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BIBLE TEXTS

ON

WOMAN'S PRISTINE POSITION

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."—ISAIAH viii. 20.

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1880.

"The love of individual liberty is certainly one of the essential characteristics of human nature, and one which is to be respected as the condition of true dignity both in man and woman."

"There is a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt.
—*Eccles.* viii. 9.

Bible Texts on Woman's Pristine Position.

A CONSIDERATION of the legislature of this country as regards woman led to an examination of God's law on this subject, and to the linking together a few texts from the Bible as to the Divine teaching and direction.

As the completed humanity consists of male and female, so must the humanity of Christ also consist of male and female, and must be in perfect harmony with His Godhead, mankind being created in the image of God. As Eve, "the mother of all living," was taken from man, so "The Man," Christ Jesus, who is the Author of life, took His humanity from woman; thus, as Adam was the source from which the woman was taken, so, in her turn, woman was the honoured source of the human life of the second Adam.

Christ, in taking our perfect humanity, undertook to raise mankind to spiritual freedom and moral purity, including woman as well as man in His grand philanthropy, and treated with marked disapprobation everything that sought to humble the one sex, in order to exalt the other. And He was a Teacher, not for the age but for all time; and woman owes her restoration to social equality with man to the lofty respect shown to her by Jesus of Nazareth.

Thus an indignity cannot be offered to womanhood without debasing manhood, and casting reproach on the teaching and humanity of Christ, the Redeemer of our race.

THE FIRST THOUGHT SUGGESTED IS UNITY IN
CREATION.

First, in the council of the Trinity, before the foundations of the world were laid, "God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image: in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them" (Gen. i. 26, 27).

And again in chapter v. 1, 2, in recording the generation of Adam, "In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam (or red earth, the generic name of the species) in the day when they were created."

When God brought the woman to Adam, he (Adam) said, "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. ii. 23, 24).

Our Lord quotes these words with the addition: "They twain shall be one flesh." (See Matt. xix. 5; Mark x. 8. Also Eph. v. 21.)

The existence of the woman in the man before she was formed may be inferred. As it is not said as in the case of Adam, God breathed into her nostrils the

breath of life, they may have existed as one, until Eve was builded (as in the margin), which is also implied in the second Adam. "There is neither male nor female in Christ Jesus."

Humanity being complete, dominion was given to them conjointly. Adam said, "A man shall cleave to his wife, not rule over her." In the state of innocence the woman required no protection, so the male (man) did not stand to woman in the relation of protector, but he stood in need of help and companionship, and was in the position of requiring the help of a co-worker.

These quotations establish the fact, that the dominion and possession of the earth and its creatures was given to man in his dual nature, woman being then invested in joint authority and possession. Being in the image of God, there could be no subjection of one half of humanity to the other (and that the completing half), else they would not have been in the image of God. They were co-equal, like the co-equal persons in the Godhead.

THE FALL AND ITS PUNISHMENT BROUGHT SHAME
AND SORROW TO BOTH MAN AND WOMAN.

This state of perfect union and fellowship was enjoyed by man until Eve yielded to the serpent's promises, and in her fall brought upon herself, as a consequence, the rule of him who had been her co-equal companion in their unfallen state. So that, instead of being "as God, knowing good and evil" (Gen. iii. 5), she brought herself into the position that was foretold: "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

In Gen. ix. 25, a curse is pronounced on Canaan: "A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren." And

St. Paul, in Ephes. vi. 5-8, exhorts "servants (slaves) to be obedient to their own masters," be they the bondsmen of master or mistress; but no one now-a-days defends slavery on the ground of this prophetic curse. Eve's subjection was not a curse, but simply a prophetic announcement of the consequences of sin.

By his fall Adam having lost the image of God, could not be raised to a higher relation to woman than that of his original one: the punishment, therefore, of subjection, in the woman's case, was the outcome of sin. She being first in the transgression, this (her subjection) was not a blessing to Adam, but, on the contrary, as she partook of his punishment in the curse of the ground, so in like manner he suffered loss in her "desire becoming subject" to him; thus losing in a great measure her help, and being once more so far alone, which God at first pronounced as "not good." Man, in the blindness of his sinful nature, then assumed to himself the position of "Lord of the Creation," arrogating to himself alone supreme power in the place of conjoint rule; but though man did, God never reversed his own command to them, conjointly to "subdue and have dominion."

Woman's punishment implied that she not only should have personal suffering, but also, in her position as mother and joint head of all living, all posterity must suffer with her, and that henceforth the stronger should rule the weaker, not only in the case of man over woman, but also the stronger man over the weaker man. Hence wars, oppression, and despotism.

The first instance we have of this being exemplified is in the history of Cain's fratricide (Gen. iv. 8).

After that came the time "when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born

unto them" (Gen. vi. 1), and "the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and took them wives of all whom they chose" (Gen. vi. 2). "There were giants in the earth in those days" (Gen. vi. 4).

"Then God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowl of the air: for it repenteth me that I have made them" (Gen. vi. 5-7). And so God sent His flood upon the earth, which destroyed the world lying in wickedness, with the exception of Noah and his family.

On the re-peopling of the world after the flood, wickedness and oppression again predominated in the earth. Hence, from the lawlessness which prevailed with regard to women, the Patriarchs were subject to fear of their lives—for example, "When Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman, that she was very fair" (Gen. xii. 14), and on to the end of the chapter. Again, in Gerar, Abraham was placed in the same circumstances (Gen. xx. 2-18). Also Isaac, with regard to Rebekah, his wife, in the same place (Gen. xxvi. 7-11).

In the days of Lot we have the record of the awful destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah—showing that cruelty to woman never ends with her, but every man's hand is turned against his fellow. Witness the crowd pressing towards the house of Lot. "The men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all people from every quarter" (Gen. xix. 4). And even Lot had fallen so

morally low that, from the fear of his fellow-citizens, he was willing to sacrifice his own daughters to these Sodomites.

We might also point to the cases of Jacob and Esau, of Joseph and his brethren, of the oppression of the children of Israel in Egypt, &c., but enough has been quoted to show the immense sufferings and sorrow arising from the rule of the stronger over the weaker. The whole Book of Esther, also, is an illustration of this,—

ONENESS IN CHRIST, AND UNITY IN REDEMPTION.

The oneness of male and female, in each participating in the other's punishment, has been shown, and now we come to their entire unity in redemption, as accomplished by the one living Head, Christ Jesus, who, while declaring Himself to be the Son of God, always takes to Himself the name of the Son of Man, though born of a woman.

In Psalm xxii. 20, the original of "my darling" is in the feminine, "which some think refers to the human nature of Christ as united to the Deity."—*Scott*. So also is Wisdom in the feminine in Prov. ch. i. v. 20, ch. viii., ch. ix. v. 1.

In Psalm xxx. 10, also liv. 4, God is addressed as "my helper," the same name as God Himself bestowed on woman at the beginning ("helpmeet").

In the typical sacrifices of Christ a female is taken for a sin-offering. "If any one of the common people sin through ignorance, . . . then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned" (Levit. iv. 27, 28). A female only here is offered to show that Christ, as Head and expiatory Substitute of humanity, is typified by a female. *Scott* remarks, "That it is to be observed here that the

words 'a sweet savour to the Lord' (Levit. iv. 31) are added to none of the sin-offerings but this of the private Israelite."

A female is again ordered in the trespass-offering (see Levit. v. 6), without the option of a male. Again, in Numbers vi. 14, a ewe lamb is offered for a sin-offering when the days of the separation of the Nazarite are fulfilled. For the water of separation the ashes of a red heifer were used (Num. xix.). This is a purification from sin, an atoning sacrifice for sins of the deep dye of scarlet. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow." This is typified by the red colour of the heifer. The expiation of the law for murder when the crime is concealed is also a heifer. "And the elders of the city shall wash their hands over the head of the heifer slain in the valley" (Deut. xxi. 6).

When God covenanted with Abram to give him and his posterity the land of Canaan for possession, we find two of the typical sacrifices there used were females (Gen. xv. 9).*

WOMAN, THOUGH FIRST IN THE TRANSGRESSION, WAS FIRST TO HEAR AND PROCLAIM THE GLAD TIDINGS OF SALVATION.

It is as the seed of the woman that salvation is first promised; and again, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel" (Isa. vii. 14). Eve first spoke her faith in the promised

* When this covenant is renewed, and Abram's name (a high father) is changed to Abraham (the father of a great multitude), Sarai's name (my princess) is also changed to Sarah (princess of the multitude.) See also Isaiah li. 1, 2.

seed by her words, "I have gotten a man from the Lord" (Gen. iv. 1). "Some think these words may be rendered, 'I have acquired a man, even Jehovah.'"—*Scott*.

Hannah, in her sublime, prophetic song, is the first to mention in Scripture the name "Anointed," or "Messiah." (1 Sam. ii. 10.)

In the New Testament, when the Messiah came to restore all things, first to the Virgin Mary was made known His advent. Next, by her to her cousin, Elizabeth, who recognised in Mary the mother of her Lord, saying, "And whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke i. 43). And Mary in her magnificat acknowledged the prophetic nature of Hannah's song, and realised in her "My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit doth rejoice in God my Saviour" (Luke i. 46) the fulfilment of the glorious prophecy of Hannah.

When our Saviour was presented in the temple, Anna the prophetess was the first to proclaim His advent to all those assembled there (Luke ii. 38).

When Mary anointed the feet of Jesus she did it to His burial, being the first to believe in His death as the Antitype of all the sin-offerings.

The woman of Samaria was the first Christian missionary to her countrymen, and was also the first to whom Christ foretold the end of the Jewish ritual. The veil of the temple, we may say, was first rent at Jacob's well; and to this humble Samaritan woman did Christ first disclose Himself as the promised Messiah.

The Syro-Phœnician woman was the first recorded believer in Christ in her country.

The women of Jerusalem were the first and only ones to weep for the suffering humanity of our Lord.

Pilate's wife was the first and only one to counsel him to "have nothing to do with that just man."

Mary Magdalene, and the other women, were the first at the sepulchre, and were commissioned by Christ Himself first to carry the glad tidings of His resurrection to the disciples; and next, the company of women from Galilee were commissioned to be the second witnesses and messengers of His resurrection.

When Paul, by a vision, was called to go over into Macedonia, he found there a company of women who were wont to congregate by the river side for prayer, and there, by the conversion of Lydia, "whose heart the Lord opened," was formed the nucleus of the first European Church (Acts xvi. 10-14).

WOMEN HAVE BEEN THE SUCCOURERS OF THE CHURCH AND HER MEMBERS IN ALL AGES.

In the Old Testament we read of Rebekah, when her children struggled within her, that she enquired of her Lord, saying, "Why am I thus?" and the Lord said unto her, "Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." And she, believing the word of the Lord, loved Jacob as the child of promise; and when it came that Isaac would have given the blessing to Esau, she (by a subterfuge, though not to be justified) secured to Jacob his birthright, and afterwards saved his life from the murderous hand of his angry brother by gaining his father's consent to his sojourning in Haran.

When Israel was in bondage in Egypt, the two

Israelitish midwives, Shiprah and Puah, feared God, and did not as the king commanded them, but saved the male children alive. Therefore God dealt well with these midwives, "because they feared the Lord," "that He made them houses" (Ex. i. 17-20).

The mother and sister of Moses saved him from being destroyed by Pharaoh's decree; and the king's own daughter, regardless of her father's cruel law, rescued the future deliverer and law-giver of Israel from a watery grave, and educated him as her own son, in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.

When gifts were brought for the tabernacle, "all the women who were wise-hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun." "And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun goat's hair" (Ex. xxxv. 25, 26),

When the children of Israel had been led through the wilderness, and arrived under the leadership of Joshua at the borders of Canaan, Rahab received and hid the spies (Joshua ii. 15-20).

By a woman God punished the wickedness of Abimelech and saved Israel (Judges ix. 53).

Ruth followed her mother-in-law, Naomi, out of Moab and succoured her in Bethlehem, and was honoured to be one of the ancestors of our Lord (Ruth i. 1-22).

Michal, Saul's daughter, saved David, her husband, out of the murderous hand of her father (1 Samuel xix. 11, 12).

Abigail being made aware by one of her young men of the churlishness of her husband, Nabal, towards David, "the Lord's anointed," and his followers, at once made haste and took ample provision for them, and prevented the meditated vengeance of David, and received a blessing for the advice which kept him from shedding blood,

"and avenging himself with his own hand" (1 Samuel xxv. 14-25).

A woman by her wisdom saved the city of Bethmaachah from being destroyed by Joab (2 Sam. xx. 16-22). Her appeal to Joab is very striking (verse 19): "I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel; thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel; why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?" Then we are told in verse 22, "The woman went to all the people in her wisdom," and by following her wise advice the city was preserved.

Joash was preserved alive by his aunt Jehosheba and his nurse for six years in the temple (2 Kings xi. 2, 3).

Elijah was maintained by a widow woman of Zarephath, in the time of sore famine, for many days, or, as in the margin, a full year (1 Kings xxii. 9).

Elisha, the Tishbite, was entertained by a woman of wealth and piety at Shunem, who built him "a little chamber on the wall," that he might turn in thither (2 Kings iv. 8, 9, 10).

When Nehemiah saw that Jerusalem lay waste, and the gates were burnt with fire, he appealed unto the people, saying, "Come, let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that it be no more a reproach" (Neh. ii. 17); and, in answer to this appeal, the daughters of Shallum (who was ruler of half of Jerusalem) took their part in rebuilding the wall (Neh. iii. 12).

Passing on to the New Testament, we find the aged Elizabeth, the mother and succourer of the infant John the Baptist, the forerunner of our Saviour (Luke i).

To the Virgin Mary was entrusted the life of the incarnate God, "the Son of Man"—Mary in faith gladly accepting the glorious charge, saying, "Behold the hand-

maid of the Lord. Be it unto me according to Thy word" (Luke i. 38). Woman being a type of the Church, may it not be that Mary here typifies the Church in thus accepting Christ as Lord and Saviour, and the husband of the Church?

When Jesus passed through Bethany, "A certain woman named Martha received Him into her house" (Luke x. 38); and we know from other parts of Scripture, He made the house of Martha and Mary His home.

The poor widow who cast into the treasury the two mites had faith to give up "all that she had, even all her living," to the service of God (Mark xii. 42, 43).

The woman that was a sinner exercised the duties of hospitality which had been neglected by Simon the Pharisee, while Jesus sat in his house at meat, by washing His feet with her tears, and anointing them with precious ointment (Luke vii. 44).

We are also told, many other women ministered unto Christ of their substance (Luke viii. 2, 3).

Lydia constrained Paul and his companions to be her visitors, saying, "If ye have judged me faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there" (Acts xvi. 14).

Phebe the servant (or, as it should be rendered, minister) of the Church at Cenchrea, is introduced by Paul to the Romans "as a succourer of many, and of myself also" (Rom. xvi. 2).

WOMAN'S AUTHORITY IN HUMANITY BEFORE AND AFTER THE FALL.

When marriage was instituted before the Fall, no

authority was given to man over his wife; but, as already seen, their authority was conjoint (Gen. i.)

That woman's authority, like her dominion, remained after the Fall, would appear from Gen. iv. 28: "And she (Eve) bare a son, and called his name Seth; for God (said she) has appointed me another seed instead of Abel." It is the mother here who names the child.

Again, Leah and Rachel, apparently without consulting their husband Jacob (Gen. xxix. 32), named their respective sons, giving them names expressive of their own personal trials and consolations (Gen. xxx. 1).

Miriam led the responses to the triumphal song of Moses (Exodus xv. 20, 21); and by the prophet Micah she is classed with Moses and Aaron as a leader. "I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam" (Micah vi. 4).

The fifth commandment of the moral law is, "Honour thy father and thy mother" (Exodus xx. 12); and to prevent any difference in respect, esteem, reverence, and obedience, she (the mother) is named before the father in Lev. xix. 3: "Ye shall fear every man his mother and father."

"Mother," besides being used to signify a parent, has a still wider significance; for it also means a woman who is superior in age, station, gifts, or grace, or who deals tenderly with any one. Thus Deborah was a mother in Israel; for, with tenderness and valour, she judged, instructed, and governed that people.—*Fisher's Catechism*.

In the fourth commandment it is implied that the joint heads (father and mother) are to enforce the keeping of the Sabbath on their children and dependants.

In the Levitical law, the command is, "He that curseth or disobeyeth his father or mother shall be put to death" (Lev. xx. 9); and in Deut. xxi. 18, to show the great

regard God has to the authority of father and mother, it is said, "If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, &c.;" (ver. 19), "That his father and his mother shall lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of the city;" (ver. 21), "And all the men of the city shall stone him with stones, that he die."

In Prov. i. 8: "My son, forsake not the law of thy mother;" and again, in the sixth chapter and verse 20, the same injunction is repeated.

Christ, in reproving the inconsistency of the Pharisees, says in Matthew xv. 4-6: "Honour thy father and mother, and he that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; and honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition."*

In the time of the judges, Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, judged Israel; and in the end of the 5th verse it is said: "All the children of Israel came to her for judgment" (Judges iv. 4, 5).

In 2 Kings xxii. 4-14, we read, that in the reign of Josiah, when Hilkiah, the high priest, found the book of the law in the house of the Lord, and when it was read before the king, he (the king) commanded Hilkiah, the high priest, with others, to go and enquire of the Lord; so they went to Huldah, the prophetess, the wife of Shallum, who dwelt at Jerusalem, in the college, and they communed (or asked council) of this mother in Israel.†

* "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. xv. 9).

† She was a contemporary of Isaiah.

In the words of King Lemuel, the prophecy which his mother taught him, the description of a virtuous woman implies independent action and authority (Prov. xxxi. 10-31).

In the New Testament we have the highest example of obedience to the authority of parents in our blessed Saviour, who, we are told, after sitting with the doctors in the temple, "both hearing and asking them questions," went down with his parents to Nazareth, "and was subject unto them" (Luke xi. 46-51).

The apostle Paul, when giving directions to Timothy as to his behaviour towards the Church at Ephesus, writes: "Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father, the elder women as mothers, and the younger as sisters." The elders of both sexes here are to be treated with deference and submission (1 Tim. v. 1, 2).

In the apostolic salutations in the 16th chapter of Romans, Paul greets Priscilla, and her husband Aquila, "as his helpers in Christ Jesus." Also the Church that is in their house. And, in the 12th verse of the same chapter, he says: "Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis which laboureth much in the Lord."

In Hebrews xiii. 7, Paul's injunction there is, "Remember those that have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." And again, in verse 19: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as those that must give an account." The obedience here is on the ground of a return for labouring and watching for their souls.

In 1 Cor. xvi. 16, this injunction is once more re-

peated in these words: "That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us and laboureth." Here, again, the helping and labouring is the reason given for submission, whether the labourer be man or woman.

THE INSPIRED SONGS AND SAYINGS OF WOMEN FORM
PART OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

See the triumphant songs of Miriam and Deborah; the prophetic outpourings of Hannah; the words of the prophecy that King Lemuel's mother taught him; the touching words of Ruth's constancy; the magnificat of Mary; the wonderful address of Elizabeth; and the sayings of many other women.

Among the prophets may be mentioned Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, Huldah, Elizabeth, Mary, Anna, and the four daughters of Philip.

WOMEN HAD POSSESSION IN LAND WITH THEIR
BRETHREN.

"Job had seven sons, and three daughters, named Jemima, Kezia, and Keren-happuch; and their father gave them an inheritance among their brethren" (Job xlii. 13, 14).

The daughters of Zelophehad—Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah—came before Eleazar the priest, and Joshua, and before the princes, saying, "The Lord commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brethren. Therefore, according to the commandment of the Lord, He gave them an inheritance among the brethren of their father" (Joshua xvii. 3, 4).

CHRIST'S TREATMENT OF WOMEN.

As already seen, Christ gave filial honour and submission to His mother; and, in His last agony on the Cross, He provided a home and protector for her (John xix. 26, 27).

Christ selected the dwelling of the sisters of Bethany for His home.

Christ taught women personally; for instance, the woman of Samaria, to whom He taught the spirituality of worship in the Gospel. "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet in Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John iv. 21-24).

Mary sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His word, and was commended by Him for choosing the better part (Luke x. 42). Again, when she anointed His feet, Christ said, "Whosoever this gospel is preached there shall also this that this woman hath done be told for a memorial of her" (Matt. xxvi. 13).

And when, on the same occasion, she was accused of waste by the disciples, Christ defended her, saying, "Let her alone; against the day of my burying hath she kept this."

When the woman that was a sinner was accused by Simon, Christ defended her, and drew a comparison between the treatment He had received from her, and that He had received from Simon.

Christ commended the faith of the Syro-Phœnician woman (whom His disciples would have sent away as a troubler of their Master), saying, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt" (Matt. xv. 28).

Christ also taught the groups of women who ministered unto Him, as may be gathered from the address of the angels at the sepulchre, saying: "He is not here, but is risen; remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee. And they remembered His words" (Luke xxiv. 6-8).

UNDER THE SPIRITUAL DISPENSATION THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT WAS BESTOWED EQUALLY ON MAN AND WOMAN.

We read that on the day of Pentecost both men and women received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

"There appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Then Peter standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them: Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell in Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken unto my voice. This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel (Joel ii. 28, 29), And it shall come to pass in the last days (saith God), I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy" (Acts ii. 3, 4, 16, 17, 18).

In comparing the above periods in the history of the human race with those passages in the epistles which treat of the relative position of man and woman, the federal headship of the first and second Adam must be kept in mind. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Rom. v. 19). This makes man the representative head of the human race; therefore, on those occasions wherein Christ is symbolically represented, the man represents, as in most of the types of the Old Testament.* The priests were men; and the first-born males, who opened the matrix, were consecrated to God, not that the first-born were better than others in the family, but as being typical of Him "who was the first-born among many brethren." So in the commemorative ordinance of the Supper, the man is representer and dispenser, but this does not invest him with any priestly authority over the communicating congregation. Again, the keys of the visible Church were given to the man, as representing "Him who opens and no man shuts;" but neither does this entitle man to lord it over "God's heritage," as does the Church of Rome alike over man and woman.

Christ, as if in order to prevent those who were to represent Him from assuming more than a representative position, instructed His disciples by example. We read that "Supper being ended" (John xiii. 2) "He (Jesus) riseth from supper, and laid aside His garment, and took a towel, and girded Himself" (John xiii. 4). And having washed the disciples' feet, he sat down,

* As the types had no inherent efficacy, so the representative has no inherent excellence.

and addressed them, saying, "If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you" (John xiii. 14, 15). Thus showing them that they are His servants only when they humbly serve the Church.

The sacrament of baptism also, in as far as it signifies the keys, and admits into the visible Church, is administered by the man.

It is to be apprehended that it is in this federal and representative sense that St. Paul says to the Corinthians, "That the head of every woman is the man, and the head of every man (that is mankind) is Christ" (1 Cor. xi. 3); and in Colossians i. 18, "And He (Christ) is the head of the body, the Church." As may also be inferred from what Paul says afterwards, "Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman, but all things of God" (1 Cor. xi. 11, 12).

The man is the image and glory of God, only in Christ, the second Adam, in whom man and woman are included: the woman is the glory of the man (or mankind) as being the crowning work of creation, the completion of humanity.

The covering of the head of the woman—spoken of by St. Paul (1 Cor. xi. 13, 14), when addressing the Gentile Churches—when praying and prophesying in the Church, refers evidently to the veil which from the corrupt state of society they were constrained to wear; the laying aside of which might make them liable to be mistaken for courtezans, and thus bring discredit and scandal on the Christian Church. It would appear that these Corin-

thian women were imprudent in laying aside this piece of dress before society was sufficiently purified.

It is not easy now to understand what is meant by its being a glory for a woman to have long hair for a covering, and a shame for a man to have long hair, as in nature the contrary is the case, a man's beard being a covering over his face. Also in the case of the Nazarite, "No razor shall come upon his head." (See Judges xiii. 5, and 1 Sam. i. 11).*

It would appear from the exhortations of St. Paul to the Corinthian and Ephesian Churches that the women were apt in their newly recovered liberty to overstep their position as equals, and also to disturb the assemblies by too much questioning, and they are therefore exhorted to more quietness, as opposed to clamour. It is therefore an impropriety that is rebuked, as when he says on another occasion: "Give none offence, neither to the Jews nor to the Gentiles, or to the Church of God."

With regard to women teaching in public, it is clear that "they spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance" on the day of Pentecost, and the Spirit of prophecy was continued to be given, as in the case of the four daughters of Philip.

Priscilla and Phebe seemed to have been teaching ministers in the church.

"The elect lady" also is exhorted "not to receive those who are unsound in the faith," "neither to bid them God speed" (2 John). All this shows that women were

* In the prophetic judgments denounced against Moab, shame and humiliation are indicated by baldness and loss of beard. "On all heads there shall be baldness, and every beard shall be cut off" (Isa. xv. 2). "For every head shall be bald, and every beard clipped" (Jer. xlviii. 37). If the want of hair in man is a humiliation, the having it surely indicates the opposite.

to take a certain part and surveillance in and over word and doctrine in the Church.

The injunction, "Wives submit yourselves to your own husbands, as unto the Lord" (Eph. v. 22), appears to mean that the wife is to do this in return for the husband leaving father and mother and cleaving to his wife, loving and giving himself for her, even to the sacrifice of his life.

The context in which Peter brings forward the same subject indicates that it was a matter of Christian expediency; for, after advising the strangers scattered abroad "to submit themselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, and servants or slaves, not only to the gentle, but also to the froward, adds, "Likewise," for the same reason, "ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that if any obey not the word, they also may, without the word, be won by the conversation of the wives" (1 Peter iii. 1). He then goes on to quote Sarah's obedience to Abraham as an example (ver. 6) saying: "Whose daughters ye are, so long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement," evidently meaning that it was to be no servile submission.

WHEN THE FUTURE GLORY OF THE CHURCH IS FORE-
TOLD, THE DAUGHTERS ARE EVER PARTICU-
LARISED, AS IN THE FOLLOWING TEXTS:—

"The Lord gave the word, and great was the company (of women) of those that published it" (Ps. lxxviii. 11).

"That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner-stones polished after the similitude of a palace" (Ps. cxliv. 12).

"And they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing-fathers, and their queens thy nursing-mothers" (Isaiah xlix. 22, 23).

"Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth" (Isaiah xliii. 6).

"Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side" (Isaiah lx. 4).

And in Joel ii. 28, 29, as has already been quoted, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God," etc.

And finally, Christ, in answer to the Sadducees, says, "In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven" (Matt. xxii. 30). This answer may have given rise to the well-known traditional saying of our Lord, preserved by the early fathers, who, when asked when the kingdom of God should come, replied, "When the male shall be as the female, and the female as the male, and neither male nor female."

But the seminal principle of all progress must ever be found in a proper sense of the inherent dignity of humanity, and in the realization of the truth, that the two halves of the human race are essentially equal in their nature and inalienable rights. Such an idea was unknown to antiquity. The Greek and the Roman despised all other races, and also treated women as their inferiors. Socrates only gave expression to the general feeling of his country and age, when he thanked the gods for being man, not beast; male, not female; Greek, not barbarian.

It was left to Christ to proclaim the brotherhood of

nations, by revealing God as their common Father in heaven, by His commission to preach the Gospel to all nations, and to restore woman to her original position, although through man's assumed rule she has not yet attained to the fulness of her original authority and possession and dominion.

As it was a consideration of the unjust laws of this country as regards woman which led to an examination of God's law on this subject, a few of them may here be specified. The right of all terrestrial things belonging equally to man and woman, it must be wrong in man to make laws to counteract God's original dispensation of joint possession, by excluding woman from her inheritance. For example, by the law of entail a man in the present day may by will exclude any female from inheriting any property belonging to him at the time of his death for all time coming. (See Isaiah v. 8.)

Then, again, by the law of the land, if a father dies intestate possessing landed property, it goes to the eldest son; the younger sons and the daughters, having no share, may be left in poverty. This is an injustice which often reacts, engendering pauperism, as in many cases the poor invest their all in house property. And, in the upper classes, how many women are thrown penniless on the world, or indebted for a bare subsistence to societies founded to save them from starvation.

Although the younger sons often do suffer also from this unjust law, still they have the advantage of college education to fit them for remunerative professions, from which their sisters are almost entirely excluded; while from time to time, Government grants are bestowed on these educational institutions, out of taxes towards which women largely contribute.

To redress this wrong women, now aided by good men, are raising colleges for themselves, but no Government grants come to them.

This male appropriation of property and mental culture is unjust, and injurious to both parties, engendering in men selfishness and oppression, and in women either an irritating sense of injustice, or a servile endurance of wrongs; than which states of mind nothing can be more hurtful to the character of both parties.

The confiscation of the whole property of the wife, under the English Common Law, is vindicated on the ground that the husband is the breadwinner (although this is by no means always the case); but even if it were so, the wife has a work equally onerous with the husband in dispensing the means which he provides, thus simply making a division of labour.*

But worse than all this deprivation of property and hindrance to mental culture, is the setting aside of the fifth commandment, which is ignored when the law makes it legal for a man, by word or will, to remove from the care and authority of the mother her children, and place them under trust; thus depriving her of the honour inculcated in the commandment, as well as the authority which God has given the mother over her

* *Conjugal Rights Act*, 1861, gave married women the right of a reasonable provision for her support out of her own money before satisfying the claims of her husband or his creditors. By an Act passed in 1877, the wages and earnings of married women in Scotland are declared to be separate estate, not falling under the husband's rights. The Bill last year, 1879, was intended to go further, and to give married women a general right to their property of every description free from their husband's control. It did not pass. It is to be re-introduced next Session. In England, a wife can only own her earnings up to £200.

children. On this head we may quote: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean: but now are they holy"—(1 Cor. vii. 14)—mother and father holding the same relation to their children.

But the culminating law of oppression to women are those Acts passed in 1866 and 1869, covertly introduced by a bill without a preamble, by which, in certain subjected garrison and seaport towns in England and Ireland, the law of evidence is suspended, and any woman may be imprisoned without a warrant on the suspicion of one official spy sent down to these towns under the authority of the Admiralty and War Office.

And even if the woman can prove her innocence of the sin imputed to her, the cruel law still treats her as if she were guilty by making her bear the legal expense of her own defence; while her false accuser goes scot-free, as having only fulfilled the unrighteous power committed to him.

The great Magna Charta, which secures the liberties of the people of this country, holds that no person shall be tried on rumour or suspicion alone, but by the evidence of lawful witnesses; and that none shall be imprisoned or dispossessed of their goods but by the law of the land.—See "*Our Constitution*," by *Ewald*, p. 214.

The Charter corresponds also with the Levitical law. In Deut. xvii. 6, we read that, at the mouth of two witnesses or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; also in Numbers xxxv. 30. And the homage that Christ and the Father pay to the law of evidence is shown in John viii. 10-17: "And yet if I judge my judgment is true; for I am not alone, but

I and the Father that sent me;" (ver. 19), "It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true." Again, in Heb. vi. 17, 18: "Wherein, God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath;" that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." And in 1 Tim. v. 19, Paul admonishes Timothy thus: "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses."

How different both from the Divine law, and from the guarantee of our liberties, is the administration of these immoral enactments alluded to.

Seeing, then, that these things are so, can this country expect to escape from the woe pronounced in Isaiah x. 1, 2: "Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!" Again, in Psalm xciv. 20: "Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?"

This establishment of a spy police puts a power in the hands of the Government which may, at no distant time, subvert the liberties of men as well as women.

This system of espionage is now making the Emperor of Russia experience the fatal effects of delegating power to secret emissaries.

The French President is also under the same bondage to this long-standing system of espionage, and he and

his Cabinet cannot work out the reforms which they now see necessary to save the country from the consequences of the low morality to which France has been brought by this system; while we, in our blindness, have adopted laws, of which it may be said that their wickedness is only equalled by their folly, as they increase the evil they profess to cure.*

All these inequalities of law show the danger to the right of both the halves of mankind by the legislative power being vested entirely in the hands of one portion. In a representative country the suffrage should be equally in the hands of those possessing the necessary qualifications, whether they be men or women. Until this inequality is done away with, the effect will naturally be, that might will continue to constitute right, and the practical result will most decidedly follow,

“ That they will take who have the power,
And they will keep who can.”

The clergy, who are the professed custodiers of morals and religion, cannot, consistently with their relation to the Church and the world, remain inactive when our legislators enact laws contrary to justice, morality, and the Word of God; and they may be assured that the Church will not long remain pure while surrounded by a people demoralised by immoral legislation. *Remember Lot, and the Church at Corinth!* (See also Isaiah iii. 5, and v. 20.)

* Since the above has been written, Mrs. Josephine E. Butlers' treatise, entitled, "Government by Police," has been published. It ought to be earnestly studied by all interested in the preservation of the liberty of their country.

ELECTORAL REFORM.

BY

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ELECTORAL REFORM.

A PLEA FOR JUSTICE.

HOW many prejudices of the past are proved to have been founded upon ignorance or error! and even in this age of vaunted civilization may there not exist deviations from justice and right which an almost immediate future may contemplate with wonder and astonishment? We may boast of our progress, our sense of justice, our refinement, our superiority over ages past; but to what strange anomalies can we become habituated: usage, training, not only seem to blunt our understanding, but create, if not a lazy indifference, at least a want of inclination to scrutinize too deeply questions which do not affect our immediate selves; nay, in many cases, custom actually seems to create an autocratic feeling of pre-eminence, that questions vitally affecting the interests of others are too often cast aside, not only as untenable, but as calculated to subvert our supposed "right" to superiority and dominion. But should mere prejudice—though handed down by the usages of former times—or should reason, be the standard by which to judge great questions of National importance? for questions deeply affecting even a portion of the community should not be lightly glossed. No! calmly weighed by the agreement or disagreement with the principles of Civil Liberty, Justice, Equity, Reason, the rights of humanity, these should be our guide!

Obedience to human laws is binding and sacred upon all, nevertheless should those laws unduly press upon one portion of the community, or be found incompatible with justice or consistency, then does it become the bounden duty of the honest and the thoughtful, notwithstanding the ridicule of the world, the jibes and jeers of the thoughtless; notwithstanding the contumely which may be inflicted for supporting a cause which may not be founded upon immemorial usage, or adapted to fashionable conceptions, still in point of justice does it not become a duty to shake off all lethargy of thought, and boldly battle for that which conscience, justice, and reason, declare to be the right? To create, by protests and reasonings, a public opinion not only capable of demanding but amending those laws which, though sanctioned by custom, are proved to be antagonistic to the principles of true liberty

and common sense? *For as the structure of Civil Liberty is founded upon the base of natural right, so liberty can only with justice be restrained when considered expedient for the safety and welfare of society as a whole.* The essence of all Freedom is founded upon Justice, and neither the precedents of the past, nor jurisdiction founded upon error, can give justification for partial legislation, for as direct representation is the groundwork of Political Liberty, so the restriction of a certain Class or Sex, the denial to them of certain privileges we ourselves possess, proclaim, if not a tyranny, at least an usurpation not founded upon the divine principles of justice.

All projects of Reform have ever been looked upon as the visionary dreams of wild utopians. To attack old settled abuses requires that bold courageous spirit which conscience and justice can alone inspire, for all reforms, ere successful, have had to battle with deep-rooted prejudice; the most indisputable rights belonging to humanity have ever been the rights most vehemently disputed. Freedom of Conscience—Abolition of Slavery—Freedom of the Press—Free Trade—Catholic Emancipation—Household Suffrage—and a score of other wise and judicious measures—to whom and to what do we owe the realization of their varied blessings? Were not one and all met in their early history with ridicule and sneers? How and by what means were those various reforms obtained? Through the persistent self-sacrificing advocacy of a self-denying few! was not their introduction denounced as outrageous to common sense, nay, calculated to ruin not only certain vested rights but the rights and liberties of the very nation? The force of custom so habituates us to present conditions that too few are prepared for advantages which change may produce; and as the mind progresses in knowledge, as civilization casts aside those habits of thought which custom or tradition have engendered, experience discovers that many of our prejudices are legacies bequeathed us by the past, and consequently are not only most unadapted to our present condition, but anomalous to, nay, a violation of, the groundwork or primary principles of Civil Liberty—Justice and Reason.

When F.H.F. Berkeley, M.P., annually introduced his Ballot Bill into the House of Commons was he not invariably received with laughter and derision? were not the principle and spirit of the Bill declared to be not only experimentally dangerous but altogether at variance and repugnant to all preconceived notions of British courage and independence? But from persistency of effort what has been the result? Behold! All those old degrading usages of past Elections how reformed! The drunkenness, the bribery, then all paramount, how vanished! Now peace and quietness reign in the place of turbulence and riot; thus as antipathies and prejudices are cleared aside by progressive reforms, what errors, what groundless fears, we discover in our former judgement! Change however desirable from intrinsic merit is ever deemed hazardous and dangerous by the weak and timid; but had it not been for innovations, the same old feudal system would be existing now

as a thousand years ago. As mind progresses in knowledge, so knowledge resorting to action produces change; and since we are living in a purer and more enlightened age than those barbaric eras of the past, surely the usage then adapted to the world's requirements would be repugnant to the present.

Now, by the light of Civil Liberty, are there not anomalies to be discovered even in our vaunted pure system of Government? Is not one great portion of the community deprived of all direct legislative power? Can that be a pure system of liberty which calls for passive obedience from those who have no direct voice in the creation of laws which they are called upon to obey. We cry "*that taxation without representation is robbery,*" and yet what are the conditions of the so-called freedom granted to women; are they not politically in a state of vassalage or dependence upon men; does the mere distinction of sex justly create an inequality of rights? If subjected to laws, without the slightest appearance of direct representation, can women possibly be in any other position than that of *political outcasts*? Are slavish conditions as the price of existence in accordance with the principles of Civil Liberty? We boast of justice, but what a mockery, when merely on account of sex all direct representation is denied.

Since a full and free Representative Government is considered, and properly so, as the best system of polity in a State—as calculated to be most conducive to the happiness and prosperity of the Nation—as most in accordance with the wish and will of a whole people—upon what principle of consistency can certain of our fellow-subjects be denied direct representation, especially when possessing equal responsibilities and equal qualifications as those in possession of that charter of freedom—the Franchise. What! merely through the condition of sex, grant privileges to one and deny to another, under equal conditions? Can the voice of a Nation be truly expressed when more than one-half of the inhabitants are deprived of all direct representation. No! for as legislators simply legislate for the best interests of those whom they represent, how can it be expected that those deprived of all political voice can have their important questions dispassionately considered? One-sided representation means one-sided legislation, for surely the consideration of questions deeply affecting large portions of mankind must be of a defective character, unless the opinions of the whole country by some direct means, can be taken into consideration.

Now in all well constituted states one of the grand points in the science of politics is to make the welfare of individuals coincide with the general interest; to confer no special privilege upon any one special class, but that as the interest of the whole is to be considered, direct legislative influence should be within the power of all, From the evidence of past historical facts, nay, from the evidence of our common sense, we must allow, that of all interests, the interests of the unrepresented are most likely to suffer, since in point of fact legislation is inspired by the influence of the represented, thus

in a truly Representative Nation all opinions should be, if not to the full, at least to a legitimate extent, permitted to have a voice, otherwise one-sided views, antagonistic to true freedom, must be the inevitable consequence; and should there be the total exclusion of any one class or sex; does not that very exclusion (in a professedly free country), proclaim an anomaly bordering upon injustice, needing rectification? and should there be no probability of danger in granting a just reform, based upon justice to all, surely it becomes a great and generous nation to hold out the hand of brotherhood to those who have hitherto, through custom or usage, inadvertently, as it were, been cast out the pale of citizenship. But unfortunately, how many of the reforms which the people justly demanded have at length been conceded, not from the spirit of justice, but through loud and boisterous agitation, in fact, from headstrong turbulence, bordering upon Revolution!

In a professedly Representative Nation is it not an act of injustice to grant a certain privilege to one housekeeper and deny it to another? I ask, are not all housekeepers (regardless of sex), when fulfilling certain equal conditions, entitled to equal benefits? What are the potent reasons that the enfranchisement of women housekeepers should be longer disallowed? What beneficial reason can be pointed out for unjust restriction? What possibility is there of social disaster? If deemed not sufficiently enlightened to vote, why are women deemed sufficiently enlightened to pay their share of the National expenditure? Upon what principle of justice is the right denied? What reasonable cause can be shown for their exclusion? Are not women housekeepers as a whole as well fitted, morally and intellectually, as many of the men who are now in possession of the Franchise? Does not the position of householder afford a sufficient test of useful citizenship? If so in the case of men, why not also in the case of women? Since the extension of the Franchise would cause no constitutional wrong, why deprive women of their constitutional right? Think you that because a few thousand women were added to the poll throughout the country, that anything of a revolutionary nature would be the result? What possible danger can there be to the Nation in ten or twelve women out of every hundred voters being added to the Poll; though their influence were comparatively trifling in extent, nevertheless, would there not be a direct representation of the sex as a whole? Is it of so serious an import that women housekeepers, paying Scott and Lot equally with men, should have an equality of privilege? Supposing for the sake of argument, it were proposed that men, not on account of incapacity, but in consequence of sex, should be deprived of all legislative power, what would be the result? What virtuous indignation would arise; would they not, with all the vituperation at their command, denounce so absurd, so one-sided, so unjust a proposal? Then upon what principle of logic, or justice, or common sense, can men deprive their neighbours (merely on account of sex), of that which in justice, under equal conditions, should be common to them both.

But unfortunately too many of the customs of the past seem so to have entered into the present, we become so habituated to the grossest absurdities that however we may be desirous of conferring justice upon others, nevertheless our understanding becomes, as it were, so warped through common usage or custom, that without taking the trouble to reflect we lazily deem the state of things existing must be right: trained up to certain ideas, the mind becomes tutored to travel in certain grooves, and as a consequence we blindly grovel in the ruts of antiquated usage; reason lies dormant, and a prejudice is so created, that anomalies actually antagonistic to Civil Liberty are not only tacitly permitted, but looked upon as a matter of course, as a mere natural condition.

Upon all great National questions, why should not the judgment of the Nation, by some direct means, be consulted? Even upon those great matters, Peace or War, actually the mind of more than half the Nation is not considered at all; what reason can be assigned for such injustice? One-sided partiality shows a want of that great virtue, a nonconforming to that great principle—to do to others as we would be done by. Where is the integrity, the equitable distribution of justice, when the voice of the larger portion of the community is politically gagged? I ask—where is the consistency, that because one ratepayer happens to be a man, he should as a consequence be entitled to a vote, and yet deny the privilege to another housekeeper, with the same amount of duties and liabilities, because she happens to be a woman? Does not a woman's welfare depend upon the laws and course of action adopted by the State? Then why, in the name of all that is honest, should she not be empowered to assist in the election of those from whom emanate all national measures for good or evil, equally with the man? Is it conformable to the conditions that equity demands, that one-half the persons composing the State should be placed at the dictation or discretion of the other half? Where is Civil Liberty; when one-half the community is governed by the independent will of the other half—a will over which there is no control. Why this persistency in wrong; why this hostility to justice? Is freedom of so little an account that so long as we possess the blessing ourselves we are careless, like the slave owners of old, even though others are enthralled? do not women equal men in point of number; are not their interests equally at stake? Then why deprive them of those natural inalienable rights which belong to citizenship. A class monopoly naturally implies a class dominion, and the dominancy of any special class has at least the tendency to reduce others to an abject slavish condition, thus in possessing direct representation ourselves, and depriving another great class or sex of all legislative power, what does it imply? an outrage upon common sense; in fact, a total disregard to the first principles of Civil Liberty—the rights of humanity!

Experience (that great teacher of mankind) has already demonstrated the fact that women are capable of performing higher duties than those which hitherto have been assigned them by the other sex. Will it not

be conceded that those women-householders, in the exercise of the Franchise in local matters, have generally used the privilege with prudence and discretion; hence, as a result, does it not illustrate the fact, that in point of fitness women-householders are equally entitled to share with men the Parliamentary vote? Why has the Franchise been conferred upon women for Municipal and School Board Elections? Why are they permitted to take part in the Election of Poor Law Guardians, of members of Local Boards, Churchwardens, Auditors, and other officials? because the interests of each are equally concerned in Local matters. But are they not equally interested in matters of a National character? Is Peace or War a matter of indifference to women? Is Taxation only burdensome to men? Having equal concern in the consequences of legislative enactment with men, why distinction as to privilege? Women are considered sufficiently qualified to vote with regard to local burdens, such as rates and levies, are they not equally capable of forming a judgment regarding the National expenditure, which amounts to but a very few millions more than that derived from local taxation? the qualification that gives the former equally should give the latter, otherwise the principle of consistency is set at naught: and then again, when a woman occupies the head of a household, performing similar duties and bearing equal burdens with men in like condition, by what right do we deny a power to one and give to the other. Men seem to value the Franchise, and justly so, but what just reason can be given for depriving others legally qualified but for sex; does there not seem a selfishness, a puerility of feeling, in permitting an anomaly of so flagrant a character; but after all, through the spirit of progress, the dominance of class has in a great measure been broken down, and now in point of justice and freedom, at no far distant future the dominance of sex must share an equal fate.

Most suggested reforms are denounced as being repugnant to the spirit of the Constitution, but in this instance is it so contrary to the usages of our country that a woman should exercise political power? If so, how long has the Salic law been abolished in this country? Are men alone, from their physical power and moral excellence, wholly and solely entitled to the Throne? Is it not rather a lady who holds pre-eminence over our National Government; can she not in her mercy grant actually the lives of those condemned by our very laws? Does she not possess the power of dismissing the highest Minister of State from office? Has she not the supreme command over our Military and Naval forces? Does she not possess the sole power of levying war or declaring peace; nay, does she not possess the right of closing the mouth of our very Parliament, by dissolution? Yet, placed in a different sphere, that Sovereign Lady would actually be deemed ineligible to record even a vote for a mere member of the House of Commons. To what extremes of folly, inconsistent with reason, men will run; precedent, usage, custom, seem to justify the grossest absurdity. We place the most unbounded confidence in a female ruler, and yet we hesitate to grant a mere vote to a small portion of the same

sex. Why do we view with reliance; why do we place the most unbounded confidence in the dominion of Female Sovereigns? Because under the different eras of our National existence the results of their supreme command will bear favorable comparison with that of men, for wisdom, constitutional conduct, nay, for the general well-being of the Nation, have they not severally proved the glories of the epochs over which they have reigned? and yet, if placed in a different station they would be deemed incapable of performing a simple act of public duty; actually the giving a vote would be deemed too lofty a height for their feminine conception, and yet politically at times we place them at the highest pinnacle of our Constitution. How do we act with women? we profess the greatest veneration for their goodness and virtues, and yet by denying them the vote we proclaim at least a want of confidence. We flatter, avow homage and respect for their many endearing qualities, and yet, politically, in what position do we place them—in one akin to that of thoughtless children; as beings so heedless, careless, and so ignorant, in fact, as incapable of forming a sound or correct judgment on public matters. We profess to owe the best teachings of our lives to women, and yet politically we place them in the same position as that of incarcerated felons. We declare that the best, the most prudent guides whom we have ever found in life, the most unselfish advisers, have been women; that perchance had we but followed the judicious precepts of those near and dearly loved ones, we should have been wiser, happier, better; and yet politically we deny the whole of the sex the possession of rationality; for does not the denial of the vote place them in the same category as that of the maniac or the imbecile? as beings incapable of forming a rational political judgment. How different is the course of procedure adopted towards men; they may be drunken, immoral, vicious, yet being men, holding each a house, and that perhaps supported by the industry of the wife, nevertheless we give them the power to vote (at least in our Boroughs). Yet with regard to women, notwithstanding the property they may hold, notwithstanding their intelligence, their industry, what do we do; stamp down upon them! Why? because they are only women. What reason can be assigned but that of prejudice? Does not their exclusion proclaim a want of calm dispassionate enquiry? But as the age progresses in knowledge, notwithstanding that selfish spirit of exclusiveness permeating so many, we shall discover that the doctrine of true representation cannot be founded upon restriction, that the exclusion of any class or sex is not only an anomaly in our representative Constitution, but discordant to the judgment of the honest and the thoughtful.

Although in the past it may generally be acknowledged that women, in consequence of sex, have been deprived of political power, still because they have hitherto been exiled from their natural rights, is that a sufficient justification for the perpetuation of that, which being founded upon injustice, must as a result be a natural wrong. I grant that all proposed innovations upon our ancient customs or institutions

demands dispassionate enquiry, but if those customs be found incompatible with consistency, if they will not bear the scrutinizing test of reason, ought they not to be swept aside as unadapted to the more enlightened present? It might be asserted that for ages past women have not been entitled to the Franchise; was not the same assertion (until lately), equally applicable to the whole mass of the working people of this country? has not our present Constitution been the handywork of a continuity of reforms? First, the Kings held autocratic supremacy; then, Kings and Nobles together; then, by slow degrees, the burgesses became of some account; then, at length the body of the people, provided they were men; and now, I ask, why should not women-housekeepers, bearing burdens and paying taxes equally in proportion with men, be entrusted with the same moral right to vote; sex can be no moral barrier; so great a deviation from the principles of Civil Liberty represents a violation of all equity and justice. Where are the high-souled instincts of our nature, that we would selfishly restrict others from rightly sharing privileges we ourselves enjoy, ay, privileges in fact for which they can show as good a title. Why this indifference to the fundamental spirit of justice? How dare we, in an age of civilisation and reason, meanly and selfishly ignore the just, the natural, the inalienable right which belongs to our common humanity.

In the present state of the law, men arrogantly seem to declare that women have no natural or acquired qualification to discharge political duties; that they are totally regardless as to who shall create the laws by which they are governed. What! notwithstanding the experience they have obtained in the exercise of the Franchise in local matters; notwithstanding their performance of those public duties has proved of a beneficial character. Why, the very concessions granted to women show the reasonableness of granting the whole principle of Woman Suffrage. Is there not as great an amount of conscientiousness manifested in women as men? Why localise her influence? Are not the concerns of her country, the welfare of humanity, of as great an account as that of the domestic circle? Then why debar her from participating in questions of a National character? Why should men arrogate the right to govern women without their consent? Upon what principle was that right solely conferred upon men? Are men so immaculate in judgment? By excluding her from direct representation, what justice can there be in legislating regarding her rights—her property—nay, her very labour. By bestowing upon women-housekeepers the same rights as those possessed by men, what phantoms of evil can possibly be conjured up. What possible justification can there be that equal rights should not be conferred upon women? This dominance, this impatience for superiority, will not stand the test of sober reason. Whom do men represent in Parliament?—those who elect them. Do women assist in their election? No! Then who need wonder that many of the important matters deeply concerning women lie in abeyance; and why? because the interests of those not directly

represented are generally neglected, and though it may be asserted that our representatives for the greater part are actuated by the spirit of justice, and hence as a result no possible part of the community can suffer, nay, it may be asserted that they possess not only the capability but the will to reform any and every abuse; yet, alas! were not those kind of arguments adduced to prevent the present class of voters from obtaining a due share of political power? but still I ask, even though no special abuses were pointed out, were not those who were so lately excluded justified in demanding representation of a more equal character? It is not because certain rights or reforms are not granted that they are not desirable; class exclusion bears upon its face at least an appearance of injustice, and surely a great and magnanimous nation like England can afford not only to act with impartiality, but with even-handed justice, to the whole of her children.

Then again, it is said—"Before any class is given the Franchise, see that intellectually they are qualified." Were not the self same kind of arguments used why the great mass of the people should not be directly represented? But did the legislature wait for an educated people before they gave them Household Suffrage? No! the Franchise was granted, and then, and not till then, was the education of the people earnestly considered. Thus this affords no argument why one half the inhabitants of the kingdom should be treated as political outcasts. Why fix upon arbitrary lines; the granting to one housekeeper and denying another, merely on account of sex? Should the mere accident of sex be a debarrer? Why should the one possess the power, and the other be powerless, in the creating of laws which all are forced to obey? We boast that one of the great glories of England is in setting an example to all other nations of representative government. We boast professedly of Household Suffrage; why not carry it out in its entire fullness—logically our profession of Household Suffrage is fictitious; and then again, the higher the civilization the more are the rights of women considered and respected; the greater the depths of barbarism, the greater the depths of women's degradation; narrow-mindedness of sex emanates from the self same feeling as the narrow-mindedness of class. What possibility of fear or danger can there be in women housekeepers having a just and legitimate right conferred upon them? We grant to them the right to vote for our local Parliaments; why not for the National Chamber? Have they not shown, electorally speaking at least, as great an amount of adaptability and education as the men? I ask, in what respect has woman abused the privilege conferred upon her; has home or family been neglected in consequence of the vote? I answer, no! and possibly not to so great an extent as many men neglect their business callings; and here I think they show a fair example to the other sex: now extend the ramification of ideas in either sex, and what is the result?—the more close the reasoning upon any given subject, the more it redounds to the well-being of the nation. Of what are men afraid? If the mere payment of rent and taxes give men the due qualification to vote, surely the

self same liabilities and qualifications, in point of justice, entitle the other sex to equal privilege. Since sex is no bar to punishment for the committal of crime, since the same conformation to the laws is demanded from both sexes or classes alike, why should not an equally direct influence be exercised by either sex in the creation of those laws by which they are bound. Has not Justice Blackstone laid it down as an axiom—That subjects are not bound in point of justice to submit to laws in which they have had no hand in framing or influence to alter; but, alas, with regard to the rights of women, the principle of doing to others as we would be done by seems to have dissolved into an idle theory. One-sided representation means one-sided laws, and one-sided laws are the invariable outcome of the dominance of class or sex; or in a word, that educated prejudice naturally predominates over the principles of equity and justice.

It has been declared that there is more power in the face of a pretty woman, more havoc in her laugh, more strength in her tears, than in all the arguments and laws of men; but what cajollery is there in flattery! How do we display the reality of our esteem, by placing her politically in the same position as that of a born idiot; the influence of the example thus set by the law is too manifest; have not most of us noted in life that those women who take most pains in the cultivation of their minds have become the jibe and jest of many a fool. Women, as a rule, scarce dare to manifest an intellectual superiority; and why? lest men declare such accomplishments to be "unwomanly." Can it be wondered then that so great a number of women take such little pains to improve their understandings, when they are trained from their very infancy into a subservient timidity almost bordering upon thralldom? and what though caprice and whim, show, gaiety and fashion, are the chief distinguishing features of too many, to whom is all this folly to be ascribed? Men seem to create, or rather prescribe, certain rules of custom, and then actually ridicule them for their frivolity; for actually following the paths which we in our wisdom have allotted them, and though men may justly claim a pre-eminence in physical strength, few would dare to arrogate a supremacy of intellect; and though the educational advantages of the country have for the most part been hitherto denied to women, yet notwithstanding the various barriers mistaken notions have erected, notwithstanding the ridicule and contumely hurled upon them, have not many of them heroically thrust aside many of those old mistaken monopolies so tenaciously clung to by the immemorial usage of caste. All honour to them for bravely battling for the right. The capacities and capabilities of women have not yet developed to their highest point, we have kept them back in the race for knowledge, we have kept them in the leading strings of captious subtleties. We have hitherto treated them as animated playthings, or domestic drudges; and acting somewhat akin to the usage of the Ottoman Empire, we have stamped them with the brand of interiority. The Turk may look upon them as possessing no souls, but we, in our christianity and civilization,

politically treat them as if they had no brains; we seem to say, as though they were children, "We know what is best for you, our interests are yours, and though we cannot take the whole of your special questions into consideration, still, the laws being ordained and applied by men, the result must be that which is good for the one sex must be good for the other also." What is this but the old worn out argument of the selfish slave-owner, did he not say to his slaves, "I know what is best for you, my interest is bound up with yours, and though your social well-being tends to my advantage, my advantages, from our unity of interests, must naturally be reciprocated, consequently, that which is beneficial for the owner must be beneficial for the slave;" thus, the blackest wrongs can be defended by the sly, cunning sophistry of the interested; the most satanic inequitable of blots, disfiguring the fair face of humanity can not only be painted and glossed, but tinselled with the rhetoric of plausibility, be covered with the false appearance of a golden virtue.

Not that I think any intentional wrong has been inflicted upon women, but we are apt too generally to take as a matter of course things to which we have become habituated, and hence too seldom do we consider whether they will stand the test of reasoning; I scarcely know of one tangible reason why women housekeepers are not entitled to vote, I know of one reason which is at times expressed, and that is, that women have not sufficient physical powers to enable them to become soldiers. What is this but the endeavour to perpetuate the feudal custom of barbaric ages? Is the old savage conception of the right to power, viz., that of mere brute strength, still entoned upon the mind of the enlightened present? Why, brute force constituted the sole ground for the pre-eminence of one savage over another; can we, with our advanced state of enlightenment, our civilization, our christianity, resort to arguments only applicable to barbaric rule, arguments which might have been adduced with some show of reason, two or three thousand years ago. What! with all our progress are we still benighted? Because wrongs have been tolerated, nay, handed down to the present, are we to have no reformation? To what is owing the progress which civilization has obtained; to the natural supremacy of the intellectual over the physical forces. Then let us as men view the question of Electoral Reform from conscientious motives—is a matter of justice to one-half of the inhabitants of a country of slight importance? Are men so naturally autocratic, so self-inflated with their own supreme power and importance, that selfishly and despotically they would monopolize that which is equally due to another. Does mere physical power imply either moral or intellectual superiority? Since clergymen are not called upon to fight the battles of our country, are they deprived of the vote in consequence? No! Then wherefore deprive women upon so childish a plea? Is it a question fraught with danger, that women housekeepers paying Scott and Lot equally with their neighbours shall be no longer defrauded of their equal right to vote. Why, the tenure of that very electoral body by which government is created

in this country is but of recent date, and was not the granting of the right of Household Suffrage (for men) declared to be "a leap in the dark." Were not the most fanciful horrors depicted as the probable results of an experiment declared to be so fraught with danger; but in speaking of granting the same right to women householders, does even the thought of danger cross the imagination of the most timid? No! for the demand is so reasonable, so just, it would simply be conferring a great boon upon many to the injury of none, a mere extension of an accepted principle, for what in reality is demanded—that the heads of households, women housekeepers, possessing the statutory qualifications entitling men to vote, should be equally entitled to the Franchise, that those very women who are already qualified and duly entitled to vote at Local Elections, such as Municipal, School Board and Parochial, shall no longer be disabled from voting for the Nation's representatives. Is there anything appalling or inconsistent in the proposition?

It may be asked—For what purpose do women need enfranchisement, and what proof is there that in granting political power further concessions will not be demanded. To the first point I answer—Look at our Laws; do they harmonize with the conditions justice requires? do they not show something of a class man-made character about them? are there not inequalities existing of an unjust character, and injurious to, and vitally affecting women? Can the contract of marriage take place unless women actually sacrifice all personal right over property? By the mere fact of marriage, is not the woman's property vested in her husband? Look at some of the one-sided laws in relation to married women! Even with regard to the guardianship of children, does not the law act prejudicially to the interest of women? Again, in our educational endowments, in what a miserable degree do women participate in their advantages? Nay, where is the equality of the law, when, in certain districts women are subjected to special laws and conditions, from which the other sex are exempt? only fancy, immorality fostered by law in various parts throughout the country! vice licensed by the state; licensed, regulated, and protected; and all for what? Man's criminal indulgence. In this instance, I ask, does not law make a distinction between the sexes? does it not distinctly create social inequalities, nay, not only reversing the ordinary method of all legal procedure, but proclaims an absolute inferiority of the adult woman to the adult man. What is this but an arbitrary and flagrant violation of human right, the sacred right of human beings to the absolute sovereignty over their own persons. Look at the inhumanity, the one-sidedness of this state of the law. Actually, no poor female (in those districts to which I have alluded), however spotless, can claim to be in possession of individual liberty; and why, in consequence of the unlimited license allowed to the functionaries of Government, whose mere suppositions are received as evidence of guilt. And yet women, such is the state of our constitutional freedom, have not the slightest political influence to express an opinion regarding laws established even in contravention of divine commands. Then

again, even in our laws of divorce, are not women subjected to special legislation? on one side the mere fact of adultery obtains a verdict, but on the other (that of men) adultery and cruelty, two separate moral offences, must be proved before a verdict to the same effect can be obtained—why this distinction? is not the one offence, committed by either sex, equally as great in moral guilt; law says, no! thus consequently it requires two offences to be committed on the part of one sex to be equal in point of magnitude to one offence committed by the other; it scarcely need be asked for what purpose women wish to participate in the enactment of the laws; no doubt the desire of most men is to be just and generous towards women, but with all their good intentions is there not a lack of proper conception as to just requirements? Is there not an urgent need on the part of those most interested to have some practical means of emancipation from unequal laws, but how and by what means can this be brought about? wholly and solely by allowing women to have some direct representation in the creation of the statutes of our country.

In answer to the second point, the fear, that by granting "Women's Suffrage" greater concession would be required; I would ask, was not the same fear entertained in the various debates regarding the advisability of granting Household Suffrage to men? Was not the assertion made that the one measure would lead to the demand of Manhood Suffrage, and the total overthrow of the Constitution would be the consequence; nay, was it not bitterly declared that Household Suffrage would be the means of erecting and perpetuating a despotism to ride triumphant over the ruins of our country. But what are the facts; do we hear of any special demand for further democratic innovations? and even should we adopt the mild reform of Woman Suffrage, what danger can possibly arise? Cannot the future, acting upon the system adopted in most ages, concert measures applicable to its own protection and defence. Shall cowardly timidity refuse a just and moderate concession, when not even the convenient grounds of expediency can be pleaded against it? We have emancipated the slave, we have emancipated the masses of our country, then upon what basis of consistency or justice can we refuse the self-same right to women.

It has been asserted, "that women are not desirous of possessing the vote; did not the slaveowner declare that the slave had no desire for freedom, and was it not avowed that the country had no desire for "Household Suffrage?" As for the Ballot, was it not loudly affirmed that the great majority of electors were averse to the un-English method of recording a vote? mere subterfuges of evasion! and now what kind of evidence can be brought forward to prove that women do not want the vote? Are scores of petitions, signed by thousands, an evidence of content? are scores of public meetings held throughout the country in favor of Electoral Reform for women, an evidence of non-desire? It is not because there is no boisterous demand that the claim is not needed and urgently desired; and although all women are not equally anxious for the vote, is that a plea or

justification for denial? What though there may be a tame passive submission on the part of some, that only proves how easily the mind can be trained into oblivion of its own inherent rights; therefore it shows the greater is the necessity of conferring the Franchise upon them, for would not a higher developement of their faculties be the result, by their participation in the enactment of our laws. Were not the slaves of old in a somewhat similar condition; did the whole or only a portion clamour for liberty? But because there was not an universal demand on their part for freedom, was that made an excuse not to free them from their bondage? No! no mean advantage was taken of their unfortunate ignorant condition; then why deprive the sensible women of our own country of their rights, in consequence of the ignorance of their unfortunate sisters; and then, again, when the Franchise was granted to women householders on all School Board elections, had any loud and boisterous demand been made for the privilege? No! Upon what ground was it granted, simply because one-half of the inhabitants of the kingdom are composed of the female sex, and upon the same ground I plead are they not equally entitled to National direct representation? Now the vote having been accorded as a matter of right to women in all School Board elections, I ask, have they not to a very great extent availed themselves of the privilege accorded them; do not our local elections afford sufficient evidence that *women do take an interest in public matters?* and here let me observe—that though the duly elected female members of our School Boards perform their several public duties as satisfactorily as the men, yet such is the inconsistency of our present law, that we actually deny those very female members the right to record a vote for a member of the House of Commons; thus, practically, all that our legislature seems to enjoin upon women is a blank submission. It seems to say—“If you ask for the Franchise we will not grant it, because we know better than you do what you require; and if you do not ask for it, of course that is a conclusive proof that you have no need of it, and hence we will not compel you to accept that which you do not require;” thus upon either of the grounds men seem to be in that happy position, of plausibly retaining a monopoly with which too many seem to have not the slightest desire to part.

Upon what moral ground are women denied the vote? Will not the statistics of crime testify that the morality of the women will bear favorable comparison with that of men? If the annals of crime are any criterion as to excellency of character, the women as a sex decidedly claim pre-eminence. Are not the convictions of men at our various courts three or four times greater in point of number than that of women; does it not cost the country four times the amount of money to keep men in order than to keep women in order; and yet women are far greater in point of number than men; does this not speak volumes for the circumspection of women? If moral principle were the basis of electoral right, which of the sexes could justly claim the Franchise? Let conscience answer.

It might be urged, that even if the Franchise were conferred upon women Louseholders, that not above ten or twelve women out of every hundred voters would be entitled to record a vote, and consequently their influence would be of a very slight character upon the legislature, then the greater the necessity for conferring at least a modicum of power, for after all, are not the opinions of small bodies of voters treated with greater respect and consideration than if they were not in possession of the Franchise; and though their demands may not be conferred, at least they command a greater attention and consideration than if they had no vote at all.

It may be urged that married women should be equally entitled to vote with spinsters and widow housekeepers; I answer, no! not upon the present application of the Suffrage. Is not the married woman represented by her husband? If Manhood Suffrage were the law, there would be some show of argument for so crude proposal, for the justifications which could be adduced in favor of Manhood Suffrage would be equally applicable universally applied; but whilst as at present the holding of a house gives men the qualification to vote, why should mere sex be a debarrier to the woman under like conditions? and though the principle has not been adopted by any other country, is it come to this, that England, of all countries in the world, can only afford to become an imitator of some puny original? What danger can there be in the proposal; whom can it injure; what harm or wrong would be the result to society? Has not England led the onward march in civilization? Have not our varied reforms produced changes not only tending to the contentment and glory of the nation, but shedding the halo of justice far and near; have they not been the inspiring means of bettering the condition not only of our fellow-subjects, but by our example, that of our foreign brethren; and though America and France have hesitated to lead the van on behalf of the rights justly belonging to women, say! would it not add honor to old England as a nation, not only in the setting an example of a full free representative government, but by bravely and heroically daring to be what no nation, with all their enlightenment, has hitherto been, viz., just and honest to women.

I see nothing of a dangerous nature in the claim for Women's Suffrage. There cannot be anything of a revolutionary tendency about it. What is there in the demand but that which is plain, straightforward, just, and consistent between human beings? Since the simple holding of a house, or the possession of property, are the fundamental reasons for the endowment of the vote to men at present, why should not an equal advantage, under the same qualifications, be applied to women. The mere payment of rent has been deemed the all-sufficient proof of competency to perform certain national needed duties on the part of men, and that, notwithstanding the glaring amount of ignorance discoverable in so many, notwithstanding their state of demoralization; notwithstanding their brutality of conduct, still are they deemed to possess the rights of free citizenship; and yet, in point of intellect,

education, love of order, and prudence;—will not the general run of women bear favourable comparison with those who are now entitled to the vote? then upon what ground of justice, or honesty, or reason, are women denied their participation of an equal right? and though there may not be anything at the back of a physical nature to demand the vote, since there is no probability of such as Hyde Park railings falling to the ground to bring the legislators to their proper senses, still how much better to comply with the dictates of justice ungrudgingly; to grant from “right” founded upon moral law, a claim consistent with equity, than to refuse, without the plea of necessity, or the fear of coming danger, simply because an antiquated usage would still urge the despotic doctrine of a false species of justification, viz., that might constitutes a right. We shall find, with the onward march of civilization, that power founded upon mere tradition is not invulnerable, that those cobwebs of feudalism—special privileges and inequitable measures—will yet be wafted aside by the breath of an enlightened public opinion.

It might be asked, “Would it be politic to grant so great an innovation?” Why thus paltering with expediency, if the claim be true in fact, if naturally right and politically just, is it not the duty of the honest to bring the question to a successful issue? Does it not seem strange that the mere fortuitous circumstance of sex should be the enabling cause qualifying a power to prescribe laws for others who have not the slightest voice either to protest against or to approve of their creation. What is this but a species of bondage? Nay, more. It cannot be gainsaid that by refusing women the right to vote, a large amount of the property, intelligence, and industry of the country, are unrepresented; then reason and justice cannot but declare in favor of concession. Would not the granting of political power to women strengthen their sense of the responsibilities and duties of citizenship, and as a natural consequence be conducive to the highest welfare of the state; nay, even were there no causes of the need for enfranchisement shown, the mere matter of “right” should be sufficient inducement to prompt men to be honest; hitherto opposition has been founded upon sentimental prejudice, and prejudice has ever impeded the march of progress. All religion, science, education, liberty itself, has ever found bias to be the great stumbling-block to all civil advancement; and now, since the galling yoke of slavery has been abolished, since we are in possession of a due measure of personal freedom, since we have a freedom of conscience, a freedom of worship, a free press, a freedom of trade, why should not the freedom of women be at length included in our grand and noble array of national blessings?

Since all the great emancipations of mankind have ever encountered vehement opposition, of course the claims of women must share an equal fate, and thus it may be said, “By granting the Suffrage to women householders might they not aspire to Parliamentary honours? it might be said, that as a logical sequence to the enfranchisement of women, that their further right to sit as representatives would conse-

quently follow; that by the granting the one claim the other must naturally be conceded. Not so. Is there no analogy in the mode and form constituting our Municipal councils? and though women are permitted to vote, does law sanction their right to sit as members in those chambers? then how shallow the plea for denial, how untenable with this glaring illustration of inconsistency; and here I would ask, what law is there existing even at present which could prevent a woman, if elected, taking her seat as a Member of Parliament. I ask, what probability is there that a woman could possibly be returned as a representative to the House of Commons, the paucity of the necessary number of duly qualified women, under the condition of Household Suffrage, would create an insurmountable barrier to a woman's entrance to that sacred chamber; nay, and as an almost invulnerable shield to so calamitous an infliction, would not men throughout the country be in a position to command an overwhelming majority? and think you, being upon such good terms with their own intrinsic merits, their majority of votes would fall upon a female candidate; nay, even more, have the newly-enfranchised working-men availed themselves of the power clearly within their own hands of sending those of their own order to the House of Parliament; and though in forty or fifty boroughs the working-class element clearly predominates, have the working-men commensurate with their numbers availed themselves, even to a justifiable extent, of their special opportunity? No, then under similar condition of enfranchisement, why should women as a class differ with the working men as to choice of representative? I then ask, upon what ground of possibility, under Household Suffrage, with so limited an amount of female voters, and those sprinkled here and there throughout the country, at most comprising but a few thousands in the aggregate, what possibility, I ask, is there of so great an innovation as that of a woman member of the House of Commons; nay, should such a catastrophe by any possibility ensue, I scarcely think that men are of so cowardly a nature as to think the constitution would be in the slightest danger. Too many men seem to conjure up ghosts of the imagination, on purpose not only to delude themselves, but to frighten the timid and ignorant. I confess I do not anticipate any great change in granting the Suffrage to women, but being a right, founded upon justice, I see no cause for longer restriction; and since the County Franchise no doubt will be shortly extended, why should not the just and honest principle of Household Suffrage, pure and simple, for boroughs and counties, without anomalous exceptions, and irrespective of mere sex, be taken into consideration; thus, why should not the principle of Women's Suffrage, or in reality the real legitimate question of Household Suffrage, be calmly considered at the same time as the County Franchise Bill; and then again, what possible reason is there that the Franchise of women should not be given a trial; was not a trial allotted to the “Ballot,” and though loudly condemned by many in its passing, the result tested by experience has proved so favorable, as to lead to its continuance. Adopt the self-same course of action

with "Women's Suffrage," and I doubt not the experiment would be the means of dispelling those doubts and prejudices which at present exist, and be the means of a real practical carrying out to its logical conclusion of the principle of Household Suffrage, shorn of invidious exceptions.

And now, in seeking electoral reform, for what do I ask? Justice, justice for women, household suffrage for women housekeepers; I call upon the nation to generously concede a claim which is founded upon a civil right, a right, the granting of which cannot foreshadow the slightest future danger; to grant the boon freely, ungrudgingly, for, alas! almost the whole of our reforms which we so dearly prize have been too reluctantly conceded. To act nobler; to give without the semblance of compulsion; for the claim is founded upon impartial justice; almost all the arguments in favor of the representation of men are equally applicable to the enfranchisement of women. By refusing to be just, a selfishness, a self-exaltation, a self-aggrandisement, a total disregard to all equity, is at once proclaimed. Refuse women their fair share of political power, and you deny the principle of representative government; though deep rooted prejudice may loudly inveigh against so great an innovation upon our customs and habits of thought: nevertheless, when justice and reason, the foundation of all civil liberty, declare the right of women to the suffrage, shall those old barbarous convictions of the superiority of one sex continue to lead the current of thought in men boasting of their civilization? shall unreflecting bias, only applicable to the uncivilized condition, outweigh the just inalienable rights of humanity, and give a seeming justification, an immunity, to the strong, to curb and control the weak? No! No! No! and thus in the name of civil liberty, in the name of justice, in the name of reason, nay, in the name of representative government, from the logical fulfilment of Household Suffrage, from the spirit of our constitution, I call upon the nation to extend the blessings of liberty, to grant farther exemption from constraint, and frankly, boldly confer upon a further portion of our deserving fellow-beings, that just, that indisputable right, that manumission from political thralldom, HOUSEHOLD SUFFRAGE FOR WOMEN HOUSEKEEPERS.

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING,
DECEMBER 8th, 1880.

MANCHESTER:

ALEXANDER IRELAND & CO., PRINTERS.

1880.

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY
FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

Executive Committee :

Miss MARIA ATKINSON.	Mrs. PANKHURST.
Miss BECKER.	Mrs. PEARSON.
THOS. CHORLTON, Esq.	Mr. C. ROWLEY, Junr.
Mrs. JOSEPH CROSS.	Mrs. OLIVER SCATCHERD.
Miss CARBUTT.	Rev. S. ALFRED STEINTHAL.
THOS. DALE, Esq.	ARTHUR G. SYMONDS, Esq.
Mrs. GELL.	J. P. THOMASSON, Esq.
Mrs. LUCAS.	Mrs. J. P. THOMASSON.
Dr. PANKHURST.	Mrs. BARTON WRIGHT.

SECRETARY : Miss BECKER.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY : Miss S. M. BACKHOUSE.

ORGANISING AGENT : Mrs. M'CORMICK.

TREASURER : Rev. S. ALFRED STEINTHAL.

OFFICE :

28, JACKSON'S ROW, ALBERT SQUARE, MANCHESTER.

BANKERS :

THE MANCHESTER AND LIVERPOOL DISTRICT BANKING COMPANY, KING
STREET BRANCH, MANCHESTER.

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REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

THE year's work, of which your Committee have now to offer their Report, has been of a remarkable as well as exceptional character.

At the assembling of Parliament in February, it appeared to those responsible for the charge of the Bill that there would be no advantage in again discussing the question in the expiring Parliament, although at that time there seemed no reason to suppose that the session would not be of average duration. The sudden dissolution of Parliament in March, with the consequent change of Government, altered the condition of affairs, but by the time Parliament had again got into working order, the year was so far advanced and the pressure of business so great that it did not seem expedient to attempt to bring in the Bill in the broken session. The parliamentary friends of the cause were not however wholly inactive.

The introduction of a measure by the Government dealing with the borough franchise in Ireland seemed to offer an opportunity for testing the feeling of Parliament on the question of the inclusion of women householders in the next extension of the principle of household suffrage. The object of the Bill was to assimilate the borough franchise in Ireland, which now stands at a £4 rental, to that in English boroughs, which is household suffrage pure and simple, without reference to the amount of the rating or rental.

Mr. Blennerhassett, M.P. for Kerry, gave notice on June 11th that, in Committee on the Borough Franchise (Ireland) Bill, he would move that the franchise be given to women householders in Irish boroughs.

Sir Edward Watkin put the following notice of motion on the paper for Monday, June 14th:—"On second reading of

Borough Franchise (Ireland) Bill, to move, That it is inexpedient to proceed with the consideration of the extension of the franchise in any part of the United Kingdom until the question of female suffrage has been decided, and also until the House has defined the term 'tenement' for purposes of voting for members of Parliament in such manner as will exclude 'hovel franchise.'" After several postponements the Bill was ultimately withdrawn by the Government at the usual annual massacre, therefore neither of the amendments could come on for discussion.

The great changes in the composition of the new Parliament and of the relative strength of parties, together with the large proportion of members elected for the first time, preclude us from forming any approximate estimate of our probable strength, and we must await the crucial test of a division list before venturing on any calculations. We may, however, reasonably expect to find a considerable number of friends among the new members, and we may also anticipate, with some confidence, that under the altered circumstances of the imminent approach of a new Reform Bill, some of those who formerly opposed our claim will now see their way to consent to enfranchise the women householders along with the others.

The great feature in the work of your Committee during the past year was the arrangement of the grand National Demonstration of Women in the Free Trade Hall, on February 3rd. The immediate object of the assemblage was to promote a memorial to Her Majesty's Government, praying that women may be enfranchised before another general election, so that in consulting the judgment of the nation, their wishes and opinions may be heard and allowed their due weight in questions affecting their interests and well-being as taxpayers and subjects of the Crown. One of the principal motives which guided the promoters of the Demonstration was to afford a means of testing the reality of the alleged demand for the suffrage by women. It was considered that if thousands of women came together in the great Free Trade Hall, Manchester,

attracted not by great names, but simply and solely to manifest by their presence their support and sympathy with the women who are claiming the suffrage on behalf of their sex—that would be a testimony to the strength and popularity of the movement amongst women which could neither be effaced nor explained away. The result of the challenge thus given more than fulfilled the most sanguine anticipations. The scene in the Free Trade Hall as the President (Mrs. M'Laren) took her seat might well draw from her the exclamation with which she opened her speech, "Is this a dream or a reality?" The whole of the vast area, galleries, and platform were thronged with a dense crowd composed, with the exception of the reporters and about one hundred and sixty men in the gallery, entirely of women. It was truly a marvellous meeting—grand in the earnestness of the purpose that had brought vast multitudes of women together from far and near, some from the uttermost parts of the kingdom—grand in the overwhelming numbers that thronged the vast hall and overflowed to another great meeting in an adjacent building—grand in the strong and fervent enthusiasm which stirred the hearts of all present, and gave to each a new revelation of the power of collective womanhood. The one drawback to the success of this gathering was the limited size of the Free Trade Hall, which could not contain the thousands of women who thronged its precincts and vainly strove for admission. After Mrs. M'Laren's introductory remarks, the first resolution was moved by the Viscountess Harberton, and supported by Mrs. Oliver Scatcherd, Mrs. Liliashworth Hallett, Mrs. Butler, Mrs. Ellis, and Miss Eliza Sturge, and carried unanimously. The second resolution was moved by Mrs. Wellstood (Edinburgh), and supported by Mrs. Haslam (Dublin), Miss Becker, Mrs. Pearson, Miss Craigen, Miss Helena Downing, and Miss Lucy Wilson. Miss Becker having taken the chair, a vote of thanks to Mrs. M'Laren was moved by Mrs. E. P. Nichol, seconded by Mrs. O'Brien, and carried with acclamation. The proceedings closed with several rounds of cheers, and even then the women lingered, seeming loth to separate.

The overflow meeting in the Memorial Hall was presided over by Mrs. Lucas, and similar resolutions were carried to those in the great meeting.

The following memorial to Her Majesty's Government was adopted by the meeting, and signed on its behalf by the president:—

“To the Right Honourable the Earl of Beaconsfield, K.G., &c., &c., &c., First Lord of Her Majesty's Treasury.

“The memorial of women delegates and others in public meeting assembled on February 3rd, 1880, in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester,

“SHEWETH,
“That your memorialists respectfully submit that women are entitled to the parliamentary franchise on the same grounds of expediency and justice as those on which they have been admitted in England to the municipal and school board franchises. That the experience of the action of women in the discharge of the trusts of the municipal and school board vote warrants their claim to become parliamentary voters. Wherefore your memorialists submit the claim of women to be admitted as parliamentary voters on the conditions that have been approved by experience, and they respectfully urge that they should be enfranchised before another general election, so that in consulting the judgment of the nation their wishes and opinions might be heard, and allowed their due weight in questions affecting their interests and well-being as taxpayers and subjects of the Crown.

“And your memorialists will ever pray.”

The following letter was addressed by Mrs. M'Laren to the Earl of Beaconsfield:—

“February 4th, 1880.

“My Lord,—As president of a meeting of women delegates and others, assembled in the Free Trade Hall in Manchester yesterday, the 3rd February, I have the honour to forward a copy of the memorial adopted by that meeting, and of the resolution appointing a deputation of ladies to present the memorial to your Lordship.

“On behalf of that meeting, I respectfully beg that your Lordship will consent to receive the ladies who desire to present the memorial in person. Should you be willing to grant their request, I have also to beg that your Lordship will kindly favour me with an intimation of the time and place when the ladies may have the honour of waiting upon your Lordship.”

The following reply was received:—

“10, Downing-street, Whitehall, Feb. 9th, 1880.

“Madam,—Lord Beaconsfield desires me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, and to tell you that he regrets it will not be in his power, in the pressure of business, to receive the deputation of ladies who desire to place in his hands a memorial in favour of the extension of the franchise to females. Any communication which they may make in writing to Lord Beaconsfield shall receive his attention.—I am, madam, your obedient servant,

(Signed) “J. F. DALY.”

On receipt of the foregoing reply Mrs. M'Laren wrote as follows to the Earl of Beaconsfield:—

“Newington House, Edinburgh, Feb. 11th, 1880.

“My Lord,—I had the honour to forward to your Lordship a memorial from the great National Demonstration of Women held in Manchester on the 3rd inst., in the Free Trade Hall, in favour of women's suffrage, at which about 6,000 persons were present, nearly all women, over which I had the honour to preside.

“The memorial was intended to have been presented to your Lordship by a deputation of ladies appointed by the meeting for that purpose, but they deeply regret to learn from your letter of the 9th inst. that the pressure of business prevents your Lordship from receiving the deputation.

“In these circumstances it only remains for me to transmit the memorial to your Lordship, hoping it may receive your careful consideration.—I am, my Lord, yours faithfully,

“PRISCILLA M'LAREN.

“To the Right Hon. the Earl of Beaconsfield.”

The following acknowledgment was received:—

"10, Downing-street, Whitehall,
"February 13th, 1880.

"Madam,—Lord Beaconsfield desires me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th inst., forwarding the memorial of the women delegates and others assembled at Manchester in favour of female suffrage.—I am, madam, your obedient servant,

(Signed) "J. F. DALY.
"Mrs. M'Laren."

The lead thus given by your Committee has been followed with great effect in other places. A great meeting of women took place at St. James' Hall, London, in May, and similar gatherings were held last month in the Colston Hall, Bristol, and in the Albert Hall, Nottingham. Other towns are also preparing for Demonstrations of the same nature.

Preliminary meetings in support of the Demonstration were held in Stretford, and in the following districts of Manchester and Salford:—Hulme, St. Michael's, Broughton, Chorlton-on-Medlock, Pendleton, Ardwick, Cheetham, and New Cross.

Drawing-room meetings, preparatory to the Demonstration, were held by invitation of Mrs. Abel Heywood and Mrs. John Mills in Bowdon; by the Misses Petrie, through the kind permission of the Mayor, in the Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall, Rochdale; by Mrs. Thomas Brocklebank, jun., and Dr. and Mrs. Whittle in Liverpool; and by Mr. and Mrs. Ruspini in Knutsford.

A meeting has been held at Accrington, and meetings arranged independently of your Committee, but aided by them, have been held by Miss Craigen at Tarporley, Masbro' (2), Frodsham (2), Longtown, Newtown (2), Malton, Llanidloes, London (6), Gloucester (4), Cardiff (4), Dublin.

On October 27th a great meeting of women burgesses was held in Hope Hall, Liverpool, in connection with the municipal election. Although the weather at the time of the meeting was terribly stormy, over 1,000 women attended, and the interest and intensity of political feeling they manifested in regard to the impending municipal contest over the whole

borough, which was waged on purely party political grounds, would have utterly confounded any one witnessing the meeting who had supposed that women were indifferent to politics. The object of the meeting was to induce the women electors to vote in large numbers, and to instruct them in the duties and responsibilities of the municipal vote; and although the restrictions of the Ballot Act preclude the obtaining of any information as to what proportion of women actually voted, there can be no doubt that the meeting had a strong and beneficial influence.

During the year ended October 31, 1880, your Secretary has attended and spoken at meetings arranged by your Committee at Manchester and the following districts of Manchester:—Hulme, Rochdale Road, Broughton, Pendleton, Chorlton-upon-Medlock, Ardwick, Cheetham, New Cross; also at Accrington, Stretford, Liverpool, Harrogate, Bowness, Douglas, Ramsey, Castletown; and at meetings arranged by other Committees or friends, in London, at St. James' Hall, and in London districts as follows:—Homerton, Tower Hamlets, Hampstead, Langham-street, Gloucester Place, Gower-street, Wandsworth, City of London, Woodberry Vale, Spring Grove, Southwark, Blackfriars, Bermondsey; also at Norwich, Knutsford, Hyde, Mumbles, Swansea, and Edinburgh, besides attending to the correspondence of the Society, and editing and writing for the *Women's Suffrage Journal*.

Your Secretary has been invited to address meetings convened by others at the Working Men's Reform Club, Hulme; the Liberal Club, Blackley; the Withington District Liberal Association; the Liberal Association, Stretford.

Mrs. Oliver Scatcherd has attended and spoken at Accrington, Edinburgh (2), Dalkeith; London Demonstration: Deptford, Walmer Castle, Portman Square, Islington, St. James' Hall; Hyde, Douglas (2), Castleton, Peel, Ramsey, Harrogate, Bowness, Keswick; Manchester Demonstration: Huddersfield, Halifax, Sheffield, Wakefield, Bradford, Bowdon, Chorlton, Broughton; Manchester, Malton, Liverpool; Bristol Demonstration: Clifton, St. Mary's (Redcliffe), Broadmead, Bristol; Leeds wards (3).

During the past year your Committee's Agent, Mrs. M'Cormick, has visited the following places:—Accrington, Harrogate, Ripon, Northallerton, Hartlepool, Darlington, Middlesbrough, Sunderland, South Shields, Durham, Southport, Burnley, Preston, Crewe, Huddersfield, Honley, Grimsby, Hull, Blackburn, Hyde, Leeds, London, Liverpool, Macclesfield, Leek, Hanley, Burslem, Stafford, Retford, Boston, Newark, Chesterfield, Derby, Lichfield, Scarborough, Stockton-on-Tees, Bishop Auckland, Douglas, Ramsey, Castletown, Peel, Wigan, Colne, Bowness, Kendal, Keswick, Wolverhampton, Walsall, Dudley, and Kidderminster. Mrs. M'Cormick arranged and attended the meetings and lectures organised by your Committee, and devoted 156 days to office and other work in Manchester. Your Agent also assisted the Central Committee (London) in arranging meetings in April.

Members of debating societies in the following towns have applied for and received papers and information for use in discussions on women's suffrage:—Chester, Birmingham, 4; Evesham, 2; Liverpool, 3; Welshpool, King's Norton, Reading, Sale, Hastings, Hull, Totnes, Glasgow, Doncaster, Preston, Halifax, Rock Ferry, Walsall, Blackheath, Padham, Knutsford, Merthyr Tydfil, Gloucester, Ventnor, Tynemouth, South Shields, Accrington, 2; Aberystwith, Birkenhead, Rochdale, Halstead, Burgh-le-Marsh, Bolton, London, 3; Bradford, 2; Bristol, Atherton, Tunstall, Cambridge, 2; Oxford, Kirkcaldy, Maidstone, Huddersfield, Wolverhampton, Southampton, Camborne, Tiverton, Barnstaple, Barnet, Cheltenham, Ashton, and Newport, Monmouthshire; Manchester, 5; and the following districts of Manchester: Plymouth Grove, Rusholme Road Society, 8; Chorlton-on-Medlock, 2; Hulme, Ardwick, 2; Harpurhey, Greenheys, Cheetham, Pendleton.

As no parliamentary action was taken on the Women's Disabilities Bill, no special effort was made to promote petitions for it. Nevertheless, during the two sessions of 1880, 292 petitions with 7,738 signatures were presented, and 41 petitions with 1,127 signatures were presented in favour of

Mr. Blennerhassett's Amendment to the Irish Borough Franchise Bill, making a total of 433 petitions with 8,865 signatures presented for women's suffrage during 1880. Of these, 160 petitions for the Bill and the whole of the petitions for the Irish borough franchise were obtained through the efforts of friends and correspondents of your Committee.

The most immediately fruitful portion of the year's work has been that accomplished in the Isle of Man. This ancient kingdom has an independent Legislature, of which the House of Keys is equivalent to the House of Commons. A movement has been set on foot in the Island to secure electoral reform, and among other objects to establish household suffrage as the basis of representation. Your Committee deemed this a favourable opportunity for endeavouring to obtain the inclusion of women householders among those who were to receive the franchise. They, therefore, organised a series of lectures, five in number, which were arranged by Mrs. M'Cormick, and delivered in August by Miss Becker in Douglas, Ramsey, and Castleton, and Mrs. Oliver Scatcherd in Douglas and Peel. In these lectures, besides the general argument in favour of women's suffrage, especial reference was made to the impending Reform Bill, and the people were urged to demand from the Legislature the extension of the suffrage to women as well as to men householders.

Although this was the first occasion on which the question had been publicly mooted in the Island, the lectures were extremely well attended, and the claim as presented by the advocates of the enfranchisement of women appeared to command general assent. The newspaper press gave ample reports of the lectures, and able and impressive articles in support of the views put forward. The deputation left, after their week's sojourn, with the satisfactory assurance that the question had been brought under the notice of every inhabitant, and the Manx people fully instructed on the subject.

Your Committee desire to express their deep sense of the service rendered in this matter by the newspaper press of the Island, including the *Isle of Man Times*, *Manx Sun*, the

Isle of Man Examiner, Mona's Herald, and the Ramsey Northern Weekly News.

The result of the consideration thus given appeared when the electoral Bill was submitted to the House of Keys. As introduced it limited the franchises conferred to "male persons." But an amendment to omit the word "male," in order to include women, was moved in Committee on November 5th, when 19 out of the 24 members of the House of Keys were present and voted. The amendment to enfranchise women was carried by the overwhelming majority of 16 votes to 3, being a vote of more than five to one of those present, and a vote of two-thirds of the whole number of the members of the House of Keys.

In congratulating you on this triumphant vindication of the principle, your Committee venture to express the hope that, when the Electoral Reform Bill comes to be discussed in the Legislature of the United Kingdom, the House of Commons will be not less just in dealing with the claims of women ratepayers, and not more narrow in its view of the true basis of popular representation than its sister assembly the House of Keys.

The financial position of the Society continues satisfactory. The year's expenses have been covered by the year's receipts, and there are no outstanding liabilities. The amount of subscriptions has been greater than ever before. The Demonstration in the Free Trade Hall involved considerable extra expenditure, but this was covered by special subscriptions, and by an increased number of ordinary subscriptions, obtained through the impetus given by its means. The result shows that when the funds of the Committee are employed to push the agitation by really effective, well-planned work, judiciously and economically carried out, the outlay is repaid, not only in accomplished work, but also in a harvest of fresh funds wherewith to pursue the advantage gained.

But while your Committee justly lay stress on the economy with which they carry on their work as a reason why more funds should be entrusted to them, they desire to guard against the impression that economy means small

expenditure. They feel increased need for large subscriptions. When men have a great public object to attain, they know well that large sums are needed, and they give subscriptions of hundreds or even thousands of pounds. We ask men to consider that so great a movement as that of the enfranchisement of half the people cannot be carried on without large sums of money, and we earnestly beg them to help this cause in the same way and to the same extent as they have helped other great movements. We appeal also to women, especially to wealthy women, to aid with large subscriptions those who are endeavouring through this means to ameliorate the condition of their less fortunate sisters. To those who are not able to give large sums, we would say—give something, and, by becoming enrolled as members of the Society, give personal support to the cause.

The present is a critical period. The Government are pledged to introduce a Reform Bill before they dissolve Parliament, and unless the principle of women's suffrage is incorporated with the County Franchise Bill, the prospect of its accomplishment may be indefinitely postponed. The promoters of the measure are determined to take the earliest opportunity of submitting the Women's Disabilities Removal Bill to the judgment of the new Parliament, and Mr. Courtney has announced his intention of introducing the measure immediately on the commencement of the session. Should the second reading of the Bill be carried, the vote will be accepted as an expression of the sense of the House of Commons that the forthcoming Reform Bill shall include the enfranchisement of women householders, even if the Bill itself should not become law during the session. Our friends will therefore perceive that the present moment is one for putting forth special efforts to take advantage of the re-opening of the question of Parliamentary Reform, in order that the claim of those on whose behalf we are working may be considered along with the rest.

DECEMBER 8TH, 1880.

THE MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

ACCOUNT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST OCTOBER, 1880.

Dr.		Cr.	
INCOME.	£ s. d.	EXPENDITURE.	£ s. d.
Balance	68 18 11	By Salaries and Office Expenses	505 16 7
To Subscriptions and Donations	1,668 8 6	" Office Furniture, Rent, Gas, Coal, &c.	43 9 9
" Journal	342 11 10 ³ / ₄	" Postage and Telegrams	549 6 4
" Postage	28 15 3 ³ / ₄	" Public Meetings	112 17 8
" Advertisements	67 9 4	" Printing	399 13 6
" Pamphlets, &c.	438 16 6	" Publications bought	78 17 3
" To Tickets sold—Public Meetings	20 17 0	Journals bought	200 0 0
" Lectures	15 9 0	Pamphlets, &c.	7 15 3
" Bankers' Interest	36 6 0	Deputation Expenses	207 15 3
	1 0 8	Agents' Expenses Collecting	49 10 0
		Lectures	31 19 4
		Bankers' Commission	72 7 10
		Journal Account:—	3 0 9
		Printing	325 16 10
		Postage	128 0 0
		Distribution and Office Work	115 6 4
		Reporting, &c.	18 2 4
		Commission	4 13 4
			591 18 10
		Balances:—	2,097 6 9
		In hands of Treasurer	115 17 6
		In hands of Petty Cash Keeper	5 13 3
			121 10 9
			£2,218 17 6

Audited and found correct,

LOUIS BORCHARDT, M.D.

S. ALFRED STEINTHAL,

TREASURER, December 3rd, 1880.

Manchester, December 8th, 1880.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Of the Society, held in the TOWN HALL, MANCHESTER, December 8th, 1880.

The MAYOR OF MANCHESTER (Mr. Alderman Baker) in the Chair.

The Secretary read the Report of the Executive Committee.

The Treasurer read the Statement of Accounts.

Resolution I.—Moved by Mr. Courtney, M.P., seconded by Mr. Henry Lee, M.P., supported by Mr. Hugh Mason, M.P., and Mrs. Fenwick Miller.

That the Report and Statement of Accounts just read be adopted, and printed for circulation under the direction of the Executive Committee.

Resolution II.—Moved by Mr. Thomasson, M.P., seconded by Mr. Councillor Southern, supported by Mr. Alderman Bennett.

That this meeting, having learned that it is the intention of Mr. Courtney to introduce the Women's Disabilities Bill at an early period in the forthcoming session, pledges itself to support the measure by all practical means in its power.

Resolution III.—Moved by Mrs. Oliver Scatcherd, seconded by Mr. Symonds, supported by Miss Becker.

That this meeting has learnt with great satisfaction that the popular legislative body in the Isle of Man has passed, by a majority of two-thirds of its number, a measure whereby the right of women householders to vote for parliamentary representatives is fully recognised; and that the cordial thanks of this meeting are hereby rendered to Mr. Sherwood and Mr. Dalrymple, proposer and seconder, and Messrs. Christian, Clucas, Corlett, E. C. Farrant, Gell, Jeffcott, Joughin, Kayll, Kelly, Kerruish, Leece, Penketh, Quayle, and Teare, the sixteen members of the House of Keys who voted in favour of the amendment to enfranchise women on the fifth of November last.

Resolution IV.—Moved by Mr. Windsor, seconded by Rev. Professor Craig.

That the following persons be the Executive Committee for the ensuing year:—Miss Maria Atkinson, Miss Becker, Miss Carbutt, Thomas Chorlton, Esq., Mrs. Joseph Cross, Thos. Dale, Esq., Mrs. Gell, Mrs. Lucas, Mrs. J. Mills, Dr. Pankhurst, Mrs. Pankhurst, Mrs. Pearson, C. Rowley, Junr., Esq., Mrs. Oliver Scatcherd, Rev. S. Alfred Steinthal, A. G. Symonds, Esq., J. P. Thomasson, Esq., Mrs. J. P. Thomasson, with power to add to their number.

The Chair was taken by Mr. Alderman Bennett.

Resolution V.—Moved by Mrs. Thomasson, seconded by Mr. Rowley.

That the best thanks of the meeting be given to the Mayor for presiding on the present occasion.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS.

FINANCIAL YEAR, 1879-1880.

	£	s.	d.
"Sympathiser" ...	150	0	0
"Viator" (February) ...	100	0	0
"Viator" (October) ...	100	0	0
"Popgun" ...	100	0	0
"Mitrailleuse" ...	100	0	0
R. W. (2 years) ...	2	0	0
A Friend (Huddersfield)...	1	1	0
R. L. ...	1	1	0
Thank-offering for Liberal Success	1	1	0
"Omega" ...	1	0	0
A Rightful Claimant ...	1	0	0
A Friend in Fife ...	1	0	0
A Lady ...	0	10	0
R. G. (Durham) ...	0	5	0
O. A. C. (Southport) ...	0	5	0
"Delta" (York) ...	0	5	0
H. E. ...	0	5	0
N. W. J. ...	0	5	0
J. G. ...	0	5	0
B. B. ...	0	2	6
X. Y. Z. ...	0	2	6
V. H. ...	0	2	6
"Beta" ...	0	2	6
J. S. ...	0	2	6
A Timid Friend ...	0	2	6
W. R. A. ...	0	2	6
M. D. ...	0	2	6
"Humphrey Clinker" ...	0	2	6
"Neutral" ...	0	2	6
A. J. T. ...	0	2	6
J. A. T. ...	0	2	6
A Friend (Batley) ...	0	2	0
J. R. ...	0	2	0
"Pioneer" ...	0	1	6
"A Wellwisher" ...	0	1	0
S. E. M. ...	0	1	0
A Friend ...	0	1	0
Anderson, Mrs. ...	2	2	0
Ashworth, Mrs. John (2 years)	2	0	0
Aldis, Professor ...	1	1	0
Atkinson, Mr. Joseph ...	1	1	0
Astley, Mr. A. F. ...	0	12	6
Atkinson, Miss ...	0	10	0
Atkinson, Miss Maria ...	0	10	0
Alderson, Mr. ...	0	10	0
Ayre, Mr. (Thirsk) ...	0	5	0
Ayre, Mrs. (Northallerton) ...	0	5	0
Archibald, Mr. ...	0	5	0
Ainsworth, Mr. (Crewe)...	0	5	0
Alward, Mr. James ...	0	5	0

SPECIAL CIRCULAR,
January, 1881.MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

Executive Committee :

Miss MARIA ATKINSON.	Mrs. PANKHURST.
Miss BECKER.	Mrs. PEARSON.
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THE MANCHESTER AND LIVERPOOL DISTRICT BANKING COMPANY, KING
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The Executive Committee of the above Society desire respectfully to call your attention to its object and operations, and to make an appeal for subscriptions in view of the present critical period of the movement.

The Society is based upon the principle that a woman who has a qualification, the possession of which would enable a man to vote, should herself have the franchise.

The opportunity of the introduction of the Bill, which the Government are pledged to bring forward before they dissolve Parliament, to extend household suffrage to the counties, offers

an occasion for the extension of the principle to women householders which must not be allowed to slip without the accomplishment of the object.

The first step towards this would be to carry the second reading of the Women's Disabilities Removal Bill, which has been introduced in the House of Commons five times by Mr. JACOB BRIGHT, three times by Mr. FORSYTH, Q.C., and in the last Parliament by Mr. COURTNEY. Its effect would be to give the right of voting for members of Parliament to women who, as owners or occupiers of property, already possess the right of voting in parochial and municipal government. In municipal boroughs which are also Parliamentary boroughs, those women would obtain votes for the borough members who, by the present law, are on the burgess roll, and vote in the election of Town Councillors.

Mr. COURTNEY will bring forward the measure at an early period of the forthcoming session, and it will be necessary for the friends of the cause to use every effort to secure for the Bill an affirmative vote on the first occasion when it is submitted to the judgment of the new Parliament.

The Society seeks to promote this object.

1. By holding public meetings and lectures for discussion of the claim of Women to the suffrage, and for the expression of public opinion in regard to it.
2. By promoting Petitions to Parliament in favour of the removal of the Electoral Disabilities of Women.
3. By the publication of pamphlets, leaflets, and other literature bearing upon the question, and more especially of the *Women's Suffrage Journal*.

Annexed is a form to be filled up by those who desire to assist them in their efforts by becoming members of the Society. Subscribers are entitled to receive the *Women's Suffrage Journal* monthly, and the Annual Report of the Society.

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

FORM TO BE FILLED UP BY PERSONS DESIROUS OF ASSISTING TO PROMOTE THE
OBJECT OF THE SOCIETY.

Madam,

I authorise you to add my name to the List of Members of the Manchester National
Society for Women's Suffrage, and I agree to pay an Annual Subscription of £

Donation of £

(Signed)

Cheques payable to S. ALFRED
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28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester.

	£	s.	d.
Alward, Mr. George	0	5	0
Allwood, Mr.	0	5	0
Ainsworth, Mr. T. H. (Stockton)	0	5	0
Alexander, Mr.	0	5	0
Ayre, Mr. G. (Thirsk)	0	2	6
Awde, Mrs.	0	2	6
Ayre, Mr. T. (Northallerton)	0	2	6
Alston, Mr.	0	2	6
Anderson, Mr. (Grimsby)	0	2	6
Atkinson, Mr. H. (Grimsby)	0	2	6
Abernethy, Mrs.	0	2	6
Addison, Mrs.	0	2	6
Antcliffe, Mr.	0	2	6
Ayrton, Mrs.	0	2	6
Atherton, Mrs.	0	2	6
Allen, Mr. A.	0	2	0
Brooke, Miss Edith	10	0	0
Buchanan, Dr.	6	1	0
Buchan, The Dowager Countess of	5	0	0
Browne, Mrs. S. W.	4	0	0
Bowring, Lady	2	0	0
Brooke, Mr. Thomas	2	0	0
Baines, Mr. Edward	1	1	0
Barran, Mr. John, junr.	1	1	0
Brooke, Mrs. Edward	1	1	0
Binney, Mr. E. W., F.R.S.	1	1	0
Buss, Miss F. M.	1	1	0
Biggs, Miss Ashurst	1	1	0
Borchardt, Dr.	1	1	0
Broad, Messrs. Jesse, & Co.	1	1	0
Boucherett, Miss Jessie	1	1	0
Barlow, Mr. James	1	1	0
Bradney, Mrs.	1	1	0
Burt, Mr. Jonathan	1	0	0
Brooke, Miss Octavia	1	0	0
Benson, Mr.	1	0	0
Biggs, Mr. Henry	1	0	0
Browne, Miss Annie	1	0	0
Bingham, Mrs.	1	0	0
Bowman, Mrs. Chas.	1	0	0
Bowling, Miss L. A.	1	0	0
Box, Mr. A. M.	1	0	0
Booth, Mr. George	0	10	6
Brankston, Mrs.	0	10	6
Brocklebank, Mrs. Thos., junr.	0	10	6
Bevington, Mr. Ambrose	0	10	6
Blair, Mr. G. Y.	0	10	6
Baynes, Mrs.	0	10	0
Bramwell, Mr.	0	10	0
Bostock, Mrs. Rosa	0	10	0
Bruce, Mr. Alderman	0	10	0
Brown, Mr. John (Stockton)	0	10	0
Bedford, Mr.	0	10	0
Burrows, Dr.	0	10	0
Blott, Mrs.	0	10	0
Brown, Miss M. A. (Wigan)	0	10	0
Bewicke, Miss	0	10	0
Barnes, Miss	0	10	0
Bayliss, Mr. Moses	0	10	0
Butler, Mrs. Josephine	0	5	0
Blacker, Mr. G. O.	0	5	0
Bell, Mr. J. H. (Darlington)	0	5	0
Baron, Mr. (Southport)	0	5	0
Berry, Mr. J.	0	5	0
Baron, Mr. (Burnley)	0	5	0
Baldwin, Mr. W.	0	5	0
Beswicke, Mrs.	0	5	0

	£	s.	d.
Barber, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Boult, Miss Lucy ...	0	5	0
Briggs, Mr. Alderman (Crewe) ...	0	5	0
Boston, Mr. Jos. ...	0	5	0
Blumer, Mr. J. G. ...	0	5	0
Brooke, Mrs. C. J. ...	0	5	0
Bramley, Mr. W. F. ...	0	5	0
Brough, Mr. Joshua ...	0	5	0
Brown, Miss Rachel (Wigan) ...	0	5	0
Brown, Mr. John A. (Douglas, Isle of Man) ...	0	5	0
Brandreth, Mr. H. S. ...	0	5	0
Bleakley, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Boddington, Mr. T. ...	0	5	0
Barwise, Mr. ...	0	5	0
Brine, Mrs. ...	0	4	0
Bulpit, Mr. ...	0	3	0
Beacock, Mr. W. ...	0	3	0
Bridges, Mr. Alderman ...	0	3	0
Bell, Mr. C. (Middlesbrough) ...	0	2	6
Braithwaite, Mrs. G. ...	0	2	6
Brooks, Mrs. Ellen ...	0	2	6
Butler, Mr. ...	0	2	6
Burrows, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Birley, Miss ...	0	2	6
Bostock, Miss ...	0	2	6
Brown, The Misses (Hull) ...	0	2	6
Bates & Quash, Messrs. ...	0	2	6
Brocklesby, Mr. C. ...	0	2	6
Brocklesby, Mr. J. ...	0	2	6
Barton, Mr. C. S. ...	0	2	6
Broughton, Mr. T. ...	0	2	6
Bygrave, Mr. ...	0	2	6
Blamires, Mr. ...	0	2	6
Brearley, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Burton, Mr. ...	0	2	6
Brooks, Mrs. (Hyde) ...	0	2	6
Busby, Mrs. H. ...	0	2	6
Briggs, Mr. J. (Ulverston) ...	0	2	6
Biggs, Miss C. A. ...	0	2	6
Booth, Miss ...	0	2	6
Baker, Mr. J. B. ...	0	2	6
Balgamie, Miss ...	0	2	6
Beckwith, Mr. J. ...	0	2	6
Barker, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Boothman, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Bell, Mr. James (Liverpool) ...	0	2	6
Barralet, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Beale, Mr. A. W. ...	0	2	6
Brooks, Mr. Will ...	0	2	6
Bell, Rev. J. ...	0	1	6
Bate, Mr. ...	0	1	6
Barker, Mrs. (Batley) ...	0	1	6
Beardmore, Mr. ...	0	1	6
Brown, Mrs. F. (Lichfield) ...	0	1	6
Butterworth, Mrs. S. ...	0	1	6
Burras, Mrs. ...	0	1	6
Breadley, Mrs. ...	0	1	0
Blakely, Miss ...	0	1	0
Bates, Mr. ...	0	1	0
Crook, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph ...	5	0	0
Chorlton, Mr. Thos. (2 years) ...	3	3	0
Carbutt, Miss ...	2	0	0
Cholmeley, Rev. C. H. ...	1	5	0
Cary, Mrs. Stanley ...	1	1	6
Clark, Mrs. Wm. ...	1	1	0
Cross, Mrs. Joseph ...	1	1	0
Cooke, Mr. I. B. (Liverpool) ...	1	1	0

	£	s.	d.
Cudworth, Mr. Wm. ...	1	0	0
Crossley, Mr. R. (Accrington) ...	1	0	0
Courtauld, Mr. S. ...	1	0	0
Craggs, Mr. G. F. ...	1	0	0
Crawford, Miss M. Sharman ...	0	10	6
Cullwick, Mr. B. ...	0	10	6
Collyns, Rev. C., M.A. ...	0	10	6
Corbet, Mr. Miller ...	0	10	0
Common, Mr. A. ...	0	10	0
Cowgill, Mr. G. ...	0	10	0
Crowther, Mr. A. ...	0	10	0
Carlill, Mr. B. ...	0	10	0
Clark, Mr. C. F. (Wolverhampton) ...	0	10	0
Chandler, Mrs. ...	0	7	6
Copestick, Mr. Thos. ...	0	6	6
Carpenter, Mr. Thos. ...	0	5	6
Carson, Miss ...	0	5	0
Cronkshaw, Miss ...	0	5	0
Carter, Mr. T. B. ...	0	5	0
Crabtree, Mr. E. ...	0	5	0
Clayton, Dr. ...	0	5	0
Cooke, Mr. F. (Crewe) ...	0	5	0
Cameron, Dr. ...	0	5	0
Caird, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Cohen, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Cronkshaw, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Cooke, Mr. J. H. (Liverpool) ...	0	5	0
Cheetham, Miss M. E. ...	0	5	0
Crossley, Mr. ...	0	5	0
Cogan, The Misses ...	0	5	0
Cooper, Mr. Thos. (Wigan) ...	0	5	0
Crawshaw, Mr. Ed. ...	0	3	0
Crosbie, Rev. W., M.A. ...	0	2	6
Clarkson, Mr. G. F. ...	0	2	6
Cameron, Mr. R. ...	0	2	6
Carter, Miss Laura ...	0	2	6
Chapman, Miss Fanny ...	0	2	6
Caryl, Mr. G., junr. ...	0	2	6
Chattaway, Mrs. T. ...	0	2	6
Class, Mr. P. ...	0	2	6
Cooke, Mr. Thos. (Grimsby) ...	0	2	6
Crosland, Mrs. A. (Batley) ...	0	2	6
Cooke, Miss Sarah (Hyde) ...	0	2	6
Cooke, Mr. H. Ribton ...	0	2	6
Crapper, Mr. ...	0	2	6
Cox, Mr. J. T. (Stafford) ...	0	2	6
Constantine, Mr. J. ...	0	2	6
Cross, Mr. H. M. ...	0	2	6
Cockerill, Mr. H. M. ...	0	2	6
Carr, Mr. W. H. ...	0	2	6
Crew, Mrs. ...	0	2	0
Cooper, Mr. ...	0	2	0
Chadwick, Mr. C. H. ...	0	2	0
Chorley, Mr. Geo. ...	0	1	6
Cooke, Mr. W. (Newtown, North Wales) ...	0	1	6
Curfew, Mrs. ...	0	1	6
Cooke, Mr. John (Grimsby) ...	0	1	6
Coldwell, Mr. Sam ...	0	1	6
Dalby, Mr. ...	1	0	0
Denham, Mr. ...	1	0	0
Dick, Miss ...	1	0	0
Dale, Mr. Thos. ...	1	0	0
Dodds, Mr. M. A. ...	0	10	6
Dale, Mr. D. (Darlington) ...	0	10	0
Dowsing, Mr. ...	0	10	0
Donkin, Mrs. ...	0	10	0

	£	s.	d.
Dixon, Mrs. (Wandsworth) ...	0	10	0
Dunn, Mrs. ...	0	6	6
Douglas, Mr. G. (Sunderland) ...	0	5	0
Dyer, Mr. T. ...	0	5	0
Drewrey, Miss E. B. ...	0	5	0
Drewery, Mr. H. R. ...	0	5	0
Dulley, Mrs. David ...	0	5	0
Dawson, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Dixon, Mr. Joseph (Walsall) ...	0	5	0
Duncan, Miss Margaret ...	0	3	0
Dodd, Mr. Thos. ...	0	2	6
Dawson, Mr. (Northallerton) ...	0	2	6
Dean & Son, Messrs. M. ...	0	2	6
Dixon, Mrs. J. M. (Hull) ...	0	2	6
Dobson, Mr. G. S. ...	0	2	6
Dixon, Miss (Birmingham) ...	0	2	6
Douglas, Mr. B. (Chesterfield) ...	0	2	6
Dunkin, Miss ...	0	2	6
Dobbs, Mr. F. ...	0	1	6
Denby, Mrs. ...	0	1	6
Dunn, Mrs. (Hyde) ...	0	1	6
Ellis, Mr. (2 years) ...	2	2	0
Eastwood, Mrs. Fred ...	1	1	0
Eccles, Miss ...	1	1	0
Every, Mr. John ...	1	1	0
Eccles, Mrs. A. E. (Chorley) ...	1	1	0
Eccles, Mrs. James ...	0	10	6
Empson, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Eaton, Mr. ...	0	5	0
Elam, Mr. ...	0	5	0
Ellis, Mr. E. (Derby) ...	0	5	0
Earp, Mr. F. ...	0	5	0
Ellis, Miss (Leicester) ...	0	4	0
Ebdell, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Elliott, Rev. W. ...	0	2	6
Eddison, Mrs. R. W. ...	0	2	6
Evans, Mrs. (Bredon) ...	0	2	6
Ellis, Mrs. C. (Batley) ...	0	2	6
Ellis, Mr. J. (Walsall) ...	0	2	6
Ellis, Mrs. W. ...	0	1	6
Ford, Mrs. ...	1	1	0
Ford, Mr. J. R. ...	1	1	0
Firth, Miss ...	1	1	0
Fowler, Miss Grace ...	0	16	0
Fowler, Mr. Ald. ...	0	10	0
Fowler, Mr. M. ...	0	10	0
Fordyce, Mrs. ...	0	10	0
Fairgreaves, Mr. ...	0	8	0
Fox, Mrs. B. J. ...	0	6	6
Furness, Mr. T. ...	0	5	0
Fothergill, Mr. W. ...	0	5	0
Foster, Mr. G. ...	0	5	0
Furness, Mr. R. ...	0	5	0
Freeston, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Frost, Mr. Alfred... ...	0	5	0
Frankland, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Finch, Miss M. A. ...	0	5	0
Flint, Mr. F. L. ...	0	5	0
Fisk, Rev. Thos. ...	0	5	0
Foggitt, Mr. W. ...	0	3	0
Fisher, Mr. S. G. ...	0	3	0
Fairburn, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Fairburn, Mr. J. ...	0	2	6
Fothergill, Mr. S. ...	0	2	6
Fawcett and Acomb, Misses ...	0	2	6

	£	s.	d.
Folds, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Fothergill, Miss Jessie ...	0	2	6
Fenton, Mr. J. M. ...	0	2	6
Field, Miss M. E. ...	0	2	6
Fogg, Mr. J. ...	0	2	6
Fraser, Dr. ...	0	2	0
Fowler, Mrs. Jas. ...	0	1	6
Garnett, Mrs. ...	100	0	0
Garnett, Mrs. (Lecture Fund) ...	5	0	0
Goldsmid, Lady ...	5	0	0
Gell, Mrs. ...	5	0	0
Goldschmidt, Mr. P. ...	5	0	0
Gwynne, Mrs. ...	1	1	0
Gowland, Mr. G. H. ...	0	10	6
Grist, Mr. J. J. ...	0	10	6
Greg, Mrs. ...	0	10	6
Goodwin, Mr. Stephen ...	0	10	6
Gilman, Messrs. T. & R. ...	0	10	6
Grey, Mr. W. ...	0	10	0
Graham, Mr. Joseph ...	0	10	0
Greensmith, Mr. ...	0	10	0
Goffey, Mr. Thos. ...	0	10	0
Gibbs, Mr. G. S. ...	0	5	0
Gammage, Dr. ...	0	5	0
Glover, Mr. ...	0	5	0
Gradon, Mr. ...	0	5	0
Gillett, Mr. J. (Southport) ...	0	5	0
Glaisyer, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Glover, Mr. (Crewe) ...	0	5	0
Gregson, Mrs. S. E. ...	0	5	0
Grange, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Goouch, Miss J. ...	0	5	0
Glasspool, Mr. ...	0	5	0
Gibson, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Guthrie, Mr. James ...	0	5	0
Grundy, Mr. James ...	0	5	0
Gee, Mr. W. T. ...	0	5	0
Glover, Mr. John (Hull) ...	0	3	0
Gidley, Mr., senr. ...	0	3	0
Gurney, Miss Mary ...	0	2	6
Gibbon, Mr. ...	0	2	6
Green, Mrs. (Batley) ...	0	2	6
Garland, Mr. J. S. ...	0	2	6
Gillard, Mr. ...	0	2	6
Godsman, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Griffith, Mr. W. ...	0	2	6
Garnett, Mrs. (Ripon) ...	0	2	6
Guthrie, Mrs. A. ...	0	2	6
Gendall, Mr. Peter ...	0	2	6
Glossop, Mrs. ...	0	2	0
Green, Mrs. (Romiley) ...	0	1	6
Greenwood, Mrs. Eliza ...	0	1	6
Giles, Miss ...	0	1	6
Goodall, Miss D. ...	0	1	6
Greenwood, Mrs. (Bradford) ...	0	1	6
Hunter, Mrs. Stephenson ...	5	7	0
Hargreaves, Mrs. Wm. ...	5	0	0
Heywood, Mrs. Abel ...	2	2	0
Holland, Mrs. Chas. (Liscard) ...	2	2	0
Holland, Mrs. C. M. (Chester), 2 years ...	2	2	0
Hetherington, Mrs. ...	1	2	6
Heyworth, Mr. Eli ...	1	1	0
Haworth, Mrs. Jesse ...	1	1	0
Hill, Mrs. William (Manchester) ...	1	1	0
Hewson, Mrs. ...	1	1	0

	£	s.	d.
Hutchinson, Miss R. P.	1	1	0
Hunt, Mrs.	1	1	0
Haworth, Mr. A.	1	1	0
Holden, Mr. E. T.	1	1	0
Hollingworth, Mr. Joseph	1	0	0
Heywood, Mr. Ald. (Accrington)	1	0	0
Hargreaves, The late Mr. B.	1	0	0
Haworth, Mr. Ald. (Accrington)	1	0	0
Haslam, Mrs. W. (Bolton)	1	0	0
Hall, Miss E. F. (St. Leonards)	1	0	0
Hadwen, Miss	1	0	0
Higginbottom, Mr. W.	1	0	0
Hulley, Mrs.	1	0	0
Hart, Mr. G. H.	1	0	0
Hall, Mr. A. (B. Auckland)	0	10	6
Helm, Mr. S. L.	0	10	0
Hurtley, Mr. R. J.	0	10	0
Herald, Mr. W. H.	0	10	0
Higham, Mr. Ed.	0	10	0
Heath, Mr. Ald. (Crewe)	0	10	0
Hindle, Mr. Ald. (Accrington)	0	10	0
Hewit, Mr. R. P.	0	10	0
Hunter, Rev. John	0	10	0
Hill, Mr. Ed. (York)	0	10	0
Haigh, Mr. B.	0	10	0
Husband, Mr. (2 years)	0	10	0
Horrocks, Mr. Laurence	0	10	0
Hinton, Mr. Amos	0	5	0
Hardy, Mr. W.	0	5	0
Hills, Mr. John (Sunderland)	0	5	0
Horan, Mr.	0	5	0
Hurtley, Miss	0	5	0
Hodgson, Dr.	0	5	0
Hill, Mr. James (Castleton)	0	5	0
Hey, Ven. Archdeacon	0	5	0
Hill, Mr. J. (York)	0	5	0
Higginbottom, Mrs.	0	5	0
Hardy, Mr. William	0	5	0
Hindley, Mr. William	0	5	0
Hall, Mr. W. (Derby)	0	5	0
Hickes, Miss Frances	0	5	0
Howarth, Mr. Councillor	0	5	0
Henderson, Mrs.	0	5	0
Holloway, Mr. Alderman	0	5	0
Heal, Mrs.	0	4	6
Howell, Mrs.	0	4	0
Heap, Mr. Thomas	0	3	6
Hall, Mr. J. W. (Thirsk)	0	2	6
Huntrod, Mr.	0	2	6
Hutchinson, Mr. (Darlington)	0	2	6
Hudson, Mr. Thomas	0	2	6
Howarth, Miss	0	2	6
Heap, Mr. James	0	2	6
Holden, Mr. R.	0	2	6
Houlgate, Rev. W. J.	0	2	6
Haigh, Mr. J. (Huddersfield)	0	2	6
Haller, Mr. Thomas	0	2	6
Hawke, Mr. J. O.	0	2	6
Hilton, Mr. E.	0	2	6
Hughes, Miss	0	2	6
Hibbert, Miss	0	2	6
Hopkinson, Mrs.	0	2	6
Heath, Mrs. Richard	0	2	6
Hodgkiss, Miss	0	2	6
Hibbert, Mrs. Charles	0	2	6
Hampson Mrs.	0	2	6
Harris, Mr. Henry	0	2	6

	£	s.	d.
Hadley, Mr. J.	0	2	6
Henry, Mr. R.	0	2	6
Higginbottom, Mr. J.	0	2	6
Hall, Mr. S. (Derby)	0	2	6
Hildyard, Mr. J.	0	2	6
Heaton, Mr. W.	0	2	6
Hollins, Mrs.	0	2	6
Harvey, Mr. J. P.	0	2	0
Hill, Mr. C. (Crewe)	0	2	0
Hill, Miss S.	0	2	0
Hollowell, Mr. W. C.	0	1	6
Harbottle, Mr.	0	1	6
Hurst, Miss	0	1	6
Hall, Mrs. (Leeds)	0	1	6
Hough, Miss	0	1	6
Hey, Mrs.	0	1	6
Harper, Mrs. Emma	0	1	6
Holms, Mr. William	0	1	6
Holt, Mrs.	0	1	0
Henthwaite, Mrs.	0	1	0
Heath, Mrs.	0	1	0
Illingworth, Mr. Alfred	2	2	0
Ireland, Mr. Alexander	1	1	0
Ingham, Mrs. (Southport)	0	5	0
Irwell, Mr.	0	3	0
Ives, Mrs.	0	2	6
Imrie, Mr.	0	2	6
Jaffrey, Miss	2	0	0
Jacques, Mr. Amos	0	10	0
Johnson, Miss (Wigan)	0	7	6
Jordison, Mr.	0	5	0
Jeffs, Mr. George, jun.	0	5	0
Jackson, Mr. W. (Grimsby)	0	5	0
Jackson, Mr. S. B. (Liverpool)	0	5	0
Jeffreys, Mr. R. P.	0	5	0
Jones, Mrs. (Formby)	0	2	6
James, Mr.	0	2	6
Johnson, Mrs. E. P. (Derby)	0	2	6
Johnson, Miss (Sodbury)	0	2	6
Jackson, Mrs. (Hyde)	0	2	6
Jackson, Miss Sara (Leeds)	0	2	6
Julian, Mr. J. W.	0	2	6
Jeffreys, Miss	0	2	6
Jones, Mr. Jos. (Derby)	0	2	6
Jones, Miss Eliza (Woolton)	0	2	6
Jones, Mr. John (Wolverhampton)	0	2	6
Jenkinson, Mrs.	0	2	0
Jackson, Mr. J. R. (Bradford)	0	2	0
King, Mrs. E. M.	1	2	6
Kerr, Mr. James	1	0	0
Kitching, Mrs.	1	0	0
Kilner & Crosland, Messrs.	0	10	0
Kenderdine, Mrs.	0	10	0
Kilmister, Mrs.	0	10	0
Kitchener, Mr. and Mrs.	0	10	0
Kipling, Miss	0	5	0
Kitchen, Mrs. W. H.	0	5	0
Knott, Mr. J.	0	5	0
Kelsall, Mr.	0	5	0
Kernode, Mr.	0	5	0
Knowles, Mr.	0	2	6
Kirby, Mr. Thos.	0	2	6
Kent, Mrs.	0	2	0

	£	s.	d.
Lighbown, Mr. Henry	3	3	0
Lawson, Mr. Wm. (2 years)	2	2	0
Long, Mrs.	2	0	0
Lupton, Mr. J.	1	1	0
Lupton, Mr. Darnton	1	1	0
Longdon, Mr.	1	1	0
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid, Bart., M.P.	1	1	0
Lightfoot, Mr. Alderman (Accrington)	1	0	0
Latham, Mr. G. W.	1	0	0
Layton, Mrs. (the late)	0	13	0
Lupton, Mr. E. A.	0	10	0
Luccock, Mrs.	0	10	0
Lucas, Miss (Harrogate)	0	10	0
Lytton, The Dowager Lady	0	10	0
Lee, Mrs. J. B.	0	5	0
Lucas, Mrs. (Darlington)	0	5	0
Lyall, Mr. G.	0	5	0
Leather, Mrs.	0	5	0
Lamplough, Miss	0	5	0
Lanes, Mrs. Ann	0	5	0
Lomas, Miss	0	5	0
Lawsou, Mrs. (Leeds)	0	5	0
Lloyd, Mrs. (Dumfries)	0	5	0
Lyon, Mr. J. A.	0	5	0
Letherbrow, Mrs.	0	5	0
Lingford, Mr. Joseph	0	5	0
Lingford, Mr. S. S.	0	5	0
Lupton, Miss Matilda	0	5	0
Lea, Mrs. W. (Wigan)	0	5	0
Leech, Mrs. (Chorley)	0	5	0
Little, Mr. James	0	5	0
Lambert, Rev. Brooke	0	5	0
Lamb, Mr. John	0	5	0
Lohner, Madame	0	2	11
Lucas, Miss Alice	0	2	6
Lucas, Miss Clara	0	2	6
Linsley, Mr. G. W.	0	2	6
Leetham, Mrs. Henry	0	2	6
Lundy, Mrs.	0	2	6
Lawler, Mr. M.	0	2	6
Lawson, Mrs.	0	2	6
Lowndes, Miss Mary	0	2	6
Limb, Mrs.	0	2	0
Lloyd, Mrs. R. H.	0	1	6
Leach, Mrs. M. A.	0	1	6
Leadbeater, Mr.	0	1	6
Mason, Mr. Hugh, M.P.	10	10	0
Mather, Mr.	2	2	0
Muir, Mrs.	2	0	0
Mills, Mrs. John	1	10	0
M'Culloch, Mrs.	1	1	0
M'Kinnel, Mrs.	1	1	0
Manfield, Mr., M.P.	1	1	0
March, Mr. J. O.	1	1	0
Mander, Mr. S. S.	1	1	0
Mele-Barese, Princess	1	1	0
Marsden, Mr. James	1	1	0
Marshall, Miss (London)	1	1	0
Mason, Mrs.	1	0	0
Milne, Mr. J. D.	1	0	0
Muirhead, Dr.	1	0	0
Melling, Mr. William, J.P.	1	0	0
Mathers, Mr. J. S.	0	10	6
Maccullagh, Mrs.	0	10	0
M'Connel, Mrs.	0	10	0
Medley, Mrs.	0	10	0

	£	s.	d.
Marshall, Mr. S. A.	0	10	0
Moore, Dr.	0	10	0
Mactaggart, Mrs.	0	10	0
M'Kerrow, Mrs.	0	7	6
Middleton, Mr. R. M.	0	5	0
Mackenzie, Rev. James	0	5	0
Massey, Mrs.	0	5	0
Mylne, Mrs.	0	5	0
Marsh, Mrs. Colley	0	5	0
Moore, Mrs. R. R.	0	5	0
M'Neill, Mr.	0	5	0
Munroe, Dr.	0	5	0
Mudd, Mr. Harrison	0	5	0
Molyneux, Mr.	0	5	0
Meadows, Mr.	0	5	0
Moss & Son, Messrs.	0	5	0
Moody, Mr. Walker	0	5	0
Mundahl, Mr.	0	5	0
Minshull, Mr. Philip	0	5	0
Martin, Mr. T. H. (London)	0	5	0
Morrison, Miss	0	5	0
Maltby, Mr.	0	5	0
Mackenzie, Mr.	0	5	0
M'Lean, Mr.	0	5	0
Manning, Mrs.	0	5	0
Maclellan, Rev. R. E. B.	0	5	0
Melling, Mrs.	0	5	0
Melling, Mr. Sam.	0	5	0
Mackenzie, Miss G.	0	5	0
Mitchell, Miss Kate	0	5	0
M'Kitrick, Miss	0	3	0
Marsh, Mrs.	0	2	6
Meakin, Mr.	0	2	6
Monkhouse, Mrs.	0	2	6
Mudd, Mr. Simon	0	2	6
Moss, Mrs.	0	2	6
Maude, Mr. John	0	2	6
Monkhouse, Mrs. (York)	0	2	6
Moore, Mr. (Hanley)	0	2	6
Mandell, Mr.	0	2	6
Martin, Miss Lilly	0	2	6
Moseley, Mr. Joshua	0	2	6
Murgatroyd, Mr.	0	2	6
Monkhouse, Mr. J.	0	2	6
Markland, Mr. R.	0	2	6
Moses, Mrs.	0	2	0
Mawson, Miss	0	1	6
Martin, Mrs.	0	1	6
Mawby, Mrs.	0	1	6
Macrae, Miss	0	1	0
Merritt, Mrs.	0	1	0
Nicol, Mr. H.	1	1	0
Nicholson, Mr. J. O. (Macclesfield)	1	1	0
Nicholson, Mr. Arthur (Leek)	0	10	0
Neale, Mr. Ed. Vansittart	0	10	0
Nichol, Miss (Hartlepool)	0	5	0
Newbegin, Mr.	0	5	0
Nichol, Miss (Headington)	0	5	0
Nevens, Dr.	0	5	0
Nicholson, Miss (Southport)	0	2	6
Norton, Mr.	0	2	6
Newton, Mr. W. (Derby)	0	2	6
Newton, Mrs. M. (London)	0	2	0
Neville, Mrs.	0	1	6
Netherwood, Mrs.	0	1	6
Nutton, Mrs. E. A.	0	1	6

	£	s.	d.
Newling, Miss	0	1	0
Newton, Mrs. James (Leeds)	0	1	0
Oates, Mrs.	2	2	0
Ogden, Mrs.	2	2	0
Ormerod, Mrs. Thos.	1	1	0
Oxley, The Misses	0	10	0
Oldham, Mrs. (Ditton)	0	5	0
Owen, Mrs. (Wrexham)	0	5	0
Oliver, Mr.	0	5	0
Owen, Mr. J. (Derby)	0	5	0
Oldham, Mrs. (Hyde)	0	2	6
Owen, Mrs. (Cardiff)	0	2	0
Owen, Mr. David	0	1	6
Pease, Mr. Arthur, M.P.	10	0	0
Pease, Mrs. Gurney	5	0	0
Palmer, Mr. J. Hinde, M.P.	1	1	0
Phythian, Mr. Joseph	1	1	0
Peiser, Mr. J.	1	1	0
Pankhurst, Dr.	1	1	0
Pankhurst, Mrs.	1	1	0
Painters, The Manchester Society of Women	1	1	0
Powell, Mr. Thomas	1	0	0
Peek, Mrs.	1	0	0
Pickup, Mrs.	1	0	0
Potter, Mr. T. B., M.P.	1	0	0
Pearson, Mrs.	0	10	6
Pain, Mr. Wm.	0	10	6
Pease, Miss	0	10	0
Pollard, Mr. A. W. (2 years)	0	10	0
Prideaux, Miss E. B.	0	10	0
Petrie, Mrs.	0	10	0
Pearson, Mr. R. (Thirsk)	0	5	0
Prideaux, Miss G. M.	0	5	0
Procter, Miss	0	5	0
Praeger, Mr. and Mrs.	0	5	0
Pilcher, Miss	0	5	0
Philips, Miss (Shifnal)	0	5	0
Parsons, Miss (Shifnal)	0	5	0
Porter, Miss M. E.	0	5	0
Parker, Mr. (York)	0	5	0
Procter, Mr. John (York)	0	5	0
Pedley, Mr. R.	0	5	0
Plaistow, Mr. J.	0	5	0
Pullar, Mrs. Edmund	0	5	0
Pearson, Mr. T. (Chesterfield)	0	5	0
Pearson, Miss (Chesterfield)	0	5	0
Pierson, Miss (Harrowgate)	0	5	0
Parker, Mrs. (Chesterfield)	0	5	0
Payn, Miss	0	5	0
Preston, Mr. John	0	5	0
Pick, Mr. D.	0	3	6
Pyke, Captain	0	2	6
Patterson, Mr. E. F. (Belfast)	0	2	6
Peter, Mrs.	0	2	6
Potts, Mrs. A. W.	0	2	6
Priest, Mr.	0	2	6
Prosser, Rev. D. S.	0	2	6
Pearce, Mr.	0	2	6
Paterson, Mr. John (Paisley)	0	2	6
Puckridge, Mr. J.	0	2	6
Partridge, Mr. E.	0	2	6
Pope, Mr.	0	2	6
Parkinson, Mrs.	0	2	0
Pullien, Mrs.	0	2	0
Porritt, Mrs.	0	1	6

	£	s.	d.
Parker, Mrs. (Heckmondwike)	0	1	6
Parker, Mr. (Heckmondwike)	0	1	6
Preston, Mr. W.	0	1	6
Pointon, Mrs.	0	1	6
Potter, Mrs. S.	0	1	6
Puckering, Mr. W.	0	1	6
Pollock, Mrs.	0	1	0
Popple, Miss	0	1	0
Roe, Mr. T.	2	2	0
Ramsbottom, Miss (2 years)	2	2	0
Ramsbottom, Miss (Lecture Fund)	1	1	0
Rigby, Miss H.	1	10	0
Richardson, Mrs. Henry	1	1	0
Reckitts, Mr. Isaac	1	1	0
Rhys, Mrs.	1	1	0
Renals, Mr.	0	10	6
Rowley, Mr. C., junr.	0	10	6
Richardson, Mr. (Stockton)	0	10	0
Roby, Mrs.	0	10	0
Radford, Mr. C.	0	6	6
Robertson, Mr. W. L.	0	5	0
Rotherford, Mrs. J.	0	5	0
Reed, Miss Nellie	0	5	0
Robinson, Mr. G. H.	0	5	0
Russell, Mr. J.	0	5	0
Ready, Mr. T. W.	0	5	0
Rowcroft, Mrs.	0	5	0
Rhoades, Mr. J.	0	5	0
Rowlinson, Mr.	0	5	0
Rowntree, Mrs.	0	5	0
Rowntree, Mr. Joshua	0	5	0
Ridgway, Mr. M.	0	5	0
Rawson, Mr. James	0	3	0
Rhodes, Mr. J. (Thirsk)	0	2	6
Rymer, Mrs.	0	2	6
Rollin, Mr. J. G.	0	2	6
Roberts, Rev. W. L.	0	2	6
Robinson, Mr. H. (Hull)	0	2	6
Raven, Mr.	0	2	6
Raddings, Mr.	0	2	6
Rawson, Mr. P. L.	0	2	6
Richmond, Miss	0	2	6
Russell, Mrs.	0	2	6
Robinson, Mr. John (Kendal)	0	2	6
Ridgway, Mr. Joseph	0	2	6
Robinson, Mr. W. B. (Chesterfield)	0	2	6
Roberts, Mr. G. H. (Grimsby)	0	2	0
Robinson, Mrs. C. H.	0	2	0
Richards, Mr. R.	0	1	6
Scatcherd, Mrs. Oliver	14	7	0
Smithson, Mrs. Ed.	4	0	0
Smithson, Mrs. Ed. (Lecture Fund)	2	0	0
Steinthal, Mr. H. M. (2 years)	2	2	0
Shepherd, Miss E. C. (2 years)	2	0	0
Scholefield, Mrs.	2	0	0
Slagg, Mr. John, M.P.	1	1	0
Scott, Mrs.	1	1	6
Sheffield, Mrs. Ed.	1	1	0
Spence, Mrs.	1	1	0
Stephens, Mr.	1	1	0
Smith, Mr. J. Stores	1	1	0
Steinthal, Rev. S. A.	1	1	0
Steinthal, Mr. A. E.	1	1	0
Scott, Mr. Alderman (Burnley)	1	0	0
Simpson, Mr. C.	1	0	0

	£	s.	d.
Swanwick, Mrs. ...	1	0	0
Sharman, Mrs. N. Pearce ...	1	0	0
Samuelson, Mr. Jas. ...	0	10	6
Samelson, Dr. ...	0	10	0
Smith, Mr. W. (Accrington) ...	0	10	0
Stead, Mrs. ...	0	10	0
Shearer, Miss A. ...	0	10	0
Smarey, Miss ...	0	10	0
Smithson, Mr. E. ...	0	10	0
Spence, Mrs. Alfred ...	0	10	0
Saxton, Miss Harriet ...	0	10	0
Simpson, Mr. Wm. ...	0	10	0
Smith, Mr. Jas. (Liverpool) ...	0	10	0
Stothart, Mr. J. ...	0	10	0
Shaw, Mrs. ...	0	10	0
Shackleton, Miss ...	0	6	6
Smith, Mr. B. (Thirsk) ...	0	5	0
Smith, Mrs. Alfred (Ripon) ...	0	5	0
Smallpage, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Stainsby, Mr. J. ...	0	5	0
Swanwick, Dr. ...	0	5	0
Scott, Mr. A., M.A. ...	0	5	0
Sager, Mr. Thomas ...	0	5	0
Shepley, Mr. Thomas ...	0	5	0
Sunter, Miss ...	0	5	0
Smith, Rev. J. H. (Accrington) ...	0	5	0
Smethurst, Mr. S. ...	0	5	0
Stephenson, Mr. T. ...	0	5	0
Smethurst, Mr. H., sen. ...	0	5	0
Smethurst, Mr. H., jun. ...	0	5	0
Smethurst, Mr. J. ...	0	5	0
Sheard, Mr. F. ...	0	5	0
Swaine, Miss ...	0	5	0
Sherwood, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Slater, Rev. C. S. ...	0	5	0
Smith, Miss (Hyde) ...	0	5	0
Shatwell, Miss ...	0	5	0
Shaw, Mr. Thomas ...	0	5	0
Silvester, Mr. ...	0	5	0
Sharp, Mr. John ...	0	5	0
Senior, Mr. George ...	0	5	0
Stroyan, Mrs. ...	0	4	0
Sinclair, Mr. Francis ...	0	4	0
Snow, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Shadforth, Mr. W. ...	0	2	6
Snowdon, Miss ...	0	2	6
Sergeant, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Smith, Mr., J.P. (Burnley) ...	0	2	6
Smith, Mr. William (Accrington) ...	0	2	6
Sinclair, Mr. R. ...	0	2	6
Smith, Mr. R. (Grimsby) ...	0	2	6
Sheard, Mrs. P. ...	0	2	6
Senior, Mr. Wm. ...	0	2	6
Smith, Mrs. (York) ...	0	2	6
Smith, Mrs. Sabina (Hyde) ...	0	2	6
Swaine, Mrs. (Hyde) ...	0	2	6
Sidway, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Simpson, Mrs. (London) ...	0	2	6
Smith, Mrs. (Kettering) ...	0	2	6
Shaw, Miss Susan ...	0	2	6
Sanderson, Mr. ...	0	2	6
Smith, Miss (Bishop Auckland) ...	0	2	6
Small, Dr. ...	0	2	6
Saunders, Mr. ...	0	2	6
Southern, Mr. J. ...	0	2	6
Smethurst, Mr. J. (Scarborough) ...	0	2	6
Shenton, Mr. J. ...	0	2	6
Swindells, Mrs. ...	0	2	6

	£	s.	d.
Simpson, Mr. ...	0	2	6
Sinclair, Mr. J. ...	0	2	0
Sherlock, Mr. John ...	0	2	0
Solomons, Miss ...	0	2	0
Sheard, Mrs. B. ...	0	1	6
Schofield, Miss A. ...	0	1	6
Stone, Mrs. ...	0	1	6
Sunley, Mrs. ...	0	1	0
Thomasson, Mr. Thos., Executors of the late ...	200	0	0
Thomasson, Mr. and Mrs. ...	150	0	0
Todd, Miss ...	5	0	0
Tennent, Lady Emmerson ...	1	1	0
Taylor, Mrs. Henry (Manchester) ...	1	1	0
Taylor, Mrs. Thos. (London) ...	1	1	0
Talbot, Mr. W. ...	1	1	0
Tozer, Captain ...	1	1	0
Talham, Mr. Geo. ...	1	0	0
Thompson, Mr. R. (York) ...	0	10	0
Thompson, Miss (Preston) ...	0	10	0
Taylor, Mr. John ...	0	10	0
Thorns, Mr. ...	0	10	0
Turnbull, Mr. ...	0	5	0
Tanfield, Mr. ...	0	5	0
Taylor, Mr. James (Sunderland) ...	0	5	0
Taylor, Mr. J. (Burnley) ...	0	5	0
Thompson, Mr. (Burnley) ...	0	5	0
Townson, Mr. James ...	0	5	0
Thorp, Mrs. Fielden ...	0	5	0
Tweedale, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Turner, Mrs. H. (Bognor) ...	0	5	0
Teale, Mr. J. W., M.A. ...	0	5	0
Thompson, Mr. John (Kendal) ...	0	5	0
Threlfall, Mrs. J. H. ...	0	5	0
Thorpe, Mr. Jas. (Grimsby) ...	0	5	0
Tongue, Mr. B. ...	0	2	6
Thompson, Mr. (Blackburn) ...	0	2	6
Thomas, Mrs. (Manchester) ...	0	2	6
Tommy, Mr. Geo. ...	0	2	6
Theedam, Miss H. ...	0	2	6
Turner, Mrs. T. (Dudley) ...	0	2	6
Thompson, Mrs. (Dudley) ...	0	2	6
Turton, Mr. Geo. ...	0	2	6
Thompson, Mrs. (Ripon) ...	0	2	0
Thorley, Mrs. ...	0	1	6
Thompson, Mrs. G. H. (York) ...	0	1	6
Varley, Mr. ...	0	5	0
Vero, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Vincint, Melle. Mary ...	0	2	4
Winkworth, Mrs. Stephen ...	5	0	0
Weiss, Mrs. ...	1	1	0
Wintringham, Mr. John ...	1	1	0
Wintringham, Mrs. John ...	1	1	0
Wright, Mrs. Barton ...	1	1	0
Wilson, Mr. Henry (Stockton) ...	1	1	0
Woodhead, Mr. (Huddersfield) ...	1	1	0
Walker, Miss Carrie ...	1	0	0
Whitehead, Mrs. (2 years) ...	1	0	0
Walker, Mrs. Edward ...	1	0	0
Wilson, Mr. & Mrs. H. J. (Sheffield) ...	1	0	0
Whittle, Mr. (Crewe) ...	0	10	6
Wintringham, Mr. T. W. ...	0	10	6
Ward, Mr. A. ...	0	10	6
Worthington, Mr. Thos. ...	0	10	6
Watson, Mr. ...	0	10	6

	£	s.	d.
Whittaker, Mr. (Burnley) ...	0	10	0
Worthington, Mrs. (York) ...	0	10	0
Walker, Mr. (Huddersfield) ...	0	10	0
Wilson, Mr. Chas. (Garstang) ...	0	10	0
Wintringham, Mr., senr. ...	0	10	0
Wilkinson, Miss Anna M. ...	0	10	0
Whittle, Miss Laura ...	0	10	0
Wright, Mr. T. ...	0	10	0
Wilson, Mr. Whitwell ...	0	10	0
White, Mr. George, (Norwich) ...	0	10	0
Woodhead, Mrs. H. (2 years) ...	0	10	0
Whittaker, Mrs. (Broughton) ...	0	10	0
Wilkinson, Mr. E. T. ...	0	10	0
Wright, Mrs. Thos. (Manchester), 2 years ...	0	10	0
Walton, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Walton, Miss ...	0	5	0
Wright, Mr. L. ...	0	5	0
Welsh, Mr. ...	0	5	0
Worthington, Rev. A. W. ...	0	5	0
Williams, Rev. C. ...	0	5	0
Whittaker, Mr. James (Accrington) ...	0	5	0
Wilkinson, Mr. John (Accrington) ...	0	5	0
Whitmell, Mr. ...	0	5	0
Wilkinson, Miss Sophia (York) ...	0	5	0
Witty, Mr. ...	0	5	0
Walmsley, Mr. J. C. ...	0	5	0
Whittle, Dr. ...	0	5	0
White, Mr. John (Retford) ...	0	5	0
Woodhead, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Woodhead, Miss ...	0	5	0
Woolley, Mr. W. F. ...	0	5	0
Watts, Dr. ...	0	5	0
Wilkes, Mr. Job ...	0	5	0
Whitelegge, Miss ...	0	5	0
Wood, Miss Alice ...	0	4	0
Wilhall, Mrs. H. A. ...	0	4	0
Wright, Miss Louisa ...	0	3	0
Wilkinson, Mrs. B. G. ...	0	3	0
Whiting, Mrs. W. ...	0	3	0
Willan, Mr. John ...	0	2	6
Walker, Mr. Thomas (Huddersfield) ...	0	2	6
Walton, Mr. (Grimsby) ...	0	2	6
Woodhouse, Mr. S. ...	0	2	6
Wright, Mrs. R. (Chesterfield) ...	0	2	6
Wilkinson, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Wood, Mrs. (Batley) ...	0	2	6
Walsh Mr. ...	0	2	6
Whyte, Mr. James (Dudley) ...	0	2	6
Wheeler, Mrs. ...	0	2	0
Wood, Mr. S. (Darlington) ...	0	2	0
Walley, Mrs. Jane ...	0	2	0
Wood, Mr. Henry (Crewe) ...	0	2	0
Wood, Mrs. (Skelton) ...	0	2	0
Wyatt, Mr. C. H. ...	0	2	0
Whitwell, Mr. (Darlington) ...	0	1	6
Whiting, Mrs. (Duffield) ...	0	1	6
Watts, Mrs. E. (Sheffield) ...	0	1	6
Wadsworth, Mrs. ...	0	1	6
Yates, Mrs. R. V. ...	2	0	0
Yeardley, Mr. ...	0	2	6
Young, Miss ...	0	2	6
Yeoman, Mr. Plummer ...	0	2	6

DEMONSTRATION FUND.

	£	s.	d.
Thomasson, Mrs. ...	21	0	0
Rylands, Mrs. John ...	5	0	0
Garnett, Mrs. ...	5	0	0
Jaffrey, Miss ...	5	0	0
Yates, Mrs. ...	5	0	0
Holland, Mrs. C. (Liscard) ...	3	0	0
Greaves, Mrs. Catherine ...	2	2	0
Hunter, Mrs. Stephenson ...	2	2	0
Heywood, Mrs. Abel ...	2	2	0
Pfeiffer, Mrs. ...	2	2	0
Taylor, Mrs. Catherine ...	2	2	0
Buchan, The Dowager Lady ...	2	0	0
Nelson, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas ...	2	0	0
Courtenay, Miss ...	2	0	0
Babb, Miss ...	2	0	0
Lytton, The Dowager Lady ...	2	0	0
A Lady ...	1	1	0
Boucherett, Miss Jessie ...	1	1	0
Cobbe, Miss F. P. ...	1	1	0
Clark, Mrs. William ...	1	1	0
Dixon, Mrs. ...	1	1	0
Hancock, Mrs. Charles ...	1	1	0
Hill, Miss Catherine ...	1	1	0
Holland, Miss Mabel ...	1	1	0
Livingston-Lemoult, Mrs. ...	1	1	0
McLaren, Mrs. ...	1	1	0
Millar, Mrs. ...	1	1	0
Macfie, Mrs. ...	1	1	0
Mill, Miss H. J. ...	1	1	0
Nichol, Miss (Headington) ...	1	1	0
Nelson, Mrs. ...	1	1	0
Paulton, Mrs. ...	1	1	0
Pennington, Mrs. ...	1	1	0
Richardson, Mrs. Henry ...	1	1	0
Ryley, Mrs. ...	1	1	0
Richardson, Mr. Thos., M.P. ...	1	1	0
Stevenson, Miss Louisa ...	1	1	0
Smith, Miss C. Ramsay ...	1	1	0
Smith, Mrs. Holyoake ...	1	1	0
Simpson, Miss T. C. (Portobello) ...	1	1	0
Sheffield, Mr. Edward ...	1	1	0
Taylor, Mrs. P. A. (Brighton) ...	1	1	0
Taylor, Mrs. Thomas (London) ...	1	1	0
Taylor, Mrs. Henry (Manchester) ...	1	1	0
Wood, Mrs. Emma ...	1	0	0
"A Friend in Fife" ...	1	0	0
Atkinson, Miss Maria ...	1	0	0
Brooke, Miss Edith ...	1	0	0
Carpenter, Mrs. ...	1	0	0
Dalby, Mrs. ...	1	0	0
Dawson, Mrs. B. ...	1	0	0
Duthie, Mrs. ...	1	0	0
Goldsmid, Miss ...	1	0	0
Grove, Mrs. Eleanor ...	1	0	0
Hallett, Mrs. ...	1	0	0
Hodgson, Mrs. ...	1	0	0
Holroyd, Mrs. ...	1	0	0
Lucas, Mrs. ...	1	0	0
Mensbier, Mrs. ...	1	0	0
Mitchell, Miss Kate ...	1	0	0
McQueen, Mrs. ...	1	0	0
Matheson, Miss ...	1	0	0
Masson, Mrs. ...	1	0	0
Nichol, Mrs. (Edinburgh) ...	1	0	0
Nelson, Miss ...	1	0	0
Peddie, Mrs. Dick ...	1	0	0
Sibthorpe, Mrs. Shurmer ...	1	0	0
Sharman-Crawfurd, Miss ...	1	0	0
Smithson, Mr. E. ...	1	0	0
Trayner, Mrs. ...	1	0	0
Wyld, Miss ...	1	0	0
Adamson, Miss ...	0	15	0
M. P. and Friends ...	0	10	6
Barlow, Mrs. Gordon ...	0	10	6
Hilles, Miss ...	0	10	6
Hinners, Mrs. ...	0	10	6
Tanner, Mrs. ...	0	10	6
Whittle, Mrs. M. E. ...	0	10	6
Hoggan, Dr. Frances ...	0	10	0
D. C. L. (Edinburgh) ...	0	10	0
A Friend (Whalley Range) ...	0	10	0
Astley, Miss ...	0	10	0
Bostock, Miss ...	0	10	0
Boddy, Miss ...	0	10	0
Bostock, Mrs. Rosa ...	0	10	0
Bailey and Venhofer, The Misses ...	0	10	0
Cooper, Mrs. (Norwich) ...	0	10	0
Cooper, Mrs. (Sydenham) ...	0	10	0
Chetle, Mrs. ...	0	10	0
Courtney, The Misses ...	0	10	0
Chamberlain, Miss ...	0	10	0
Courtauld, Miss ...	0	10	0
Cattell, Mrs. ...	0	10	0
Donkin, Mrs. ...	0	10	0
Ellis, The Misses (Leicester) ...	0	10	0
Finch, Miss M. A. ...	0	10	0
Fothergill, Miss Jessie ...	0	10	0
Gooch, Mrs. ...	0	10	0
Grey, Mr. W. ...	0	10	0
Hennell, Miss Sara ...	0	10	0
Horn, Miss ...	0	10	0
Hullah, Mrs. ...	0	10	0
Jex-Blake, Dr. Sophia ...	0	10	0
James, Mrs. ...	0	10	0
Kenrick, Mrs. Wm. ...	0	10	0
Knott, Miss ...	0	10	0
Luccock, Mrs. ...	0	10	0
Leach, Mrs. (Yarmouth) ...	0	10	0
Mathews, Mrs. ...	0	10	0
McCulloch, Mrs. ...	0	10	0
McKinnel, Mrs. ...	0	10	0
Muir, Mrs. ...	0	10	0
Muggleton, Miss ...	0	10	0
Marsh, Mrs. Colley ...	0	10	0
Oxley, The Misses ...	0	10	0
Praeger, Mrs. ...	0	10	0
Petrie, Miss ...	0	10	0
Simpson, Mrs. ...	0	10	0
Williams, Mrs. (Aberystwith) ...	0	10	0
Whitelegge, Miss ...	0	10	0
Maccullagh, Mrs. ...	0	7	6
Hulley, Mrs. ...	0	6	6
Copestick, Miss ...	0	6	0
Fowler, Miss Grace ...	0	6	0
Prideaux, The Misses ...	0	6	0
B. E. ...	0	5	0
E. F. (Heaton Moor) ...	0	5	0
"Spring Vale" ...	0	5	0
L. J. S. (St. Andrews) ...	0	5	0
"A Woman Wellwisher" ...	0	5	0
"Lover of Justice" ...	0	5	0
Alward, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Anderson, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Bergeron, Madame ...	0	5	0
Barralet, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Brown, Miss Helen ...	0	5	0
Biggers, Mrs. ...	0	5	0
Briggs, Miss (Cheltenham) ...	0	5	0
Burton, Miss ...	0	5	0
Blumer, M.s. ...	0	5	0

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Becker, Miss E. A. ...	0	5	0	Ellis, Mr. Colbeck ...	0	2	6
Box, Mr. A. M. ...	0	5	0	Furnivale, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Colby, Mrs. ...	0	5	0	Gough, Miss ...	0	2	6
Colby, Miss A. E. E. ...	0	5	0	Green, Mrs. (Uppingham) ...	0	2	6
Colby, Miss Maria ...	0	5	0	Green, Mr. James (Batley) ...	0	2	6
Cary, Mrs. Stanley ...	0	5	0	Haslam, Mrs. (Dublin) ...	0	2	6
Curzon, Mrs. ...	0	5	0	Hill, Mrs. Wm. (Manchester) ...	0	2	6
de Hersant, Mrs. ...	0	5	0	Huth, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Fairgreave, Mr. James ...	0	5	0	Hinde, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Gibson, Miss J. K. ...	0	5	0	Jackson, Mrs. (Chesterfield) ...	0	2	6
Holland, Miss Constance ...	0	5	0	Jordison, Mr. J. ...	0	2	6
Kirkland, Miss ...	0	5	0	Johnson, Miss (Sodbury) ...	0	2	6
Long, Mrs. ...	0	5	0	Kenderdine, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Le Geyt, Miss ...	0	5	0	Laplough, Miss ...	0	2	6
Letherbrow, Mrs. ...	0	5	0	Livens, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Macdonald, Mrs. ...	0	5	0	Lanes, Mrs. Ann ...	0	2	6
McMillan, Mrs. Robina ...	0	5	0	Maylor, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Melling, Mrs. ...	0	5	0	Mackenzie, Miss G. ...	0	2	6
Ord, Mrs. ...	0	5	0	Martin, Miss Lilly ...	0	2	6
O'Connor, Miss ...	0	5	0	Norton, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Prideaux, Miss G. M. ...	0	5	0	Nuttall, Miss ...	0	2	6
Priestman, Miss ...	0	5	0	Netherwood, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Peppercorn, Miss ...	0	5	0	Philips, Miss ...	0	2	6
Pickup, Mrs. ...	0	5	0	Porter, Miss M. E. ...	0	2	6
Reynolds, Mr. J. R. ...	0	5	0	Rhys, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Rowntree, Mrs. ...	0	5	0	Reed, Miss Nellie ...	0	2	6
Spence, Mrs. (Glasgow) ...	0	5	0	Slatter, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Squirrel, Miss ...	0	5	0	Shore, Miss A. S. ...	0	2	6
Saxton, Miss Harriet ...	0	5	0	Singleton, Miss Lucy ...	0	2	6
Slater, Mrs. ...	0	5	0	Smith, Mrs. (Hyde) ...	0	2	6
Slater, Rev. C. S. ...	0	5	0	Tod, Miss (Chesterfield) ...	0	2	6
Solomons, Miss ...	0	5	0	Tod, Miss Isabella (Belfast) ...	0	2	6
Timmis, Mrs. ...	0	5	0	Tewson, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Turner, Mrs. (London) ...	0	5	0	Thacker, Mrs. ...	0	2	6
Thomas, Miss R. (London) ...	0	5	0	Taylor, Mrs. Mary (Whitehaven) ...	0	2	6
Thomas, Mrs. W. H. ...	0	5	0	Walton, Mr. E. J. ...	0	2	6
Tubbs, Mrs. T. W. ...	0	5	0	Whiting, Mrs. W. ...	0	2	6
Tennant, Miss M. J. ...	0	5	0	Wright, Miss Louisa ...	0	2	6
Tweeddale, Mrs. ...	0	5	0	Walton, Mrs. (Ripon) ...	0	2	6
Wilkinson, Mrs. E. T. ...	0	5	0	Winkworth, Mrs. (Reading) ...	0	2	6
Wilkinson, Mrs. B. G. (Bolton) ...	0	5	0	Wahab, Mr. C. ...	0	2	6
Wellstood, Mrs. ...	0	5	0	Glover, Mr. John (Hull) ...	0	2	6
Wigham, Mrs. ...	0	5	0	Book, Mrs. J. (Dewsbury) ...	0	2	0
Wigham, Miss Eliza ...	0	5	0	Brown, Mrs. F. (Lichfield) ...	0	2	0
Wilkinson, Miss Anna M. ...	0	5	0	Barker, Mr. Thos. ...	0	2	0
Yardley, Miss ...	0	5	0	Critchley, Mrs. ...	0	2	0
Yardley, Miss D. ...	0	5	0	Cowd, Mrs. ...	0	2	0
Hodgson, Mrs. (Didsbury) ...	0	4	0	Dawtry-Drewitt, Miss A. ...	0	2	0
Plimsaul, Mrs. ...	0	3	6	Hibbert, Miss ...	0	2	0
Cobbe, Miss H. L. ...	0	3	0	Jones, Mrs. (Formby) ...	0	2	0
"Barnaby's Raven" ...	0	2	6	Marsh, Mrs. ...	0	2	0
"One Little Half-crown" ...	0	2	6	Porter, Mrs. ...	0	2	0
J. R. ...	0	2	6	Philips, Miss (Shifnal) ...	0	2	0
Ade, Mr. ...	0	2	6	Parsons, Miss (Shifnal) ...	0	2	0
Briggs, Mr. J. (Ulverston) ...	0	2	6	Parker, Mrs. (Chesterfield) ...	0	2	0
Boult, Miss Lucy ...	0	2	6	Shaw, Miss Susan ...	0	2	0
Bevington, Mrs. A. ...	0	2	6	Snowdon, Miss ...	0	2	0
Broughton, Miss ...	0	2	6	Woodcock, Miss ...	0	2	0
Bolus, Mrs. ...	0	2	6	"C.-on-M." ...	0	1	6
Browning, Mrs. ...	0	2	6	Mitchell, Miss ...	0	1	6
Belben, Mrs. E. ...	0	2	6	Russell, Mrs. ...	0	1	6
Curfew, Mrs. ...	0	2	6	Stone, Mrs. ...	0	1	6
Clarke, Mrs. Pickering ...	0	2	6	Tweddle, Mrs. ...	0	1	6
Clarke, Miss M. E. ...	0	2	6	"Belfast" ...	0	1	3
Clark, Mrs. Edith ...	0	2	6	M. J. M. ...	0	1	0
Chattaway, Mrs. T. ...	0	2	6	Crow, Miss Rachel ...	0	1	0
Clarke, Miss (London) ...	0	2	6	Corfield, Mrs. Emma ...	0	1	0
Cripps, Miss ...	0	2	6	Dixon, Miss Annie ...	0	1	0
Chaplin, Rev. A. ...	0	2	6	F. E. S. ...	0	1	0
Daniell, Mrs. ...	0	2	6	Gaffney, Mrs. ...	0	1	0
Elmy, Mrs. Wolstenholme ...	0	2	6	Hallock, Mrs. ...	0	1	0
Evans, Miss M. A. ...	0	2	6	Rose, Mrs. E. ...	0	1	0
Evans, Mrs. (Bredon) ...	0	2	6	Winter, Mrs. ...	0	1	0
Evers, Miss ...	0	2	6				

Kvinden,

skabt i Guds Billede.

En Fremstilling

af

Aasta Hansteen.

1ste Hefte.

CHRISTIANIA 1878.

Kvinden,

skabt i Guds Billede.

En Fremstilling

af

Aasta Hansteen.

Og Gud sagde: Lader os gøre et Men-
neske i vort Billede, efter vor Lignelse.
1 Mosebog I. 26.

CHRISTIANIA.

Trykt hos H. E. Larsen.

1878.

Kvinden,

skabt i Guds Billede.

En Fremstilling

Ret til Oversættelse forbeholdes.

Aasia Hansen

Of Gud sagde: Lad os gøre et Menneske i vor Billede, efter vor Lignelse.
I Mosesbog I. 26.

CHRISTIANIA

Trykt hos H. E. Larsen

1878

Forord.

I nyt norsk Tidsskrift, tredje Bind første Hefte, læser vi i Dagbogen — med dens ypperlige Belysning af Forholdet mellem luthersk Retroenhed og Nutidens moralske og humane Bevidsthed, — den Bemærkning, at Dogmernes Betydning, for Nutidens tænkende Mennesker er saa aldeles svundet ind til intet, at man i disse Tider er „mest tilbøjelig til at betragte den, der spekulerer ud et nyt Dogme eller en ny Opfatning af et gammelt Dogme, som en Nar.“

Denne Ytring maa nødvendigvis gøre en vis nedslaaende Virkning paa den som har gjort en ny Opfatning af et gammelt Dogme til Hovedhjørnesten for sin hele Tankebygning. Men jeg trøster mig til, at man i Frankrige har fundet det nødvendigt, at lægge en Maa-ling af Jordens Omkreds fra Pol til Pol til Grund for derefter at bestemme Metrens Længde; jeg trøster mig til, at det paa dette Foretagende grundede System er blevet fundet saa hensigtsmæssigt, at det i den nærmeste Fremtid vil blive almeengældende i hele Europa, selv i Norge. Jeg haaber derfor, at naar jeg, i Lighed hermed, har fundet det nødvendigt at lægge en Granskning af Treenighedslæren til Grund for at bestemme Personlighedens Begreb, — dette for Menneskeheden umistelige Klenodie, der er mindst ligesaa uundværligt som Længdemaalet, — jeg haaber derfor at jeg, i Betragtning af det praktiske Formaal som jeg har havt for Øje, vil kunne undgaa ovennævnte, lidet ønskelige Titel, trods det at jeg, i min norske Troskyldighed og Uvidenhed, har givet mig af med Dogmer, som udenfor Norges Grændser saa stærkt er gaaede af Mode.

Indhold.

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Foredrag, holdt i København 23de April 1878:	
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I.

„Naar Gud siger, at Mennesket (Mand og Kvinde) er skabt i hans Billede, saa maa han dermed mene, at de to Personer der tilsammen udgøre Mennesket, fremstille de tre Personer, der tilsammen udgøre de Kristnes Gud, den treenige Gud. Det tre Gange gentagne „i Guds Billede“, hvormed Menneskets Skabelse fortælles, tyder ogsaa hen herpaa. Det forekommer mig, at Manden er et Billede paa Jehova, Skaberen, da han af de menneskelige Evner især udmærker sig ved Handlingens Skaberkraft, og har en mægtig Optræden i Lighed med den dømmende og straffende Jehova. Den anden Person i Guddommen, Guds Søn, Jesus Kristus, „Menneskens Søn“, som han kalder sig selv, fremstilles lige meget af Mand og Kvinde. Den tredje Person i Guddommen, Hellig-Aanden, — dog dette sidste har jeg ikke suget af mit eget Bryst, men har faaet det af Frederik Paludan-Müller, og da Tankens Sandhed og Dybde tilhører denne Digter, saa kan den kun fremføres med den Udtrykkets Skønhed som han har givet den:

„Som Solen mig de Ord imøde skinne :

Gud i sit Billed skabte Mennesket,

han i sit eget Billed skabte det,

dengang han skabte det som Mand og Kvinde.

Guds Væsen altsaa Kvinden slutter inde,

der har med Manden lige Byrd og Ret,

men hvor i Guddomsdybet skal vor Æt,

skal vi det Kvindeliges Ophav finde?

Dets Udspring i den Helligaand jeg finder,
som har fra Evighed undfanget Sønnen,
og som i Tiden Sjælene genføder,

som trøster og vejleder og paaminder,
som træder frem for os med Suk i Bønnen,
og som bedrøves naar den Modstand møder.“

Saaledes lød Slutningen af et lidet Stykke som jeg skrev i 1870¹⁾, i hvilket jeg kaster et Blik paa Kvindens Stilling i Universet, hendes Forhold til Alskabningen. De ovenanførte Linier er en, som jeg tror, tildels ny Udlægning af de Ord af første Mosebog: „Og Gud sagde: lader os gøre et Menneske i vort Billede, efter vor Lignelse.“ De indeholder en plastisk Opfatning af Guds-Billedet. Det er her tillige fremstillet med en, saa at sige, arkitektonisk Symmetri. I den plastiske Opfatning stemmer jeg overens med den tyske Forfatter Baumgarten, som udhæver at „Gudsbilledet først og fremst er den menneskelige Skikkelse.“ Det arkitektonisk-symmetriske er derimod nyt, nemlig Ordningen af den Maade hvorpaa de to Menneskets Personer fremstiller de tre Guddommens Personer.

Der indeholdes ogsaa i det ovenanførte, at Gudsbilledet bestaar ikke alene i Skikkelsens, men ogsaa i Handlingens og Virksomhedens Lighed mellem Menneskets Personer og Guddommens Personer. Gud Fader og Hellig-Aanden, som Ophav til det særligt mandlige og det særskilt kvindelige hos Menneskets Personer, aabenbarer og kundgør sig ved den mest forskelligartede Fremtræden og ved de mest uensartede Virkninger; den førstnævnte Guddom ved Skabelse af synlige Skikkelser og Former; ved at give Love og ved at straffe deres Overtrædelse; ved underfulde Almagtsgerninger; den sidstnævnte Guddom gennem den usynlige, stille og indadvendte Virken, som dog ikke er mindre mægtig, som paa Pintse-Festens Dag kom ligesom „et vældigt drivende Vejr,“ og viste sig som „Tunger ligesom af Ild“²⁾.

¹⁾ Trykt i „Nordisk Maanedskrift“ Marts 1871.

²⁾ Ap. Gern. II., 1.

Disse Aandens to forskellige Poler er, for at fastholde det arkitektoniske Udtryk, Bygningens to Vinger (Fløje), medens Midtpartiet dannes af Jesus Kristus, Guds og Marias Søn, denne Guddom som kalder sig selv „Menneskesønnen,“ og som er Ophav til det rent menneskelige, der er fælles for Mand og Kvinde, nemlig Sjæle- og Hjertelivet.

Det skønne som ligger deri, at Ingen paasætter sig selv Kronen, men at man bliver kronet ved en Andens Hænder, er her tilstede derved, at det er en Mand som nævner Kvinden som den Hellig-Aands Billede, og at det er en Kvinde som nævner Manden som Jehovas Billede.

Da jeg nedskrev det foregaaende Afsnit, stod jeg helt og holdent paa statskirkelig Grund; — med mit Vidende idetmindste, havde jeg ikke isinde at træde udenfor denne. Jeg troede nemlig, i al Troskyldighed, at nye Ideer og Tanker, grundede paa ny Granskning og ny Opfatning af Bibelordet, lod sig opbygge paa, lod sig forene med, ovennævnte Grundvold.

At dette var en fuldstændig Indbildning, fik jeg imidlertid den paatageligste Vished for, et Aar senere, 1) ved Efterretningen om visse Beslutninger som var tagne paa Kirkemødet i Stockholm, Oktober 1873, 2) ved mundtlig Samtale med en af Høvdingerne paa det norske statskirkelige Omraade, og 3) ved Ytringer i et Organ tilhørende samme.

Jeg erfarede nemlig ved førstnævnte Lejlighed, at man fra svensk statskirkeligt Standpunkt ikke ønskede at Ægtemanden skulde „ære sin Hustru“, skønt det er Apostelen Petrus selv som foreholder ham denne Formaning, tillige at man ikke skøttede om Kvindernes „Hengivenhed“, men kun fordrede deres „Underdanighed“; — ved næste Lejlighed kom jeg til Kundskab om at man ikke alene, med Apostelen Paulus, vilde forbyde Kvinden at tale, men at man endogsaa vilde anse det for „Synd“ om hun vilde skrive; — ved sidstnævnte Anledning endelig, erfarede jeg, ved spottende Ytringer over den Forargelse som var vakt ved de nævnte berygtede Beslutninger fra det svenske Kirkemøde, at disse fandt Medhold paa tilsvarende norsk Omraade.

Følgen af alle disse Erfaringer var, at jeg indsaa at jeg snarest muligt burde forlade den Grund hvorpaa jeg hidtil havde staaet, ligesom jeg vilde have skyndt mig at forlade et Isflag i Bjørvigen paa en varm Aprildag; — ligeledes indsaa jeg at man paa en saadan Grund ikke kunde opføre nogen ny Tankebygning, og at man der, til

Overflod, allermindst vilde vide af, eller endog taale, en Kvindes Tanker, selv om disse nok saa meget vilde gaa ud fra, og støtte sig til, bibelske Sætninger.

Jeg skyndte mig derfor at arbeide mig bort fra mit hidtilværende Standpunkt, dette vil, idetmindste for mit Vedkommende, sige, at jeg begyndte at arbeide mig ud af min dybe Uvidenhed om hvad der i nyere Tider var foregaaet i den sekulære, det vil sige, den med Aarhundrederne fremadskridende, Aandsverden som findes udenfor Retroenhedens Omraade.

Herved gik en hel ny Verden op for mig. Jeg var som en Fange der, efter mange Aars Indespærring, faar sin Frihed, og genser Naturen i hele dens Størhed, Mangfoldighed og Bevægelighed; Indtrykket var overvældende. Min Bevidsthed var imidlertid fremdeles den samme. Min Overbevisning var fremdeles, at Kristendommen umuligt kunde danne en fiendtlig Modsætning til de aandelige Goder, som nævnes: Frihed, Fremskridt, Kundskab og Humanitet, hvilket jeg, i min Troskyldighed, havde troet at Alle maatte være enige om.

Det Complex af Ideer, paa hvilket jeg vilde bygge mit hele System, min Centralidee, som skulde være Hovedhjørnesteinen, hvorpaa jeg vilde grunde min Anskuelse om den Tofoldighed, den Enhed af to Personer, som kaldes Mennesket, denne stod fremdeles urokket; og jeg kunde saaledes blot med saameget friere Hænder, med saameget friskere Mod fortsætte mit Arbeide. Kun bliver Tonen en ganske anden. Den bliver mere filosofisk og mindre bibelsk. Denne Redegørelse har jeg maattet fremføre, for at forklare den Svæven, eller Svingning, imellem disse to forskellige Tonarter, som rimeligvis vil blive mærkelig i mit Foredrag.

Det er altsaa den af Frederik Paludan-Müller henkastede Tanke, som jeg har grebet, og hvoraf jeg har bygget den ene Vinge i min Tankebygning, hvis Opførelse er istandbragt ved en ejendommelig S sammensmeltning af Ordet om, at Mennesket er skabt i Guds Billede, med Læren om den guddommelige Trefoldighed, eller Treenighed.

Lad os kaste et Blik paa Kvindernes virksomme Optræden i Menneskeslægts Historie, og lad os betragte denne kvindelige Virken og Optræden med den Opfatning, at der gennem denne aabenbarer sig en, for Kvinderne ejendommelig, altsaa en kvindelig, Aand; og lad os saa atter se denne fra det af Fr. Paludan-Müller givne Synspunkt. Dette udtrykkes klart og tydeligt nok i hans ovenfor fremførte skønne Digt, saaledes:

Da Kvinden er Menneske skabt i Guds Billede, ligesaavel som Manden, og da hendes Væsen dog er saa dybt, saa væsentligt forskelligt fra hans, saa maa hun nødvendigvis have sit, for hende særegne, Forbillede i Guddommen, i hvilket hun er skabt. Som dette Kvindens Forbillede nævner Digteren den tredie Guddomsperson i vor Trosbekendelse, den hellige Aand. Hertil har jeg føjet, som vi har set, den udfyldende Tanke, at Manden følgelig maa have ligeledes sit særegne Forbillede i Guddommen, og nævnte dette som Skaberen, Faderen.

Vi vil da altsaa forsøge at tage Rede paa den kvindelige Aand; vi vil efterse om vi kan finde denne Aands Spor i Menneskehedens Historie, om vi kan se dens Virkninger fremtræde paa nogen mærkelig Maade. Da vi har hørt at det er den hellige Aand som er blevet nævnt som den Guddomsperson, i hvis Billede den kvindelige Aand er skabt, saa maa vi nærmest søge i Kirkehistorien.

Hvorledes den kvindelige Aand viser sig at have sit Ophav i Hellig-Aanden, idet denne aabenbarer sig i Kvinden gennem hendes Opgave, finder jeg i et skønt Billede fremsat af en fransk Forfatter. Han giver os først en klar

og sand Udlægning af det aandelige Præstedømme som den kristne Menighed har, og af hvorledes dette Præstedømme har to særskilte Opgaver, en mandlig og en kvindelig:

„Kvinden har altid havt en høj Opgave som Kristendoms-Forkynder. Det har været forbilledlig vist i sin Oprindelse ved Jomfru Marias hellige Veninder, som var ved Frelserens Grav endogsaa før end selv den Disipel som Jesus elskede, og de var derfor de første som vidste om Opstandelsen og som meldte den til Apostlerne. I det hele taget er Kvindens Opgave mindre at forklare eller kundgøre Sandheden, end at lade den blive følt. Maria kundgjorde ikke Ordet som var Gud, men hun fødte ham ved den Hellig-Aands Kraft. Her finder man et Mønsterbillede for den kvindelige Tjeneste i Prædikeembedet, som er Sandhedens uafsladelige Forkyndelse. For at Sandheden skal faa Tag i os, maa den først forklares for vor Forstand: dette er Mandens særskilte Arbejde, fordi Forstandsevnerne er de forherskende hos ham. Og da Fornuften, som „oplyser ethvert Menneske som er i Verden,“ er det som mindst afhænger af de indre Forskelligheder som udgør enhver Persons Ejendommelighed, da den er det menneskelige Samfunds klare, almindelige og rodfaste Bindemiddel, saa gør Manden Tjeneste for Sandhedens Undervisning i et offentligt Embede som henvender sig til den store Mængde: derfor er Prædikestolen for ham, han prædiker i Kirken, og han har Kundskabens og Lærdømmens Embeder.“

„Hos Kvinden er Kærlighedens Magt eller Følelsen det forherskende. Denne Følelsen Forhersken bestemmer Kvindens særskilte Opgave: den har til Maal at faa Sandheden ind i Hjertet, at forvandle den til Kærlighed. Men Kærligheden læres ikke, den indgives. Kærligheden i Mennesket fødes ikke ved Undervisning; den opkommer ved Indskydelse, og denne Indskydelse afhænger af det inderligste i den Sjæl som man vil faa til at elske Sandheden. Den afhænger af disse uendeligt fine Afskygninger, af en Mængde næsten umærkelige Omstændigheder, af den usynlige Væv af Sindsrørelser, Minder, Drømme Haab, som adskiller ethvert Hjerte fra ethvert andet.“

„Den store Røst, som forkynder Sandheden gennem Aarhundrederne, er sammensat af to Stemmer: Manden har de stærkt klingende Durtoner; Kvinden udaander bløde, fyldige Moltoner, hvis Ophør vilde lade den anden Stemme fremtræde alene med Styrkens Haardhed. Af deres Forening fremgaar den majestætiske og yndige Samklang“¹⁾.

Den kvindelige Aands Fremtræden i Menneskehedens Historie er mærkelig og unægtelig. I Verdenshistorien finder man vel et overvejende Antal mandlige Navne mod kvindelige, men det er let forklarligt. Verdenshistorien er skrevet af den mandlige Aand, og er fortrinsvis Fortællinger om den mandlige Aands Handlinger og Virkninger, og det ligger selvfølgelig i Sagens Natur, at Kvinder sjeldnere have en mandlig Aand end Mænd, og at det maa være endnu sjeldnere, at Kvinder med en kvindelig Aand gør den mandlige Aands Gierning.

For at gøre dette klart vil jeg fremsætte Exempler. Semiramis havde en mandlig Aand, og gjorde den mandlige Aands Gjerninger, saa glimrende og i saa stor Maalestok, at hun staar Side om Side med Cæsar og Alexander. Jeanne d'Arc havde en kvindelig Aand, men udrettede med sin rent kvindelige Aand den mandlige Aands Gjerninger, thi at reise en Trone, at føre en Hær sejrrikt mod Fienden, og at redde et Rige fra Undergang, maa utvivlsomt henregnes til mandlige Gjerninger. Og dog, hvor rent kvindelig staar hun ikke for os, selv med Sværdet ved Siden!

I Kristendommens Historie aabenbarer den kvindelige Aands Ophav, Hellig-Aanden, sig gennem Handlinger og Virkninger. I Kirkehistorien og Martyrhistorien er den kvindelige Aand den levende Magt. Kirken, Menigheden er Bruden, og Bruden er selvfølgelig Kvinde. Her finder vi derfor kvindelige Navne, her bliver Kvinden hørlig og synlig, her udfolder hun sin Virksomhed.

¹⁾ Gerbet, mission de la femme. Dette her anførte Sted findes i la femme, deux discours par Adolphe Monod.

For at faa Plads i Kirken og i dens Historie maa altsaa Manden, paa en Maade, iføre sig Kvindelighed. Her kan han ikke trænge frem paa almindelig Mands-Vis: ikke med Sværd, ikke med sin Kraft, sine Tanker, sine Opfindelser, ikke med sin Vilje og sine Paabud; han maa træde op som den „Bundne i Herren“¹⁾, som den, der har sin Styrke i sin Skrøbelighed, som den der siger: ikke min men din Vilje ske! Heraf følger, at om ogsaa Kirkehistorien skulde indeholde flere mandlige end kvindelige Navne, saa er det alligevel den kvindelige Aand som i den er den raadende, og som giver den sit Præg.

Den mandlige Aands Ophav, Jehova, ser vi føre sit Ejendomsfolk paa underfuld Maade med Styrke og Visdom. Naar vi ser hvorledes Herren strider mod Ægyptens Farao, og gør den ene mægtige Gerning efter den anden for at bøje hans Stivsind og knuse hans Forstokkethed, og tilsidst begraver ham med hele hans Hær under Havets Bølger, hvem kan da ikke se Ligheden mellem Billedet og dets Ophav, naar Manden fører Krig og kommer frem med sine forfærdelige Ildsvælg og knuser sin Fiende foran sig?

Ved den Hellig-Aands Udgydelse paa Pintsedagen stiftes Menigheden, og dermed begynder den kristne Kirkes Historie. Ved denne Guddoms Aabenbarelse, ved den kristne Kirkes Stiftelse kunde den kvindelige Aand træde ud i Livet og give det sit Præg. Her er ogsaa Lighed mellem Billedet og dets Ophav. Hvem genkender ikke Kvinden i den stille, indadvendte, og dog saa mægtige Virken? Hvem genkender ikke det kvindelige Præg i den Aand „som fordm aabnede Profeters Mund, lagde det varslende, forjættende Ord paa deres Tunge, og nu virker ordnende og styrende i Kirken?“²⁾

Naar jeg siger, hvem ser ikke Ligheden, da maa jeg tilføje: af dem som have Øjne at se med.

¹⁾ Eph. IV, 1.

²⁾ I. Peder I, 11. Ap. G. XX, 28. Udvikling af de kristelige Hovedlærdomme af Dr. Henr. Nik. Clausen.

II.

Hele denne Fremstilling gaar ud paa at forklare de Ord, at Mennesket er skabt i Guds Billede, saaledes, at den menneskelige To-Enhed skal udtrykke den guddommelige Tre-Enhed. I det foregaaende har jeg fortrinsvis tegnet den menneskelige Skikkelse og Egenskab, i sin mandlige og kvindelige, Dobbeltthed, og har antydnet hvorledes denne Tofoldighed bliver Udtryk for den guddommelige Skikkelses og Egenskabs Trefoldighed. Jeg vil nu gaa over til at fremhæve hvorledes Mennesket, i Handling og Virksomhed, ligeledes skal afbilde Guddommen.

Gud har givet Mennesket en skabende Aand, til at skabe paa menneskelig Vis, ligesom han selv skaber paa guddommelig Vis. Nu ved vi, at Gud har skabt Verden for ham, ved ham, til ham, som han kalder sin eenbaarne Søn, og som er Menneskesjælens Ophav, som er Forbillede for det, som er fælles for Mand og Kvinde, for det rent menneskelige. Naar nu Mennesket skal skabe, og det er især Manden som har faaet den skabende Aand, hvis Ophav er Gud, Skaberen, han skal da skabe for, ved, og til Menneskesjælen, for, ved, og til det menneskelige. Men naar den mandlige skabende Aand vil skabe blot for, ved, og til sig selv, løsrevet fra Sjælen, fra det menneskelige, da bliver det en tom, en ødelæggende Skaben. Denne Erkendelse udtrykker Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson saaledes:

Hvem ei har Kærlighed i det smaa
han kan ei Mængdens ei Mindets faa.
Hvem ei kan bygge sit eget Hus,
hvad stort han bygger gaar og i Grus.
Med Sejr fra Moskva til Kartagena,
han dør dog ensom paa Sankt Helena.

Den skabende Evne slaar saaledes om til sin Modsætning, til det ødelæggende, naar den egenmægtigt og ukærligt løsriver sig fra det menneskelige — og fra det kvindelige. Guddommen er en Treeninghed, og vi kan saaledes vide at der altid er en Samvirken af de tre Guddommens Personer, og at saaledes den hellige Aand, som er den kvindelige Aands Ophav, ikke har været udeltagende under Skabningens Tilblivelse. Vi se jo ogsaa, at „Guds Aand svævede oven over Vandene“¹⁾.

I Lighed hermed se vi, at den menneskelige skabende Aand maa have kvindelig Inspiration, for at frembringe det skønne og det velgørende. Digteren og hans Musa er en Forestilling, som Enhver er saa fortrolig med, at Opfatningen af denne Sandhed maa siges at at være gaaet over i den almene Bevidsthed. For at den menneskelige Skaben skal være i Overensstemmelse med den guddommelige Skaben, maa den altsaa have Hensyn og Kærlighed til det menneskelige, og have Indgivelse af og Hengivelse til det kvindelige. I samme Grad som den menneskelige skabende Aand undlader at tage dette Hensyn, at have denne Kærlighed, at modtage denne Indgivelse og at yde denne Hengivelse, i samme Grad fjerner dens Arbejde sig fra Ligheden med Guds velgørende Arbejde, og bliver en mere opløsende end skabende Virksomhed.

Om denne Tankegangs Rigtighed kan man overbevise sig ved at følge den spekulative Filosofis Udvikling i Tyskland. De filosofiske Aander have der, mer og mer, gaaet sine egne Veje, og har, altid mere udelukkende, villet skabe en Verden for sig selv, ved sig selv og til sig selv, nemlig for den mandlige hvileløse Aand, løsrevet baade fra det menneskelige og fra det kvindelige, og har derfor ogsaa med sine nyeste Herolder i Spidsen, vandret den lige Vej til Afgrunden, det vil sige, til den al Aand, al Tro opløsende, Materialisme.

¹⁾ 1ste Mosebog I, 2.

Den skabende Evne staa saaledes om til sin Mødestad, til det ubelegge, naar den egenmægtigt og ubestemt lægger sig til det menneskelige — og fra det kvindelige Guddommen er en Freenighed, og vi kan saaledes vide at der altid er en Samvirken af de to Guddommers Personer, og at saaledes den helige Aand, som er den kvindelige Aands Ophav, ikke har været udelagt under Skabningens Tilblivelse. Vi se jo ogsaa at Guds Aand staa over alle andre, og at den menneskelige skabende

Lad os nu vende Blikket mod den mandlige Aand. Jeg henførte, i det først forelæste Afsnit, Mandens Forbillede til Guddommens første Person. Jeg drog Parallellen nærmest med Hensyn til Krigsførelsen, med Hensyn til den krigerske Karakter som udmærker det gamle Testaments Jehova, og som ligeledes er saa fremherskende hos Manden fra de ældste Tider lige til Nutiden. Jeg nævnte dog ogsaa i største Korthed, som Mandens Forbillede, den Guddomsperson der har skabt de synlige Skikkelser og Former, det vil da sige, fra vort Standpunkt først og fremst Jorden, med alt hvad paa den vokser, lever og rører sig, hvorved jeg altsaa betoned Skaberen. Jeg vil nu gaa ud fra dette sidste.

Jeg har ladet mig sige af Sprogkyndige, at Mandens hebraiske Navn Adama, betyder rød Lerjord, og jeg vil minde om, inden vi forlader det bibelske Omraade, for at begive os ind paa filosofisk Grund, at han blev dannet af „Støv af Jorden“. I. Mose. 2.—7.

Den mandlige Aand er, i god Overensstemmelse hermed, vel skikket til at indtrænge i, og at undersøge Jorden, alt det synliges Natur og Væsen. Manden er en Søn af Jorden, ligesom Titanerne, han styrkes ved at kastes til Jorden, han vilde, om muligt, trænge ind til dens Middelpunkt. Den mandlige Aand karakteriserer sig ved sin krystalliserende, sin konstruerende Evne.

Den mandlige Tænkningens Udgangspunkt er Matematik, og Vejen gaar dernæst gennem Geometri, Fysik, Mekanik, Geologi, Botanik til Zoologi. Fra Dyreriget naar den mand-

lige Tænker endelig op til det menneskelige, det vil sige, til den menneskelige Anatomi. Fra denne stiger han op i Fysiologien, og — væbnet med Mikroskop og Elektricitets-Apparater, undersøger han Nervesystemet fra de yderste Fibrer og Spidser, gennem Rygmarven op til Hjernen, — og han staa nu ved den Dør som fører ind til Sjælelivet.

Han staa ved Porten, — men Porten er lukket, vel at mærke.

Det foregaaende Afsnit sluttede med et skarpt Udfald mod den nyere tyske, spekulative Filosofi. Det skarpe i Tonen hidrører fra det statskirkelige Standpunkt, hvorpaa jeg befandt mig da jeg nedskrev det. Jeg vil nu derfor nærmere forklare denne Udtalelse, paa en Maade som bringer den i Overensstemmelse med min Opfatning af den mandlige Aand, som væsentlig forskellig fra den kvindelige Aand.

Lad os altsaa vende Blikket mod den mandlige Aand.

„Ingen Videnskab kan bringes istand, dersom man ikke i Eftertanken afsondrer hvad der i Virkeligheden er forenet,“ (J. P. Mynster, Psychologi), derfor har vi ikke Ret til at forekaste disse spekulative Filosofer Beskyldningen for Ensidighed og Overgreb, hvis de lader deres Arbeide gælde for hvad det virkelig er, nemlig Frembringelser af en enkelt eller nogle enkelte Sjælekræfter. Og selv om disse Mænd udelukkende arbeide med deres mandlige Aand, paa en fra det menneskelige og det kvindelige fuldstændigt afsondret Maade, da er de naturligvis i deres fulde Ret, naar de arbeide som Mænd, med deres mandlige Evner og Kræfter, for at vinde mandige Resultater.

Men der gives blandt Mændene en egen Slags Naturer, en egen Slags Aander, som ere begavede paa en mere menneskeligt flersidig Maade, som ikke er saa udpræget, eller om man vil, ensidigt, mandligt anlagte; disse kalder man Digtere, og disse minder undertiden de strengt mandlige

Tænkere om, at „der gives meget mellem Himmel og Jord som deres Filosofi ikke drømmer om“. (Hamlet, Shakespear.) Digterne adskiller sig paa det bestemteste derved fra Filosoferne, at de ikke er uvidende om Kvindens Tilværelse. De kan ikke undvære hende i deres Digtning. De mandlige spekulative Tænkere, derimod, vidste ikke at Mennesket er Mand og Kvinde, og at de tilhobe saaledes kun fremstille det halve Menneske; de vidste det ikke, i højere Forstand, det vil sige, de havde intet Begreb, i filosofisk Betydning, som udtrykte eller repræsenterede Kvindeligheden, hvorved denne Størrelse kunde overflyttes i deres Tanke- og Begrebs-Verden. Den mandlige Aand var derfor Enehersker i Tankernes Verden.

De mandlige spekulative Tænkere var ikke destomindre selvfølgelig Mennesker, og de havde saaledes, foruden den strengt mandlige Side af deres Væsen, ogsaa en rent menneskelig Side, som man vel maa kalde Hjerte og Sjæl, denne tilfredsstillende praktisk i Livet, nærmest vel i Familielivet, medens de i deres Systemer kun tog Hensyn til den mandlige Side af deres Væsen, og arbejdede paa at fremstille Alskabningen efter deres mandlige Aands Opfatning og Evne.

Det er det tyske Folk som især har frembragt disse Spekulationens Heroer, og det er disse som har frembragt Systemer, virkelige Konstruktioner. Kun paa Afstand har jeg formaaet at iagttage disse storartede, underfulde Tankebygninger, som udtrykke den mandlige Aands Art og Væsen.

Af alle disse udødelige Aandens Stormænd, forekommer Hegel mig at være den, hvis Værker har den strengest mandlige Karakter, og det er derfor jeg vælger at nævne ham, idet jeg skal karakterisere den mandlige Aand. Man kunde kalde denne Tænker Romeren mellem de tyske Filosofer, thi blandt de store Kulturfolk er der vel intet som er saa strengt, og man kan vel tilføje, saa ensidigt, mandligt anlagt, som det romerske. De hegelske Konstruktioner vil derfor ogsaa, ligesom de romerske Aqua og Via-dukter, om de ogsaa, ligesom disse, for en stor Del har tabt deres

praktiske Betydning, staa som evige Mindesmærker af den mandlige Aand.

Denne strengt mandlige Karakter gør Hegel til den mest utilgængelige og, for den kvindelige Aand, mest afskrækkende af alle Filosofer.

Utilgængelig er naturligvis Hegel, mere og mindre, lige saavel for mandlige Aander, i samme Grad som Chimborazo og Davalaghiri ere vanskelige at bestige ogsaa for Mænd, men det sidste Udtryk vil jeg nærmere forklare.

Naar en Kvinde stræber at trænge ind i disse den mandlige Aands Storværker, for at gøre sig bekendt med dem, da fyldes hun med Forbauselse og Beundring, hun føler sin Tanke styrkes, sin Synskreds udvides, hun føler en opløftende Glæde over den mandlige Aands Kraft, og skabende Dygtighed, — men hun føler tillige et Savn saa stort, saa uendeligt, som gør det umuligt for hende, at fordybe sig eller slaa sig til Ro. Hun finder nemlig intet tilsvarende til det, som udgør hendes Aands ejendommelige Indhold. Derfor vil Hegel især virke afskrækkende paa hende, ifølge hans Konstruktioners særligt mandlige Natur og Karakter, og fordi denne Karakter er saa strengt gennemført i hans Aandsfrembringelser, at disse kan siges at være kemisk rene for alle menneskelige og alle kvindelige Bestanddele. Kvinden vil derfor trække sig tilbage fra det hegelske Omraade med samme Hast som den, hvormed man skynder sig ud fra et Rum hvor man mærker, at der ikke findes nogen af de Luftstoffer som er nødvendige for Aandedrættet.

Ingen har saa gennemført som han, Georg, Friederich, Wilhelm Hegel, villet med sin Pandebrask ompånde og fremstille Alskabningen. Han vilde med sin Tanke indtrænge i, eller som han selv udtrykker sig, kemisk gennemtrænge sit Stof, og dette Stof var Tilværelsen i al dens Mangfoldighed og Uendelighed.

Han vilde med sin Tanke indtrænge i Tilværelsen, sammensmelte sin Tanke med Alskabningen.

Saaledes forestillede vore hedenske Forfædre sig Jetten Ymers Hjerneskal som Himmelhvælvingen.

Det, som jeg i forrige Afsnit har kaldt, at ville skabe

en Verden for sig selv, ved sig selv, og til sig selv, denne Villen og denne Gøren, denne Stræben og denne Handlen, ser vi gennemført i egentligste Forstand, og efter største Maalestok udført hos Hegel, som jo, som bekendt, paa sit Dødsleje sagde, at det var kun en af hans Tilhørere som havde forstaaet ham, og denne Ene, — — havde dog heller ikke forstaaet ham. Her er det altsaa ikke længer den mandlige Aand i sin Almindelighed, som skaber for sig selv, ved sig selv, og til sig selv, men det er det enkelte Individ, den enkelte mandlige Hjerne, som omskaber Verden efter sit Billede, — til en eneste uhyre, arbejdende Hjernemasse! I Sandhed forbausende, forfærdeligt!

Vist er det, at den mandlige Pandebrask her fremtræder som ærefrygtbydende Størrelse, og dens Stræben at ompspænde Himmelhvælvingen, eller rettere, at sætte sig i dens Sted, maa siges at være storlagen.

Vor Slægt, den germanske Stamme, kan være stolt af at have frembragt denne Jette, hvis Tanker endnu drive omkring Himmelranden som Skyer, ligesom Jetten Ymers Hjerne, efter vore Forfædres Forestilling.



Strøtanker.

Den Sag som kaldes Kvindesagen, dette Arbeide som drives over hele den civiliserede Verden for at forbedre Kvindernes Stilling og indsætte dem i deres naturlige Rettigheder, denne Sag har sine Modstandere, som fremstille den paa en saa forventt og karikaturagtig Maade, at man har ondt for at tro, at det virkeligt er deres Opfatning de kommer frem med, man nødes næsten til at tro, at der er ond Vilje med i Spillet; det vil da sige, at de slaa sig dumme, som man siger, for ikke at indrømme det berettigede, det uendeligt berettigede, i dette Arbeide, for at frigøre Kvinderne fra Fordommenes Tryk. Denne Sag har mandlige Modstandere og kvindelige Modstandere. Jeg ved ikke hvem af disse som er værst. De mandlige Modstandere er mere tykhudede, men de kvindelige Modstandere er over al Maade stivnakkede og aldeles umodtagelige for Fornuft. Alligevel er disse Strøtanker, som jeg nu vil fremføre hovedsageligt rettede mod de mandlige Modstandere, af den Grund, at jeg synes at der nu er, og altid har været, hakket altfor meget paa Kvinderne og altfor lidet paa Mændene. Jeg vil derfor lade de kvindelige Modstandere sejle deres egen Sø. Jeg vil blot se hen til, at man ikke kan vente stort af Kvinderne, da de lever i saa trykkede og indskrænkede Forhold, og er blevet vetskræmte af altfor megen Hovmesterering fra alle Kanter, baade fra den verdslige og fra den geistlige Side. Med Magthavere behøver man derimod ingen Medlidenhed at have.

Det gamle System, som Modstanderne hævder, bestaar i at tilegne Mandkønnet alt fordelagtigt og behageligt, Ære og Værdighed, Frihed, Rettighed og Ejendom. Naar der er Tale om saadanne Goder, da „regnes ikke Kvinden med“. Men man mindes hende øjeblikkeligt saasnart der bliver Tale om Anklage og Straf, da hentes hun frem, og faar endogsaa en Broderpart.

Vi læser i „Jødedommen“, af Ge. Vilh. Lyng, Side 105: at Guds Pagt med Mennesket „sluttes før Kvindens Skabelse, saa at Kvinden egentlig kun gennem Manden staar i Forhold til Herren, medens, paa den anden Side, Manden gennem Kvinden træder i Forhold til Slangen.“ Forfatteren tilføjer den naive Bemærkning, at dette „ikke er videre smigrende for Kvinden.“

Men nu kommer enda det mærkværdigste; det er, at med Mandens Frihed, Rettighed og Værdighed skal der følge Ansvarsløshed, og med Kvindens Ufrihed og Umyndighed skal følge Ansvar. Vi læse saaledes i samme Værk: „at Synden egentlig er Kvindens og ikke Mandens.“

Mærkværdigt nok gives der ogsaa Kvinder som vil være med paa dette, at gøre Kvinden til et Slags Søskendebarn af Slangen. I nordisk Maanedskrift, April 1878, fremtræder Elfride Fibiger, for at sige „endnu et lille Ord om Kvinden,“ og hun begynder med den forfærdelige Ytring, at Synden kom ind i Verden ved Kvinden, „ikke som Kød af hendes Kød, men som Aand af hendes Aand.“ Ikke destomindre nævnes i samme Stykke, som en af Middelalderens kristelige Vildfarelser, at den ofte behandlede Kvinden som det onde Princip.

I Vaudevillen „Til Sæters“ findes en Ytring som gaar i samme Retning. Skolemesteren, hvis Aandsdannelse synes at have et aldeles middelaldersk Tilsnit, siger nemlig, at „Kvinden er Slangens Afkom!“

Hvilken Forskel mellem Oldtidens Filosofer og Nutidens! Den store, den ærværdige Sokrates udvalgte sig den heftige og urolige Xantippe til Hustru, for at have en daglig Øvelse i Sagtmodighed og Selvovervindelse.

Nutidens Filosofer er ikke tilfredse med deres Samtids Kvinder, der dog i et Aarhundrede har været afrettede til at lade som om de intet Hoved og ingen Hjerne havde, og at lade som om de ikke havde Knoger og Muskler, — det er endnu ikke blødt nok, — deres Smag tilfredsstilles kun ved et Væsen, som virkelig er uden Hoved, uden Hjerne og uden Benbygning. Forestillingen om et saadant Bløddyr — hvad jeg vilde sige! — om en saadan „kvindelig“ Kvinde, synes at være nødvendig for deres selvbehagelige Velvære.

Endnu en mærkelig Sætning af „Jødedommen“:

„Hendes (Kvindens) Kald og Betydning er betegnet ved Forjættelsen, at hendes Sæd, ikke hun selv skal knuse Slangens Hoved; thi denne Forjættelse, der nærmest fik sin Opfyldelse i Kristus, har ganske vist en blivende Betydning. Hvad Stort, der sker i Menneskehedens Liv, det er altsammen dog kun en Del af denne store Sejr over Dødsfienden, og Forjættelsen faar derfor den almindeligere Betydning, at dette Store skal udføres ved hendes Sæd og ikke ved hende selv“

Saaledes lyder denne mærkværdige Sætning.

Det kunde synes beundringsværdigt at sprænge Kristendommen, og Menneskeslægten Historie, og af Ruinerne

at bygge et altopslugende Hæderstempel for Mandkønnet, altsammen i en eneste Sætning; men naar man saa ser hen til, at al denne Herlighed er bygget paa Ordet om Kvindens Sæd, og naar man ved, at dette Herrens Ord til Slangen lyder: „Jeg vil sætte Fiendskab imellem dig og Kvinden“, I Moseb. III, 16, da ser vi, at dette Hæderstempel svæver aldeles i Luften.

Idet vi Kvinder saaledes undgaa sjælelig og aandelig Tilintetgørelse, udbryder vi: Allah er stor!

Dette Udraab haabe vi, snarest muligt, at høre lyde i Kor fra de østerlandske Kvinder, som endnu trælle under Muhameds Aag, naar de ogsaa faa Øjnene op for, at Dogmet om deres Sjæletomhed og Aandløshed var et Menne-skepaafund.

Vi Kvinder kunde jo, naar vi var ligesaa nærige som vore mandlige Modstandere, og vilde skrabe til os alt muligt, og fordre Eneret til Besiddelsen, vi kunde jo, støttende os til Herrens eget Ord, gøre Paastand paa at Mandkønnet skulde udelukkes fra Kampen mod Slangen. Men vi bære os ikke ad som den navnkundige Ridder, Don Qvixote de la Mancha, som med mere Iver end Dømmekraft læste Krønikerne om de Helte han vilde efterligne, saaledes at han, da der sjelden eller aldrig blev meldt om at Ridderne spiste, deraf sluttede at disse hans Forbilleder ikke havde denne Fornødenhed, og som Følge deraf besluttede selv heller ikke at ville spise. Vi Kvinder slutte derimod, at Mændene, endskønt de ikke er nævnte, dog ogsaa skal være med i Kampen.

The, du fine kvindelige Drik! Hvor let og luftig du er! Du har ikke Ølets eller Brændevinets mandlige Øxehammerkraft, men hvor mægtig er du ikke i din Aroma!

Mærk vel, jeg taler ikke om Thevand, men om virkelig celestial eller imperial The, om virkelig himmelsk eller keiserlig The.

Den mandlige Selvgodhed og Selvkærlighed har længe nok været behandlet som en syg Kylling; den har ligget i en Æske med Bomuld og er bleven foret med Smør og Pepper. Det er paa Tide den hærdes lidt. Hvad vilde man sige om en Person som havde den Egenhed, at han ikke kunde taale at høre at hans Nabo ejede ligesaa meget som han! Som syntes at han havde mistet Ejendom og Rettigheder naar han ikke kunde anse Næsten for en Stymper?

Kvinderne gaar deres Bane i Livet, ligesom Hestene paa Landevejen, med Skyklapper til begge Sider af Øjnene, for at de ikke skal se noget af det som omgiver dem. Det tillades dem ikke at se, hverken det som hæver sig i Højden eller det som sænker sig i Dybet. De skal altid kun have et aldeles horizontalt og ganske indskrænket Perspektiv foran sig, og denne indsnævrede Synsvide skal ufravigeligt udfyldes af en enkelt Mandsskikkelse.

De Kvinder, som ønske en videre Synskreds, og som derfor, til Mændenes store Ærgrelse, bøje Skyklapperne lidt tilside, for dog at se lidt mere af Verden, og for at betragte andre og flere Formaal end det ene ufravigelige, — disse Kvinder kalde Mændene til Straf: „Blaastrømper!“ til Skræk og Advarsel!

William Shakespears Macbeth trøster sig til, at hans Magt og Kongedøme staar trygt, saalænge indtil Birnams Skov kommer vandrende op til hans Borg Dunsinan. Derfor har han et sikkert Ord.

Frigørelsens mandlige Modstandere holde sig ligeledes til et sikkert Ord. At dette Ord er en Forbandelse gør dem intet. De synes, ligesom Lady Macbeth, at det vigtigste er at tilegne sig Magten og Herredømet; hvorledes man kommer i Besiddelse deraf, bliver Noget aldeles forsvindende. De trøster sig til det sikre Ord om Syndefaldet og Straffen. „Han, han skal herske over dig,“ indelutrer for dem Livets Herlighed og Skønhed. At Døden, Forbandelsen, Tornene og Tidslerne følger med, enser de ikke, naar blot Herredømet staar fast. De enser ikke heller, at de, paa denne Maade, kommer til at staa i en uhyggelig Nærhed med den bibelske Figur som kaldes Menneskeslægtens Fiende, der ogsaa stoler paa, at sket er sket og kan ej endres, og som ogsaa vil beholde det mest mulige af Syndefaldet og dets Følger, og som ligeledes vil have Magten og Herredømet for enhver Pris.

Hvor forbauset man end bliver ved at se en saa uædel og uskøn Opfatning af denne Menneskehedens største Sag, som omfatter dens hele Levnetsløb, saa indser man dog meget snart at den gør sin store, uberegnelige Nytte.

Skønhedens evige Love er nemlig uadskillelige fra Sandhedens evige Love. Menneskeslægten har en den iboende Skønhedssans, hvis Uddøen vilde være „en Slukning af Lyset i Menneskelivets Inderste.“ Denne Skønhedssans gjorde det umuligt for Kvinden at reise sig mod Manden, før at afkaste sine Lænker. Det maatte derfor fremtræde Mænd som tilbød Kvinderne Friheden. Dette er sket. Som Følge deraf er Skønhedsloven ukrænket. Før at Kvinden kunde optræde mod Manden, uden at saare Skønhedssansen, maatte der fremtræde Modstandere. Ved „Modstanderes“ Fremtræden, ved deres Bestræbelser for at hindre Kvindernes Frigørelse, er det Uskønne fremtraadt paa en saa forfærdelig Maade, at Kampen mod disse „Modstandere“ bliver en Kamp for Skønheden.

Sandheden vinder paa samme Tid, thi der kan ikke længer være Tale om Tilbageholdenhed, om Fortielser for at skaane Modparten for ubehagelige Sandheder, om af Ædelmodighed kun at fremkomme med Fjerdedelen af de retmæssige Fordringer, ethvert Haab falder bort om at Modparten, af Sandhedskærlighed, skal komme imøde paa halv Vej. Man søger ikke længer efter Blomster til at dække Skaden med; man griber den kirurgiske Kniv, for at føre den, med sikker Haand, saa dybt i det onde Saar som nødvendigt er for at udrense det tilbunds. Dette er ogsaa det sundeste.

Den Synsmaade, at Manden maa hjælpe den almægtige Gud at udføre hans Straffedomme, kan vi ikke gaa ind paa. Hvis nemlig Lovgiverne, kun for at opfylde Herrens Ord til Kvinden: „han, han skal herske over dig,“ havde søgt at gøre hendes Trældomsaag saa tungt som muligt, da maatte jo ogsaa Herrens andre Straffedomme: „Jorden skal vorde forbandet for din Skyld,“ „den skal bære dig Torne og Tidsler“ og „du skal dø Døden,“ søges iværksat ved Love. Agerbruget maatte afskaffes og forbydes, thi det arbejder jo netop paa at bringe Jorden til at frembringe noget Andet end Torne og Tidsler. Lægekunsten maatte ogsaa afskaffes og forbydes, og Hustruen maatte gennem Loven opmuntres til at være lei mod sin Mand, og den maatte paalægge hende at unddrage ham enhver Pleje i Sygdomstilfælde, da en slem Kone kraftigt vilde hjælpe til at gøre Jorden forbandet for ham, og for at den manglende Pleje skulde fremskynde hans Død.

Dette er soleklart, indlysende og uimodsigeligt.

Da nu ingen af Herrens andre Straffedomme søges iværksatte ved Love, saa er det tydeligt, at Manden, naar han optræder som Magthaver mod Kvinden, ikke gør det af Omhu for Herrens Vilje, men af Ømhed for sit eget Herredøme. Dette Herredøme, som han kom i Besid-

delse af gennem Kvindens Straf, ser han tydeligvis ikke som en Forbandelse, hvilket det jo er, men han tager det for en Herlighed, en Kompliment fra Gud til ham, for Noget som Herren har sagt for at „smigre“ ham. Men da maa han ogsaa tage Døden og Tornene og Tidslerne som Komplimenter, thi det er Vin skænket af samme Kande.

Man forekaster mig at jeg farer for voldsomt frem. Men efter min Mening er det med Kvindesagen som med at plukke Brændenelder: griber man løst paa Bladene, da brænder man sig, klemmer man fast til, derimod, da brænder man sig ikke.

Da jeg har fremført flere mærkelige Udtalelser, som maa kaldes overraskende paa Grund af den Opfatning af Kvindens Natur og Væsen, som derigennem røber sig, saa vil jeg endnu tilføje en lignende, som har staaet at læse i vort norske — — blad for halvandet Aar siden omtrent; den lyder: „6 Personer er med deres Hustruer gaaede over til den katholske Religion.“ Istedetfor Kommentar vil jeg fremsætte Sætningen med nogen Forandring: „6 Personer er med deres Ægtemænd gaaede over til den katholske Religion.“

Det er gennemgaaende at Mændene, ialfald Theologerne, saasnaart de tager Sigte paa Kvinderne, eller tale om sig selv i Forhold til dem, forvexler sig selv saa smaat med Gud, Herren, Skaberen, medens de opfatter Kvinderne som Noget jeg — ved ikke hvad, Dyr, Ting, eller forveksle hende saa smaat med — Slangen, Djævelen.

Jeg vil hidsætte nogle Exempler paa den theologiske Tankegangs Forvirring i den Henseende.

Otto von Gerlach siger:¹⁾ „Manden bliver skabt først, derefter bliver Kvinden skabt som hans Medhjælp ved Siden af ham, til Tegn paa at ikke Mand og Kvinde tilsammen først danne et helt fuldstændigt Menneske, men at Mandens Bestemmelse oprindeligt er at være selvstændig, og at Kvindens Bestemmelse er at være til for Manden.“

Hvis ikke dette er uklare Forestillinger og en forvirret Tankegang, da ved jeg ikke hvad jeg skal kalde det. Den er fuldkommen meningsløs, denne Udtalelse om det hele fuldstændige Menneske. Hvad kan Otto von Gerlach mene, naar han siger at Manden efter sin oprindelige Bestemmelse var selvstændig, men at Kvindens Bestemmelse er at være til for Manden?

Hvis Manden var selvstændig, hvad skulde han da med Kvinden? Vi har hørt, at hun blev skabt som „hans Medhjælp ved Siden af ham,“ altsaa har vi jo klare Ord for hans Ufuldstændighed, thi den Selvstændige trænger ikke til nogen „Medhjælp som er ham lig.“ (1 Mosebog 2.) Kort iforvejen har G. selv ganske rigtigt forklaret os Hensigten med at Adam blev skabt først: „Det tænkende, sig selv bevidste Menneske skal først føle sin Ensomhed, før Gud giver ham en Medhjælp.“ Her røber Hr. v. G., at han har en menneskelig Bevidsthed, trods sine egne Paa-stande. Her fortæller han os jo selv, at Gud vil at Adam skal føle sin Ufuldstændighed.

Det er som man ser et fuldkomment Dilemma.

Jeg vil fremdeles spørge: Naar Manden oprindeligt er det hele og fuldstændige Menneske, thi det maatte han være hvis hans Bestemmelse var at være selvstændig, hvad er da Kvinden?

Manden bliver altsaa mindre fuldstændig efter Kvindens Skabelse end han var „oprindeligt“? Mister han en Brøkdel af sin Fuldstændighed, for at Kvinden skal kunne skabes i Egenskab af Repræsentant for den manglende

¹⁾ Erklärung der heiligen Schrift.

Brøkdæl af den menneskelige Fuldstændighed? Men Hr. v. G. har jo netop sagt os at Mand og Kvinde ikke „tilsammen danne et helt og fuldstændigt Menneske.“

Kvinden bliver da til det, som hun er efter „Jødedommens“ Forfatters Mening, — hun bliver at opfatte kun „som et Anhang til Manden“; hvilket her maa betyde, hvad man i Familielivet plejer at kalde et „Paahæng“, da hun, som vi har set, ikke kan være Menneske, hverken som Halvdel eller som Brøkdæl, og altsaa maa være Noget udenfor Mennesket staaende. Men hvorledes kan da den tyske Skriftkloge, i samme Aandedræt, fortælle os, at Gud førte Dyrene parvis frem for Adam, for at han skulde føle en Trang til en Forbindelse med „sin Lige“? — og fortælle os at han „maatte føle denne Trang saa levende?“

Hr. v. G. er her øjensynligt i samme Forlegenhed, som den norske Jægteskipper, for hvem Masten blæste overbord, saaledes at den hang og slæbde i Sjøen ved Siden af Skibet. „Aa, Gud be're os,“ udbryder han fortvivlet, „vi gaar under, hvis jeg ikke kapper Masta!“ — Nu, saa kap den da! — udbryder Passageren. „Nei, det er saa god Vedia!“ Nu, saa lad den hænge, siger Passageren ærgerligt. „Ja, men da gaar det tilbunds med os.“ Dog — Gaaden løses. Den tyske Skriftfortolker rykker ud med Sproget, og tilføjer: „Forsaavidt afspejler sig i Ægteskabet Guds Forhold til sin fornuftige Skabning.“ (!!!)

Da liegt der Hund begraben!

Pastor Sigvald Skavlan¹⁾ udhæver det som noget mærkværdigt, at Gud ikke overlod det til Adam at skabe Eva. Pastoren kender nok ikke Digterens Ord:

gik alle Konger end paa Rad,

de mægted ej, det mindste Blad

at sætte paa en Nelde,

siden han tror, at Adam skulde kunne skabe et Menneske. Som sagt, det løber i et for Mændene, saasnart de faar Øje paa Kvinderne, da ved de ikke længere hvor Skaberen er, og hvor Skabningen er.

¹⁾ Eva, den første Kvinde.

For at bringe Rede i denne planmæssige Forvirring, for at give Retledning i denne tendentiøse Ugreie, vil jeg gøre følgende Bemærkning:

Da Mennesket er skabt i Guds Billede, saa kunde ikke Manden nogensinde have været „selvstændig“, uden ved at fremstille Guds-Billedet i dets Helhed.

Hvis Manden havde fremstillet Gudsbilledet i dets Helhed, og altsaa virkelig havde været selvstændig, kun et eneste Minut, saa vilde Kvindens Skabelse været en Umulighed i al Evighed. Naar Mennesket, det hele, fuldstændige Menneske, engang var skabt, da kunde det jo ikke skabes en Gang til.

Adam blev skabt først, for at det Savn han følte i sin Ensomhed, skulde bringe ham til, med den inderligste Kærlighed og Glæde at modtage Kvinden.

Hendes Naturs Finhed udtrykkes ogsaa derved at hun skabes af et allerede forædlet, levende Stof. Ogsaa af den Grund maa hun skabes senere end han.

Denne Pause mellem Mandens og Kvindens Skabelse er en Forventningens Stund, som naar Brudgommen venter paa sin Brud. At han maa være den første paa Pletten, det har Herren selv lært ham ved Adams Skabelse.

Det er før Højtidelighedens Begyndelse, Alt er beredt, Alle er forsamlede, man venter kun paa Festens Dronning. Hvad var en Fest uden hende! Vi ser ogsaa, at idet Bruden træder ind af Kirkedøren, da lyder først Orgeltonerne, da spilles der op.

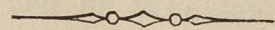
Da Eva er skabt, da er Skabelsen fuldendt, da begynder Menneskeslægtens Historie. Da Eva træder ind i Livet, da spilles der op, da udbryder Adam i Henrykkelse.

Efter denne poetiske Afslutning af de bibelske Motiver, vil det være passende at der i disse Strøtanker, — denne Mellemaktsmusik, — følger et Stykke med en friskere Nutidsklang, for at indlede den næste, mere filosofiske Afdeling.

Jeg er ikke lærd, og jeg giver mig heller ikke Udseende af at være det, — men jeg er Nybygger. Som Kvinde, indtrængende paa religiøst-filosofisk Omraade, kan jeg vel, ialfald her i Norge, kalde mig saa. Jeg har derfor Nybyggerens store Fordel, jeg kan tilegne mig tusinde Maal Jord, — ja uhyre Landstrækninger, bare ved at gjøre en Streg i Jorden. — Mændene, jeg mener Tænkerne, Filosoferne, maa derimod, ligesom de praktiske Ingeniører bygge Viadukter over Jorden, — og grave Tunneler, filosofiske Tunneler under Jorden, for at komme forbi hverandre, saa tæt bebygget er deres Omraade. De mandlige Tænkere have nu begyndt at grave sig ned i „det ubevidste“, da den mandlige Bevidsthed forlængst er gennempløjet til det yderste.

Da Manden kun er sig bevidst som Enkeltmenneske, saa vil han ogsaa have en enkelt personlig Gud.

Naar Kvinderne forkaste Taushedsdogmet, da vil den mandligt enkeltmenneskelige Bevidsthed blive en Umulighed. Kvindernes Tilværelse kan vel ties væk, oversees, glemmes, — men nægtes kan den ikke. Naar Kvinden træder frem og taler: „Se, jeg er virkelig til! Jeg lever!“ Da maa Enhver nødvendigvis give hende Ret.



Treenighedslæren.

Det højeste af alle Begreber er Personlighedsbegrebet. Det indeslutter derfor ogsaa det guddommelige i sig. Forestillingen om Guddommen har ogsaa i alle Tider været uadskilleligt fra Forestillingen om det personlige.

I alle Tider, det vil sige i gamle Tider, da Menneskene vilde være hele fuldstændige Mennesker, og da Tænkerne, Vismændene, saameget som muligt vilde tænke som hele fuldstændige Mennesker.

Det er den nyere Tid, saavidt jeg ved, som har frembragt Specialister. For at trænge dybere ind paa det enkelte Punkt, har man indskrænket Omfanget af sine Iagttagelser. Den nyere Tids Tænkere repræsenterer især Hjernevirksomheden, de ere Forstandsspecialister.

Denne Forstandsspecialisme, retter sine Iagttagelser mod den legemlige og synlige Form af Skabningen som vi kalde Naturen, og behandler derefter Naturlagtagelserne paa speculativ Maade, men med liden Idealitet. For denne Hjernevirksomhed, væbnet med Mikroskop, synes Personligheden, i dens Begreb og Betydning, at opløse sig til Atomer.

Personlighedsbegrebet er af umisteligt Værd for den menneskelige Tilværelse. Mennesket selv er, for den menneskelige Bevidsthed, Kilden til dette Begreb, da Mennesket unægteligt er Person, og fordi, indenfor Menneskets Iagttagelseskreds, ikke noget andet Væsen kan erkendes for Person. Den højeste Tilværelsesform er den personlige. Denne Tilværelsesform er derfor den eneste tænkelige, den

eneste mulige, for Guddommen. Menneskets Skaber, Menneskets Gud, maa være en personlig Gud, ellers stod Skabningen højere end Skaberen.

Personlighedsbegrebet er altsaa i højeste Grad vigtigt, ja umisteligt. Med Personlighedens Begreb staar og falder Guddommen, opfattet som Forsyn, som en levende, barmhjertig Gud.

Med dette Begreb staar og falder Mennesket, opfattet som sjæleligt, aandigt Væsen, og tillige dettes Forhold til Guddommen, som Forsyn.

Med dette Begreb staar og falder altsaa ogsaa det, som jo nu er Tidens Løsen, Menneskeværd, Menneskeværdighed og Menneskerettighed.

Med dette Begreb staar og falder Moralen, selve det moralske Princip, thi med dette Begreb staar og falder Sjælens Udødelighed, det selvstændige, bevidste, ansvarlige, med Fornuft og fri Vilje begavede, Individ.

Naar dette Begreb opløses eller tilintetgjøres, da forvandles Guddommen til en mægtig Naturkraft, vidunderlig i sine Virkninger, men som arbejder uden Maal eller Med. Skabningen forvandles til lutter Materie, den menneskelige Tanke bliver reduceret til Fosfor, det menneskelige Legeme bliver en underfuld, arbejdende Organisme, hvori forskellige Stoffer cirkulere, forbrænde og forvandles paa en højst interessant Maade, men uden noget højere Endemaal, da det sjælelige Princip er forsvundet, i hvis Tjeneste denne Organisme skulde staa, hvis Udtryk den skulde være.

Tilværelsen forvandles, med et Ord, til en storartet kemisk-fysisk Proces.

Det er bekendt, at det menneskelige Sjæleliv for Øjeblikket befinder sig i en stor Krise. Det er bekendt, at Filosofien i Nutiden har tabt sit egentlige Fodfæste, som Videnskab om aandelige og sjælelige Tilstande, og at den gør fælles Sag med Naturvidenskaben¹⁾.

¹⁾ Jeg støtter disse Udtalelser nærmest til en Afhandling i et svensk Tidsskrift: „Om den samtida filosofien i Tyskland, Danmark och Frankrike“, af P. J. H. Leander. 1876.

Dette kan have sin store Nytte og sin store Berettigelse, som en overgaaende Reaktion mod forhen herskende, altfor abstrakte Systemer og Tankeretninger, som med altfor stor Vilkaarlighed trængte ind paa det naturvidenskabelige Omraade.

Men det sjælelige og aandelige Holdepunkt maa atter genfindes. Dette Holdepunkt kan kun søges og vinde Fasthed i Religionen, i den fuldkomneste Religion vi kende, i Kristendommen.

Dette Holdepunkt synes i Nutiden at være glippet.

Vi maa søge Aarsagen til at dette er sket. Jeg vil i et senere Hefte af dette Skrift, udtale mig nærmere herom. Her kun saameget om Grunden til Nutidens religiøse Op-løsningstilstand: Aarsagen synes at være, at Forvalterne af de dyrebare kristelige Sandheder og Troslærdomme have været altfor ængstelige, altfor urokkelige, i deres Fastholden af de Former hvori disse Sandheder og Troslærdomme er os overleverede.

Da disse Former ikke længer tilfredsstillter Nutidens tænkende Mennesker, saa har disse svaret paa, eller imødegaaet, den omtalte Urokkelighed ved at, paa en temmelig voldsom Maade, sønderslaa de forældede Former hvori de umistelige Skatte er os overleverede, saaledes, at det synes som om selve Indholdet stod Fare for at spildes.

Det er bekendt, at i Henseende til de her omhandlede Regioner af det menneskelige Liv, er Tilstanden i den civiliserede Kristenhed saaledes som her i Korthed er skildret. Da saaledes en, vistnok beundringsværdigt dygtig, men tillige overveiende realistisk Fremtrængen, formelig synes at true det sjælelige Omraade med en Slags Oversvømmelse, saa mener jeg at kunne faa Medhold i, at det vilde være en fortjenstfuld Gerning at yde en, om nok saa ringe Skærv, at give et Vink, om ogsaa i stor Ufuldkommenhed, for at hjælpe til at vogte det menneskelige Sjæle-Omraades Grændser.

Da nu, som jeg har paaapeget, Personlighedsbegrebet er umisteligt for dette, saa vil jeg stræbe at gøre et saadant forebyggende Arbeide, ved at søge en fast og dyb

Grundvold, hvorpaa jeg kan opføre et Tempel for denne dyrebare Helligdom, hvori den ukrænkeligt kan bevares.

En saadan Grundvold tror jeg at have fundet i Treenighedslæren. Jeg vil da skride til Opførelsen af min Tankebygning, hvilken jeg, som før nævnt, har søgt at istandbringe ved en ejendommelig Sammensmeltning af denne Lære med Ordet om, at Mennesket er skabt i Guds Billede.

Paa denne Maade haaber jeg tillige at kunne gøre mine Tanker gældende hos Samtiden, der jo, som vi ved, er overvejende realistisk. Naar man vil udrette noget, maa man jo nødvendigvis søge at komme i Forstaaelse med sin Samtid. Jeg vil derfor udhæve, at jeg støtter mig til noget reelt, til noget virkeligt. Jeg støtter mig navnlig til den Virkelighed som kaldes Mennesket, til den unægtelige Kendsgerning som kaldes den menneskelige Tilværelse.

Vi vil begynde med at forsøge at klargøre, hvad en Person, hvad Personlighed vil sige.

Enhver Forestilling om Personlighed er uadskilleligt knyttet til Forestillingen om særegne Evner og Egenskaber, som er Personlighedens Kendemærke. Enhver Forestilling om en Person dannes netop ved at opfatte forskellige Egenskaber, som bestemme Personens Karakter, med Udelukkelse af andre Egenskaber, som ikke høre til denne Personligheds aandelige Bygning. Et Væsen som har alle mulige Egenskaber, er derfor ingen Person. Et saadant Væsen findes derfor heller ikke. Naar man taler om et saadant Væsen, da er det kun et Tankeexperiment man foretager, eller — det er en meningsløs Tale man fører.

Naar vi tror paa den personlige Gud, da maa vi ogsaa tro paa den treenige Gud. Guddommen maa være trefoldig for at have Personlighed, og disse tre Personer maa være Et, for at være den alt omfattende, den alt indefattende, Gud. At tale om en personlig Guddom som er En, er derfor en løs og svævende Tale. Til denne personlige Gud, som er En, kan ingen Troende staa i et nærmere Forhold, eller anderledes, end vore hedenske Forfædre stod til deres Valfader. Denne personlige Gud, som er et Enkeltvæ-

sen, forestiller den mandlige Tænker sig, fordi han er fuldkommen uvidende om Kvindens Tilværelse, i højere Forstand, navnlig som Aand, — og han derfor, naar han, paa paa Spekulationens Højder taler om Mennesket, ene og alene tænker paa det mandlige Individ, altsaa forestiller sig Mennesket som et Enkeltvæsen.

Naar den mandlige Tænker saaledes ikke ved, at Mennesket bestaar af to Personer, som udgør en Enhed, men tænker sig Mennesket som en enkelt Personlighed, og naar han dertil vil fastholde Ordet om, at Mennesket er skabt i Guds Billede, saa kan han heller ikke forestille sig Gud anderledes end som en enkelt personlig Gud, da han slutter fra Billedet til dets Original, eller Forbillede.

Naar den mandlige Tænker alligevel vil fastholde Læren om Treenigheden, da faar han, som Følge deraf, et haardt Arbejde. Derfor har ogsaa Læren om den treenige Gud været en haard Tale for de mandlige Tænkere, „fra Augustinus og til Hegel“. (Dr. Henr. Nik. Clausen). Alle deres Forsøg paa at løse Problemet gaa i to Hovedretninger: enten fremstilles de tre Guddomspersoner som svarende til Hovedsider i den menneskelige Personlighed, f. Ex., Væren, Erkenden, Villien; — Magt, Visdom, Kjærlighed; — Sjæl, Fornuft, Følelse; — eller omsættes Trefoldigheden i en indre Virken, den forvandles til de forskellige Akter i det guddommelige Tankeliv.

Efter endeløse Spekulationer for at fatte den og til egne sig den, efter fjorten Aarhundreders frugtesløse Anstrelser, kaste Tænkerne den nu ogsaa endelig fortvivlede fra sig. Vi ser hvorledes Tydsklands mest fremragende protestantiske Theologer, med Dr. Sydow i Spidsen, henregner Dogmet om Treenigheden til de „uddøde Forestillinger.“ Vi har nylig hørt en Grundtvigianer, Jungersen, yttre at denne Troessætning maatte ansees for at være „opgivet,“ da den ikke havde nogen „Tilknytning i den menneskelige Bevidsthed.“

Dette er ogsaa fuldkommen sandt, og i god Overensstemmelse med hvad jeg netop har udviklet, navnlig naar den mandlige Tænker, ved „menneskelig“, forstaar, — ikke

det tofoldigt-menneskelige, men kun det enkelt-menneskelige, og dette naturligvis, fra hans Standpunkt, som det mandlige.

For Kvindens Bevidsthed er derfor Tilknytningen til Treenighedslæren langt lettere, da hun, ifølge alle bestaaende Forhold, altid forestiller sig Mennesket tofoldigt, da hun umuligt kan være uvidende om, eller overse, Mandens Tilværelse, da han indtil nu har været Menneskehedens Repræsentant, og har fungeret, saalangt som det paa nogen Maade var fysisk muligt, baade som Mand og Kvinde.

For at bevise Sandheden af min ovenfor fremsatte Sætning, at den mandlige Tænk er fuldkommen uvidende om, eller aldeles ikke har formaaet, eller haft Anledning til, at opfatte Kvindens Tilværelse i højere Forstand, navnlig som Aand, — hvilket er Grunden til at han ogsaa, i højere Forstand, tænker sig Mennesket som enkelt Personlighed, — vil jeg hidsætte en Ytring af den norske Tænk, Dr. Ge. Vilh. Lyng: „Adam finder Navn paa Dyrene; han finder dem svarende til Forestillinger, der slumre i Dybet af hans Sjæl, — men han finder intet svarende til den ene Tanke, den Tankernes Tanke, der ogsaa slumrer derinde, — der indeslutter i sig hans Væsens hele Fylde. Og først da han finder det, først da Gud skaber Kvinden, i hvem Adam finder sin Naturs dybeste Længsel tilfredsstillet, i hvem Adam ser sit eget Billede i Skabningen, først da ser ogsaa Adam at alt er saare godt, først da er Adam et helt Menneske og skikket til at udføre det Kald han har faaet af Herren, at gøre sig Jorden underdanig.“

Denne Sætning er vel skikket til at vise den hele Ufuldkommenhed, den hele Uklarhed, i de mandlige Tænkernes Opfatning af Kvinden, som selvstændig, aandig Personlighed, som Menneske skabt i Guds Billede. Den beviser tillige med hvor stor Ret jeg har valgt Titelen paa dette mit Skrift, thi her sættes jo Kvinden som Naturvæsen skabt i Mandens Billede. Ja, det synes næsten som om Forfatteren ikke ser i hende et selvstændigt levende Væsen, ved Siden af Adam, men snarere som om han kun i hende ser det Ribben som var Adam frataget, og som

han genindsætter i Adams Side, hvorved denne først bliver „et helt Menneske“. Jeg har hidsat dette Sted som en Prøve paa den gennemsnitlige Opfatning af Kvindens Betydning, som man finder hos de religiøst-filosofiske Tænkere. Dr. L. udtaler alligevel om Guds sidste Skaberakt, hvorved Mennesket bliver skabt i Guds Billede, at det er en trefoldig Skabelse.

Dette stemmer overens med mine Ytringer Side 15.

Afvigelsen mellem hans og mine Anskueiser viser sig derimod, idet han nærmere vil forklare hvorledes Mennesket, som Billede af Guds treenige Væsen, ligeledes maa være et treenigt Væsen. Denne menneskelige Treenigheds Beskaffenhed eller Bestanddele er efter hans Forklaring: 1) Menneskets Herredømme over Dyrene. 2) Menneskets Herredømme over den øvrige Skabning. 3) At Planterne gives Mennesket til Føde.

Dette menneskelige Treenighedsvæsen er det samme som Menneskets „Liv, Historie“. Forfatteren bemærker ogsaa, at „Treenigheden hos Mennesket ikke som hos Guddommen er en virkelig Trehed af Personer, men kun en Trehed af indre Livsstadier“. Men i samme Øjeblik siger han, at Guds Væsen ogsaa er hans Historie, og at dette „Væsen eller Historie er Treenigheden“.

Man ser her, at „en virkelig Trehed“ af Personer i Guddommen aldeles opløser sig, ligesom der i den menneskelige Treenighed hos Forf. ikke findes Spor af Persons-Trehed. Atter et Bevis paa hvor umuligt det er for den mandlige Tænkens enkelt-menneskelige Bevidsthed at faa en Anskuelse af Persons-Treenigheden.

Hegel omsætter Læren om denne, efter sit System, saaledes, at den anden og tredje Person i Guddommen hver især, er en Reflexion eller en Tankebevægelse, som foretages af første Person, da han sætter Aandens Væsen udelukkende i Tænkningen.

Men om første Person, som altsaa egentlig er eneste Person, faar vi intet Begreb; ialfald er denne Guddom slet ikke Person. Den personlige Bevidsthed eksisterer nemlig slet ikke, paa nogen blivende Maade, efter det Hegelske

System, den tændes kun som en Gnist, som igen slukkes med hvert enkelt Menneske. Menneskenes Mængde fremgaar altsaa, som en Strøm af lysende, personlige Bevidsthedsfunger, af den evigt arbejdende og skabende Materie, som paa en Gang er Verden og Gud.

Man ser, at man her er paa Fixstjerne-Afstand fra Begrebet om en personlig Gud.

Dette System tyder ogsaa paa en svag Opfatning af Personlighedens Betydning, ligesaavel som af Menneskets Betydning som Personlighed, thi den personlige Bevidstheds Lys slukkes saasart det kommer ind i Dødens Port, som det synes, ved den kolde, stærke Luftstrømning fra det hinsides. Dette støtter ogsaa min ovenfor fremførte Sætning, thi, i Lighed med, eller til Støtte for min Paa-stand, at en personlig Gud som er En, d. e. et Enkeltvæsen, ikke kan gives, ser vi, at det enkelt-menneskelige, (mandlige) personlige Bevidsthedslys let kan slukkes.

Den eneste Maade hvorpaa Mennesket kan faa en Forestilling om Gud, som „Ingen har nogen Tid set,“ Joh. I. 6., det eneste vi har at gøre for at faa en Anskuelse af Guds Væsen er, at forudsætte Overensstemmelse mellem det guddommelige og det menneskelige Væsen.

En Flerhed af de mest fremragende blandt Nutidens friere tænkende Theologer forkaste, som ovenfor nævnt, Treenighedslæren, fordi den ikke kan forsvare sin Plads i deres Bevidsthed. De vil navnlig gaa ud fra det bekendte til det ubekendte, hvilket jeg tror er en almindelig videnskabelig Grundsætning.

Da jeg nu mener at have vist, at disse Mænds Bevidsthed ikke kan siges at være fuldstændig, som menneskelig Bevidsthed, da den halve Menneskehed, den halve Menneskelighed, den kvindelige Del, ikke er optaget i Tankens Regioner, ikke er inddraget under de filosofiske Begrebers Omraade, saa mener jeg videre at kunne vove den Paa-stand, at de mandlige Tænkeres Forkastelsesdom over den kristelige Treenighedslære endnu kan tilbagekaldes.

Naar Kvinderne paa deres Side forkaste Taushedsdogmet, og derved blive istand til at komme til Kundskab om,

og faa Klarhed over, deres egen, for dem ejendommelige, Natur og Aand, saa vil de derved ogsaa blive istand til at aabenbare disse for den mandlige Tænkning. Naar de kvindelige Sjæls- og Aandskræfter blive løste af deres Baand og Lænker, naar disse, hidtil saagodtsom ubrugte, Kræfter skabe sig en Virkekreds, naar Kvinderne gennemgaaende overtage den Virksomhed som hidtil, paa deres Vegne, er blevet drevet af Mændene, naar Kvinderne herefter selv optage Arbejdet paa de Marker, de Vidder, som unægteligt høre under deres Omraade, — da vil det vise sig at mange af de højeste Spørgsmaal, f. Ex. Treenighedslæren, endnu er uløste, fordi den kvindelige Aand, — tildels simpelt hen fordi man har været uvidende om dens Tilværelse, — har været udelukket fra at deltage i Forskningen og i Forhandlingerne.

Naar Kvinderne, paa Tænkningens, paa Aandens Omraade, hævder deres Tilværelse paa en Maade, som svarer til det Talforhold og til det legemlige Rum, de indtager paa Jorden, da vil enhver mandlig Tænkner nødes til at udvide Grændserne for den hidtilværende „menneskelige Bevidsthed“. Den vil for det første faa en Dobbeltthed, det mandlige og det kvindelige; — dernæst vil man opdage en mellemliggende Mark, som passende kunde kaldes „det rent menneskelige“, (et saadant Udtryk findes jo allerede); — og saa har man strax Trefoldigheden, den menneskelige Trefoldighed. Da vil maaske den menneskelige Bevidsthed kunne finde at en Tilknytning til Læren om den guddommelige Trefoldighed ikke længer er umulig, omendskønt det ser ud til, at Enigheden om den menneskelige Treenighed, ligesom al anden Enighed, først vil naaes gennem en alvorlig Kamp.

Menneskesønnen.

Da man nødvendigvis maa gaa fra det bekendte til det ubekendte, saa har jeg taget Ordet om at Mennesket er skabt i Guds Billede til Udgangspunkt, for at kunne gaa fra det menneskelige til det guddommelige.

Jeg har i dette Heftes første Afsnit tegnet i Omrids de to Sider, eller de to Arme, — den mandlige og den kvindelige, — af den menneskelige Trefoldighed, som svarende til de to Vinger, Gud-Skaberen og Gud-Helligaanden, i den guddommelige Trefoldighed. Men nu er Midtpartiet tilbage, — det rent-menneskelige, eller fælles-menneskelige, — som udfylder og forener den mandlig-kvindelige Tofoldighed, hvorved den menneskelige Trefoldighed fremstiller sig for os. Dette Midparti svarer til den anden, altsaa den mellemste Person i Guddommens Trefoldighed, Jesus Kristus, Midleren, som forener de to Aands-guddomme, og som tillige danner Forbindelsen mellem disse og Menneskeheden.

Jesus kalder sig selv Menneskesønnen, fordi hans Guddoms-Ejendommelighed, hans Væsens Herlighed, netop bestaar i, at den er rent moralsk, rent sjælelig, at den fremtræder under menneskelige Vilkaar, uafhængig af substansielt guddommelige Egenskaber eller Betingelser. Hans guddommelige Væsen er af den Art, at det kun gennem Lidelse han aabenbares for Verden. Jesus er Sjælens Gud, Hans Høihed kommer bedst tilsyne i Ringhed. Han er Sjæle-Guddommen. Men Sjælelivet, det moralske Liv, kan

jo egentlig kun gennem Lidelse eller Prøvelse aabenbare sig i sin Høihed, Renhed og Godhed.

Hvorledes kan Skibet vise Styrken i sin Sammenføjning uden i Stormen? Hvorledes kan Træ vise at det kan frembringe Flamme uden ved at komme i Brand? Hvorledes kan Strængen komme til at tone, uden ved at spendes, ved at strammes? — Svage Strænge kunne ikke udholde Stramningen, og brister med en skurrende Mislyd. Jesu Sjæls Strengespil var spendt til det yderste, men det brast ikke, det toned med fuld Skjønhed og Renhed indtil Lidelsens Maal var naaet, og det vidste derved sin Guddomsherlighed.

Lidelsens aabenbarende Evne, ser man jo i Tragedien. Man ser der Lidelsen som det højere Sjælelivs egentlige Aabenbarelsesform, eller Aabenbarelses-Mulighed. Derfor staar jo denne Digtart som den højeste Kunstform, fordi det moralsk sublime, det sjæleligt ophøjede kun gennem Lidelsen kan aabenbare sig.

Som Lidelsens Herliggører, gennem Lidelsens Forherligelse, er Jesus Midler mellem Gud og Menneskene. Man kan sige, at i Jesus forenes det guddommelige og det menneskelige, i ham mødes Guddommen og Menneskeheden, paa den Maade, at i Lidelsen nedstiger Sjælens Gud for at aabenbare sig for Menneskeheden, og gennem Lidelsen opstiger Menneskesjælen til Guddommen.

Jesus er Menneskesjælens Fuldender, han er den sjælelige Menneskeheds alpha og omega, dens guddommelige Forbillede, han er dens Lærer, som opdrager den, og som ved sin Vandring paa Jordan hæver den op til sig. Han er altsaa sand Gud og sandt Menneske paa den Maade, at i ham mødes, i ham sammensmeltes —, sjæleligt og moralsk, — det guddommelige med det menneskelige.

Jesus er derfor „Vejen“, som fører fra Jordan til Himlen, og han er tillige „Hyrden“, som fører Menneskene til Guddommen, fordi han, som Mennesket Jesus, har vist Menneskene, Vejen til Fuldendelsen igennem det sjælelige Livs Forklarelse og Guddommeliggørelse. Han har, som Menneske vist os Sjælelivet i en saa fuldendt, saa fuld-

kommen Højhed, Renhed og Elskelighed, at vi maa erkende at her er det guddommelige naaet.

Den mandlige Tænkning har i snart to tusinde Aar kæmpet og stridt om Foreningen af den guddommelige og menneskelige Natur i Jesu Person. Den mandlige Aand, som hidtil paa Menneskeheden Vegne har besørget al Tænkning, eller som ialfald har været Ordfører paa Jorden, har havt et umaadeligt Arbejde med Løsningen af dette Problem, og den har, netop ved sin overvejende formelle Dygtighed, skabt sig uoverstigelige Vanskeligheder. Jeg har vist hvorledes jeg har søgt at overvinde eller undgaa disse.

Nutidens Protestantisme har forkastet Dogmer og Troesætninger, naar disse optræder med middelalderske Fordringer, det vil sige, som, til Ord og Bogstav fastslaaede, Sætninger, som under Saligheds Fortabelse, maa troes eller ialfald ordlydende bekendes.

Nutiden opfatter de foreliggende, overleverede Troesætninger som et kortfattet Udtryk for de store ledende Tanker, hvori Menneskene har udtrykt Udbyttet af det, gennem Aarhundrederne fortsatte, Aandsarbejde hvorigennem de stræbe at fatte og forestille sig Guddommen, og hvorved de søge at nærme sig denne i Liv og sjælelig Renhed. Nutiden nægter ikke at Guddommen har ledet, og indvirket paa dette menneskelige Aandsarbejde, den opfatter Troen som en Ytring af den Menneskesjælen iboende Trang til at sætte sig i Forhold til Guddommen, og som en Følelse af Guddommens Imødegaaelse af denne Trang, men den indrømmer Individet Ret til en friere, en frivillig Tilegnelse, af Troeslærdommene, efter det personlige Gudsforholds Medfør.

Saavidt jeg har formaaet at opfatte de herskende Tilstande i denne Henseende, har man til Løsningen af det her omhandlede Problem, slaaet ind paa en Stræben, som gaar i samme Retning som den jeg her har fulgt.

Det for den menneskelige Bevidsthed, for det menneskelige Sjæleliv, vigtige og væsentlige af Kristuslæren bestaar i, at denne Lære viser os Guds aabne Faderfavn, iste-

detfor den forfærdelige Dommer, truende med de evige Helvedesstraffe. Den viser os Skranken nedbrudt mellem Guddommen og Menneskeheden.

Denne Lære har imidlertid en dogmatisk og en historisk Side, som ere vanskelige at forene. Vi staar her foran Mysteriet.

Den mandlige Aand ynder ikke Mysteriet, men nødes til at erkende dets Tilværelse. Mysteriet er kvindeligt; Kvindeligheden er hemmelighedsfuld. Gennem den kvindelige Aand kan den mandlige Aand først komme i Forhold til Mysteriet og føle dets charme. Manden stirrer ind i det ufattelige med stivt Blik; det er for ham det lufttomme, bælgmørke, uendelige Rum. Den kvindelige Aand er som Luftkredsen, der opfanger og bryder Solstraalerne, — og den mørke Afgrund bliver til den milde blaa Himmel.

Hvorledes den historiske og den dogmatiske Kristus bliver at opfatte som en Enhed, det er Spørgsmaalet. Mysteriet er der og staar fast, selv om Nutidens Tænkere ville forkaste det, idet de alene ville holde sig til den historiske Kristus, som Menneske.

Den historiske Virkning af hans Vandring paa Jorden overskrider nemlig det menneskelige, og maa kaldes guddommelig, ikke saameget for dens Udbredelse, thi Buddhaismen har en omtrent ligesaa stor, men paa Grund af Kristendommens frigørende, kulturbringende Kraft.

Navnet Menneskens Søn, hvormed Jesus helst nævnte sig selv, forekommer mig at indeholde en Forsoning mellem det dogmatiske og det historiske.

Jeg vil nu fremføre de Ideer af mit System som hører herhen.

Den guddommelige Person, som blev „Kvindens Sæd“, og saaledes blev sandt Menneske, denne guddommelige Person er dogmatisk, Ophav til det menneskeligt-sjælelige, — og er, historisk, blevet et Forbillede for Menneskenes Sjæleliv. Han viser os som i et samlet Billede, i sin Person, Menneskesjælens højeste Udtryk af Blidhed, Ynde, Godhed, Kærlighed, Højhed i Lidelsen og sand Visdom.

Denne guddommelige Person danner efter mit System, dogmatisk, Forbindelsen mellem Skaberen og Hellig-Aanden.

Hvis ikke Sønnen var det forbindende Midtparti for de to Aandsguddomme, — hvis altsaa Guddommen var Gud-Fader og Hellig-Aanden to-ene, — hvis ikke Sønnen var det fælles Hjerte for disse to Gudsøjne, — det ene skuende det synliges Verden, det andet det usynliges Verden, — da kunde disse to Guddoms personer ikke være et; der var da to Guder og ikke en Guddom.

Hvis det kun var den mandlige Aand og den kvindelige Aand som aabenbarede sig paa Jorden gennem Menneskene, hvis det kun var disse Aandens to forskellige Pøler som fandt Bolig og Udtryk i særligt mandlige og særligt kvindelige Legemer, da udgjorde disse Mænd og Kvinder ikke en Slægt, ikke en Enhed, men de maatte udgøre to forskellige, for hinanden evigt ufattelige Slægter. Om ægteskabelig Forbindelse mellem disse Væsener kunde der ikke være Tale, da en saadan Forbindelse nødvendigvis forudsætter een Slægt, og da man ikke forener sig med det ufattelige og derfor fuldkomment frastødende. Hvad der gør Mænd og Kvinder til een Slægt, og gør Ægteskabet muligt, det er den elskelige, den menneskelige Guddoms persons Billede, det er den menneskelige Sjæl som de begge eje. En Mands Sjæl og en Kvindes Sjæl er begge to menneskelige Sjæle, og der er ingen Forskel mellem dem, uden som forskellige Individuer, men der er ingen Forskel paa Grund af Kønnen. De to Køn opkommer fra de to underfulde Guddoms personer, som afbildes i to skabte Aander, som kræver hver sin særskilte Bolig, og faar sit ejendommelige Udtryk i to forskelligt formede Legemer.

Paa denne Maade vil jeg fremstille Slægtskabet mellem Gud og Mennesker, paa denne Maade mener jeg at Ordet om, at Mennesket er skabt i Guds Billede, bliver anskueligt, navnlig fremsat saaledes, at man kan skue Ligheden. Paa denne Maade mener jeg, at Treenighedslæren som hidtil har været en haard Tale for den menneskelige Tænkings Ordførere, ligeledes vil kunne opfattes som et Ord der indeholder en dyb Sandhed.

Jeg har ovenfor udviklet Grundene til at denne hidtil har været en aldeles haard og ufordøjelig Tale for Kristendommens Fortolkere.

Jeg grunder saaledes Tilegnelsen af Treenighedslæren paa den udvidede Opfattelse af Menneskenaturen, med det dobbelte Formaal, at Dogmet skal kaste Lys over den menneskelige Bevidsthed, og hjælpe til at skærpe Opfatningen og opklare Betydningen af Menneskets Tofoldighed, som Mand og Kvinde; medens den udvidede Kundskab om den tofoldige Menneskenatur atter bliver os den eneste mulige Ledestjerne, ved hvis Hjælp vi kan naa Tilegnelsen af Dogmet.

Det udfyldende og forbindende Mellemlid, det rent menneskelige, hvormed Menneskenaturen viser sig som trefoldig, det træder her til idet jeg minder om, at det var Menneskesønnen som nedbrød den Skranke som skjulte den kvindelige Aand for den mandlige.

Der gives en Maade hvorpaa den guddommelige Trefoldighed, eller Treenighed, som Persons-trethed, tillige kan fremstilles som „Historie“. Denne „Guds Historie“, som fremtræder for os i Menneskeslægten Historie, aabner et uendeligt dybt og rigt Tankehav for os:

Først aabenbares den evige Skaber, som den strenge Jehova, Lovens Gud, Dommens og Straffens Gud — for Moses og hans Folk.

Forjættelsen, hvorved den kommende Frelser, Messias, stilledes i Udsigt, forkyndtes gennem Tiderne ved Profeterne. Mosebogen fortæller os jo, at den allerede havde lydt for de første Mennesker. Omtrent 1,500 Aar efter Moses aabenbares denne Messias som „Menneskesønnen“, og forkyndte Skaberen som Faderen; — medens den tredje Person i Guddommen, Aanden, forkyndtes af Johannes den Døber, og viste sig ogsaa i Skikkelse af en Due ved Jesu Daab, og senere meddelte sig til Apostlerne og de andre Døbte som en Ild.

Aanden er altsaa forkyndt for de Kristne, og de ved om Aanden, ligesom Jøderne vidste om Messias; men Aanden er endnu ikke kendt af dem, ikke erkendt i sin sande Skikkelse.

Nu er Tidens Fylde kommen til Aandens Aabenbarelse, det vil, i Nutidens Sprog, sige Menneskeaandens Forligelse med Mysteriet.

Naar Kvindeligheden bliver erkendt som aandelig Størrelse, da vil endelig Menneskehedens Orgel kunne tone med „fuldt Spil“, (Aasmund Olafsson Vinje), efterat hidtil, gennem Aartusinder, den mandlige Røst har lydt, altoverdøvende og „alene, med Styrkens Haardhed.“



DEL
VOTO POLITICO DELLE DONNE

LETTURA TENUTA DA

ANNA MARIA MOZZONI.

(Estratto dal periodico **La Donna**, Anno IX-30 Marzo 1877, N. 290
Bologna, Strada Stefano, N. 5).

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VENEZIA
TIPOGRAFIA DEL COMMERCIO DI MARCO VISENTINI
1877.

DEI
VOTO POLITICO DELLE DONNE

LETTURA TRATTA DA

ANNA MARIA MOZZONI

Relazione del Giornale La Donna Anno IX 30 Marzo 1877. N. 230
Bologna, Strada Stefano, N. 51

ARRETRATI

PROGRAMMA DEL COMITATO DI MARZO 1877

per fare il bene che si può nel maggior tempo possibile. Il
guardoso rispetto verso gli uomini deve cedere il passo al culto
imperterribile dei principi, i quali con senza o contro gli uo-
mini di qualsiasi parte, rimangono sempre alla meta che è loro
prescritta dalla legge suprema della logica. Fanni perciò dover
dei democratici di trattare il loro apostolato e preparando un
terreno avanzato nelle opinioni, costringere il governo ad
indicare in quella via che gli ha così solennemente indicato il

La salita al potere della sinistra parlamentare fu salutata dal paese come l'alba del giorno della riparazione, ché se il programma che questa deponava sul banco dei Ministri non segnava le colonne d'Ercole nelle vie della libertà, accennava almeno alla fine di quella *Via crucis*, che s'andava dirupando sotto i passi degli italiani.

Gli uomini che il voto del 18 Marzo avea recati in alto, compresero il senso di quel voto e tosto, dopo il famoso programma di Stradella, si bucinò di un largo piano ricostitutivo dell'ordine amministrativo e si nominarono numerose commissioni incaricate di raccogliere elementi alla compilazione di progetti di legge, che dovevano sostituire la realtà laddove, secondo la frase felicissima del presidente del Consiglio, non v'era che la nuda presunzione legale.

Il paese accolse con tali entusiasmi questi sprazzi di luce che il Governo fu quasi sgomento del proprio successo e sbigottito della sua immensa popolarità, dacché travedeva sopra di sé il potere irresponsabile che proiettava la sua ombra poderosa sulle liete speranze del popolo.

Questa poco ricreativa situazione, che oggi tutti gli italiani avvertono, consigliava parecchi liberali a starsene cheti nella aspettazione benevola e paziente anziché incalzare impazientemente il Ministero.

Oggi però che indirizzo definitivo di Governo pare diven-

ga fare il men che si può nel maggior tempo possibile, il riguardoso riserbo verso gli uomini deve cedere il passo al culto imperscrutabile dei principî, i quali *con, senza o contro* gli uomini di qualsiasi parte, giungono sempre alla meta che è loro prescritta dalla legge suprema della logica. Parmi perciò dovere dei democratici di riattivare il loro apostolato e, preparando un terreno avanzato nelle opinioni, costringere il governo ad inoltrare in quella via che gli ha così solennemente indicato il voto della nazione.

Ed eccovi detto da quali idee io sono suggerita recandovi innanzi una tesi fra le più avanzate che questo secolo delle grandi preparazioni si porta nel fianco affaticato. Essa per mia disgrazia conta avversari alla destra, alla sinistra, al centro, e dentro e fuori delle due Camere. Essa non può invocare in suo favore la disciplina di partito, non le è concesso porsi all'ombra di grandi influenze, non trova punto di partenza nè punto di appoggio in nessun paragrafo delle innumerevoli leggi che si succedono, s'incrociano, e sostituiscono le une le altre.

Essa non è sostenibile che davanti ad un pubblico altamente illuminato, avvezzo alla libera discussione, alla più larga tolleranza ed alla serenità del giudizio. Essa non è presentabile se non davanti a quelle larghe intelligenze che non precipitano i giudizi come gl'inesperti, non meravigliano di tutte le cose nuove come gl'idioti, non credono d'aver capito prima di aver discusso come gl'indotti, e non decretano non esservi luogo a procedere prima di aver bene esaminato i documenti.

Nè statemi a pensare, o signori, che codeste mie parole siano precauzioni oratorie intese a rendervi benevoli ad una tesi alla quale difettino per avventura valide dimostrazioni. Oh no! esse riguardano altri ascoltatori meno sereni e riposati, e l'anello irresistibile delle idee mi ha trascinato dalla riflessione delle difficoltà di chi parla, al debito di chi ascolta.

Buon per me che avendo esperito più e più volte la vostra benevolenza, posso abbandonarmi con fiducia alla schietta esposizione del mio pensiero, ben sapendo d'altronde che nel mio paese le idee ed i costumi sono in grande anticipazione sulle istituzioni, sicchè l'innovazione non troverebbe urto di per sè e perciò solo che è nuova, ma non dovrebbe combattere, presso i più, che obiezioni parziali.

Ciò premesso espongo le diverse parti del mio discorso. Dapprima un rapido sguardo alle condizioni giuridiche delle italiane, poste a riscontro con i principî che sono base della Società moderna, vi porrà in grado di apprezzare la distanza che passa fra le une e gli altri e quindi l'obbligo che incombe al legislatore di studiarle e comporle in accordo migliore.

Dappoi io vi verrò dimostrando come a queste riforme una sola sia la via seria ed efficace, accordare, cioè nel voto politico una legale rappresentanza agli interessi femminili davanti al potere legislativo, e combatterò tutte le obiezioni che si sollevano contro questa innovazione. E le combatterò senza dissimularmene una, senza sorvolare a nessuna difficoltà, senza svoltare, senza sofisticare, con quella lealtà di controversia dalla quale non ho mai avuto bisogno di deviare perchè convinta della bontà della mia causa.

La condizione della donna, e non in Italia soltanto, è un fatto isolato nella nostra organizzazione sociale ed il disaccordo fra questo fatto ed i criteri che informano gli ordinamenti scientifici, politici, giuridici, fra tutto l'insieme, insomma, della nostra civiltà, va accentuandosi ogni giorno più fino a divenire, non solo sofisticato ed irrazionale, ma ben anco violento nella vita pratica.

Quando la servitù femminile si venne affermando nella società primitiva, la superiorità della forza, ed il concetto della legittimità del dritto di forza era non solo accettato, ma era invocato pur anco.

Perpetuamente in lotta con gli elementi e con le forze animate ed inerti della natura, strappando faticosamente alla terra il rozzo pane, contendendo alle belve la tana per ricoverarvi la sua donna ed i suoi bambini e proteggerne il riposo, l'uomo era veramente il re della famiglia. — Il suo dritto ed il suo dovere erano una sola cosa e si riassumevano in questo solo, l'impiego della sua forza.

Nel procedere dei tempi, la progressiva sicurezza delle persone, l'affermazione del dritto di proprietà, l'abuso della forza, il raffinarsi dell'intelligenza che avvertì nella umanità pregi di un ordine più elevato ed una fonte di piaceri più squisiti, sollevò il morale degli uomini, e la forza non essendo più l'unico ideale, l'uomo sentì che fra lui e la donna la proporzione non era tale quale gli era apparsa dapprima, le si ravvicinò per lo spirito, sentì l'influenza dei pregi di lei e la di lei servitù si cangiò in tutela.

Se si discorrono con lo sguardo rapido le grandi modificazioni subite dalle condizioni della donna, transitando la civiltà dall'Oriente all'Occidente, dal paganesimo al Cristianesimo e dal feudalismo all'ordine presente, v'è di che stupire come abbiasi potuto ripetere da un principio primo ed indiscutibile, un fatto che venne sempre modificandosi e tarpando man mano l'ali al principio e lottando con esso, e questa lotta spiegarsi più energica ed efficace quando e dove l'uomo piega a civiltà, più debole e nulla laddove precipita o giace nella barbarie.

Taluni che credono dover usare moderazione anche nel l'uso del sillogismo e sogliono ragionare non quanto vuole il senso logico, ma solo quanto basta a ricreare lo spirito in discorsi accademici senza concluder nulla nel fatto, dicono, che le donne han già ottenuto assai, che se volessero ricordare il passato si allieterebbero del presente e non mirerebbero più in là.

Senza contare che costoro non avrebbero dato alla donna

diverso consiglio quand'era comprata e venduta sui mercati, dacchè in costoro, questa forma di discorso, è più presto un istinto che un ragionamento, il fatto del continuo migliorarsi delle sue condizioni prova meglio che qualunque sforzo dialettico che la così detta missione della donna, (frase abusata, con la quale s'intende dire che le facoltà generali della natura umana lottano in lei con lo speciale lavoro del quale la natura stessa l'ha incaricata) costituisce un equivoco dal quale è duopo uscire, equivoco scientifico e sociale.

La condizione sociale e civile della donna ormezza il passo complesso della civiltà, questo lo accordate tutti; dunque ha attinenze con l'indirizzo generale del pensiero, col tramutarsi degli ordinamenti civili, col raffinarsi dei costumi, col concitarsi dell'attività generale, col fuggarsi dei pregiudizi, con il progressivo accertamento delle cognizioni.

Infatti la questione della riforma delle condizioni femminili in mezzo alle declamazioni, agli stupori, agli scandali, all'umorismo parlamentare ed extra parlamentare, procede trionfante e, come il vento montano spazza dinanzi a sè le nubi, così essa disperde, mostrandosi, le obiezioni che le si parano davanti.

Fu considerata un delirio, essa rispose ragionando — fu combattuta con il dogma religioso, ed essa ha risposto con la teoria del libero esame e rinfacciando alla scienza la ribellione alla scolastica — fu assalita con gli *a priori* scientifici, ed essa additò al secolo l'indirizzo sperimentale e gridò con esso, abbasso alle ipotesi. — Le fu scagliata addosso tutta la patristica, ed essa si armò del razionalismo — le fu imposto silenzio in nome della natura, ed essa ha risposto, prendete lezioni dalla natura e non pretendete dargliene, lasciate alla natura la libertà delle sue manifestazioni eppoi studiate queste manifestazioni e concludete — Le furono rinfacciate le liberalità già ricevute, ed essa ha mostrato l'operaio ed il negro che hanno ottenuto più

in un giorno che essa in secoli — L' uomo difende contro di lei il suo dritto divino, ed essa le chiede, sorridendo, che cosa si abbia fatto del dritto divino dei re — L' avvocato ed il prete armati della doppia tradizione la inseguono senza posa, ed essa si difende consegnando ai musei della dotta antichità i miti dell'uno e facendo vergogna all'altro che discepolo primogenito della filosofia moderna, oratore instancabile di diritti e di libertà, pubblicista inesauribile, mitingajo ardente, diguazzando come pesce in acqua nel mare magno delle teorie democratiche, vada poi per conto della donna a disepellire le fossili tradizioni pagane e feudali, pretendendo ch'essa s'accontenti dei vivaci colori del ristauero.

No, signori, non ce ne accontentiamo. — Voi avete fatto una gran corsa in questo secolo, ma noi vi abbiamo ormeggiato davvicino e vi preghiamo di non contenderci il passo. — Nè crediate che pari alle antiche amazzoni che si denudavano i petti quando fosse loro mancata la forza del braccio, andiamo a fare appello ad altri elementi che ai razionali. Oh no! se la nostra ragione è adulta, la vostra è senile. Voi siete altri dai vostri padri che ponevano le donne sulle cattedre e nelle accademie e facevano loro il posto ovunque con le volute qualità le cercassero. Lo spirito tecnico ha dato un altro indirizzo alle vostre idee ed ai vostri sentimenti, e con le idee mutano le forme e non v'è nulla da rivederci.

Noi dal canto nostro divezzate dall'essere adulate e costrette anzi a reagire contro le multiformi accuse di codardia, d' inferiorità intellettuale, di mancanza di senso giuridico, di incapacità in una grande quantità di cose, siamo rientrate in noi stesse, abbiamo esaminato i nostri pregi ed i nostri difetti e ci siamo permesse di esaminarvi anche voi, spogli del dritto divino, che è scaduto affatto nella nostra opinione, ed abbiamo trovato che la nostra ragione procede al par della vostra con

la forma sillogistica, che i problemi che travagliano la vostra coscienza, sono gli stessi che turbano la nostra; che la libertà che voi amate l' amiamo anche noi: che le vie per le quali voi conquistaste la vostra, furono tracciate dagli stessi principj che debbono rivendicare la nostra; che se lo sviluppo delle facoltà comuni agli enti umani aiutano e promuovono tutte le missioni speciali degli individui, attesoche tutte quante si fondino sull'impiego delle facoltà razionali, morali e fisiche e procedono ad uno scopo egualmente complesso, lo sviluppo di quelle facoltà comuni a tutti gli enti umani non combattono, non inceppano e non guastano nulla neppure nella missione nostra, non solo in faccia alla società nella quale non siamo che individui come voi, ma anche in faccia alla specie dove il compito nostro è diverso.

Così agguerrite nel campo teoretico noi vi abbiamo presentato battaglia e ci siamo azzuffate di santa ragione e (davanti ai nomi gloriosi di Madama Sand, di Madama d' Hericourt, di Zoè di Gaumond, di Clarissa Bader, di Maria Déraisme, di Miss Buller, di Dora d' Istria, di Malvina Frank e di cento altre in tutti i paesi civili), dovete convenire, con una dottrina ed un valore che non sempre vi aspettavate, sicchè vedendo che i petti delle amazzoni non si denudavano avete rinunciato ad ogni velleità cavalleresca.

Gl' ingegni mediocri non trovando argomenti ci scagliarono ingiurie e ci rinviarono al fuso, onde dissimularci l' imperizia delle loro penne, la fiacchezza delle loro armi, e la inconseguenza delle loro opinioni; ma molti di voi, a cui la passione del dispotismo non fa velo, cominciarono a porre in dubbio la nostra inferiorità, gli avvocati copiarono dai vecchi codici la nostra imbecillità senza crederla troppo, e le donne ben temperate, che una volta riguardavate come fenomeni e mostruosità, sono oggi una imponente minoranza.

Molti di voi, e dei migliori, passarono nel nostro campo con armi e bagaglio, sicchè il Büchner ad esempio, capocchia di quella scuola materialista che dal peso e misura del cervello dedusse la nostra inferiorità intellettuale, parlando recentemente in una pubblica adunanza in America, affermava che la superiorità intellettuale della donna in quella parte di mondo è incontestabile. E qui faccio punto.

Ottenuta la ricognizione della nostra capacità sul terreno teoretico, ci è conteso di goderne il frutto nel terreno pratico.

Nella famiglia, nella città, nello stato, pare che l'esercizio del nostro diritto sia in collisione con l'altrui e nuoca alla società ed a noi stesse.

Non posso a meno di vedere una analogia fra il nostro caso e quello delle nazioni d'Occidente quando volevano strappare ai poteri dispotici l'abdicazione in favore della sovranità popolare e questi respingevano la domanda dichiarandoli incompatibili coi diritti antichissimi della corona. Ma fare appello all'antichità nelle cose umane è follia, perchè la vecchiaja è per lo appunto condannata a morire, quindi l'abdicazione fu fatta ed ora popoli e re hanno trovato un nuovo equilibrio.

Lo stato era nell'antichità pagana una aggregazione di famiglie e la legge d'armonia volendo l'armonia del tutto e delle parti, erigeva la famiglia aristocratica. Il volere del Capo di famiglia era legge e ragione, freno e motore, principio e fine dell'attività familiare, come il volere del Capo dello Stato, individuo od ente collettivo, era legge innappellabile in quella società, che non aveva ancora escogitata la umana personalità.

Lo stato moderno invece, basato sulla affermazione di questa personalità, è una aggregazione d'individui — e, perchè il concetto dello Stato si discosti viemmeglio dal concetto della famiglia, gli si sono levate parecchie attribuzioni, che rilevavano

da quel concetto per piegarlo sempre più a quello di semplice amministrazione (1).

Lo stato ha quindi declinato, a mo' d'esempio, ogni responsabilità sulla confessione religiosa dei cittadini ed i loro voti monastici. Poco gl'importa che si erigano e si conservino delle dinastie nobiliari, nè che le sostanze rimangano infestate alle rispettive famiglie, come era dapprima statuito per la gelosa conservazione di esse. Esso ha sostituito dovunque alle sollecitudini attive del padre di famiglia, l'azione passiva dell'amministratore.

In che cosa, dunque, risponde a questo Stato una famiglia nella quale il capo investito di poteri dispotici fa e disfa, vuole e disvuole, autorizza, amministra, dilapida e finalmente si assenta declinando tutti i suoi doveri e conservando tutti i suoi diritti, e riunendo in sé in connubio mostruoso il potere assoluto e la irresponsabilità?

Come mai un Codice moderno ha potuto erigere in diritto una simile strapotenza, accostando due termini così incompatibili davanti alla ragione, senza che la coscienza del legislatore occidentale non gli si rivoltasse nel petto?

Come non ha posto mente che, dando così un essere umano in balia di un'altro e per tutta la vita, bestemmia tutta la moderna società?

Eppure, o signori, il legislatore non sembrò avvedersi, o per lo meno, non fu sgomento dall'affermazione di un diritto così enorme. Malgrado l'abuso d'ogni cosa a cui l'uomo è fatalmente inchinato, egli confidò nella natura dalla quale la società conjugale è cementata. Certo reputerebbe impossibile

(1) Alcuno potrebbe obiettarmi qui, se non sarebbe da porsi ogni studio a ricostituire la famiglia anzichè assecondarne le tendenze dissolventi.

Troppo vi sarebbe a dire su questo argomento e troppo quindi mi dilungherei dalla meta. Ora quindi constato un fatto ed una tendenza, senza ragionarla e senza giustificarla.

vincolare in simile modo due uomini, ma un uomo ed una donna possono andare e, fino ad un certo punto, vanno.

Ebbene, questo fatto gli dà torto. Non la legge, non la forza del dritto del quale investe una parte e che deprime nell'altra, conserva la società conjugale, ma la natura. Tutta la prudenza e previdenza della legge è in pura perdita; è molto chiasso per nulla. Che se le disposizioni del Codice menassero a conseguenza, la sola logica conseguenza non potrebbe essere che questa, l'inasprimento dell'animo nella parte depressa e l'abuso del potere nella parte prevalente.

Dove la natura ha posto il cemento, l'edificio si regge; dove non l'ha posto, l'edificio crolla ed i tribunali si affaccendano a firmare sentenze di separazione.

La natura ha posto nell'organamento della famiglia tutto lo studio che voi avete posto nell'organizzare lo Stato. Non v'è nulla da metterci, la legge non deve stare che al difuori a guardia dell'abuso. — Voi avete immaginato una aristocrazia con alla testa una corona irresponsabile ed una democrazia rappresentata da due elementi, il giovine che promuove ed il vecchio che frena, l'elemento che pensa, discute, delibera, ed il potere che eseguisce. È un congegno, insomma, composto di differenze e di equivalenze che, equilibrandosi, costituiscono un insieme più o meno omogeneo — Nella società coniugale la natura non ha adoperato altrimenti, ma il suo lavoro è di una tale efficacia che tutte le vostre convenzioni non possono dirla con essa quand'ella si mette a non essere dalla vostra.

Voi dichiarate, ad esempio, che il marito è capo della famiglia perchè ha la capacità. Ora la natura alle volte non la intende come voi e gli ha negato questa capacità, ed il diritto che gli accordaste su una nuda presunzione non può trovare esplicazione nel fatto. Egli è obbligato a capitolare e la moglie, alla quale negate questa capacità, deve esercitarlo per lui.

La natura ha visto prima di voi il bisogno di equilibrio, di distribuzione, di differenza e di equivalenza ed ha provveduto a tutto. Soltanto essa non ha opinato con voi sulla opportunità che, moralmente parlando, gli elementi attivi ed espansivi siano sempre da una parte e gli elementi negativi e passivi siano sempre dall'altra — Essa non è imbarazzata che la donna sia talora più intelligente, più volontaria e più pratica dell'uomo, e che l'attività interna della famiglia sia determinata dall'una anzichè dall'altro. — Questo non le porterà nessun disturbo, i fini complessi ch'essa si propone saranno sempre raggiunti — e la paura ch'essa non ha dell'attività morale, intellettuale e materiale della donna, perchè l'avrete voi? Qual maggior diritto di lei avete per aver paura? Avreste sopra di noi delle vedute diverse dalle sue?

Maometto che destinava le donne all'harem in questo mondo e non dava loro nessuna speranza per l'altro, non poteva immaginare nulla di meglio per le donne che farne dono completo agli uomini, chiudendo ben bene le loro menti alla più lontana nozione di diritto alla libera espansione. Ma voi che fate appello alla nostra missione naturale, onde persuaderci a starcene zitte, sapreste voi dirci per qual ragione la natura ha posto in noi queste facoltà espansive, o sapreste persuaderci che ha fatto una contraddizione ed una assurdità? Sareste da tanto da provarci che la donna si snatura quando impiega la sua attività con lo scopo ragionevole d'ogni attività, l'utile, e dimostrarcelo non già con della lirica e dei fervorini, ma col senso pratico e comune?

Non sarebbe dunque la legge più conseguente all'indirizzo generale del pensiero moderno, se, smettendo la vecchia mania delle presunzioni e degli *a priori*, non decretasse più le capacità e le incapacità, ma facesse grazia di supporre la razionalità a tutti i cittadini, uomini e donne, fino a prova in

contrario? E non si conformerebbe meglio alla teoria dello stato il legislatore, laddove considerando che la sola natura è la motrice e conservatrice della società coniugale ed affidandosi agli elementi simpatici ed equivalenti da essa cementati, dichiarasse dovere essa svolgersi liberamente nel suo interno e rappresentarsi da entrambi i coniugi nella città e nello stato, o dall'uno dei due indifferentemente, purchè produca il consenso dell'altro?

Quale pratica impossibilità si vedrebbe nell'esercizio della patria potestà per parte d'entrambi i genitori, dacchè la natura ha disposto perchè l'autorità loro sia diversamente manifestata da essi e diversamente sentita dai figli, stando qui come dovunque la legge a semplice guardia dell'abuso?

E qual tarda ma urgente giustizia farebbe il legislatore se, non dimenticando ad ogni terzo momento che *il diritto senza dovere è tirannia*, rivedesse un po' le buccie a quel diritto di assenza del marito, forte del quale, egli abbandona moglie e figli alla provvidenza, disertando bravamente tutti i suoi doveri, e torna poi quando gli pare, non sempre coperto di gloria come Ulisse, ma con la pretesa però di trovar sempre una Penelope!

Le condizioni della donna nella città non abbisognano meno di revisione. — La responsabilità stà al diritto come lo spirito alla materia e dal difetto di corrispondenza fra la responsabilità ed il diritto, uscirono tutte le violenze che hanno funestato la vita umana. È la storia del dispotismo e della schiavitù, è quella del privilegio e delle esclusioni, della tirannia e delle oppressioni. Noi usciti dalla rivoluzione filosofica, abbiamo talmente respirato con l'aria questa dottrina, che la disproporzione fra questi due termini stimiamo sofisma in dottrina e barbarie nel fatto.

Se alla luce di questi principî guardo alle condizioni della donna nel doppio foro non so più se l'89 è fatto, o se è da

fare. Il Codice penale non vede nessuna logica necessità di convenire le incapacità presunte dal Codice civile. Sono due parallele che corrono con perfetta indipendenza l'una dall'altra. Anzi nell'adulterio la responsabilità della parte debole, incapace, passiva, pupilla ed imbecille, è gravissima e maggiore. Come? la responsabilità e l'imbecillità possono incontrarsi nello stesso soggetto? L'applicazione della penalità potrà farsi senza una assurda barbarie sopra un pupillo perpetuo ed incapace? Ma risponde la legge, con una innocenza invidiabile, l'adulterio della donna minaccia d'introdurre un elemento straniero nelle famiglie. Ma e l'adulterio dell'uomo, o signori, minaccia esso tutt'altra cosa? O sarebbe mai il legislatore avvenirista in questa materia fino ad accettare la teoria della vergine madre, di Auguste Comte? (1)

La legge dichiara la donna incapace di tutela in genere — la stima però incriminabile per ispinta alla corruzione. — La considera inetta ad assumere una procura, ma imputabile per abuso di fiducia. — La reputa incapace di esercitare la patria

(1) Il titolo che riguarda l'adulterio è veramente il più inutile del nostro codice, poichè la querela per l'adulterio è affatto scomparsa dai nostri costumi. Gli afflitti eredi di Menelao hanno imparato a spese del patriarca a non levar troppo rumore nel mondo per le loro sconfitte segrete. A forza di circondare il marito di diritti e d'autorità, e di dichiarare, debole, suddita, pupilla, imbecille la moglie, la legge ha ottenuto di rendere ridicolo quello quando è ingannato e sconfitto da questa, e v'è una maligna congiura nella nostra società perchè egli solo lo ignori. Tutto questo è egli brutto quanto pare a prima vista? — Non saprei. — Trattandosi di pari direi che è una bassa e vigliacca slealtà, ma visto che l'uno dei due per ragione di leggi e di costumi non è mai ben padrone di sè, il criterio della lealtà non è assolutamente applicabile.

Dal canto loro i mariti nei loro momenti di desolazione di spirito troveranno qualche conforto nel consiglio evangelico che certamente nella mente di Cristo mirava al loro indirizzo: « Perdonate per essere perdonati. »

podestà vivente il marito e nella famiglia composta nella normale carreggiata, ma la incarica dell'esercizio esclusivo della patria podestà nella figliazione naturale, dove questo esercizio è più intralciato. — Che più? Vieta la ricerca della paternità per sollevare la madre dalla responsabilità che il padre deve dividere con lei, l'ammette quando si tratta di privare il figlio e la madre adulterina del concorso del suo corresponsabile al peso comune — sicchè l'uomo investito di tutte le capacità e di tutti i diritti, non ha doveri, se non in quanto ha l'onestà di riconoscerne, dacchè, marito, li può declinare con l'assenza, padre naturale col divieto della ricerca della paternità. — L'antica Roma gridava « guai ai vinti »; oggi si deve ancora ripetere *guai ai deboli!*

Non v'è funzione più consona alla natura della donna quanto la tutela. In faccia alla specie ella non ne ha un'altra, e l'uomo con la sua forza che lo porta alla fisica espansione vi è assai meno atto e la natura non ve lo porta. — Infatti la sua tutela è quello che sono le disposizioni legali, convenzioni e non realtà. Epperò non vi state a pensare di trovarvi quel complesso di sollecitudini continue e varie che riflettono tutti gl'interessi e tutti i bisogni del pupillo. Questa è la tutela vera e naturale ed è esercitata dalle donne soltanto nelle cui mani, nella gran generalità dei casi, trovansi i pupilli. La tutela legale è una semplice amministrazione, per cui mi venne fatto di incontrare tutori che non avevano mai veduto i loro pupilli, ed uno ne ho conosciuto che ignorava la morte di una sua pupilla sei mesi dopo avvenuta.

Ma la legge non si sgomenta per queste quisquiglie e decreta imperterrita che sono incapaci di tutela le donne, i pazzi, i delinquenti, i mentecatti. Non si chiama davvero sottilizzare, nè distinguere!

Nè nella arbitraria distribuzione delle sue incapacità, la

legge è generalmente più felice. La donna maritata è incapace, epperò pupilla a tutte le età, la non maritata è maggiore a ventun'anni. La vedovanza disimbecillisce issosfatto la donna quand'anche giovine e può quindi esercitare la patria podestà, la moglie anche a 60 anni non può neppure prestare il suo denaro col minor presumibile giudizio. Zia germana e nubile, si cava dall'amena compagnia dei pazzi, dei malfattori e degli imbecilli, epperò è capace di assumere la tutela dei nipoti; madre e moglie, per la solita imbecillità che le porge fra i doni nuziali il glorioso sposo, non ha voto negli interessi dei suoi figli, e via dicendo. Insomma si direbbe che il legislatore determinando le condizioni giuridiche della donna non s'è neppure informato se sia carne o pesce, ma l'ha pigliata indifferentemente per l'una cosa o per l'altra, secondo che tornava in acconcio agli interessi dell'uomo col quale la vedeva in rapporti.

Se poi aggiungete che delinquente, la si avviluppa in una veste giuridica lunga e larga quanto quella degli altri cittadini e le si scatena contro l'uggiosa eloquenza del procuratore della legge accanito a provare la sua capacità come il codice civile a decretare la sua incapacità, ed in questa forma impossibile la si pone davanti ad un tribunale composto di enti diversi da lei e che però non esito a dichiarare incompetenti (1), avrete quasi completato il quadro delle condizioni nelle quali versano le cittadine della libera Italia.

E ho detto quasi, e non a caso, poichè se rivolgo lo sguardo a quella massa che, vittime di inopportuni sofismi sociali, deve vivere di vizi che non sempre avrebbe e di passioni che non divide, allora poi il cuore si solleva e l'ironia

(1) Hanno essi mai pensato i legislatori che per noi il giurì non esiste, e che un certo spirito di sesso, che ha qualche analogia con lo spirito di corpo, rende in molti casi niente affatto rassicurante il giurì maschile nel giudizio dei reati femminili?

muore sul labbro. La vergogna di un simile organamento che diffonde il vizio alle spalle della miseria è ributtante.

Taglio corto su molti altri punti sui quali ci è duopo invocare l'attenzione del legislatore onde non dilungarmi troppo dalla meta, e perchè quanto ho detto di volo convincerà i più sonnolenti ottimisti che le donne hanno bisogni, soffrono ingiustizie, sono lese negli interessi più vitali e che niuno le rappresenta davanti alla legge per ispeciale mandato, e questa dorme fra due guanciali credendo che, poichè non si parla, tutto cammini pel meglio.

No, vogliamo che ci si abba di, e siamo divenute esigenti. Le vostre lodi e le vostre odi non ci divagano più. Avete finito di menare il can per l'aia chiamandoci « angeli del focolare e regine della famiglia. » Tutta questa lirica che per conto vostro avete gettato nei ferravecchi e che venite ripulendo per conto nostro, si risolve a fatti in un vero musulmanismo con frasario cristiano. Voi non siete più poeti generalmente, ed i pochi che rimangono drappeggiati nella toga senatoria, dando la destra al collega banchiere e la manca al collega industriale, cantano all'unisone con questi

« La sventura non è bella

E glorioso il duol non è ».

Non troverete dunque irragionevole che anche noi facendo tesoro delle lezioni che ci date in versi ed in prosa, domandiamo quelle guarentigie che avete stimate opportune e necessarie per voi medesimi.

Voi trovate intollerabile di non poter essere sindaci a 25 anni, noi troviamo insopportabile di essere pupille a 90. Voi volete pagar meno, noi vogliamo sapere almeno perchè paghiamo tanto. Voi volete che ogni cittadino non imbecille sia elettore, e noi vogliamo si riconosca che vi sono donne non imbecilli. Voi volete l'abolizione della pena di morte, e noi, figuratevi! vi

ci associamo di gran cuore, ma vorremmo ancora che provvedeste il padre ed il pane a tutti gli uomini che nascono. Avete voluto che la moglie mantenga il marito quando non ha nulla, ma noi vogliamo controllare un po' le sue spese quando ha qualche cosa. Ci bisogna allevare i figli con dispendio di tempo, cure, fatiche, veglie e salute? ben volentieri, ma vogliamo anche che la legge ci faccia rispettare da questi uomini dei quali siamo le prime benefattrici, e non venga loro a dire ad ogni terzo momento « vostra madre è imbecille. » Voi vagheggiate una riforma dello statuto ed un'allargamento del regime costituzionale, noi ci accontentiamo di uscire dal regime dispotico.

Voi, signori, fate le leggi, e noi non siamo consultate, ci confezionate in ogni maniera di salse, e non ci domandate, neppur per forma, se non ce ne stiamo a disagio. Molti di voi tranquillamente desiderosi del bene e disposti a farlo, senza soverchio calore però, dicono che le donne nel Codice attuale stanno come sante nella nicchia, che hanno ottenuto molto, che di più veramente non si poteva e non si saprebbe fare per loro, e molte altre frasi da gente contenta e che vorrebbe che altri s'accontentasse. — Mi duole davvero di gettar delle nubi su quei rosei cuori, ma non siamo contente affatto e per non importunarvi con troppe cose in una volta, ne cerchiamo una sola, *il voto politico*.

Ottenuto questo verrete voi stessi ad informarvi dei nostri bisogni e non crederete di perdere il vostro tempo.

Ma qui mi vedo assalita da un nembo di *ma di se di forse*, ai quali tutti darò udienza e risposta.

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Il diritto politico fu in tesi astratta riconosciuto alla donna al pari dei diritti civili. — Cittadina e contribuente nella città,

nella provincia, nello stato, investita di una condizione giuridica, sottoposta alla sanzione penale, non v'è giurista così musulmano da non capire che ad un tal ente giuridico non era possibile negare teoricamente il diritto. Ma quando poi si venne all'esplicazione pratica di questo diritto, quegli uomini che seguendo il nesso logico delle idee avevano tutto concesso, bloccati in massa dal pregiudizio tutto negarono. — Nè pensarono a distinguere fra essi e ad esaminare se quelle forme nelle quali si presentava la donna investita del diritto ripugnassero veramente alla natura delle cose o se li smarrissero semplicemente perchè nuove.

Poichè è d' uopo confessarlo, o Signori, mentre la civiltà importa una assidua mutazione di idee e di cose, ogni novità ci si affaccia come un'assurdità e non è che il successivo lavoro di riflessione e di esperimento che ne liscia ai nostri occhi i contorni, e ce la fa apparire successivamente possibile, ragionevole, naturale e più tardi necessaria, indiscutibile.

Così è accaduto delle istituzioni che volta a volta la scienza, l'industria, l'arte, la politica, la varia vicenda delle cose, ha introdotto nel mondo, e così è accaduto del voto della donna in altri paesi a quest'ora stessa e così sarà fra noi. — Non è che per affrettare l'affermazione del principio, nel quale ho fede inconcussa, ch'io vi invito a fare con me questo lavoro di riflessione che vi dimestichi con una novità che non ha altro torto che d'essere nuova, restando in pace profonda con la natura.

Le obiezioni che si sollevano contro il voto politico delle donne, sono queste :

1. Le cure della famiglia.
2. La loro ripugnanza agli affari ed a tutto quello che sa di pubblicità.
3. La loro poca intelligenza politica.
4. La loro ignoranza delle questioni sociali.

5. La influenza dei padri, dei mariti, dei figli, degli amanti per cui verrebbero oziosamente moltiplicati i voti senza aumento nella somma delle intelligenze e delle volontà.

6. Lo spauracchio di tutti i Governi d'Occidente, la bestia nera del mondo liberale, la superlativa delle imprudenze per l'Italia, l'influenza clericale.

7. La inopportunità di questa innovazione.

Quando a tutto questo avrò aggiunto che le donne se ne stanno chete e degeneri dalla prima madre, non appetiscono ancora il frutto della scienza del bene e del male, io crederò di aver detto tutto quello che si può dire contro la mia tesi.

Incomincio adunque dalla prima. La donna è fatta per le cure della famiglia, e la sua natura la allontana dagli affari e dalla pubblicità.

Se un turco mi dicesse: le donne sono fatte per l'harem e per questo le teniamo rinchiusa, capirei che quello ch'io cerco è incompatibile col loro stato sociale, e che troppe cose sono da sconvolgere prima di arrivare fin là. — Ma in Occidente, Signori miei, le donne affollano le vie, ingombrano gli alberghi, si stipano nei convogli ferroviari, s'incontrano viaggiatrici a tutti i gradi accessibili di latitudine, pubblicano libri e giornali, esercitano industrie e commerci, adornano con le nude bellezze e le trasparenti eleganze tutti i convegni, fino ad esservi abuso di pubblicità, primeggiano nei teatri, dov'è nascosto di loro poco più del pensiero, e quindi mi è lecito concludere che se cotali usi e costumi, che nessuno stima sconvenir loro, non le distrae dalle cure della famiglia per cui esse ancora allevano i figli e dirigono la casa, l'esercizio del voto elettorale le distrarrà infinitamente meno, e me ne appello ai più affaccendati affaristi se la loro qualità di elettori fu mai un sovraccarico intollerabile di occupazione ed un dispendio oneroso di tempo per cui il minimo dei loro affari ne abbia sofferto.

È questa perciò una delle obiezioni la cui imponenza sta tutta nella sonorità della frase e per la donna nella grazia delle immagini da essa suscitate.

Nè le donne ripugnano agli affari più di quel che ripugnano alla pubblicità. Se io non ho le traveggole vedo le donne occuparsi di sete e di cotoni, esercitare industrie e professioni, arti e mestieri, impiegare i loro capitali in imprese commerciali, seguire i rialzi ed i ribassi dei pubblici valori, condurre negozi e stabilimenti di pubblico servizio, le trovo iscritte col titolo di pubbliche mercantesse nel Codice di commercio, e ne vedo ogni giorno attendate fin nelle vie e sulle piazze occupate a vendere ed a comperare come gente che non ha mai sognato di ripugnare a queste cose. Se poi intendete dire che le dame mettono i loro affari nelle mani di un amministratore sia per lunga abitudine di indolenza patrizia, sia per darsi esclusivamente ai convegni geniali, ai piaceri, ai viaggi, alla letteratura amena, allora siamo d'accordo, fanno così anche i gaudenti dell'altro sesso, ma chi ha mai sognato che sia ripugnanza intima di natura ciò che vuol porsi in conto al favore delle circostanze?

Nè la poca intelligenza politica delle donne, la loro inesperienza, la loro ignoranza delle questioni sociali regge più di quelle prime obiezioni all'analisi critica.

Qual grado di intelligenza si esigerà per essere elettore? Saper leggere e scrivere? Esigete dippiù, o signori, perchè io conosco bene le nostre compagne e non vorrei che gli elettori risultassero infinitamente più scarsi delle elettrici.

Saper far di conto? Ma l'ultima fruttivendola sbaglia meno i suoi conti che certi impiegati di finanza.

Fare degli sproloqui in politica? Ma io vorrei farvi udire le ciarle di certe popolane che col loro grosso e schietto buon senso miran più dritto che i sofismi stiracchiati di certi gior-

nali quando van facendo le loro evoluzioni da destra a sinistra e viceversa. È vero che quelle brave creature cavano i loro ragionamenti dalla testa e non dalle tasche.

Bisognerà aver amato la patria? Signori, leggete la storia d'ogni paese da Debora a Giuditta, da Clelia a Volunnia, da Giovanna d'Arco a Stamura, dalla Mauroiena e dalla Bobolina alla Mille Marckus, che oggi il governo serbo, con una gratitudine da governo, manda in esilio. E la storia d'Italia? Oh rileggetela dal 1848 al 1860!

Qual grado d'intelligenza sarà dunque necessario per l'esercizio del voto? — Ecco migliaia e migliaia di donne che hanno ottenuto patenti d'insegnamento. — Eccone una miriade che nubili, o vedove, maggiori secondo la legge, fanno i loro affari e vivono nella perfetta indipendenza, godendo senza scialaquo, amministrando senza errori, speculando senza storditaggine, facendo onore ai loro impegni, non dovendo nulla a nessuno. — Eccone migliaia che col lavoro, l'oculatezza, lo spirito pratico, si sono fatte un patrimonio. — Eccone altrettante che hanno salvato i mariti ed i figli da catastrofi economiche ed hanno ripiantata la casa, una e più volte rovinata. — Ecco madri che investite dell'esercizio della patria podestà nell'assenza, nell'interdizione, nella soppressione dei diritti civili dei loro mariti, o nella vedovanza, con le sapienti economie, con gli affari ben fatti, riporranno nelle mani dei figli a loro tempo, il retaggio paterno in ordine ed in aumento. — Ecco mogli, e molte pur troppo, che legalmente separate dai consorti, ebbero un voto di fiducia ben meritato nella consegna della prole, verso la quale han presentato maggiori guarentigie di moralità, di buon ordine, di savio indirizzo educativo. — Ecco una quantità di commerci e di industrie nelle cui vele soffia la fortuna incatenata dall'intelligenza pratica delle donne. — Ecco centinaia d'istituti educativi, prosperi e fiorenti condotti da donne. —

Ecco migliaia d'artiste che ogni giorno strappano al pubblico più colto ammirazioni interminabili per sapienti interpretazioni, per divinazioni creatrici. — Ecco una miriade di scrittrici valenti nella letteratura amena e seria, cultrici di scienze speciali ed apostole intelligentissime di riforme sociali.

E siccome la politica non è molto astrusa ed ogni elettore non è tenuto ad avere illustrato il *Principe* di Macchiavelli, così credo converrete con me che in fatto d'intelligenza si potrebbe reclutare una quantità di elettrici da opporre con gran guadagno a certe masse elettorali delle nostre campagne, che sarebbero dispostissime a pigliare il cane per San Rocco ed il diavolo per San Michele, se non aveste gran cura di metter loro la scheda ben chiara in mano.

Dopo tutto ciò che ho detto, o signori, la ignoranza della donna non può essere allegata qui che in modo relativo. Dite ad una persona intelligente una cosa che ignora e non la ignorerà più, e quindi quando si istituiranno dei corsi di scienze sociali per gli elettori, che ne hanno generalmente bisogno, io vi prometto che li reclamerò anche per le elettrici e ristabiliremo un'altra volta l'equilibrio.

Quello che dell'ignoranza vuol essere detto dell'inesperienza. Trasportatevi in ispirito al 1859. Ricordate le incertezze, le confusioni, le diffidenze, le velleità, le indeterminatezze che portaste nel primo esercizio del voto. Dappertutto si strillava e si arringava. Bisognava dimostrare al popolo di essere liberale. Si provava che Cavour era più radicale di Mazzini, Napoleone III innamorato dell'Italia più che Orsini. Di tempo in tempo la voce di un popolano arginava la tumultuosa eloquenza degli avvocati e dei giornalisti, e tentava di veder chiaro fra quella tempesta di argomenti, di affermazioni, di smentite, di proteste, di programmi e di mozioni. Il popolo se ne tornava da quelle procellose adunanze con la testa grossa e con la per-

suasione che quegli avvocati e giornalisti erano tanti Cristi e tanti profeti piovutigli dal cielo ad annunciare la buona novella ed il regno di Dio sulla terra; salvo poi a mutarglisi tutti i quadri il giorno appresso passando da un circolo democratico ad un circolo liberale, dal liberale al progressista, dal progressista al patriottico, dal patriottico all'unitario e così via, con una sinonimia di concetto, per così dire, tanto sottile e briccona, da imbrogliare non che la testa di un popolano anche quella del Tommaseo.

Arrivava poi il giorno delle elezioni. Pubblici funzionari alti e bassi, giornalisti ed avvocati, apostoli e candidati, tutti sotto le armi, tutti affaccendati a predicare al popolo, ad illuminarlo, a guidarlo, ad imbeccarlo; i muri parlanti da cento affissi, tappezzati di nomi, di programmi, di promesse, di allarmi, dovunque una confusione nervosa, concitata, convulsa, epilettica. — Il popolo ignorava i nomi, non conosceva le persone, non sapeva la portata del suo diritto, ignorava da quali interessi e di quante speranze fosse gravido il suo voto per coloro che glielo cercavano lasciandolo col pelo in giù, e dava il suo voto ad un recente puntello dei governi cessati credendo darlo ad un vecchio patriota, o spediva al parlamento un affarista credendo porre il suo mandato nelle sacre mani di un apostolo.

Tutto questo significa che non s'impara a nuotare se non gettandosi in acqua o se preferite, secondo la frase del nostro popolo, che *il mestiere insegna*. — Noi dunque saremmo più giovani di voi di 18 anni nell'esercizio del voto, ma in compenso abbiamo sempre letto i giornali, abbiamo seguito i lavori parlamentari, abbiamo sempre pagato le imposte, abbiamo letto con le stesse vostre trepidazioni il resoconto dei bilanci preventivi e consuntivi, abbiamo le tasche vuote al par di voi, sappiamo che cosa ha significato la crisi del 18 marzo, vediamo che vi agitate tutti per qualche cosa che non è soltanto idea e spirito, ma

è forma e corpo, ed abbiamo per soprappiù capito anche questo, che i nostri interessi saranno sempre per voi delle tesi accademiche finchè l'esercizio del voto politico non ci porrà in grado di farvene delle tesi pratiche.

Ora è tempo ch'io affronti il terribile capitolo delle influenze. Le donne secondo l'antico adagio umoristico non son gente. — Esse non sanno nulla di nulla e non hanno opinione determinata sopra nessuna cosa; — se le donne voteranno, lo faranno col padre, col marito, con l'amante, con un uomo insomma, con quello che avrà saputo entrar meglio nell'animo loro. — E voi, Signori, che cosa fate? Voi votate la lista del giornale al quale siete abbonati, voi votate con quel capo partito che si è imposto alla vostra venerazione, ai vostri entusiasmi; gl'impiegati votano col capo ufficio, gli ufficiali col generale, i sotto prefetti con i prefetti, i sindaci con i sotto prefetti, i comunisti coi sindaci. — Vi sono poi i voti dei cittadini illuminati non preparati dall'apostolato dei giornali e dei circoli, voti che arieggiano gl'indipendenti, ma ahimè, sono forse sacerdoti del dio nascosto nelle casse delle spese segrete.

E temete le influenze per le donne? me ne appello ai padri che fanno allevare le loro figlie in conventi per poi vederle brillare in ambienti profani, ne faccio appello ai non pochi mariti per l'emancipazione dei quali scriverei volentieri un volume, ne appello al sig. Proudhon scandolezzato dalla *ribellione che circola fra le file delle donne intelligenti* contro tutte le pressioni consacrate dai secoli, ne faccio appello a quelle donne coraggiose, che in tutti i paesi, hanno preso nobilissime e non infeconde iniziative, lasciando che intorno a loro si declamasse, si ridesse, si caluniasse, con anima d'apostoli ed abnegazione di martiri — Che più? ne faccio appello al fatto che vi stà dinanzi, o signori, su questa donna che vi parla è passato il tempo e la esperienza, ma le idee e la coscienza sono incrollabili.

Ma voi non vi date per vinti. — Queste influenze determinate dal sentimento sono mutevoli e fortunate — ma v'è una influenza terribile, antica, che soggioga molti uomini e gran parte delle donne, non nelle opinioni soltanto che subiscono il controllo della ragione, non negli affetti che si spostano, ma le afferra nell'intima coscienza, impone la fede e vieta l'esame, le conquide con i terrori dell'avvenire, paralizza in germe ogni forza vitale che tentasse bilanciarla, comanda, regna e governa in nome di Dio, l'influenza del prete.

Per non sottrarmi a nessuna delle difficoltà inerenti al mio compito, aggiungerò per conto vostro, che la propaggine sacerdotale deve gran parte della sua forza a questo appoggio che trova nelle donne; che duttile, elastica, cosmopolitica, essa accarezza la repubblica in America, il legittimismo in Ispagna, l'imperialismo in Francia, l'autonomia in Ungheria, la rivolta in Polonia, il dispotismo in Turchia, dappertutto l'elemento che lusinga i suoi interessi e promuove la sua prosperità. — Rigida nel principio, versatile nelle forme, assoluta nell'ordine ideale, estremamente relativa nell'ordine pratico, essa ha capito esser la donna una specie di rete coperta che mantiene le sue relazioni nel mondo laico tanto più comodamente in quanto sfugge all'apparato delle relazioni ufficiali e tanto più profittevolmente in quanto si toglie alla coercizione delle forme sociali, non lasciando documenti che aiutino ad apprezzarne l'attività. — Egli è perciò che ovunque si chiesero larghezze per la donna, la parte illuminata del partito clericale, ben lungi dal dar di piglio alle furibonde diatribe dei vecchi padri del Cristianesimo, l'aiutò galantemente a rialzarsi, unì la sua voce a quella dei liberali, vantò con lei tutto quello che la Chiesa fece per sottrarla all'abuso pagano della forza e chiese libertà per lei come per tutti.

Come vedete, o Signori, io spingo la lealtà fin dove potete desiderarla e non fuggo la battaglia sopra nessun terreno.

Voi sapete meglio di me perchè la Chiesa fece con la donna un'amicizia così salda e così antica. — I titoli di benevolenza ch'essa vanta presso la donna datano dal suo stesso avvenimento nel mondo, sono veri e reali, sono grandissimi, ed i legislatori sel sanno senza avere la sagacia di scongiurare quella influenza acquistando verso la donna titoli maggiori.

Emigrando dall'Oriente all'Occidente il cristianesimo svestì la scoria locale. La monogamia insegnò il rispetto di quei sentimenti gelosi, dei quali l'uomo fece sempre gran caso per sè e che riesci con la poligamia ad atrofizzare nella donna.

Con l'indissolubilità del matrimonio insegnò il culto di quelle facoltà morali che fanno della donna la tutela ed il consiglio della famiglia e sottrasse la sua vecchiezza al selvaggio disprezzo della debolezza e dell'impotenza. — Con il culto della verginità volontaria la sottrasse, giovine e bella, all'intemperante autorità dei padri pagani ed insegnò al forte il rispetto di una volontà, che faceva omaggio dei più cari tesori di natura ad un'Essere superiore all'uomo.

La morale cristiana si trovò sempre sui passi della donna per ispaganizzare a di lei riguardo i legislatori, per mitigare il rigore dei codici, per condannare le loro ingiustizie, per proclamare l'unità della morale, per soffocare nelle coscienze dei cristiani quei principi brutali, che le leggi ispirate dal pensiero laico non hanno ancora smessi ed insegnano l'abuso della buona fede e della ignoranza ed assicurano la irresponsabilità ai furbi senza cuore. — A grande fatica riescirono oggi le donne ad iscriversi come studenti nelle università laiche, ma quando Bologna era dei papi vide la donna su tutte le cattedre. Molte Accademie laiche le danno l'ostracismo oggi ancora, ma il Campidoglio quando non servì più al trionfo selvaggio della conquista s'inghirlandò dei miti allori della Scienza e della Poesia e non fece differenza fra i sessi. — Che più?

Il Cristianesimo, erede del mosaismo era misogino, ma esso colmò la lacuna escogitando nel suo grembo il bel tipo della Vergine madre, lo idealizzò, ne fece la deipara, la corretrice dell'umanità. Alla sua stregua la santità redime completamente la donna dall'inferiorità nella quale il cristianesimo l'ha trovata. Non si domandi se è giovine od attempata, se bella o deforme, se piace o meno all'occhio dell'uomo. È in lei un valore che si innalza al disopra d'ogni umano apprezzamento. È Santa. Al suo tugurio accorreranno piccoli e grandi, pontefici e re, popoli e guerrieri, e baceranno devoti il lembo delle sue vesti. Alla sua tomba si appenderanno voti, ai suoi templi si profonderanno tesori, ai suoi altari si arderanno incensi, al suo nome si dispora l'immortalità felice e gloriosa della divinità.

Signori, non vi meravigliate dunque che il clero, il quale, più o meno scientemente, rappresenta questo ordine di ideali, abbia dell'influenza sulla donna. Non è debolezza di spirito in lei, non è pregiudizio, è giusto senso dei suoi interessi.

È ben vero che vi sono qua e là oratori che dalle sacre bigoncie scagliano in capo alla donna le vecchie invettive di S. Basilio, di Sant'Epifanio, di San Giovanni Grisostomo e di tutti quei vecchi padri del cristianesimo, che, orientali innanzi tutto, ripugnavano dallo spirito democratico del cristianesimo e non potevano inghiottire le larghezze ch'esso portava alla donna. Ma quando sento quei sacerdoti disepellire quei santi rancori e buttarceli in viso con una stizza che non è nè dei tempi, avvezzi a discutere ogni cosa, nè dei paesi dove la libertà e la personalità sono rispettate, nè del cristianesimo che abborre da ogni oppressione e repressione, non ne rilevo che la poca accortezza dell'oratore che si stacca dalla parte illuminata del suo partito.

Tuttociò vi prova, o signori, che noi siamo fatte all'intutto come voi. Amiamo quello che ci giova.

Perchè amate voi gli ordinamenti liberali? perchè rispondono ai vostri bisogni, al vostro amor proprio, ai vostri interessi nel maggior possibile numero ed estensione (1).

Ora questi ordinamenti, così come stanno, soddisfano essi egualmente ai nostri bisogni ed alla nostra dignità di persone e di cittadine, che contribuiscono al par di voi alle spese dello Stato, al decoro del paese, alla prosperità della patria? Che cosa gli ordinamenti democratici hanno fatto per noi? Ci hanno tolto il voto amministrativo, sicchè abbiamo pagato finora le imposte comunali senza che fossimo onorate di vederne il perchè. Ci hanno tolto maritate la libera amministrazione dei nostri beni, hanno riconfermato la irresponsabilità ai seduttori, ai mariti il diritto d'assenza, ai padri l'esercizio esclusivo della patria potestà, han ricopiato tutte le nostre pretese incapacità, finalmente ci han messe a fascio coi deliranti, coi malfattori, coi mentecatti.

E vi lagnate dell'influenza clericale? Perchè dunque ridete, o legislatori, quando vi si parla delle nostre condizioni impossibili come gente che ha orecchie e non intende?

Perchè, o avvocati, vi fregate le mani e dite che il nuovo

(1) L'illustre Autore degli studi *sulla Filosofia del diritto pubblico interno*, conte Luigi Montagnini, così definisce, a carte 144 del suo terzo volume, le convenienze del regime costituzionale del quale egli è dottissimo campione e storico: « Il reggimento costituzionale nel quale si concilia la libertà degli atti legali e della parola con l'eguaglianza civile, l'ordine e la sicurezza con la facilità di soddisfare l'ambizione legittima degli uomini d'ingegno atti a salire sino ai sommi gradi del pubblico governo, è il solo fra tutti che meglio si contempera alle cupide aspirazioni della natura umana. »

Secondo lo stesso Autore *il binomio sociale è la forza e l'interesse*, e questa sua affermazione ha certo per sè l'illustrazione della storia intera.

Ma sarebbe egli sperar troppo dall'umanità, nutrendo fede che il rischiaramento progressivo delle coscienze sostituisca la forza morale, cioè il diritto, alla forza empirica della materia, sicchè questa contemplatesse e rispettasse gl'interessi di tutti?

Codice ha segnato un gran progresso e che non si poteva fare di più? Non vedete che la morale cristiana, che molti di voi chiamano incadaverita e mummificata, vi precede ancora di secoli?

Però volete voi smagare la influenza clericale? riconosceteci elettrici. Non avete tempo, non avete gusto ad occuparvi di noi, fatene a meno. Dateci il voto, e basta. Alla domane del decreto che ci accorda il voto si trova come per incanto che voi tutti fate gran caso della nostra intelligenza politica, e ne siete così persuasi che venite a dimostrarci di esser tutti migliori gli uni degli altri.

Per incanto le mozioni in favor della donna scendono dalla montagna parlamentare e si diffondono nella pianura, invadono la destra ed il centro. Ieri si rideva, oggi si discute, domani si voterà. La mozione strana, comica, intempestiva, piovuta ieri come un bolide non si sa donde, nè perchè, ha superato rapidamente tutti i gradi numerici della minoranza ed ha raggiunto la maggioranza e la fusione degli interessi delle elettrici con quelli dei deputati, avrà finalmente guarito il corpo legislativo da una forma morbosa di buon umore, che minaccia di farsi organica a discapito di quella riverenza che deve ispirare anche alle elettrici.

La donna si affezionerà consapevolmente ad un ordine di cose che fornisce un obiettivo alla sua intelligenza e guarentisce i suoi interessi, e l'influenza clericale verrà soffocata per le ragioni medesime che l'hanno creata nel passato.

Restami ora a dire un'ultima parola intorno all'inopportunità di questa innovazione ed è questa, non lo dissimulo, la parte più incresciosa, del mio discorso, poichè se discutendo le altre obiezioni ho dovuto rivolgermi alle diverse gradazioni dei partiti nazionali pei quali è più o meno discutibile il principio medesimo, per combattere questa mi è d'uopo guardare

alla sinistra, poichè da lei sola, che ammette il principio, può partire, e parte, questa paurosa, illogica e vaga obiezione.

Che cosa è l'opportunità? Quali ne sono i caratteri? Come l'accertate voi?

Per me, l'opportunità è un concorso di circostanze omogenee o compatibili con l'affermazione dell'oggetto che si considera. — E che cosa vedete voi qui dentro che sia inconciliabile col voto politico della donna? Le circostanze omogenee in questo caso sono, il trovarsi in esse i requisiti che si esigono dagli elettori, la possibilità di seguire nella scarsa misura convenevole gli avvenimenti politici, interessi e bisogni da guarentire, la possibilità materiale di compiere l'atto del voto. — Ora quale di queste condizioni manca alla donna?

Io temo piuttosto, e ve ne preparo fatte tutte le mie scuse, che l'inopportunità sia tutta nelle disposizioni dell'animo vostro, o nel non esservi abbastanza convinti dell'identità dei principî che reggono le sorti umane in ambo i termini della specie. Deplorabile incoerenza che vorrei tutta attribuire a deficienza d'intelletto anzichè a bassi e privati moventi!

So infatti che i re non hanno mai riconosciuto l'opportunità delle repubbliche ed i papi non hanno mai creduto un momento alla opportunità del libero esame. Ma re e papi tengono le radici nella tradizione ed in un ordine di idee assoluto immutabile. Il loro *non possumus* è la resistenza della logica. Ma voi con quale diritto e con quale logica respingete la conseguenza di idee che sono la ragione dell'essere vostro?

« Voi circuite il mare e la terra per fare un proselite, sclamava Cristo, indignato della doppiezza dei Farisei, e quando l'avete trovato ne fate un figliuol della Geenna peggio di voi, giacchè la vostra gloria cercate e non la salute degli uomini. Guai a voi, ipocriti, perchè il regno di Dio si avvicina! »

Voi, democratici, udiste le grida di dolore dei negri, voi

combatteste per la libertà del Greci, voi protestaste contro il governo personale di Francia, voi fremete pei cristiani d'Oriente, ma volete mantenere la servitù nelle vostre case stesse, perchè lì dove voi signoregiate, lì soltanto non vi pare opportuna la libertà — Guai a voi democratici apocrifi, perchè le idee si faranno ragione anche di voi, e l'avvenire metterà a nudo il vostro liberalismo a doppio fondo!

Io sono giunta alla fine del mio lungo discorso.

Ho dimostrato che le condizioni giuridiche delle italiane non rispondono ai nostri costumi, nè al pensiero che viene informando tutte le istituzioni moderne. — Non ho avuto bisogno di dimostrare che a noi non si pensa, o non si provvede che avaramente, dacchè dopo 47 anni di libero governo ci si ridona oggi quello che il governo straniero non ci aveva negato mai, il voto amministrativo, contro il quale ancora si sollevano taluni, che in questi tempi di ibridismo politico, dovrò chiamare radicali-opportunisti.

Ho dimostrato come questo stato di cose non può mutarsi per noi fino a che non avremo col voto politico il diritto d'imporre ai deputati lo studio e la sollecitudine dei nostri interessi, epperò, signore mie, vi invito a chiederlo apertamente e direttamente al Parlamento.

Non lo otterremo. Tutti gli italiani vogliono riforme in tutti i rami della pubblica amministrazione e non ottengono e non otterranno nulla, o quasi nulla, per la ragione che i due famosi *beni inseparabili* sono semplicemente incompatibili, e quello dei due che si trova più largo non crede all'opportunità di restringere sè stesso per far posto all'altro.

Non otterremo, ma avremo affermata la nostra maturità e la nostra volontà; non otterremo oggi e noi ci ripresenteremo domani, eppoi ancora, eppoi sempre, fino a che posto fra l'uscio ed il muro dall'ammasso dei conti arretrati, il privilegio creda

finalmente all'opportunità di concedere quel che gli sfugge e la democrazia abbia capito la necessità della logica.

Non posso finire senza rendere un sentito omaggio alla scuola sociale di G. Mazzini, che informata ai principi di una morale giovine e purissima, tende a redimere la crescente generazione dal macchiavellismo, e ferma ai principî accoglie la donna, e non accetta al suo dritto limitazione nessuna, ed egual gratitudine professo a molti uomini che affigliati a partiti che non riconoscono in principio il dritto della donna, pure per senso d'equità, per animo nobile e generoso, vorrebbero le sue condizioni migliorate, nè meno grata mi dichiaro alla Società democratica, i cui membri, se non tutti per avventura accettano le mie idee, pure guardando con simpatia ad ogni sforzo che mira al progresso sociale, ha aperto volentosa le sue porte alla mia tesi.

Ma l'omaggio più cordiale di gratitudine porgo al nobilissimo Cairoli che prese in seno alla Commissione per la Riforma elettorale l'iniziativa per la ricognizione del voto politico alla donna; che se il suo progetto non ebbe successo, non minore vuol essere l'ammirazione e la compiacenza dell'animo pel nobile atto, perchè quando una causa è alla vigilia del suo trionfo, le menti più anguste ed i caratteri più incerti le si proclamano ed improvvisano profeti ed apostoli, non così quando la lotta si prevede ancora lunga e la gloria del successo lontana.

Ed ora, signore mie, converrete con me che sarebbe stato più che ozioso, l'invitarvi ad udire com'io la pensi sopra un argomento, nel quale, quand'anche le mie opinioni non fossero note poco premerebbe conoscerle. Si è oggi più che mai ristucchi di parole che non concludono a fatti.

Epperò io non farò il torto alla vostra intelligenza di inventare una perorazione per decidervi ad apporre i vostri nomi

alla seguente petizione diretta ai due rami del Parlamento onde ci sia accordato il voto politico.

La direzione del Giornale *La Donna*, scritto esclusivamente da donne e che da ormai nove anni tiene alta la bandiera dei nostri diritti, si è incaricata di raccogliere le firme e ricapitarle.

Signori Senatori, Signori Deputati.

Il Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri nel suo programma di Governo, il quale ebbe efficacia di commuovere a speranza tutti gli italiani, stigmatizzò alcune leggi che *basandosi sopra nude presunzioni legali* infirmano la realtà.

Ora una classe innumerevole di cittadini trovasi avviluppata in una veste giuridica, la quale, emanazione di tempi disparati, reliquia di tradizioni antiquate, che il progresso delle scienze sociali ha demolite da ogni altra parte, rappezzatura di dritto romano e di dritto consuetudinario straniero, astraе dalla realtà presente e si afferma come un fatto isolato nel corpo delle istituzioni moderne.

Ora questa massa di cittadini che ha diritti e doveri, bisogni ed interessi, censo e capacità, non ha presso il corpo legislativo nessuna legale rappresentanza, sicchè l'eco della sua vita non vi penetra che di straforo e vi è ascoltata a mala pena.

Noi italiane ci rivolgiamo perciò a quel parlamento, che col Governo ha convenuto doversi alla presunzione sostituire la realtà, affinchè posti in disparte i dottrinarî apprezzamenti e le divagazioni accademiche sulla entità e modalità della nostra natura, e sul carattere della nostra missione, voglia, considerandoci nei nostri soli rapporti con lo Stato, riguardarci per quello che siamo veramente:

cittadine, contribuenti e capaci, epperò non passibili, davanti al diritto di voto, che di quelle limitazioni che sono o verranno sancite per gli altri elettori.

A questa parità di trattamento con i cittadini dell'altro sesso, non conoscendo noi altro ostacolo che la tutela della donna maritata, domandiamo che sia tolta, come non d'altro originata che dalla legale presunzione della nostra incapacità, facendo noi considerare agli onorevoli legislatori, che avendo il governo italiano promosso con ogni cura l'istruzione femminile e trovandoci noi, perciò, al giorno d'oggi, alla eguale portata intellettuale di una quantità di elettori che il legislatore dichiara capaci, stimiamo che nulla osti acchè venga a noi pure accordato il voto politico, senza del quale i nostri interessi non sono tutelati ed i nostri bisogni rimangono ignoti.

Fiduciose nella saviezza e giustizia dei legislatori, le sottoscritte insistono perchè sia fatta ragione alla loro domanda.

Milano

A. MARIA MOZZONI.

VENEZIA
Tipografia del Commercio
1877.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY COMMITTEE.

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS,

INCLUDING

ANNUAL REPORT, SUBSCRIPTION LIST, TREASURER'S
BALANCE SHEET, AND SPEECHES

AT THE

ANNUAL MEETING,

*Held at the Rooms of the Social Science Association, Adam Street,
Adelphi, London, 23rd January, 1879.*

MANCHESTER:
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ALEXANDER BIRNBAUM & CO. PRINTERS, MANCHESTER.

posed on their part should be accepted; the implied under-
standing being that at least as much should be conceded to
Scotland as by the Act of 1870 had been conceded to England
and I were found to amount to a restriction of the whole measure, except
the class which recurred to married women all wages and

EIGHTH AND NINTH ANNUAL REPORT
OF
THE MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY COMMITTEE.

IN submitting to their friends the summary of the arduous
and at times depressing work of the last two sessions,
your Committee rejoice that they are able to record the taking
of one further step towards the legislative recognition of the
property rights of married women.

Till the session of 1877 the law of Scotland gave to a
husband the sole control of his wife's property, heritable or
moveable (*i.e.* real or personal) and the ownership of her
earnings; but in Scotland, as in England and Ireland, the
feeling and practice of the people had advanced beyond the
law, and marriage settlements to limit or defeat the preroga-
tive of the husband were usually adopted.

At the request of this Committee, Mr. Anderson, M.P. for
Glasgow, introduced in the session of 1877 the Married
Women's Property (Scotland) Bill, a measure which proposed
to secure to every Scotchwoman that control over her own
property which, unless she were rich enough and cautious
enough to make special legal provision to guard it, was for-
feited by her marriage. The second reading of this Bill was
fixed for the 18th of April, when it was opposed by the Lord
Advocate, on the part of the Government, chiefly on the plea
that it went beyond the lines of the English Act of 1870. The
Lord Advocate admitted, however, that some alteration ought
to be made in the law of Scotland with regard to a wife's
control over her property, and a sort of compromise was
offered, by which the Government assented to the second
reading of the Bill on condition that amendments to be pro-

posed on their part should be accepted; the implied understanding being that at least as much should be conceded to Scotland as, by the Act of 1870, had been conceded to England and Ireland. The Government amendments, however, were found to amount to a rejection of the whole measure, except the clause which secured to a married woman all wages and earnings acquired by her after the commencement of the Act, and the clause which limited the liability of a husband for his wife's debts contracted before marriage to the amount of property received by him through the marriage. As the Lord Advocate expressed his willingness to deal comprehensively with the whole question at a later period, your Committee did not consider themselves at liberty to refuse this instalment of justice, and the Bill passed the House of Commons in its mutilated form. Your Committee desire to take this opportunity of tendering their hearty thanks to the Right Hon. the Earl of Rosebery for the earnestness and ability with which he carried the measure through the House of Lords.

The Married Women's Property (Scotland) Bill, 1877, received the royal assent on the 2nd of August of that year, and came into operation on the 1st of January, 1878. Whatever property, therefore, a married Scotchwoman has obtained by her own industry since that date, or may so obtain in the future, will remain her own, free from the *jus mariti* and right of administration of her husband. Mr. Anderson re-introduced his Bill (with some slight modifications) in the Session of 1878, but was unable to obtain for the second reading an earlier day than Wednesday, May 1st, which falling in the Easter recess, the discussion on the second reading of the Bill was delayed until May 14th. On that day it was again postponed, at the request of the Lord Advocate, to Friday, May 31st. No notice of opposition had been given, and there seemed a fair chance of carrying the second reading on that evening had not the painful shock caused by the sudden death of Mr. Wykeham Martin led to the adjournment of the House. The notice of opposition given a few days later by the Lord Advocate destroyed all chance of proceeding further with the Bill during the Session of 1878; but, undismayed by oppo-

sition, Mr. Anderson re-introduced his Bill this Session, and the second reading now stands fixed for Wednesday, the 5th of March next, as the first order of the day. Your Committee earnestly invite all their friends to aid them in securing for the Bill on that day a favourable consideration, nor can they forbear this expression of their deep obligation to Mr. Anderson and those who have supported him, for the patient and persistent resolution with which they have met extraordinary and unexpected difficulties.

Your Committee regret that with regard to England they have been unable to obtain any legislative advance since the date of their last report. The Act of 1870 is an ineffective substitute provided by the House of Lords for the original measure of Mr. Shaw-Lefevre. Your Committee expressed their objections to it whilst it was still before the House of Lords, and have since steadfastly sought its amendment.

At their request Lord Coleridge, in the Session of 1877, presented to the House of Lords the Married Women's Property Act (1870) Amendment Bill, and in an admirable speech, on the 21st of June, moved the second reading. He was opposed by the Lord Chancellor (Earl Cairns), who, on the 21st of June, 1870, had moved in the Upper House the second reading of the Bill, which had been so triumphantly carried through the House of Commons by the Right Hon. Russell Gurney. On that occasion Lord Cairns had declared that the effect of the Bill would be "to put the married woman as to property in the same position as the unmarried," and affirmed that, after the best consideration, his opinion was that the principle was the true one. Your Committee hope, therefore, that the opposition of Lord Cairns, in 1877, was due rather to an imperfect appreciation of the scope of Lord Coleridge's Bill than to an abandonment of the principle which, in 1870, he recognised as the true one, and they trust that he may again be found amongst the promoters of so just and beneficial a reform. Lord Coleridge's Bill was, upon the opposition of the Lord Chancellor, negatived without a division.

Acting under the advice of the Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas your Committee sought, in the Session of

1878, the re-introduction of the measure in the Lower House, and were happily successful in inducing Mr. Hibbert, M.P., to take charge of the Bill. The ballot, however, proved unfavourable, and Mr. Hibbert could not secure an earlier day for the second reading than Wednesday, 24th of July, before which date the Government had appropriated the remainder of the Session, and the Bill was therefore lost for the time.

Mr. Hibbert's unavoidable absence during the Winter Session is the sole reason why the Bill has not yet been re-introduced. This Bill is in substance identical with that which, in 1873, Mr. Hinde Palmer so skilfully piloted up to the stage of report through the House of Commons. Its object is to secure to a married woman her own property, and to make her liable for her own contracts as if she were a single woman.

Your Committee desire to call attention particularly to two grievous defects in the present law which have not, perhaps, been sufficiently dwelt upon. Under the Act of 1870, although a married woman can sue in her own name in respect of her separate property, she cannot be sued in respect thereof* upon debts or obligations contracted by her after marriage, and her creditors have therefore no means of enforcing their claims upon her for such debts or obligations.

It also appears that unless the ruling in a late case of the Manchester Stipendiary Magistrate can be proved to be wrong in point of law, a married woman who has taken every possible step to secure to herself whatever protection our English law will permit her, has yet no legal remedy against a husband who takes advantage of her absence to enter her house and rob her. Mr. P. A. Taylor, M.P., on the 16th of December last, asked the Attorney-General in the House of Commons whether he had received any further information in regard to the case of Mrs. M'Carthy, and if he could state whether the Government intended to propose any amendment of the law. The case was as follows:—

* See *The Times*, March 11th, 1878. *Hancocks v. Lablache*.

That Mrs. M'Carthy's husband, in spite of a marriage settlement whereby her property had been secured to her separate use, in spite of a protection order obtained in consequence of his misconduct, and in spite of a judicial separation pronounced against him, had, during her absence from home, entered her house and stolen her property, and that on an application being made to Mr. Headlam he had dismissed the case upon the ground that "he did not believe that section 11* of the Married Women's Property Act was intended to enable a woman to prosecute her husband for stealing her goods." The Attorney-General is reported by the *Times* of December 17 to have answered "that he believed the facts were correctly stated in the question of the hon. gentleman. It would not become him to answer a question as to the correctness of the decision of the Stipendiary Magistrate, that being liable to an appeal to a court of law. It seemed to him that the provisions of the section were plain and intelligible. He was therefore of opinion that no amendment was required." The Attorney-General, in his reply, seems to have been under the impression that Mr. Headlam had adjudicated on the case and decided against Mrs. M'Carthy, whereas he simply dismissed the case; there is therefore, we fear, no appeal. It is impossible, however, that the matter can be allowed to drop in this fashion, or that the evident intention of the Legislature can be permitted to

* Section 11 of the Married Women's Property Act (1870), cited above, enacts that—

11. A married woman may maintain an action in her own name for the recovery of any wages, earnings, money, and property by this Act declared to be her separate property, or of any property belonging to her before marriage, and which her husband shall by writing under his hand, have agreed with her shall belong to her after marriage as her separate property, and she shall have in her own name the same remedies, *both Civil and Criminal, against all persons whomsoever*, for the protection and security of such wages, earnings, money, and property, and of any chattels or other property purchased or obtained by means thereof for her own use, *as if such wages, earnings, money, chattels, and property belonged to her as an unmarried woman*; and in any indictment or other proceeding it shall be sufficient to allege such wages, earnings, money, chattels, and property to be her property.

be frustrated by the caprice of a magistrate. If Mr. Headlam's reading of the law be correct, the result of the work of this Committee during the last ten years is simply *nil*, as it will be in the power of any magistrate to laugh in the face of Parliament and say: "You passed an Act to protect poor married women from robbery at the hands of bad husbands, but I don't believe you really meant that they were to be punished for robbing their wives—you only meant they must please be kind enough not to do it."

Your Committee desire to direct your attention to section 196 of the Criminal Code (Indictable Offences) Bill, which provides that "No act done by a husband or wife, with reference to the property of his wife or her husband, shall be deemed fraudulent misappropriation;" and to point out that this section ignores entirely the protection given to women by the Married Women's Property Acts of 1870 and 1877. Your Committee appeal to their friends to give them every possible assistance in securing not only the passing of the two Bills dealing directly with the property rights of married women, but also such a change in the law as shall make it impossible that another magistrate should misinterpret the intention of Parliament in this matter.

In conclusion, your Committee have to record with grief the removal by death of one of their most eminent supporters. The memory of Russell Gurney will always be held in reverence by those who have worked in this cause. His position as a judge brought daily before his eyes the misery arising from the inequality of the law; and with a strong sense of justice and an unflinching patience and courage, he gave at all times his great parliamentary influence in support of every effort for the legal protection of women.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY COMMITTEE.

Statement of Receipts and Expenditure from July 22nd, 1876, to January 22nd, 1879.

Dr.		Cr.	
July 22, 1876.	£ s. d.	By Secretary's Salary and Wages	£ s. d.
To Balance at the Bank	154 6 6	Postages, etc.	93 8 5
„ Cash in hand	1 7 10	„ Advertisements	2 16 0
„ Subscriptions and Donations	517 0 8	„ Printing	110 16 7
„ Bank Interest	5 0 8	„ Reporting	10 18 0
		„ Parliamentary Papers	2 0 0
		„ Travelling Expenses	43 15 1
		„ Sundries	2 6 6
		„ Bank Charges	0 8 0
		„ Balance in Bank	28 4 2
		„ Cash in hand	4 11 8
	£677 15 3		£677 15 3

January 22nd, 1878.

Examined and found correct,

WM. MALLESON.

THE TREASURER'S APPEAL.

The public cannot read the Report of the last two years, or the speeches delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Married Women's Property Committee, without being made aware that the laws regarding the property of married women are still very far from giving the necessary protection, and that married women still lack the freedom to work and to earn money which all other persons possess.

Very few people are aware of the large proportion of married women who, quite apart from factory labour, are wholly or partially supporting themselves and their families by paid work. It is surely a singular thing that such poor married mothers should be subjected to special difficulty in the management of their means and in the support of their offspring. Cases have arisen where a man has extorted the earnings of his wife by interfering with profitable engagements which she has made. Is it not intolerable that a woman whose husband does not supply home comforts to his household should be forced to ask that husband's permission before she may earn what is required for her family, or that he should have the right to annul any contract she may have made, even when that contract involves the means of living for the family?

The Married Women's Property Committee desire to obtain a real remedy for a wide and cruel grievance. Their appeal to the nation is of the simplest description, in support of principles already in all but universal operation. They ask that the Property Laws shall no longer be a standing insult to an institution universally recognised in civilised countries as necessary to the well-being of society. They ask that the

law which protects the property and earnings of an unmarried woman shall not deal less favourably with the far more hardly-acquired possessions of a married woman. They ask that a married mother shall have the same right to provide and to guard the necessaries of life for her little ones which an unmarried mother possesses.

The Committee require funds for the prosecution of their object. So far a few hundreds a year have sufficed for their labours. Engaged as we believe we are in a work of justice, we appeal for help to all who wish to strengthen the weak by the beneficent instrumentality of just laws.

URSULA M. BRIGHT.

Alderley Edge, Cheshire,
February, 1879.



SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS FROM JULY 22ND, 1876,
TO JAN. 22ND, 1879.

	1876.	1877.	1878.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Anon, Edgbaston	...	3 0 0	...
A Friend	...	...	1 2 0
Arnold, Mrs. Arthur	1 1 0	...	1 0 0
Ashurst, W. H., Esq.	1 1 0	...	...
Ashford, Mrs.	...	1 1 0	...
Armstrong, Mr.	...	1 0 0	...
"	...	1 0 0	...
Andrews, Mrs	...	0 10 0	...
Addison, Minna	...	...	0 2 9
Brooke, Miss Edith	10 0 0	10 0 0	10 0 0
Bright, Mr. Jacob, M.P.	...	10 0 0	...
Bazley, Sir Thomas, Bart., M.P.	...	...	5 0 0
Boucherett, Miss...	5 0 0	...	...
Boyd-Kinnear, Mr. J.	...	5 0 0	2 0 0
Browne, Mrs. S. W.	...	5 0 0	5 0 0
Brown, Mrs. Sarah B.	...	5 0 0	...
Bright, Mrs. Jacob	...	...	2 2 0
Baker, Mrs. Mills	2 0 0	...	2 0 0
Bostock, Miss	0 5 0	...	...
Courtauld, Mr. Samuel	5 0 0	...	10 0 0
Crook, Mr. and Mrs....	5 0 0	...	3 0 0
Cobden, Mrs.	...	3 3 0	...
Cropper, Mr. James	...	2 2 0	2 2 0
C. A. E....	...	...	2 0 0
Courtauld, Miss	...	...	2 2 0
Carroll, Mrs....	...	1 0 0	0 10 0
Carpenter, Mrs. Russell	0 10 0	...	1 10 0
Clark, Mrs.	...	...	0 10 0
Collinsore, Mrs. L.	...	0 10 0	...
Cogan, The Misses	...	...	0 5 0
Dixon, Mr. George	5 0 0	...	...
Dilke, Sir C. W., Bart., M.P.	2 0 0	...	2 0 0
Davies, Mrs....	...	1 1 0	...
Davidson, Mrs.	0 10 0	...	...
Dehersant, Mrs.	1 0 0	...	...
Downing, Miss	0 2 6	...	...
Ford, Mrs.	...	2 0 0	2 0 0
Freeston, Mrs.	...	0 5 0	0 5 0
Gurney, Right Hon. Russell	5 5 0	...	...
Goldsmid, Lady	...	5 0 0	5 5 0
Gore Langton, Lady Anna	...	5 0 0	...
Gell, Mrs.	2 2 0	...	...
Gillson, Mrs. H....	...	2 0 0	2 0 0

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Green, Mrs. ...	0 5 0	...	0 5 0
Gurney, Right Hon. Russell (per) ...	0 3 0	...	...
Gerard, Mrs....	...	0 2 6	...
Heywood, Mrs. Abel...	...	...	2 2 0
Hall, Miss Rose ...	1 1 0	...	1 0 0
Hodgson, Mrs.	...	1 1 0	2 2 0
Herbert, Lady Florence	...	...	0 10 0
Hennell, Miss Sara S.	...	0 5 0	0 15 0
Howarth, Mrs.	...	0 2 6	0 2 6
Impey, Mrs....	...	...	0 5 0
Leese, Mrs. Joseph	...	1 1 0	1 1 0
Leon, Mrs.	1 1 0	...	1 1 0
Lucas, Mrs.	1 1 0	...	...
Lloyd, Miss C. G.	0 10 0	...	...
Lupton, Miss	...	0 5 0	0 10 0
Mellor, Mr. J. P.	50 0 0	...	...
Morley, Mr. Samuel, M.P.	...	...	50 0 0
Mason, Mr. Hugh	10 10 0	...	10 10 0
McLaren, Mrs.	5 0 0	...	5 0 0
McLaren, Mrs. (special donation)	...	...	3 0 0
McKinnell, Mrs	...	1 1 0	...
Mills, Mrs.	...	...	0 10 6
McTaggart, Mrs....	...	0 10 0	0 10 0
Moore, Mrs.	...	0 5 0	0 10 0
M. H.	...	0 2 6	...
Nichol, Mrs....	5 0 0	...	5 0 0
Newman, Professor	2 0 0	...	4 0 0
Nicol, Mr. Henry	1 1 0	1 1 0	0 10 6
" (special donation)	...	...	1 1 0
Newman, Mrs. E. H.	1 0 0	1 0 0	...
Ogden, Mrs. ...	...	2 2 0	2 2 0
Offord, Mrs. (per)	...	1 0 0	...
Ogilvie, Mrs.	...	1 0 0	...
O'Brien, Mr. E. W.	...	...	1 0 0
Pennington, Mr. and Mrs.	...	10 0 0	10 0 0
Palmer, Mr. J. Hinde	1 1 0	...	1 1 0
Petty, Mrs.	...	...	0 2 6
Prideaux, Miss E. B....	0 2 6	...	...
Pearse, Miss...	0 2 0	...	...
Pamphlets, Sale of	...	...	0 2 0
Robberds, Mrs.	5 0 0	...	5 0 0
Ransome, Mrs.	...	1 1 0	...
R. P. H.	...	0 10 6	0 10 6
Rigbye, Miss	0 10 0	...	0 10 0
Rowntree, Mrs. W.	...	0 5 0	...
Renwick, Mrs. E. H.	...	...	0 2 6
Sharman, Crawford, Miss	2 0 0	...	...
Snowden, Mrs. Ann	...	0 15 0	...
Sims, Mrs.	0 10 6	...	...
Smith, Mrs. W. B.	...	0 10 6	0 10 6
Strangman, Mrs. John (late Miss C. J. Lloyd)	...	...	0 10 0
Smith, Mr. James	0 2 6	...	...

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
S. E. G.	0	2	6				0	2	6
Smith, Rev. R.							0	2	6
Thomasson, Mr. J. P.	50	0	0				25	0	0
Thomasson, Mr. and Mrs. J. P.	10	0	0						
Taylor, Mr. Samuel L.				5	0	0			
Taylor, Mrs.	5	0	0						
Taylor, Mrs. P. A.				5	0	0			
Taylor, Mrs. Henry	1	1	0				1	1	0
Thomas, Mrs. W. H.	0	10	0						
Thomas, Miss R.	0	5	0						
Turner, Mrs.				0	5	0			
Venturi, Mrs.	2	2	0						
Wedgwood, Mrs. Hensleigh	5	0	0				2	2	0
Walkington, Mr. S.							1	1	0
Webster, Mrs.				1	1	0			
Williams, Miss	1	1	0				1	1	0
Whitehead, Mrs.	0	10	0				0	10	0
Whitworth, Miss	0	10	0				0	10	0
Walton, Mrs.	0	5	0						
Wates, Mrs.	0	5	0				1	0	0
Wareing, Mr.	0	5	0						
Wood, Mrs. Travers	0	5	0						
	£210	18	6	£98	18	6	£207	3	3



MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY COMMITTEE.

ANNUAL MEETING of Friends and Subscribers, held in the rooms of the Social Science Association, 1, Adam Street, Adelphi, London, January 23rd, 1879.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT, M.P., in the Chair.

Miss LUCY WILSON read the Report of the Committee.

The TREASURER (Mrs. Jacob Bright) read the Statement of Accounts.

Resolution I.—Moved by G. J. SHAW LEFEVRE, Esq., M.P., seconded by Mrs. ARTHUR ARNOLD, and supported by J. HINDE PALMER, Esq., Q.C.

That the Report and Statement of Accounts just read be adopted, and printed for circulation under the direction of the Committee.

Resolution II.—Moved by Miss LUCY WILSON, seconded by Sir ARTHUR HOBHOUSE, Q.C., K.C.S.I.

That this meeting pledges itself to use every means in its power to obtain for married women the same legal control over their own property as that which is enjoyed by every other portion of the community.

Resolution III.—Moved by G. OSBORNE MORGAN, M.P., Q.C., seconded by JAMES HEYWOOD, Esq., F.R.S.

That the following persons be the Committee for the ensuing year:—Mrs. Addey, Mr. Arthur Arnold, Mrs. Arthur Arnold, Mr. Jacob Bright, M.P., Mrs. Jacob Bright, Mrs. Butler, Mr. Thomas Chorlton, Mr. L. H. Courtney, M.P., Sir C. W. Dilke, Bart., M.P., Rev. Alfred Dewes, D.D., LL.D., Mrs. Gell, Rev. Septimus Hansard, Miss Ida Hardcastle, Mr. Thomas Hare, Professor W. B. Hodgson, Mrs. Hodgson, Mr. William Malleon, Mrs. Moore, Mr. H. N. Mozley, Dr. Pankhurst, Mrs. Sutcliffe, Mr. P. A. Taylor, M.P., Mrs. P. A. Taylor, Mr. Thomas Taylor, Miss Alice Wilson, Miss Lucy Wilson, Mrs. Venturi, with power to add to their number.

Resolution IV.—Moved by ARTHUR ARNOLD, Esq., seconded by H. N. MOZLEY, Esq.

That the best thanks of this meeting be presented to Mr. Jacob Bright for presiding on this present occasion.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY COMMITTEE.

ANNUAL MEETING of Friends and Subscribers, held in
the Rooms of the Social Science Association, Adam
Street, Adelphi, London, *23rd January, 1879.*

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT, M.P., presided, and announced that expressions of regret at inability to attend, and of sympathy with the objects of the meeting, had been received from Mr. Courtney, M.P., the Hon. Mrs. Maurice Drummond, Mr. Peter Taylor, M.P., Madame Venturi, The Hon. John Welsh (the American Ambassador), and Mr. Hibbert, M.P.

Miss LUCY WILSON read the Report of the Committee, after which

Mrs. JACOB BRIGHT, the treasurer, submitted the financial statement.

The CHAIRMAN said: Ladies and gentlemen, I think I may congratulate you that we have here to-day so good an attendance, even in this very bitter weather. I was afraid that we might have found the room too large for our gathering. I think I may say without fear of contradiction that there is no Act of Parliament on any important subject that has given so little satisfaction to all the parties concerned as the Act of 1870, which we are now met to consider. I do not know anyone who is grateful for it. That Act undertook to protect especially the earnings of women, and I believe it is admitted that it even provides for the protection of property which is otherwise obtained; but it is so indirect and obscure, so utterly incomprehensible, that unless the women whom it is supposed to benefit and who seek its shelter are as experienced as lawyers themselves, they are not likely to get any benefit

from it. Now, the object of this Committee is to seek to remedy this state of things, and to obtain a statute which is simple, which lawyers will not wrangle over, and with regard to which there will not be half-a-dozen opinions and decisions; and I hope we shall succeed in persuading Parliament to pass such an Act. The report has referred to a case which has occurred at Manchester, and coming from that place I might have been disposed to say a few words on the subject, but for the fact that the report deals so very completely with it—I mean the case of the man M'Carthy. The decision of the Bench in regard to it seems an astounding one. A woman has a magistrate's protection order, a judicial separation, and the advantages of the Act of 1870. It does seem a surprising thing that after all this her husband can come into her house in her absence, and steal with impunity. Why, she is as defenceless as were women before the precautions of the Act of 1870 were taken. Well, I am surrounded by able men and women—men who were long connected, and some who are now connected, with the House of Commons; lawyers also who have had a great deal to do with the passing of this measure in the House of Commons; and I should like to hear from them whether the opinion of a local magistrate in Manchester is worth more than the opinions of all other legal men, or even of the House of Commons itself. If Mr. Headlam knows more than all these put together, he must be an extraordinary man. But so long as this judgment remains unreversed, it seems to me that wives who have the misfortune to have unjust husbands, and require protection, are without any shelter whatever; and I think that one of the first things the Committee of this association should do, is to ascertain whether the judgment of Mr. Headlam be correct, whether it is to stand, and whether all we have been doing now for years is to be set aside. With these remarks, I will call on Mr. G. J. Shaw Lefevre, M.P. for Reading, and a gentleman who has done more, perhaps, to originate this legislation than almost anyone else.

G. J. SHAW LEFEVRE, Esq., M.P., said: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I have great pleasure in rising to move "That

the report and statement of accounts just read be adopted and printed for circulation under the direction of the Committee," and in doing this I need hardly say that the object of this Committee is one in which I feel a great and deep interest, as your chairman has kindly adverted to. It is now eleven years since I first introduced a Bill into the House of Commons on this subject, and since the first serious effort was made to deal with this question. Reforms like this move on slowly in the House of Commons, for eleven years have elapsed since then, and the question is not now settled, but a Bill will be brought into the House during the coming Session, which will be identical with the Bill which I then introduced. I may remind you that the Bill I speak of in 1868 passed a second reading by the casting vote of the Speaker, and it was then referred to a Select Committee, who took evidence on the subject, not only with regard to the complaints which were made of the existing state of the law relating to married women, and the earnings of women in manufacturing districts, but they also took an immense amount of evidence as to the results of similar changes made in the laws of other countries—especially in America—and this evidence was laid eventually before the House of Commons, and in the next session—the session of 1869—Mr. Russell Gurney, who has been so feelingly alluded to, took the subject up, and again introduced a Bill which was identical with that of the previous year. I had been in the meantime appointed a member of the Government which came into office in 1869, and therefore could not again take charge of the measure, though I continued to take a share in promoting it. That Bill was again referred to a Select Committee of the House of Commons. In the previous session the Select Committee had discussed the principle of the Bill, now it was the details which had to be dealt with. I think that Committee was one of the strongest and best that ever sat in the House of Commons, from a legal point of view. No less than four of the members of it have been since elevated to the Bench. Among them are Sir George Jessel, the Master of the Rolls; Lord Coleridge, Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas; Baron Amplett, and Mr. Justice Lopes. There was also on

that Committee Mr. Russell Gurney, Mr. Lowe, Mr. Headlam, and myself, and other gentlemen who had training as lawyers. The present Home Secretary, Mr. Cross, was also a member of it. It would have been impossible to select a more capable Committee to consider a Bill of this kind. That Committee went most carefully through the Bill. They sat four days, merely discussing clauses one by one, and they came to the conclusion that it was a most satisfactory measure. If I recollect right, there was but one objector—Mr. Lopes. The Bill finally passed the House of Commons by a large majority. On the third reading the majority was over four to one, viz., about 130 to 30. But in the House of Lords changes were made in the Bill at the instance of Lord Cairns which entirely altered its character. When it came down again to the House of Commons, it became a question whether we should allow it to pass into law in its mutilated state. On the whole, however, the Bill, bad as it was, admitted the important principle that a married woman was entitled to have and hold property apart from her husband. It was, therefore, thought desirable to allow the measure to become law, and we hoped that the fact of the Act being so unsatisfactory would make it more easy on a future occasion to alter it, and make it more complete. Accordingly the Act passed in the shape which we well know, and I venture to say that it is an Act quite disgraceful to the Legislature—(hear, hear)—a more confused, illogical, and absurd piece of work does not exist on the statute book of our country. For my own part I have always disclaimed all responsibility for it, although I had much to do with it. This Act has remained the law of the land for nine years, and there is, I think, very little chance of its being altered by the present Parliament. Again and again the question has been brought before Parliament. Mr. Hinde Palmer introduced another Bill in 1873, and carried its second reading by a large majority, but failed from want of time to carry it through all its stages. That was in the last Parliament. During the present Parliament only one effort has been made. Mr. Anderson, the member for Glasgow, introduced a Bill which was substantially identical with that I introduced in 1868, but applying only

to Scotland, to which the Married Women's Property Act of 1870 does not apply; and the debate on that occasion certainly gave no reason to believe that the House of Commons would at present pass a satisfactory measure. The Home Secretary made what appeared to me a rather violent speech—(hear, hear)—against the principle of the Bill, and compelled Mr. Anderson to reduce the measure to the impotent and inoperative Act passed in 1870.* At the same time, as I have said, a very important principle is contained in the Act of 1870. It did for the first time recognise that a married woman is entitled to her separate earnings, although it has not given her complete security for enforcing that right.† It has also, though in an obscure manner, recognised the rights of married women in respect of small sums of money. Up to £200 in money coming to a married woman becomes her own property. Why it should be limited to £200 no one could say. In the second place there must have arisen a large amount of facts since then that have a bearing on the question. It was one of the great arguments used against the measure that it would tend to create and foster discord and strife in families, but we are now entitled to appeal to experience whether that has been the effect of the Act of 1870, and whether the fact of giving to a wife the separate right to her earnings as her separate and absolute property has the effect of producing ill-feeling and discord in the family. My confident belief is that it has not been so—(hear, hear)—that no evidence to this effect can be brought forward; the result has been most satisfactory, and therefore we are entitled to appeal to experience in favour of the principle which we advocate, viz., that of giving to women the absolute right to their property. The principle has also been fully admitted by the Court of Chancery. I believe it has even been held that a married woman has the right to keep

* The Married Women's Property (Scotland) Act, 1877, gives to a married woman in Scotland all her earnings, made or acquired, after the coming of that Act into operation.

† Should Mr. Headlam's decision in the M'Carthy case be upheld, this is so, but we can scarcely conceive that that decision can be sustained.

racehorses and a stud out of her separate property. It is also held by the Scotch Judges that a married woman has a right to hold separate shares in a Bank* out of her own property, and it is said that many such women are sufferers by the failure of the City of Glasgow Bank. The principle, therefore, is admitted, and is carried out in many cases. Has it operated badly or not? I believe experience will uniformly show that it has operated well, and I believe we may appeal to that experience to support us in the general application of the principles which we advocate. I have no hope, however, that this will be carried out by the present Parliament. We must look to a future Parliament to carry out in its integrity the principle of the Bill which I introduced in 1868.

Mrs. ARTHUR ARNOLD seconded the resolution. She said: There is not much to be said on this subject. It is merely a question as to whether one set of people are to forfeit their property without being accused of any crime, in order to enrich another set of people who have done nothing to deserve this concession. The confiscation of a man's property is associated in our minds with felony or high treason; the confiscation of a woman's property with marriage. Of course I mean that is the idea of the more thoughtful among us, for the ugly fact that a woman's marriage is punished as a felony is concealed from the young under a bridal veil and orange blossoms. The upper classes, indeed, usually have a settlement, but this is always unpleasant, and is too costly to be within reach of the great mass of society. It is intended to defeat the action of the common law, which hands over the wife's property to the husband, and every settlement is a protest against the law as it stands at present, for people do not try to avoid that of which they approve. There will always be special cases in which settlements will be found desirable, such as the weak intellect or extravagant habits of one of the parties, and to those I make no objection. I speak

* See the case of Mrs. Biggart, as reported by the *Times* of Thursday, 16th January, 1879. The leading judgment (in which all the other judges of the Court of Sessions, Edinburgh, concurred) was delivered by Lord Deas, who most distinctly affirmed that a wife might deal with her separate estate just as if she were a single woman.

only of compulsory settlements. Now why should any adult human being be deprived of the management of her property? In some cases she had the control of it before marriage, and then the wrong is more flagrant, and the cruelty more keenly felt. If no woman was suffered to hold property, some people might fancy they were incapable of managing it. But we constantly see single women whose property is in their own power, and they are almost always remarkable for a wise and careful expenditure. We sometimes see men wasting their fortunes on racing, betting, and gambling, but where do we find women addicted to these vices? This particular wrong is not against womanhood, but against wives, and not only a grievous wrong to them, but an injury to the whole community, for a compulsory settlement makes a difference between rich and poor to the disadvantage of the latter. It takes property from the care of the owner who is morally responsible for its use, depriving her of any control over the capital, and casting the legal responsibility upon trustees, who are not personally interested, and not always trustworthy. It places third parties between married persons who should be allowed to arrange their money matters without intervention. It puts trustees in a painful position. Indeed, men will naturally shrink from such liabilities in future, liabilities undertaken solely for the convenience of friends, and it is possible the late sad failures of banking companies will make many men refuse to act as trustees; and as fathers would rather give their money to their own daughters than to their sons-in-law, Parliament may shortly be awakened to the fact that married women had better have their property in their own power. In the majority of cases the household expenses are entirely in the hands of the wife, the husband (if he has no business requiring a floating capital) virtually giving up nearly his own income. Such generous souls being shocked at the legal robbery of wives, are often tempted to go as far as possible in the opposite direction. A husband's liability is often mentioned as a set-off against the injustice of robbing a wife. I find, however, that both husband and wife are equally obliged to keep each other off the parish. I do not complain of a wife's liabilities. I wish them greatly

extended. But I do say it is shamefully unjust that while equally liable with her husband in this respect she is not allowed equal power over her property. Equal responsibility should have equal authority.

The Act of 1870, designed to secure to a married woman her own earnings, was said to be an equivalent to the poor for the settlements which provide for their richer sisters. As it passed the House of Commons the measure would have been beneficial, but after much talk and tinkering in the Upper House, which ended in a compromise, it became like the Irishman's knife, which had nothing original but the rivet, having had three new blades and four handles. You will probably concede that when a law is not precisely that which it professes to be, it is apt to be either ineffective or mischievous, and, I fear, this is the case with the law of earnings. I am, however, seeking for information, and shall be much obliged if any one present will correct any erroneous impression I have formed on the subject. But first let me ask you, gentlemen, what would you think if any one spoke of giving you your earnings? Would you not say that no one could give you that which was your own already? And as women strongly resemble the male half of humanity, it would seem to me as absurd to talk of giving me my earnings as to talk of making me a present of my own hands or head. For surely the produce of any adult person's labour, whether of the hands or of the intelligence, belongs rightly to him or to her who earns it. Alas! not always legally, but by that eternal law of justice which is before, above, and beyond all Acts of Parliament. The Bill itself was good and greatly needed, but it was "wondrous pitiful," a thing to weep at now, and to wonder at hereafter, for it recognised while it endeavoured to overthrow the infamous assumption that one human being can hold property in another. It laid bare the bitter truth that half the population of this so-called free and Christian land belonged, or might belong, to the other half. For no man pretends he can own the earnings of another free man; it is only to the earnings of his slave that he dares to lay his unholy claim.

The Act of 1870, then, was a Married Women's Property Act of the last importance, since it was designed to give some proprietary independence to married women, and aimed a blow at that domestic tyranny which is the basis of all laws relating to them in this country. Now, was that Act effectual? I often fear it was worse than useless, since by falsely persuading people of an improvement in the condition of women the energies of their friends have been slackened. This is my difficulty. At all times a married woman could keep her own earnings, her husband permitting, and she cannot keep them without his sanction at present. For a wife cannot make a contract, or engage to remain any stipulated time with her employers, who naturally prefer to deal with women who are free agents, and this keeps many married women out of employment. Her husband may cancel any agreement made by his wife, and forbid her earning money altogether. It is only from a bad man she wishes to keep her earnings, and such a one will not consent to an engagement from which he does not expect to derive some benefit. I do not see how the Act can be useful to a woman living with her husband, since good men did not rob their wives before 1870, and bad men may still rob them with impunity. A husband cannot, I believe, draw out a wife's earnings from a bank if placed there in her own name, but if he sees her coming out of the bank may he not forcibly take her money? the robbery with violence in this case having nothing to fear from the *cat*, nor from a prosecution for felony. If separated from her husband by a magistrate's order the Act may be of some use, but even then it can hardly be called *protective*, at least it is very unlike the safety men have secured for themselves. For if a wife puts her money in a desk, or lays it out in furniture, the husband may watch an opportunity to break open the desk and to cart away the furniture, the law not permitting the wife to prosecute him for felony. Taking these points, and leaving many untouched, I fear the law of earnings is not worth the ink with which it was written, seeing there is always one man—the husband—who can rob the wife with impunity, and unless the Married Women's Property Act can be placed on a more satisfactory basis, it cannot improve their position.

But can we suppose any number of Property Acts would secure the monetary independence of a married woman, since we have lately heard, in the Agar-Ellis case, a judge declaring that it was the duty of a wife to submit even her conscience to her husband's authority. It is only charitable to suppose that the judge's wits were wool-gathering when he made that observation, conscience being precisely that which defies tyranny, and escapes control. But it showed more strongly than anything I ever met that a married woman has no legal existence in England. She is merely property, then how can she hold property? As well may we say that a carriage belongs to a horse. Horse and carriage being both property belong to some person. The Bill is useful in educating the public mind, and in exposing the crying evil of which I complain—the placing every married woman, be she the noblest in the land (save the Queen alone), in a far lower position than a felon who has served his time in prison. All these paltry cobblings and piecings, these miserable mendings of ancient laws borrowed from ignorant heathens 2,000 years ago, so unutterably demoralising to men, so cruelly oppressive to women, will continue till we become brave enough and honest enough to declare in the face of day the great truth that *all human beings are born free, and should be equal before the law*. To human legal equality we are surely advancing, though we are not likely to have it for many years. But if we demand it now, is it not possible that we may obtain it before we can have one-half of the thousand small items which go to make up the sum of liberty? I have much pleasure in seconding the resolution.

J. HINDE PALMER, Esq., Q.C., supported the resolution. He said: Mr. Chairman, ladies, and gentlemen, I have much pleasure in supporting the resolution that the report to which we have listened should be adopted and printed and circulated; but I should have had greater pleasure if we had been able to report a much larger amount of progress. Because it appears to me, that no subject should be urged forward and helped on with a greater degree of energy and force than the subject which we have now before us. My friend, Mr. Shaw

Lefevre, has referred to the fact that the Bill for the amendment of the law with regard to Married Women's Property attained to certain stages—he has told you this, that the Married Women's Property Bill of 1870 was actually settled in all its clauses by one of the ablest Committees which ever sat in the House of Commons; and one would naturally and reasonably suppose that if any Bill could possibly pass as a well-formed and complete measure, this one would surely be entitled to success. Moreover, the principles of the Bill were so unusually clearly established, when it came from the House of Commons, that one would think those principles would carry conviction with them. But the most remarkable thing connected with it is that the alterations made in it by the House of Lords, although they have made the Bill almost if not quite useless, have at the same time admitted the principle. Therefore, it is not possible to resist an Amendment Bill on principle, because it has been admitted that a married woman is to be entitled for her sole and separate use and enjoyment to almost every kind of property which you can mention—that is, if she can comply with all the vexatious restrictions which are laid down in the Act of 1870. She may become the owner of money invested in public funds or in private funds, in building societies, in savings banks, and so on, as well as being the custodian of her own earnings. That principle has been conceded. I was in hope that a new measure would have been introduced into Parliament. Lord Coleridge undertook to introduce a Bill for the amendment of the Act of 1870, similar to the Bill in the last Parliament which I had charge of, bringing back the law to what it ought to have been, and what it was settled to be by the House of Commons. But I was very sorry to hear that Lord Coleridge did not get so far with his measure as I did with mine, because he did not carry his through the second reading in the House of Lords, whereas I did succeed so far as to get the amendment Bill carried by a large majority. But the misfortune was that it was delayed in Committee till so late in the session that it was impossible to carry it further then, and before the next session the Parliament was dissolved. But there is an advantage even in the delay which has taken place, because it gives us the

benefit of experience in the working of the measure passed in 1870, bad as it was, and it has the good effect of enabling us to see whether the prognostications concerning the evils which were to arise have really been borne out or not.

Another advantage which has arisen from the delay is to show how very defective the Act of 1870 is, because litigation is constantly occurring which demonstrates the necessity there is for improvement. Among these cases has been the one at Manchester, and most undoubtedly if that decision is to be maintained, then Mrs. Arthur Arnold is quite correct in saying that the clause in the Act of 1870, which gives the woman her earnings, will be a nullity altogether. But I really don't believe for a moment that that decision is good, because nothing can be more clear than the Act of 1870, which says, in so many words, that the married woman is to have the same remedies both civil and criminal against all persons whomsoever for the protection of her separate property as if she were unmarried.* Therefore, if this case should come again before a properly constituted tribunal, the wife could undoubtedly prosecute her husband for depriving her of her property. But if that is not so, and if the law is to be construed as the magistrate, Mr. Headlam, says, I really do not see that the Act of 1870 would then be worth a straw—(hear, hear)—because the only good part of that Act as it is now, is that it does deal with the earnings of married women in humble life. Can anybody question or doubt the justice of such a measure as that?

It has been truly said that persons in the higher ranks

*Section 11 of the Married Women's Property Act (1870) enacts that a married woman may maintain an action in her own name for the recovery of any wages, earnings, money, and property by this Act declared to be her separate property, or of any property belonging to her before marriage, and which her husband shall by writing under his hand, have agreed with her shall belong to her after marriage as her separate property, and she shall have in her own name the same remedies, both civil and criminal, against all persons whomsoever for the protection and security of such wages, earnings, money, and property, and of any chattels or other property purchased or obtained by means thereof for her own use, as if such wages, earnings, money, chattels, and property belonged to her as an unmarried woman; and in any indictment or other proceeding it shall be sufficient to allege such wages, earnings, money, chattels, and property to be her property.

of life have marriage settlements which do for them what the Married Women's Property Act ought to do for women of the poorer classes. When Lord Coleridge introduced his Bill into the House of Lords, the same silly jokes as to what married women would be likely to do with their separate property were indulged in as when Mr. Russell Gurney's Bill was before their Lordships. The absurdity of this kind of argument is at once seen when we remember that among persons of property of any great amount the same enjoyment of separate property already exists, and surely the same arguments ought to apply to the one class as well as to the other. It is absurd to indulge in arguments of this kind. Another unjust assumption is that every married woman, if entrusted with the sole charge of her own property, would do wrong with it and misappropriate it. Men, as has been clearly shown, indulge in gambling, horse-racing, and much worse practices; and it is unjust and untrue to suppose that because a married woman is entrusted with the charge and management of her own property, that she is more likely to misapply or squander any part of it than her husband would be had he the custody of it. I am able to say this myself, because during the time that I had charge of the Bill in the House of Commons I had, as you will suppose, a very large number of communications from various people, and I was truly astonished at the number of cases that came to my knowledge in which the grossest abuses had taken place on the part of husbands who had come into the possession of their wives' property, and had applied it in the most abominable way to the detriment of their wives. I should just like—though I must not, of course, mention names; but when the accusation is made that women would apply their property to bad purposes, I should like to repeat to you what was said to me in a letter:—"I can mention a case near here," says the writer, "in which the husband has an establishment, has a mistress, and a numerous family, on a farm bought with his wife's money, and within sight of her residence. It is an infamous thing to marry a woman's money, and then give it to a mistress, to the extreme injury of the wife." That is only one instance in

which men can misappropriate not only their own property, but the property of their wives also.

I cannot but think that if this Committee perseveres in urging an amendment to the present Act, they must ultimately succeed. But still I quite agree with the remark made by my friend, Mr. Shaw Lefevre, that there is not much hope of its being favourably dealt with by the present Parliament, because when we see how the attention of the public is drawn away from home matters and the foreign policy of the Government consumes the time of Parliament to the detriment of all domestic interests, it seems to me to be extremely unlikely that during the short time the present Parliament can last we shall have much chance of bringing our cause to a successful issue; but it must be ultimately accomplished. Meanwhile, the more the absurdities of the existing Act are made manifest, the better it will be for us in the end; and certainly if it ever again be my fate to sit in the House of Commons, I shall lend all my energy and help to the passing of an Amendment Act of this kind. (Hear, hear.)

Miss LUCY WILSON moved the second resolution, which was as follows:—"That this meeting pledges itself to use every means in its power to obtain for *married women* the same legal control over their own property as that which is enjoyed by every other portion of the community." She said: This resolution describes the immediate aim of this Committee, the branch of the great work of obtaining justice for women to which it has hitherto confined itself. But I believe that Mrs. Arthur Arnold struck the true keynote of our work when she said that we could not succeed in getting this portion of justice unless we claimed the whole of justice. If we regard only the principles on which our national life professes to be based, this claim of married women to the control of their own property can be maintained by itself, and its justice must be admitted by all who uphold those principles; but if we consider, in spite of our great professions, what the other laws and customs of this country with regard to women actually are, we shall then see that we cannot maintain this claim without by implication asserting the injustice and pronouncing the con-

demnation of all the laws which create any inequality between the political and social status of men and of women. We can only found this property claim securely on a basis of personal right, which if conceded would involve the absolute equality of all before the law. It is by ignoring this basis that the present injustice has been created. It is by looking at the matter from only one point of view that the present law has arisen, and if we, too, look at the matter from one point of view only, we are likely to create another injustice in the opposite direction. Regarding the question only as concerning the interests of men, the property of the wife has been confiscated without any regard to her just right and interest, and if we now demand the restoration of her property simply because the confiscation is hard to her, and without having regard to the possible rights of the husband, we may be doing an injury to him. It is only by having a firm conviction of what justice is, and how far it should be identical for men and women, that we can arrive at a sound conclusion on this subject. In a country which professes to base its national life on principles of universal freedom and justice, as England does, it must be a fundamental axiom that the personal rights of every individual are the same, and that each has an equal claim to have those rights enforced by the combined power of the whole community. The confiscation of a woman's property in marriage, in any degree, is a violation of that principle. The rights of one-half the people is maintained and upheld, and the right of the other half is denied and abandoned. Those principles also recognise the right of individuals to pursue their own interests so far as, and no farther than, they do not injure the rights and interests of others. The claim of a man to his wife's property injuriously affects the equally important and sacred interests of the woman, and therefore is indefensible. The plausible, but often misleading, argument that the welfare of the individual must be sacrificed to the welfare of the community has no application here, for it is not the welfare of an individual but that of one-half the community that is at stake, and the forfeiture of the rights of one-half of the community to the other is a parallel action to the forfeiture of the rights of one individual to another. The

question of a married woman's right to the control of her own property may be regarded either as a question of the law of property, or of the conditions of marriage, or of personal right. But the last is the true light in which to regard it, for the right to property and the right to marriage are only portions of personal right. I regard it as a question of the personal right to marriage rather than to property, for the laws we are concerned with are only part of the conditions of marriage in England. Of all the personal rights a human being can possess, none is more primitive and inalienable than the right of the individual to marry. That right is recognised and upheld in the case of men in England, and is absolutely denied in the case of women. No woman can marry without the leave of the State, and without paying for the purchase of that permission the greatest price it is possible for any human being to pay—the price of the confiscation of every thing she possesses, and of her own reduction to a state of personal slavery for life. On no other terms can a woman compass marriage in England; and I challenge the men of England to say by what right they demand from women this tremendous price for permission to exercise a right which they never gave and cannot take away. It would be as just to say that a woman should not see or walk without paying a heavy ransom to the State, as that she should not marry. With the first part of that price of marriage we deal on this Committee, but we are crippled in our action by the fact that ours is only a branch question, which does not carry on the face of it the principle on which alone we can justly ground our claim. So long as the personal slavery of women in marriage remains untouched, so long as we, even tacitly, admit it, so long we have no ground for claiming for women the possession of their own property. If it is right that a woman should be the chattel of the husband, then it is right that her property also should be the chattels of the husband. It is ridiculous to pretend that a person who has no right over herself, or her actions, should have any rights over money or lands. While her sacred right to her own children is denied, it is idle to assert her claim to mere worldly possessions. It may or may not be the wisest course for this

Committee to enlarge the basis of its operations, and to labour for the recognition of all the personal rights of women in marriage—or rather, I would say, to obtain the personal right of all women to marry without incurring forfeiture or disqualification in any way—but even if it confines its action to its original aim of obtaining the complete abolition of the forfeiture of a woman's property in marriage, I hope it will seek it on the ground to which Mrs. Arnold has referred, and claim it as a portion of that great sum of justice to which it would itself be an important contribution.

Sir ARTHUR HOBHOUSE, Q.C., K.C.S.I., seconded the resolution. He said: I will not dwell on the strict terms of the resolution, on which criticism might, perhaps, be offered, because we are not here as in a court of law, or scanning terms as if they were being used in a law suit, and I am certain that everyone here will understand what we mean by the terms of this resolution, and that is that the Committee pledges itself not to rest until it has firmly established by law the principle that a woman, by the mere act of marriage, does not pass over to her husband the right to any of her property, however acquired, whether by her own earnings or by any other means. That is a great object; and it is worthy of a great effort, and it requires a great effort. Those who attack such established institutions must have oak and triple brass around their breasts. (Hear, hear.) It requires the earnestness of a sincere conviction. It requires the faith which removes mountains and which supplies the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. At the same time, though it does require great courage and perseverance to accomplish such an object, we are not as men without hope. The history of this movement gives us no reason to despond. The difficulties you have met have not been in greater measure, but rather in lesser measure, than the difficulties of others who have had inveterate abuses to assail; and the progress you have made has been as rapid as could have been expected by persons who have watched the course of such a movement as this. Let us see how the matter stands. When people first began to complain of the law that regulated the property of married persons, the common law had

not been the subject of any legislative alteration, or, so far as I know, of any open political discussion. It had indeed been encroached upon by the Court of Chancery to aid the wealthier classes to escape from its pressure. But the law which affected the immense mass of the community, had so stood from time immemorial, and was surrounded by all the sanctity and all the prejudice that invariably do surround institutions so placed. Yet it was within, I think, fifteen years after the first serious attack made on it by the Law Amendment Society, that what I must call—notwithstanding all its shortcomings—a substantial measure of reform was passed. You persuaded the House of Commons to pass a full measure of reform—that measure, I mean, which was matured by the ripe wisdom of Mr. Russell Gurney, whom we have now lost—aided by the unsparing energy of Mr. Shaw-Lefevre. No doubt when that measure came to the House of Lords it there received the treatment which that body always gives, and which we must always expect it to give, to the earlier proposals for the alteration of any law relating to property. But though it was there reduced to very slender proportions as regards the wealthier and propertied classes, yet as regards the wage-earning class, who were much the most numerous of those affected by the law, it gave, or was intended to give—and it appears to be framed to give—a very substantial measure of relief; in point of fact I agree with Mr. Hinde Palmer, that it left the principle of Mr. Russell Gurney's measure untouched so far as regarded the wage-earning class. Now I remember a meeting being held in this room, at which they did me the honour to call me to the chair, for the purpose of debating whether the measure as it left the hands of the Lords should be accepted, or whether opposition should be offered to it, and it wanted only the holding up of a little finger to prevent it going through the House of Commons. And one of the arguments used then was this: that inasmuch as the measure of the House of Lords gave relief to the most numerous class of persons affected by the bad law—the wage-earning class—the momentum of the measure would be diminished, and there would be less chance of getting a full remedy. Such an argument as this has a great deal of worldly wisdom in it,

and it may sometimes be cogent—as when a great authority said “Except these abide in the ship ye cannot be saved.” In that case we know that the ropes were cut, and the shipmen kept to the ship, and all were saved. How it has been in this case I don’t know. I know it was determined to take the generous course with regard to the Bill, and to get for our suffering countrywomen such a measure of benefit as the Lords’ Bill might give them quite irrespective of consequences to others. Now one is aware that gratitude is a very small factor in politics, and that each class, as it is relieved from its own suffering, is apt to become apathetic and to pay little heed to the similar sufferings of other classes. How it may be here I don’t know, but whichever way it is, I was glad then, and I am glad now, that the generous course was adopted. I am glad because it was right, because I think that if others had been kept under the bad law merely that they should assist us to get a better remedy, I should not now fight with so clear a conscience in this controversy. The past history of this movement, then, gives us considerable ground for hope, and I am the more encouraged by seeing the extreme feebleness of the arguments by which the proposal to revert to the good Bill of Mr. Russell Gurney is met. I will complete what I have to say by an examination—necessarily a very brief examination—of these arguments. Remember they are delivered by the head of the legal profession—by a man who is as able an advocate as any this age has produced; and therefore they must be taken to be the very best arguments which the case will allow of. Now Lord Cairns in the first place says—and I am glad to hear him say it—that the Act of 1870 has worked admirably. And one is the more glad to hear this, because, according to the arguments of those who opposed Mr. Russell Gurney’s Bill, it ought to have produced some great disasters. However, Lord Cairns says it has worked admirably. Why, then, if it has worked so well, does he object to extend it to a greater number of cases? Well, he recites Lord Penzance’s famous speech, delivered in 1870, which, so far as it is founded on any principle at all, is founded on the principle that a woman, at least when she is married, is not fit to have property, and that

if she has any, she is certain to make a foolish and vile use of it. Now I will not dwell on that supposition as one insulting to my fellow country-women, although it is that, but it is contrary to all experience. What is there in the nature of women that would make them so act? Do you find that where they have had property they have so acted? These are questions to which neither Lord Cairns nor Lord Penzance has addressed himself. It is true that Lord Cairns quotes the evidence of Mr. Cyrus Martin Fisher, an American lawyer, who gave evidence to this effect: that there is nothing in the laws of some of the American States which prevents women, if so disposed, from squandering all their property and then coming on their husbands for support. Perhaps not. No doubt all freedom may be abused, and all gifts may be abused, but that is no argument against the gift of freedom. Neither Mr. Cyrus Martin Fisher nor any other witness says that in America the suggested consequences really take place. Their evidence is all the other way. They say that the results are excellent, and unless Lord Cairns can show us that some of these witnesses have said—not that there may be, but that there actually have been, and are bad consequences attending this change of law in America—not till he does that will his citation of American witnesses furnish any arguments but what are favourable to our cause and fatal to his. Lord Cairns further objects to Mr. Russell Gurney’s Bill that it would effect a complete revolution in the institutions of society; and again, that the association which advocated the passing of Lord Coleridge’s Bill assigned no reason for the alteration of the Law which it proposed, and that there was the same defect in the petitions presented in its favour. So far as the assignment of reasons goes Lord Coleridge did that, and it was not necessary for the petitions to do it. If, however, Lord Cairns thinks it necessary, this Committee can supply the defect; they can assign all the reasons given in 1870; reasons which have never yet been answered except by sneers, and they can add to them the eight years’ additional experience of the operation of the law of freedom in America, in our Colonies, and, to some extent, in England also. For I don’t agree with

Lord Cairns that what he calls the revolution was not effected by the Act of 1870. I agree with Mr. Hinde Palmer that it was effected as regards the wage-earning classes; it was effected that all the money or property a wife earned was taken from the husband and given to the wife. Therefore, as regards the larger number of persons—800,000 Lord Cairns states them at—this revolution was effected; and it was effected more completely for them than anything asked for with regard to the wealthier classes, who are protected by contract and by the Courts of Equity. But that greater revolution being effected, he tells us that it works admirably; why, then, should not the lesser revolution we ask for work admirably too? But he says the House of Lords made a settlement of the question. But suppose they did act in the sense he says, I must beg to demur to the notion that the House of Lords can settle such a question finally, or that they can settle it even temporarily, by altering a Bill framed in an opposite sense by large majorities of the House of Commons, the alterations being accepted by that House under pressure, and being immediately protested against by the promoters of the Bill. Now, it is the business of this Committee to make it clearly understood that the question is not settled, and to do that in the most practical way they can. That we shall succeed in time I do not fear. I believe that every other great English community has done this work with success and with ease. To be sure they have not any hereditary legislature. We have one, and we must expect obstacles there which can only be overcome by patience and perseverance, by repeated appeals to experience, repeated demonstration how strong our reasons are, and how weak are the reasons opposed to us. Such appeals as these will convince in time the good and intelligent part of the House of Lords—such as Lord Cairns himself. As regards others, for others there are in all assemblies—as regards the sleepy man, who says he is in bed with his children and cannot arise—or even if there be, and I don't know that there is, an unjust man who does not fear God neither regardeth man—even with these your efforts will produce such effect that for your importunity they will grant your prayer. (Hear, hear.)

The resolution was carried *nem con.*

G. OSBORNE MORGAN, Esq., Q.C., M.P., moved: "That the following persons be the Committee for the ensuing year:—Mrs. Addey, Mr. Arthur Arnold, Mrs. Arthur Arnold, Mr. Jacob Bright, M.P., Mrs. Jacob Bright, Mrs. Butler, Mr. Thomas Chorlton, Mr. L. H. Courtney, M.P., Sir C. W. Dilke, Bart., M.P., Rev. Alfred Dewes, D.D., LL.D., Mr. Thomas Hare, Professor W. B. Hodgson, Mrs. Hodgson, Mr. William Malleon, Mrs. Moore, Mr. H. N. Mozley, Dr. Pankhurst, Mrs. Sutcliffe, Mr. P. A. Taylor, M.P., Mrs. P. A. Taylor, Mr. Thomas Taylor, Miss Alice Wilson, Miss Lucy Wilson, Mrs. Venturi, with power to add to their number." I feel sure that the work of this Committee could not be left to better hands. With regard to the general question, I should like to say a word or two. It certainly does seem to me that there is something childish in the apprehensions felt as to the movement. Of this I am sure, that no single man of the members who voted against Mr. Hinde Palmer's Bill, or the noble lords themselves who endeavoured to laugh out Lord Coleridge's Bill from the House of Lords—not even Lord Cairns himself—would ever have allowed his daughter or his sister to marry without the protection you seek to throw round all the women in the country. It is said that the Bill would lead to matrimonial jars; but if this were so, then every boudoir in Mayfair would long since have been a cockpit, and every drawing-room in Belgravia a bear-garden. It is answered by the experience of the Act of 1870. Now, with regard to that, I must say that it was one great evil of the law before 1870 that it created a different state of the law for rich and poor. No doubt the Act of 1870 did, to some extent, remedy that evil. But speaking of the Act of 1870, I quite agree with Mr. Hinde Palmer that it was chiefly valuable, in that it admitted the principle, and introduced the thin end of the wedge. But when I have said this, I have said everything that can be said for it. Allow me to point out one of its inconsistencies. By section 7, if a man gives to a married woman a legacy of two hundred pounds that is her own; if he makes it two hundred guineas that is her husband's. How is it possible that such an Act of Parliament can remain on the Statute Book? And I am bound

to say that if the decision of the Manchester magistrate remains uncorrected, which I cannot believe it will, the whole Act will become a dead letter. Because, observe, that decision enables a husband to deprive his wife of the whole benefit of the Act of Parliament, provided only that he acts with a felonious intent. Is not that absolutely ridiculous? A husband has only to go and take his wife by the throat and wrest the £5 note, or whatever property she has, from her in order to escape with impunity! Indeed, that decision gives a new aspect to the question, because if it is to stand it makes the Act a dead letter, and furnishes a new and a very strong argument for supporting Mr. Hibbert in his efforts in the House. And here I wish to make a somewhat personal explanation. The meeting was a little in the dark as to the position of the movement this session. The truth is that Mr. Hibbert—and I am sure the Bill could not be entrusted to a better champion—unfortunately for us, though very fortunately for himself, on the very day on which he was to introduce his Bill, went through the process of getting married himself; and instead of acting like the famous Lord Coke, who under somewhat similar circumstances—

. . . To law and learning tied,
Thought of the statutes, and forgot his bride—

he wrote to me to introduce the Bill in his name, and unfortunately I did not get the letter for two days, and by that time every nook and cranny of the time of the House at the disposal of private members had been filled up. That is the reason why the Bill was not introduced, but I trust that we shall have an opportunity of raising the question in the House of Commons, if not by Bill by resolution, which is always possible. I trust we shall have this opportunity of raising the question in the House, and I am quite sure that the more it is debated the more Englishmen—who are in the main reasonable—will give their adherence to its principle. We will do our best to carry our point, or at any rate, if we cannot carry our point, to put it in the best position we can for next Parliament.

JAMES HEYWOOD, Esq., F.R.S., seconded the resolution. He said: I am much obliged to Mr. Osborne Morgan for the explanation which he has just given to us, because I, and some

others who are comparative outsiders, have been somewhat puzzled to know how the Bill was going on. I would like to say with regard to the practical working of this matter that my late wife always had the entire control over her own property. I never interfered with the appropriation of any of her own means. She shared household expenses with me, and I do not believe that I was at all a loser by acting in a generous way. If Parliament would give women the control over their own property and incomes, wives would, I believe, be willing to share the family expenditure with their husbands, instead of the husband having the power to sign a cheque upon the wife's private banking account. Now with regard to a wife having a settlement made upon her on her marriage, I don't agree with the settlement at all. It is a very awkward affair. I speak as a practical man, and I say that these settlements generally mean a settlement in the 3 per cent Consols, and the trustees only consent to what is "safe." That may perhaps mean an allotment in the preference shares of some railway which, after all, does not produce so much interest as a good investment ought to produce. I believe that Mr. Russell Gurney's Bill would have been very effective, and I hope the House of Commons will send a thorough-going measure to the Lords with such a majority that they will listen with more respect than on the last occasion. I have been told that the Lords always give way when there is a majority in the Commons of 90 or 100, and I hope Lord Cairns and others will find such a decided feeling in the Commons, that they will accept the Bill and give us success.

The resolution was carried *nem dis*.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD proposed, and Mr. H. N. MOZLEY seconded, a vote of thanks to the chairman, which was carried with applause.

The CHAIRMAN, acknowledging the compliment, said: I have seldom presided at a more interesting meeting than on this occasion, and while listening to the speeches here to-day I have had my faith in the ultimate success of the movement largely increased.

The meeting then broke up.

[Copies of this Pamphlet and of all other Papers issued by the Committee may be had from the Secretary, Mrs. WOLSTENHOLME ELMY, Congleton, Cheshire.]

SPEECH

OF

SIR THOMAS ERSKINE PERRY

AT THE

ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE

Married Women's Property Committee,

4TH FEBRUARY, 1880.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

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SPEECH.

Sir ERSKINE PERRY then rose and moved the second resolution, as follows: "That this meeting pledges itself to use every means in its power so to amend the law that a married woman's property shall be her own after, as well as before, marriage, liable for her obligations, and subject to her control." He said: I received yesterday a very flattering request from the secretary of your Society to move what may be called the principal resolution of the meeting to-day. My first impulse was to gratefully decline a task which I felt I should perform very inefficiently, because, though as Mrs. Arnold says, my name was long ago associated with this question, I have for the last twenty years been wholly emancipated from any contact with English politics, my labours being in a more obscure, but not unimportant, field, in the administration of good government among 200,000,000 of our fellow-subjects in India. (Hear, hear.) But I thought it would be ungracious on my part and also selfish to refuse the application made to me, and therefore here I am. But I trust this short preamble will prepare you to expect anything but a vigorous, effective speech in support of the resolution I have read to you. It is quite true that twenty-five years ago—I think it was—I moved a similar resolution in the House of Commons, and I did not venture to do so without having informed myself as to the opinions of abler men than myself on the subject; and, after a careful study of the question, I think perhaps a short record of the experience we met with in the parliamentary reception of a new idea may be useful to you in your future labours. We had directed our attention to the state of the law on this subject in the different civilised countries of the world, both that prevailing among our brethren or our cousins in the United

States, in our colonies, and in Europe, and we were able to point out two remarkable facts—first, that in every civilised country in the world except England, married women were entitled to hold separate property; and the second fact was, that the wealthier classes in this country were able to give the go-by to the common law of England that makes over the whole of a woman's property to her husband by an application to the Court of Chancery, thus making one law for the rich and another law for the poor. We further were able to show the House of Commons how it was that the English law had acquired this very peculiar character, distinguishing it from the laws of other civilised nations, from all the German race, to which we are akin, and also the Latin races, the French, the Italian, the Spanish, the great authors of the jurisprudence of the civilised world. We also submitted the fact that no Act of the Legislature had altered the old English law as still existing in Germany, but this had been done by decisions of the judges—it was judge-made law. As late as the time of Charles the First the law was extremely just as to married women, because it held that on the death of the husband the widow was entitled to a third of his personal property, and to half if there were no children; but Blackstone states that the law became altered by *imperceptible degrees*, until at the time when he wrote a husband had the power of disinheriting his widow and leaving his property to whom he pleased. If you examined these imperceptible degrees, you will find that they were the decisions from time to time of men—judges who I may say were most of them husbands—certainly they had no Portia by their side to ask what were the rights of women. But so it was, and the law was made in that manner, and up to 1870, by the common law of this country, power was given over absolutely to the husband. I was going to tell you how the views of a few earnest reformers were met in the House of Commons. I am happy to think that in moving the resolution I had the support of a statesman who has paid the deepest attention to social questions, the present Lord Derby, but, except myself and the present Lord Chief Justice (then Attorney-General), the whole of the lawyers in the House, Liberal and Conservative, were strongly opposed to alteration of the common law of England.

Vice-Chancellor Malins was foremost in opposition, but Sir Thos. Chambers, the Common Serjeant, was equally earnest in opposition, on the score that the introduction of two such establishments in a family would break up the whole harmonious character of the British household, so famous throughout the world. To this I venture to reply, two establishments are the evil we have to deal with; two establishments both maintained out of the wife's property, one where the wife lives with her starving children, and another in St. John's Wood, where the mistress is revelling in luxury. This is the harmonious union we were content to break up. At the time I mention the opposition was strong, and the Bill I had in hand fell through, not so much on account of the opposition, because I am quite sure you will agree with me opposition does not thwart an earnest reformer when he feels he has got hold of a sound principle. (Hear, hear.) It fell through principally because there was a Bill at that time in the House of Lords with respect to divorce, which in some measure "took the wind out of our sails," as it contained clauses which certainly did deal with some of the aggravated evils under which wives suffered from the treatment of brutes of husbands, while it was impossible to obtain redress under the law as it then stood. These clauses for a time stopped us. In 1870, mainly, I believe, through the exertions of this Society, and the soundness of the principle they had in view, the Married Women's Property Act was passed, and I am ashamed to say, though I knew generally what the position of the law was, I never read it until this morning. I can see at a glance in going through it that the Act is an extremely valuable one, but it is also very imperfect. (Hear, hear.) We have had grievances pointed out to-day to which I could add many illustrations that would show the necessity of the reform you ask for. I would say at once what I think is required on the part of the Government with regard to this question. Mrs. Arnold has alluded to large principles as concerned with this measure and somewhat apologised for treading on ground not wholly pertinent, as she suggests, to the matter before us. I am not of that opinion. I believe that the questions she has touched upon are intimately mixed up with what we are aiming at—namely, obtaining the rights of property for married women.

I believe that to vest that property in her it is absolutely necessary to surround it with all the rights of property—the right of contracting and the liability to be sued, neither of which exists under the present law. As the law now stands it is favourable only to men. It gives a married woman with property the right of holding that property—also her earnings, and yet she is not under liability to any person, even the baker from whom she gets her bread. That is my own construction of the law. A married woman in the possession of personal property cannot at the present moment be sued by any one. That is an evil which affects men and the world in general, but in other respects the existing law materially affects a married woman. The case which occurred in Manchester shows, if it is indeed the law, that women can be robbed with impunity, and that no redress whatever can be obtained. I may perhaps be allowed to allude to another case which I heard of yesterday, and which, as it is pertinent to this question, deserves to be noticed. It is the case of a married woman living in separation from her husband, making large earnings herself and supporting him in his absence, in America or elsewhere. Yet such a woman is not able to make a valid contract with any one who might choose to trust her. These are all of them matters which call for redress. Mrs. Arnold alluded to another matter, in regard to which, if I understood her rightly, I am not quite sure I agree. She pointed out that without the interposition of trustees no woman is safe in the possession of personal property. I entirely agree with her so far. My own experience—and it has not been a short one in life—my own experience is that where a married woman possesses separate personal property, in nineteen cases out of twenty, however much the law may invest the woman with all the rights we desire to confer upon her, if she loves her husband, out of the whole twenty certainly not more than one will withhold from him her separate property. If he is well-behaved, tender, and kind, no woman would long withhold her separate property from him. But at the same time I also think that out of every twenty loving husbands, each with separate property of his own, not one would be found who would be willing to make over to his wife his separate property for her

to make ducks and drakes of. This distinction depends on sexual differences, where the nature of the woman is either superior or inferior to that of man. I have, therefore, come to the conclusion that, however much we may invest women with the rights of separate property, a wise person will always interpose trustees to protect the lady from herself and from the cajolery of her husband. This being so, a clear conclusion was formed in my mind twenty-five years ago, that there are so many difficulties environing the subject, that for any private member like Mr. Hibbert to take it up is imposing upon him an almost hopeless task. It is a measure essentially for the Government to take up. There are so many matters connected with it that for a private member to undertake it, especially in the enormous pressure of business that now prevails in every Parliament that meets, would tax his powers to such a degree that it would be almost impossible to accomplish anything of importance, and that it is only by the assistance of the Government that a large and comprehensive measure can be obtained. I fully adhere to the conclusions which the able men with whom I was associated in 1856 arrived at—that a large, comprehensive, and ample law is what we require. The resolutions referred to in the report of the Law Amendment Society, which were then adopted, I adhere to in their entirety, and having myself drawn up that report, I may say that with the additional experience of a quarter of a century, I see nothing in it I wish to qualify. What we said then, I say now, abolish the old common law that the fact of marriage makes over the whole of a woman's property to her husband; enact that a woman's separate property before marriage and her acquisitions after marriage shall be entirely her own; and declare that she shall be liable to all the obligations arising out of her own contracts and to all the obligations which the position of a wife and mother throw upon her. Then, in my opinion, you will have a large and suitable ground to act upon; and then women will have not only the protection of the criminal law, but the protection also of the civil law, when their property is invaded. And although I quite understand the scruples and reluctance with which those who live in happy homes can contemplate a husband prosecuting his

for theft, or a wife prosecuting her husband for theft, yet I have sufficient confidence in the wisdom of our judges, and in the common sense of the English law, to rest quite certain that a true deduction would be made when such cases came before a court. If it could be shown that a husband and a wife have been living together amicably, then if he might have taken away even against her will a portion of her property, what jury would convict a husband or a wife of theft? But if, on the other hand, it could be shown that a ruffian of a husband was in the habit of maltreating his wife and taking all her property away, then I am convinced that a jury would say, and if they had the power they would say so now, that the man who acted in that manner was as guilty of as gross a theft and robbery as any criminal in the country. I should trust, therefore, to the wisdom of our judges in dealing with such cases, and I am satisfied that a right conclusion would invariably be arrived at. Before I sit down I would suggest to our chairman, should he think of going on with the prosecution of his task, that he should urge on the Government, as no doubt he will, that this really is a Government subject, and that it ought to be taken up with all the wisdom and with all the power which the executive government can call to its assistance. I am glad to think that the public mind is being educated upon this subject, so that the conclusions we long ago arrived at are now receiving general acceptance. There is one point which I omitted to mention in the reference I made to the procedure in the House of Commons twenty-five years ago, and that is that most of the objections that were then brought before us have now absolutely disappeared. By the law of 1870 many of the principles we have contended for have been adopted; and now that they have been put into action they have done no harm, but manifest good. I trust that Mr. Hibbert will go on in the valuable task he has allotted to himself, and I can only regret very much as an individual that I have not had time to attend these meetings more frequently.

