had been passed, a collection had been taken. Nothing had happened. The women who had come to the meeting in prison garb had not yet melodramatically opened their cloaks to reveal their costume; the dog-whips they had brought with them were still up their sleeves; even their voices

had been still. And the chairwoman had just uttered the words, "Suffragist ladies, we commend ourselves to your courtesy. Hear the message of a friend. I call upon Mr Lloyd George."

And, at his rising, pandemonium began. The dog-whip soon appeared. From every corner of the vast hall the frenzied interruptions came. "Free speech" was killed before the speaker had got a hundred words out of his mouth. Twice Mr Lloyd George sat down. And, at last, in this meeting of women, the men stewards had to do the dirty work of turning out a few of the hundred women who were not only making free speech impossible, but who were setting at nought the convenience, the peace, the very happiness of five or six thousand women belonging to a body with which the hundred women had nothing to do. Again and again and again Mr George endeavoured to raise his voice above the din; again and again the chairwoman made her appeals; but the meeting had gone to pieces. Here and there two or three women were droning out, for ten minutes at a stretch, the chant, "Deeds not words!" in a frenzied monotone. Others were crying out "The message! Give us the message!" Women jumped on the platform and shouted insults at the first Cabinet Minister who had ever stood on a Woman Suffrage platform. Every sentence he could manage to shout out was countered by something shouted back at him, even when he was actually saying, under these grotesquely unpropitious circumstances, words in praise of woman's judgment, ability, and aptitude for government! In short, the speech of the first Cabinet Minister who had ever appeared on a Woman Suffrage platform became, even in its quieter moments, an exercise of battledore and shuttlecock repartee between him and Suffragists. In the words of a sympathiser, a woman writer, "pandemonium reigned for two hours" during the first speech made by a Cabinet Minister to an audience of Suffragists.

Well, no comment is necessary on the main fact, for it defies comment, though the ordinary intelligence

will note the fact that the creators of this pandemonium are the driving force of the Suffragist movement. Nor can one comment on the extraordinary fact that Mr Lloyd George's convictions apparently survived that scene, and that he positively "worked off" (no more respectful phrase is possible under the circumstances) his peroration, and closed that speech with the words, which he was just able to make audible :

" . . . that they should call in the aid, the counsel, and inspiration of women to help in the fashioning of legislation to cleanse, purify, and fill with plenty the homes upon which the future destiny of this great commonwealth of nations depended."

These things are amazing enough, and defy comment, but what is perhaps less amazing but more disturbing is that there were actually people in these islands, which Montaigne called the home of common sense, who held that the right of free speech had been denied to those who would not let Mr Lloyd George get three consecutive sentences past his lips.

The Squint of Suffragism.

The newspapers, it is true, were flooded with correspondence from people who from that moment washed their hands of Woman Suffrage for good ; but amongst other letters were some from extraordinary people who imagined that a hundred women were vindicating the right of free speech by flourishing dog-whips, droning out a mechanical chorus, and making all speech impossible—letters from people who positively did not understand that the right of free speech does not mean the right to prevent free speech, but does mean the right (apart from all question of manners) to speak, and to speak in peace.

But there seems to be a strange liability to a kind of mental strabismus in all who champion the cause. For one of the sanest newspapers in the country, a newspaper that holds up at their highest the traditions of English journalism, *The Manchester Guardian*, exhibited this strange perversity in its next issue. From

one page of that issue I take three editorial references to this unparalleled scene. First, the leading article judicially "divided the shame evenly." "At all costs and under whatever provocation there should have been no laying on of hands, no violence, no ejections." Excellent counsel, illustrating marvellously that chivalry expected of man under difficult circumstances which we shall afterwards have to consider. The leader-writer's restraint and self-control, exhibited 200 miles from such a scene and 24 hours after it had taken place, was most praiseworthy. And we all honour the spirit of the melodramatic tag: "The man who lays his hand on a woman save in the way of kindness . . ." etc. But obviously, it requires only the merest extension of that doctrine, if it were held to apply to such a scene as that, to lay down the principle that no policeman should ever lay hands on a woman to take her into custody—and, indeed, the extension needed would be very slight to carry that principle into effect if ever we got a woman's Parliament.

The next reference on that page shows the poison of Suffragism more subtly at work. For "A Woman's Impressions," given as a descriptive report of the meeting, contains the amazing rebuke to Mr Lloyd George that he should not have trifled with the meeting by making any allusion to Queen Elizabeth!—that he should not have made his speech in his own way, but that he should have yelled out his message to begin with and then, I suppose, have gone home, after satisfying the frenzied impatience of a hundred women out of six thousand! The passage in which this strange squint comes out ran, with the running commentary that one is forced to make upon it, in these words:

"He can hardly have gauged the temper of the meeting he was to handle." (The "temper" was that of a sixtieth part of the meeting defying the pleasure and desires of all the rest. Moreover, not the least interruption had taken place to reveal to him "the temper of the meeting" until he himself arose) "and it is surprising in one who can be a rhetorician that he should have begun with academic references to Queen Elizabeth . . . Mr Lloyd

George considers that the position of one who advocates Woman's Suffrage is one which still requires justification by argument" (which was hardly strange, indeed, when his was "the first speech ever made by a Cabinet Minister" on a Woman Suffrage platform), "and he had doubtless prepared a speech which would in due course have arrived from Queen Elizabeth by gentle degrees to the present day, when he could in ten minutes have given the gist of his message."

Well, good manners, of course, have nothing to do with such a case and such a plea as that, but I wonder what on earth would have been said by the *Manchester Guardian*, or by any other respected and respectable organ of opinion, if another paper had allowed a contributor to lecture a statesman on the very order with which he chose to frame his speech, because a hundred male rowdies (not even opposed to his cause, to carry the thing into the most rarefied atmosphere of dizzy bewilderment) chose to exhibit a calculated frenzy of impatience ostensibly, but not really, because he chose to lead up to his point in his own way? It is difficult to say which was the more insolent of the two—the offence itself or the excuse made for it.

But the third instance of mental strabismus as the result of association with Suffragism is even more staggering. It appeared also in the editorial columns, and on the same page, and was not the expression of any irresponsible contributor :

"Probably Mr Lloyd George would have done more wisely if he had kept any general matter intended for outside consumption to the end of the speech. But the line he took is one more of the curious indications that even sympathisers with the movement among men are perpetually failing to see the real position of women on the question. It is so inevitably a failure that it might almost become a rule now that no man should be the chief speaker at a meeting on Woman's Suffrage."

I could forgive the sanest man in England if, after reading such a passage, he went out and drowned himself out of sheer mental prostration and giddiness. A Cabinet Minister addresses a meeting of Women Suffragists for the first time in the history of a movement that has none too many friends. He is first rebuked for assuming that Woman Suffrage still

requires "justification by argument." And then he is told that because a hundred women out of six thousand prevent him making a coherent speech at all, the rule should henceforth be that no male supporter should show himself prominently on a Woman Suffrage platform. I agree that after such an experience no man of spirit would want to show himself at all, but that he should be *told* to appear furtively, and to hide behind the chairwoman's petticoats, and not make himself very visible, and not to provoke the audience of women by supporting their cause too prominently—that these things could be written and the cause still survive, is really a very disconcerting and depressing symptom indeed. Only one man who ever lived could really have done justice to such a situation, and that was Dr Johnson. But I fear that even his invincible sanity would have confessed itself beaten, and that in despair he would have drunk five pots of tea straight off, and then have settled down to the adventures of Pantagruel to lose himself in what (Cambronne not then having spoken his *mot de Waterloo*) would have been congenial company. There are, of course, *à priori* grounds for supposing that an eruption of feminism is only possible in, and is the very sign of, an age which is losing its virility; but the condonation of the Albert Hall pandemonium is in itself a sufficiently disturbing indication of the truth of that theory.

I have dwelt on that scene and its condonation at length, however, because it was the shortest way of correcting the truly extraordinary notion that to resent, and to endeavour to frustrate, the avowed intentions of people to wreck a political meeting and to prevent free speech, is to deny "the right of free speech." It is only in an age in which the national sanity is waning that such a task should be necessary as to point out that the right of free speech is the right of a man to address a public meeting; and that the negation of the right of free speech is the effrontery and unintelligent insolence of those who make free speech impossible.

The "Battlefield of Maternity."

It has been well to sandwich that little matter of the right of free speech between the consideration of two other illusory "rights"—the right to a vote by a payment of taxes, and the argument that the fact and act of maternity gives a right to a vote. The maternity fallacy is, of course, put forth as an answer to the physical force argument. That argument is really final and conclusive and unanswerable, but in a moment of misguided inspiration somebody suddenly remembered that if soldiers die in battle, women sometimes die in childbirth, and so the phrase "the battlefield of maternity" was coined. It got taken up enthusiastically, and was soon elevated into an argument. It is not uttered irresponsibly, but by people who ought to be able at least to think clearly, seeing that they assume, or are entrusted with, the function of instructing others. It appears, for instance, as a prominent argument in one of the few leading articles that a certain London Liberal newspaper has devoted to reasoning out the cause—for nine out of ten editorial references to the cause have dealt only with parliamentary tactics, and have not even endeavoured to do what must be done before the question of tactics becomes relevant, viz., make out the case *for* Woman Suffrage by answering the case *against* it.

The "battlefield of maternity" cry does not, of course, attain the dignity of an argument—it is merely an example of the unreflecting sentimentalism that marks the cause. If it be the death of women, or the risk of women, in childbirth that is set off against the male military function, then we can answer it merely by saying that it is not alone soldiers among men who risk and encounter death and injury as the result of doing work which woman does not do. For coal-mining is just as deadly a "battlefield" as maternity, and railway-shunting, bridge-building, ship-building and ship-sailing, and other industrial and

peaceful occupations, in which most men are working for wages to keep some women as well as themselves, also exact their toll of men's lives.

But the maternity argument is advanced also to contend that women serve the State by being mothers and continuing the supply of citizens, just as men serve the State by upholding it. Well, if it comes to that, women no more serve the State by being mothers of citizens than men serve the State by being fathers of citizens, and one service must simply cancel the other. The fact that some women die through childbirth, whilst no men die through procreation, has nothing to do with the relative service of each to the State. The only point proved by that difference is that the sexes and their functions are so separated that a woman cannot be a mother without physical disablement and risk, but that men can be fathers and still go on with their work as though nothing had happened except that they have one more mouth to feed. The battlefield of maternity argument, in fact, merely points to one of those many differences of sex which we are constantly encountering, but which Suffragists are constantly denying. Their main and basic position is that there is no difference between the two sexes. "We want votes because men have got votes, and we want votes on the same terms as men have got them," they say. And if you then reply: "That is all very well, but if women want votes because men have got them, we must first consider the differences between men and women," then they begin to point to a few women who are doing men's work, and they argue from isolated and exceptional examples the identity of the two sexes. But when it is pointed out that even if women here and there perform indifferently some forms of work that could be much better done by men, they do not do the material work of the world nor uphold the State in any direct way, then a complete somersault, figuratively speaking, is turned, and the Suffragist begins to plead the very sex differences she denies,

and to talk of the exacting nature of maternal duties and of "the battlefield where life is born."

The Race and Maternity.

But maternity is not a battlefield at all, except that it is a warfare between natural causes and effects—between mortal beings and the common grim enemy of us all. A man fights pretty much the same battle every time he is down on what may prove to be his deathbed through working for his wife and family and going out to business when he ought to have "lain up" at home. Maternity, moreover, is a natural function—soldiering is not. And a woman does not have children "to serve the State." She looks forward, not to giving birth to "a little son of Empire," but to giving birth to her own child. If she lived on a beautiful tropical island alone with her mate, she would have just the same joy and pains in giving birth to her child, although there was no such thing as a State for it to be born into. In short, it is not the State she serves by her maternity, but the race. The man serves the race just as much by his paternity as she does by her maternity, but the simple difference between them is that to serve the race by perpetuating his species does not interfere with his work either for the State or for his mate, whilst for her to serve the State, first by her maternity and then by her maternal duties in rearing a child that takes longer than any other animal to reach maturity, does incapacitate her for the direct service of the State. If women ceased to be mothers, the State would certainly come to an end, as would the Conservative party and the Liberal party and the Votes for Women party. But the same thing would happen if men ceased to be fathers, and there is as much connection between fatherhood and the State as there is between motherhood and the State—that is to say, very little. For men and women are fathers and mothers not as citizens, consciously performing services to the State, but as normal beings gratifying their own instincts—which gratification is the only

guarantee for the perpetuation not only of the State, but of the race whence States arise. Parenthood, in short, is an individual and personal matter, and existed before there were such things as States. And (to come to the point that immediately exposes the fallacy) States do impose compulsory military service on men, but no State can impose compulsory maternity on women. Indeed, many of the predestined and irreclaimable Suffragists protest vehemently against the monstrous notion that all women should be expected to sacrifice themselves to maternity—"expected" not by the State, but by social opinion merely, for there has never been any suggestion that the State should impose any pains or penalties upon those women who shirk the pains and penalties of maternity or who repudiate the maternal function of women altogether.

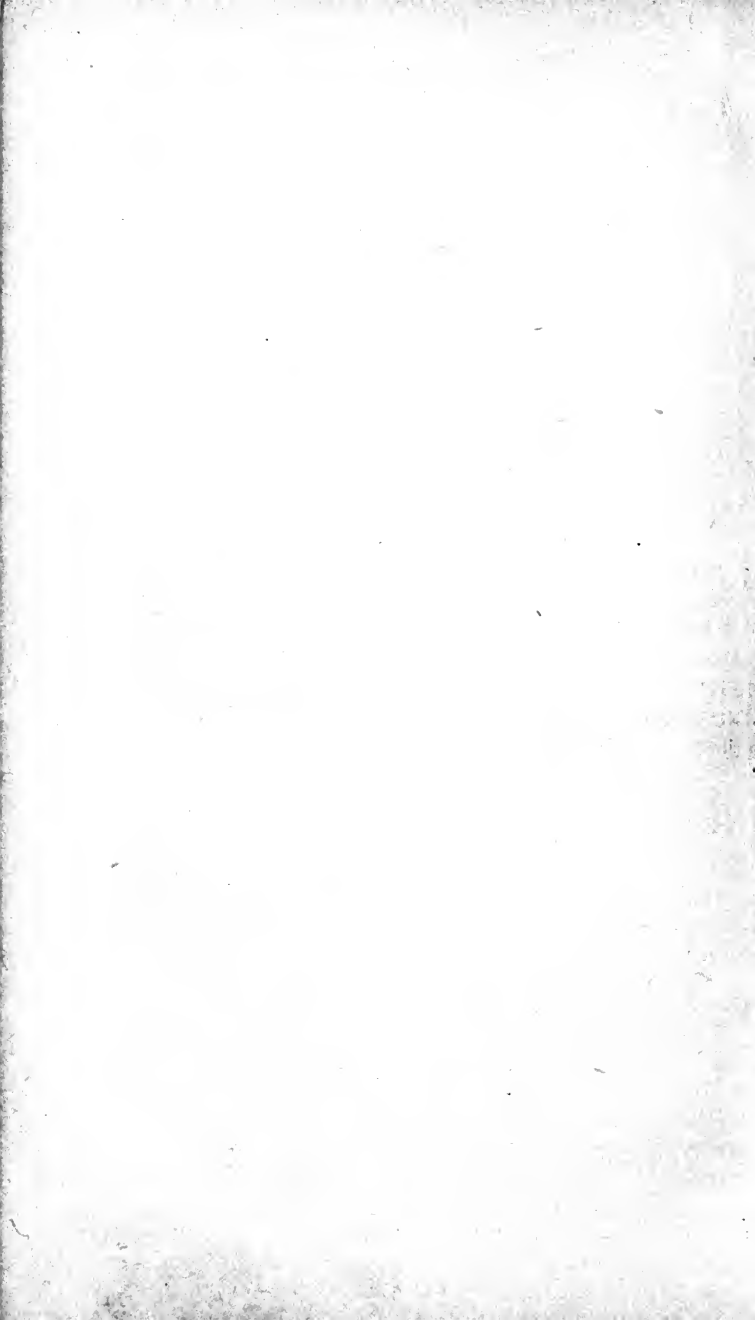
And so the "battlefield of maternity" argument is merely part of the quibbling sentimentality by which the cause, in its minor issues, is supported. It becomes nonsense the moment it is looked at rationally, but it has to be looked at, not because there is any point or reason in it, but simply because a good many people who will not think for themselves must have their thinking done for them.

But "the battlefield of maternity" argument is put forward rather to answer the unanswerable "physical force" argument than as specifically constituting a "right," as the "payment of taxes" fallacy is put forward. That fallacy, and others, having been disposed of, we are now free henceforth to consider the granting of votes to women not as a right at all, for there is no such right either on abstract or on particular grounds, but as an act of grace. And the answers of Anti-suffragists to the claim for the suffrage as an act of *grace* are those which oppose it on the ground of *expediency*.

CHAPTER IX.

The Two Kinds Of Women.

NOISE V. NUMBERS—WOMEN AS ORATORS—THE OBSESSION OF SUFFRAGISM—THE PSEUDO-INTELLECTUALS—THE SOIL OF SUFFRAGISM—“STARTLING THE NATIVE”—EXPLOITING THE MULTITUDE—SENSE AND SINCERITY—A LITTLE REFERENDUM—NUMBERS IGNORED—THE WOMEN WHO DON'T.



CHAPTER IX.

The Two Kinds Of Women.

BUT before we come to consider the claim of women to votes even as an act of grace, the preliminary question must be answered of whether women want votes at all—that is, women generally. “But what nonsense!” it may be said, “to ask if women want votes! What of the demonstrations, processions, imprisonments, martyrdoms, and the entire active propaganda? There has never been a political cause in modern times carried on with more energy than the later development of this Woman Suffrage campaign.” Well, we can admit a good deal of that, but still not be silenced by it by any means. For we must not mistake noise for numbers, or even the persistence of some for the demands of the many. It is a fact that the Suffragists have displayed wonderful ingenuity, resource and determination—not to admit that would be as foolish as for others to deny that their campaign has been characterised by absurdities and profitless and pointless excesses. But we must not be too much awed by the stage army of militants who pass through Bow Street at recurrent intervals. And apart from the militants altogether the determination of a comparative few does not prove the case that women want the vote at all. If there are as many women as earnestly determined to oppose the vote as there are women earnestly determined to secure it, the two determinations cancel each other so far as affording any index of what women, speaking generally, want. But in addition to those who oppose the vote publicly and with determination, there is a huge body of women who oppose the granting of the vote when they are asked

to give an opinion upon the matter; and if there is, further, an even vaster body of women who have so little aptitude for politics, and take such little interest in politics, that even the supreme question of the "enfranchisement" of their sex leaves them indifferent (so indifferent that they will give neither a yea nor a nay upon it) and if this indifference and opposition is characteristic of the mass of women, then we shall know that so far from women wanting the vote, only a certain few women want it. And that is the truth, as will presently be shown, so far as the truth can be ascertained both from negative and positive evidence of the extent to which the demand for Votes for Women corresponds with any general desire amongst women as a sex.

Noise v. Numbers.

But it will be said that the women who do want the vote want it terrifically, passionately, desperately. Let us admit it—though the very superlative character of those adverbs ought to make us pause. For if, viewing some of the actions by which they supplement their desire, I were to add the word "hysterically," it would only be carrying the topmost note of the other adverbs into the highest register of shrillness with which they clamour for the vote. But because you do not hear the women who oppose the vote speaking in the same shrill accents, and "demanding" of the Prime Minister (at deputations during which the Prime Minister is treated none too civilly) that they shall not have the vote, you must not suppose that their determination to oppose the vote is any less than the determination of those who ask for it. And if you say, "Well, at least the women who don't want the vote haven't gone to prison to get it," the answer is that apart from the fact that going to prison is not going to settle the matter one way or the other, there would really be nothing gained by going to prison to protest against having what they have not got when they have not got it.

But it is necessary to remember two or three very important things in considering the apparent relative strength of the two sections. The first important thing is that a negative cause is always at a disadvantage against a positive cause. If there is a certain inert strength in one position, there is a greater dynamic force in the other. The women who agree with those champions of the cause that want the vote feel that the champions are at any rate doing something—asking for something, getting forwarder somewhere or other, and not merely standing still. And though safety, prudence and all wisdom may lie in standing still rather than in rushing onward, nevertheless those who ask for the vote, especially if they invoke the cause of the “downtrodden,” seem to be doing more than those who say, “let well alone, and let womanhood develop on existing lines.”

But it is a grievous mistake to suppose that because the women who do not want the vote do not organise processions and demonstrations (though as a matter of tactics I think they ought to do), and do not give the police a lot of trouble, and do not indulge in the spectacular propaganda of the more ardent wing of the Suffragists, that therefore they do not feel deeply, sincerely, and even passionately that the cause of Votes for Women is a mistaken cause and one which, if it were a successful cause, would bring women a greater plague of evils than any that would be removed. But the women who feel these things are, in the mass, not voluble women, skilled in the arts of public controversy (which always demand a certain audacity of temperament, in male or female). Some of them are so skilled, and—intelligence against intelligence—they are much more than a match for the best spokeswomen among the Suffragists.

Women as Orators.

And here let me step out of the march of the argument for a moment just to answer a point that arises from the last sentence. “You admit,” it may

be said, "that the women who are Anti-suffragist, and who publicly champion *their* cause, exhibit a very fine intelligence and capacity as public speakers. Does not that prove that women are not unfitted to take part in public life?" The point, of course, is only a debating point, and looks much more formidable than it really is, but it is quite good enough to be met. Well, it can hardly be doubted that even the extremely intelligent women who publicly oppose the suffrage are not typical of their sex—not as regards intelligence, but as regards their capacity for public work and speech. And they do not come out into public controversy because they wish to do so, or because the platform attracts them, but simply because of their compelling conviction that when certain women arrogate to themselves the right to speak for their entire sex, it is incumbent upon them to throw their prejudices aside, and even to try to rise above their own limitations, and come forward to declare that women do *not* want votes as emphatically as other women declare that they do. This is not only a man's question as against a woman's question—it is a question in which one type and ideal of woman is opposed to another type and ideal of woman. Hence, those women who oppose the movement by public speaking are simply women who feel compelled, when the sex is threatened by what they regard not as a liberation but as a danger, to come out in the open and meet the enemy on her own ground and beat her with her own weapons. And the fact that some women make capital public speakers—both for and against the cause—no more proves that all women are, could, and should be engaged in public controversy than the fact that some women work on the pit-brow proves that to be a desirable occupation for all women in general. When you hear of an Anti-suffragist woman speaker who gets so fascinated with her platform success that she deserts her side to go over to the enemy, then you will have something to talk about. But that miracle has not

yet happened. Till then, therefore, the answer to the point that even those women who do not want the vote deserve it because they show they are so intelligent, is that they are so intelligent that they do not want it. Besides, even a capacity for public speaking is not the last test of the fitness for a vote. There is more in public life than platform oratory, though the two things have become sadly confounded. And some of the most intelligent men, and even the strongest physically, have a dread of public speaking so profound that it paralyses their intelligence when they try it.

The Obsession of Suffragism.

We now return to the high road after this divergence to meet a debating point. The fact that the women who oppose the vote do not make as much stir in the public world as the women who want the vote, must not blind you to the fact that the women who do not want the vote are going about their work and doing what they conceive to be woman's duty without noise, riot, or notoriety ; whereas with those who do want the vote it has become a preoccupation, almost a sole occupation, sometimes a profession, and even an obsession, precluding any other form of activity whatever. Do you suppose that many of the prominent Suffragists spend much time at home, I will not say performing domestic duties, but even directing others to perform them? But it would be doing womanhood a great injustice to suppose that only those women who are most prominent just now in the public eye are the real spokeswomen of their sex. The best examples of womanhood in the land (even if you say, "Only from the old-fashioned point of view") are those who are going about their work in their own quiet way, and a few of them have the courage and the skill to emerge to counteract by decorous public debate the noisier but not the more effective work of the prominent Suffragists.

Of course, the Suffragists have sedulously fostered

the notion that they *are* the women of the country. But that is merely not true. Only those who have mixed in circles where Suffragism is the prevailing creed know how arrogant and intolerant are Suffragists to all who oppose them, whether men or women. Free Traders and Tariff Reformers may meet amicably anywhere (except in public, where their amity is not required) but if it be known in a Suffragist circle that an Anti-suffragist is present, the poor man or woman is fetched out of the social sphere and atmosphere altogether, and put through his paces as though he were a candidate on a platform, waiting and willing to be heckled. And in such circles Suffragism is often only a particular manifestation of a general tendency.

The Pseudo-Intellectuals.

For there is just now abroad a certain type of "intellectualism" that is opposed to its natural enemy, which is merely intelligence. It reveals itself not only in politics, but in art—not only in art, but even in feeding. Common sense is, in these circles, a very humdrum, philistine, bourgeois, commonplace sort of virtue indeed. If you eat beef, you are vulgar. A toleration for melodrama (even though you tolerate it only as you tolerate the art of the pavement artist) puts you amongst the "intellectually" damned. You must talk the jargon of art until, if you are a healthy-minded man, you want to go outside and enter the first low "pub" you can find and drink a pint of common beer out of a common tankard. Personally I don't mind admiring art (though I do not admire everything done in the name of art) and I respect artists (with many notable exceptions), and I believe that it is a great pity, from the point of view exclusively of artistic considerations, that the British public does not greatly understand or esteem art. But, on the other hand, I am quite sure that a nation of artists would be a nation in decadence, and that a certain bovine, healthy philistinism is what keeps the general mind sound in the general body. And that is why the jargon of art really

becomes the language of decadents. Shakespeare didn't go about talking art, Mr Max Beerbohm's cartoon no doubt showed clearly enough Browning's attitude to the Browning Society, and Tennyson smoked clay pipes, and Meredith liked a good tramp over the downs. And all great creative artists have got in them something of the healthy and sane philistinism of Dr Johnson. But if, in the circles I speak of, you frankly called "post impressionism" the second childhood of art, you were thought to live secretly somewhere in the neighbourhood of Peckham. In such circles, also, you must have "broad views" about marriage, but that is the mere cant of "intellectualism," for if you carried your broad views into practice you would be looked upon as a more degraded being than even the Bohemian of the eighties, who was a healthy, albeit rather a grubby being. And, in short, if you stand up for any orthodox view whatever, you are looked upon as a musty survival of mid-Victorianism (that deadly epithet!) and are classed with chandeliers, the Family Bible, Yorkshire pudding, and a heavy mid-day dinner on a Sunday. And if you sincerely believe that wives and mothers are, potentially, as noble creatures as any beings created by the Creator, you are regarded as being hopelessly behind the times and as old-fashioned as an antimacassar. No perception that the elemental truths are those that never go out of fashion ever enters the minds of the "Intellectuals."

The Soil of Suffragism.

It is in this soil—this favourable *nidus* for abnormal growths—that one phase of Suffragism flourishes. It is no more representative of womanhood than "the artistic temperament" is the prevailing temperament of the British working man. It does not stand for progress so much as for decadence, and the happiness of woman no more depends upon it than the salvation of the human race depends upon embracing the artistic principles of the Cubists. But nevertheless, by a 'cute

alliance between the principles of decadence and the arts of modern advertisement, a wholly false idea has been given of the importance and intellectual quality of the movement, and the arrogance of this type of Suffragist towards their sisters who oppose them partakes of something of the spirit of a vendetta. I do not wish to be unfair, and if that statement needs some qualification, it shall have it. There are many women Suffragists who take a much more human view of their creed. They see in it, however mistakenly, the regeneration of their sex, but do not perceive that if their sex is to be born again *it must be born again in its own likeness*. But these women may yet be won to the cause and side of their own sex, which is not Suffragism. And the most arrogant and "intellectual" form of Suffragism has its nest and home in another soil. The soil is that in which overblown flowers run to an untimely seed—energy is there, and some good purpose, but it has overshot itself, outgrown its strength, and its roots are not in mother earth. Whether over-development or arrested development is the obscure cause, the result is that they have been turned into "sports"—not in the colloquial, but in what I believe is the botanist's sense of that word.

"Startling the Native."

Coming back now to the political rather than the "intellectual" Suffragists, I do not think it can be denied that on the spectacular side the cause has made more progress than it has on the argumentative side. The militants, on their own statement, have taken to the more strenuous form of propaganda mainly to call attention to their cause—to *épater le bourgeois*—to startle the native—rather than because they expected their activities to appeal to their intelligence. Lady Selborne, for instance, who is not a militant, wrote a letter to herself in another lady's name (though without her authority) to point out what she thought a curious thing :

"You hold a crowded meeting in the centre of London, with an ex-Cabinet Minister as chief speaker, and you get a short paragraph on a back sheet in most of the papers. Now, if I threw a stone at the Prime Minister's carriage I should get a column on the first page, and perforce people's attention is directed to our cause."

So Lady Selborne wrote to herself, signing the letter with the name of Lady Constance Lytton, and she sent the little invention to *The Times* with a letter to the Editor saying: "Sir, I have received the enclosed letter from Lady Constance Lytton. It seems to me there is a certain truth in what she says, so I should be much obliged if you would insert it in *The Times*, March 10, 1911." We need not be hard on Lady Selborne. The innocent fraud reveals a curious notion on the part of women of what is the regulation way of conducting a public controversy, but as Lady Constance Lytton afterwards endorsed the sentiments attributed to her by Lady Selborne, no particular harm was done, and no doubt Lady Selborne learned a salutary lesson by the exposure of what was, though a thoughtless, not really a deceitful act. But she was annoyed that her husband, the Cabinet Minister referred to, should speak of Woman Suffrage and get no attention from the Press, whilst if a militant threw a brick at the Prime Minister's carriage she would get a column of notoriety. Hence Lady Selborne (addressing herself in the name of another lady) felt that the militant method was the better of the two.

Well, the phenomenon of an ex-Cabinet Minister addressing a public meeting is, in itself, not very remarkable; but it is not every day, fortunately, that stones are thrown at a Prime Minister's carriage, though the newspapers have already discovered that that sort of thing has lost a good deal of its news value (for the bourgeois soon gets tired of a joke after being once *épaté*). But Lady Selborne's fallacy is in supposing that "the cause" is advanced by such antics. A tradesman standing on his head outside his shop would no doubt attract "people's attention," but they

might be more entertained by his eccentricity than induced to go inside his shop and buy his wares. And the militant Suffragettes have really insulted the intelligence of democracy by supposing that their cause gained by the mere inanity of their public misbehaviour.

Exploiting the Multitude.

Yet there is some truth in the words Lady Selborne put into the mouth of Lady Constance Lytton, and so far as they are true they ought to stimulate every man and woman in the islands to prove them false in the long run. Unfortunately it is true that the arts of irrelevant advertisement are those which impose upon the multitude, though only up to a certain point. And the greatest danger to which the democracy is exposed is that it may be exploited by clever advertisement. The pitiable shifts and devices to which parliamentary candidates have to abandon themselves to secure votes—even from men—do show that democracy is a little too ready to make itself the prey of the arts of the showman as against the sincerity and truth of the man who appeals merely to their intelligence. In a London paper the other day was the news of the appointment of a certain lawyer to a judgeship of a criminal court, and the paper concluded its notice of the appointment and its brief biography of the new judge with the words :

“He has a keen sense of humour, a fund of good stories, and a knack of ready repartee—gifts which should go far to brighten the courts over which he presides.”

Now, you will ask, “What on earth has that to do with Votes for Women?” It has a good deal to do with your attitude towards the spectacular campaign of the Suffragists. It has, in fact, just as much to do with that as a fund of good stories has *not* to do with a good judge. Now, why were the readers of a newspaper—a newspaper, moreover, that does its best to enlighten democracy in other ways—told that a judge who had the liberties of men and women in his hands,

numbers among his qualifications such incongruous virtues as that he has a fund of good stories and a knack of ready repartee? The answer is that the intelligence of democracy is sometimes insulted even by its friends. They assume that it does not think, and that it is readier to laugh than to reflect, and that all that is necessary to commend a new judge to the man in the street is to say that he promises to make his criminal court a gay and lively place and to provide piquant paragraphs in the newspapers.

Now, precisely the same really contemptuous attitude to the public that is shown in that fatuous commendation of a new judge—a commendation that mentions every virtue except those that we look for in a judge, and that no doubt did the judge himself an injustice—is shown by the picturesque, spectacular, and wholly irrelevant part of the Suffragists' militant campaign. Their martyrdoms and disturbances were really meant to take your mind off the question rather than to concentrate it on the question; that question being whether it is a good or a bad thing that women should be plunged, as a sex, into the welter of politics and economic rivalry with man. That was the purpose. But whether they had that effect depends entirely upon how far people are able to distinguish the real from the false, the relevant thing from the irrelevant thing, and the sensible thing from the senseless.

Sense and Sincerity.

But it may be said, If women will do such extraordinary and unwomanly things as to fasten themselves to a pillar in a place of worship, and howl at a Prime Minister who has attended to deliver an address far removed from politics, they must indeed be suffering under a very strong sense of the injustice of being kept without votes. Well, even that assumption is going too far, for the psychological motives of conduct are very obscure, and people will do strange things. But it is not surprising that women who deride everything that other women think "womanly"

should do and say those things which are thought and called unwomanly. But the point is not whether they are earnest or sincere or not. We should have believed in their earnestness and sincerity no less, but a good deal more, if they had behaved, not irrationally, but with the force of reason merely. And their earnestness and sincerity are equalled by those women who do not find it necessary to be gagged and get arrested in order to prove these qualities, and who have refrained from assaulting even those prominent politicians who are prepared to do the thing they abhor—give votes to women. Besides, the militants have not only annoyed Mr Asquith, who is against them, but Mr Lloyd George and Sir Edward Grey, who are in favour of their cause. Mr Lloyd George apparently likes it, but Sir Edward Grey, taking a more normal view of things, has announced that if the annoyance and misbehaviour to his friends the Prime Minister and others does not cease, he is not going to waste his time and breath over commending a cause so hopelessly damned in the eyes of the nation. Nevertheless he has begun to commend the cause.

And the point to condemn about militancy is that it seeks to achieve by annoyance what it does not secure by argument, and it will not do to give encouragement to any cause—even if it were deserving and unanswerable—to try to seek its triumph by disorderliness and misdemeanours. Tariff Reform has been a cause for nearly a decade, but Tariff Reformers do not waylay Free Traders, and either of those creeds is upheld by an immeasurably greater number of people than assent even to the bare principle of Woman Suffrage. But we could not afford to allow militancy to triumph and set the example of a tyranny of insubordination, or each sect in the State would make itself a power by the sheer force of becoming a nuisance, and Christian “Scientists” might enforce a clamour for State endowment by a policy of passive resistance and the resources of a voluntary martyrdom.

The fact, then, that Suffragism has been supported

by the vehemence and disorderliness of a few women is no commendation whatever of the vote being granted as an act of grace. Their earnestness is counter-balanced by the orderly earnestness of women who do *not* want woman to be enfranchised. And if we leave emotion on one side, and come to numerical strength, the claim is no more valid. Even the most implacable opponent of the cause would be content to abide by the result of a referendum of the question to the mass of existing voters, and would sorrowfully capitulate before the evidence that the vote was desired by an overwhelming majority of the women themselves. But that submission of the issue to a democratic decision is not what the Suffragists want. With a blind impetuosity that has no parallel in politics, they simply wish to rush the position through what is now an omnipotent House of Commons, and before the opposition to the revolution can be consolidated.

A Little Referendum.

The Anti-suffragists, on the other hand, ardently desire to place their opposition at the mercy of the real will of the nation, or even of the wish of the women themselves. There is, to be sure, nothing Quixotic in this desire, for they know quite well that the mass of opinion in the country is with them, and that makes it all the more bewildering that we should have a Parliament, many of whose members talk quite glibly about Woman Suffrage becoming law during this session, a complacent prophecy that apparently assumes the House of Lords to be eager to abrogate even its suspensory veto. And the organised Anti-suffragists have done their best to secure an indication of what the *women* of the country think by sending out at great trouble and expense many thousands of postcards asking a plain "Yes" to one or other of the simple questions, "Do you think women *should* have the parliamentary vote?" and "Do you think women should *not* have the parlia-

mentary vote?" The results of this canvass, conducted among the women voters on the municipal register of 103 districts, proves absolutely (1) That more than twice as many women are opposed to the vote as are in favour of it; (2) that many more women are neutral or are indifferent to it than are even against it. For out of 135,481 women municipal voters asked to vote, 57,112 disdained even to reply. The assumption must be made that these 57,112 are, at any rate, not Suffragists, for if a woman wanted a vote she would at least go to the trouble of saying she did when asked. But the majority of the 57,112 are probably women who have such little patience, sympathy, or interest in the claim, and who regard the danger of the suffrage as so remote from probability, that they merely put the postcard in the fire. And though only 21,725 women municipal electors were in favour of Woman Suffrage, 47,286 were against it, to say nothing of 9,358 who were neutral, and who therefore at any rate did not want the vote, and to say nothing of the 57,112 women who did not bother about the matter at all.

Now, these figures reveal that less than one woman in six is in favour of Woman Suffrage—roughly two in thirteen. And it is a very curious and instructive thing that that figure holds good in two other referenda that have been taken. The first was conducted by Colonel Seely, M.P., among the adult women of his constituency of Ilkeston, and the second was conducted by the Scottish National Anti-Suffrage League. It is worth while setting out these figures, together with those resulting from the referendum taken by the English League for opposing Woman Suffrage, for they constitute a Referendum in miniature, and answer overwhelmingly, both by the indication of direct opposition and of positive indifference to the Suffrage claim, any contention that the Suffragists may have the hardihood to make of the extent to which their "demand" for the franchise has any response from the sex.

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	Voters	Votes Recorded For or Against	For	Against	No Reply	Neutral
Ilkeston	6,600	2,855	1074	1811	3,745	—
Scottish League	66,055	29,740	10,740	19,000	34,261	1935
English League	135,481	69,011	21,725	47,286	57,112	9358

Numbers Ignored.

If, then, we measure the claim for a vote by the intensity or by the numerical strength of the opposition to it, we are forced to set out on our enquiry as to the expediency of granting the vote as an act of grace, hampered (or relieved) by the knowledge that, as a matter of fact, the women of Britain do not want, so far as any evidence goes, to have the vote at all. And this fact is recognised even by the Suffragists, for we have representative spokeswomen among them denying that the vote depends either upon whether the existing male voters will give it or not or upon whether the majority of women want it or not. From which we are to conclude that they are, in their own estimation, of such transcendent importance that they are the only people in the State whose opinion upon a very grave matter of State is to be consulted. To show that I do them no injustice in thus stating their attitude, I will quote a passage from a letter written (*Daily Chronicle*, September 1911) by an official of the National Union of Woman Suffrage Societies, in answer to the voting taken by the opponents :

“The leaders of a movement which can bring 40,000 women together from every part of the country, and which is being carried on with equal enthusiasm all the world over, will scarcely set much value on the actual numerical value or the actual numerical figures of those who are for or against.”

If numerical strength is to be ignored, why on earth does she wish to impress us by the mention of the figure of 40,000? And she goes on :

“They know that even if the proportion were ten to one against them, the intensity of desire in the smaller number would be so much greater than in the larger that mere numbers would be a minor consideration.”

Well, it is impossible to argue or even to be on speaking terms with such a point of view as that. You meet it, you shake your head, and mutter to yourself a pious sympathy, but you know the case of such a point of view is hopeless, and you pass on.!

The Women Who DON'T.

Now, there is not only a practical and determining significance in this outstanding and unchallengeable fact that the women of England, considered in the mass, *do not want the vote*. There is a moral significance even greater, and even as fatal to the hope. For you cannot enfranchise a whole sex against the wish of the vast majority of the sex. Indeed, the word "enfranchisement" becomes nonsense if the majority of the sex consider not that you are going to liberate them, but are doing your best to fetter them with a responsibility they cannot discharge and to burden them with a duty which is repugnant to them. And that is the position—in itself a proof that the movement is artificial, factitious, and has no roots in the needs of their sex. Clearly, then, to give the vote as an act of grace means also imposing the vote as a distasteful burden.

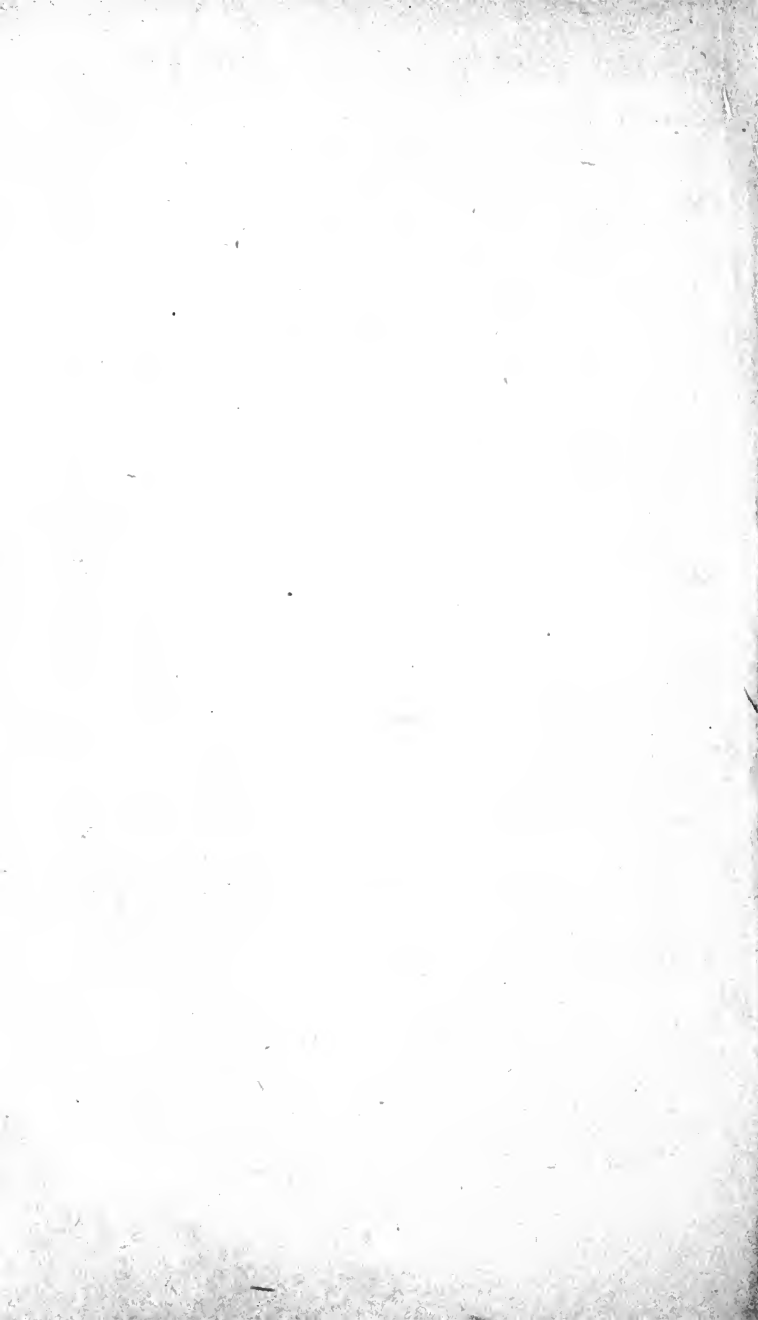
But it is the curious nature of this agitation that it produces the strangest twists and turns of logic—when you have vanquished one point as an argument it

¹ No doubt by the time these words are in print the logical conclusion of this unreason will have been reached. For the movement now begun in favour of a Referendum will have its effect upon a Parliamentary majority that will be prepared to grasp that escape from the dilemma created by its own complacency. But the Suffragists, seeing that the parliamentary game is against them, and confronted with the fact that a Referendum would reveal the fact that so far from the nation wanting the suffrage, only a few voluntary societies want it, will then boldly come out to say that they want it irrespective of anybody else's wishes altogether, and irrespective also of the wills of the nation, whether expressed by the House of Commons, acting without a mandate, or by the House of Commons acting through a mandate obtained either by a general election or a referendum. We shall then see exactly where we are, and that the movement constitutes a phase of irrationality that must be allowed to run its course and pass away.

comes to life again as an absurdity. And so, although it be admitted that more women hate the idea of being burdened with a vote than have an "intense desire" for it, supporters still say, "Well, why not let the women who want it have it, and those who do not want it can go without it?" Well, a vote is not a toy. It is not something given to play with—to be used until it no longer interests or to be put away in a drawer and not used at all. A vote is an instrument of power, and so a vote is a thing which concerns other people besides those who do not particularly wish to exercise their own vote. So it is no use to say, "Let the women who do not want it yet wait and be educated up to it!" For the simple fact is that they don't want it because they are already educated *beyond* it. And if we are to consider women at all, we must consider one portion as much as another, and not ignore it because it happens to be the more numerous and the better behaved of the two.

For the women who do not want the vote object to being governed by other women—and that is not sufficiently appreciated as their point of view. They recognise that if other women had the vote, they themselves would have to take up the same weapon, and shoulder a burden they do not want, in order to take care that their type and ideal of woman could prevail against a type and an ideal with which they have no sympathy.

And this brings us to another consideration concerning giving the votes to women as an act of grace, and that is, the opinion that men and women have of each other and of themselves.



CHAPTER X.

Sex And Politics.

SEX DIFFERENCES — THE THEORY OF SEX TYRANNY
— “POWER” AND POWER — “THE IMMORALITY OF
AUTHORITY” — WOMEN’S OPINION OF WOMEN.



CHAPTER X.

Sex and Politics.

IT has now become a commonplace of the Suffragist case that "men have a contempt for women," and regard them as "inferior creatures." Every man must answer that charge for himself. My own answer is given in the dedication of this book, and I imagine that most men alive can refer their respect for women to the same source.

But when the taunt is made to you it is as well to answer it gently. For I have found that the first ray of light that could be made to penetrate the Suffragist mind concerning men's attitude to Woman Suffrage, proceeds from the illumination that a man might oppose the political enfranchisement of women not because he thought they were inferior creatures, but from the motive that he dreaded that their last state might be worse than the first. I am firmly convinced that the starting point in the minds of many Suffragists has been this moral heresy concerning man's opinion of women. In that war of the sexes that must, perhaps, be eternally waged at the bidding of an instinct, men do many injustices to women. Those injustices can never be remedied, it may be, so long as the race does not become effete—the spiritual carnage of broken hearts through broken faith is inherent in the struggle of sex, and when it ceases the end of the race must be in sight. For it can only come when the sexes have lost their curiosity about each other, and nothing would assist that calamity more than that the sexes should be so modified and approximated as to weaken the force of sexual attraction. But even men who sin against women do not lose their respect for women,

unless they belong to that worthless class of men whom men do not respect. Many a man makes a shrine of that altar upon which a woman has given herself in sacrifice to him.

Sex Differences.

But all this modern talk of sex antagonism, it is curious to note, comes not from men but from women ; and exclusively from those women who accuse men of regarding woman as an inferior being. And nothing is more irrelevant to the discussion of this question than whether man or woman be the superior being. The only point at which the two questions touch is at the point whether woman, in her relation to the State, occupies the same position as man, considered as a factor in the State. It is true that that point, which turns upon the physical superiority of man, carries the consequences very far ; but it really does not involve such a general contrast as Which is the higher being, man or woman? They are not comparable to that extent, nor is there any profit in trying to establish such a far-reaching comparison. There are similarities, but there are dissimilarities, and the only point in making any contrast at all is to help us to decide whether woman is sufficiently different from man as to make it undesirable to thrust upon her the same place in the State and life that man occupies, or is sufficiently like man to make her function towards the State and the outside world exactly the same as his.

Now, the task of deciding between these two alternatives is fortunately made easier by the extreme view taken by the most representative Suffragists. The most penetrating and philosophical mind would shrink from the task of adequately explaining, to the last shade of moral and mental difference, wherein man and woman differ. But happily we are saved from entering upon a discussion which would land us into a labyrinth like that of the Bangorian controversy, which found men still contending when

the original point of Bishop Hoadley's controversy was forgotten and most of the original disputants had passed away. For it is almost of the essence of the position of the Suffragists that there is practically no difference in man and woman beyond the physical fact of sex. Indeed, it has been called by them the "accident" of sex and "the mere fact" of sex. And to say that but for the accident of sex a woman would be a man is like saying that but for the accident of death a dead man would be alive. And a lot of trouble is saved by taking the Suffragists on their own extreme ground, for it simplifies and narrows the discussion.

But for present purposes it is only necessary to say that we must take the difference between the sexes as self-evident. The physical difference has been discussed in an earlier chapter, and we have seen how far it takes us; that it has shown women to be inessential to the State, however fitted or unfitted she may be for the home. But that thread of sex-difference will have to be dropped now, and perhaps picked up again later, for now we are concerned with what Suffragists really mean when they say that man looks upon woman as an inferior being.

The Theory of Sex Tyranny.

The pithiest and truest answer to that charge is that the foolish and benighted men who have a low opinion of women can be matched in folly and beaten in numbers and influence by those benighted women who have a poor opinion of men; and for a moment we will merely let one sex cancel the other so far as that exchange of compliments is concerned. But the implication of the charge is that as men think women inferior, they treat them accordingly—that is, tyrannically, taking advantage of their "unprotected" political condition to pass laws concerning them which press hardly upon them. This charge is one which is of too specific a nature to succeed, because it can be specifically examined

and refuted, and it will not be waste of time to devote an entire chapter to refuting it. In this place, however, taking it as a refutable charge, we shall merely stop to consider what is implied by this charge of man's unfairness to women. The charge overshoots itself by the terms in which it is made, for it is often stated in terms which imply that it is a natural and inevitable thing for one sex to be unfair to the other, seeing that neither sex understands the other nor is in complete sympathy with it. But if that were true, women would be equally unfair to men if they obtained political power, and as they would be, as a sex, in a majority over men, we are being asked to transpose the positions, with our eyes open, and make ourselves the downtrodden sex by enthroning another sex over us. And, I need hardly say, we are not likely to do that. Men would, of course, have their ultimate weapon for their hands if this sex tyranny were carried to the unendurable point; and that consideration, coming at this juncture again, serves afresh to show how grotesque would be the situation which gave power to one sex to tyrannise over the other by parliamentary enactment when that other sex would have it in its power to sweep away the parliamentary enactments, and even the Parliament that gave them birth, by ignoring both in a simple act of revolution.

And though that danger, of deliberate sex tyranny by women, would be remote, it is just as well to consider a very real danger which, whilst falling short in degree of anything that could be called tyranny, might carry us very near to the point when legislative and administrative measures, carried by women's votes, would be repudiated by the men outvoted. That danger is this: It is becoming more and more the tendency in parliamentary legislation to sail very near to the wind of antagonising the big electoral minority by the use of the power of the big parliamentary majority. Both parties in the State are guilty in turn of succumbing to this temptation

to make their party hay while the sun of their majority shines. The Conservatives succumbed over the licensing and educational legislation; the Liberals by their financial legislation, and even in the constitutional issue, have done the same. Each party legislates almost up to the line when the minority is ready to rebel, leaving a small margin between acquiescence and revolt. And so we move forwards by violent oscillations of the pendulum, and the national spirit of compromise is perhaps failing of its charm. But, as things are, with male voters only, even a very big minority respects the bigger majority. It grumbles, growls and threatens, and saves up its scores, and hopes some day to pay the enemy back in its own coin: but all the time each party sails near the wind of exasperating and outraging a portion of the nation less by only a few hundred thousands than its own supporters, even though among its own supporters it may include many who give a very doubting assent to what is done by their party.

“Power” And Power.

But let us imagine a Parliament returned by the votes of women as well as men; let us further imagine, or realise, that the votes of women would be in a majority. Then let us consider the almost certain contingency that some highly controversial measure (and Heaven knows what acute controversies our national politics might not develop with a female electorate) were passed solely because the votes of women, allied with those of a few men, turned the scale. Can one imagine that laws so passed, forced upon men to their repugnance by women; scrambling through Parliament only by virtue of the female franchise, would command the respect that it is desirable even obnoxious laws should command? To ask the question is to answer it, and there would be no stability in a State in which the distribution of parliamentary power did not correspond with the

distribution of that final and effective power in earthly matters, the wills and strength of men.

And this possibility would be reached not by the conscious and deliberate "tyranny" of women over men (which we might reasonably expect according to the Suffragist theory of natural sex antagonism), but it would be reached by the easily conceivable, and extremely probable alliance of the votes of women with the votes of a section of men. I do not know or care whether women would be conservative or revolutionary in political power. No one can say, because we have no experience of woman's behaviour in the political sphere of a modern democracy. Domestically, they are generally cautious and conservative—politically, they might be mad-cap revolutionaries, sentimental visionaries, or the most mulish Tories; or they might be none of these things, but might impart quite a new and startling standard to political thought and action. But the point is that, even if we do reject the Suffragist's theory of sex antagonism, women would hold a parliamentary power which had no equipoise in their real and effective power, and so might act irresponsibly. And so men would in fact be, however praiseworthy the motives of the women who helped to outvote them, the "slaves" of women—up to the point when the votes of women no longer counted. And so it is not necessary to accept the sex antagonism theory in order to prove that the danger would be real if women had political power, though the danger is imaginary while men only have political power.

The full proof that it is imaginary waits for a later chapter, when we come to consider the legal position of woman. But meanwhile we may ask, How many women believe it? How many women believe that man uses his political power as a tyrant? The Suffragists think so, of course, but they are in a hopeless minority; and if the tyranny were obvious, would not all women be conscious of it? The fact that they are not, the fact that more women do not

seem to care a straw whether their sex is enfranchised than there are even women who do not want their sex to be enfranchised at all, proves to any reasonable mind that the talk of man's political tyranny politically exercised over woman must be judged merely as so much empty rhetoric. It sounds plausible, and what might happen, but the truth is that it doesn't.

"The Immorality of Authority."

Here, perhaps, we must step aside to meet a certain amiable theory. There are people whose political theories are abstractions, having no relation to life, who assert that it is bad even for one sex to be placed in a superior political position over the other, and that men would gain in moral stature by admitting the other sex to an equality—an equality, by the way, that would actually be a superiority. Mill urges this point very eloquently, but it has no point until men are proved, *to their own admission*, to be unjust to women; for if a man does not believe he is committing an injustice, it is useless to tell him he will feel nobler when the injustice ceases. But there is really no necessity to meet this argument. For the argument is really anarchistic. It implies that control, authority, and governance are immoral things, automatically converting the controllers and the governors into tyrants and the controlled into slaves and the downtrodden. Now, that theory is nonsense. It is part of the greater nonsense which just now is substituting revolt as a superior moral quality to discipline—which is beginning almost to regard revolt as an end in itself, in itself good, and not a desperate attempted remedy. But the notion that in this world authority is an immoral force needs to be combated, as it very easily can be. In this life all of us have to bow to some superior force or other, from a mere creditor to Death itself. A few months ago the very schoolboys of England, catching the infection of revolt from their elders, went out on strike. But we had no difficulty there in satisfying

ourselves of whether authority was immoral or not. We had no difficulty in deciding that as between schoolboys on strike and parents and teachers who did not sympathise with the object of the strike, it was the might of parents and teachers that must prevail, and abstract "rights" must take care of themselves. Parents and teachers simply assumed, in the most brutal fashion, that they knew better than the schoolboys what was good for them, and back to school they went.

Now the illogical Suffragist mind will say that I am, like a characteristic man, basing my opposition to the Suffrage on the ground that man's relation to woman is that of the parent to the child or the pedagogue to the pupil. I am, of course, doing nothing of the kind—though even that proposition is tenable so far as man and woman in the State are concerned. But I am merely answering the argument that authority in itself is bad, engendering tyranny and slavishness, and that man had better renounce his political supremacy on that ground and for his own sake. And to that argument (which really comes from Mill) I can only reply that if it were true, parents should renounce their supremacy and authority over their children. And if it is then said that though parents may know best what is good for their children yet men do not know what is good for women, the briefest answer is the best. As far as this question is concerned, men *think* they know best, and most women agree with them.

Women's Opinion of Women.

And in coming back to consider whether women are inferior to men as political animals we must be struck by this curious thing: that it is not only men, but most women, who think women are so inferior. You never hear a man say, "I am tired of being governed by men. Men weren't made for politics!" But you do hear women say, "I shudder at the idea of being governed by women. Women

were never made for politics!" And most women think that, whether they say it or not. The Suffragist, of course, will say, "Oh, that is merely the prejudice of some women—we are going to educate them out of that." And, indeed, Suffragists are adepts in the art of explaining every thing that does not suit their case by some theory that goes out of its way to avoid the obvious. And in this case the obvious deduction to be drawn from the fact that most women think woman is unfitted for politics, is that they think so *because they know their own sex.*

Let us ignore altogether the fact that men hold that opinion of woman's political incapacity; let us ignore the fact that the normal and average woman lives a life which does not bring her into contact with those realities which make up political phenomena; let us ignore every actual indication of experience (such as the Suffragists themselves so abundantly supply) that women are really unfitted for political thought and activity; and there is still left the extremely awkward and difficult fact that most women think so too, and that many representative women, from Queen Victoria down to the late Mrs Craigie and Mrs Humphrey Ward, hold that woman is unfitted for all that is implied in political enfranchisement. Queen Victoria, of course, may be struck off the list—she was hopelessly Victorian, I suppose the Suffragists will say, and therefore doesn't count. But Mrs Craigie (John Oliver Hobbes) had one of the most penetrating original minds to be found among modern women, and Mrs Humphrey Ward's eminence needs no affirmation. The fact that certain eminent women hold that view does not, of course, settle the question; but when we find that the view is not exceptionally or sparsely held by women, but is held by the vast majority of women, it is really ridiculous to contend that it is only man's impertinence that holds woman to be his inferior in political capacity. But one may say that the view is not held so much as that it is a

feeling *instinctively felt* by women themselves; and instinct is a safer guide even than reason in a matter which logic does not touch, with which arithmetic has nothing to do, of which we have no experience, and which cannot be *proved* either way by any strictly logical process. But the burden of proof, if it were possible to give any, should rest upon those women who argumentatively deny the instinctive feeling of the vast majority of their sex.

We have now reached a point, I think, when we can decide the first question concerned with giving votes to women as an act of grace. And the answer is, to put the statement beyond argument, that more women pray that votes may not be given as an act of grace, or for any other reason, than ask for the vote as a right or on any other ground.

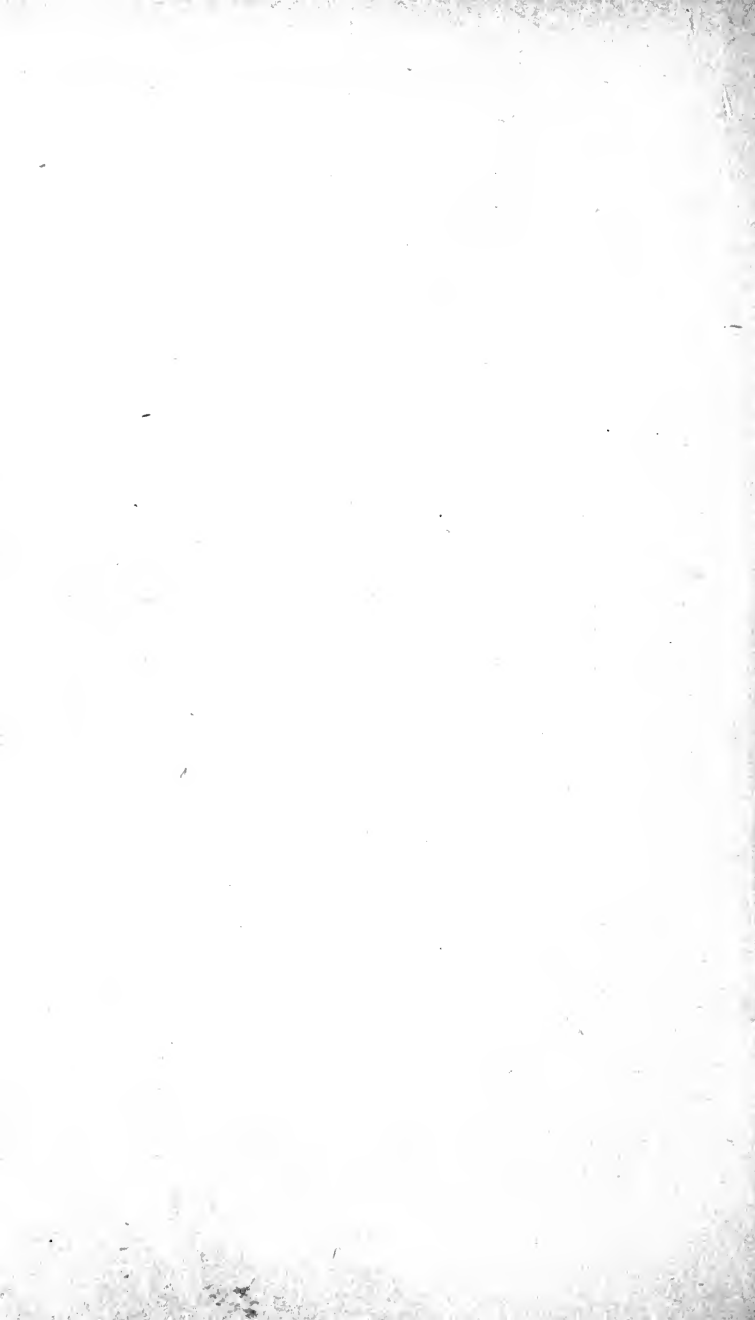
The point then arises, whether we should force the Vote upon those who don't want it for the sake of those who do. That would obviously be doing a good deal more than we have a right to do, even if we ignored entirely the feelings of men in the matter, as the electorate actually charged with the responsibility of deciding.

But even the words "for the sake of those who do" begs the question, unless "their sake" is to mean nothing more than the bare gratification of their own desires, irrespective of the desires of other people. But let us see whether if the vote were thrust upon women who don't want it for the sake of pleasing those who do, the State would be likely to gain anything commensurate with such an outrage upon all understandable principles of government. And I think any reasonable person will agree that the case must again be overwhelming, and must reveal, in fact, some startling consideration hitherto undreamt of in man's philosophy.

CHAPTER XI.

How Could Woman Serve The State?

WOMAN'S POLITICAL JUDGMENT—MAN'S UNIVERSALITY—MAN AS WOMAN'S REPRESENTATIVE—WOMAN'S MORAL NATURE—WOMAN'S DEFICIENCY OF PUBLIC VIRTUE—HER DOMESTIC VIRTUE—THE DANGER OF MORAL EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNMENT—THE SUBJECTION OF WOMAN TO CLERICAL INFLUENCE—THE SYMMETRICAL STATE—HOME, WOMAN, AND THE PERFECT STATE—ONE IN TWO.



CHAPTER XI.

How Could Woman Serve The State?

WE are going to try to discover that startling consideration which would justify a vote being given to all women against the wishes of the majority of women; and against all those considerations, from the point of view of men, that have so far been urged. It is a big task, but if I fail I shall have succeeded entirely to my own satisfaction. Indeed, I may truly say that I am looking for what I do not expect to find in order to prove that it is not there.

But we may try a cast or two. And here we are not yet considering whether what woman or the State gained by woman's political activity would be lost by the woman or the State through her withdrawal from her present activities. We are assuming that all her political interests and pursuits conflict with no other interests whatever—that although all she has to do is to leave home behind her and go into the world of general industry and politics, home will not suffer by her withdrawal.

Woman's Political Judgment.

Well, what effect is she likely to have upon the world of politics and the State so far as we now know her? It is said that she will bring "a larger view" to the consideration of political questions. I think I know that "larger view"—it is generally the impracticable, the impractical, the irrelevant, the lax, and even the narrow view. But whence and how can this "larger view" come to woman? Considered as an intellectual manifestation it cannot come at all, for we know that man's mental capacity is at least as large as woman's—and, of course, I am

putting my case at the lowest, for we really know that woman is man's intellectual inferior, even if the standard be set by sheer pound and ounces of brain. It will then be said, of course, that woman is man's inferior only because she has not had man's opportunities and experience for intellectual development. But, leaving aside altogether the very wide question of how far her intellectual inferiority may be inherent in her as a *secondary* sex characteristic, or whether she could educate herself out of any intellectual limitation, all we can say is that in order to reach man's level she would have to duplicate man throughout all his experiences, and by the time she had done that she would, unquestionably, have educated herself out of all her secondary sex characteristics. And it is a moot point whether she could not even go so far as to negate or modify some of her primary sex characteristics, for what evidence we have of that tendency powerfully suggests that intellectual development plays havoc with the maternal functions and weakens and even destroys the desire to exercise it. But, taking women as they are, we can only say that the *potentiality* of their intellectual equality with man can be proved neither one way nor the other, and that as to the *actuality*, the case is against them.

For, apart altogether from man's superior quality or quantity of brain, the mere power of *concentration* that he has for any intellectual task makes him woman's intellectual superior. Some of the most pathetic words in literature are those, to my mind, in which Gibbon speaks of his walk in his garden at Lausanne at the end of his long task, and of how much of his life has gone with the doing of it. One simply cannot imagine a woman undertaking so stupendous a task as "The Decline and Fall," or producing such a system of philosophy, against chronic ill-health, as Herbert Spencer's long life-work. But if it be contested that woman is not man's intellectual inferior, I can only ask in what intellectual occupation she shows herself his superior, and pass on whilst waiting for the

reply. We have no reason whatever, not the remotest reason from any ascertained fact at all, to suppose that a Parliament of women or an electorate of women would or could take any saner, wiser, or really larger view of a given political question than a Parliament or an electorate of men—though I am by no means contending that those men who do find their way into Parliament are the intellectual champions of their sex, or that the male electorate has reached finality in intelligence.

Man's Universality.

Nor would their experience of life help them to give a saner and completer judgment. After all, with the one exception of maternity, man has every experience under the sun. If finance is talked of, forward come the bankers. If foreign affairs are talked of, forward come the diplomatists and travellers, If arts, science or literature are discussed, forward come the artists, the scientists, the men of letters. And so on to the end of the chapter of every human activity. And even those questions and conditions directly and even exclusively affecting women have their male experts—maternity homes, female wards of workhouses, even dressmaking, laundries, and the work of pit-brow women are familiar ground to men, and they can speak of the conditions prevailing not only without great ignorance but often with the completest possible knowledge. But how innumerable are those activities and interests of men concerning which women know next to nothing—and it is these affairs of men rather than the affairs of women that make up the main body of political questions. It is therefore supremely ridiculous to suppose that by actual experience of life and affairs, any more than by intellectual capacity, woman will reveal a larger vision of any political measure or proposal than man—short of some proposal touching the home itself. But even thereupon man has something to say, and he knows a good deal more about the affairs of the home than woman knows of those affairs

of his which are practically inaccessible to her—those innumerable male interests into which woman does not penetrate at all. Moreover, so long as men live in houses, the home is man's affair too.

Where, then, is the larger vision of woman to come from? She is not going to sit down and cerebrate herself into a higher degree of intellect than she has got brain power to provide and be the mother of the race and the worker in it at the same time. Where, then, is she going to get her superior or equal political acumen from? What reason have we to suppose that woman, in entering politics, will do more than she has done in entering every other sphere—bring subordinate and second rate intellect and powers, even at their highest, and so merely increase the number of representative opinions without increasing the stock of human wisdom? How and why is she going to contribute anything really worth the price of a big revolution to those problems which vex the soul and mind of man, *although* he knows most about them, and *although* his mind is at any rate not inferior to hers? I see no hope for this new and larger vision—no hidden spring from which this surprise is to come. Women would be, let us say, very like men, only less so. Possibly. But the idea that woman could bring any *superlative* quality to politics, is a wild assumption which there is nothing we know concerning woman to justify.

Man as Woman's Representative.

But, to step again out of the line of argument to meet an irrelevancy, the Suffragist who has no answer to that may say, "Whether we brought any original talents to politics isn't the point. We still think we should, but the point is that we should be able to look after and control our own interests." Well, even that begs the question, for most women would still rather trust their own material interests in the hands of men. But in giving them power to control their own interests—which I should not object to if they could

be segregated from ours—they would be given also the power to control the interests of men, and that point is entirely forgotten when Suffragists say, “We merely want to look after our own interests in our own way,” and when fervent but rather loose-thinking politicians fling out their arms and say, “All we ask is that the custodian of that cupboard shall have a weapon with which to defend her children’s bread!”—a passage that simply nauseates the intellect. If some political genius could devise a constitution which would first separate the interests of men and women, and then allow them to be voted upon separately by each, leaving man to be the ruler as now over all those many things in which differences of sex-interest disappeared, I think he would deserve to be listened to, if only for his ingenuity.

But the argument that in admitting women to political power you are doing no more than justice to them by giving them power to control their own affairs, is answered by the obvious fact that you are also giving them power to control *your* affairs. And that is not the sort of Home Rule for the sexes that is possible. Even Ireland says, “Let us manage our own affairs, and you can do what the devil you like with yours!” But the separate interests of Ireland and Great Britain are much more easily delimited than the separate interests of the sexes. Moreover, *except in legislation for protecting women*, man has always legislated in the spirit that the well-being of one sex is the well-being of the other.

I noticed that a lady Suffragist argued some months ago that in Parliament “teachers, milliners, laundry girls, factory girls, and women workers generally” were imperfectly represented, and “mothers and wives not at all”! Well, if Parliament were a Trades’ Union Congress, and the electoral constituencies were not towns but trades and not counties but professions, that would be a very intelligent argument indeed, and it would be a pleasure to come across it. But the Imperial Parliament is not a Trades’ Union Congress,

but is the executive government of a big Empire. And Parliament represents not trades and professions, but the men, women, and children of the various classes of the community, so that the women of each class are represented in the Commons just as much as peeresses are represented in the Lords. And as to "mothers and wives" being "not represented at all," how *could* a man in any given class vote so as *not* to represent his wife upon any ordinary question submitted to Parliament? We can only assume, in a rational world, that he represents her interests by his vote, just as he represents her interests by his labour. I marvel at the essential meanness of the mind that, looking round on man's little territory of power (for woman's power over man in everything that politics does not touch is great enough already), covets that, and wishes to enter it, and yet cannot and does not hope to share in those more arduous fields wherein man is representing woman by every hour he works and by every shilling he earns.

And now we can return to the high road again.

Woman's Moral Nature.

But if women cannot bring higher intellectual gifts or greater experience to politics than men, is there nothing in their natures which gives them some advantage over men? Man is their physical superior, and is at least not their mental inferior, but have they no quality which makes them superior to men and which they could place at the service of the State? Well, those are fair questions, though I ask them of myself. Physically and intellectually, man is woman's superior; in moral qualities, I think, woman is man's superior. But the moral qualities act differently in each. Man is certainly not inferior to woman in moral *perception*. That is clear when we think that all the great ethical teachers, all the great inculcators of moral principles, have been men, though woman has certainly been placed in no position of disadvantage by man that has restrained her from expressing herself as

an ethical teacher. And at the other end of the scale men have finer perceptions in regard to those minor moral points which come within what we call a code of honour. For instance, a woman has less scruple about paying her gambling debts than men, and it is doing no injustice to the sex to say that they are the finest kleptomaniacs, if I may so express the point, in the world. But though woman has no better grasp of moral principles than man, though her moral perceptions are no keener than his, her moral example acts more directly than man's, and it needs a personal object for its expression. Woman's morality, in fact, is seen at its best advantage in direct personal influence, and that is why we pity children who have lost their mother early, and say of a girl, "Ah, poor child! she never had the benefit of a mother." You do not so often hear that a child has suffered, in his moral upbringing, because he lost his father at an early age.

But man exerts his moral influence as a great teacher of men—of men in the mass. I suppose that even the last rumblings of political prejudice will not mutter a denial of the supreme moral influence of Gladstone—but I suppose no one will deny, either, that Mrs Gladstone made it possible for him to be a great man. He may not have found his inspiration in her—that came from his own moral character (or perhaps ultimately from his religious faith), whatever be thought by partisan opinion of its excesses in action. But unquestionably he found in her the solace and support which sustained him in his public action as a political moralist—and as a matter of fact, one can hardly find the respective functions of man and woman, in their perfection of delimitation, better personified than in Gladstone and his wife. She was really the other half of him, his complement—as all perfect wives are to the husbands who deserve them.

But it does not by any means follow that the simple possession of high moral qualities fits their possessor

for any function of government. Some of the saintlies men and women the human race has ever produced would have been the most impossible people in the world to be set over others in actual authority. Where high moral qualities are valuable is when they are allied to that breadth of view and that experience of life which alone can make them most effective and that alone can prevent them becoming even dangerous to the State. Nor does it follow that because woman's moral qualities are generally found exerted for the benefit of those people in whose lives she has a direct personal concern, that they would be found equally pronounced when set to the service of the State.

Woman's Deficiency of "Public Virtue."

It is difficult for any one to deny that women allow their hostile prejudices, and their very self-protective wariness, to be aroused much more easily than men. Mr Gladstone was once attending the funeral of a well-known Englishman, during the first Home Rule ferment, and it was mentioned, in the hearing of an old lady at the graveside, that that illustrious but then maligned statesman was standing near to her. "Oh, dear!" she said, as she stole a horrible look at him, "I do hope that he won't make an disturbance!" Now, most old ladies might not have said that, but certainly no old gentleman who ever lived could have said it. And the particular psychological operation that sent those grotesque comic yet really awful words to her lips, is precisely the operation that prevents a woman seeing a question dispassionately when it concerns her own personal interests (for I am sure that the old lady in the churchyard had perverted the strong language concerning Mr Gladstone that she had heard from the male members of her family into her own settled conviction that Gladstone was an atheistical and criminal-minded character). I do not say that this

limitation is a *fault* of woman's nature. On the contrary, it is in its way and short of absurd excesses, a very desirable trait, for it indicates that her first thought is for her own—not necessarily for herself at all—but that narrow and concentrated habit of mind produces a defect of judgment which might make women even a danger in politics.

But it will perhaps be objected that I am libelling the sex in saying that a woman cannot see any question dispassionately when it touches the interests of herself or her own people. Well, to take a large question, many women are now found suggesting that the institution of marriage should go into the melting pot, and in many cases the bias in their mind against marriage arises from the unhappiness of their own personal experience. But men do not so readily allow their own personal experiences to condemn an existing institution. Many men, themselves unhappily married, may nevertheless desire to maintain the institution of marriage because they see in it a form of regulating the relations of the sexes which, if it brings individual hardship, nevertheless ensures the general social stability. In such a question, in fact, men take the large view, or, at any rate, the dispassionate view. And to take a smaller issue, most people's domestic experience will reveal, if they make a little effort in memory, some crisis or state of affairs when it was a question of a man stepping outside his own sphere of interests to do something that would not bring him any personal advantage, but might even damage it, and when the bias of the woman's advice has been "to leave things alone"—and very often it may be very good advice, too. But the view taken is not the "larger" view at all—it is the narrow, prudent, self-preserving view.

But again it may be said, "That is merely your own prejudiced generalisation, and there is no real truth in it." And I should have to leave it at that—my assertion, supported by a good many people's experience, against the denial—but for the fact that I

can call a witness to support me whose evidence even Suffragists have got to accept, for he is their own witness, and upon this point is speaking in their cause. The witness is John Stuart Mill, and the evidence is to be found in "The Subjection of Women."

"I am afraid it must be said" (he writes, page 161, ed. 1869) "that disinterestedness in the general conduct of life—the devotion of the energies to purposes which hold out no promise of direct advantage to the family—is very seldom encouraged or supported by women's influence. It is small blame to them that they discourage objects of which they have not learned to see the advantage, and which withdraw their men from them, and from the interests of the family. But the consequence is that women's influence is often anything but favourable to public virtue."

Of course Mill, believed that experience of public life would cultivate in women public virtues, but they could, on his own showing, only be cultivated at the expense of what is really another high and important virtue—a solicitude for the family interests. And the plain, simple and human truth is that we do not *need* women to cultivate public virtues at all, especially if they are going to upset the balance between the two forces now acting: the public sense of the man and the private and family sense of the woman. What Mill looks upon as a defect in woman that public experience might remedy, I venture to look upon as a safeguard for the family interests that an acquired sense of public virtues would destroy.

Her Domestic Virtue.

Mill had, in fact, stumbled upon a bigger admission than he thought he was making or hoped would be perceived, for nothing could better illustrate the danger of woman crossing over from one sphere and entering another than that both she and man would then be moving in the same direction as far as public activities are concerned, and that direction away from the interests of the home. And whether or not, as Mill was contending, experience of public affairs would negative this natural predilection of woman for the

family interests, it is certain that the fact that she has got the predilection at all is an excellent thing, and some proof that she is in just the place where she is most wanted when she is at home looking after the interests of the family—the guardian, the conserver, the upholder of family life.

And upon this point we may in all reason say that in so far as women are disqualified by the limitation Mill speaks of from disinterested public service, they are qualified eminently and wholesomely as the guardians of family interests; and that they would only laboriously acquire a virtue which the world does not need in them at the expense of a virtue in them which the family cannot spare.

The Danger of Moral Excellence in Government.

A few pages back I said that high moral qualities, unsupported by breadth of view which a practical experience of life affords, might even be dangerous in the State, and Mr Frederic Harrison—one of the great humanists of our time—in whose long life high moral qualities and a wide experience of life assuredly meet, each in a high degree of perfection—brings out very clearly in what is practically his autobiography, "Realities and Ideals," the disability that hampers the moral reformer in political action, and the defect of his qualities:

"It is a fixed psychologic law that the earnestness of moral and spiritual emotion—which is the strength and beauty of the higher natures—too often shuts off from the ken of those most deeply moved the nice adjustment of balance in competing good and evil, usefulness and risk. St Bernard, St Francis, Fénelon, Wesley, the Slavery and the Drink Abolitionists, had noble messages to deliver, but they would prove most oppressive legislators and judges. Their very merit lay in their bold defiance of obstacles, their indifference to all countervailing risks, their disdain of compromise. But compromise is the daily and hourly necessity of practical affairs. And those who disdain compromise are ever on the verge of oppression and disaster, and too often face both together with a light heart. We are bound to hear and weigh all that such men can urge. But it is for men of

a very different stamp—often it may be men of a stamp more common and less fine—to decide the issue and abide the result.

Now women in the average, as a sex, share this nature. They form opinions more quickly, less patiently, less coolly than do men. Emotion, prejudice, sentiment, play a larger part in their decisions than in those of men. They are less in the habit of facing practical risks and dilemmas. They will not take pains to walk all round embarrassing crises before they decide; nor do they habitually weigh all sides of a question with a fair, impartial temper. It would be laughable to tell us that men and women are equally fitted by nature to form a balanced judgment of this kind. Common sense records the contrary as a fact. But all political questions and all parliamentary elections really turn, or ought to turn, on nicely balanced judgments of this sort

The real objection to 'Votes for Women,' over and above that it risks imposing on men sacrifices of labour and life which women do not share, is this—that it degrades and weakens the moral and emotional influence which women indirectly give to men and have never failed to give. The power of women to moralise life and to modify action is not lost because it is exerted in society, in the home, in literature, in education. To sink this high and ennobling influence in the rough-and-tumble of elections would be to destroy and debase it."

I do not think I need carry any further than those words, in support of my own, the argument that the superior moral character of woman would not necessarily be manifest as a gain to the State; but that it would necessarily work to the disadvantage of that calm judgment in political affairs which even as things are, is not too conspicuous, for it seems to be the peculiar property of political discussion to emphasise the meanest as well as the noblest side of the human character.

"The Subjection of Women" to Clerical Influence.

But if women can exert a strong moral influence, they can also be influenced; and one influence to which they are said to be subject is that of clerical influence. As I have no first hand evidence of this, from any personal knowledge, I should not raise the point but for being able to give what I think is very satisfactory testimony of the experience of others. Mr

John Massie, a Liberal ex-M.P., is one of the foremost opponents of Woman Suffrage, and he cites a clergyman who said to the Member for his Division: "I don't believe in Woman Suffrage for the country, but I suppose it would be good for our voluntary schools!" and the implication of that musing is pretty apparent. But so many instances of that kind have been given that one almost ceases to appreciate the general truth in so much reiteration.

But far better evidence than that can be given of the "subjection of women" to clerical influence—which was, by the way, one of Mill's own admissions against them. For the Church, like the Imperial Parliament, has its two houses, with a House of Laymen in each Province, and the lay representatives are men, elected upon a male franchise; so that the Church is now governed by men, just as is the State. But the Bishop of Oxford, Dr Gore, happens to be a Suffragist, and he wishes the Church to be brought into line with the woman's movement in the secular sphere. But, in passing, I should say that he is the sort of Suffragist (in the Church) who knows where to draw the line where women are concerned. For in proposing that the franchise for election to the Houses of Laymen should be altered to include women, he was careful to say that "the great negative principle of the Church was that the priesthood should belong to men; on the other hand, the Church admitted women as deaconesses, patronesses, and churchwardens." And that is just the sort of distinction that Anti-suffragists make: "the great negative principle of the State is that the government should belong to men; on the other hand, the State has admitted women to be members of school boards, town councils, and boards of guardians."

But the proposal of the Bishop that the Houses of Laymen should be based upon a female as well as a male franchise was strenuously opposed at a sitting of the Representative Church Council on November 22, 1911. And the opposition to the proposal, stated not by anti-churchmen, but by prominent laymen in the

Church, and to the faces of the Archbishop of Canterbury and all the Bishops present, was that women were so prone to clerical influence that the Houses of Laymen would no longer represent the laity, but the clergy. So that, as Mr H. J. Torr said, "the introduction of a large element of feminine intellect would seriously disturb the balance between lay and clerical influence." And then, before all the Bishops, he tried to make his point clearer :

"You have to face the fact," he continued, "that a large proportion of women voters would be influenced by—" and then he stopped, somewhat embarrassed, finally adding, amid laughter, "You know what I mean!" (*The Standard report, Nov. 23, 1911.*)

And he concluded: "What we need in the Church is to get the masculine lay mind to bear on Church questions. But if we were to clericalise that lay mind, we should undo very much of the value of the lay voice." No doubt it required some courage to express that point of view before the assembled Bishops, and I can quite understand the momentary embarrassment which, however, was triumphed over by courage. And Canon Hensley Henson, who is obviously not a layman, said: "If they were to throw the franchise (for the Houses of Laymen) open to women on equal terms with men, it would give an immense and very undesirable excess of influence to the unmarried Bishop!"

That debate, among Bishops and laymen, goes very far indeed towards establishing the truth that women are subject to clerical influence; and though clerical influence in Church matters may or may not be a desirable thing (though it could hardly be that if it would clericalise the Houses of *Laymen*) clerical influence in the State is not desirable, if only because it works in a rather subterranean fashion, and is not easily counteracted. No doubt some of the Suffragists themselves might be altogether above that influence, and do not greatly come into contact with it, but in opposing Woman Suffrage it has to be opposed not because of what Suffragists themselves might or might

not do, but on the grounds of considerations applying to one sex and the other sex, taken as such. So that in one direction at least the women might be expected not to "purify" politics so much as to clericalise them.

The Symmetrical State.

There is one other question that may be briefly dealt with in this chapter, for it concerns, though not so closely, the enquiry with which the chapter began, of what the State would gain by woman's political activity. There are some theorists who hold that the extension of political power to women is, even though it be a final and remote step, the indispensable step to the accomplishment of the perfect State. They do not necessarily say so because they favour the extension of the Suffrage now, or because they think the time has yet come for it, but they think it must come, if at some distant day, in order to complete the symmetry of the State. The point is of more than abstract importance, of course, for in it is involved this question: Whether the extension of political power to women is part of the process of social and political evolution, or whether it is going off the track altogether. And these theorists, many of them even regretfully, no doubt, think that it must be part of the evolutionary process, because they cannot conceive the State as a symmetrically complete thing if it does not include women in it.

Well, a State is not a work of art, so we may disregard the symmetry that is visualised only by the æsthetic imagination. The only symmetry which need concern us is that which does not satisfy the eye, but which gives stability to the structure, and which saves it from being lop-sided or top-heavy. And if we consider the State either in the narrower sense and truer sense of a political entity, or in the wider sense of the active industrial and productive community, a State which is based upon democratic manhood control is broadly based, at any rate, and the strength and stability of the structure, and therefore its real symmetry, will entirely depend upon no

material being built into it which is not equal to the strain that it might have to bear; and that danger at any rate would be averted by the structure being confined to man.

But there is a still wider conception of the State, if we include in it the whole community, and imagine it not as a structure with a base and an apex, but a social organism—a collection of human beings, getting through life in the happiest way. From any such conception it is difficult to exclude the home, unless the mind travels far enough to perceive the State as pervading the entire life of the community as matter pervades the material world, when the activities of the State were organised up to such a point in the governing of men's lives that men would thank the gods for the escape that death provided. That ultimate conception of the State is certainly possible, and he would be as bold a man who would deny this possibility as he who asserted it: that some day a democracy may rise to uncoil itself from its own chains, free itself from its own tyrannies, and shake off its own bureaucrats.

Home, Woman, and the Perfect State.

But if we think of the State as a community in which government is *not* carried up to the point at which men have put their own individualities in a State pigeonhole, and in which a man can still call his children his own, the home must surely still hold its place if only as the temple of the one side of life left to the individual man's own government. And the more perfectly ordered the State was (if it had not lost sight of human happiness as its aim) the more inviolate from the State would be that last little bit of territory whereon the individual man could take his stand. And in that inviolacy woman would then hold a prouder place—prouder, because we may at least suppose that in the perfect State we are discussing the perfection would at any rate have

gone far enough to ensure the material needs of the home, and to relieve woman of the domestic cares that beset her to-day.

For we are considering the perfect and symmetrical State—unattainable ideal though it may be. And not only is there no sense of a lack of symmetry in a conception of the State as one in which men looked after their work and the women looked after their homes, but it is the very perfection of its symmetry which baulks the imagination and makes the conception difficult. But it is certainly a more pleasing and symmetrical conception of the State than that of a State in which the industrialism of women ran alongside that of men, and the two sexes flowed in rivalry along the same channels of material and political activity, and the home became subject to State inspection as a consequence of the employment of State foster-mothers, charged with the duty of supplementing the impaired superintendence of a mother somewhere else in the State's employ; or a State in which we can visualise each individual adult unit dwelling in a cubicle, and the State's children marched off at curfew time to the State dormitories.

But, dealing with conditions so far remote from anything we can clearly conceive at all, it is at least as easy to suppose that the more highly organised a State was, and the more settled the conditions of life within it were, the greater security, dignity, and authority there would be in woman's position in the home; as it is to suppose that in the perfect State she would have carried her public virtues into every department of the State's activity, and have arrived at that negation of the family virtues which was apparently Mill's ideal.

"One in Two."

Miss Christabel Pankhurst, who can be much more interesting and effective as an argumentative force than as an exponent of a blind-alley militancy, has defended the imitation of man by woman because she thinks

it illustrates the whole process of biological evolution—a progress from the simple to the complex, with a corresponding “*variety* of function.” But the progress from the simple to the complex works out in quite another way, for it is attained by *differentiation* of function, and not by one structure doing the work for which another structure was intended. Heaven knows what may happen to us as things are going, and the heart and the liver may some day start imitating each other, but when they do there will be a dreadful physiological chaos. And it is not by women *imitating* man, but by *differing* from him as widely as may be, and by performing wholly different functions that the line of real biological development will be followed in our social structure.

Certainly, there is no reason to suppose that there is any connection whatever between the perfect symmetrical State and woman's position in it as man's political equal. On the contrary, as mankind itself starts the differentiating process by being divided into two sexes *to begin with*, the differentiation of function and the progress from the simple to the complex, seem to be provided for only by further specialisations—which in fact is what happens, if only we let well alone. But the mistake of the whole body of Suffragism may be seen here: Suffragism supposes that man and woman are separate, individual units. They are not. The human being is the unit. Man and woman are only the beginning of that differentiation of function which points out to us clearly enough, unless we shut our eyes and are wilfully blind, in what direction true development lies, that direction being, not to try to jumble up together what Nature began by separating, but by taking mankind as the unit, man and woman as the first subdivisions, and then developing each sex on its *own lines*.

We had to chase the theorists into a conception of a State that made our speculations almost “void for remoteness,” in trying to test the notion that as woman's political equality with man is essential to

the symmetrical State, it was only a question of time whether she should have the vote now or next century. And I have tried to show that so far from it being merely a question of time, it is a question simply of keeping to the right track or going off the track altogether. But we can leave theory aside and come close to our own day in order to test whether the political and general freedom of women is inseparable from any conception of ultimate political development. A Russian Suffragist, speaking to her English fellows a few weeks ago, and indignantly contrasting our backward land with hers, declared that in Russia the men were wholly in favour of the emancipation of women, and that there the men and women were political comrades. And we know ourselves, indeed, that in Russia women take such an equal part in political life that they languish in the fortress of St. Peter and Paul and perish in the snows of Siberia. So that women may and do hold an equal position with men in a State whose political development has not yet even enfranchised the men, let alone developed its symmetry.

The United States is not comparable with Russia—in most things it is in advance, and in one or two things rather worse for being so. In several of the Western and undeveloped Federal States Woman Suffrage now prevails, but all through the States women hold a position of freedom, according to themselves, and to the most prominent American Suffragists, far in advance of any other race of women on earth. I do not doubt it, but what does it prove? In the English newspapers of November 21, 1911, there is the account of an interview with Mrs Leeds, a wealthy American lady, who is leaving the land of her birth for England—not because she is “an anglomaniac,” as she says, but because she finds America unendurable. The men there are what women make them, she says, and she does not think much of them. And as for the women, her opinion of them is implied along with her preference for the Englishman over her own countrymen :

"I confess I think all women like the masterful type which I find among Englishmen. I sometimes think it is because American men lack this quality, and are too indulgent to their wives, that the latter tire of them and divorce them."

If that be true—and I for one do not doubt it is—even the domestic freedom of women has its bad side. But although the American woman is not emancipated politically throughout all the States, no one will deny what they say themselves, that they are freer and more independent than the women of any other country. And nowhere—except in the fantastic administration of China—is public life more corrupt. Indeed, it is so corrupt that Mrs Gilman, the most prominent Suffragist of America, apparently believes that men want to keep political power to themselves because of the graft and boodle that it affords. We may therefore deduce from these contemporary instances, a better notion of whether the conception of a perfect symmetrical State is inseparable from the political and general freedom of women, than we can deduce it by pursuing the theorists into the mists beyond our ken.

To end this chapter by recalling the question with which it opened, there is no clear indication, still less any certainty, that woman would bring to the service of the State any gifts that would justify granting her the vote as an act of grace, and outweigh those prime facts and considerations which forbid it to her as a right.

There remains, I think, only one main question to consider, in clearing the ground for the final and supreme consideration which, apart from everything else and when all is said and done, governs the whole matter. That remaining question is:—Does the fact that political power is confined to men involve, in truth and reality and not rhetorically, any injustice to woman? And that question has two branches: (1) the laws affecting woman and their administration, and (2) the economic position of woman. And these two branches of the remaining question can next be considered in their order.

CHAPTER XII.

The Woman And The Law.

THE GROUNDS OF DIVORCE—THE DUAL CODE OF MORALITY—EQUAL LAW—THE HEAD OF THE HOME—HUSBAND AND WIFE—WIFE PROTECTION AND MAINTENANCE—FATHER AND CHILDREN.



CHAPTER XII.

The Woman And The Law.

DISREGARDING minor legal grievances which are capable of receiving, without fuss or excitement, the attention they may deserve (and which it is reasonable to suppose they will receive from a Parliament of men, for just the same reason that a Parliament of men has considered past grievances of women and remedied them by man-made laws)—disregarding these minor, disputable, and even imaginary grievances, there is one outstanding grievance which Suffragists say illustrates and proves the inveterate tendency of man to do injustice in his laws to woman. That grievance is the different grounds for divorce allowed to husband and wife.

The Grounds of Divorce.

If a husband wishes to divorce his wife, the fact of her adultery is sufficient ground for his case. But before a wife can divorce her husband, she must prove that he has been cruel as well as unfaithful—though the difference is more apparent than real, because the courts give a wide interpretation to the term “cruelty.” A husband, however, has merely to prove that his wife has been unfaithful, and the Suffragists say that this distinction is a survival of the Eastern notion of a wife’s status, and illustrates the injustice that man perpetrates against woman when the two interests come into conflict.

In a robuster age Dr Johnson put into plain language the difference between the offence of infidelity in the husband and the wife, and the far-reaching differences between men and women very soon touch, naturally enough, this question. The potential injury to the

wife of a husband's infidelity begins and ends with the wife herself, and is not comparable with the potential injury of the wife's infidelity to the husband; for superadded to the violation of the marriage vow, which we may take to be the same in both cases, is the stark fact that a man might work and lavish his affection upon children of whom his worst enemy might be the father—of whom, indeed, it may truly be said that his worst enemy must be the father. And a more poignant human wrong can hardly be conceived than that.

And if we suppose that a husband does not remain in ignorance of the paternity of his wife's child, but forgives her (as has been done by men either of a nobly magnanimous nature or of a strange deficiency of sensibility) there still remains a large distinction between the two offences. For the presence of the alien child in his household, or even the knowledge of its existence outside (though unless he rebutted his paternity in a divorce suit he would still be responsible for its maintenance) is enough to perpetuate throughout his life his sense of the wrong done him. But a husband's infidelity cannot, in the nature of things, perpetrate the same wrong upon the wife. In the one case, the child may be born and reared in his very home, and in the other the wife's sense of injury could hardly come home to her with the same acuteness if she knew that a child of her husband's existed elsewhere. A celebrated novelist who died some ten years ago lived on terms of the greatest affection with his wife although, to her knowledge and with her assent, he was the parent of children, denied to her, by a woman whom she treated with all respect and consideration—though it is not a ménage that goes well with a monogamous system of marriage. But it would be almost beyond the imagination to consider a husband occupying that position of acquiescence towards his wife and the father of her children—a consideration that belongs to another set of differences between men and women, the psychological differences. And as

a matter of fact and experience, we know that ordinarily a wife does not feel it so difficult to forgive a husband for infidelity as a husband finds it to forgive a wife, and the very root meaning of the word adultery may be said to indicate a difference not only in degree but in kind.

The Dual Code of Morality.

And though those who seek to regard men and women as identical creatures will deny it, the reason why a husband finds it more difficult to forgive is a very simple one, considered psychologically and not physiologically. The difference may thus be expressed: If a wife is unfaithful to her husband a bigger revolution takes place in her moral nature than may take place in the moral nature of the husband. That, too, may be denied, but it is nevertheless true. For before a woman—that is, a self-respecting woman—can be unfaithful to her husband, her husband must have been displaced entirely in her affections by another man. The same process, it is true, also accounts for the infidelity of some husbands. A husband may yield to a passion for another woman which is not an ignoble passion at all, though he may renounce his own unlawful happiness because of his sense of the unfairness of forcing upon his wife the alternative of either separating from him, with all the cruelty that that would involve because of her economic dependence upon him, or of enduring an association which would otherwise become repugnant to her.

But that is not the commonest kind of a husband's infidelity. A learned judge, and late President of the Divorce Division, in giving evidence before the Royal Commission on the Divorce Law in 1911, spoke of the "accidental" adultery of a husband. Probably he was misreported, and said "incidental"—a word which better expresses the other kind of adultery of which the husband is most frequently guilty. It is an act of bodily unfaithfulness to his wife rather than of

spiritual unfaithfulness, and though it has not any spiritual passion for its object to redeem or extenuate it, the fact is that it causes less unhappiness than an infidelity which goes deeper in his nature, for incidental adultery often begins and ends with the isolated incident itself. The husband has not necessarily lost either his respect or affection for his wife, and though in such a case neither the respect nor the affection may be very deep, his infidelity on the other hand does not go so far as to endanger the home. But a wife does not abandon herself at all to that "incidental" degree of infidelity, unless she is really an abandoned woman, and a wanton.

The view of dual morality implied by the last word outrages many people whose views properly command great respect. Nevertheless it is borne out by the experience of all those who know something of their fellow men and women. Those whom the view outrages contend that the dual morality which social sanction allows to men and women is wrong, is unjust to the woman and too lenient to the man. It may be so, though before that were admitted it would be necessary to carry the question a little further than can be done here. But some indication of the problem to be resolved even in settling that point may be derived from considering how incidental are the functions of fatherhood in contrast with the sustained burden of maternity. Our monogamous system of marriage, in fact, imposes a restraint upon the man, viewed in the light of Nature's intentions, which it does not impose upon the woman. Or, to put the point succinctly, man is probably a polygamous being, and monogamous marriage keeps the birth-rate down.

Equal Law.

But it is not necessary to justify a different code of morality for the sexes, in order to prove that in any case, whether it be right to condone it or not, a wife does not commit "incidental" infidelity as a husband may, unless she has the nature of a wanton. But,

taking her as a normal self-respecting woman, the act of infidelity in her case spreads wider mischief, from the point of view of the marriage state, than in that of the man. It weakens in her her love for her children, and her regard for the home, to say nothing of her love for her husband. She is undoubtedly stronger to resist temptation than a man; for either superior morality, as I believe, or merely the fear of the social standard of dual morality, as others seem to believe, does restrain her under temptations to which a man (who knows that so far as he is concerned, he is not putting wife, home and children in the melting pot), would succumb. But when she does succumb the fall is greater. She burns her boats, and husband, home, and even children become secondary to her infatuation or even to her sincere passion.

And so the wife's infidelity differs from the husband's, in degree of effect, in two very important particulars: she does a potential injury to him which he cannot do to her, and she brings much nearer the crisis of a disruption in the home. And if we lived in times when questions were weighed and sifted with dispassionate penetration, those two very important distinctions of degree between the infidelity of one and of the other might suffice to leave the law as it stands. But, as things are, it is very likely that the change will be made.

The practical considerations, in any case, diminish the importance of the distinction. For if a woman desired to divorce her husband for a single act of infidelity, the assumption might be made that it was desirable, by the mere fact of her own desire, that the union should be dissolved. For either she would feel the wound too deeply to forgive him (a sentiment which in itself upholds the sanctity of the marriage state), or she would welcome the opportunity afforded her to end a union otherwise distasteful; and as in either case there would be little guarantee of future happiness, the union might just as well be dissolved. And no doubt the law will be changed so as to allow

of equal rights of divorce, on the ground that the real and simple nature of the offence is the breach of the marriage vow, and that breach should be sufficient to entitle either party to relief. I have gone rather fully into this matter mainly because it is the most outstanding example of "unequal laws" made by man against woman to which Suffragists point; but also to show that even one who takes what is, from their standpoint, the extreme man's view, is prepared to see that inequality remedied.

The Head of the Home.

We can now consider how the law, as between husband and wife, stands generally. And I think it will be seen that unless the law of England is to deprive a husband and father of all authority and dignity, and reduce him to the position of inequality against which the Suffragists protest, it would be difficult to imagine a code of laws that gave more protection to the wife consistent with the view that she had any obligations at all or he any rights whatever.

He is the head of the home in common law—a not unnatural arrangement, seeing that he is responsible for it, from the responsibility of its upkeep down to the responsibility of paying the fine, if his wife or her servant sets the chimney on fire. Besides, the common law of England does not take the Feminist view of the unimportance of man. And even in a home somebody must have the last word—though it is certainly not the husband who always has it. And he is not only the head of the home, but he can decide where the home shall be—which again is not an unnatural arrangement, seeing that he generally provides the home, and also that the place of his occupation generally governs the place of his residence. And if a husband could not decide that elementary matter, then the wife would have to decide it, which would be an injustice against the husband just as much as it is now contended that "arbitrary power" is an injustice

to the wife. But there are even husbands who sacrifice their business and personal convenience to the residential wishes of their wives, just as there are wives who will not allow their husbands to do any such thing. In other words, husband and wife generally behave like reasonable beings; and in those cases where they do not, in such elementary and fundamental matters as these, then the husband can only fall back upon his common law rights and decide for himself how far his own self-respect compels him to assert them. But when his power of final decision in such initial matters is held to be one of the tyrannies of the present marriage state, then we are obviously approaching a time when the cultivated animosities of human nature make marriage an impossible state, at any rate for "impossible" people.

Husband and Wife.

But the husband's common law rights in other respects have been greatly modified by statute law; and in considering the present state of the law as between husband and wife it will be best to contrast it with the law, as stated by Mill, when he was inspired to protest that a wife was the only legal slave left in England. There is first the advantage of compressing the subject into a small space; and then the greater advantage furnished by the actual contrast. For it is not necessary here to consider exhaustively whether the law as it affects women, any more than as it affects men, is capable of improvement. We are only called upon to consider whether the law as affecting women is biassed against them by the fact that it is man-made. Mill not only said it was, but that no alteration was to be looked for until women had the vote. And so we may limit ourselves to considering the legal grievances which supplied him with the material for his main argument, and then show that those grievances have been remedied by legislature and judiciary without women having the vote.

“Meanwhile the wife is the actual bond-servant of her husband; no less so, so far as legal obligation goes, than slaves commonly so called.” So Mill wrote in 1869. In 1912 a husband can compel his wife to do nothing except to cohabit with him. But he can only compel her to do that negatively; that is, by being no longer responsible for her maintenance if she declines to cohabit with him without just cause; for if she declined to cohabit with him for good and sufficient cause, she would be able to pledge his credit for her maintenance. But she is now no more his bond-servant than he is hers—in actual practice, often not so much. He cannot compel her to do even her “domestic duties.” If she wishes to take Miss Cicely Hamilton’s exalted advice, and “shirk them,” she may, without forfeiting anything more serious and valuable than her husband’s respect. Many wives, indeed, contrive to shirk them without forfeiting even that.

“She can acquire no property but for him; the instant it becomes hers, even by inheritance, it becomes *ipso facto* his.” So wrote Mill in 1869. In 1870 was passed the first of those Married Women’s Property Acts which now allow a wife to own anything and everything she may honestly acquire, to her own absolute and exclusive use, just as though she had no husband, and were herself merely a man. And even when Mill wrote he did not make sufficient allowance for that extremely important principle of “separate use,” which was invented and acted upon by the courts of equity before the legislature put the principle into statute law—a principle which invaded very successfully indeed the husband’s rights over his wife’s property at common law. But now he has absolutely no rights whatever—what is hers is her own, and what is his is hers to the extent of her proper maintenance.

Wife Protection and Maintenance.

“No amount of ill-usage, without adultery super-

added, will in England free a wife from her tormentor." So wrote Mill in 1869. In 1912 she can free herself from her tormentor if she merely does not like the sound of his voice or objects to him smoking pipes. That is to say, she can leave her husband whenever she chooses and for whatever she chooses, with good reason or for no reason whatever, and *Regina v. Jackson* (1891) settled that he possesses no power to force her back to him. The only thing she cannot impose upon him under such conditions is that he should maintain her for the rest of his life exactly as though she were a loving wife who had not left home, for no husband is compelled to support a wife who refuses to cohabit with him without just cause. And as to "ill-usage," she has the remedy of a judicial separation (equivalent to the divorce *a mensâ et thoro* of the old spiritual courts), if (1) he has been convicted of an aggravated assault upon her, or (2) if he has been guilty of persistent cruelty to her. (Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1895.) She can also obtain her order under the same Act if her husband is an habitual drunkard, and seven years later, remembering the man's side to such a case, the legislature gave the same right to the husband (under the Licensing Act of 1902). And she can also obtain her judicial separation if he "has been guilty of wilful neglect to provide reasonable maintenance for her, or for her infant children, whom he is legally bound to maintain, including illegitimate children of the wife born before marriage." (Macqueen, page 222.) Moreover, the court of summary jurisdiction may not only grant her the separation, but the custody of the children; and, further, a payment for maintenance up to £2 a week, in default of paying which the husband may be committed to prison. And it has been held that the courts of summary jurisdiction, in assessing the amount that a husband may be ordered to pay for the support of his wife, should be guided by the practice by which alimony is granted in case of judicial separation by the High Court. Consequently, where there are no children

of the marriage, or where there are children and the wife has not to support them, "she should be allotted one third of her husband's net income." It is needless to say that if a husband secures a judicial separation from his wife, she is under no obligation to work to support him. Nor has she any liability to support his and her children unless and until the husband cannot do so ; but the husband is obliged to support, in a separation under this Act, not only his own children, but any children she may have by a former marriage that he would have to support if they were his own, to say nothing of any illegitimate child under sixteen years of age that his wife may have had before marriage. The fact that a husband has to support children of his own by a former marriage makes no difference to the alimony allotted by the court to his wife.

If a husband deserts his wife he is deemed "an idle and disorderly person," and is punishable by imprisonment with hard labour. No wife has any obligation to maintain her husband unless he becomes chargeable to the parish ; and only then is she liable to the parish authorities for the cost of his maintenance ; but even so it is only her separate estate against which the liability is charged, and not herself :— "In consequence of the impersonal character of the only judgment obtainable against a married woman—that is, against her separate estate, and not against her person—an attachment of her person is impossible." (Macqueen.)

A man is liable for the debts of the woman with whom he cohabits if he allows it to be thought she is his wife, and she can pledge his credit as a wife can for necessaries ; and necessaries are held to be the means of living in accordance with the husband's position, and also to include the wife's costs in any matrimonial action she brings against him ; and even if a man divorces a guilty wife he must pay the costs properly incurred by her for her defence. A person who has advanced money to a deserted wife for necessaries can recover from her husband ; and if a wife separates from

a husband for any cause that leaves him liable for her maintenance, "the common practice of advertising in the newspapers 'that he will not be responsible for any debts she may contract,' is of no efficiency." A widow acts as administratrix of her husband's estate if he dies intestate, and takes one third of his estate if there are children, and one half if there are none. A husband is not bound to bequeath any of his property to his widow, and no wife with a separate estate is bound to leave any of it to him. Finally, when the husband dies, his next-of-kin are responsible for his burial, but a husband is bound to provide for his wife's burial, and is liable to any stranger who has paid the expenses of her funeral, "the same having been suitable to the rank and fortune of her husband."

Father and Children.

"They are by law his children," wrote Mill, in 1869. "He alone has any legal right over them." In nothing is the law more tenacious of common law rights than in the way it upholds the authority of the father over his children, but even that "sacred right" has been modified by legislation, and the courts constantly deprive fathers of the custody of their children. "The right of the father to the custody and control of his children is one of the most sacred of rights. No doubt the law may take from him this right, or may interfere with his exercise of it, just as it may take away his life or his property or his liberty, but it must be for some sufficient cause known to the law." (Lord Justice James, *in re Agar Ellis*, 1878.) And four years only after Mill wrote, an Act was passed dealing with the custody of children, the object of which was that "a wife might be at liberty to assert her rights as a wife without the risk of any injury being done to her feelings as a mother"—that is to say, she could bring a bad husband to book and not only still have access to her children, but obtain the custody of them. The Summary Jurisdiction Act also gives this comfort and power to the wife, if she be a successful applicant

for a separation. "Even after he is dead," wrote Mill, 'she is not their legal guardian, unless he by will has made her so.' That was not true, for when he wrote it had been decided more than a century before (*Roach v. Garvan*) that in the absence of any testamentary guardian appointed by the father, the mother, on his death, became the guardian "by nature and nurture"—and a very natural state of affairs, too. But no provision seems to exist enabling a mother to show cause why the testamentary guardian appointed by her husband should not be appointed, but the custody of the children left to her. Short of that solitary fact (though he did not specifically call attention to it as an omission) the whole indictment of Mill now falls completely to the ground. And if so much has been done by man-made laws to protect the interests of women, without their having the vote, in all reason we may suppose that the same motive will still continue to influence the legislature and judiciary of men.

Of those laws lying outside the relations of husband and wife, which give specific protection to women as against men, there is no need to speak. They simply attest the root difference between the sexes, protecting the female against those wrongful acts of the male which she, in her turn, cannot commit against him, and which therefore exhibit the unilateral arrangement of Nature—exhibit, that is to say, the contrast between the activity and initiative of the male and the passivity and receptivity of the female. Man can take no credit for those man-made laws, however, except in so far as they show him to be a just being, wishful to do his best to redress by his own system of laws the unequal balance of the laws of Nature. But those who comprehensively deny the significance of any difference between men and women might pay some little attention to the extent to which those laws of Nature go, for they may even be said to symbolise the relations between men and women.

Enough has now been said to show that woman does not need the vote to protect her interests against the

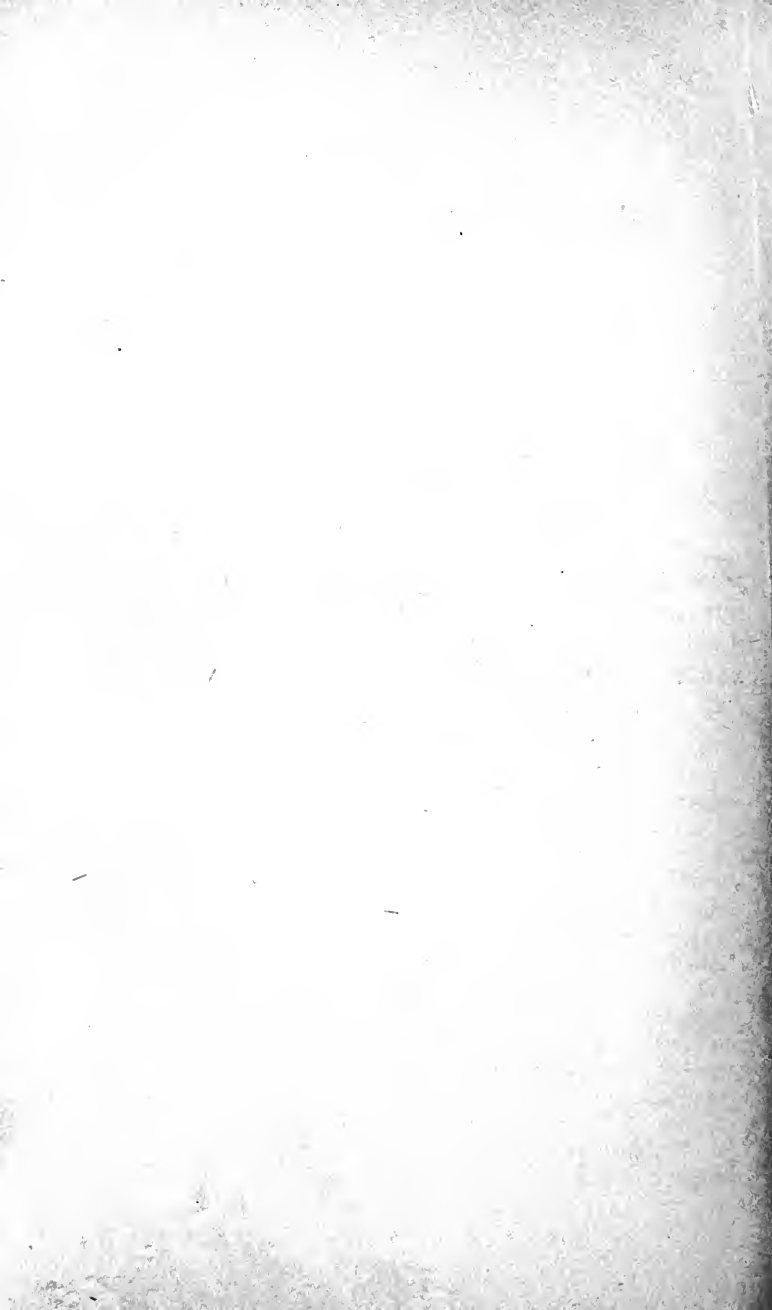
tyranny of man's laws, seeing that the code of man-made laws as a London Stipendiary magistrate (Mr Paul Taylor) said recently, "are all in favour of the wife." But it is not only the law we have to consider. Its administration affords as good an index of his sense of justice. For instance, in law there is an equal right on the part of men and women to sue each other for breach of promise of marriage. But, as we know, that law is interpreted quite differently by judge and jury when man is the suitor than when a woman is the plaintiff. He gets nothing but ridicule and derision. She gets the sympathy of the jury and the damages. But as the question of man's administration of the law really belongs to the department of what may be comprehensively called "chivalry"—we will let it take its place in a chapter devoted to that interesting aspect of man's relation to woman.



CHAPTER XIII.

Chivalry And Martyrdom.

JUSTICE AND CHIVALRY—"THE WEAKER VESSEL"—
PUNISHMENT OF WOMAN AND MAN—MAN'S DEFER-
ENCE TO WOMAN—THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MILITANCY—
ELECTIONEERING VALUE OF MARTYRDOM—CHIVALRY
AND CONTROVERSY.



CHAPTER XIII.

Chivalry And Martyrdom.

IN one of these strange street disturbances which this movement has engendered—or rather, one may almost say, which have engendered the movement as it exists to-day—two workmen stood on the edge of a crowd watching a cordon of police patiently striving to save some violent women from damaging either party to the *melée*—themselves, the active attackers, and the passive resisters drawn up in a line near a certain official residence.

One of the workmen—whose trade was carried on his back, for he was a sandwich man—muttered rather to himself than for general consumption the sentiment: "'Eroes! 'Eroes! That's what I calls women like that!" And he went on sucking his grimy clay. "'Eroes!" said the man next to him, "'Eroes you call 'em, do yer? You just try the same monkey-tricks, and see the sort o' bran mash they'd—well make *of you!*"

Each of the speakers paid, though one more consciously and more sanely than the other, his tribute of chivalry to woman. And the women themselves, charging furiously at the harassed policemen, were really admitting, whether they knew it or not, that the policemen who bore insults and violence that would have pleasantly aroused their combative masculine instincts if men had been the offenders, were also exhibiting the chivalry of man towards woman. And the whole militant campaign, though it be the very insensate extreme of a movement based upon a denial of the justice of man to woman, is in itself a witness to the fact that man treats woman with chivalrous respect. It will be time to prove that grotesque irony

true when we have first considered some examples of man's chivalry to woman in actual daily experience.

And the first place to look for them is in man's behaviour to woman in his public capacity. For, after all, the chivalrous respect that a man pays to woman in social and private life, or even the fact that he did not pay it at all, has nothing to do whatever with the Suffragists' case. If it were proved that so far as man in the State were concerned he was not unfair to woman, but erred on her side rather than against her; if the case for his public behaviour could be set no higher than that; and if in his social and private behaviour to woman he gave her no more chivalrous consideration than, say, the mistress of a household ordinarily gives to her domestic servant, the Suffragist case that man is unjust to woman would still be defeated. She has, on her own showing, no right to ask for any respectful consideration whatever from man to her because she is a woman. She is his equal, his rival, a struggle-for-lifer like himself. Indeed, not only must she not complain if man treated her with no more respect than bare good manners, "from one gentleman to another," as they say in Clapham; but she would be cutting the ground from underneath her own position if she accepted more from him. And, to do Suffragists justice, some of them are carrying out their creed to its logical conclusion, if I may judge from the somewhat ill-mannered "No thank you!" that is occasionally snapped out when one offers the commonplace courtesy of one's seat in a train. And the logical Feminist has the courage (a courage which even the Anti-suffragist may respect) to disdain and disown the illogical Suffragist's attitude in complaining that woman does not get that chivalry which it is the very essence of her creed to say is the sign and symbol of woman's "subjection."

But, at any rate, I am under no obligation whatever to prove that men behave with any chivalrous respect to women in private and social life. All that it is necessary to show to rebut the Suffragist position, is

that in those public affairs within the control of men they do no injustice to woman but give her a bare preferential consideration.

Justice and Chivalry.

Well, there is no place like the courts of justice for discovering how things stand in this matter. And there the evidence is overwhelming that women are treated not only with a bare preferential consideration, but with a leniency and indulgence that man does not mete out to his own sex—indeed, if he carried leniency and indulgence so far for his own sex, he would think he was defeating the very ends of justice. If you ask me to adduce the evidence that man so treats woman, where am I to begin and where am I to end? How, indeed, can one give evidence at all of a fact so notorious, so naturally received, so much the expected thing, that one only realises it is the rule by some occasional breach that creates comment or stirs one's indignation? I have attended criminal and civil courts during twenty years, and the actual instances of the judges' consideration for women have dropped from my memory only because they were too common to make any durable impression.

The judges of the English High Court are, I suppose no one will deny, the most eminent administrators of the law in the world; and I have seen them all in the judgment seat, except those appointed within the last few years. But even those who had a reputation for severity—"hanging judges" and "terrors" for certain classes of crime—always touched their judgment with some compassion, and loosened the strings of mercy, when they were dealing with any woman short of one whose crime was so revolting as to make men instinctively say, "Lucky thing for her she hasn't a judge and jury of women to deal with!" And yet these same judges, dealing with men charged with crimes against women, were implacably and sometimes even cruelly severe. But, of course, it would almost be stooping to imbecility to try and prove by actual

instances the truth of something so notorious as that, in the administration of the law, judges always import into justice some of that consideration for womanhood which still, we may be thankful, marks man's attitude to woman amongst every class and degree of Englishman—systematic wife-beaters excepted, though they, thanks to the discouragement which they receive from summary jurisdiction, are a dwindling band, the last upholders of the tradition that man is a brute to woman.

“The Weaker Vessel.”

But, to give some concrete instances of man's judicial attitude to woman, let me take first a case which came before the Courts long enough ago for one to be able to recall it now without recalling the case to the public memory. It was notable for the fact that the petitioner was a young woman who had, after a rash and impulsive adventure that ended in an unfortunate marriage, committed adultery; and this guilt on her part, brought to the notice of the Court by the King's Proctor, barred her from the relief she had sought and obtained, unless the judge exercised the discretion which is left to him in such cases, and made the decree *nisi* absolute. It is a discretion sparingly exercised in exculpation, and in this case one can only say that it was exercised very generously indeed. But what the judge said is more important than what he did. I quote from the report in *The Westminster Gazette* on the day of his decision :

“The petitioner was charged with misconduct, which she denied, but the jury had not believed her. He quite agreed with the jury, who could have come to no other conclusion. Therefore they had a case where the petitioner not only had been guilty of misconduct but, in her denial of misconduct, had committed perjury. The question was, what had he to do with the matter under his powers of discretion? Some people, said his lordship, were foolish enough to think that a woman and a man should be treated the same. This Court never had done so, and he hoped never would hold that a woman was not the weaker vessel. Her constitution and habit of thought and feminine weakness might lead her to do things which might be excusable

in her, although the same conduct might not be excusable in a man."

And so the judge exercised his discretion in favour of the petitioner, reproving her for her perjury, but adding that it was always better for people to deal frankly with the Court, "for this Court is always ready to recognise the weakness of the sex in certain matters."

Well, I am not concerned to say whether I agree with everything the judge said, or to enquire whether it is quite discreet for a judge of the Divorce Court to declare so uncompromisingly that woman is "the weaker vessel" in that particular department of human frailty over which he judicially presides. But could a better illustration be found of the treatment meted out to woman by man in his public and judicial capacity? And could we have a better instance to prove that sex carries its differences even into the sphere of justice, than this recognition of woman's "constitution and habits of thought and feminine weakness?" Could we also have a clearer proof that though men contend that woman's "constitution and habits of thought and feminine weakness" debar her from certain spheres and activities of life, they are nevertheless even pleaded by man himself, *in her interest and for her benefit*, when he sits in judgment upon her?

And only the day before that judgment was pronounced, a very different case came before the House of Lords and a very different treatment was meted out, again, to the man concerned than to the woman. It was a case into which there is no need to enter beyond saying that the prisoners were sister and brother, and that the House of Lords had to decide the unique case of whether it could restore a conviction that had been quashed by the Court of Criminal Appeal. It was a case in which the equality of the guilt could not be questioned, but in restoring the conviction, the House of Lords sentenced the man to three years' penal servitude and the woman to six months' imprisonment in the second division: a distinction in punishment infinitely greater

than any possible difference in the offence could have been, short of such a difference as would have made the woman not the co-prisoner she was, but the complainant, which she was not.

I think these two instances are quite sufficient to bring in support of a truth so notorious that it is in the very bone and fibre of commonplace experience—the truth that man, so far from denying justice to women, judicially and publicly, renders to her something that a sexless justice could not grant.

Punishment of Woman and Man.

But before we leave this part of the subject, let me try to bring it right down to date. And I cannot do that in a fairer or better way than to reach out my hand for the newspaper of the day on which I write, and see what that has to tell us, in the judicial reports, of the different treatment accorded by judges to men and women offenders.

One case upon which my eye immediately lights is that of a woman charged with cruelly ill-treating her own son, a "weak-minded lad of thirteen." "A neighbour spoke to hearing the child screaming in the night and to finding him naked in the rain and covered with weals and bruises. She had never seen such marks on a child." The presiding magistrate "characterised the offence as shameful and inhuman. The defendant, he said, was a vile and vicious woman. A fine of £5 and costs was imposed, or a month's imprisonment." As there is no other case recorded in the paper in which the man's offence is on all fours with that, or anything like it, I cannot put it in parallel columns, but I very much doubt whether, if the father of the lad had been charged with the same offence and the same cruelty proved, he would have got off with anything like so inadequate a sentence. The other cases, however, are better put in parallel columns and left entirely to tell their own tale.

MEN.

At the Kent Assizes, at Maidstone, George _____ pleaded guilty to obtaining by fraud money from three residents of Whitstable. He had deluded various women by marrying them bigamously, and obtaining money from them, and had been sentenced on two counts to three years' and five years' penal servitude. These offences were now recalled against him, and the prisoner was sentenced to four years' penal servitude in addition to the two unexpired years of his previous sentence.

At the Glamorgan Assizes Mr Justice Lawrence passed sentences ranging from three months' to twelve months' hard labour on the prisoners found guilty in connection with the strike riots in Rhondda Valley. Twenty-one prisoners were sentenced in all. Sentencing the ringleaders, the judge said: "Somebody must have the courage to prevent this state of things going on, and each of you must be sent to prison for 12 months' hard labour."

WOMEN.

At the Kent (the same) Assizes a young woman named _____ pleaded guilty to a charge of attempting to drown her two-year-old child. For the defence it was stated that the prisoner became engaged to a respectable man shortly before she committed the offence. The man was not the father of the child, but knew all about the prisoner's history. They decided not to marry until the case had been dealt with. The prisoner was bound over and discharged.

At Bow Street a second batch of "Suffragette" prisoners were dealt with for the damage to property committed by them during their demonstration two days before. The following traders were mentioned as having suffered damage: Grand Hotel Buildings, £100; Swan and Edgar, £20; Hippell, chemist, £35; Fendick and Co., tailors, £80. Penalties varied from 10s to 40s, according to the amount of damage done and the "record" against the defendants. "Mrs Pethick Lawrence, the leader of the demonstration," charged with assaulting a constable, was sentenced to a month's imprisonment in the second division (against which decision she appealed).

Man's Deference to Woman.

Now, I am not going to waste my time in proving that in social life men treat women, in the mass, with the same chivalrous sort of consideration as in the public sphere. Those who believe it is so will require no proof of a fact which their own daily experience attests, in the home, in the street, and wherever men and women meet. And the only people who deny it are those who say that they do not want any preferential treatment from men, and whose whole case of "equality for the sexes" excludes it altogether. And yet even when they deny that men are chivalrous, a note of indignation creeps into their voices—so ingrained even in the breasts of those who repudiate chivalry is the recognition of it. A typical utterance is that of Mrs Zangwill:—"Men have never shown any chivalry to women, except perhaps to a few pretty women of the middle class." Well, sweeping mis-statements of that kind are really not worth pursuing. Every mother's son contradicts that one—for how else can be explained that tender deference which a son pays to his mother in contrast with the more assertive obedience which he pays to his father?

But the existence of chivalrous feeling towards women is not only denied, but the sentiment itself is even derided. And that I cannot understand, for even if it be a mistaken notion on man's part that he is chivalrous to women, it is difficult to see why the sentiment should be derided, though its practice were merely an illusion.

But the odd thing—one of a thousand odd things in an amazing tangle of contradictions and absurdities—is that the Suffragists themselves admit the existence of a considerate attitude on the part of men for which there is no better or shorter name than chivalry. They admit it despite themselves. Just as Mill claimed on the one hand that women were the equals of men in intelligence when he wanted to prove their fitness for the franchise, but pictured them all as a brainless lot when he wanted to show the defects of their

“narrow” education, so the Suffragists are constantly driven to admit that very chivalry which they deny and deride. Miss Cicely Hamilton, for instance, wishing to prove the fantastic doctrine that women acquire their bad manners in the home, and would acquire better manners if they went out into the world of commerce, is driven to make the admission that men are considerate to women; for the two *choses vues* she selects are that of ill-mannered women — one blocking a booking-office window and the other taking a large and unpleasant dog into a 'bus—testing the manners and patience of men in a way and to an extent that we may suppose would not have been the case if each had not been, as Miss Hamilton put it, “what is usually termed a lady.”

But if we want to discover the strongest admission of this chivalry in men, we shall discover it in that word-defying movement of militancy. It is difficult, perhaps, in a book dealing with this question of Votes for Women to avoid saying a good deal about the militant movement, as an auxiliary of propaganda. Nevertheless, one can do difficult things if one tries, and of the militant movement I will merely say that I have nothing to say beyond the statement that nothing I could say would have any real quantitative relation to what might be said. The militant movement stands by itself. One can only say of it that in this strange world strange things happen, and the militant movement is one of them. Marvelling and saddened, but admitting that it certainly has made the Suffrage a “live” question¹, we can only pass on.

¹ Those who wish to know something of the militant movement from the inside may read Mrs Billington-Greig's book on that subject with the sub-title “Emancipation in a Hurry.” Mrs Billington-Greig charges the leaders of that movement with betraying the cause; and the decision announced in the middle of January 1912 to resume militant tactics against the Government unless it will itself press a Woman Suffrage Measure through the House enables us to understand Mrs Billington-Greig's point of view. For if Woman Suffrage ever had a chance of becoming law, it is in this Parliament, but if the Government were, or could be driven to the choice of taking up the responsibility or

The Psychology of Militancy.

But of its relation to this question of chivalry it is possible to say something, for here the resources of one's language are adequate, as nothing more is needed than to point out what is really obvious. And the obvious thing about the militant movement is that it is itself a wonderful tribute to man's chivalry towards woman. For the psychological process of its devotees is summed up entirely in the words and actions of the henpecking wife who, slapping her husband in the face, said, "There, you big bully! Why don't you hit me back, you coward!" The tactics of the movement, in short, are so to embarrass the guardians of law and order that they shall be faced with one of two disagreeable alternatives:—either to give up maintaining law and order, or to maintain it only by incurring the odium of treating women exactly as men would be treated under precisely the same circumstances. If any bigger acknowledgement could be made of man's treatment of woman than that, I should be very pleased to receive it.

There is no need to prove the case. It can be gathered from the newspaper files. A prominent militant has, indeed, obligingly collected all the evidence that is necessary upon the point in a book

going out of office, it would certainly go out of office, we should have a general election with Woman Suffrage as the prime issue, and votes for women would have to wait until there was a majority in Parliament specifically returned to carry it. Therefore, unless there is something profound in these tactics that the masculine mind cannot fathom, it looks rather as though the militants wished to postpone that achievement of their cause which would, by its very success, render the continuance of the organisations now existing to attain it unnecessary. A Government, by the way, returned to carry Woman Suffrage would have nothing else to do, for Mr Lloyd George and Mr Balfour would be colleagues. A Government returned to kill Woman Suffrage could do nothing at all, for Mr Asquith and Mr M'Kenna and Mr Austin Chamberlain and Mr F. E. Smith would sit looking helplessly at Mr Balfour, Mr Bonar Law, Mr Lloyd George and Sir Edward Grey. It is this consideration which makes the proposal for a Referendum so eminently sane.

in which the exploits of militancy are chronicled with pride. But taking only the very last ebullition of militancy up to the time of writing, two or three incidents of that window-smashing orgie may be extracted from the newspaper accounts of that evening's diversion, and I take them from one single newspaper.

"To their credit it must be said that the police were thoroughly good humoured. 'Now, Mrs Pethick Lawrence,' they would say, as though remonstrating with her mildly, for all the trouble she was giving. Obviously the police were very loth to take her into custody, but at last the Inspector gave the word. 'We must take her in,' he said.—*Daily Chronicle*, Nov. 22, 1911."

That incident needs no comment—it straightforwardly proves the point. The next incident is slightly more complex, but the same truth emerges :

"Thwarted by the mounted police in their attempt to break the line they seized the bridles of the horses and clung to them desperately. I saw one officer trying in vain to unclasp the little hand that clasped his horse's bit, and the crowd howled as he made his horse plunge so that the woman was in grave danger of injury. This perilous device was tried by several women, and as a result the operations of the police were much hampered. It was only the strength of a number of unmounted policemen who could release the bridles from the grip of those women's hands."

The "howling crowd" did not apparently appreciate the difficult task of the police, nor grasp the fact that militancy is designed merely to thrust upon the police, as I have said, an odious alternative. But the crowd *did* howl at police who, if they had been dealing with the crowd, would have loosened the hands on their horses' bridles, not by trying to unclasp the hands, but by attacking the seat of the will that kept the hands there—that is, by cracking their heads. For policemen do not deal very gently with riotous men who lay hold of their horses' bridles. But even the "howling crowd" attested the chivalry of man towards woman.

The next instance is also a straightforward proof of my contention :

"One painful incident happened and aroused some feeling in the crowd. It was the arrest of Miss ———, one of the most

notable figures in the Suffrage movement. She is a cripple, and in all the raids has been familiar in her hand-driven cycle chair. She wheeled this indomitably against the lines of the police until their patience was exhausted, and, lifted bodily up by two inspectors and seven constables, she was carried into Cannon Row Police Station."

Now, I suppose I need not strive to prove to any intelligence that the crippled militant was there not because of her militant capacity, but because of her crippled incapacity. She was there, in short, not to awe or overpower the police, but merely to enhance the odium of the alternative I have spoken of. She was brought into the firing line, we may almost say, in the hope that she would be hurt, but certainly with the intention to represent the police as ruffians if they even accidentally hurt her. The plan, however, apparently provides for no such compromise as that which the police adopted, in merely detaching a number of their body, as another account says, "to take her out of harm's way."¹

Of course, I have been pointing out and proving the

¹ The perfect *reductio ad absurdum* of this matter has been accomplished by Mr F. T. Jane, the well-known writer on military topics. A proposal was made by several ladies that the work of national defence should be served by raising a few regiments of women to shame the men. It was pointed out that with a modern rifle a woman might do very good shooting, and war was imagined as a sort of picnic in which ladies could be motored to the scene of action, find a marquee erected for lunch, and the enemy waiting obligingly until lunch was over. No idea that war is unlike a shooting-party marked the suggestion. Mr Jane then seriously comments: "Any expeditionary force we might employ would be heavily depleted by the necessity of a home garrison left to deal with possible rioters. Here the women regiments would be useful. Even the worst of hooligans would hesitate at organised bottle-throwing at women; or, if any such throwing took place, public opinion would take a stronger view than it has done when male soldiers and policemen were the target . . . and the most virulent of M.P.'s would hardly dare to justify attacks upon women seeking to preserve law and order."—*The Standard*, Oct. 6, 1911. Mr Jane adds: "Thus the whole vexed question of Votes for Women would be automatically solved." The subtlety of no opponent is so deadly as this charming ingenuousness of Mr Jane.

glaringly obvious thing in showing that not only is Suffragist militancy a recognition of the preferential treatment that man accords to woman, but that its very object is to take advantage of it, although the "equality of the sexes" creed actually relieves man of this obligation; whilst if that obligation be modified or abrogated, under stress of the very circumstances that are intended to provoke its abrogation, he is held up to opprobrium for brutal behaviour to women. And so the involutions of topsy-turvydom go on until it requires a real effort of the mind to pursue Absurdity through the mazes of Heaven-knows-what-to-call-it.

But unfortunately so many people fail to see the obvious—witness the crowds who howled—that nowadays the task of anybody taking part in public affairs is not to be profound and to think deeply so much as to think clearly and speak plainly. It is, in fact, rather in the correction of fundamental error than in the pursuit of ultimate truth that the energies of the mind are taxed in these democratic days. And that is why some special words must be devoted to that active phase of militancy which, in its passive aspect, was known as "forcible feeding." For I have known otherwise intelligent people who did not spare their intelligence in general condemnation of militancy, surrender their intelligence altogether upon the question of the "forcible feeding" of women prisoners. Though, on the other hand, I have heard of instances of sympathisers whose sympathy for the cause has been weakened by that phase of militancy, for as parents of theirs, as surgeons in his Majesty's prisons, had been forcibly feeding male prisoners, at every meal-time, for their varying periods of incarceration, they knew that forcible feeding was the only way "officially to keep alive" obdurate male prisoners. But "forcible feeding" was, of course, another expedient to force the same dilemma upon the authorities. The unexpressed formula was: "Either you shall let a woman break the prison regulations and come out

of prison ill and thin, or you shall odiously feed her forcibly." And I need hardly say that such a formula implied by male prisoners would not have availed them in the slightest degree or have secured anybody's sympathy. Those who have seen male prisoners fed forcibly know what a very unpleasant business it is, even for the prison surgeons; and they feel, I am sure, that it adds quite unnecessarily to their duties. But there is an obligation upon them not to allow prisoners in their medical charge to injure their health, and so they feed prisoners forcibly with just the same humane motive as they would sew up the wound if a prisoner cut his throat with a dinner tin. And that is the long and the short and the top and the bottom of the forcible feeding adjunct of militancy exhibited by Suffragist prisoners, most of whom, moreover, have gone to prison because they refused (another phase and stage of martyrdom) to take advantage of that option which has not been given to male prisoners who have allied themselves to the cause and committed the same class of offences. And this rational view of the matter in no way precludes sympathy and even admiration for any women in whom the motive of the propagandist value of "martyrdom" was unconscious or actually subordinated to one of "protest."

Electioneering Value of Martyrdom.

But, of course, the aspect of a thing depends on how you look at it, and the best way of looking at anything is to look at it sanely. The militants, of course, presented that phase distorted, and they hoped that there was not enough clear vision in the public mind to correct the distortion. For we cannot suppose that the militants themselves were under any illusion as to the rationality of the matter—though that is the beginning of another dreadful maze into which I have neither time nor inclination to grope my way, and I am quite willing to make allowances to one side if allowances be also made to the other.

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But a little exhibit I once saw in a Suffrage committee room window forcibly suggests that even forcible feeding was an inspiration meant to serve the purposes of propaganda rather than a martyrdom self-imposed and enjoyed for its own sake. A bye-election was taking place in Bermondsey, and in the murk and drizzle of a winter night the Suffragist committee rooms made a welcome little patch of light. Having no violent prejudices I sought, with a companion, the shelter of the shop front. But in the window, fascinating a little crowd of urchins, was a realistic and beautifully executed little waxwork exhibit, that seemed to have come from some diminutive Chamber of Horrors in a Lilliputian Madame Tussaud's. It was a group—a group of prison doctors, warders and wardresses, and they were gathered round the figure of a woman prisoner, held down in a chair. There were tiny indiarubber pipes, tiny tin bowls, and all the mechanism and paraphernalia of the operation represented—which was, of course, the operation of forcible feeding. It was, as I say, a beautifully executed example of the wax-modeller's art; and its cheap realism—in a double sense—awed and delighted the urchins of Bermondsey enormously. But I was thinking of its effects upon the adult mind—of the effect intended and of how difficult a thing it is to chase those electoral mendacities that are implied and not stated, and thinking of the meanness of such methods of controversy, when a member of the committee came to the door. She noticed with interest two fairly intelligent looking men gazing at the *pièce de conviction*, and my companion felt it was really necessary, for the self-respect of his sex, that she should be under no illusion as to what we thought about it all. So, with one eye on the exhibit, and the other on the committee-woman, he exclaimed, "Barbarous! I call it simply barbarous! Can such things be allowed in a Christian country!" And then, addressing the committee-woman, he asked her, "*But why on earth won't they let her take it in the ordinary way?*"

The propaganda had apparently not provided an answer for the unanswerable, and the committee-woman wisely did not attempt the impossible. The question, I daresay, was not necessary to enlighten her mind—it merely enlightened her as to the intelligence of other minds, and as to the futility of such perverted martyrdoms and upside-down methods of controversy. Yet none who condemned militancy, and yet made a reservation concerning man's cruelty in regard to forcible feeding, can ever have troubled to put that simple intelligent question to themselves in terms so fatal to the electioneering imposture. Well, if women are coming out into the rough and tumble of politics they will, at any rate, be able to keep up what I fear is the traditional reputation that politics have acquired for cultivating the deceitful arts of mankind. Nay, so far from purifying politics, they may even beat men at their own game.

Chivalry and Controversy.

But they will not be allowed to have it all their own way even then. Chivalry will indeed have to fly out of the window when political woman comes in at the door. But now, even in this controversy, we "make allowances"—and Heaven knows they are needed! For it seems to be a difficult thing for the Suffragist case to be presented courteously, to say nothing of it being presented rationally. If I may give an example from my own experience, it is merely because it is typical of the arrogance with which men, fighting for womanhood more than for their own sex, and for humanity more than either, are treated by women Suffragists in this controversy. In the *Westminster Gazette* some two or three years ago I wrote an article, entitled "Man, Woman and Nature." It was a very gentle and reasonable contribution, unprovocative of anything except the thought required to answer it. And the most controversial speculation it contained was this: that the tendency of woman's enlargement of her sphere must necessarily be towards identification

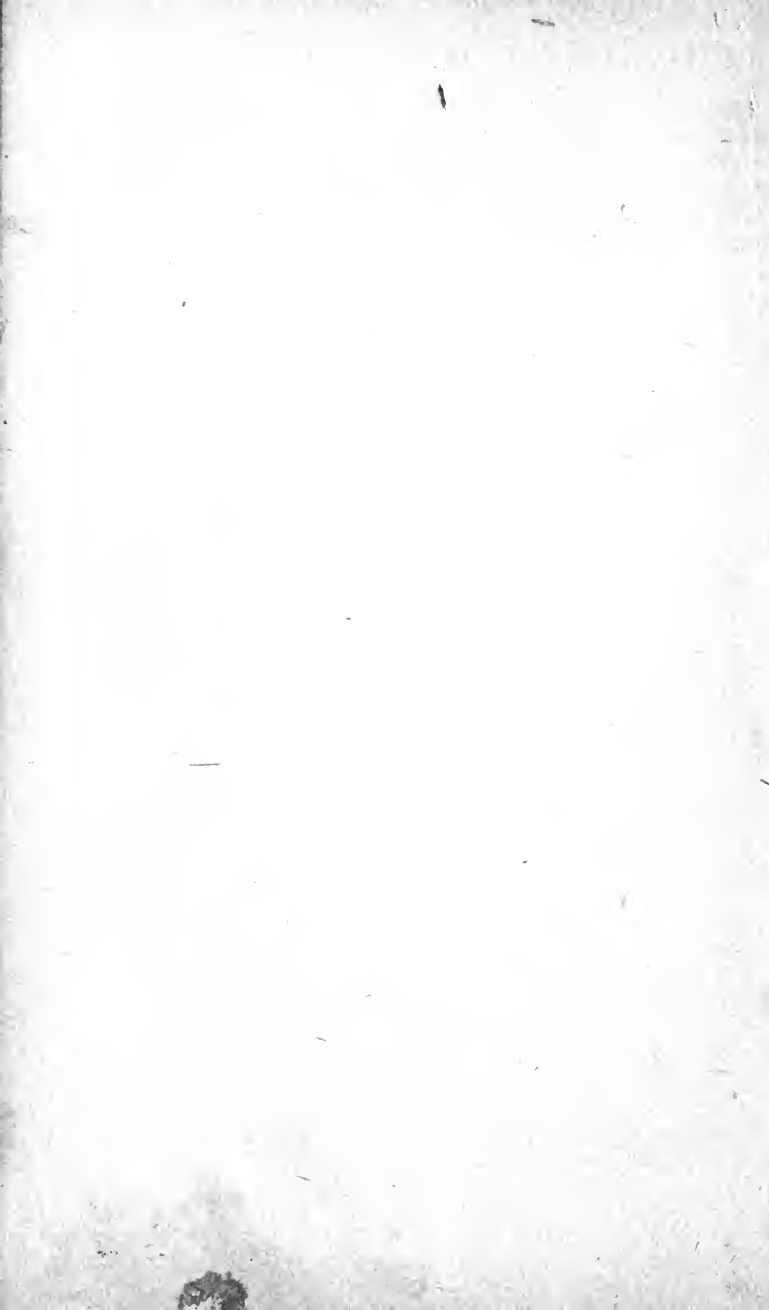
with man's habit's, duties and pursuits in innumerable ways, which might in turn involve a modification of the temperamental and other sex distinctions, tending towards sex convergence instead of that sexual divergence which Nature requires for the best reproduction of the race. It was not a vicious, stupid, malevolent or anything but, I hope, an intelligent speculation—as, indeed, biologists who have since entered into the controversy have proved by making, with more authority, the same point. But it did not save me from letters abusing the male intelligence in general, and my own in particular; and a male correspondent unwisely sought to correct me in the columns of the *Westminster Gazette*. But his measure was easily taken, for he was such a careless controversialist that he based his argument upon figures taken from the census, which were perfectly correct, except that they applied to men and not to women; as may be seen from the fact that he stated that 83 per cent of the *women* of Great Britain, which is just the figure for men, were industrial wage-earners! I answered him adequately, and he disappeared from the scene. But into the correspondence then rushed Lady — to support him. And after saying that she “did not happen to see” the article which was the origin of the whole matter, she proceeded to say: “I unhesitatingly affirm that the standpoint of those who ‘oppose Woman Suffrage in old England’ does not appear to those who are working for the Suffrage in this country as at all ‘elevated’ or entitled from any point of view, except perhaps their own, *to the smallest respect!*” Now, if a male controversialist, having admitted that he had never read my views, had “unhesitatingly affirmed” that they were not entitled to the smallest respect, I should have known what to say to him. But in the case of Lady — I naturally held my pen.

Well, that may be thought by some a small point to make. I do not think so, but if it be small in itself, it has to do with a very big fact. For if women are

coming out into public activity as men's equals, giving no quarter or courtesy, I fear the social rules underlying man's relations to woman will be correspondingly modified, and she will receive none. Nay, it will be inevitable, for chivalry is not possible between "equals." But it may be said that women will be pleased to take as good as they give in controversy. So it will be, no doubt. But one shudders at the prospect of such "equality," and at the vista it opens up of raging and tearing propagandists clutching at each other's fallacies.

But even if they can maintain their "equal" position in controversy, and are quite eager for the fray, it is not in political matters only that chivalry will have to go to the wall, if they claim equality all round. In the economic sphere, as in the political sphere, it will be rivalry and struggle for the survival of the fittest and the strongest, and in a succeeding chapter we may begin to consider, how far "equality" in the economic sphere will take us. We shall then have dealt with the point stated in the preceding chapter: Does the fact that political power is confined to man involve, in truth and reality, any injustice to woman? And that question falls into two branches: (1) the laws affecting women and their administration, and (2) the economic position of woman. The first has been considered, and the second remains. But the first has taken us very far, for it has involved the consideration also of man's attitude to woman not only in respect of laws and their administration, but in respect of the social, and personal relations of the sexes. I set out to prove that both in the making and the administering of laws man gave to woman a consideration he denies to his own sex, and that solely and simply because she is *not* his "equal" and never can be in any rational sense of the word, he gives her the compensation not only of the protection of his laws but of a preferential and deferential attitude to her in life generally. That, too, I think I have proved. But surely it needs no proof. The wreck of the

"*Birkenhead*" is man's answer to the cry for equality of the sexes; and I do not understand the man or the woman who wishes to produce such an "equality" between the sexes that the cry of "Women first!" will sound absurd and "mid-Victorian" . . . For, of course, it will always be heard.



CHAPTER XIV.

The Suffragist's Bible.

THE MAN WHO WAS NEVER A BOY—MILL'S IDEA OF MEN — “WHAT IS YOURS IS MINE” — CUI BONO? — HIGHER EDUCATION AND MARRIED HAPPINESS—THE ENTHUSIAST'S DREAM — THE FALSE ANALOGY — THE UNIQUENESS OF THE HUMAN SEX—A RIVAL ANALOGY — “MERELY PHYSICAL STRENGTH.”



CHAPTER XIV.

The Suffragist's Bible.

THE question of the economic position of woman has, strictly speaking, nothing to do with Woman Suffrage—though it has everything to do with what Woman Suffrage involves. But the case against giving Votes to Women can be completely presented without touching the question of woman's economic position at all—though as soon as we do touch that question we enter upon the wide field of the fundamental change in the status of woman that would follow upon her political enfranchisement.

We may, however, now pause, having considered the case against the Suffrage in all its chief aspects, to devote some attention to John Stuart Mill's work, "The Subjection of Women." And, certainly, in a controversy so far-reaching as this it would be unfair to consider the case for Woman Suffrage as answered by dealing only with the arguments and claims of the modern Suffragists, and ignoring the biggest contribution to their cause that has proceeded from any mind—and that mind, I need hardly say, a man's.¹

Mill's book, "The Subjection of Women," is really the Suffragist's Bible. Nothing in their case is not contained within its pages, and everything that can be said in favour of their cause is there said much better than they themselves can say it.

¹ Just as the most temperate and reasoned, and therefore the most effective, contribution to the modern discussion comes from a man—Mr W. Lyon Blease, in "The Emancipation of English Women." It is perhaps, however, indiscreet to say so, as the author might regard that opinion as only another manifestation of "the male hydra-headed egoism" which he attacks.

In the whole realm of literature it would be hard to find a book conceived in a nobler spirit, and the Suffragists ought certainly to honour Mill's memory more than that of any woman who has pioneered their cause. For the book is even a passionate as well as a reasoned appeal for "justice" to women, and the book, in its intention, ennobles even the idea of justice. No man who reads it can read it without a thrill of admiration for its courage, its intellectual honesty—within the limits of the argument—and its chivalrous feeling. And I think no woman, however violent and militant she may be in her actions and views, should damn with her contempt the sex that has produced such a champion of their cause.

It is odd, however, that the Suffragists do not make much use of this, their Bible. They will say, no doubt, that they use its arguments, and perhaps even think, in the vanity of their hearts, that they improve upon them. But even so, it is odd that they neglect the influence that might be exerted by frequent reference to the plea of the greatest mind that has lent support to their cause. Other minds as great as his, and his contemporaries, took an entirely opposite view to his view, but the very rareness, and uniqueness, in fact, of Mill's support—the only first-class mind that has supported Woman Suffrage—ought to make his work supremely prominent in their propaganda. But one never hears them mention it, and apparently it is not a well-thumbed Bible at all.

The Man Who Was Never a Boy.

The truth is, though they would not be likely to admit it, that their Bible lacks inspiration. It is inspired by a noble sense of abstract justice, but it is not inspired by any accurate and intimate sense of the realities of the world we live in. Consider what Mill was, and we can see that this is just such a book as he would have written. He was, in his own language, "never a boy." At three years of age, when most

boys are struggling with the alphabet, he had begun to learn Greek. His father crammed him with learning as chickens are crammed for the market; and at fourteen he had an adult intelligence although he had never held a cricket bat in his hand. He was, more or less, a recluse, over-intellectualised in his youth, and in his manhood the intellectual side of him was so supreme that he himself recognised his feelings and emotions were atrophied. It was not that he had no capacity for feeling—his mind was more sensitive to justice than most men's hearts—but he looked at everything from the intellectual and rational point of view—and expressed even emotion in terms of logic. But his logic went wrong from the start because, in dealing with a very human question, he based his logical case not upon the facts of human existence, but upon a false analogy between the relative position of men and women and the phenomena of political change in the different classes of men.

Such a book as "The Subjection of Women" was therefore just such a book as such a man might have been expected to write. He was a philosopher living in his own vacuum—a vacuum from which nearly all human feeling had been withdrawn by that intellectual pump, his mind. John Bright expressed something of the same view when he said after the publication of "The Subjection of Women" (as Mr Justin M'Carthy has just recalled) that "a man, by setting himself to be a thinker, might think himself out of practical politics altogether," and he spoke of Mill as "one who sees men as trees walking." And the intellectual and rationalist age that produced the Economic Man—the being who has no motive in life but gain—produced his counterpart in Mill's idea of the Husband as a man who acted from no other motive but the love of power.

Mill sat down to write "The Subjection of Women" with this fact in his mind: that women were legally subjected to men by the laws regulating the relations of husband and wife, and he enlarged that relative and legal position into the conception of man as a tyrant

and woman as a slave. Given the fact that man was legally the woman's superior in a domestic relation, that he was the head of the household and the woman owed him obedience, he sat down to project, from his inner intellectual consciousness, those two beings to the limit of their theoretical development, and he produced the husband as the Tyrant and the wife as the Slave—not using either term with any figurative allowance, but using both terms in their starkest meaning. What he said to himself was this: Where there is power, there must be tyranny; where there is obedience, there must be slavery. Husbands are therefore tyrants and wives are slaves.

Mill's Idea of Men.

It is in the second chapter of the book that he deals with the domestic subjection of women, and the second chapter is now entirely out of date, which is perhaps one reason why the book is not more frequently referred to. For if it were now re-issued that chapter alone would almost reduce the book to one of mere literary interest, and go a long way towards vitiating the whole of it. In a previous chapter we have already seen how completely Mill's summary of woman's domestic status is now out of date, and as he connected very intimately indeed her "domestic slavery" with his argument for political enfranchisement, his book, from a propagandist point of view, would now ill serve the cause. For, in the first place, a prejudice would naturally be created against the book by the reader who came across such passages as these: "There remain no legal slaves except the mistress of every house," and "I am far from pretending that wives are in general no better treated than slaves; but no slave is a slave to the same length and in so full a sense of the word as a wife is." And the second respect in which the book would tell against the cause rather than help it, is that a perusal of Mill's view of men's attitude to their wives, in the light of modern actuality, would suggest very forcibly what is the truth—that an ounce of actual ex-

perience is worth any one page of Mill's elaborate theorising. In one passage he says, putting his finger on the spot (as he believed) of the *primum mobile* of man in relation to the whole question :

“And here, I believe, is the clue to the feelings of those men who have a real antipathy to the equal freedom of women. I believe they are afraid, not lest women should be unwilling to marry, but lest they should insist that marriage should be an equal condition; lest all women of spirit and capacity should prefer doing almost anything else, not in their own eyes degrading, rather than marry when marrying is giving themselves a master, a master, too, of all their earthly possessions.”

Well, a woman in marrying a man no longer makes him the master of all her earthly possessions; nor does she make him “master” at all except in that colloquial sense of the word in which it still survives amongst ordinary housewives, some of whom are content to leave their husbands the shadow of that compliment whilst retaining the substance of the matter in their own hands. But the belief that he had got the clue to a man's objection to Woman Suffrage, and its correlated changes, in supposing that men are afraid women would insist on equal conditions in marriage, was singularly wide of the mark. Already marriage is so equal in its conditions that it offers no advantages to men whatever (apart from the higher view of marriage which Mill seemed to think men incapable of taking) but those which proceed from the bare domestic comfort for securing which a man pledges *his* freedom up to the hilt, although he does not always get the comfort. But that passage is rendered wholly absurd and revealed as rather malevolent, by the mere fact that so far from woman's freer domestic status depending upon her own political enfranchisement, as he thought, it has been conferred upon her by man-made laws, even though political power is still denied to her. But Mill's obsession as to the tyrannical motives of men was so pronounced that he seemed to assume men married women, not out of affection, but to gratify a natural instinct and desire for tyranny, whilst rejoicing that the law,

which had abolished all other forms of slavery, permitted every man to have one slave—viz., his wife—all to himself: "For every man who desires power desires it most over those nearest to him, with whom his life is passed, with whom he has most concerns in common, and in whom any independence of his authority is oftenest likely to interfere with his individual preferences." Well, there is merely an historical interest in that view of a husband's motive and power. Whatever be a man's motive now in getting married, he is a fool if he expects a legal slave, because marriage does not give it to him. His "slave" can leave him the morning after marriage, and no power can force her back to him. But it is not necessary to examine that part of the case, for to-day, at any rate, law and fact and the general experience refute both its statements and its psychology.

"What is Yours is Mine."

But the point is that this conception of man as a tyrant and woman as his slave dominated his whole case for the political enfranchisement of women, for he was pleading not only that laws should be altered but that women should be allowed to make them. He wished in the first place to set women free from all domestic subjection (though he did not wish to set men free from the responsibility of maintaining them), and having postulated husbands as tyrants and wives as slaves, he proceeded to base his claim for her political enfranchisement on the same grounds: "On the other point which is involved in the just equality of women, their admissibility to all the functions and occupations hitherto retained as the monopoly of the stronger sex, I should anticipate no difficulty in convincing any one who has gone with me on the subject of equality of women in the family." But that is just where the difficulty, in fact, comes in. For there are many husbands to-day who, so far from being themselves domestic tyrants, are subject to an overpowering personality in petticoats, but who nevertheless do not

"go with" Mill or anybody else in assenting to the political enfranchisement of women.

But so anxious was Mill to establish a condition of equality between husband and wife that he states one proposition which, if applied now, would turn the position against him and make a woman much more man's "slave" than she was when he wrote. The Married Women's Property Acts had not then been passed, and in urging "a woman's right to her own property" he laid down this proposition: "The rule is simple. Whatever would be the husband's or wife's if they were not married, should be under their exclusive control during marriage." Well, what the husband earns, or what he receives as income from property, would be his whether he were married or not. It is only by the fact of his marriage that he shares it with another, and though Mill went on to say, "I have no relish for a community of goods resting on the doctrine that what is mine is yours but what is yours is not mine," that is exactly the position of the husband now that the Married Women's Property Acts give the wife separate control of her own income but leave the husband with the responsibility of maintaining his wife and their children out of his own earnings or income. But if marriage is to give so equal a status to both husband and wife that even the fact of the husband's maintenance of a wife and family is to give him no advantage or consideration, and not even the often empty title of the head of the house, then the Married Women's Property Acts ought to be reconsidered, on Mill's own shewing, for they do proclaim the principle, *but as against the husband*, that "what is mine is yours but what is yours is not mine." Such are the difficulties which beset the theory of perfect equality of status even in the domestic sphere.

Cui Bono?

But it was, as I have said, the domestic inequalities that supplied Mill with his arguments for woman's

political enfranchisement, except so far as he based her enfranchisement also upon abstract justice. But as Professor Dicey has pointed out, even Mill admitted that every abstract right must be based upon "the permanent interests of man as a progressive being"—though in "The Subjection of Women," he expressed the point even more emphatically. And his book is especially weak in its failure to give any reason for expecting a beneficent result from the emancipation of women commensurate with those results fairly to be asked for when such a revolution is in question. He argues that woman's nature and capacities are really an unknown quantity, because she has, in the main, been confined to one sphere, and so he claims to be entitled to conjecture what no one can prove or disprove—that if woman penetrated into man's sphere she would in time reveal the same capacities as man. So we might—or might not—but in order to bring it to the proof woman would have to duplicate man through all his interests and experiences. But he does not face the problem of whether what woman would do in her new sphere might not so injure her efficiency in the other sphere that, on the whole and in the sum, the "abstract right" to political and economic equality might not be "in the permanent interests of man as a progressive being." Yet this problem must have occurred to him, for when he is arguing for women's domestic equality he says: "If . . . the wife undertakes the careful and economical application of the husband's earnings to the general comfort of the family, she takes not only her fair share but usually the larger share of the bodily and mental exertion required by their joint existence." A manifest absurdity, however, for it involves the proposition that it is harder work to spend money than to earn it. And then he continues: "If she undertakes any additional position it seldom relieves her from this, but only prevents her from *performing it properly*. The care which she is herself disabled from taking of the children of the household nobody else takes; those of

the children who do not die grow up as best they can." And again: "The superintendence of a household, even when not in other respects laborious, is extremely onerous to the thoughts ; it requires incessant vigilance, an eye from which no detail escapes, and presents questions for consideration and solution, foreseen and unforeseen, at every hour of the day, from which the person responsible for them can hardly ever shake herself free."

Well, if the domestic sphere is so exacting for those who perform its duties conscientiously—as Mill admitted, and nobody wishes to deny—and if the normal woman is still to find her vocation in the domestic sphere, and not to compete with man in his, it is plain that she will still have enough to do to justify her economic existence in the home as now. But if women in the mass and even in considerable numbers are to invade man's sphere, it can only be at the expense not merely of her own domesticity, but of the home and family itself.

And what compensation did Mill think she would give to human society for her entrance into this other sphere? Well, apart from many general assumptions of her capacity, which placed her as the potential equal of man in every concern of government and service except where physical considerations (which he ignored) might enter, he confined himself to showing that a widening of woman's educational training and experience might make her a better mate for her husband. And before proceeding further, it is very well worth while to pause at Mill's claim that the higher education of women would tend to increase domestic happiness.

Higher Education and Married Happiness.

In the last few pages of the book he dwells on the subject with much eloquence and even feeling. He asserts that "the totally different bringing up of the two sexes makes it next to an impossibility to form a

well-assorted union"—as to which one can only say that that neighbour to an impossibility is achieved over and over again, in countless thousands of unions in each generation. And he says:

“What marriage may be in the case of two persons of cultivated faculties, identical in opinions and purposes, between whom there exists that best kind of equality, similarity of powers and capacities with reciprocal superiority in them—so that each can enjoy the luxury of looking up to the other, and can have alternatively the pleasure of leading and of being led in the path of development—I will not attempt to describe. To those who can conceive it, there is no need; to those who cannot, it would appear the dream of an enthusiast.”

Now, short of assenting to such an optimistic ideal as that of two persons, of cultivated or uncultivated faculties, ever being found to be “identical in opinion and purposes,” any Anti-suffragist might adopt that passage, word for word, by the mere alteration of “similarity” to “dissimilarity” (of “powers and capacities”) to describe the conjugal felicity which is to be attained by men and women “behaving as such,” to put the matter concisely. But Mill held that such felicity was next to impossible of attainment so long as women did not receive the higher education for which he pleaded: “While women are brought up as they are, a man and woman will but rarely find in one another real agreement of tastes and wishes as to daily life.”

Well, practically the whole organisation and provision of higher education for women has taken place since Mill wrote those words that helped, more than anything else, to stimulate the provision of higher education. The opening of examinations, the foundations of colleges, the participation in university training, as well as the entire system of State-provided elementary education for girls as well as for boys, have come about since Mill advocated these things as the best guarantee for domestic felicity. Girton was opening its doors before the reviewers had ceased reviewing “The Subjection of Women”—for books in those days were not reviewed on the day of publication and

forgotten by the end of the week. Newnham followed two years later, and in the same year the Board Schools arose in the land. Since then the older universities have, in varying measure, extended their advantages to women, and the throwing open by London University of all its degrees to women precluded the admission of woman to all newly opened universities, on terms of perfect equality with men so far as degrees are concerned. Broadly speaking, we may say that whereas when Mill wrote no generation of women had grown up which had received a university education, since Mill wrote two generations of middle-class women have received the benefit of the higher education he urged as a condition precedent to domestic felicity.

The Enthusiast's Dream.

And do we find that they have realised "the dream of an enthusiast," even in that partial measure which he would now say was all that could be expected from a partial realisation (as he might contend it still only was) of his recipe for conjugal bliss? So far have we receded in daylight reality, from the dream of the enthusiast that the completion of fifty years of the higher education of women synchronises with marriage having fallen into such disrepute that higher educated women, as we shall see, are now asking us to revise our attitude to marriage altogether, and the demand for an easier escape from marriage has become an integral part of the woman's movement.

It is no part of my business to say that the higher education of women and domestic felicity are incompatible, but it is part of my business to point out that the one has not brought the other as Mill confidently predicted. It is a commonplace of observation that happy marriages, particularly among the class whose women have benefited by the higher education, are decreasing rather than increasing; and there is very good ground for connecting one phenomenon with the others. Indeed, a reviewer in *The Nation*, dealing with Miss

Ellen Key's book on "Love and Marriage" (a book in which something like free union and free disunion are advocated) specially dwells upon the influence of *education* in producing conjugal estrangements, because of the consequent increase of "sensibility," leading in turn *not* to Mill's "real agreement of tastes and wishes as to daily life," or identity of "opinions and purposes," but to their direct opposite: incompatibilities of tastes, wishes, and temperaments. And undoubtedly the development of higher education among women, so far from realising the dream of the enthusiast, has resulted in unsettling a good many more homes than it has rendered happy, to say nothing of the other effect of preventing a good many homes being started at all by the leading away of higher educated women from domestic life altogether.¹

¹ The incompatibility between higher education and a predilection, or even a qualification, for marriage might, however, be more courageously maintained. As these pages go through the press an article written by Miss Helen Hamilton appears in the *Freewoman* (p. 66), dealing with the manufacture of spinsters by college training. It is a most sympathetic and penetrating survey of the effect produced upon feminine character by higher education. "The College woman, speaking generally, for all her admirable qualities, seems destined almost inevitably to spinsterhood. . . . Women, therefore, preeminently fitted, one would imagine," (as Mill imagined) "for wife and motherhood are either averse to marriage, or are not to the masculine taste. . . . Whatever the explanation, the fact remains that a large and increasing number of intellectual women are destined to live the incomplete life of spinsters. . . . The higher education has failed, I think, in this respect. It has not succeeded in turning out, as a rule, women who combine the graces of learning with ordinary feminine attributes and charm. . . . I do not say that this is the confessed or even the desired *aim* of the higher education of women. I am sure it is not. Nevertheless it tends in many cases to produce the type described so often as an inferior imitation of a man. . . . Sometimes she is an intellectual or moral prig, or both. . . . not infrequently self-assertive and apt to over-rate her own importance in the scheme of things. Last, but by no means least, she tends to lose the desire to please and her sex-attraction." These passages of experience, when contrasted with the theories that Mill projected, should serve to make us distrust the theorist who deals in great human issues without taking into account the forces of human nature. I ought

And if Mill could go so far wrong in his theory that to raise the educational standard of women was all that was required to produce the domestic felicity and "real agreement of tastes and wishes as to daily life," have we any reason to suppose that his allied theory of the national well-being that would follow upon woman's exercise of political power was not also the dream of an enthusiast? As a matter of fact and experience, a high degree of academic education (which is not co-terminous with intelligence, by any means, especially that kind of intelligence required in a home) has very little to do with domestic happiness. That is not to say that an educated man should marry his cook—though even that rash experiment has realised actual success—but the love and esteem of man and wife, and their own natures, have more to do with the happiness of their marriage than the standard of education which either has attained if they belong more or less to the same social class. The dream of the enthusiast, indeed, is more likely to be realised by a recipe that would have made Mill's book all the better—a little less intellect and a good deal more human feeling.

The False Analogy.

Mill's work is extremely logical—but *he laid his own foundations*. He saw in the relations between man and woman only an extension and a survival of other forms of tyranny or the denial of liberty. Looking back upon history, he saw that all the struggles of men, except those made against Nature herself, were struggles of one class against the bondage in which another class held them—of slaves against their owners, of the feudal serf against the over-lord, of the pleb against the patrician, of nobles against kings, and of the common people against everybody but to say that it appears, not in any Anti-suffrage publication, but in an excellently written Feminist review, which appears to contrive to support the most advanced Feminism in combination with a commendable human tolerance of any views falling within the Feministic movement.

themselves. And in considering the political development of nations, he saw that it had depended and arisen from the emancipation of one class after another, and the overthrowing of one social dominion after another. And then, after looking at these things, he saw in the political unenfranchisement of women the old tyranny of class, and almost the last remaining subjection of one class to another, the last denial of political freedom: "By degrees the slavery of the male sex has been at length abolished, and that of the female sex has been gradually changed into a milder dependence. But this dependence . . . is the primitive state of slavery lasting on. . . . It has not lost the taint of its brutal origin."

And so we come to the false analogy which, I venture to think, entirely vitiates Mill's work. The analogy is between men and women (considered as masters and slaves) and the artificial divisions among mankind in which one class has been held in subjection by another. But Mill was too good a logician to overlook the weakness—a weakness at the very core of his argument. He recognised that it might be detected, then met it obliquely, and then proceeded on his way as though he had disposed of the objection that the analogy was false. And he performed this feat partly by the use he made of the word "natural," using it in two senses, and then confusing the whole point by the ambiguity of the word. He recognises the objection to the falseness of the analogy in these words, taken from the earliest pages of the book:

"Some will object that comparison cannot fairly be made between the government of the male sex and the forms of unjust power which I have adduced in illustration of it, since these are arbitrary, and the effect of mere usurpation, while it, on the contrary, is natural. But was there ever a domination which did not appear natural to those who possessed it?"

Now, that evades the point altogether. Recognising the weakness of the comparison, he meets it by what is really a juggle on the word "natural" (though the juggle comes out more clearly in a long passage in

continuance of that which I have quoted). But those who "object to the comparison" are still right, for the simple reason that whatever confusion other ages and peoples may have made in the use of the word "natural," the subjections of the classes he has instanced *are* "arbitrary" and *are* the effect of "mere usurpation," while "on the contrary" the division between men and women has no counterpart whatever in the artificial and arbitrary and *mutable* divisions between different classes of men. Mill does get round the objection to his comparison, but he gets round it by making a wide detour and ignoring the really natural division of the sexes, and by assuming the difference between them—and consequently the difference in their political status—to be no more "natural" than the division between the different classes of men was rightly or wrongly supposed by them to be. The difference between a peer and a commoner is *not* natural—the difference between a peer and a peeress *is* natural.

And so we can leave out of account altogether the question of whether dead and gone people were right or wrong in their idea of what was natural, or whether Mill himself used the term in an ambiguous or equivocal sense. But taking things as they are and as we ourselves interpret them, we say that whilst the gulf between serfs and seigneurs may have appeared "natural" to them whereas it was only customary, the gulf between men and women *is* natural in the true and proper sense of the word, as meaning that it belongs inherently to created beings. So it is not because we defend the subjection of women as "natural" that we can say his analogy is false, but we say that his analogy is false because it is made between two totally different entities—made, that is to say, between serfs and seigneurs, whose differences *are* arbitrary, and "natural" only in the loose sense of the word, and between men and women whose differences are not arbitrary at all, but are *natural* in the right and proper sense of the word.

And the false analogy is constantly appearing ; as, for instance, in the following passage : "The social subordination of women thus stands out an isolated fact in modern institutions. . . . This entire discrepancy between the social fact and all those which accompany it . . . should at least suffice to make this, like the choice between republicanism and royalty, a balanced question." But there is no choice between being a man and being a woman. Men and women, moreover, may exist in the same state, but republicanism and royalty cannot. Men and women together make the human race, but republicanism and royalty together make nothing—except, perhaps, the happy compromise of our own constitutional monarchy. But they are in their essence opposed things, and mutually exclusive, and men and women are complementary things, mutually interdependent.

The Uniqueness of the Human Sex.

But if you regard women as one class and men as another, each struggling against the other in the political and social world, with diverging interests and not common interests, rivals and competitors and equals in the struggle for life, interchangeable parts in the social mechanism, so that a woman may become a man just as easily as a monarchy can become a republic, or a serf become a freeman, then it is not a difficult task in logic to establish the case that there should be, in justice, the same precise and actual equality between the two "classes" of men and women as had been obtained in the other classes. But men and women are *not* classes—they are sexes, the two halves of a whole, and the logic that might be invincible when applied to class breaks down altogether when you apply it to sex, for there is no analogy possible between them. The relations between man and woman are not political or even social—they are personal in the highest degree and in a kind that exists in no other relation of life whatever. And no analogy

whatever is possible between men and women and serfs and seigneurs—to try to establish one is almost like saying that as the birds of the air are free, there should be no government on earth. And the idea, which he elsewhere expresses, that men and women are “broadly distinguished” because men and women have occupied the relations of seigneurs and serfs and patricians and plebeians, is as fantastic as any notion that ever proceeded from the human brain.

And the whole basis of his position, in respect of woman's status domestically or politically, rests entirely upon his first assumption that the human sex relationship is just like any other human relationship, either between classes or between individuals of the *same sex*; and that it can be compared to kingships and republics, sovereigns and subjects, conquerors and conquered, slaves and slave-owners. But the relationship between the human sexes is really unlike anything else on earth—it is useless to compare it either with the relationship of the classes into which men have divided themselves, or of the sexes into which Nature has divided the lower animals. For men and women are not the artificial products of class differentiation; and they are not merely the male and female of a certain animal species. They are naturally and arbitrarily created, as against the first and artificial distinction; and they are human—with all that that implies—against the other. In fact, no analogy in the wide universe is possible with man and woman. The human sex stands absolutely by itself, a thing apart, to be judged only by the circumstances surrounding it, and not by any analogy drawn from any source or phenomenon under the sun.

A Rival Analogy.

And it is just because Mill ignored that entirely fundamental fact of the uniqueness of the thing he compares with all sorts of unlike things, that his magnificent logic and his sometimes beautiful but often pedantic English and his wonderful learning, and his

passion for justice for justice's sake, are all useless. If you compare man with aristocracy, and woman with democracy, or reverse the process, you can do something of what Mill did—making the proper allowance for difference in talents. But you will have been arguing vainly. How can the relations between woman and man be adjusted on any lines or principles applicable to any other sphere or relation of life? How can a man argue from the relations between master and slave or king and subject what principle of conduct should govern his relations to a being who fills such a place in his life as woman does—to a being who fills the dreams of his youth, and inspires his manhood, and shares his bed, and at whose side he wishes to lie when both come to their eternal sleep?—or who, on the other hand, fills his life with the torments of the damned because she drinks like a fish and pawns his clothes?

We can see clearly enough why and where Mill's analogy was false if we only consider that he omitted one other and very important and human relationship, that of employer and employed. You cannot say that the relations of employer and employed are analogous to those of a government and the governed, or are to be decided by any analogies drawn from the political relations of men. For a totally different set of considerations arises when you are dealing with employers in relation to employed than when you are dealing with the relation of a man to the State, or of a slave to his owner. We should think it absurd to say that because a monarchical State was transformed by the people into a republic that therefore an industry should be transformed by the employed into a co-operative society. It might or might not be the right thing to do, but the republic and monarchy would have nothing to do with it. But if we can see the falseness of the analogy there, how much greater is the fallacy in deciding that the relations between man and woman should be guided by any evidence or experience drawn from the political warfare or changes

made in the artificially distinguished classes of men, or the industrial relations of employers and employed? It may be right or wrong that there should be no employed or employers at all—it may be right or wrong that the relations between employers and employed should be so transformed that the employed should become the employers, or something in between, and neither the one thing nor the other. But you cannot talk of man and woman in terms of government and people, class and class, slave and slave-owner, any more than of employer and employed. The employer may become an employee, and the employed employ him; or the serf may become a seigneur, or a plebeian become a patrician and buy his former patron up. But a woman cannot become a man, and the sexes cannot so transform themselves that they become neither the one thing nor the other—at any rate one sincerely hopes not, though we shall see later that something like that is going to be attempted. And so when analogies are drawn from any source whatever to fix the relations between man and woman, they must be false analogies; and any logic or noble pleading based upon a false analogy must lead to a false conclusion. And that is exactly what Mill's "Subjection of Women" leads to. It is vitiated at its very source by an imperfect and false notion of what men and women really are, and it is a masterpiece of self-delusion.

"Merely Physical Strength."

One final consideration will help us to realise how partially and incompletely Mill viewed the whole problem. Only once, I think, does he refer directly to man's physical superiority over woman. It may have been his caution, or it may have been his oversight that explained the omission, but in any case by refraining from dwelling upon it he avoided the difficulty that presented itself to him on his realising that though classes and forms of government have changed because of the transference of physical power

from one class to another, the transference of physical superiority from man to woman is, so far as we can humanly foresee, impossible. And that fact alone—all false analogies apart—places the relation of man and woman in a different category from any of the other relations he was considering.

Moreover, he avoided, and perhaps deliberately, paying any regard to the far-reaching effects produced by the physical differences between men and women with all their consequences near and remote. And the one direct reference he made to man's physical superiority as being a *distinguishing* fact of sex, is when he admitted that woman has produced no work "in philosophy, science, or art entitled to the first rank." He then says: "Let us take the only marked case of apparent inferiority of women to men, if we except the merely physical one of bodily strength." That word "merely," applied to a fundamental and unalterable fact of sex, reveals the theorist but almost conceals the thinker. And it is indeed an amazing thing that Mill apparently saw no application, purpose, or function in man's physical superiority over woman than for him to use it as a domestic tyrant. Of the part played by man's physical nature in relation to the State he either perceived nothing or suppressed the expression of what he saw because it would have destroyed the symmetry of his logic, and toppled the structure over.

Yet it was perhaps natural that a man who "was never a boy" and who never played a game should underestimate both the virtue and the consequences of physical strength. And it was perhaps natural that one whose closeted mind was inflamed with a sense of the beauty of abstract justice should see in man's physical superiority over woman no purpose beyond that of making him, *not the defender and protector of woman*, but her tyrant and bully.

CHAPTER XV.

Suffragist And Feminist.

VOTES AND WAGES—POLITICAL IMPOTENCE IN ECONOMICS—THE CASE SUMMARISED—CONTEMPT OF MAN—THE RACE AND THE INDIVIDUAL—THE POLITICAL WOMAN—THE MATERNAL SUFFRAGIST—THE LOGICAL SUFFRAGIST—WAGES FOR WIVES.



CHAPTER XV.

Suffragist And Feminist.

I HAVE heard Suffragists addressing factory girls on their grievances, and promising them that when they had the vote they would have no need to strike, for they would be able to compel their employers to pay them fair wages. And this possibility of the Vote being used as an instrument for economic advantage commended itself warmly to a lady of my acquaintance, until it was pointed out to her that domestic servants, too, would of course have the same power of dictating hours of labour and of rest and a minimum wage. And then, after making a not quite successful effort to accommodate herself to that shock, she told me that, of course, "the domestic sphere and the economic sphere were not the same thing." And, except for the specialists to be found on one side or the other of this controversy, that loose way of thinking and of expression is characteristic of the political-minded woman. She wants to be politically emancipated before she has emancipated herself from a hundred prejudices and imperfections of reasoning.

Votes and Wages.

But Suffragists who tell factory girls that votes will raise their wages are already giving evidence that when they come to enter political life they will be very apt at "the game." For, of course, votes cannot and do not raise anybody's wages. That is, as things are. In the time to come, perhaps, when the State is the chief employer, and each employee is a voter, then votes may have the directest possible relation to wages, and the fortunate electorate will be able to vote itself, by a judicious selection of its parliamentary representatives,

successive increases in salary and wages. But even that process would not be capable of being carried too far, for when it had gone far enough to point to the danger of national bankruptcy, through a defiance of economic law, it might be found necessary to deprive of votes all that portion of the electorate which stood in the happy position of being able to vote its own emoluments out of somebody else's pocket. For the State is not a miraculous body, intervening to catch manna from heaven and then showering it on the people. The State is merely a collection of mundane taxpayers—in other words, one's neighbours and fellows—and in other words again, the State is merely Somebody Else.

But that time is not yet, and as things are it is perfectly true to say that votes cannot and do not raise anybody's wages. Or, making the utmost allowance for the little truth there can be in the statement that votes can raise wages, we may say that the relation between votes and wages is so remote and that the two things are separated by so many other and more immediate factors, that in no honest use of language can it be said that there is any connection whatever between the two.

The reason is simple : wages depend upon advantage of bargaining, and that depends upon other considerations. But wages do not depend upon the wishes of voters, and not even upon the wishes of Parliament. To wish and to will are two different things, and even if Parliament ordered that the wages of all factory girls from this time henceforth should be doubled, the parliamentary edict would be just as invalid and impotent as though Parliament were to order, on the other hand, that every factory girl should buy two hats where now she buys one, to encourage the millinery trade or to develop ostrich farming in South Africa. Even Parliament is potent only so long as it can enforce its decrees, and the vote of a Bermondsey factory girl would no more raise her wages than my opinion that womanhood would be all the better if

it were uncursed by the factory system altogether, will lead to a single factory girl the less being employed.

Political Impotence in Economics.

If those who say that women's votes would raise women's wages could point to a single instance in which the voting power of men had raised men's wages, there might be something to answer. But, as it happens, not only can we defy them to prove the positive statement, but we can even go a long way towards proving the negative statement that what they say is not true, and to prove a negative is not usually possible. More women are employed in domestic pursuits than industrially, and a more scattered lot of workers cannot be imagined. Union, which is the chief direct factor in raising wages, is almost denied to them, and yet their wages and conditions of service have enormously improved, for the simple reason that more domestic servants are sought than there are girls who come forward to be engaged; and so a domestic servant holds a bargaining ground which gives her an advantage over her prospective employer, and her wages have been bettered solely because of that advantage, which has come to her by the development of female factory labour absorbing thousands of girls who would otherwise be her rivals and competitors in obtaining domestic places. That fact, of the improvement in the wages of domestic servants, proves that whether votes can influence wages or not, a rise in wages has no dependence upon a vote, as every organised industry amongst men has shewn. But we can go further than that.

Not only have workmen got votes, but they have got representatives in Parliament. And when, in the summer of 1911, dockers and railwaymen were striking all over the country, their representatives in Parliament had no more to do with the striking movement, as parliamentarians, than they had to do with that summer's heat wave. The movement swept by

the Labour Party altogether, leaving them to vindicate their existence and to hang on to the skirts of the outside movement, by making parliamentary speeches that did not affect the situation one way or the other and by being complimentarily called into the negotiations when the negotiations began. And the rise in wages since conceded by various railway companies had no more to do with the fact that their employees had votes than with the fact that they had hats. Indeed, the whole economic uprising of that summer showed very vividly not only the power *behind* the vote in one direction, but the power *apart* from the vote in another direction, that men possess. If any Suffragist had, in that turbulent week, told a docker that his vote would in time raise his wages, I fear the docker would have told the Suffragist to go quite out of sight.

And if it be true that even those men who have votes, and who not only have votes, but a whole Party in Parliament to look after their interests, got their rise in wages by disdaining parliamentary influence altogether, then I think we have proved the negative, so far as a negative can be proved, to the statement that votes can raise wages.

But we may carry the point even a little further yet—though, to be sure, it is all a very elementary matter, and worth attention only because Suffragist arguments must be answered. If votes can raise wages, through Parliament—and they cannot raise them through any other institution—then votes and parliamentary power ought to be able to lower wages. Now, the composition of Parliament since the rise of the modern industrial system has been, until the last few years exclusively, and during the last few years predominantly, drawn from the capitalistic class, those who pay wages and not those who receive them. The capitalistic and allied classes not only have had the votes of the people in their pockets, but they have controlled and still control every avenue of administration. Yet the rise in workers' wages which began in the fifties has

taken place entirely in defiance of that parliamentary power which, if votes can affect wages at all, would at least have kept them down. And so when we consider that not only have votes nothing to do with wages, but that only one woman in five is affected by the industrial system, and that they are affected only during a certain period of their lives, any argument that all women should have votes because of a remote possibility (amounting to something just more than nothing) that a few might raise their wages, disappears as a serious consideration altogether.

The Case Summarised.

And if that were all that had to be said about the economic position of women in regard to the vote, that is all I should have to say. But there is a good deal more to be said. Hitherto, we have been on the defensive, and now we come to the attack. The defence has carried us far, but that is because there is so much more in the question than either Suffragists or influential politicians seem to think. And perhaps, before continuing to consider the economic hopes of women, it will be as well briefly to summarise here those considerations against the Suffrage which I have urged. I have endeavoured to prove :

(1) That this vast question has escaped even the benefits of the party system ; that as the electorate is now only educated on big political issues by the warfare of party organisations, the electorate has practically received no education whatever upon this huge matter ; and that the intelligent discussion of it on any democratic scale has even yet to begin ; and further that if any Parliament were debarred from passing any prime measure over the heads of the people, it is a Parliament that owes its existence and all its moral justification to respect for the will of the people.

(2) That the idea that the question can be settled by a mere reference to the democratic principle can only be maintained if we attach more importance to the name of a thing than to its consequences ; and that the question of Votes for Women has more depth and importance than attaches merely to an increase of the number of people exercising the franchise.

(3) That there is no such thing as a natural right to a vote, and

that as Mill admitted : "The decision on this, as on any of the other social arrangements of mankind, depends on what an *enlightened* estimate of *tendencies and consequences* may show to be most advantageous to humanity in general, *without distinction of sex.*"

(4) That the physical differences between man and woman are far-reaching, and not superficial differences ; for they delimit the spheres of man and woman, and extend so far as to make woman unnecessary to the governing State, either to control or to uphold it ; and to rule her, as a necessity, out of the active community, except in regard to functions of a domestic character carried into the outer world outside the home.

(5) That "Votes for Women" would not merely mean women acting as voters, but permeating every department of the State, legislative and administrative.

(6) That a vote is not merely an opinion, but an opinion to be enforced ; and that the effective enforcement of the will of government depends absolutely upon the physical forces at the disposal of government, and those physical forces are male and not female.

(7) That the fact of a woman paying taxes gives her no right whatever to a vote ; and that the question of whether she shall have a vote at all is narrowed down to considering whether any reasons for giving her the vote as an act of grace are counterbalanced by reasons which make the concession inexpedient,

(8) That many more women object to the Suffrage being given than there are women who want it.

(9) That those who object to the vote being given are not influenced by any considerations of woman's "inferiority" whatever, except her inferiority as a political factor in the State ; that her superior moral qualities are seen at their best in the sphere which politics do not touch ; and that in the political sphere those qualities might even be dangerous, whilst she could only develop "public virtues" at the expense of domestic virtues vastly more important to the social well-being than the acquirement of a political aptitude which the State does not need in her.

(10) That the most perfectly developed State would be one not in which woman was a political and industrial factor just like man but one in which the domestic functions of women were developed to their highest pitch under the shelter of a social and political organisation which reduced domestic material cares and anxieties to a minimum.

(11) That if woman is to be regenerated, she must be born again in her own likeness ; that man and woman are the two halves of a whole ; that the whole is the human being, and that true biological development is to be secured not by woman imitating man, but perfecting herself.

(12) That the present exclusion of woman from political power imposes no injustice upon her, for man-made laws are just to her, and the laws are administered by men in a spirit not of bare sexless justice, but with a conscious and specific consideration of the difference between the sexes.

(13) That in general life man gives a preferential and deferential consideration to women in a spirit of chivalry which is the expression of a realised obligation from the strong to the weak ; but that in the effort to attain "equality" with man woman would have to surrender that consideration which is incompatible with the relations between equals.

(14) That men and women are not comparable with any divisions of classes or political institutions, or anything else in the whole world ; but that the human sex stands by itself, a unique thing defying any analogy whatever.

And now we have to come to closer quarters with the real aims and ambitions of the woman's movement, and it will not take so long to show that the movement will produce social anarchy and the degradation of woman as it has taken to show that "Votes for Women" has, at any rate, no millennial mission to accomplish.

Contempt of Man.

At the bottom of every revolution is an underlying idea that is not apprehended even by all the revolutionaries. And the underlying idea of the Woman Suffrage movement is a disrespect for man, amounting in the worst cases to real androphobia. Different causes may account for the sex-hatred in individual cases, and probably the process by which it has come about are not clear even to its victims. And there may be more than one general cause. For instance, the male "Futurists" hold that man has paid too much court to women, too much deference, and far too much attention for the good of his work. And there may be some truth in that view, but it is really only the recoil to decadence from an excessive amorousness. It may be true among the Latin races, but it is not true among the Teutonic and northern races. Still, it may be that that recoil to decadence among male

"Futurists" has now its counterpart in a decadence among women which is expressed by their disrespect of man, and there are marked tendencies of our present social system which are producing what can only be called temperamental neuters. Indeed, some Feminists like Mrs Gilman, frankly contend that men and women are over-sexed, and apparently desire to see a race of men and women who will take only a tepid and academic interest in each other; whilst of other Feminists it can only be said that they err in a contrary direction, though their mistake will lead to the same end, for when sexual matters are discussed *ad nauseam*, nausea naturally follows. Normal men and women are unaffected by these tendencies. Normal men love, and they work too, and they strive to keep the family in comfort, and they shudder at the thought of leaving those dependent upon them in want. And the normal woman looks upon her home as her little kingdom, looks up to her husband with respect, looks upon her children with affection, bears troubles as best she may, and is still happy if it can be said of her, "And her children rise up and call her blessed. Her husband also, and he praiseth her."

Now the difference between that type of woman and the woman who has no respect for man is almost as great as the difference between the two sexes—just as the difference between the decadent "Futurists" and the normal man is as great as the difference between normal man and woman. And the struggle now going on is not really whether woman shall have a vote or not so much as which type of womanhood shall prevail.

The Race and the Individual.

It is not only man, however, that is held in disesteem, it is, by a natural extension, the Home as well. Those to whom home life and the domestic virtues offer no attraction are quite right to rebel against a state of society which makes home life and the domestic

virtues of more account than the individual dislike of them. It is all, in fact, a struggle between the race-type and the revolting individual, between the woman who, blindly it may be, confirms her life to Nature's intentions, and the woman who, a rebel against her lot, wishes to consult absolutely her own individual interests, as she conceives them, and who joins a movement designed to impose her own view of woman and life upon all other women. The modern Suffragist of the advanced type is really the incarnation of Ibsen's heroine-type: the woman who "wants to live her own life," who insists that "her first duty is to herself," and to whom, consequently, nobody else owes any first duty either. Now there is really no reason to look with contempt upon women who take these views. A woman is perfectly entitled to take that view of woman's life, just as a man is entitled to live a life of selfish cynicism about women, whilst taking his pleasures where he can find them—though the bachelor is not, of course, by any means the counterpart of the extreme Suffragist. But the thing that concerns those men and women who have not arrived at that point of de-civilisation and of decadence from a normal social standard, is merely to take very good care indeed that we do not upset the whole social balance for the sake of gratifying those who reject our general social standard, so far as the relations between men and women are concerned—relations not involving them merely, but the Home as an institution of our very social life.

But you may say, "Oh, in a struggle between what the race demands and what the individual demands, the race is bound to win." So it will, and must, if we only let well alone, or try to improve it without making things worse. For naturally those women who are least attracted by husbands and babies will be least likely to have either, and therefore in the course of a generation or two the problem might largely solve itself, for any type which does not reproduce its kind naturally disappears.

But where the danger lies is that many right-meaning but undiscerning people may mistake the revolt of the abnormal woman as the signal of "progress," whereas it is really the signal for retrogression and the sign of decadence; and they may be led to give a sentimental assent to all those tendencies which, if they recognised them, they would most abhor. For I need hardly say that the effect of an assent to the ultimate aim of the woman's movement, and the cultivation of every activity by woman which would lead her away from the home, would in the long run have its effect on the race. Empires have fallen, and races may decay. And so it is no use relying on Nature to correct our mistakes—the thing to do is to look where we are going, and not to make the mistake to begin with.

The Political Woman.

But it will be said, and truly, that all Suffragists are not contemptuous of men, and England, home and duty. Far from it, but that is because they are assenting to what they do not understand. Women Suffragists constantly refer to the "noble mission of womanhood," its high maternal duties, and so forth; but what they don't apparently see is that the movement they are assisting is one which snaps its fingers at the whole mission of womanhood and the sacred maternal duties. The Suffragists who know where they are going and where they want to go do not care a fig for such old-fashioned twaddle, and I verily believe that if Madame Adelina Patti—even if the gods could send her back to her glorious prime—were to sing "Home, Sweet Home!" to a gathering of the most forward school of Suffragism, she would get hissed for her pains. And from their point of view they would be quite right. That infinitely beautiful ballad represents, in the essence of its sentiment, all that they stand out against: the dominion of home interests over the lives of women. But from the point of view of those who do not regard home interests and the family affections as

the survival of a barbaric age, lingering on into the beginning of a more enlightened time, there can be no compromise whatever with the other view of a woman's life. And, apparently, the real nature of "the cause," this antagonism between two types of woman, is imperfectly appreciated and perhaps not even understood, by the old guard of Suffragists, or even by the more modern type of Suffragist who has become one through associating with Liberal Federations and other political organisations.

In one way this eruption of political woman serves man very well right. As soon as the franchise was extended in 1884 the Conservatives said to themselves, "Now we shall have to talk another language altogether. Here is Hodge, poor devil, who hasn't got an idea in his head, and upon my word I shan't know how on earth to talk to him!" And then, upon their remembering Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire's kiss to the butcher at Westminster, the Primrose League was incubated and the Primrose Dame arose in the land, and tea-parties, cocoa-nut shies, and merry-go-rounds, came along to beguile Hodge into thinking that the Conservative cause was a primrose path. The Liberals, instead of leaving democracy—if it were worth its salt—to take the circuses for what they were worth, a jolly good afternoon's amusement, could not trust Hodge to vote straight if he were amused, although they said he was sufficiently instructed to have the vote; and so they called in the Woman Liberal to redress the balance of the Primrose Dame. And so it serves man right for his treason to his own sex in not trusting to its intelligence. For nothing happened. The Woman Liberal simply torpedoed the Primrose Dame in one constituency, and the Primrose Dame vanquished the Woman Liberal by sheer force of frocks in another constituency, and the balance of things was undisturbed. Parties gained nothing, but man has now to defend a position in which he made the first breach by inviting the arts of woman to supplement his own political influence and to charm, if

not to overcome, the intelligence of the enfranchised democracy.

The Maternal Suffragist.

But the type of women produced by these political agencies is generally a very maternal type. When they are speaking on this question their voices thrill with the righteous indignation of the British matron, and there is nothing vixenish or very subversive of man in their creed. They talk the same pointless sentimentalities as Mr Lloyd George, and dwell on the home, the children, the hearth, the pantry, in fact upon every truly blessed thing that the cause teaches them to neglect. Lady Selborne, for instance—at least I think it was she, but if not Lady Constance Lytton will correct me—said in a recent article that a woman's domestic life was enough to satisfy the ambitions and activities of any woman, and I quite agree. But why on earth a woman who takes that sane and maternal view of a woman's life should go crusading for a vote simply passes my comprehension. I cannot understand it even if there were no case against the vote at all, and if a woman merely considered how infinitesimally small that part of a woman's life is which is touched by the vote, and what an infinity of good work there is for a woman to do apart altogether from it.

Then there is another type of Suffragist who is as contemptuous of man as any of "the cause," but who unwisely jumbles up her contempt of man with a glorification of the domestic woman. Such a one, apparently, is Mrs Gilman, the leader of the American Suffragists, and if I quote that lady it is because the underlying idea of modern Suffragism, or rather of Feminism—for that is the distinction to be made—is the same in all countries. And Mrs Gilman has got hold of a new theory about us which, if it be acted upon, will one day lead to some emasculated worm turning and writing "The Subjection of Men."

So far as I can understand the theory from Mrs Gilman's interpretation of it, man began as a sort of

outsider in the human race, and the female was really "the race-type," but he managed to acquire his early empire over her solely by his physical force. But according to Mrs Gilman, whatever good man has managed to do, has been through his simple human quality, and whatever harm man has done has been due to his masculine nature; and woman has only gone wrong, apparently, when she has copied man—though why she should now wish to go wronger by copying him in everything is not clear. But man is told by Mrs Gilman that woman could manage the world infinitely better than he does, that she is the born administrator, and that man is a secondary and inferior product, and in her desire to exalt woman over man, Mrs Gilman takes a false step by saying :

"As a matter of sex, the female is more important. To be feminine, if one were nothing else, is a far more extensive and dignified office than to be masculine and nothing else."

The Logical Suffragist.

And you do not need to think long to see that that statement gives the case away for Suffragism altogether. For it means that to be a mother and do your duty properly takes up infinitely more time than to be a father, which is not only true, but the final truth about this matter. And these lapses, these admissions that give the case away, are constantly being made by the Suffragist who wants to have the best of both worlds—home and the world outside. The only Suffragist who occupies a really impregnable position, if you accept her point of view, is the Feminist who boldly takes her stand on the platforms that the fact that a woman has to bear children does not make her a maternal woman—especially if she does not want any—and that each sex must work out its own destiny in its own way. The Feminist view, in fact, is that man and woman are just as antagonistic and self-dependent as any other two beings who want to pursue the same ends by the same path in rivalry.

And so we come back again to the Economic Ques-

tion, for though I may seem to have wandered from the point all I have been saying is relevant, and you cannot cross a river till you come to the bridge.

To pursue that figure, the river in this case is that which divides woman's life from man, and the bridge by which woman will cross over into man's territory is the economic bridge—the bridge of Labour—and the bridge of Sighs!

I have now got to give some proof of what I have said of the tendencies of Feminism. And the only proof necessary at this stage is afforded by the economic programme that the woman's movement has engendered. For it so happens that, owing to the candour of several prominent Suffragists, the cat has been let out of the bag for even those to see who thought there was no cat in it—nothing but a blank ballot paper waiting to be used at the first opportunity. And just as one section has said: "Oh, do leave off talking about Home and Duty!" so another section, overlapping it, has said: "Oh, for goodness' sake leave off talking so much about the Vote until you have quite got into your minds what you are going to do with it!" And the advantage of this candour to me is that I have not got laboriously to prove what is admitted as to the ultimate aims of the movement, for they are proved in advance—not by admissions, however, but rather by bold and commendably candid statements.

The aim of Feminism is, of course, to make the wife independent of the husband, or woman of man. "And a very proper and desirable thing, too!" will the matronly Suffragist begin to say. Though not so confidently when she sees where this independence of the wife is going to land *her*. She is going to obtain her independence, of course, by Labour. Moreover, her labour is not to be in the home, but in the factory, the mill, the office, anywhere and everywhere that is open to man. And on the principle that a husband and a wife are a cat and a dog, and that home is a dull hole, stifling woman's noblest capacities, it is quite right that

she should go and earn her own living. Moreover, as man's equal all the way round, she *ought* to go and earn her living, and not be dependent upon one as weak as herself.

Wages for Wives.

Now a few amiable Suffragists have scented the danger of this line of economic independence of women. They see, though perhaps vaguely, that it will not only destroy the home but even that which we now agree to call womanhood. But the doctrine of the economic dependence of woman upon man, that is to say upon one declared to be only an equal, could not be burked. Mill himself said that for a wife to be above her husband's subjection she must have the power to earn her own living independently of the husband altogether. But the amiable and matronly Suffragists I have alluded to saw that the logical result of that "must" would be to throw every woman upon the labour market, and so they tried to square the theory with another kind of practice. What they did was to evolve the doctrine of "wages for wives."¹

Now, I am not going to waste much time on that perfectly silly idea. People who make proposals of that kind should really not be allowed the advantages of the printing press to spread them. Do people who talk of wages for wives think how much a working husband has, as *his* reward for his toil, when he has discharged his family obligations? Do they know that under those acres and acres of slate roofs of the

¹Lady Aberconway (Lady M'Laren) is one of the authors of this theory. I do no injustice to her logic in taking the following passage from her "Woman's Character of Rights and Liberties."

"It is misleading to talk of man as the breadwinner. *He is merely the man who earns money.* Now, gold and silver are of no use in supporting human life, and it is only when gold and silver are converted into nourishing food, when they are changed into warmth and clothing that they minister to life at all. Thus the task of converting *mere useless metal* into material to sustain living force is a very important one, and one which has been entirely overlooked in estimating the value of women's work."

London villa suburb live husbands and wives in a precarious comfort only because the husband allows his wife to spend his money, and because he is, as a good husband and a decent father, content to allow his wife to dole out to him (and he takes it like the man he is) just enough every week for his fare up to town, his sixpenny farinaceous lunch, his week's tobacco and a very occasional drink? A working man, I noticed, wrote to a London paper some months ago, when this notion was being promulgated, to point out that if he paid his wife a legal minimum wage, either he could not pay his rent or the children would have to go short of boots, for all that he had "left over by his missis" for himself was eighteenpence a week for tram fares. And to that sane protest from a sane man, some insane female replied, "Oh, well, the wife would advance you *her* money and pay for the children's boots herself, *and then they would know what came from her!*" I think I can hear the average housewife "dratting such nonsense" vigorously. The mother who cannot teach her children what they owe to her except by reminding them that she has paid for their boots ought not to be a mother at all.

I wonder whether the Wages for Wives people have thought the matter out just to see what the social effect would be. Married life is by no means such a bed of roses for the average man that he will be likely to go into it binding himself up to the eyes to a woman who takes legal wages like a housekeeper. If he is to pay a wife wages, he will want to be able to "sack" her when she can't earn them, just as his employer sacks him. No man binds himself to take a *servant* for life; he *will* bind himself to take a *wife*, who would throw her legal wages in his face if she were a worthy woman at all.

If he pays her wages, he will have a right to exact the service and the conditions of service that wages imply, and if he took a strict view of his relation as the employer, I don't really see why he should not insist that his wife took her meals in the kitchen along with

the other servants. And if the law is going to order a man to pay his wife wages, and rent, and clothes and food for his children (though I am afraid they would soon be found not coming into the scheme of things at all) he will want a servant or a wife whom he can dismiss at a reasonable month's notice when he is tired of the services she renders—whatever those services be. And a really scrupulous-minded employer might insist on paying his wife in the manner that so embarrassed the Baroness in de Maupassant's story "Le Signal." In short, if men have to pay wives wages, they will buy both their affections and their house-keeping attentions in the open and changing market. In other words, the average working man, at any rate, would "keep a woman." But it is indeed strange that people who talk of "maternal dignity" and the "sacred status of motherhood" should degrade the whole idea of wifeness to such an ignoble level.

Now, the Feminist does not try to have the best of both worlds by trying to combine domesticity and economic independence in that fashion. She boldly and more pleasantly says: If woman is to be independent, she shall take her independence *to* the home (unless she wants to keep it to herself entirely, which would be the more likely) and not acquire it there. And there might be something to be said for the social state of affairs which would be involved in such an arrangement if only it were certain that there would any longer be a home for her to take independence to. But as that is the very question we shall have to consider, we will approach it by first surveying, very cursorily and without the introduction of any statistics, woman's actual position economically, and how Suffragism and then Feminism wishes to affect it.



CHAPTER XVI.

“Liberty” And A New Slavery.

THE BIRD OF PASSAGE—MARRIED WOMEN'S LABOUR
— WOMAN'S HANDICAP — THE SURPLUS WOMAN —
WOMEN AND THE PROFESSIONS — INTERMITTENT
INDUSTRY — THE MATRON AT WORK — THE COUR-
AGEOUS FEMINIST — WHERE SUFFRAGIST AND FEM-
INIST MEET — TIME THE ENEMY — THE CHILDREN ?
— THE NEW SLAVERY.



CHAPTER XVI.

“Liberty” And A New Slavery.

AS things now are, a woman enters the industrial market not because she wishes to devote her life to industry, but because she can turn to some advantage those years that lie between the beginning of her womanhood and the uncertain day when she hopes to get married. That is the prime distinguishing fact between woman's industrial position and man's. As Mrs Billington Greig says, sex gives no advantage to man in his labour; nor does it affect his motives in entering or leaving the industrial market. He does not—or he does not as things are—look forward to the time when a woman will take him out of the factory or the office and work for him. He works primarily to satisfy his own needs, and when he feels that he can afford to keep a wife, he generally takes one. Not because he is an altruistic being, by any means, but because he is impelled by a force fortunately beyond votes and Acts of Parliament, and that is sex attraction. And as the desire born of that force can be gratified, as things now are, most satisfactorily by awakening the same desire in one who prefers home and the security of a husband to industrialism and a precarious economic independence, he finds little difficulty in getting a wife.

The Bird of Passage.

And that brings us to another difference between man and woman as a wage-earning being. A man ordinarily earns wages—at least, every married man does—to keep not only himself but his wife, and what children he may have, out of his earnings. A woman sometimes earns money to keep her husband (though,

very properly, the law shows how it regards that inversion of the natural order of things by protecting her earnings against her husband); and sometimes a widow earns money to keep her children, just as sometimes children earn money to keep their widowed mother. But there is a very large number of women and girls who do not earn their *living*, though they are occupied permanently and throughout the working day, but who earn enough to keep themselves in pocket-money or to pay some portion of the parental cost of keeping them; and the pocket-money girl has done more harm to the economic independence of men than she has done to hasten the day of the economic independence of women. But all young women who go out into the industrial or the commercial market go into it, not to devote their lives to it, but hoping to remain in it only until the man they are prepared to marry comes forward to relieve them of the burden of earning their own living, and turn them into what Feminism calls "a parasite"—that is a woman who goes marketing with her husband's wages. And sometimes the man never comes forward, or he is not accepted because he cannot offer everything the young woman would like to have, and then she grows up to join that margin of unabsorbed women without whom all this woman's question—political, social, and economic—would never have advanced beyond the harmless and speculative stage in which Mill and the blue-stockings left it. But most women lie apart from this problem, and get out of industry by marriage. The man, however, remains a worker in the industrial and professional field all his life, or until illness lays him aside, or until he has acquired a competency that enables him to give up work altogether. The contrast between his position and woman's position in the economic field is therefore very marked.

Married Women's Labour.

Let us take quinquennial periods in the ages of men and women employed industrially. Between the ages

of 20 and 25 one in three women (of that age) are employed in some capacity or other, whilst practically all men are employed. But after 25 the marriage market is already beginning to take women out of the industrial market; and so in the next five-yearly period between 25 and 30 years of age, only one in five women is industrially employed, whilst among men of the same age the proportion is as high as 98·3 per cent—that is to say, all men except rich men and invalids. Between the ages of 40 and 45, one woman in six is at work, whilst the percentage among men is 97·8—that is to say, whereas only 167 women in a thousand are in employment, 978 men in a thousand are in employment, between the ages of 40 and 45. And whilst the proportion of men employed continues very high to the end of the mortal chapter, when man can work no more, the proportion of women employed falls away.

Now the falling away in the middle period of woman's life would be much more marked but for the operation of one cause that breaks the fall, and that is, female married labour. As it is, woman is mainly a bird of passage in the labour market, entering it before she marries and leaving it in most cases when she gets married; but a large number of married women still go on working when they ought to be looking after their homes; and it is this condition of affairs that approximates to the Feminist ideal of woman's economic independence. Or, rather, the spectacle and conditions of married labour afford us the nearest approach in actual being to that state of affairs which will prevail, if the Feminist ideal be completely realised. The subject of female married labour is too vast to be entered upon here at all. Much has already been written upon it, and if Miss Frances Low, who has investigated the conditions of married labour from the standpoint of one who is not impressed by its beneficent effects, gave her investigations permanent form she would do good service in swelling the literature available on the subject.

Woman's Handicap.

Now, it is not necessary to say, and it would be unfair to say, that the Feminist Suffragists would be content to see the conditions of female labour, married or single, not ameliorated. They would aim at its amelioration, first by throwing open to women every industry, occupation, business, or profession, and then by trying to raise the rate of wages paid to them. But two obstacles would stand in their way.

The first, that three out of four male industrial workers are employed in those industries from which women would still be excluded until they had developed something like physical equality with men—that is, in the engineering, shipping, railway and general transport trades, the coal mining, building, iron-working, and the heavier trades generally. So that it would take some time at least before women had penetrated into even the greater part of man's industrial sphere. And as capitalists they would be at a disadvantage with men for many, many years to come—for quite long enough, in fact, for women to have confirmed themselves as hewers of wood and drawers of water in comparison with the capitalistic advantages possessed by men.

And the second obstacle is that woman is not as efficient a worker as man, even in those trades in which men have helped to protect women (and themselves) by insisting that on piecework women should be paid at the same rate as men. For even in the textile trades, where machinery does its marvellous work under human guidance, a man earns twenty-five per cent a week more than woman. But in other trades, where either more skill would be required of them than they are likely to exhibit for some time to come, or where more physical aptitude would be demanded than they would be likely to acquire for some time to come—in those trades equalisation of wages, if it could be brought about at all, would be likely to bring men's wages down rather than to send women's wages up, by a strong influx of women in the labour market making

labour cheaper. So that even though efforts were made to ameliorate the position of the woman worker, it does not follow that they would be successful by any means, and the probability is that for a sufficient space of time to allow for the physical efficiency of woman to be gained at the expense of disqualifying her for the one thing for which she is essential and supremely fitted, the conditions of female labour would remain substantially the same as now—subject to the probability that they would be much worse by reason of the greater competition brought about by all women trying to secure “economic independence.”

Miss Violet Markham, a prominent worker among the band of women who are opposing the Suffragists publicly, is one of the most courteous and effective controversialists to be found even on one side of the controversy; and the following passage taken from an article by her on “Votes and Wages” gives some idea of the social condition of affairs that lurks within the scheme of woman’s economic independence :

“‘If a Glasgow lad wearies of work he marries a Dundee lassie,’ runs the saying in Scotland. Dundee, the centre of the jute trade, must surely be an industrial paradise from the Suffragists’ point of view. Women form three-fifths of the persons employed; they, rather than the men, carry on the skilled processes of the trade, and the employment of married women takes place on a large scale. Here are women who cannot be taunted with the adjective ‘parasites’; and yet what do we find as the result of their labours? The highest infant mortality rate in Scotland: physical deterioration of so grave a character that the Chief Inspector of Factories in his report for 1900 spoke of a height of five feet and a weight of nine stone as being of common occurrence in men of twenty years and upwards; and general, social, and domestic conditions which are the despair of all who know them.”

And everyone who knows anything of the evils produced by women working industrially—as in the Staffordshire potteries—knows that home and children and all those attributes of woman which we now call “womanly virtues” go to the wall as soon as woman becomes an industrial worker and prolongs her industrialism into her married life.

Miss Markham, by the way, quotes a passage from Mrs Fawcett in the *Economic Journal* (1892) which is worth recalling, and I quote it on Miss Markham's authority without having referred to the original. Mrs Fawcett is cited as having written that one drawback to woman's hope of economic equality with man is that those industries in which she is engaged are not so wealth-producing as those in which man is now engaged. That is true; and if man insisted for the sake of retaining his own economic independence upon retaining those industries within his own control, he would hold woman at a permanent economic disadvantage, just as he would hold her for a long time to come by his capitalistic monopoly. And Mrs Fawcett is further cited: "The cry, 'the same wages for the same work,' is very plausible, but it is proved to be impossible of achievement when the economic conditions of the two sexes are so widely different." And as Mrs Fawcett is a political economist as well as a Suffragist that opinion is worth considering, for it means that if woman seeks her own independence, apart from man, she will, in the economic rivalry, be outdistanced, and therefore held in "subjection," though she had forfeited man's protection.

The Surplus Woman.

Now, there is a midway position between the Suffragist who wants "just to put her cross on a little bit of paper" and the Feminist who wants complete economic independence for her sex. That position is held by orthodox Suffragists who in the main adhere to Mill's position. His position was that the normal woman will choose a domestic career, and she will have her time taken up for part of her life with domestic concerns, but should be free to devote herself also to any profession or trade which she can pursue without hurt to her domestic duties. Further, the power to be independent of her husband should be hers all the time so that she may go out and earn her own living when she wants to do so. And further,

apart from married women, those women who do not choose marriage for their vocation should be allowed to order their lives just as though they were men. And that brings us to the question of the surplus woman, as she is called—the woman who either has not secured the protection of a husband or who disdains to try to secure either the husband or his protection.

It is pointed out that inasmuch as there are more women than men in the land, there is that problem staring us in the face. "What are you going to do with her?" it is asked. "You can't put her into a lethal chamber, you can't even argue her out of existence. What are you going to do with her?" Well, it is a fair question. But as far as the political side of the matter goes, there is no more reason why we should shift the whole basis of government because a certain number of women are doomed or destined more or less permanently to be non-domestic workers, than there is to abolish marriage, or to modify its monogamous basis (although Feminism even contemplates that solution) because the same women do not want to enter, or cannot enter, into the marriage state. And as to the economic problem, of the "surplus woman"—though that is not the most pleasing phrase by which to describe her, because some of the most estimable women alive are those whom man has missed for a mate—that problem, which cannot be shirked any more than the problem of the surplus man, is capable of solution without such a violent upheaval as would be involved by reducing *every other woman* to the same economic and "unprotected" position.

But as a matter of fact, the women concerned are (apart from the exceptional cases to be mentioned) settling the matter for themselves. There is no means of providing work for those women who have not got husbands to work for them, except by them taking their chance in the economic market, and that is what they are doing. No trade or industry is barred to them whatever except those barred by their physical

incapacity to perform the work according to the male standard. No woman would be accepted by the army or naval recruiting depôts, of course, but if she were to present herself for a job in an engineering works or on the railway, her services would be declined not because of her sex *per se*, but because the man to whom she presented herself for employment would not think he would get out of her the individual efficiency he required. But apart from such occupations as those for which she will have to go into training when the time comes, there is none into which a woman may not penetrate.

Woman and the Professions.

And as to the professions, she may become a doctor, an architect, an accountant, a journalist, or what she pleases. But two main professions are closed to her—the law and the church. As to the church, I have nothing to say. A Suffragist Bishop thinks that woman is “naturally” debarred from entering Holy Orders and qualifying for the Episcopal Bench, though why a woman should not be the Archbishop of Canterbury if she should be Lord Chancellor I do not see. The proscription in that case seems to be a good instance of a man being a Free Trader in everything but his own trade. But as to the profession of the law, that is another matter, and I suppose the governing motive in the exclusion of women from the legal profession is, at bottom, a trade union motive. Probably the General Council of the Bar, or the Benchers of the Inns of Court (like the Incorporated Law Society), in their last resort base their opposition to the admission of women upon the general law of self-preservation—a law against which women will frequently come into conflict when they are striving for economic independence. They know that the profession of the Bar is already lamentably over-stocked by men: they know that hundreds of barristers have to eke out a living in other walks of life; that there

are men who have been at the Bar for twenty years and have been maintaining wives and families in genteel poverty, hoping for the day that never comes; or who have never married, and so never absorbed one of the surplus women, simply because they could not earn enough to keep themselves. And probably they fear opening those gates to an influx of competition which would potentially double the pressure of the competition within an over-stocked profession. For even man is not always economically independent—he is often dependent on that chance and luck that never come.

But as to the problem of the surplus woman it may disappear or be solved by itself. In any case it will have to be tackled, like any other economic problem, but this is not the place to tackle it, from my point of view, which is that of regarding it as a wholly subordinate problem. I am far from saying here that if a woman wishes to become a lawyer she should not be allowed to become a lawyer, and take her chance of becoming a briefless barrister like a man; but I do say that unless she is to be regarded as an exceptional woman we are going off the track of progress altogether, and that a state of society which is based on the assumption that it is as normal for a woman as for a man to become a lawyer or a merchant or a mechanic is a state of society heading straight for racial decay; and that the Suffrage is just that implement which will both sanction and compel this abnormal standard, not alone in those women who want to be lawyers and merchants and mechanics, but in those who do not. And so the Anti-suffragist does not want to see the house burned down to secure roast pig, nor every woman, married or single, reduced to self-dependence because a certain number of women prefer to remain unmarried or to be independent. In any case, the problem of the surplus woman and the self-sufficing woman is a comparatively modern phenomenon, and may be righted without any violent social upheaval. But even if we assume—which we are not going to do—

that the maternal function is less important to the race than the ultimate proof that woman could in time rival man in every sphere of his activities, the fact remains that the maternal woman needs consideration at least as much as the non-maternal woman. Besides, some of the responsibility for the surplus women falls on themselves. The higher education is the sort of education, apparently, that swells the number of surplus women; and if women prefer to wear themselves out in academic competitive examinations until the maternal side of them becomes atrophied, and then find themselves educated above and beyond marriage altogether, some provision will no doubt have to be made for a new economic and human complication. But no general revolution is required to meet a partial case, and it may even be cured by a natural agency.

For there is an interesting theory that the predominance of one sex in the birth rate runs in cycles, and that male children may in another generation predominate largely over the female, though a greater wastage goes on among men, apart from the greater difficulty in rearing male children. But we need not wait for that style to come. It is here now. For to every 100 girl babies there are 106 boys born, but as fewer survive the figures become exactly reversed so as to give just that excess of adult women over men which constitutes the problem of the surplus woman. Well, if the science and womanhood of England would devote itself to the task of keeping the boy babies alive, the problem of the surplus woman would soon be so reduced that it would practically disappear, or would be represented almost entirely by those women who prefer to seek their economic and general independence in their own way. But I think that we shall see that the whole drift of the movement towards the economic independence of women is to increase enormously the surplus woman—or at least, the number of women who would lack husbands.

And now we can return to the mid-way position

held by Suffragists concerning woman's economic independence, and pursue the subject to a finish.

Intermittent Industry.

There are those who do not aim at all that the Feminist aims at, but who would be content if women could have the "power" of being independent, and take up their work at will, fitfully to please themselves, or entirely if they preferred it and they did not find marriage a success. Well, that is really an impracticable plan, unless a woman is prepared to let her trade or business or profession take the first place in her life, and her home the second place. And it is worth while recalling that even the efforts of man so to legislate as to prevent woman from injuring the race, by keeping too long at her work before the birth of a child and returning to her work too soon afterwards, have been opposed by Suffragists on the ground of an unwarrantable interference with a woman's liberty to earn her own living.

But the notion that a woman can take to a profession or trade intermittently—drop it for a year or two after she is married, and pick it up again when she has a mind to—is not a practical thing. Trades and professions do not stand still waiting for the return at some vague time or other of the person who has left the one or broken the connections of the other. Besides it would really be a dreadful world in which wives and mothers were always holding the threat of desertion from one camp to the other over the head of the home, or over the head of one who was no longer the head of the home. Indeed, one may imagine much domestic anxiety caused by such a possible state of affairs, the husband being awakened in the dead of night by his wife suddenly exclaiming: "John, I want to be a plumber!" and being perplexed to know whether his spouse was merely expressing one of those desires and longings that come whimsically to women under certain happy conditions, or whether the wish for economic independence were tardily and suddenly asserting itself in her.

The Matron at Work.

Mill thought "there ought to be nothing to prevent faculties exceptionally adapted to any other pursuit from obeying their vocation notwithstanding marriage, due provision being made for supplying otherwise any falling short, which might become inevitable, in her full performance of the ordinary functions of a mistress of a family." But perhaps the best answer to that is that the cases would be *so* exceptional that one need not worry about them. Matrons are not usually seized with a desire to take up another walk in life, and the woman who has taken it up before her marriage does in practice wish to leave it, and is glad to leave it, when she marries because she feels that she is taking up a duty which demands her whole attention and care. Even when a musical comedy actress gets married the papers unnecessarily tell those who are not interested in the personal matter that "my husband and I have not yet decided whether I shall return to the stage." But at any rate such cases must be exceptional, as things now are, when the normal sphere of woman is the domestic sphere.

But it is made not to be an exceptional case by the strange theory which supposes that married women have nothing much to do. According to this theory, a woman is kept in a state of partial idleness in her earlier years as a married woman, but when her children are growing up she longs for some avenue of activity outside the home. Well, I have never yet met the woman with such superabundant vitality that after she has brought up a family and approached her critical age she wanted to begin to start to earn her living. Everybody ought to know that when a woman has brought up a family she wants a little rest and peace. She almost looks forward to the time (although she will be older by so many years) when she will have "got the children off her hands," as she puts it, in order that she may get the rest and peace; and though she may devote herself to a wider social life when she is freed from her most pressing pre-occupations,

her desire for a fresh avenue of activity does not take the form of desiring to resume any work that her marriage ended, still less to take up poker-work on a commercial scale.

And all these attempts to mix up the domestic woman with the independent woman really fail. They involve such an element of fitfulness and spasm as to be worthless for any settled policy. Broadly we may say that the woman who is married and finds it her vocation also finds that it gives her quite enough to do ; and the task before society is to see rather that the economic conditions which at present do not give her husband the security that is necessary for maintaining the home shall be changed so as to secure it—though the very movement which aims at woman's economic independence makes that security, of course, increasingly difficult of attainment.

But the really logical position occupied by the Suffragists is that taken by the Feminist section, who say that woman must be trained to support herself, to be self-sufficing and to remain so if need be. Mrs Billington Greig pithily puts that position in these words: "The new demands and the old condition cannot subsist together. But the abolition of the old condition must place upon the very women who make the new demands a heavy burden—the burden of personal economic independence." And at this point we must link up the question of woman's economic independence with the claim for her political freedom, and show that one involves the other, and where the two together will take us.

The Courageous Feminist.

A challenge having been issued to Suffragists, "Are you willing to give up, for the political advantage of a vote, the social, legal and economic advantage of your status as wives?" an official in one of the Suffragist societies, deputed to answer that sort of question in the public press, replies, "Certainly, certainly—we are not only willing but *eager* to give up man's protection and

to seek our own independence." Well, so long as we know who "we" are and are not, that is all right. The "eager" lady speaks not for herself only, but for her allied Suffragists, but whether they speak for woman in the mass is a very different question. All the same it is just as well that women in the mass should begin to realise that "we" is intended to stand for them too; so that those "parasitical" women who are now quite content to wait for their husbands' weekly wages or their husbands' monthly salaries must begin to understand that in assenting to their political enfranchisement they are assenting also to the doctrine that they shall have nothing whatever to do with their husbands' wages or salaries. As Mrs Billington Greig says: "The married woman accepts the position legally established. . . . In law she has the best of the bargain; there is no law obliging her to work; there is a very clear law entitling her to maintenance." But that privileged position she must, on political enfranchisement, exchange for one of self-dependence, which is what "independence" really means. That is the logical outcome of woman's political enfranchisement, and it is an advantage to have to deal with logical and clear-sighted Feminists who accept the logical conclusion. The Suffragist who almost baffles attack is the Suffragist who extols maternity and the home when it suits her, but puts all that sort of thing in the background when it doesn't; and who wants to retain all the advantages of the legal status of a wife, but to acquire the right to make laws in general. But the Feminist who says, "We wish to take no advantage whatever of femininity," at least occupies a logical and courageous position. And she saves one the trouble of trying to prove the obvious and what must be inevitable by coming out boldly to meet the inevitable and taking the position of woman's self-dependence into both hands. She reduces to contemptible significance the intelligence of those Suffragists who say (to quote an actual instance): "It is rating our intelligence very low to tell us that if a woman once

in four or five years walks down to a polling place and puts a cross before a man's name, she will seriously endanger her best womanly characteristics." And the Feminist reduces to the same level those parliamentary advocates who think that that pedestrian exercise is all that is involved in the woman's "movement."

Where Suffragist and Feminist Meet.

But the logical Feminist and the logical Suffragist reach the same end by different routes. The logical Suffragist says, "Certainly, we are eager to give up our privileges in exchange for fresh responsibilities and entire self-dependence; and for the sake of the vote we will gladly surrender all our advantages." But the Feminist says, "The vote is only a vehicle. Where we want to get to, whether we ride or walk, is the complete independence of woman from man, though that means complete political independence just as much as economical self-dependence." And so the two streams converge at this point of woman's self-sufficiency and self-dependence, and we may pause to look around us, having got that far. Nay, we need go little further at all.

Now, if a woman is to have no legal claim upon a man for maintenance, whether she be married or not, she will, of course, have to maintain herself. Whether she be a Feminist, a logical Suffragist, or merely a Suffragist who does not quite know what she wants, or whether she be what I think is the ordinary and average woman—a woman who desires nothing better than home and husband to love and cherish her in return for her own love and care—whatever sort of woman she may be, her first care will have to be to secure an entire independence of man. How she will secure it, or whether she can secure it at all, or whether she will be happy when she has got it, we will not for the moment consider, but pause to look into one feature of woman's position that Suffragists of all grades ignore, though it has very much to do with

the general question of woman's whole position. And that is the question of the relative age-marriageability of the two sexes.

Time the Enemy.

We are to suppose a world, or a country, in which youths and girls, men and women, are all equally intent on one thing: earning a living, the woman no more relying on man's protection than the man relying upon hers. Now, a woman cannot secure economic independence except by giving herself to work with the same single eye and determination that a man gives to his work. A man does not work with one eye on his trade, and another on the chance of a woman turning up who will take him from his work and keep him; and when a woman is equally dependent on her work, and has no security for her maintenance beyond it, she will have to devote herself to her trade or profession with just the same sense of its permanent necessity as a man has.

But complete economic independence is not acquired in the twinkling of an eye. It has to be worked for. A working man who wishes to rise in his trade serves a serious apprenticeship to it, and hopes one day to be foreman or overseer, and struggles to rise above the dead level. And a professional man knows that he must devote the twenties to acquiring that experience which the thirties will consolidate, so that he may attain that security of position in his profession which, if it has not come in the forties, will not come at all. And a tradesman has the same long row to hoe if he wishes "to build up a business." And in the effort to attain economic independence a woman will have to abandon herself to the pursuit of her trade or profession with just the same assiduity and concentration and patience. But a woman's effective marriageable period is much shorter than a man's. He may not marry till he is thirty-three or four—that is, till he sees his economic independence fairly assured—and still be a young husband, but a woman who does not marry

till she is thirty-three or four has let her best years slip by, and is marrying at a bad age from most points of view. But she cannot afford, in a state of society which gives women no legal security for man's protection, to give up her trade or profession within a few years after she has entered upon it, and just when she is beginning to feel the ground a little firm under her feet.

And when the wear and tear of a keen competitive struggle was playing havoc with her looks she would, so far as her attractiveness to man is concerned, have lost ground that nothing could make up. For one may still suppose that the last thing in human nature to change would be the attraction of sex to sex—when that fails, humankind will fail too. And a man will not be attracted to a woman because she has a good head for figures, or is a competent electric mechanic or the head of the export department of a large bacon-curing house. Unless *he* is to become the "parasite" (which is one possible development of the situation) he would be attracted by the appeal that a woman makes to a man as a physically desirable creature. But the effect of her striving for economic independence would be to carry her on in industry to the time when her sex-attractiveness was a diminishing quantity, and by the time she had attained her economic independence she might find that she would have to rely upon it not during the twenties and thirties, but during the forties and the fifties and the sixties too. And this vital consideration is ignored both by Suffragists and Feminists, whose new era is apparently to be a golden age when all women will be young and entering blithely into ready-made and lucrative positions, with none old, and solitary, and living in penurious industrial drudgery. The inequalities between the sexes, in short, extend even to the attraction that one sex has for the other; for a man's effective period as a suitor (if I may still so put it) is a good deal longer than a woman's effective period as the wooed (if that word is not most incongruously old-

fashioned in such a connection). And, to interrupt the argument for a moment, one other effect would be seen. The average age at which a woman marries now is 25, but she would not have acquired her economic independence at twenty-five, or even at thirty, so that she would reduce by so many years the conceptive period of her married life ; and this would tell its own tale upon an already diminishing birth-rate.¹

The Children ?

But it would be expected that many women, especially those in whom the maternal instinct or the affections were strong, would seek the first opportunity of escaping from the independence which had been "secured" for the sex. But they could escape from it only by marriage (or other alliance) with a man who was not bound to support her. Nevertheless, she would take the risk, and she would become wife or companion under an uncertain tenure. For, with women economically independent, and man relieved of his legal obligations to woman altogether, I do not quite see where marriage, as now we know it, would "come in." Nor do I see where the children would be considered in such a scheme of domestic duality, and no doubt the proverb would arise, "Children will happen in the worst regulated families." But in a population of indiscriminate male and female industrialism children would indeed be looked upon as encumbrances. For the mere fact of giving birth to them, apart from any question of looking after them maternally, would be a serious interruption of the business or labour of a woman who had no security for her livelihood but her own exertions. Indeed, if we try to imagine what would be the impossible position of

¹The Registrar-General's report for 1909 says : "There are sufficient grounds for stating that during the past thirty years approximately 14 per cent of the decline in the birth-rate (based upon the proportion of births to the female population aged 15 to 45 years) is due to the decrease in the proportion of married women in the feminine population of conceptive ages."

man as a worker if he were under the same liability and disability in regard to the birth of children, we can begin to estimate how children would be regarded by a generation of women who had to earn their own living absolutely. And it might then dawn upon men and women that the maintenance and the protection that the male gives to the female, were not a badge and sign of her inferiority, and did not give her the status of a parasite, but that they were the only conditions under which a race could be properly reared. It might then be seen also that home and family life depended upon man shouldering the burden and responsibility for it. It might then be realised that the only thing that made life tolerable to the woman who wished to have children was that assurance for her comfort and well-being, the minimum of which is assured to her by the law and the maximum of which is limited only by her husband's resources.

But there would be one further complication of the relations between the sexes. In their effort to secure economic independence for themselves, women would double the available labour in the country, and so enormously increase the competition which, as things are, make life a struggle for most men. It is hardly likely that enough new trades would be opened up by and for women to absorb them or any considerable proportion of them. They would therefore compete with man in those trades already existing. Well, the Wages Fund theory is exploded, but the amount of wages paid does still depend upon the amount of employment available. But if men are sharing the industrial world with women, they must also share with women the wages paid by the industrial world. And so what is now earned by men alone would be reduced by the extra amount secured by women to provide for their economic independence, making the proper allowance for those women already in employment now.¹

¹ "The fierce struggle of women to wrest the labour field from men, to undersell their own husbands, fathers, and brothers, is a monstrous perversion alike of industrial, domestic, and moral

The New Slavery.

Under such an industrial warfare I do not see many men proposing marriage ; but I do see many men and women putting their wages together to effect a little economy in the cost of living. In short, I see a lot of temporary arrangements, a good deal of "setting up house together," but very few marriages (what would marriage have to offer?) and maternity avoided like the plague.

But if it be said, "Oh, things wouldn't be so bad as that. People would still get married in the old way," then nothing would have happened beyond the fact that woman had surrendered the chiefest security of wife and mother (at the bidding, too, of many ladies who are neither), and that support and maintenance which Feminists call "parasitism." And if it be said, "So that is all that man's devotion to woman means! He will not give his support voluntarily, but only if the law compels him!" then the answer is that as things are the man does it voluntarily, for that obligation is quite present to his mind when he gets married, and after he is married he does his duty as a matter of course without thinking of the law ; but the law is there only to give the woman a final guarantee of his support and maintenance, and it is man-made law. But a state of society in which woman was man's industrial rival and a husband had no liability to maintain a wife, is obviously a state of society not favourable to the cultivation of any domestic duty. Woman would thus find out that she

order. A society which continues to develop in this line is lost."
—Mr Frederic Harrison, "*Realities and Ideals.*"

The following letter, which appeared in *The Standard* of November 21, 1911, is also to the point, as showing what happens already :—

"Sir,—If women obtained the vote, would they go in for high wages, or would they still undersell their services as they do in the drug trade? I can point to hundreds who accept 5s. or 10s. a week, and keep out of employment a male assistant who would earn 35s. a week.

H. C. BEDDING,
Hon. Sec. Chemists' Assistants'
Reform Union."

had obtained her political freedom at the expense of industrial servitude, and her economic independence at the expense of a degradation in her status as a woman. She would find that she had clutched at a fresh liberty and grasped a new slavery. For man would still want the companionship of woman, and he would obtain it from the vantage point of a superior financial position, in the free and open market of sex equality.

But there is one other prospect that would be opened up by woman's effort to obtain economic independence. Seeing where it was leading to, finding himself subjected to a competition which simply maimed but did not kill his own economic independence, wearied of a state of society in which two individual units grew where one home had grown before, man might suddenly decide to turn the whole crazy fabric over by a power that has nothing to do with votes for women and rates or taxes, but which illustrates the whole difference between to wish and to will, between "Votes for Women" and the minds of men.

And now we can endeavour to get to the root of the matter. So far, we have considered merely the consequences accepted by orthodox Suffragism, but now it remains to be seen to what land of promise the Feminists, who are the advance guard of Suffragism, are beckoning their sisters.



CHAPTER XVII

The Great Experiment.

FEMINIST INDIVIDUALISM—THE FALLACY OF EQUALITY—THE DUALITY OF MANKIND—SUFFRAGISM AND FEMINISM — THE FEMINIST CREED — THE “KEPT” WIFE—THE VAST READJUSTMENT—BACK TO NATURE — THE HIGHER LIFE OF THE LOWER ANIMALS — “WOMANLINESS MUST GO” — “MARRIAGE MUST GO” — THE PRICE OF EQUALITY — THE HUMANIST AS PROPHET—THE GREAT EXPERIMENT—RESPICE FINEM.



CHAPTER XVII.

The Great Experiment.

THE root area of a tree corresponds generally to its branches—whatever is in the air has its justification in the earth. And Feminism, a tree of sudden growth which spreads its branches so wide as to cast a new shadow on the earth, has its roots running so widely in the soil of revolutionary thought that it is impossible, at the present stage of its growth, to trace out its roots to their ultimate fibrils or radicles. But we can at least try to get down to the main-root, and see of what it consists, and make some little exploration of its circumference.

For now, putting behind us all the minor points of this controversy, and even making the effort to be no longer controversial—putting in the background all such questions as the relation of votes to taxes, the abstract “right” to a vote, the question of the fairness or the unfairness of man-made laws, and all those arguments which methodically advance from each side to confront each other on the purely political issue—leaving behind us for good all that obligatory but somewhat tiresome logic-chopping in which even Anti-suffragists are doomed to engage ever since the curse of Mill descended on this matter and he started the dreary game by evolving two abstractions from his inner consciousness which he called man and woman—even putting behind us the Vote as achieved, let us now look at what it will achieve in turn: let us confront and examine the great experiment of Feminism which is to follow upon the rash adventure of Suffragism.

The soil in which the tree of Suffragist-Feminism grows is that of a revolutionary conception of the

real functions and inter-relations of men and women. Anti-suffragists think and maintain that it is a revolutionary conception. Feminists and Suffragists contend that it is merely an evolutionary conception—a development from a state and a conception imperfect and unjust to one that is perfect and free and in itself progressive. And that claim, and not such truly pettifogging considerations as the constitutional implication of a dog licence, is the claim by which Suffragism stands to make itself good, or to fail because it cannot make itself good.

Feminist Individualism.

Now the Suffragist and Feminist both assume that men and women are not complementary beings, together making the whole human being, with separate spheres of work and function, distinct secondary sexual characteristics, and different moral, mental and temperamental attributes. They agree that there are certain primary differences of physical structure and function, which alone constitute sex, but assert that those differences are small and unimportant in relation to the general similarity; and that the sexual nature of a woman is neither more nor less pronounced than that of a man; and that therefore they are equal beings, in a common humanity, except in so far as one function is concerned, the function of reproduction, which (they contend) is in any case, an optional function, and should not be allowed to interfere with the individualism of the individual unless she wishes it. But here we immediately come to one sexual difference which no Feminist philosophy can argue away; for whether a man does or not exercise that function has no effect whatever upon his capacities; but if a woman exercises that function it lays her under a disability wherein she is immediately at a disadvantage in relation to man, as an efficient worker, to say nothing of her further disabilities as a rival of man in all the wide sphere of life if she also, once a mother, extends her maternal care and attention to a young being

which should draw its sustenance from her, and which, taking longer to reach maturity than the young of any other animal, needs what the young of no other animal needs. And if woman does *not* exercise that function then her individualism is indulged at the expense of racial necessity. But the Feminist denies that that racial necessity ought to influence in the least degree the freedom of the individual, and so we are forced either to admit that the individual is more important than the race or to assert that in any conflict between individualism and the race the individual will succumb. For, considered from the standpoint of the race, the individual can only "live her own life" once. If she wishes to live her own life to the exclusion of any consideration for the life that must either renew itself or die, then Nature takes her at her own word. She lives her own life—and that is the end of her.

The Fallacy of Equality.

But the Humanist (for the term Anti-suffragist becomes nonsensically inadequate to confront the term "Feminist" in a revolutionary matter of which the demand for the Suffrage is rather the letter than the spirit) the Humanist believes that in such a conception of woman lies the whole heresy of Suffragism and Feminism alike. And he traces that heresy to a false estimate of equality. He argues that where there is *difference* in duality there cannot be equality, for things that differ cannot be equal; the Feminist then sees in his denial of "equality" an implication of superiority; to which he replies that the human sexes cannot be distinguished by *terms* of inferiority or superiority, but that they are distinguished by the *fact* of *difference*. And he believes that the false importance that the Feminist attributes to equality is merely her protest against the imagined implication of inferiority.

So he points out that the idea of equality being a natural or even desirable condition is negatived by all creation, for all creation attests inequality, and seems to take the most extraordinary pains to express in-

equality and diversity in all her works. The stars in the firmament differ not alone in their distance from us, but in their own magnitude ; sun, planets and satellites all show inequality. Trees and plants of the same species, even when they grow side by side in the same soil, and are warmed by the same sun, are unequal. Even the two familiar peas in a pod would reveal great differences if looked at minutely, and one egg is really unlike another. And amongst men and women inequality, not only of degree but of nature, is simply rampant. No man ever born was exactly like another, and the inequalities of strength, of intellect, and of temperament even in the children of the same parents are amongst the most fascinating facts of life. Equality, therefore, not only seems undesirable but unattainable. So far from it being a divine ordinance that we should all be similar and equal, the divinity that shaped our ends hewed us all differently. And the Humanist believes that the equality which Feminism first proclaims and then wishes to strive for is not only undesirable but impossible—that what it proclaims is contrary to the truth and what it strives for is unattainable, even though disaster may follow from the very striving.

And so, seeing that diversity and difference and not equality and sameness, are found in all created things, in women as amongst themselves and in men as amongst themselves, he sees no discordance or want of harmony in the conception of woman and man as the different halves of the human whole. And though the word "equality" is imported into the matter by the Suffragist and Feminist, the Humanist admits that the two halves of a whole must indeed be "equal," but that the sum total of each respective equal is to be computed by the calculations of different capacities ; and he argues that to speak of men and women as equals in the sense in which one pound of lead is equal to another pound of lead is nonsense ; but that to speak of them as equals in the total sum of human existence, as Art and Science may be said to be equal in the total sum of human achievement, or as the moral

sense and the intellectual sense may be said to be of equal value and importance in the human nature, is the right way of looking at both the difference and the "equality" of man and woman.

The Duality of Mankind.

And, beyond this natural justification for difference, he points to the actual difference of function between the dynamic and creative masculine force and the conserving feminine force, to establish completely the duality of mankind in something more than physical attributes and physical functions. And he argues that though men and women in the beginning may have been distinguished only by these physical differences, the whole trend and effect of civilisation has been to emphasise these differences, and that the biological evolution of man and woman conforms to the general biological law of development by differentiation of function; and that by the differences more than by the likenesses between the two is the race best perpetuated. And if it is then said that, according to such a proposition, the race would be best served if all men were muscular giants and all women physically degenerate, then he would reply that it is just as possible to get too far from Nature as it is to deprive ourselves of the advantages of civilised progress by going back to it. But all these contentions of the Humanist are contemptuously brushed aside by the Feminist, who still sees in them, not the desire of man to keep the balance of sex-differentiation even, in the interests of his race, but the arrogance and egotism of man holding woman in perpetual subjection. And so we can come to consider more closely how Feminism desires to secure her freedom, and then what humanity may be like when an unduly self-conscious and rebellious Feminism has attempted to destroy the basis of civilised humanity, and to start the road backward to that natural state from which civilisation has been either the escape (as the Humanist thinks), or the disastrous departure, as the Feminist apparently thinks,

Suffragism and Feminism.

And at this point, before coming to the full development of Feminism, it will be necessary again to establish the connection between Suffragism and Feminism and to show that the first-named is the parent of the last. The connection is sufficiently clear, even viewed as a logical process, for Feminism is only Suffragism carrying to its logical end the equalitarian theory on which the Suffragist bases her logical claim to the vote. The connection is certainly that of logical if not of spiritual development. The stages by which the matronly and political Suffragist merges into the modern militant Suffragist, until the advanced Feminist is reached, are much the same as those by which the Liberal is merged into the Radical and the Radical into the Socialist. Even the differences are very much on the same plane, for whilst the Liberal may still take his stand on Individualism, his humanitarian impulses draw him towards Socialism, which repudiates Individualism altogether; and though the matronly Suffragist takes her stand on the importance of the maternal function and the privileged position that marriage and maternity give to wives, the logical extension of her creed of perfect equality with man carries her into the company of those who see in the wife's privileged position the whole explanation of woman's subjection, and who point out that the equality at which the woman's movement aims must modify marriage, home, and the function of maternity profoundly. The connection between Suffragist and Feminist is also established by the fact that Feminists are all Suffragists, and they call themselves the advance guard of the army, which is exactly what they are. But the point of ascertainable continuity between the most rudimentary Suffragism and the most advanced Feminism is seen at the demand for the economic independence of woman, which is common to all Suffragists and all Feminists alike, although in the matronly Suffragist it takes the shape of a demand for "wages for wives."

The Feminist Creed.

The best statement I have yet seen of Feminism, put in a paragraph and not distributed throughout a volume, is contained in the foreword of the first issue of a new Feminist paper, *The Freewoman*, an ably written paper which expresses the spirit of Feminism, leaving to other organs of the cause the political letter of the two "isms." When I say "the best statement," I do not mean the best only for my purpose of showing the aims and spirit of Feminism, but the statement which best expresses the philosophic and intellectual basis of Feminism. It is true that even this statement is obscured by the heresy of man's contempt for woman, and perhaps it is impossible ever to convince any Feminist or Suffragist that if the present age allows, and future ages vindicate, their revolution, the Humanists who oppose it have merely been the unprogressive and unenlightened opponents of evolution and not the perverse and contemptuous opponents of woman. But the writer is good enough to allow that "the opponents of Freewomen are not actuated by spleen or by stupidity but by dread."

"This dread is founded upon ages of experience with a being who, however well loved, has been known to be an inferior, and who has accepted all the conditions of inferiors. Women, women's intelligence, and women's judgments have always been regarded with more or less secret contempt; and when woman now speaks of 'equality,' all the natural contempt which a higher order feels for a lower when it presumes, bursts out into the open. This contempt rests upon quite honest and sound instinct . . . (and) it is for would-be Freewomen to realise that for them this contempt is the healthiest thing in the world, and that those who express it honestly feel it; that those opponents have argued quite soundly that women have allowed themselves to be used, ever since there has been any record of them; and that if women had had higher uses of their own they would not have foregone them."

That is not quite "the best statement" of the attitude of man to woman, but, at anyrate, it furnishes the enlightenment we need as to the motive force of Feminism. We do not accept its truth, but as it is impossible to understand Feminism without knowing

what its motive force is, we ought to be grateful for that enlightenment. It gives, not the point of view of Feminism so much as its feeling—the core of Feminism. If it were a point of view, it could be argued with; but it is both above and below argument—above because a feeling sincerely held must be respected even if, being below argument, it cannot be uprooted.

The next passage shows that Feminism, at any rate, has progressed in other things than a programme beyond elementary Suffragism. It drops the contention that woman was at one time man's "glorious equal," and abandons the argument that Abesses and Boadicea and "the woman voters of Lyme Regis" prove that man has been a wanton usurper :

"How women have fallen into this position is a moot point. It is yet to be decided whether they ever did 'fall'—the reason why is yet to be assigned. It is quite beside the point to say women were 'crushed' down. If they were not 'down' in themselves—*i.e.*, weaker in mind—no equal force could have crushed them 'down' . . . Those who are 'down' are inferior. When change takes place in the thing itself—*i.e.*, when it becomes equal or superior—by the nature of its own being it rises. So woman, if ever equal, must have sunk on the ground of inferiority. Whether this inferiority arose through the disabilities arising out of child-bearing, or whether it arose through women giving up the game—*i.e.*, bartering themselves for the sake of the protection of men—it is difficult to say. Probably in her desire for love continued, for protection, for keeping the man near her, she stepped into the rôle of making herself useful to him, serving *him*, giving him always more love and more, more service and more, until on the one hand, she acquired the complete 'servant' mind, and he, on the other hand, gained the realisation that her 'usefulness' was of greater moment to him than the fret of the tie which retained him."

As I am not at this point concerned with combatting the doctrine of Feminism, but with giving some exposition of it, I have nothing to say controversially of that passage except to remark that in that conception of the process of woman's enslavement, nothing is attributed to the call or claim of maternity. The child is merely the mechanical impediment to her freedom—it is not maternal care but bare parturition

that enchained her, and it is not her child, but "him," for whom she has spent herself. Maternal nurture is left entirely out of the question of "duty" or "self-sacrifice," or the process of her domestic subjection and sex-segregation. And then we get the concrete statement of the aim of Feminism :

"At the present time, when man's adventurous and experimental mind has made much of her 'usefulness' useless, woman finds herself cut off from her importantly useful sphere, equipped with the mind of a servant, and with the reputation of one. She thus finds herself in a position in which she is compelled to do one of two things—*i.e.*, remain solely as the man's protected female, or making what may or *may not be a successful effort*, endeavour to take her place as a master."

And so Feminism looks to see women "recognised as 'masters' among other 'masters,' considering their sex just as much an incidental concern as men consider theirs." I do not think the philosophy of Feminism can be more succinctly put. It does not so much overleap the barriers of sex as knock them down; though in the leap over the human gestatory period and the years of maternal nurture, a bigger leap is taken in philosophic aim than can be accomplished by physiological fact, if maternity is still to observe its function.

The "Kept" Wife.

The bondwomen are then told whence their subordination arises :

"It can only be accounted for upon an understanding of the stupefying influence of security with irresponsibility. And this is what 'protection' always means for the 'protected' . . . By securing the protection of a man, a woman rids herself of the responsibility of earning her own living."

And so the abolition of the "protected" position of women is the first item in the programme of Feminism—the first article of its foundation, the corner-stone of the temple.

But Feminism also has "a new morality," and from one exposition of it we learn that "to the door of the 'legitimate mother' and to the 'protection' accorded

her by popular sentiment, is to be traced the responsibility for most of the social ills from which we suffer." And so "when women come to regard the 'kept' condition of 'the mother' and 'wife' with as much horror as they regard the other 'kept' woman, and sometimes children, whom they themselves keep religiously outside the pale, or as they would regard a male lover who sold his 'love' for board and lodgings, then—and never until—shall we have arrived at the point when Feminism will be sure of itself and its future." Then this writer, expounding a new morality, goes on "to brush away a few of the sentimental cobwebs which men and women have spun to hide the naked hideousness of the kept wife and mother from themselves":—

"Motherhood, when legitimate, has had an emphasis laid upon its sanctity which nothing in its commonplace nature in any way justifies . . . The truth of the matter is, that it falls upon the human female to reproduce her kind in exactly the same way as it falls upon the females throughout creation to reproduce theirs . . . As we are now living in a period which tends by general consent to apotheosise the 'mother,' it is necessary to say that while we believe profoundly in the 'momentousness' of motherhood, we have no belief in its sacro-sanctity."

Having destroyed the sentimental cobwebs, the new moralist then returns to the logical consequences of the iniquity of "kept" wives. Admitting that children more intimately appertain to a woman than to a man; asserting that "the mother's decree as to their existence should precede the co-operation of the father"; assigning to him the subsidiary status of an "after-thought"; and hinting that biological evolution may even contrive to make him unnecessary altogether, the Feminist proceeds:

"Considering therefore that children . . . belong more to the woman than the man, considering, too, that not only does she need them more, but as a rule wants them more than the man, the parental situation begins to present elements of humour when the woman proceeds to fasten upon the man, in return for the children she has borne him, the obligations from that time to the end of her days of full financial responsibility not only for the children's existence but for her own also."

We are a long way here from wages for wives and

the marital-maternal logical view that the "bounds of freedom" for man should be made narrower yet. Indeed, the Feminist positively recognises, in her clear view of the logic of Suffragism and Feminism, that there is such a thing as the man's side to the case. The writer points out that in the old days a man got something for his money—his "pride of possession" was flattered by having mother and daughters dependent on him and respectful to him. But now, with revolting and independent daughters and Suffragist wives, there is nothing left for him at all—for this Feminist, like all others, and like John Stuart Mill himself, rules out of consideration the satisfaction and motive of "self-sacrifice" and "duty" that a man also shows in providing for a family. But now,

"As the troupe of females refuse any further to flatter the man's pride by continued subjection, the man gets nothing for his pains. Therefore, if the kept wives do not in the future offer to deal with their own situation in their own way, it seems certain that men will be compelled, by economic forces stronger than their traditional sense of superior protectiveness, to make the situation clear to the women. It is, or ought to be, a matter of pride in the decent quality of human nature itself that the initial strivings in such a vast readjustment should have come from women themselves."

The Vast Readjustment.

And how will the vast readjustment work out? The Feminist is resigned to the present generation of motherly souls living on and then dying out, but they will

"Bring up their daughters in a new knowledge of conditions . . . All women will be taught that throughout their lives they will be regarded as responsible for their own upkeep, and will take precautions accordingly. For any children for whose bringing into the world they assume the responsibility, they will regard themselves as being finally financially responsible . . . The only special financial recognition which they can expect on account of any disabilities which are theirs through the mothering of the race would be that of a State insurance which would re-imburse wages lost during the time when actual child-bearing prevented the exchanging of services in the professional and commercial world for monetary return."

There we have the economic independence of woman carried to its destined end. How the maternal Suffragist will square the logical result of her logical claim for a vote with her desire for mere maternal protection, and wages for wives, I do not know. Lady Aberconway (Lady M'Laren) has devised a Woman's Charter, the conjugal clauses of which are based upon the assumption that man is an illimitable ass, for the patience with which he may be expected to bear his marital burdens, and that he must cheerfully assent to fresh chains being riveted upon him, by what the logical Suffragist calls "the 'kept' wife," in the name of the glory of motherhood, although the glory of fatherhood is represented as consisting of merely the duty to work and provide. Lady Aberconway also included the unmarried mother in her Charter: "I propose the following law: That if it be proved that any man has been informed of the expected birth of his illegitimate child he should be held responsible for any injury either to the mother or to the child arising out of his neglect to provide necessaries." It is fortunate that, though Lady M'Laren can "propose" laws, she is not yet in a position to carry them out; for a preliminary point to be legally proved in such a matter is the paternity of the child, seeing that cases have been known, not infrequently, for a woman, embarrassed by choice, to assign the paternity of her child to the wrong man. But Feminism, logical and strict from first to last, insists that if woman is to enjoy the "glory of motherhood," she must be prepared, as the very sign of her freedom and equality, to pay her price for it. Man, after all, has not been responsible for the pains of her travail. He protects and keeps her in order to lessen them, and therein associates himself with the glory of her motherhood and feels some glory of fatherhood; but equality cannot mean dependence, and the Feminist scouts the notion of wages for wives as an ignoble evasion of the equality of woman with man:

"Freewomen . . . do not wish by law or by any other means to fasten their responsibilities on others. They themselves are

prepared to shoulder their own. They bear no grudge and claim no exemption because of the greater burdens which Nature has made theirs . . . The Freewoman's position is to see that she shall be in a position to bear children if she wants them without soliciting maintenance from any man, whoever he may be . . . The well-intentioned people, now utterly bewildered, are pretending that housework has fallen into disrepute because it is unpaid work, forgetting that the best of the worker's work is always unpaid. In their bewilderment they have gone so far as to set up a monstrous theory that wives should become the paid employees of their husbands! . . . The entire theory is ludicrous in its absurdity. No! Personal relations *between equals* must be entered into on *terms of equality* . . . Feminism would hold that it is neither desirable nor necessary for women, when they are mothers, to leave their chosen money-earning work for any length of time."

And what of the bare industrial fact of this vast "readjustment"?

"We are compelled to recognise that we are not asking for a small thing, but a thing, which in the sphere of industrial labour alone will necessitate as much reorganisation as would be forced upon men by a successful German invasion and occupation. Another eight million women seeking paid labour in the land! That is not a small thing!"

It is not, indeed. But so statistically stated, the economic independence of woman will enable us to realise what will become of the economic independence of man, and how "the equalisation of wages" will have to be made by bringing down men's wages to the level which will prevail when every woman is "economically independent" as the price of votes for women; and we may further contemplate the effect upon the marriage-rate of a system of dual industrialism which will make bachelordom, and not the ability to maintain a wife and family, the standard of man's economic independence. But, as we shall see, Feminism does not contemplate the continuation, as a necessary thing, of the institution of marriage. With the abolition of the "kept wife" will be involved a corresponding abolition of marriage as we now know it.

Back to Nature.

But before entering upon the new morality of Femin

ism, a few words are desirable to insist upon one very clear point that emerges from the "economic independence" of woman. That doctrine precludes altogether the maternal function of suckling a child. In the new order, all the children will be artificially fed. The mother will be asserting her economic independence up to the last moment; she will become a mother; and then go back to her economic independence as soon as, for her own sake, she prudently can. For there is no suggestion that women will be employed only in such capacities as will enable them to take their children to their work, and feed them every two or three hours as the "kept" wife and mother does, now that she is in a state of "subjection" to man and stays at home. Well, of the eugenics of this matter, and of the effect upon the race, and of whether a hand-reared race will be worth rearing, I am not competent to speak with any scientific knowledge; but I believe that it is held by both enlightened and unenlightened people that at least for the first year of a child's life its mother must be content to occupy the humiliating state of "subjection" to its bodily needs—that is if the mother have any sense of the "glory of motherhood," and the child's life be of any consequence. But in any case it is sufficient for my purpose to point out that Suffragism and Feminism, with their common doctrine of "equality," whence is quarried the cornerstone of economic independence in their new temple of freedom, does contemplate the abolition of all maternal nurture.

And that brings us to a curious fact—the fact being that, so far as this maternal function is concerned, Suffragism and Feminism are retrogressive, not to the extent of carrying us "back to Nature," but to the extent of carrying us back to something lower than the animals.

The Higher Life of the Lower Animals.

It is a common contention of Suffragists and Femin-

ists that the state of dependence of woman upon man has no sanction whatever from the glorious example set to us by the lower animals. As Mrs Gilman, the leading American Feminist, says :

“ We are the only animal species in which the female depends on the male for food—the only animal species in which the sex-relation is also an economic relation. It is commonly assumed that this condition also obtains among other animals, but such is *not the case.*”

It is not indeed. As is well known, and as, indeed, Mrs Gilman points out, “ the common cat ” feeds herself and her young. The tom-cat has no responsibility whatever in the matter. He does not have to maintain a wife in a state of subjection and parasitism. He is gloriously and promiscuously free in his amours, sows his wild oats nocturnally, and keeps the benefits of his own economic independence entirely to himself, and degrades no she-cat whatever to a parasitical or servile level. And so it appears that the human male and female—man and woman—have grievously departed from the exalted example set to them by tom-cats. “ We are the only animal species in which the female depends on the male for food.” We are also the only human animal—the only civilised being.

But Suffragist-Feminism is not apparently content to go back to the glorious example of the lower animals. A woman is a mammal, just like “ the common cat.” And mammals are the highest order of vertebrate animals—mammals were a very definite advance in the scale of creation ; and the most prominent characteristics of the mammalia are expressed in the maternal sacrifice of the placental union of mother and child, in the prolonged period of gestation, and in the lacteal nutrition after birth—a sacrifice which was one of the most important factors in the progress of mammals. If, therefore, the human species is to progress to the higher life of the tom-cat and the she-cat, we ought to stop there and be content, and not press onward. For the she-cat at least suckles her young, even though she is economically independent. But emancipated woman

seeks, in her march forward under the inspiration of the high example of the lower animals, to abandon that non-individualistic function. The mammal arises from a subordination of individualism to the maintenance of the species. The emancipated "mamma," however, will distinguish herself from all other mammals, even "the common cat," by "living her own life," and scorning maternal sacrifice.

"Womanliness Must Go."

It is obvious that such a rash and revolutionary adjustment in the economic status and maternal philosophy of woman would in any case, even if left to itself, evolve a readjustment of morality equally rash and revolutionary. But it is already provided for in the actual "constructive" programme of Suffragist-Feminism. As Miss Cicely Hamilton remarks, "Authority to her (woman) is a broken reed." And she asks: "What, we wonder, would be the immediate result if the day of independence and freedom from old restrictions were to dawn suddenly and at once? Would it be to produce, at first and for a time, a rapid growth amongst all classes of women of that indifference to, and *almost scorn* of, marriage which is so marked a characteristic of the—alas, small—class who can support themselves in comfort by work which is congenial to them?" ("Marriage is a Trade," p. 28.) Noting, in passing, the admission again made of what effect the higher education of women is having upon their attitude towards marriage, the answer to that question is that Feminism is already answering it. As another Feminist writes: "There is no fruit in the garden of knowledge it is not our determination to eat." The fruit, meanwhile, is ripening. For there is no aspect of sexual relations that Feminism does not freely discuss. All reticence is honestly and courageously disdained and the healthy phraseology of the Bible is resurrected freely. So far as I know there is no corner of sexual phenomena or relationships that Feminism has not already explored, and the articles of its new morality

are being definitely shaped. The "kept" wife must go, and learn to look after her own children as well as herself. The unwedded mother must be restored to the position of dignity which the marriage institution has robbed her of. "Womanliness," of course, must go to the wall.

"It is this womanliness which the sentimental desire to retain, by forbidding women the vote; it is this womanliness which the non-sentimental desire to disperse by giving them the vote . . . It is true that professional advocates of Women's Suffrage do not say this: they loudly assure us the contrary; but that is partly because they have a sentimentalist following which they dare not lose and partly because, being mostly women, they have not grasped the Sex War." (*The Freewoman*, vol. I, p. 66.)

And all the barred gates before "all the walks of life" must go too: "From the judge's seat to the legislator's chair; from the statesman's closet to the merchant's office," says another Feminist, "from the chemist's laboratory to the astronomer's tower, there is no post or form of toil for which it is not our intention to attempt to fit ourselves; and there is no closed door we do not intend to force open." In fact, as Miss Olive Schreiner says in *Woman and Labour*, "we take all labour for our province." It will be noted, however, that in all the catalogues of the walks of life which women are now to tread, no mention is ever made of the humbler walks of life. It is assumed that woman will occupy the judge's seat, but not that she will be a "man in possession"—which I believe is the lowest grade of the legal profession. They will be in the merchant's office, and up the astronomer's tower; but they contemplate with no ecstasy, and not at all, being in the dustman's cart or down the bottom of a coal pit. Certain unpleasant corners of the whole province of labour will still remain the undisputed prerogative of man.

"Marriage Must Go."

And I think we must say, too, that marriage must go. For, in the confusion of many voices (or rather, of written words) the prevailing note is that the institu-

tion of marriage has survived its day. And so we have Feminists writing on "the fullest legal, social, and moral recognition of polygamy," as the surest way of obtaining justice for the unmarried mother and her child. Elsewhere we find a reasoned justification for the decline of marriage in order to bring about that decrease in the population which will check or mitigate the inevitable effect of men's wages coming down as the result of woman's world-wide competition with him. And, mingled with many views springing from the aims of social amelioration, are views concerning the ethics of the relation of the sexes from which a few examples must suffice, in each case the expression of lady "Feminists":

"Indissoluble monogamy embodied as a legal enactment, or postulated as a strict morality affecting people of every range of temperament, is an unjustifiable tyranny, psychologically monstrous and morally dangerous. It is blunderingly stupid and reacts immorally, producing deceit, sensuality, vice, promiscuity, prostitution, spinsterdom, and a grossly unfair monopoly.

"In short, the law has no appropriate business in the affairs of the human spirit. Its operations lie in cruder spheres. It might as well legislate upon the tints of the clouds and the curves of the sea waves. It can bid passion neither come nor go.

"I certainly hope that Freewomen will not enter upon the sex relationship for any such conscious purpose as that of reproduction; but rather that they will find in the passionate love between man and woman, even if that be transient, the only sanction for sex-intimacy—a very different thing from the seeking of such a sanction in the habit created and the opportunity afforded by marriage. . . . To the healthy human being there is something repugnant in long continued sexual relationship with a person with whom one is in the constant and often jarring intimacy of daily life. . . . Of course, the shortening of the period of each woman's sexual subordination to the father of her child will leave a great surplus of male sex-activity, which will have to be taken into account; and it is under the pressure of this surplus that the whole edifice of life-marriage will at last fall to the ground.

"The general attitude of the masses to motherhood is the outcome of looking at the subject from three points of view, the mystic, the moral and the domestic. . . . If she is not licensed by a certificate known as 'lines,' to produce children, motherhood is the disgraceful result of giving way to the low passion of sex. . . . No mother is (regarded as being) worthy the name unless

she is anxious to act as nursemaid, sempstress, and washer-woman to her infant . . . It is not sufficient that she should want to render such services now and again when the mysterious power called love makes her delightfully and unreasonably jealous of anyone who does anything for her child ; no, such services must be persistently given in the name of duty, and, compared with them, any work of a literary or artistic nature for which we may have a gift, is menial. As a Freewoman I . . . can find nothing but cant and humbug in the idealistic prejudices which are responsible for the general attitude of men and women to this vital subject . . . I speak as a Freewoman, not as a libertine. But emphatically I repeat that sterilisation is a higher human achievement than reproduction. Coming now to the moral aspect of motherhood, to argue that a woman is fulfilling her highest purpose in producing a child provided she is married, but that she disgraces herself, her sex, her family and society if she becomes a mother without being married, is illogical to a degree . . . For many reasons it may be argued that it is expedient for a couple to marry when they have children, but none of them worth discussion has an ethical basis . . . I seem to hear a chorus of such retorts as 'Motherhood develops everything that is best in a woman.' Does it? Have you never seen a brilliantly clever woman go all to pieces when she becomes a mother? No, I am not referring to a physical collapse but to the ruin of intellect and individuality. Have you, men and women, never lost a most enthusiastic woman by reason of her getting married and being a mother? . . . Under present conditions women are expected to be domestic servants to their children, and even when they are capable of higher work they frequently become so from a mistaken sense of duty. It would be much better for their children's sake and for the sake of the world at large, if they would leave the nursemaidry to women who are not equipped for any higher sort of work, and devote themselves to looking more closely after the children's education . . . Under present conditions, I fail utterly to find any explanation to justify the attitude of the masses to motherhood and the superior airs of mothers themselves." (*The Freewoman*, vol. I, p. 153 *et seq.*)

Now, if it had been possible to present a summary of the aims of Feminism without citing any examples of its aim to revolutionise our morality, I would gladly have done so ; but the new morality is so indissolubly linked with the economic independence and freedom of women (as that in turn is linked indissolubly with the principle of sex-equality which is at the root of Suffragism) that it was impossible for me to make so vital an omission. But the last thing in the world

I wish to do is to create a prejudice against the political aims of Feminism by giving some examples of its new morality—if that had been my object I should not have stopped at the quotations given.

The Price of Equality.

To discount such prejudice, therefore, it is only right to say that such views and opinions as I have quoted, which perhaps may not find an echo in the bosom of the matronly Suffragist, are not irresponsibly expressed, or expressed with any cowardly shame or furtiveness. They are the open, and, I am sure, the perfectly honest opinions, mostly of educated women who sign their own names, and they write "not as libertines but as freewomen." They are in advance of the Suffragist—but only in intellectual perception, for they see before them the road that Feminism must tread, of which the first step is the vote. And they have an honest and hearty contempt for the Suffragist who will not see before the end of her nose, and who imagines that the "emancipation" of women begins and ends with the vote and with what the vote may legislatively accomplish. They incarnate the spirit of "emancipation," whilst the Suffragist fumbles with the letter of it.

And yet the only difference between the Suffragist and the Feminist is that the Suffragist is the Feminist minus her intellectual honesty and perception. The difference between the most elementary Suffragist and the most revolutionary Feminist is not in principle, but in degree—with this further difference, that the elementary Suffragist does not grasp the full meaning of her principle and the Feminist does. The Feminist has the courage of her logic—the Suffragist bases her claim upon logic, and then shirks its consequences, and wishes to effect the meanest compromise between her purely personal jealousy of man's political "superiority" and her desire for the domestic security which his labour affords. All the Feminist does is "to think the thing out." Taking seriously all that is implied in the

sex-equality principle of Suffragism ; taking seriously Mill's remedy for wifely subjection—the vote, and the “power” of economic independence ; taking seriously the “eager” claim of Suffragists for their “economic independence,” the Feminist merely shows what its consequences are, and accepts them. With equality claimed as a right, equality must be accepted as a burden. When women rebel at their economic subjection to men, they must earn their own independence by their own effort. If they do not rebel, but accept the “subjection,” then their claim for political equality becomes ridiculous, for then the husband represents them as much by his vote as by his labour. If they do rebel, then they must face the music. The matronly and political Suffragist, however, wishes to have the best of both worlds, and so she earns alike the contempt of Humanist and Feminist ; for the Feminist regards her as a halting coward in the cause of Feminism, and the Humanist looks upon her as a traitress to the cause of humanity. But midway between the two stands the vast army of Suffragism, steadily moving with the army's own advance, pressing first for the vote and then content to say “*Che sara, sara.*” And all the time the Feminist says : “Unless our talk of equality is all cant and merely still the degrading cajolery of our femininity, then we must take up the burden of life just as men do, and prove our equality or perish in the attempt. With the assertion of equality must go the last of our privileges” —or, as Mrs Billington Greig puts it, “The old condition and the new demands cannot subsist together.” And Mrs Billington Greig is not only one of the ablest of the Feminists, but was the first Suffragist to enter Holloway “for the vote.”

But of the morality of Feminism I have here nothing to say, either to denounce or defend it. I have given some examples of it merely to show that the “woman's movement” involves the most fundamental revolution of our current morals ; and to show how blindly foolish are those who can suppose that that movement, revolu-

tionising all else, must not also revolutionise our present morality. The only criticism I feel called upon to make of it here is this: Anti-suffragists are often charged with being merely opposed to something—merely and negatively “anti.” Well, the Suffragists and Feminists also are merely “anti” in the long run—their movement is anti-social and anti-racial. It is true that in some directions its proposals spring, as they think, from a eugenic conception of what would be for the good of the race, but the bulk of it affirms the individualism of woman and her right and duty to renounce “self-sacrifice” and the maternal racial duty. The Feminist morality, in short, is that the old order must be destroyed, and that the new order must accommodate itself to the individual demands and happiness of woman, race and “duty” apart. And so it is to be judged, as they present the case, by its effect upon the individual happiness. And the root of the matter, from the Humanist’s point of view, is that it will not secure, but destroy, even the individual happiness (which would be its only justification) whilst also destroying the race.

The Humanist as Prophet,

But before we come to the root of the matter, a few words may be said in self-complacent justification of the predictions of the Humanist—for the Humanist is the Anti-suffragist who has had foresight, just as the Feminist is the Suffragist who has had the courage to confront the consequences of Suffragism. And the Humanist has for years been contemned and derided by the maternal Suffragist for his exaggerated fears, his tyrannical, masculine dread of woman’s “equality,” his revelation of his real unchivalrous nature; and, above all, for his grotesque parodies of what sort of a woman the Suffragist was, and what sort of a world Suffragism would lead to. Well, how does he stand as a prophet now? He said that Suffragism would kill “womanliness.” And now the Feminist abhors the Suffragist who prates of the thing. He said it would

lead to woman "trying to be a man and to do a man's work." And now woman is going "to take all labour for her province." He talked of "the new woman" and was jeered at. The new woman now laughs at the mental frumpishness and the dowdy prejudices of the matronly Suffragist. He said that Suffragism meant woman losing her domesticity. And now "domesticity" is what the Feminist makes open war upon. He said that Suffragism was "war on motherhood." And now sterilisation is regarded as a greater human achievement than maternity. If he were sufficiently far sighted he said that the end of Suffragism would be such a modification of the relations of the sexes as would tend to break up the institutions of home and family. And now the woman who regards herself as already spiritually emancipated, whilst waiting for the vote, advocates a morality which, in its mildest form, must modify home, family, and marriage profoundly. He talked of the gradual evolution of a "temperamental neuter," and that human modification is already amongst us. All he was derided for predicting as the result of "the vote" is now the programme of Feminism before even the vote is won. And now we can see that even the coarse catch-cries of the man in the street and even the crude jokes of the comic papers that so perturbed, and even now ruffle the Suffragist's matronly bosom, were merely the instinct of the unreasoning Humanist, who saw further into the problem by intuition than the matronly Suffragist has ever been able to see even by a pathetic devotion to the dreary logic of Mill.

The Great Experiment.

And, if the Humanist has been right in his perception of the drift of consequences so far, may he not, in all humility, put to both Suffragist and Feminist this proposition : that Feminism will only lead to the fresh subjection of woman after an interval of "liberty"? That is what he believes. He opposes Feminism, not alone because it would be bad for the race, but not

less because it would be bad for woman, which means the same thing. If man cared to live *his* own "individual" life, and give no hostages to fortune, he himself would be no loser, sex against sex; but the Humanist believes that that is only because, in the general degradation of the race, he would merely be as relatively and "individually" advantaged as now, though living in a world no longer worth human endeavour. The Feminist believes it will be a gloriously better world, and is prepared to make the great experiment—"which may or may not be a successful effort." If it could be a successful effort, then I should like to be on earth in that time to acknowledge that there were forces in humanity of which I had not dreamt. But the Humanist can only plead and urge that the effort would not and could not be anything but a vain one, and that in the effort itself would all the disaster lie. For man will always be, in any conception we can form of the developments or modifications of sex, the economic and physical superior of woman. He is that superior now, as much as in any age, and that superiority alone has thrown upon him the burden of supporting woman whilst she replenishes the life of the world. As Mrs Gilman herself says, "The male human being is thousands of years in advance of the female in economic status." Would not woman, long before the thousands of years could elapse that might or might not make her his equal, have surrendered herself to a new subjection to man?—a subjection all the worse because she would live in a world in which the compensating guarantees for her position had been shattered, and because she herself had torn up all those safeguards against which she now rebels as constituting her state of subjection? In short, where a man now marries, will he not then be able, with his economic superiority working in alliance with the drudgery of woman's industrialism, to hire?

Respice Finem.

It may be said that that question is looking far ahead. I do not know that it is looking far, for once ideas become accepted they are not long in being translated into results. But it is looking ahead, certainly, and that is exactly what must be done, and what statesmanship is not doing. It is blindly accepting a blind force of human error as though it were part of the Divine plan for the progress of man, and it is surrendering itself to the whirlwind. Half-way through the revolution that Feminism seeks to accomplish once the vote is won, mankind might, if it could only readjust its view to our own day, stand aghast at what had been done. But it could not then readjust its view. What was already accomplished would have familiarised men and women to a state of society that would seem to them, as another Mill might then point out, a "natural" state of society, though it were one from which, if they could see it with our eyes, they would recoil with horror could the choice between now and then be presented to them. But the minds of those men and women whose fate is in our own hands to-day would be subdued to their own experience, so that even if they saw the ultimate end, they would fatalistically accept its consequences—just as now some people are prepared to face the first logical consequences of Votes for Women. But there could be no turning back. Once all women were economically dependent on themselves, there could be no violent reversal to displace them industrially. Once they were bringing no children in the world but those that they themselves wished to support, the whole pressure of the social order would be upon them to keep them as they were, just as the whole pressure of the social order ought now to be on the maintenance of man's obligation to maintain wifehood and motherhood in the domestic security which provides the cradle for the family, the State, and the race. But, once started on its path, the woman's movement would move to

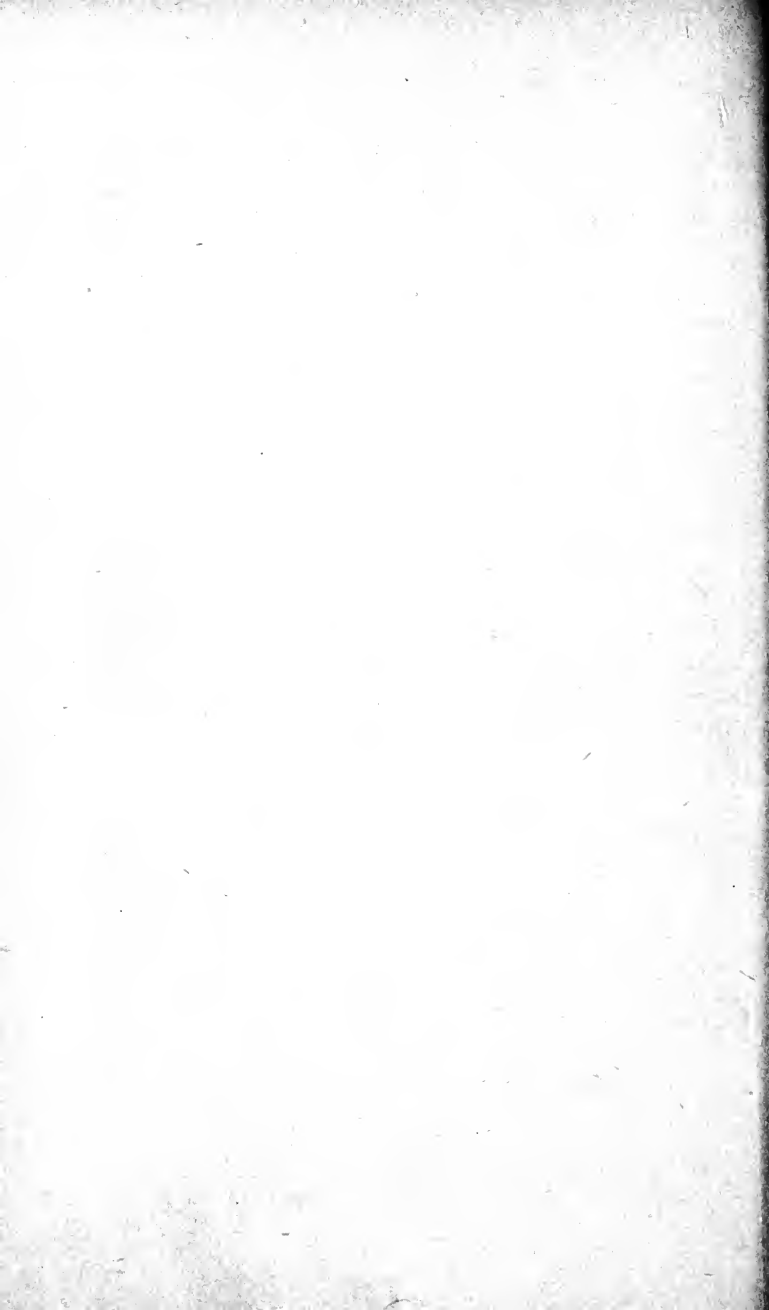
its destined end, until the cry of a distant generation arose, and women sought to escape from their "freedom" by a return to their old "subjection," and "Give us back our homes and the security of manhood for our motherhood!" became the agony of their one hope in their despair. But now we are drifting into all that darkness with our eyes open—playing with the greatest issues of our humanity as though they meant nothing more than the bulkiness of an electoral register—eager for a great experiment which may teach, not us, but new and strange generations, that we men and women, even us of this year and day, sinned against the light and encompassed their degradation.

In the first chapter of this book, the view was combated that the extension of the franchise to women was a mere superficial issue, capable of being decided by a mere reference to the word "democracy." I think we have now seen, at any rate, how superficial is that view. But we may now return to that "superficial issue" of the Vote. This has been no divergence from it. We have merely been looking at the end of which the vote is the means. We have merely taken a peep through the doors of that temple of woman's liberty of which the Vote is the key.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Wrong Road.

MR LLOYD GEORGE—MR GEORGE'S "LITTLE MAN"—
WOMEN AND WAR—WOMEN AND CIVILISED GOVERN-
MENT—HOME AND THE STATE—THE DISFRANCHISE-
MENT OF MEN—HOME AND THE VOTE.



CHAPTER XVIII.

The Wrong Road.

"WE have to prepare the children for the world ; we want to prepare the world for the children." So said a Suffragist speaker, and the antithesis seems very effective until we enquire into it. But I am for the moment concerned only to point out that in that conception of the whole duty of woman man has no place whatever. Or take another Suffragist sentence: "Is not the woman who gives her husband and her sons to fight for their country as much concerned as to the way in which it is governed as they?" There, again, man is out of it altogether. His wife "gives" him to the country. He does not give himself—the British matron, with a noble and generous gesture, sends him forth to fight—makes a gift of him to his country. That is a new and startling proprietorial doctrine, but the curious thing all through this controversy is the consistency with which man is ignored and belittled. It is not only women Suffragists who belittle him—those members of his own sex who favour the cause also speak contemptuously of him. Thus a male and literary Suffragist, having an official connection with the Suffragist party, in dwelling on the "insult" to women offered by a contemplated Franchise Reform Bill capable of being turned into a Bill to give a vote to every adult woman in the country, asks us to consider this case, among others:—

"The school teacher, looking round on her class of boys of 14, will reflect that in seven years the dullest and the weakest of them will have become her ruler, though in the interval he may only have added vice to stupidity and grossness to folly."

Well, of course, the hypothetical teacher may have hypothetically exerted a bad influence over him—

though I do not think young women are often found teaching boys of 14. But take the next boy in the class—I can see him clearly: a bright, manly fellow. In eleven years' time (not in seven, I hope, for at 21 he will only just be beginning to learn how to think and to know what life is, and will not be adult enough in intelligence to exercise the vote)—but in eleven years' time he may be one of the most promising intellects in the country, whilst the teacher remains "elementary" and stationary, unless she has brightened up a bit and become an Anti-suffragist.

Mr Lloyd George.

But there you see the familiar trick of always stating the case for Suffragism by presenting the male as miserable and contemptible and the woman as noble, and glorious, and contemptuous of the feeble-minded male, and one gets a little tired of the unintelligent monotony of it. There is, again, Mr Lloyd George who says, "Women only go to doctors when they are ill—a man goes when he thinks he is ill." It is not true, and a man's anxiety about his own health generally arises, or receives a keener edge, from the fact that he is the breadwinner. But Mr Lloyd George, too, subscribes to the silly fashion, and as he is now the head of the parliamentary phalanx which is going to carry the cause to victory, it is time to train a gun on him and get in a shot or two before the battle begins.

Now that, of course, is a dreadful thing to do, I admit. To belong to a certain political party, and train a gun on the most popular of its leaders, is simply not excusable. As things are, if you want to attack a Liberal you must be a Conservative, and if you want to attack a Conservative you must be a Liberal. It is rather a silly arrangement, because it supposes that both Liberals and Conservatives are either paragons or ignoble people, according to what you are yourself; but it is done because it is an easy thing to go with the stream, and in any case there is a ready-made audience for you. And then, again, as I said, in the

beginning of this book, it is generally only cranks who attack their "leader," and if you don't happen to be a crank, party cranks nevertheless mix you up with the cranks of the party should you venture to do the unorthodox thing and speak disrespectfully of a "leader." But *je prends mon bien ou je le trouve*. What is well in Mr Lloyd George (and there is a good deal that is well in him) I accept, even gratefully; what is not, I don't, though I generally keep it to myself in the usual party way. But in this case Mr Lloyd George is not a Liberal—he is a Suffragist: in fact the head of the parliamentary army of Suffragists, and as Parliament is whence Woman Suffrage will come, if it comes at all, Mr Lloyd George becomes, for the concluding purposes of this book, exactly what the House of Lords was to him for a good deal of this oratory. The fact that he had Lords for colleagues did not prevent him from saying dreadful things about the House of Lords, and the fact that he is a Liberal will not prevent me from saying truthful things about him. I say so much merely to explain how matters stand to those "earnest Liberals" and "good, loyal Liberals," who have been deluded by Mr Lloyd George into thinking that there is a necessary connection between Liberalism and Woman Suffrage. He says so, and he is a Liberal, but that doesn't make it so. Besides, if you cannot attack a public man's public opinions there is nothing to attack about him (unless you are in Parliament, and can move to reduce his salary) and all you have to do, to be a good and earnest and loyal Liberal, is to squeeze into a political meeting, spend three hours of physical discomfort, get horribly excited, applaud like mad, and go home thinking what a fine fellow the political hero is. It is a pleasing and innocent frame of mind, and brings much joy also to the political hero's heart. But if you are at all touched with sophistication that innocent joy in full perfection can have belonged only to the enthusiasm of youth. However. . . .

Mr George's "Little Man."

At Bath, on November 24, 1911, Mr Lloyd George made what I think was the first reasoned (or at least argumentative) speech that he, or any other political leader has ever made in favour of Woman Suffrage as part and parcel of a general political speech on policy—for I except those speeches delivered by avowed supporters to specially sympathetic audiences, and such speeches as Mr Lloyd George himself has made until the interruption of Suffragists have compelled him to desist. And one passage of that speech was this :

"I know they say, 'Women are not fit to Vote.' You get a little bit of a man (laughter) the whole brains of whose household are in his wife, and who is probably absolutely ruled by her, saying, 'You know, women are not fit for a vote.' (Laughter). He is the ruler of creation. Well, you know it is bad taste to talk like that."

Of bad taste I will not dispute with Mr Lloyd George, (perhaps we all have our lapses) for it would open up a nice question of casuistry : how far a man with a certain political faith may be supposed to have assented to what he thought were lapses from taste on the part of those leaders of the political party of whose principles he approves, although he by no means approved of the lapses committed. And perhaps a waiver might be pleaded. But, questions of taste altogether apart, it is at any rate "very bad" sense for Mr Lloyd George "to talk like that." Does he, I wonder, on "getting the laugh," think the laugh is not dear at the price of such a travesty of the relative values of man and woman? If I invert the relation, and speak of a "big powerful man, all brain and muscle, and not only the governing spirit in the home, but the breadwinner outside it," will he assent to that picture, manifestly nearer to the average truth than his, as cancelling his "little bit of a man," small both in mind and in body, with a wife who is "the whole brain of the household?" I do not understand the masculine mind that seeks to prove the case for votes for women by the degeneracy of the masculine sex ;

though I do think the eagerness some men show to pour contempt upon their own sex is one sign of it.

Women and War.

However, Mr Lloyd George's speech is worth further attention. He apparently has some notion that the real and final qualification for the franchise is the possession of a soul.

"I have never been able to understand how—unless you deny to a woman the possession of a soul, with all the infinite responsibility that fact implies—you can deny to her the power which you give to man in the government of the country."

Now, I am certainly not going to turn Mohammedan, and incur the infinite responsibility of asserting that woman has no soul—for I suppose Mr Lloyd George meant "assertion" rather than "fact"—but I do take the finite responsibility of saying that a woman's vote no more depends upon her soul than her soul upon her vote. "There are also celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one and the glory of the terrestrial is another." Why reduce the franchise to a psychic qualification? If Mr Lloyd George wants a better argument for Woman Suffrage than that woman has got a soul, he had better take the argument of the Suffragists themselves, that a woman has a body and a mind—which is so plausible an argument that it takes an entire book to demolish it and to see where it leads. But the psychic argument does not take more than a paragraph. One democracy inaugurated its career by declaring there was no God. If another democracy marks its final perfection by declaring that there is no soul, shall we then all be struck off the register and have no votes at all?

Some of the newspapers in reporting his speech set out in a medallion this statement:—

IF WOMEN BY THEIR VOTES
PREVENTED THE INFAMY OF
A SINGLE WAR, THEY WOULD
HAVE JUSTIFIED THEIR VOTES
BEFORE GOD AND MAN.

By "prevented the infamy of a single war" I suppose that Mr Lloyd George meant that every single war was an infamy, or he would have said "prevented a single infamous war." But he himself, a few months earlier, was uttering some very pregnant words in the City of London, and the effect of his diplomatic utterance was to convey to another nation that Great Britain would contemplate, under certain circumstances, a war which, I am sure, Mr Lloyd George himself could not have regarded as infamous. But I take it, from the effect produced by that declaration, "If women by their votes prevented the infamy of a single war they would have justified their votes before God and man"—that the declaration was regarded as what you call "a clincher." Well, it by no means follows. For women by their votes might prevent one war only to produce another and bigger war; and women might by their votes do that which would even produce a war that otherwise might not have taken place at all. But men are just as concerned as women in preventing wars if the prevention be consistent with the honour and the safety of their country. After all, though the women "give" them to the country, they have to find the ships, the money and the men to do the fighting. Moreover, even that intellectual advocate for Woman Suffrage, John Stuart Mill, made a reservation on this very subject in considering the wisdom that might be expected from women in the State:

"The influence of women counts for a great deal in two of the most marked features of modern European life—its aversion to war and its addiction to philanthropy. Excellent characteristics both; but unhappily, if the influence of women is valuable for the encouragement it gives to those feelings in general, on the particular applications the direction it gives to them is at least *often mischievous as useful.*"

Women and Civilised Government.

Apparently Mr Lloyd George thinks man has taken no part in the civilisation of the world. For,

"the gentleness of woman has saved mankind from barbarism; their weakness has become the strength of civilisation, and now

when the functions of government have been conquered by the arts of gentleness which they practise, they have at least the right to an equal share in the victory."

In that passage, at any rate, Mr Lloyd George got on to speaking terms, though distantly, with part of the philosophy of the question. For if women had indeed subdued the functions of government by the arts of gentleness, conquering the fiendishness and barbarism of man, there would be some case made out, not for their having the vote, but for considering their claim to "a share in the victory" as something to set off against the many and prime considerations of why it is nevertheless not expedient for them to have the Vote. But if I may venture to express the opinion, Mr Lloyd George makes the mistake of supposing that because "the instruments of government were the sword, the battle-axe, the pillory, the rack, the dungeon and the gallows" once upon a time, and because the instruments of government are now the public platform and the Vote (with the military to be called out when necessary, and reserves of police kept handy at Scotland Yard for the militants) that it is women who have accomplished the miracle. It may be so, but the processes by which they have accomplished it are veiled alike from history and from Mr Lloyd George. Heaven knows what noble impulses men may imbibe with their mothers' milk, and I have written no line which denies to women the tribute of exercising a fine moral influence in the formation of men's characters. But in any direct civilising of the instruments of government women have certainly borne no share; for the transformation from rack and dungeon to the annual meeting of the National Liberal Federation and the Vote has been done entirely by man. If Mr Lloyd George meant that women are gentler and more peaceful in their natures than men, no one denies it. But that does not carry us as far as his emotional expression and rhetorical extension of that sentiment no doubt carried his audience.

Home and the State,

Still, it brought him up to one other consideration, and as he might have pursued it to some advantage it is a pity he did not pursue it. For he dwelt on the fact that legislation now affects the home, and that therefore women should have the vote. Well, it has already been pointed out that to give women votes for the sake of influencing legislation affecting the home does not end there, for it would also give women votes to influence all that great body of legislation which does not come anywhere near the home. But man is also affected by the home—the home is not woman's exclusive interest—and the fallacy that man may not legislate for the home because a woman dwells in it, belongs to a very old order of fallacy.

“Who rules o'er freemen must himself be free” seemed to have sense as well as poetic rhetoric until Johnson exclaimed in parodic derision,

“Who drives fat oxen must himself be fat.”

But the question of whether the extension of legislation affecting the home should also extend the right of voting to woman is linked up with another question: whether the State is going to enter the home at one door whilst votes for women and the woman's movement drives her out at the other. Mr Lloyd George no doubt believes that the more legislation enters the home the better—he said that in New Zealand¹ the

¹ It may be remarked that in the course of this book I have overlooked all reference to the operation of Woman Suffrage in New Zealand, Australia, Finland, Norway, and one or two of the least settled states of the United States of America. The oversight is not accidental. But I have refrained from touching upon the point for two reasons: (1) That that is the affair of those countries and not ours, though certain ladies from the Colonies come over here to take part in an agitation which is just as little their concern; and (2) that I am not weakened in my belief that Woman Suffrage is a mistaken cause for our country because other countries have committed the very mistake. And the conditions between these countries and ours are too widely

woman's vote had "widened the horizon of the home." But it is not an accepted axiom that widening the horizon of the home, if by that is meant that you cannot tell where the home leaves off and the State begins, is so self-evidently a desirable thing as Mr Lloyd George seems to think we shall all take it to be. The more developed the State outside the home, and the better organised the home within itself, the more perfect the State; but that is only another way of saying that the better man did his own work, and the better woman did hers, the better for everybody. And it will not do for statesmen to be penetrating the home with legislation whilst assisting a movement whose whole influence is against the home; and then to base their claim for votes for women on the ground that the State is entering where its presence has become necessary as a foster-mother. I do not know whether that is an anti-Liberal view or not, but it is at any rate a view to be taken into consideration, and to be answered, before it is assumed that the extension of legislation affecting the home, is any reason for women to have votes. And again, I should more readily believe that Mr Lloyd George had taken some pains to think out the connection between the home and votes if he had devoted some part of his speech to considering what was going to be the effect on the home of married women throwing away their legal right to maintenance as the price of their votes.

different to allow of any profit to be drawn from their experiences, to say nothing of the fact that Woman Suffrage has not been in operation long enough to make their own experience of much value, so far, even to themselves.

Nor have I allowed myself space in which to touch upon the international aspect of the matter—an aspect adequately dealt with by such men as Lord Curzon and Lord Cromer. It is worth while to point out, however, even in a footnote, that our greatest rival, challenging us all along the line, is a virile race whose women are still content to accept, and to excel in, the domestic mission of woman. Feminism has made no headway in perverting the hausfrauen of Germany to a sense of the importance of woman taking "all labour for her province" to the neglect of the nurture of the race.

Mr Lloyd George, however, seems to be a helpless victim of the notion that a man has nothing to do with the home, or his wife, or his children, or anything that there is. "Who can say," he asks, "that her experience, her point of view, is not more worth considering than that of the man on the Housing Question?" Well, a woman whose experience of women is quite as profound, I daresay, as Mr Lloyd George's opinion of them, tells me that women are very difficult to move on the housing question, especially those who go out to work, for they would rather cram the family into two small rooms than distribute the family over four, because two extra rooms would make a great difference in the domestic work to be done. But what is *the man's* vote for but to express her opinion too, after they have talked the matter over, if it be a question affecting home interests? Are we to abolish plural voting in one direction merely to establish it in another? Or is it supposed that the wife will vote one way and the husband the other, and that the husband's vote, which may at least be as wise as the wife's, is to be cancelled by hers?

The Disfranchisement of Men.

But if Mr Lloyd George is so anxious for women to have votes, because some part of our present "domestic" legislation touches things which concern people who live in homes, why is he not equally anxious that men, who have votes *already*, shall be allowed to use them on this all-supreme question which touches homes and the people in them, as vitally as all the questions he mentioned rolled into one and then magnified, not by rhetoric, but by a big multiple? Why is he, who believes in giving votes to women, so contemptuous of the votes that men have already got, that he is going to help to rush through Parliament a measure upon which no single voter has ever cast a vote¹ On the day before he left London for

¹ I except a single bye-election at Wimbledon, when I believe a Woman Suffrage candidate stood at the bottom of the only poll at which a Suffragist has ever stood.

Bath he addressed a meeting of the supporters of Woman Suffrage to say that he thought they ought to work up enthusiasm for a wholesale enfranchisement of woman instead of only a partial and discreet enfranchisement. I do not in the least object to him working up the enthusiasm, for *all* women to have votes, if he will only give other people the chance to work up the enthusiasm for *no* women to have votes. But he rules men and their votes off the electoral map altogether: "I know people say, 'But men are interested in this question. Why don't you leave it to the men?' Men are not equally interested."¹ Well, this book may help to enlighten Mr Lloyd George on that point. Yet if this is a woman's question only or even mainly, why does he not see that it is referred to the women at least to decide it? And if it is a woman's question, why is a Parliament of men going to decide it without making any attempt to find out what women think about it?

But, "with arms outflung," he declaims:—

"All we ask is that the custodian of that cupboard shall have a weapon to defend her children's bread!"

Words. It may be all he asks, but it is not all we shall get. But are men not capable of defending their children's bread? From the very peril that he spoke of did not the men "defend their children's bread" with the most overwhelming earnest and evidence of their intentions that has ever been given in a parliamentary battle? And is Mr Lloyd George so very sure women may not *sell* their children's bread, from his point of view, whilst being converted to the theory that they are defending it? And because most wives

¹ Answering a deputation of Suffragists at Glasgow on Nov. 21, 1907, Mr Lloyd George actually said that "he could not conceive of a revolution of this character being introduced into our constitution without the country being asked upon it definitely," and he added: "It could hardly be said that the 400 members of Parliament pledged to Woman Suffrage had really consulted their constituents about it." In November, 1907, in short, he himself made his position now untenable.

stay at home cutting up bread and butter whilst most husbands are working outside to earn it, does that domestic function give them any qualification for the vote which is not adequately fulfilled by the man?

But, you may ask, why pay so much attention to a single speech? The answer is clear: It is the only speech ever yet delivered by a responsible statesman in immediate promotion of the measure of Woman Suffrage as apart from academic generalities that no one has been expected to pay attention to. And the arts of platform oratory, which are really similar to those of the drama in the sense that they are made to appeal to the emotions rather than to the intelligence, sway audiences in really a dreadful and disconcerting manner. For a descriptive report of Mr Lloyd George's speech says:

"But the crowning effort was the masterly plea for the admission of women to a share in the government of their country. The eyes of every woman were brightened with hope where they were not dimmed with tears as they heard the most magnificent tribute that has ever been paid to the gentleness, the self-sacrificing nobility, the overwhelming importance of the sex, while the whole meeting, men and women alike, were swept off their feet by the vision which this magician has conjured up before their wondering eyes."

Now, that sort of thing is much more alarming than satisfactory. In the report of his speech the only interruptions recorded were from Suffragists engaged in their usual task of interrupting perversely,¹ but there

¹ And so little did he please the women whose cause more than anybody else's, he was supporting, that we read, the day after: "About two o'clock on Sunday morning thirteen members of the Woman's Social and Political Union, male and female, drove in taxi-cabs to the residence of Mr S. Robinson, M.P., at Box some five miles distant, where Mr Lloyd George was spending the night. They made their way into the grounds, and shouted and sang outside the windows and, despite the efforts to remove them, did not leave until they had satisfied themselves that they had aroused the whole household." If Mr Lloyd George's faith in the cause can survive that sort of thing, he is indeed superhuman. One almost distrusts the "serene martyr's faith" that can let a man make a speech in favour of Woman Suffrage and go to bed to be wakened in the small hours by the din of Suffragists, and calmly go to sleep again without making

was no dissentient voice raised to Mr Lloyd George's emotional but not highly intellectual oration, and we may take it that men who went there with no mind at all on the subject had it made up for them by the "masterly plea" and the "most magnificent tribute" (and the other qualities that will be looked for in vain in the actual report) that "swept them off their feet." And when we consider that the Parliamentary majority that is being relied upon to carry the measure has apparently gone no deeper into the question of what the woman's movement means and *is* than Mr Lloyd George himself has done, and that the power it possesses of making its Parliamentary will prevail is now absolute, it is worth while paying some detailed attention to the first real case for the measure as an imminent political thing that the leader of the cause in Parliament has ever presented inside or out.

Home and the Vote.

It is a painful thing, of course, to criticise a Liberal leader—very. But it would have hurt even more to have repressed what I have said of Mr Lloyd George's speech upon a matter which transcends Liberalism or any other creed except that of the cause of humanity itself. The Countess of Arran,¹ a Suffragist, quoted a Liberal M.P.'s complacent but brainless dictum on the whole question, addressed to herself: "The only reason for Woman Suffrage is that there is no reason against it." She approved the sentiment, of course, but it was very kind of her not to mention his name.

That is just the sort of fatuous blindness that would have been cured if there had been anything like an adequate discussion of this question. But we see that even Mr Lloyd George, the parliamentary leader and champion of the cause, has apparently not permitted at least some effort to "wrestle" with the faith. But a day later Mr Lloyd George was announcing that he himself would gladly move the amendment to the Franchise Reform Bill extending its provisions to women! Well, human nature must be simply dying out.

¹Winifred, Countess of Arran, *The Standard*, Oct. 3, 1911.

his mind to probe the question to a much greater depth than the M.P. who pronounced that view. Of the "eagerness" of Suffragists to secure not only a vote, but the reduction of married women to the position of maintaining themselves as though they were single women, his mind apparently takes no cognisance whatever. He himself is too eager in this case to do that dangerous thing in all cases: to legislate in advance of the sense of the nation. Nor, I suppose, did any of the women whose "eyes were dimmed with tears" imagine that he was commending to them a cause promoted by women who are "eager" to deprive them of their legal claim on their husbands' wages and to send them out to earn their own living.

In "the first speech ever made by a Cabinet Minister on a Woman Suffrage platform," Mr Lloyd George uttered a peroration which asked us "to call in the aid, counsel, and inspiration of women to help us in the fashioning of legislation which would cleanse, purify and fill with plenty the homes upon which the future destiny of this great commonwealth of nations depends." The perorations of politicians should always be looked at indulgently. Probably "the backyards of England" would have expressed just as accurately as "homes" the precise processes of Mr Lloyd George's thoughts. But it is stated that he has been studying this matter for twenty years, which seems a clear case of overstudy. For if he had been studying it for twenty hours he ought to know that the movement he is assisting is one that is the shortest possible cut to *disintegrating* "the homes upon which the future destiny of this great commonwealth of nations depends." He ought to know that the whole aim and effect of Suffragism is to create *separate* and individual interests for men and women, and to diminish their joint interests, and not to consolidate those interests in home and family. And if he really believes that the future destiny of this great commonwealth of nations depends upon our "homes," then he ought

to be an Anti-suffragist; and if, believing that, he is a Suffragist, then it only shows how a man may waste much time with no profit.

To the wider possibilities of the development of economic independence he gives us no consoling or opposing philosophy. He may say that men will never allow their womenfolk to be deprived of the legal security which the law now gives them, though if man is to be ruled out of account on the major question, I don't see why he should be called in to prevent a development that would at any rate not adversely affect him as a sex. But Mr Lloyd George might also put it that men will have to protect women against themselves—which is just what he now says they are not "equally interested" in doing. And if he thinks, now that that development is presented to him, to glose over the dangers and difficulties of the future by saying, "Let us give them the vote first, and think out the consequences afterwards!" I can only say that that attitude of mind is not statesmanship, but what Meredith called "deadmanship"—drift and pusillanimity, and emotion where thought should be.

Sydney Smith said of Lord Macaulay, "He overflows with learning—and stands in the slop!" Mr Lloyd George does not overflow with learning, but he does overflow with emotion, and stands on the platform, and though emotion makes excellent rhetoric it makes very bad sense. And if he thinks that to give Votes to Women will end a difficulty, he is greatly mistaken, for it will be but the beginning of a new tangle of difficulties which statesmen at some future time or other may vainly try to unravel. It is all very well to say, as he says, "Men will lose slaves but find comrades," but—making all allowance for the exigencies of platform oratory, which sometimes perhaps do an injustice to the orator—it is at least just as likely that men will lose comrades and the comrades find themselves in a new slavery. That is *the real question* to be faced—and to be considered and not dismissed by a rhetorical tag. And if Suffragist or

Feminist could convince me that the new order would open the gates to a new glory for their sex, I would gladly see every door flung wide open that barred woman's way, and would throw my own weight, for the little it might be worth, against each door. For even if one were "a little bit of a man" I believe all men have in them that little bit of essential manhood which would sacrifice much to secure the dignity, the glory, and the happiness of woman. And that is why I have no contempt for Suffragist or Feminist. I believe them to be misguided and adrift, and I believe that it is the duty of every man who thinks they are to say so with what reason and courtesy he can command; and to try to convince them, even the most perversely sceptical of the good motives of men amongst them, that no man would stand out against halving the dominion of the political world with woman if he were not convinced that in the end it would be doubling the burden of her life, uplifting her in nothing, profiting the race by nothing, but robbing it of much. But, if the revolution is accomplished, then in the time that we shall not know others may see what comes of the speculations of amiable theorists who, like Mill, allow themselves to be guided by abstract conceptions without thinking out where their theory will lead to when realised in actual practice. And it will indeed be odd for future generations to realise that the woman of their day, with her thews and sinews and graceless strength, came from the high-browed, smooth-haired mid-Victorian blue-stocking, mating her placid intellectualism with the emotional nature of the "practical politician"!

"We have to prepare the children for the world; we want to prepare the world for the children." It sounds well; it has a nice antithetical balance, and all the seduction of rhetoric. Mr Lloyd George himself, by altering the pronouns, might have uttered it. But if we change the terms whilst preserving the antithetical

balance, we shall see how much reason it expresses. "We have to prepare clothes for the man; we want to prepare man for the clothes." If a tailor said that, we should know that he was talking nonsense. For, without any reflection, we should instantly perceive that the two functions were, not necessarily opposed, but entirely different. But because we do not so instantly realise what preparing the children for the world means, and what preparing the world for the children involves, the incongruity is not so apparent. And uttered, as it was, on a platform, it no doubt sounded irrefutable, and no doubt the audience applauded it warmly. But if a cook told her mistress, "I have to prepare the dinner for the table—I cannot be expected to prepare the table for the dinner," we should think she was an extremely reasonable cook indeed.

And I dwell on that sentence of nicely balanced antithesis not merely to show how delusive a thing Suffragist rhetoric may be, but because the speaker could not have better framed a sentence that contained the material for the whole practical and simple philosophy of this big matter. We cannot better delimit the spheres of man and woman than by saying it is the work of man to prepare the world for the children and the work of woman to prepare the children for the world. But so flexible and mutual and reciprocal are the relations of man and woman that the work of each helps the other, so that even in preparing the children for the world—which is no small matter, being perhaps more than half the battle—a mother is also helping to prepare the world for the children. For by every son she sends out into the world, equipped with those virtues which her maternal care has grafted upon his budding manhood, she is helping to prepare the world for the children of her children. And if it were possible for the human species to have fashioned themselves with a divine insight as well as with the knowledge gained from human experience, they could not have hit upon a more harmonious dualism than the Creator created in Man and Woman. It is because

that dualism is in danger of being disturbed by taking a first step that we should confront the danger, not by looking only on the present, but by looking beyond that first step with a prophetic vision.

In a book which has primarily a negative purpose only—to point out a wrong way—there has been no place to speak of the positive side of woman's work and life, and of how much the happiness of the human race depends upon her virtues as wife and mother. But no one who knows anything of life can be ignorant of the truth that more domestic tragedies—the silent, ceaseless, chronic tragedies, and not those that cure themselves by rising to a crisis—are accounted for by the imperfect and unsympathetic attention that the mistress of a home gives to it than by any other cause short of that of destitution itself. And a movement which is based upon a view of life that would assist that neglect in some women, and compel it in all, is not a movement which, by any possibility that the human mind can foresee, could bring any happiness whatever to the human race. Yet the first step that we are now asked to take is to give the sanction of a nation's law and outlook to that movement—to a movement repudiated by women not less, at any rate, than it is urged by women—and to a movement that would, once it were impelled by our sanction, progress by its own momentum and be stopped only by its own consequences. And, humanly speaking, the first step would be irretrievable.

I have now finished the task I set myself—to deal with the demand for the political enfranchisement of women, which is the political side of the woman's movement; and I leave, perhaps, to another time some effort to trace the further tendencies of modern Feminism. But even when confining myself to the political side of the movement, I have shown, I think, how very far it takes us—far out beyond the political sphere altogether, and deep into the very bowels of our social and family life. In considering a subject of

so wide a range, it is inevitable that some errors of judgment must have crept into my work, and even some traces of prejudice—for even where there is most strength of conviction some weakness of prejudice may creep in. But for those defects I plead that human weakness from which even man is not exempt, and never will be. But errors of judgment and prejudices are not matters within our control, and in any case I hope that such blemishes are few. But what is within one's control is that one's arguments shall be honestly conceived and honestly set out. A fallacy is that defect in logic which deceives the mind of the man who utters it, and there is nothing in himself but his own intelligence to correct it. After reviewing what I have written, I have failed to detect any fallacy in my reasoning, despite an earnest desire to discover any that might have flown from a pen if it travelled faster than the judgment. What fallacies have escaped my own detection, however, will be detected by others and will be exposed as they deserve. But, whatever they be, those errors and weaknesses are, as I say, beyond my own control, and remain despite my judgment and beyond my knowledge.

But what is not beyond my knowledge is the spirit in which I have written. For a fallacy a man may be excused, since it is only his intelligence that is at fault, but for specious reasoning there is no extenuation, since that is intended to deceive others and not oneself. From that blemish, at any rate, I think this book is free. I think the case I have had to present is so strong that it needs no argument that will not bear sifting down to the very bottom of its nature. But I should in any case have disdained any artifice that cheated others, for it would not only have afforded me no satisfaction, but it would have deprived me of the chief satisfaction one can have in holding any opinion or creed—the satisfaction that it is sincerely held and can be justified to the reason. Fallacies may have a long life, for they belong to the imperfections of one's own mind, but sophistries—which are those fallacies

designed to deceive others—are soon exposed and recoil on the man who utters them. And the worst tendency of modern political life is that both fallacies and sophistries flourish, for people are often more eager to impose their cause on others than first to impose it upon themselves. But in twenty years' practice of a profession that, as it is now carried on, offers many temptations to intellectual dishonesty and little encouragement to its opposite, I have been fortunate in never having written a line upon any public matter which was not the expression of my own sincere faith; and that, together with some practice in considering public affairs, exhausts my credentials and fitness for the task I have endeavoured to perform.

That I have presented an answer to every part of the case I oppose is too much to claim; but I do claim that I have left no considerable corner of the large field wholly unexplored, and I think I cannot have failed to have enlightened some minds as to the almost illimitable ramifications of the question discussed, whether I have convinced them on all points or none. That, at any rate, is a step gained; for at least it will have proved to them the imperative need for that calm, and grave, and unhurried consideration which a question of such magnitude demands, especially from those who see in it merely an increase of the number of voters in the State. But my greatest endeavour has been so to present the case I have presented as to weaken the faith of those who have given their adherence to what I have tried to prove is a wholly mistaken cause.

But, if that were accomplished, my satisfaction would not lie in carrying off an argumentative victory, but in having done something to lessen a great danger. Nor should I welcome only for its own sake any victory for the case I have urged in a parliamentary battle, unless it were a victory won also over the hearts and minds of my countrymen and countrywomen, and so an enduring victory.

Life offers but few pleasures, but the supremest

pleasures that life can hold arise from the affections—from the loves of men and women, the love of children and the joys of home. And it is because I firmly believe that those supremest pleasures of life, and all those gracious ways of thought and feeling which make life tolerable, would in the long run, and by its inevitable development, be endangered by the course against which I have written, that I have made this reasoned appeal not only that the first step may not be taken but that none shall continue to look even doubtfully down the road which it begins, but shall resolutely turn their backs upon it and seek the happiness of the race on the old path.

That path, at any rate, *has* led onward and upward ; and if we consider the obstacles that man has had to encounter, and through what labyrinths the path has twisted, and from what he started, and with what little light man has had to grope his way, mankind has done better than it could ever have hoped ; and man may yet reach that melancholy perfection of his own nature and knowledge when he will discover that his spiritual nature is better than the destiny that has been assigned to it. But we can only march on in hope, trusting in the path we have trodden.

On that path men and women have gone together, each other's complement, perfect in union, incomplete apart—each needing what the other can supply, each doing best what the other can do least well, and one doing what the other cannot do at all. But this natural and harmonious dualism of mankind would be riven and sundered on the new path that woman wishes to tread. And in treading it she would take her mate along with her—but her mate no longer, and only a fellow being still unlike her, half embittered and half estranged, compelled to rivalry but unsubdued—and each fallen from the other's grace.

The Woman-Hunter

ARABELLA KENEALY

Author of "Dr Janet of Harley Street," "The Mating of Anthea,"
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Author of "Dr. Janet of Harley Street," "The Mating of Anthea," etc., etc.

The most powerful story Miss Arabella Kenealy has written. It is at the same time a passionate love story, and a profound study in the psychology of emotions. Here are two men, opposite as the poles in temperament and *morale*, the ascetic Anglican priest, and the "woman-hunter" of the title, man of the world and libertine. Both are in love with Nerissa, the charming heroine; one is her husband. The theme of the book is the widely-differing effects on temperament and conduct which result from love in these two widely-differing men. The one, the ascetic priest, concerned for his soul's salvation, fights his passion for his young bride as a deadly and besetting sin; the other comes by way of his passion to regeneration. An adept in the conquest of women, he brings all his powers to the siege of the beautiful unhappy wife, wooing her in every mood and tense, ringing the changes of his wooing through strategy, and bribery and temptation, through force of mastery, through guile and wile and passionate assault, and so at last to love, profound and true. The story, though eminently modern, is picturesquely set in a romantic old tower.

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The story of a little man married to a great woman, of their relations and interactions, their battles and despairs, written round the strong and familiar interests of passion and power and politics. The story moves at a gallop, and it is for the reader to meditate and moralise when the book is laid aside.

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Author of "The Second Elopement," "The Third Wife," etc.

Another of those psychological-sensational romances which Herbert Flowerdew has made a speciality of his own. Woven in with the mystery of a crime as baffling as anything imagined by Gaboriau, the pretty love story of Esmond Hare and Elsa Armandy engages the reader's sympathy from the moment of their first meeting. This is in a lonely country road, at midnight, where Elsa is on her knees picking up handfuls of sovereigns that do not exactly belong to her, and the atmosphere of mingled mystery and romance continues to surround their moving and unconventional love story up to the moment of its happy ending.

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Author of "A Lady of France."

Readers fortunate in having read this author's stirring novel 'A Lady of France' will appreciate this new romance of mediæval France, which contains atmosphere, colour, life and movement. 1207 is the date when the story opens. Count Bertrand de Crein falls in love with the beautiful Lady Rosamund, whom he is escorting to the Lord of Gervandan in Toulouse, whose wife she is to be. In the meantime the Count of Toulouse is threatened with Rome's curse and an armed crusade to put down heresy. In the subsequent siege and sack of Beziers, Rosamund's husband is killed, and the love of Rosamund and de Crein culminates in marriage. The book is full of excitement, adventure, thrilling escapes, and heart-stirring romance.

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An exciting modern story of grip and power, some of the most startling episodes of which concern the kidnapping of a girl who has been turned out of house and home by her father and imprisoned in a house in Kensington. She is rescued by a bachelor, who in turn finds himself in a delicate position. An American female detective plots his arrest and ruin. The story rushes on in a whirl of excitement through a maze of plots and counterplots to a dramatic dénouement.

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A decidedly new note has been struck in this most readable and interesting novel. As the name indicates it is an aeroplane story, and one of those rare books which must be read at a sitting; incident follows incident in ever-increasing interest, until the reader, breathless from excitement, learns from the last page "what really did happen."

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Author of "Troubled Waters."

The principal theme of this volume is the abnormal astuteness of the Conductor of a railway restaurant-car, whose powers of observation and deduction enables him to solve the many absorbing "mysteries" that come under his ken, and which, as a preventer and detector of crime, put him on a par with any of the great puzzle-readers of fiction. Mr. Headon Hill goes direct to the point, and carries the reader rapidly along from the first page to the last.

A Robin Hood of France.

MICHAEL W. KAYE

Hated at court and falsely accused of murder, the young *Sieur de Pontenac* flees to the Forest of Fontainebleau, and becomes the leader of a band of robbers (*King Mandrin*), beloved of the oppressed *canaille*, but hated of the nobles, whom he defies and robs. *Claire d'Orgueil*, the only child of the *Comte d'Orgueil*, having lost heavily at cards, wagers the winner—who has her in his power, and who hopes to force her to marry him—that she will lure "*King Mandrin*" into the power of his enemies; but, arriving in the Forest of Fontainebleau, ends in falling in love with the "*Robin Hood of France.*"

Neighbours of Mine.

R. ANDOM

Author of "*We Three and Troddles*," "*In Fear of a Throne*," etc.
With 60 original illustrations.

This broadly farcical story of types and incidents of suburban life will afford as much amusement as the famous "*Troddles*" books which have in volume form successfully appealed to something like 200,000 readers of all classes, and should prove as popular with those who like a rollicking story. Now and again the author conveys a moral, discreetly, but generally he is content to be extravagantly amusing in depicting adventures, which are sufficiently out of the ordinary to be termed "singular." The book is cleverly and amusingly illustrated throughout the text by a popular artist, who has admirably succeeded in catching the drollery of the narrative.

The Loves of Stella.

MRS. SHIERS-MASON

Stella O'Donovan, a very poor but also very beautiful and quite unsophisticated Irish girl, lives in an old castle on a lovely but lonely Bay on the Irish coast. She has Spanish blood in her veins, and much of the impulsive and fascinating temperament of the Andalusians. Becoming heiress to a million of money, she decides to go to London and enter Society. Before her departure, a young Norwegian sculptor, *Olaf Johansen*, of striking appearance, comes to reside in the village. He at once falls in love with *Stella*, who returns his affection, but who, doubtful of herself, flees to London. Here she appears to meet *Olaf* again, but it is his twin brother impersonating him. *Stella* at once succumbs to his love-making, and many highly dramatic scenes follow.

Every Dog His Day.

HAROLD AVERY

Author of "A Week at the Sea," etc.

Basil Relaver and Angela kiss in a garden at Avesbury, youthful and innocent lovers. Circumstances divide them, Basil is whirled away into the vortex of commercial life and spends some years building up business and making himself a position. Prospering, he revisits Avesbury to learn from Helen Sutherly, Angela's aunt, that Angela, proud and independent, lives in London and earns her own livelihood as a secretary. They meet and misunderstand. Helen Sutherly intervenes, but the lovers are again about to part when they meet once more in the old garden and "love awakens and does not wake in vain." It is a pleasant, quiet story which grows in interest as it proceeds, and leaves a sense of satisfaction in the mind of the reader when it is finished.

The Long Hand.

SIR WILLIAM MAGNAY, BART.

Author of "Red Chancellor," "Count Zarka" and "A Prince of Lovers."

The setting of the story is Bavaria at the end of the 18th century, when that very remarkable, but now almost forgotten genius, Benjamin Thompson, Count Rumford, was for a short time actually Regent of Bavaria, and was standing forth as the saviour of Munich, threatened at once by the French and Austrian armies. At this juncture a young English traveller arrives in that city, and by chance is drawn into a tragic adventure, being mistaken by an emissary of vengeance for a young officer who has given offence at Court, and whom the "long hand" of royalty is seeking to clutch. This episode proves to be but the first of many exciting adventures, and from it is developed a love interest which becomes the engrossing theme of the story. Readers who have enjoyed the Author's previous novels will find no falling off in this, his latest novel of the same genre, which offers a feast of romance and stirring adventure.

Exotic Martha.

DOROTHEA GERARD

Author of "The City of Enticement," "A Glorious Lie," etc.

Martha Grant, betrothed to a Dutchman whom she has met at an Alpine health resort, but who resides in Java, arrives at Batavia to find her lover married to another woman. Rather than face the humiliation of a return to her Scotch home she engages herself as a lady's maid to an invalid Dutchwoman. Suspected of poisoning her mistress, she is condemned to penal servitude for life. Effecting her escape, with the aid of an eccentric French doctor, who is the real, though unsuspected, poisoner, she is on the point of yielding to the advances of her rescuer, when George Pether, the friend of her girlhood, appears upon the scene, and in his company "exotic Martha"—quite cured of an ill-regulated passion for the tropics—regains her native land.

The Cardinal.

NEWTON V. STEWART

Author of "A Son of the Emperor," "Across the Gulf," etc.

An historical story of Italian life in the 13th century, the time of the Guelphs and Ghibellines, when the Pope and Emperor with their factions were opposed. Ottaviano Maldini is the cardinal. He is all-powerful in Rome, and more of a soldier and a statesman than a churchman. Ariadne, the heroine, is a princess who is kidnapped and falls into the hands of the Moors. She is an exquisite little creature and her dancing uniquely beautiful, but she deliberately lames herself to escape harem life. She is offered as a slave to the cardinal, who out of pity buys her. With the cardinal she is happy, interest and affection develop into passionate love between them, and in the end Ariadne dies by her own hand, and relieves the cardinal of the embarrassment of her presence. It is an intensely interesting romance, and presents a lively and accurate picture of the times,

The Qualities of Mercy.

CECIL ADAIR

Author of "The Dean's Daughter," "Cantacute Towers," etc.

The Mercy of the Qualities is a girl who, having inherited property, is free from the necessity which often leads to marriage, for which she is temperamentally disinclined. Captain Dare, whose little kinsman Colin is Mercy's friend, has other views, but Mercy will have none of him, and in pique he marries Alys, a timid little friend of Mercy's, who runs away from him and is hidden by the vicar's wife. Mercy and Colin swear eternal friendship; the latter has no desire to marry and perpetuate the house of Dare. Dare is found dead, a victim of the vendetta. The wholesome story is full of interesting ingredients—Riches, High Place, lovely Country, Beautiful Weather, some Excitement, and Mystery.

The Unholy Estate; or, the Sins of the Fathers.

DOUGLAS SLADEN. Author of "A Japanese Marriage," "The Admiral," "The Tragedy of the Pyramids," etc.

This is a present-day story of strong domestic interest. The problem which Mr. Douglas Sladen treats is the unhappiness inflicted by unsuitable marriages and the inconveniences which besiege those who defy the marriage convention and take their lives into their own hands.

The story lies on the fringe of politics. An eminent political personage, thinly veiled, occupies a prominent position in it. He supplies one of the main elements in the book, and the other is supplied by a woman of great position who gives up everything for the man she loves and is content to live cut off from society for his sake.

The book differs from most books which deal with the same subject in the fact that neither party, in spite of straitened means and social ostracism, exhibits any remorse or regret. They are completely satisfied with what they have done. They live a simple life and their love match is an unequivocal success. The unexpected dénouement of the story is a happy one.

Hodson's Voyage.

W. H. KOEBEL

Author of "In the Maoriland Bush," with 8 original illustrations on art paper by Fred Pegram.

This is a work of light humour from the pen of Mr. W. H. Koebel, better known of recent years as a travel writer of distinction, but who in taking up fiction again is returning to his first love. The plot deals with the trials of a commercial traveller on board a liner. He is mistaken for a country officer whom he resembles, and the complications that ensue include a love interest, and give rise to a rapid series of situations that contain frank elements of farce, especially when the hero finds that fragments of the past history of his military prototype are known to others and not to himself. The climax of the story arises when it is imperative that he should reveal his identity, and when he finds it impossible to convince his companions that circumstances have compelled him to act the lie. The book abounds in situations, and much amusement arises from the bewildering happenings of the unexpected. The fate of the unfortunate victim hangs in the balance until the last page.

The Baron of Ill Fame.

HESTER BARTON

This story gives a faithful picture of Florence in the time of Dante. Besides Corso Donati, the hero of Campaldino, Dante and his wife; Giotto, the great artist; Giano della Bella, the popular demagogue, and other Florentines known to history, figure in the novel. The period dealt with was a stirring and brutal one, yet amid the clash of steel, the flow of blood, the hoarse yells of mutual hatred, the orgies of illicit passion, the violation of convents, the sacking and burning of towns, men and women plighted troth even as to-day, and the author of this romance of mediæval Florence has unified her graphic descriptions of historical incidents by a love story all the more idyllic because of the background of vice and crime.

Duckworth's Diamonds.

E. EVERETT-GREEN

Author of "Clive Lorimer's Marriage," "The Lady of the Bungalow," etc.

Duckworth has entrusted a haul of diamonds to his friend, Dermot Fitzgerald, who brings them to England to await instructions. He is aware that he is shadowed by one, Pike, and gets Hilton, a friend of his, to come over to Ireland and advise him. Hilton advises him to bring the treasure and hide it in his own caves of Treversal. This they do, though not without adventure. In a little village, close to Treversal, stands a small cottage to which Barbara Quentin has retired on the death of her millionaire father, whose assets appear to be nil, and whose child is unprovided for. She lives in the cottage with a friend, making acquaintance with Hilton and Dermot. Later on, Phyllis Duckworth is drawn into the web of fate, and comes also to the cottage. Letters come ostensibly from Duckworth, demanding the surrender of the treasure to his sister; but Phyllis deems these forgeries, and Dermot holds on. In the end and in the nick of time, Duckworth himself turns up; there is a raid upon the caves of Treversal, but the villains are caught and arrested, and various pairs of lovers are made happy.

A Passion in Morocco.

CHARLOTTE CAMERON

Author of "A Woman's Winter in South America."

The story opens on board a P. & O. steamer when it is ploughing its way steadily towards the Moroccan coast. A beautiful English girl, duly chaperoned, makes the acquaintance of a handsome Moorish prince who is returning to his native land after passing through the curriculum at Oxford, with the varied problems of East and West seeking solution in his mind. The presence of the girl presses one of these questions irresistibly to the forefront of his consideration. At Mazagan the ladies are invited by an officers' guide to visit the harem of the Kaid, where the beautiful English girl, separated from the party, is trapped by the wily owner, from whose hands she is duly rescued, at the eleventh hour, by Mohammed el Yumar, the Moorish Prince. Many adventures follow—amid strange scenes are enacted against a background of vivid Oriental colour, and in the end East and West effect a union, finding that "love levels all."

The Lotus Lantern.

MARY IMLAY TAYLOR

Author of "The Reaping," "The Impersonator," "My Lady Clancarty," etc.

A love story of great charm and dramatic power, whose scene is laid in Japan of to-day. Lieut. John Holland, a military attaché of the British Embassy, and betrothed to the daughter of the British Ambassador, while witnessing the Buddhist festival of lanterns, symbolizing ships of the souls of the dead, meets Umé-San, who had been sold by her relatives and had become a Geisha girl in a Tokyo tea garden. A plot has been formed to place her in the power of an unscrupulous and cruel Japanese prince. Holland's sympathy is first enlisted, and finally he falls passionately in love with the little Japanese girl, pure, sweet, and devout, notwithstanding her surroundings. The story moves with dramatic force, is filled with interest from the opening chapter to the end, and Umé (flower of the plum) is one of the tenderest and dearest heroines of fiction.

Damosel Croft.

R. MURRAY GILCHRIST

Author of "The Courtesy Dame," "The Two Goodwins," "The Firstborn," etc.

The heroine of this book is the last of a wealthy yeoman family in the High Peak Country; the hero is a young man from Yorkshire, of equal social standing but comparatively insignificant means. Janey Maskrey is beloved by three; her choice falls at last upon the most fitting suitor, with whom, without being aware of the fact, she has been in love for some considerable time. An author of distinguished reputation—akin to the Maskreys—presents with his curious entourage a remarkable contrast. Several old-world country-scenes, notably the Carrying of the Garland at Castleton, are presented with a wealth of colour. The book is full of sunlight, of happiness and of country mirth.

The Doll: A Happy Story.

VIOLET HUNT

Author of "White Rose of Weary Leaf," "The Wife of Altamont."

This is a story of a woman who, having been divorced once, and having lost control of her child, invents a stratagem by which, upon her re-marriage, she thinks she will be protected from a second loss of her child should she again be divorced. How the stratagem fails and how the first child that she had lost comes into her life again, and how in the end, though her stratagem has failed, she is successful all along the line owing to the employment of purely feminine weapons, it is the purpose of this novel to show.

A Prisoner in Paradise.

H. L. VAHEY

The scenes of this story are enacted in the Malay Islands and Singapore. A British agent, after years of residence on the South Sea Islands, pines for civilization, and decides to quit. The appearance of a beautiful half-caste reconciles him to remaining. Complications with the natives arise, and flight becomes the only safety of the lovers. They fly by different routes, and the man arrives at Singapore, where the vessel carrying the woman is reported lost with all hands. The tie that bound him to the Malays thus broken, he seeks the solaces of civilisation by marrying a widow. Disillusioned, after two months he quarrels with the widow, and ships back to barbarism. Unexpectedly, he finds the Malay wife returned and awaiting him, and considers himself absolved from his recent unsuccessful marriage. The book is said to possess something of the glitter and colour of Conrad's tropical tales.

When Satan took Flesh.

A. J. ANDERSON

Author of "The Romance of Fra Filippo Lippi," etc.

In this story Satan takes flesh that he may plot a second Fall. By means of Clairvoyance he bargains for possession of a young man's body, and discovers in the doctrine of the limitation of the family a new and powerful temptation by which to wreck the human race. Mr. Anderson writes with sincerity of purpose and has a thorough knowledge of his subject, and his story is worthy of the careful attention of every thoughtful mind.

The Children of Alsace.

RENE BAZIN

Author of "The Nun," "Redemption," etc,

A story of Alsace full of this famous Author's penetrative charm. It is of Alsace conquered, of those who remain loyal to France and those who compromise with the victors. Obeile is the name of a prominent Alsatian family, the head of which goes over to the winning side. Love complications arise among the younger members of the family, such as occurred in English History in the time of the Cavaliers and Roundheads. The atmosphere of Alsace under the new government is skilfully reproduced, and the conflict of racial feeling engendered admirably portrayed. The story is full of interest and excitement, and has the added charm of historical accuracy.

Between Two Stools.

RHODA BROUGHTON

Author of "Red as a Rose is She," "Cometh up as a Flower," etc.

This story deals with the situation of a man and woman—he single, she married, who have had a liaison of ten years' duration, while the woman's husband has been lying hopelessly crippled by an accident which happened before the opening of the narrative. The interest lies in the effect upon their characters, and in the emotions of hope, fear and remorse which agitate them. The situation is complicated by the apprehensions aroused by suspicion that the heroine's half-grown daughter divines something of the truth. The introduction of an unmarried girl to the hero entangles the knot still further—a knot which is untied only on the last page.

Camilla Forgetting Herself.

H. L. VAHEY

Author of "A Prisoner in Paradise."

Novels which 'lift one out of oneself,' which are not gloomy or sordid, and are not concerned with matrimonial failures, 'problems,' and the seamy side of marital life, are none too common; so that the refreshing and stimulating story of 'the incurably romantic' Camilla and her lover-husband will be hailed with delight by those who have not come to look upon marriage as a 'doubtful adventure characterized by the total surrender of freedom.' It is a humorous, 'lovey' and wholesome story, without a 'sugary flavour.' From the first page to the last line—in which Camilla tells her husband 'a great secret'—there is a spirit of Joy and Happiness pervading the book. To those of us who are still sufficiently old-fashioned to have matrimonial ideals, and a genuine belief in the existence of enduring, all-conquering love, Camilla will make a strong appeal. Though written in a light, bantering vein, the story contains an idea—a great idea, it may be—which is nothing more or less than a plea for *real* marriages; made in Heaven or otherwise, but founded, not upon legal forms, conventions and sacrifices, but upon a union of hearts. To those who found the psychology of Mr. Vahey's last book, 'A Prisoner in Paradise' (Stanley Paul) too strong, the present volume will come as a pleasant surprise.

The Bride of Love.

KATE HORN

Author of "Edward and I and Mrs. Honeybun," "Mulberries of Daphne," "The White Owl," "Lovelocks of Diana," "Ships of Desire," etc.

A love romance full of the charm which won for "Edward and I and Mrs. Honeybun" so many admirers. Psyche is a delightful heroine, whose face is her fortune. The story tells how Psyche and her little sister, Pomander, under trying circumstances battle their way to success, and will interest all who know what it is to cherish ideals which lie outside the sphere of their environment, and who ultimately win their own reward.

The Marriage of Lenore.

ALICE M. DIEHL

Author of "A Mysterious Lover," etc.

Lenore has married more than once, and thereby hang numerous complications. Her first husband is an elderly roue, and the second, who is present at her first marriage, restores to her the bouquet which she drops, and in this act and its recognition eyes and souls meet. There is a rumour that the first husband was a bigamist. Thereupon Lenore marries her second, only to find that her first husband's *mésalliance* was no marriage and that she herself has committed bigamy. The old husband dies, and so matters are set right. The story flows on through troubles and distractions, raptures and pains, to its happy ending.

God Disposes.

PELLEW HAWKER

A novel of quick changes, rapid movements, and striking dramatic situations, which opens with the description of a dead man sitting at his library table, his hand resting on his cheque book. The surreptitious visitor who makes the discovery secures the cheque book, forges the dead man's signature, and succeeds in cashing a cheque for a large amount. On the strength of the money he poses as a rich man, pushes himself into country society, and wins the heart of Lady Angela Dawson, who is affianced to Viscount Woolmer, the son and heir of Lord Bletchford, and the elder brother of the dead man. Later he claims to be the heir to the property, but in due course is discovered and exposed. The characterisation is good, the narrative interesting and the *dénouement* all that can be desired.

The Watch Night.

HENRY BETT

A story of adventure in the exciting years of 1741-1746. The hero, when a young man in London, comes under the influence of Whitefield and Wesley, and joins the Methodists. Later he becomes involved in Jacobite plots in Lincolnshire and Northumberland, and falls in love with a lady who is acting as one of the Pretender's agents in England. The Jacobites suspect that he is a spy upon them, and he is kidnapped and carried to Holland. There his life is attempted, and he learns that the English Government has offered a reward for his apprehension. Since he cannot return, he journeys to the borders of Bohemia to visit Herrhut, the headquarters of the Moravian Brethren. Here he finds himself in the midst of the second Silesian war. He sees Frederick the Great, and meets the heroine once more unexpectedly at Dresden. It would be unfair to unravel the complex plot with all its surprises, it will suffice to say that while this is a lively narrative of love, intrigue, and adventure which hurries the reader on from page to page, it is also a serious attempt, the first in English fiction, to give a faithful picture of the life of the Eighteenth Century Moravians and Methodists. There are vivid glimpses of many famous men, especially John Wesley.

A Woman with a Purpose. ANNA CHAPIN RAY

With coloured frontispiece by Frank Snapp.

In characterization, in dramatic force, and in artistic treatment this is the best story Miss Ray has yet written. It deals with the married life of a strong, successful, self-willed man of affairs to a girl who has tried to support herself by her pen, and in failing has retained her high ideals and her respect for her own opinions. The story is so full of the life of to-day that it stirs our emotions while it delights us with its absorbing plot. People of rare quality and reality are portrayed, vital problems are inspiringly handled, and a love story of power and originality is developed to its logical conclusion.

Love's Old Sweet Song. CLIFTON BINGHAM

Mr. Clifton Bingham, who, thirty years ago, wrote the words of the famous song bearing this title, which is known and sung all the world over, has in this new novel—the first he has written—woven his sympathetic verses into a most interesting and human story, both dramatic and pathetic. Though containing only five characters (excepting the dog) it touches lightly and tenderly the chords of human life in a manner that will appeal, as in Molloy's song, to every heart. It is a book that will be appreciated by everyone who has heard or sung "Just a Song at Twilight, when the Lights are Low," and should make an appropriate gift book to lovers of music.

The Activities of Lavie Jutt. MARGUERITE and
ARMIGER BARCLAY. Author of "The Kingmakers," "The Worsleys," etc.

Lavie, the heiress of a millionaire, is taken into society—for a handsome consideration. She is resourceful as well as charming, and when she falls in love with the impecunious Lord Loamington, who keeps a hat shop, she is able to tender very valuable advice. But Lavie is not satisfied with talking; she is full of activity and inventiveness, and she "makes things hum." This story of her many activities is bright and out of the common.

Opal of October. JOY SHIRLEY

For those born in the month of October, the opal is said to be a lucky stone, and this novel is based upon the assumption that it is so. It is a story of the times of the soothsayers and the witches, when people were all more or less trying to discover the philosopher's stone which turns everything to gold. The witch in this case is a young girl of great beauty, who narrowly escapes the stake.

The Mystery of Red Marsh Farm. ARCHIBALD H. MARSHALL. Author of "The Squire's Daughter," "Exton Manor," etc.

This novel deals with the mysterious disappearance of a child, who is heir to a property consisting of an old Manor House and a large marshland farm, which has been in the family for generations. Many people are concerned in the mystery, and suspicion falls first on one, then on the other, but the police fail to clear it up. The mystery is solved by a young squire who is in love with the sister of the missing child, but not until he has travelled half round the world in search of the solution.

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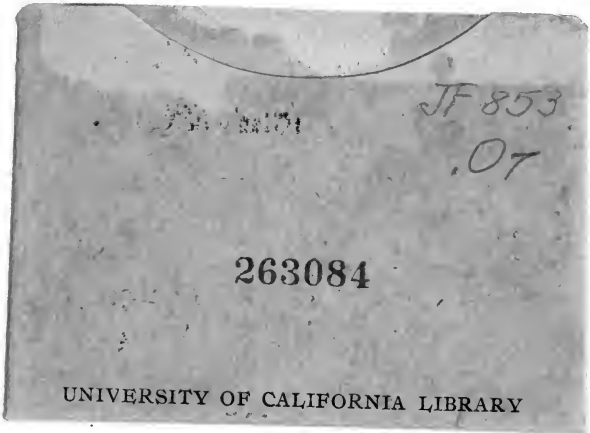
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