

# SHAFTS

A MAGAZINE FOR WOMEN AND WORKERS.

EDITED BY MARGARET SHURMER SIBTHORP.

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## What the Editor Means.

I honour the souls that are willing to sink,  
Half their present repute for the freedom to think ;  
And when they have thought, be their cause strong  
or weak,  
Will sink t'other half for the freedom to speak ;—  
Caring nought for what vengeance the mob hath in  
store,  
Be that mob the upper ten thousand or lower.

Lowell.

THE triumphs may be said to have been gained by means of the Parish Councils' Bill. First, the assertion and granting, that, so far as the bill goes, sex is to be no disqualification in the future ; second, that neither shall marriage disqualify. So far, but yet not far enough. A great evil would have been done had the Bill been passed in its earlier form ; but women must not lose sight of the fact that though marriage is pronounced no disqualification, practically it will continue to be a disqualification so long as the husband is the householder. Reading Mr. Fowler's resolution we come upon a sentence which renders negative, for the most part, the benefit which women would derive from it. The resolution runs—

"A woman shall not be disqualified by marriage from being on any local government register of electors, or for being an elector of any local authority, provided that a husband and wife shall not both be qualified in respect of the same property."

This simply means that, save in a very few cases, the condition of things will be as before. At the same time it gives a good opportunity for those men—and women assure us they exist in numbers—who are really in earnest about helping forward the enfranchisement of women to arrange matters so as to make their wives independent agents. There are many ways in which this could be done,—one is that the house should be taken in the wife's name, where there is only such tenancy to constitute a right to vote.

The debates in the House on this Bill prove much advance to have been made both in sense and unselfishness ; but also show us, that opposition still exists on the part of men, to the freedom of women. Mr. Labouchere's assertion—

"he should support his hon. friend (Mr. Storey), because he was opposed to any woman of any sort or kind having a vote. (Laughter.) He was an advocate of the domestic-angel doctrine in regard to women. It would be most destructive of the charms of domesticity if women were given a vote"—

though like his usual utterances in regard to women—not worth much notice, represents the feeling entertained by the great majority of men, who cannot look upon woman save

as a creature of sex. True it is that such belong to the lower order of minds and morals, yet they form a large portion of the males of the community, and have power at present, either by vote or as in authority, to enforce their will upon the nation.

Therefore we must learn, we must force ourselves to look the matter straight in the face. If the House were composed of men desirous of giving to women the freedom and privileges enjoyed by themselves, there would be no opposition to progressive measures brought forward in their favour. That there is always opposition, jeers and laughter proves, that such is not the composition of the House. It proves also other things which readers of the debates will deduce for themselves. Women must not be afraid to look facts in the face, to understand that men as a body are not anxious that women should be free. All their education and training, by developing dominance, carelessness or self-seeking, has been directly contrary to such a wish ; all the education and training of women, by developing dependence, helplessness and self-sacrifice, has tended to keep them enslaved. Now we who fight must not forget that we have to do battle against dominant self-seeking on the one hand and slavish self-sacrifice on the other—both acquired results, neither essential. There is much talk of sex and its effects ; sex has nothing to do with this, it is the result of mis-education, faulty training. But the world is marching on.

Clear seers are in the minority. So long as we are on the march the clear seers will lead ; the minority leadeeth ever, therefore it must be strong. To be all of one mind would indicate either perfection, or that apathetic sink, stagnation. We have a huge apathetic sink in our midst at present, wherein, by far too many women and men rest placidly, at peace because they are without life. Life means discontent, not the discontent that merely grumbles and is inactive ; but the Discontent Divine, which struggles, and struggling moves ever upward and onward ; which cannot be satisfied with less than the utter destruction of all that degrades the individual and so the community, all that deprives of freedom. Determination is the valour of such Discontent, and such determination must be the armour of women now. It shall gain all for which it striveth,—it shall overcome every obstacle. The attitude of women in their onward march must be hostile to all that bars the way. Bitterness need not mingle with such hostility,—bitterness is not strength but weakness. The hostility, must be the frank, calm, steady yet friendly stand of those who

clearly see, and, so seeing, know that the thing for which they strive is their inherent right, and worth all else that life can give ; that they are called to take their part in the world for the sake of all that is worth preserving, and that no sophistry, no other claims enforced upon them, or created by man for them, must cause them to falter one step by the way.

We have foes without, and within ; opposition from men and from women. Our attitude must overcome all, educate all, raise all to clearer light. We must be internally united to be strong ;—no breaches in our ranks ; unity of effort, no matter what diversity of opinion as to details.

## HOW TO HELP "SHAFTS."

The question, "How can we help you?" has been asked in kindly letters many times ; and many suggestions have been forwarded. The best is as follows—that each of the present subscribers should agree to purchase two copies a month instead of one ; should send one copy away each month to a different friend, with a letter asking the friend to subscribe for at least a year. This is a capital suggestion ; and if resolutely carried out by all my subscribers will save SHAFTS, and secure its ultimate success. It will also relieve me from much harassing anxiety.

M. S. SIBTHORP,  
Editor.

## DRESS REFORM.

MY DEAR READERS,—It is my intention to adopt at once a Rational, useful dress, suitable for business, for walking, and one which is capable of being modified so as to be suitable for evening wear. When this dress—now being made—is completed, I mean to go freely to and fro in it wherever my business may call me, to appear in it at my Club (the Pioneer), and at many places of public resort. Any questions regarding the dress will be answered at this office, and the dress itself can be seen when ready. I invite any lady who feels that a change is called for, and who has the courage of her convictions to join me, in this step. Someone must begin. If several would begin so much the better. At present the inconvenience and fatigue endured by women suddenly coming into active business and public life, in a dress suitable only for leisure, and not to be recommended even so, is most serious. The first step only, counts. Who will volunteer to take it?

Faithfully yours,  
THE EDITOR.

## Influential Lives.

MADAME SOPHIE KOVALEVSKAYA,  
*Late Professor of Mathematics at the  
University of Stockholm.*

By JAAKOFF PRELOOKER.

IN these days when education is general, when talent is by no means rare, when many possess scientific knowledge, and competition is naturally great, it is not easy even for a man, with all the privileges he enjoys, and with the highest degree of scholarship, to attain the professorship of a University. For a woman, the attainment of this distinction is accompanied by almost insuperable difficulties, amongst others prejudice against women, and general mistrust of her abilities. The fact that the subject of this sketch was elected to occupy the chair of Mathematics in the University of Stockholm arouses at once our interest in her life and career, all the more so as Madame Kovalevskaya is known not only for her scientific but also for her literary labours. In the leading Russian monthly, "The European Messenger," there appeared, in 1890, a short autobiography of Madame Kovalevskaya from which we glean a few facts concerning her early childhood. Her father was General Krukovsky, a descendant of the Hungarian Hero-King, Matthew Corvinus, and rich land-and-serf proprietor, with the ideas and habits of the higher military circles in Russia. Her mother, being much younger than her father, was treated by him like a child, even scolded in the presence of her own children. The young children were entrusted entirely to the care of the Nyanya (nurse) who had her own code of conventionalities, and a series of legends and tales with which to amuse and instruct her nurslings. The children were kept much indoors, and seldom took outdoor exercise, but once, when Souja was out walking with her Nyanya, she saw some peasant children playing happily and amusing themselves. She asked to be allowed to join them. The amazed nurse could only exclaim: "How can you, daughter of a General, play with common children?" at which Souja blushed, ashamed of having entertained such a wild idea.

When Souja was six years old, her father resigned his service in the army, and settled on his estate in the government of Vitelsk. Rumours of the emancipation of the serfs began to spread, and the easy life of this family took a somewhat earnest turn. The French governess was sent away and an English one engaged in her place, who being of Scottish parents brought with her a new element, a braver spirit which permeated the house. Though she had lived for many years in Russia, and spoke Russian fluently, this English lady retained the characteristic features of her race—perseverance, tact, and

conscientiousness, which gave her at once influence and weight in the family, all the more so as Madame Krukovski herself was but a poor creature, with all the weakness of the Russian aristocracy. The governess ordered Souja to rise at seven, and Dunja, the housemaid, took off the blankets from the sleeping girl to compel her to fulfill her governess's orders. Souja, angry, scolded the housemaid, and the governess called to her from the adjoining room: "Don't dawdle, Souja! If you are not ready in a quarter of an hour, you will bear the ticket 'lazy' on your back during luncheon."

"My mother," writes Madame Kovalevskaya, "was in fact afraid of the rigid and systematic Scotch girl, and did not venture to interfere with any of her orders. In the djetskoy (children's room) she was received rather like a guest than the mistress."



MADAME SOPHIE KOVALEVSKAYA.

Souja was permitted to read only the books which had passed the censorship of her governess; nevertheless she read secretly all the books she could get hold of.

The governess concentrated on Souja all her affection, but this was rather of a heavy and severe nature, deprived of any outward token of tenderness.

With regard to her taste for Mathematical science, it was her uncle Peter who first roused her interest in this subject. She listened to his talks on mathematics with great attention, and believed that this science opened the way to wonderful and mysterious realms of thought and bliss. A curious accident helped to strengthen this belief. On one occasion the walls of their rooms were being covered anew with paper, but there not being sufficient of it, one wall was left incomplete. It was therefore temporarily covered with sheets of lithographic

lectures, containing different geometrical figures and numbers. These incomprehensible figures attracted the attention of the child, who for long hours studied them, without understanding their meaning.

Some years later, when she took her first lessons in differentials, her tutor was astonished at the quickness with which she comprehended them, the pupil remembering their aspect as seen years ago.

Her strivings however for a systematic University training in Mathematics, met with strong opposition on the part of her parents, owing to the usual aristocratic prejudice against women-students. But a way out of the difficulty soon presented itself. Souja became acquainted with the Russian naturalist Kovalevski, and the mutual interest they inspired in each other, resulted in a happy marriage. Almost immediately afterwards the young couple travelled to Germany, and settled at Heidelberg, where Madame Kovalevskaya entered the University, which then opened its doors to women-students. For two years she attended the lectures of Königsberger, Kirchhoff and Helmholtz, and then proceeded to Berlin to study under the famous mathematician Weyerstrass. Entrance to his public lectures was denied to women, but the Professor, after a few conversations with the gifted young Russian, was so much impressed with her talent, that he offered to give her private lessons. Four years passed in enthusiastic study, and the young student of twenty years mastered the intricate problems of advanced Physics and Mathematics with amazing ease. Before Madame Kovalevskaya returned to Russia with her husband, the professor was anxious that she should obtain a German degree. For this purpose he sent three of her treatises to the University of Göttingen, and on account of the high merit of her work, the examiners granted her the degree of Doctor without oral examination. Two of the essays touched on difficult questions in the Higher Analysis, and the third treated of the Form of Saturn's Ring.

Madame Kovalevskaya returned to Russia and settled at Moscow where her husband held the professorship of Paleontology at the University. She devoted her time to the profound study of Physics and Mathematics, and her friends and former teachers awaited the results of her researches with the greatest interest and expectation. But Madame Kovalevskaya felt the responsibility of her position as representative woman-student in the branch of Physics, and she determined not to publish any work until further study had matured her thoughts, and she could appear before the public with a discovery that would be worthy of a place in the history of Science.

A sad break now came in the happy family circle, in the death of Professor Kovaleski, and the young widow was left alone with her little daughter, her only child. With a heavy heart she turned to her studies once more, and relieved her

## Sensitive Men.

AMONG the many reasons advanced against the employment of women in business, not the least singular, perhaps, is that of an "Edinburgh Reader" of "Answers." After expressing his views as to their unfitness for the work "of the office or the large shop," he adds "The haggard, careworn woman" (of business) "is to me an object of compassion." He looks forward to the time when they (women) "will be kept at home, where their graces and little accomplishments will be far more useful."

Is this guileless innocence, or is it "wrote Sarcastic?" Either women's work is found "useful," or employers deliberately sacrifice every other consideration to that of cheap production!

Another victim of ultra-susceptibility writes to the same sympathetic journal deprecating short-hand and type-writing for women on similar grounds. He signs himself "Typist"! What would the feelings of these sensitives be could they see women engaged on a "big wash," turning wringing-machines, heavy treadle sewing-machines, scrubbing, working in the fields, etc.!

A wider knowledge would convince an "Edinburgh Reader" that the business woman is by no means the only "painful feature in our modern life" as it affects women. In thousands of struggling households are "kept-at-home" women, women who never go out except in the wake of a perambulator—latter-day Marthas, "careful about many things" beside their "little accomplishments"; "cumbered with much sewing"; whose lives are a ceaseless round of toil, and care, and self-denial; much more haggard and careworn than their sisters engaged in business, for their work is never done. There is no day of rest, no bank holiday, no half Saturday for them.

Why is there no gush of sentiment on behalf of the domestic drudge? Is it because the "business woman" is paid for her work while the home-worker is not? "The boy is father to the man." Surely the father of an "Edinburgh Reader" and his congeners must have been the boy who eat all the cake himself because he was afraid it would give his sister indigestion and a red nose! For my own part I prefer the frankly selfish boy who says, "My sister shan't have any cake, I want it all and I'm a boy; bread's good enough for girls." There might be some hope of such a boy. He is at least not a hypocrite.

To women workers themselves I would say, at the beginning of a New Year of hope and endeavour, do not be discouraged because some few men, measuring your, perhaps unaided, efforts by their own achievements, "with all appliances and means to boot," pronounce you "failures" in this or that walk of life. Every man holds, as an article of faith, that his own profession, trade, or calling is peculiarly unsuited to the feminine capacity. An amusing illustration of this was related by Mrs. Barnett, of S. Jude's, Whitechapel, in one of her interesting lectures. When trying to find work

for many unemployed women in her district she interviewed a hairdresser among others. Asked whether he thought women could learn his business—or profession—he replied, "Impossible, Madam, it took me three weeks to learn the business."

"Union is strength" should be the motto of every woman loyal to the ideal of womanhood. The brotherhood of man must have its counterpart in the Sisterhood of woman. In the true spirit of chivalry the strong in intellect, in influence, in money, must uphold the weak, and all that are desolate and, therefore, oppressed.

We must remember, too, in extenuation, that the critical attitude of man towards woman is of the very essence of his being, as old as the world—almost.

Adam struck this note in Paradise, and it is still echoing, with up-to-date variations at the present time. Do not judge him harshly, however, there were but two of them, and he knew, of course, that he was not to blame.

Let us also thankfully acknowledge that the criticism of to-day is absolute flattery compared with that of—say—the Georgian era. M.A.

## LINKS BETWEEN VOLUNTARY AID AND THE POOR LAW.

*These little stories have been sent to SHAFTS, from the "Charity Organisation Society, Islington Committee."*

Sixteen years in a Workhouse! It is very difficult to begin life again on your own account after that, and almost impossible, unless there is someone to lend a helping hand. But this is the tale of how a new start was made. About 20 years ago, a lonely young woman found her way into Islington Infirmary in consequence of epileptic fits. After three months she came out and went to service, but had to return with the same illness in a year or two. Partially recovering, she gradually settled down into a hardworking servant of the State, without wages, as a scrubber in the Workhouse.

Last year a kindly chaplain interested himself in her, and finding her health restored, but for very occasional fits, he asked the aid of the Charity Organisation Society to place her out. We found her brothers willing to help a little, and we sent her to a Convalescent Home, where she remained some months, part of the time as servant. There she had time and opportunity to gain fresh vigour of mind and body. And she needed this time of refreshment, for when she first came out of her prison there was a child-like helplessness about the poor woman, but at the same time a child-like affectionate nature that responded to kindness. She tried one or two places temporarily, and has now for many months been in service with a good mistress, who bears with her slowness and occasional attacks of illness. She is becoming a trusted and much valued servant, and looks on those who helped her out of the Workhouse as some of her best friends.

This is only one among many instances where voluntary help comes as a valuable adjunct to the legal relief of the Guardians.

Many inquiries have reached this office as to what has become of "The Towing Path." The writer who overlooks each part has been very ill; but as she has now introduced her principal characters to her readers,—as Society's manner is,—and the tale, as a tale, really only commences in the next chapter, no harm is done. It will re-appear in February.

## Medical Experts as Ethical Guides.

(Concluded from December Number.)

"Dr. Hickman made a proposal for superseding what he believed to be misleading vivisectional experiments by a system of combined clinical observations, which could only have been carried out by the co-operation of an educated public. The scheme was calculated to give a great preponderance of influence to the more modest, patient, and reverent order of medical investigators, and to put the showy and ambitious ones at a discount. But it was impossible to rouse the public to take any interest in investigations that were slow and not showy. The persons applied to were for the most part so indifferent, or even antagonistic, that one wondered what they meant by professing any desire for vivisection to cease. When the public is so apathetic to the needs and claims of true science, what can a Government do but drift at the mercy of whoever makes the most noise?"

I have mentioned two methods for superseding Vivisection with which I have been in special contact, but there are thousands of practitioners in England now, who know just what the originators of these methods knew, and would like to investigate in ways ethically equivalent to theirs, but who are hindered at every turn; thousands who do their best to give an ethical tendency to medical advice, not because they wish to set up as specially spiritual, or lack respect for their career as physcists, but because they know there is nothing, on the whole, better for the health of individuals than to take a reverent and ethical interest in the well-being of humanity. Such men die off year by year, disappointed and heartsick, because the public does not understand what they are aiming at, and cares little for anything but noisy and glaring catch words.

Though we cannot now do what we might have done to encourage and help the dead, we might at least take pains to know what is going on among Medical and Biologic 'Experts' now living. I happened to hear lectures by three biologists last summer; one of them said: "Whatever Huxley may be, a Biologist he certainly is not; he teaches not Biology, the Science of Life, but Necrology, the Science of Death!" At a discussion over which he presided, I mentioned the "Leigh-Browne Trust Fund" for assisting investigations useful to Biology, which do not cause pain to animals." The Chairman said: "If I were required to mention investigations, useful to Biology, which do cause pain to animals, I should be puzzled!" The second lecturer whom I heard, mentioned some recent experiments on cutting off the tails of mice for several generations, to test some principle in Heredity, and pointed out first, that there was a false step in logic between the experiments and the principle they were supposed to illustrate; and secondly, that farmers have cut off the tails of certain breeds of sheep for countless generations;

so that, if anything could be learned in that way, it might have been done by observing the lambs born of such sheep; and he added—"All that one can say about experimentation of that kind is that it is a pity men waste so much time . . . The artificial creation of monsters is mostly useless to Science."

The third lecturer analysed certain physical theories of Evolution and Heredity, to which well-known names are attached—of those supposed to have proved them—and pointed out that no one of them is really proved at all, for under each lies some gratuitous assumption, dragged in to supplement the supposed evidence. He said of one such theory, not very long ago preached as a new gospel—"I don't believe it, and don't know a single one of the younger biologists who does!" implying that the researches by which it had been professedly so triumphantly proved, had only made a temporary show, but had not added anything to the real store of scientific acquirement.

He wound up one lecture by quoting Tennyson's line—"Knowledge is of things we see," and added, "I don't believe knowledge is of things we see, but emphatically of things we do not see! We know that gentleness and honour are better than false-ness and cruelty, but as to how our physical bodies are evolved, we know nothing yet, we only guess." Here we see the materialistic Biologist reproving the professedly religious Poet, and convicting him of lack of faith in the unseen Good; by no means so rare a case as many people think! Whenever a student of science does his work thoroughly, he is being led to an interpretation of Nature more spiritual than any poet and theologian reaches; more so, *i.e.*, in the proportion that the Creator's facts are more holy than human fancies about those facts! When the Biologist is not ethical in his teaching, it is because his work is not thorough; because he has stopped short in his investigations, to appeal prematurely to an ignorant public, and throw out partial doctrines as traps to catch applause.

When medical advice does not tend on the whole in an ethical direction, it is because the doctor tells the patient the readiest way out of an immediate difficulty, but not the possible, or probable after consequences of the remedy he is suggesting.

"The pure in heart shall see God," whether they call themselves Materialists, or Atheists, or anything else. Biologists, who, after starting from a standpoint of mere physical investigation, arrive, by sheer force of simple candour, at an ethical insight worthy of Moses and the Prophets, are common enough, thank God! Only they don't as a rule, become President of the British Association; but that is no reason why we should leave them out in the cold, and ignore their existence. If you know of any biologists likely to ethicallise medical science, by all means give to such any help you can, remembering that to speak of the opposite School as if they represented *all* "Biologic and Medical Experts" is really to extend their influence.

It would be a good suggestion to join the Summer meeting of students in Edinburgh

and attend the Biologic and Social Science courses for an instructive and enjoyable holiday; and if you think the lecturers are likely to exert beneficial influence on future medical science, to ask ere leaving, if you can do anything to help them. I think that several workers are beginning to see that assisting those who work on honest lines, is more useful than the excessive discussing of any set of people, who have mistaken rampant curiosity for love of Truth, noisy self-advertising and mutual advertising for genuine fame—and, for philanthropy, a habit of applying immediate remedies to uncomfortable facts, without respect for past experience, or regard for future consequences."

### GOOD NEWS.

Like an invigorating current of the fresh strong air, like a whiff of the sea to the tired, weary worker, comes, across the ocean, the encouraging, gladdening news, that, while our legislators have been debating in trembling terror whether "it is safe," whether they dare (!) let women sit "on local governing bodies," in a township in New Zealand a woman has been elected Mayor of the borough. This lady is Mrs. Yates, she is distinguished as being the first woman who has been elected Mayor within the British dominions. The name of the township which has thus signalled itself is Onehunga. Her husband, Captain Yates, held the same position, in the same borough, a few years ago. The Mayors of New Zealand towns, are usually created Justices of the Peace. So that as female Suffrage exists in the colony, it is expected that Her Worship will promptly be raised to the Magisterial bench.

A question is being raised as to whether "Mayoress," or "Mayor" be appropriate in this instance. It has been decided that "Mayoress" is unknown to the law, she will, therefore, be styled "Mayor." Then what about the husband. Lord Mayor he could not be called. Must he receive some title from his wife's dignity as women generally do from their husband's. We should say yes, certainly, call him Mayoress or Mayor Consort. Let women think out a name for him, and all future spouses who will share in their dignities. Something must be done, and that quickly.

A contributor to SHAFTS, whose article on "Sensitive Men" appears in these columns has sent the following very, kind and most encouraging lines—

### ACROSTIC.

Speed home thy arrows, straight and true!  
Hercules, himself, ne'er slew  
A deadlier foe than thine!  
For thee, to-day, no word of praise—  
The maid unborn shall twine thy bays,  
Sing peans at thy shrine.

M.A.

ALL those desirous of helping SHAFTS would do so by favouring, whenever possible, those firms advertising in this paper. See advertisements.

## "Post Prandial Philosophy."

MR. GRANT ALLEN calls this would-be philosophy "A Glimpse into Utopia," and proceeds complacently, in an after-dinner reverie, to forecast the future of woman. It is both curious and amusing to consider what an amount of trouble the male half of creation, from Adam to Milton and onwards, have taken to place this "feminine defect," and how far they still are from the solution of the problem. He describes woman as "the sex sacrificed to reproductive necessities," and is surprised (!); "can never imagine why" the best women—women's rights women—are displeased with his expression. "Women in the lump," he says, "have a certain disadvantage laid upon them by nature in the necessity that some, or most, should bear children." To what deity does Mr. Allen allude—under the term "Nature"? Has he been in direct communication with this abstraction? Has she been revealing her secrets to him that he should be able to put his finger upon this "disadvantage," which later on he calls a "sacred and peculiar privilege"? He compares the physical strength of the sexes, forgetting that physical strength is not the standard of excellence; that the animal creation far exceed us in strength; also that it has not yet been proved that the want of physical strength is an essential of woman's physical nature or merely the result of training. May we remind him that women, thoughtful and educated women, know well that the bearing of children is not a disadvantage, that it has many compensations—physical, mental, and moral; that it is in fact the highest physical privilege. May we assert that the disadvantage under which we labour and have laboured has arisen from the dominance of men, which has been so unblushingly asserted from a sexual, financial, and intellectual point of view.

The conditions of life looked forward to by Mr. Grant Allen and Dr. Alfred Wallace would simply produce a continuance of this dominance on the one hand and dependence upon the other. History has proved to us that woman has been regarded, more or less, as a creature of sex throughout all past ages, and that this fact has been productive of the utmost immorality, cruelty, and injustice. The world has waited for the perception of the woman to awaken. It has awakened. Women now have decided that what has been shall cease to be; they look upon themselves, humanly speaking, as the most fitting arbiters of their own destiny, as the best judges of what they are and shall be.

Many "osophies" grow around us, striving after the truth, with new, and sometimes opposing, theories. One of these propounds the idea that the spirit, the ego, takes upon itself the form sometimes of the one sex sometimes of the other. If this be so, what then?

In such questions, we can only note the opinions of the thoughtful and more highly advanced—others cannot count, and such women have reached that stage of development which has shown that to them

by natural right belongs the privilege and duty of regulating the number of their children, also of choice and careful selection as to who shall be the father of such children; and it is quite true that a much higher standard of development will thus be reached. But women have already practically departed from the old, bondage-producing ideas, and we may safely predict that no amount of sophistry will induce them to return.

There is much in this Utopian imagining which is admirable, but the note running through it, a note struck lately also by Dr. Alfred Wallace, is a false note and one to which woman no longer responds.

## The Pioneer Club.

THE debates at the Pioneer Club, 22, the Cork-street, will be resumed and arrangements for the Spring Session of 1894 put into train in February. The Thursday evening Debates at 8 p.m., beginning on February 1st are as follows—

- February 1st—"Lady Macbeth." Opened by Miss BEATRICE LAMB.  
" 8th—"Our share in the Sweating System." Opened by Mrs. ANNIE HICKS.  
" 15th—"Coming out. What does it mean?" Opened by Mrs. HOLROYD CHAPLIN.  
" 22nd—"Tennyson and the Democratic Spirit of the Age." Lecture by T. LIESCHING, Esq. Followed by a Discussion.  
March 1st—"That the Manners of to-day show want of consideration for others." Opened by the PRESIDENT.  
" 8th—"Splits." Opened by Mrs. GRENFELL.  
" 15th—"Religious Novels." Opened by Mrs. SKEY.  
" 22nd—"Story of my Life." Lecture by FELIX VOLHOVSKY. Followed by Discussion.

Members are requested to send in subjects for debate to the Convener of the Debates Sub-Committee before 12th February.

The club has not by any means been deserted during the Christmas and New Year holidays. Members have met and enjoyed themselves exceedingly in many ways, to say nothing of more serious matters. On Thursday last a very pleasant evening was spent. After dining with the President all adjourned to the Drawing Room, where each member contributed to the general recreation, by a recitation, a song, an experience, personal or by hearsay, of a ghostly, instructive or comical nature, or by telling a story.

"A little nonsense now and then"  
Is relished by the wisest women.

The truth of which couplet was proved on this occasion; all present entering with delight into the fun of the hour. It was a pleasant change for the nonce from the regular discussions,—usually of a deep and serious nature.

At intervals times are set apart for the enjoyment of something on a higher scale, more ambitious in art, such as Musical evenings, Recitations, or the Drama, all excellently carried out. In the latter part of December "King Lear" was performed in the Drawing Room of the Club, we might say, "to a full house," by Pioneers, some of whom were professionals. The acting was excellent, full of spirit, ability, and that intuition which treads so close upon the heels of genius and enables persons to be, what they portray. Mrs. Massingberd made a capital "poor Tom," and took the part as to the manner born. Her rendering was so realistic that one could scarce restrain a shiver when she drew her coat round her and huddling up her shoulders ejaculated, all of a tremble, "Tom's a cold." Miss Marshall, as Cordelia, seemed Cordelia in *propria persona*, and charmed everybody. Miss Rose Mitchell was inimitable as the Fool, and elicited peals of laughter. Miss Dollard, as Regan, and Miss Dobie, as Goneril, had no easy part to play,—a distasteful part,—but they kept it up to the life, and were greatly applauded. Miss Rose Seaton, so clever in her Recitals, took the part of Edmund with an ability all her own. Miss Whitehead Miss Cooke, Mrs. Skey and Mrs. Holroyd Chaplin, distinguished themselves as amateurs. We are conscious of remembering "poor Tom" distinctly; running like a dominant note through the harmony of memory. King Lear was admirably performed; the part of the King being taken by one evidently at home in histrionic art, Mr. Wm. Poel—who also acted as director of the arrangements. How greatly all these enjoyable times stimulate! How ennobling and strengthening to all the Pioneers, and through them to the cause of women's emancipation, is this association together of earnest women, who work.

## DEATH OF MRS. COWEN.

Thousands of persons all over the country, wherever the movement among women is known, are to-day feeling the shock of the death of this earnest woman, who has for years devoted herself to public duties; and to the gaining of complete emancipation for women. She was one of the first, who gained a place on the School Board; her interest in literary, and scientific questions, was well known. She kept in close touch with practical liberalism; was emphatically a woman of ideas; and was undaunted by the slights, that unthinking people are always ready to cast on those who follow their own opinion, though it may lead them into temporary singularity. She worked for the cause of temperance, for the acquisition of electoral power and responsibility for women, and was a sworn enemy of the enslavement of fashion. More than this, she was a woman of great kindness of heart; generous and good, respected, admired and loved. Among other sincere, and grief stricken, mourners, I, as Editor of this paper, may well bow my head, for in her, SHAFTS has lost a generous, helpful, true friend.

## REVIEWS.

"BARABBAS—A Dream of the World's Tragedy." By Marie Corelli. (London: Methuen and Co.).

"Of all the cants that are canted in this canting world the cant of criticism is perhaps the meanest, as well as the most tormenting." It is much to be regretted, that the work of the critic is performed too frequently by young and inexperienced persons, often unable to comprehend the writings they presume to criticise; hence books which require deep thought and searching, are passed lightly by. They do not suit the pre-conceived opinions of the aspiring reviewer and are condemned, either openly or by the faint praise which damns.

"BARABBAS" is a masterpiece, and will hold its own more and more as time passes, clearing thought and destroying prejudice. That it contains much which will not obtain the universal vote, is of no account; the best and noblest literature always does. It is, not only one of the books of the year, but with the author's other works, may be said to be among the most powerful literary productions of the Nineteenth Century. The last fifty years, which have witnessed such radical changes in our literature, have produced nothing greater of their kind than the works of this gifted writer, who opens up to us a glimpse of things not seen by careless eyes; who lays her daring hand upon the massive folds of the dark outer curtain—hiding even the gleaming of the LIGHT beyond the inner veil—and sweeping it aside, reveals to our charmed gaze something of the splendour we are in search of, thrills our ravished ears with echoes of melodies lost so long, and long desired. The thoughts which shine through her wonderful pages are a message of strength and gladness to many souls. There are many such messages conveyed by many pens, and by many voices; who hath ears to hear let them hear. This book, "Barabbas," is a work of genius; containing lofty flights of imagination. Justice has not been done to it by the criticisms flashed over it; it glows with power; it fills the heart and understanding with the truthfulness and beauty of its pictured scenes and characters. Some of its critics have accused the book of blasphemy—a wild accusation without even a foundation of sand. Many say the subject is too sacred for, and unsuited to, production in its present form. Why?

It is a DREAM. The title proclaims it "A Dream of the World's Tragedy." In so naming it, the Author gives, we think intentionally, the very highest and widest honour to the Christian story, as related by the apostles; and no apostle has touched this story yet, with a hand so tender and true. Marie Corelli is in her right; she sees deeper, thinks higher, and embraces within the long sweep of her far-searching range of vision, thoughts without name or number, unknown perchance to her critics. She is one who views the deeper depths. Gazing beneath the shining, calm surfaces she sees the deeps below: she flashes the light of her spirit over them, and lo, the

deeps live. Human loves, human passions, human aspirations, gleam and glow; flush'd, eager, panting human life, stirs and throbs in the great profound, into which we so seldom look; the deeper workings, the hidden motives, the inner lives of persons, who have hitherto seemed to us more like pale ghosts moving to and fro, arise and look into our faces with intent, burning gaze. Unuttered questions are on their trembling tongues; answers in their eyes aflame. This magic pen has pulsated them into individual existence; they stand forth animated with noblest impulse,—quivering with passion, love and pain,—exalted to the far off heights by self sacrifice for and love of humanity and all created things,—such sacrifice as makes the Human Divine;—or bearing the hideous burden of hypocrisy, cruelty, lust and malice, they walk the shuddering earth to destroy, and having destroyed for a space what is good will eventually destroy the evil in themselves. We rise to heights;—we gladden in quick sympathy;—we shrink from vice rampant and cruelty triumphant in quick changes of mood, spell bound by this pen of power that bears us along. "Barabbas" is the gospel story glorified, quickened, transfigured, stamped with an awful reality, instinct with life not before known, never to be forgotten. What then? is it inconceivable that the powerful pen of a cultured woman of genius, should write a more potent picture of the World's Tragedy than was written by the fishermen of Judæa? Surely the world is the better of this wondrous concept of a dream,—whatever be the creed it may hold; or whether it be free of creeds, holding only to the indestructible inner Truths. For by nothing is our nature so exalted, as by the contemplation of the Ideal; whether that Ideal be purity, truth, nobility, heroism, in the abstract, or these virtues carried to their concrete perfection in great actions, and earnest, determined human effort.

"Barabbas" is a gallery of pictures, painted with consummate skill and by a master-hand. It opens with one, in dark but vivid colouring, of the Jewish Prison, and Barabbas the robber and murderer. The writer enters herself into the scenes she portrays, and into the circumstances by which her characters are surrounded. They live and breathe with a vitality the Apostles' narrative failed to give them, beautiful as it is; they shed upon that narrative a halo that partakes of something which has no relation whatever, even the most distant, to "Blasphemy." We feel that we understand their hard, cruel, tempted lives; we see the good in them, as well as the evil; we pity Barabbas, and loathe Caiaphas, the High Priest and Arch Hypocrite, so much viler a thing than the robber he contemns. We stand by the bier whereon lieth Judas dead, self slain, we look upon him where he lies cold and still, "with upward gazing eyes upon the watchful stars," in our very souls we hear the voice that seems to say "Call ye me Traitor? Lo, in the days to come, there shall be among professing saints many worse than I." We bow our heads in shivering sorrow knowing how shamefully true would be such a cry from

the dead lips of Judas, "Judas the Traitor" as we have named him, Judas who has endured the pointing of the world's cruel finger of scorn for nineteen weary, waiting centuries. What is this light that bursts upon us. Is't possible that the sin of Judas was *light* compared to many darkensses in the ages which have followed.

Marie Corelli is *en rapport* with her characters. She is with the stalwart Barabbas in his gloomy prison; she enters for the time being, into his untamed, even ferocious personality, into his untutored, half savage, yet passionate heart, capable of such keen suffering. How full of truth and power is the daring touch with which she pictures his mad, impotent rage against the ray of light, "a thin, white line of light which *persistently* pierced the thick obscurity" of the prison. The word *persistently* (the italics are ours) is worthy of note, it is called forth by the mood of the *man*, not by the light. It is natural to the genius of this facile pen to understand so well, how the thing which might have comforted many an ordinary prisoner, merely maddened this one. One physically weaker, or spiritually higher, might have seen much to soothe in it. Barabbas hated it. Enwrapped in matter as he was, it produced only mad rage, savage curses and groans. "The ray dazzled and hurt his eyes"; those eyes that "could have turned a bold gaze to the amber flame of the Syrian Sun radiating through the blue dome of ether," but *here and now!*

We have in these words a striking contrast between the freedom once enjoyed and the horrible, chained captivity of the present. When the beam changes as evening approaches "to a soft dusky crimson" the man's mood changes with it; and softens as the minutes crawl on, to bitter regret and tears.

The next picture gives us Barabbas free, yet unconscious that he is so, deeming that he himself is the man the crowd demand to be crucified; lost in doubt, conjecture, fear, amazement, suspense, until at last his wandering gaze is fixed, his restless, turbulent heart held, captured, stilled—by a sight at which he gazes with bated breath, "One Figure"—

"For that Figure seemed to absorb into itself, all the stateliness, all the whiteness, all the majesty, of the lofty, spacious Tribunal; all the light that fell glimmering through the shining windows. Such radiance, such power, such glorious union of perfect beauty and strength in one human form, Barabbas had never seen or imagined.

Still as a statue of sunlit marble, He stood, erect and calm, His white garments flowing backwards from His shoulders, in even, picturesque folds." The multitude contemplating this heroic sweetness, this meek fortitude, this gentle grandeur, with rage and anger—as such base natures as those composing the major portion of this crowd ever do—shout, hoarse with fury,—"Away with him, away with him; Let him be crucified."

We are all more or less familiar with these words, but they come here with a power hitherto unknown, because here a personality grand, noble, pitiful and sweet, is put before us, in colours true and clear; it takes our heart captive and commands our

interest. The introduction of Judith Iscariot, as *specially* joining in the cry against the Christ, at this point, and later, has been objected to by many, and is we think rather stretched and out of taste. But the introduction of Judith herself, adds a beautiful colouring to the picture, and the writer discriminates justly, and with subtle power, between what in her character was merely vanity run riot, what was really fault-worthy, and what was the gem itself though hidden by grosser matter.

Throughout the life of Christ women were as here depicted, conspicuous for their tenderness, love and mercy; for greatness of mind and self sacrifice; yet it is quite credible that among so many women some might have been found as vindictive and cruel as the men are described. Also, this is a Dream; therefore can there be no question of authority.

It is one of the finest testimonies to the innate nobility and strength of womanhood, that so many noble women have come from a race, the male half of which held them in such subjection; where they were and are debarred even from entering into the inner court of the temple where the God they adore is worshipped.

Nor can Christianity (or what goes by that name) boast much more enlightenment; women being rigidly kept out of the priesthood, though now they are rapidly forcing their way into the clerical ranks and proving how eminently fitted they are to teach, and to preach TRUTH.

Bleeding from a soldier's rough blow Barabbas receives a straight look from the eyes of "the Nazarene" which is a revelation to the undisciplined heart.

"The pity and tenderness of that look pierced him to the soul; no living being had ever given him a glance so instantly comprehensive and sympathetic."

So, truly and tenderly touching up every vital point, in this tale of deepest pathos and import, the author makes us participators in all the events of the time; really so short, yet seeming of such duration, because of the greatness of its records. With marvellous skill and realistic power of portrayal, she makes us feel the tale new, so irresistible is the light she throws upon it.

In the long trial so familiar to us, so increased and intensified in interest in these pages, it is impossible to read without deep emotion, the powerful characteristics of each individual;—the struggle that goes on between the lower and the Higher Nature in each; and while recognising the Divinity in all, though oft hidden, to note how "the Nazarene" towers to a great height above the rest, in a distinct, perfected personality, His Own; so that all who read must cry with one voice,—Whether Divine or Human, no prophet ever saw as this Seer into human hearts seeth; no man, ever hath spoken as this woman-man speaketh. A type surely of what will be when sex hath been outlived and overcome; when out of the long struggle with adverse forces without and within a perfect existence shall evolve itself; that will be more of woman perchance, and less of man as he now is; yet of neither sex; but a complete perfected

creature. We have a picture of Pilate's struggle with his own fears, augmented by the calmness and sweet dignity of the Accused, and by the impressive force of the message from his wife—"known in the city for her haughty fearless disposition and her contempt for the Jews"—"Have thou nothing to do with that just Man." Again in our ears the Governor asks, "Art thou a King then?" But the words are fraught with deeper meaning; we thrill to the straight steadfast look "full into Pilate's eyes" and the answer comes, solemn and still "THOU SAYEST."

"As He spoke," the writer says, "the sun, flooding the Judgment Hall with ripples of gold and crimson, encircled the Divine brows with a glittering rainbow radiance; as though the very heavens had set their crown and signet, upon the splendour of a Truth revealed."

In condemning the Innocent Accused to the most barbarous of deaths, Pilate, who secretly admires His courage and grand physique, though strong and daring himself, dares not act up to the stature of his convictions, and so falls short of the height to which he might have arisen.

Picture follows picture in this great gallery, and whatever may be said against these radiant fancies of a Dream by Hypercritics, or immature critics, they tend to make more clear, more impassioned and interesting, a story that has captivated a vast portion of the civilised world for centuries. They show more fully we think even than the gospels themselves, that whether we believe the personality crucified, to have been God, or merely a powerful, more perfect human being of a Diviner type,—whatever, or whichever, of the different explanations or beliefs we choose to abide by, we cannot but recognise a life which puts ours to shame; and which it raises our nature even to consider. The idea of an incarnate God Marie Corelli says, was a popular one; "arose from a desire to symbolise the Divine in Humanity"; being an idea common to all religions.

Choice words grace these pages in rich profusion, quoted and original.

"For this cause," says "the Man of Nazareth", "came I into the world that I should bear witness unto the Truth"

"One of the world's noblest madmen", Pilate sees Him to be, "One who thought for Himself"

Then follows this fearless sentence "Nothing more terrorising to sacerdotal tyranny, than liberty of thought. Nothing more dangerous than liberty of conscience."

"For," says the pen of the Dreamer, "whosoever seeks to bear witness to the Truth in a world kept up by Lies, must be mad . . . No fault so reprehensible in Society as plain speaking."

Pilate asks the question wrung from his tortured heart by its doubts and convictions, the question a weary world has asked ever and ever as the centuries have rolled, "WHAT IS TRUTH?" No answer is recorded.

Marie Corelli's characters are drawn by one who can understand their temptations, their sin, their sorrow, and their repentance; one who knows also, that the soul outlives the dead sin by endless ages of existence. Splendid is the description of the Earthquake, the Darkness, the Horror of the arisen Dead, the crowding and crushing

terror of the multitude, who having come out to gloat over the agonies of others, are plunged into self condemnation and gloom.

Petronius the centurion in his sorrow and anger pronounces a malediction on the priesthood. He declares the "King of the Jews" to have been "diviner than any gods I wot of."

Melchior, who comes upon Barabbas an embodied mystery, is full of fine irony—flashing like a rapier thrust, in the sun's ray,—which he brings to bear upon most events as they arise and are talked of. Here are a few of his sayings.

"Come, Barabbas, let us leave the dead Christ, to the women who loved him; we men have done our part, we have murdered him."

In the company of Barabbas, he meets Peter later on. The account is full of tragic passion. Peter bemoans his cowardice, his lie, with frenzied despair. Melchior is tender with him but again his keen satire cuts like a sword.

"Alas for thee, Petrus, thou too must serve as a symbol, a symbol of error, for on thy one lie, self serving men will build a fabric of lies, in which the Master thou hast denied will have no part. . . . Thy cowardice and fears shall live; thy lie shall be the seed from whence shall grow harvests of error."

When Peter curses Judith, Melchior is full of earnestness, and says—

"Thy curses are in vain, Petrus, they sound on empty air. He who curses woman or despises her, must henceforth be himself accursed and despised. For now, by woman's purity is the whole world redeemed. . . . Truly the language of symbols is hid from thee, if thou canst curse women. Were there a million treacherous women meriting thy curse, it matters little, for, henceforth, Womanhood is sacred in the sight of the Eternal."

Then again the rapier gleams—

"If ye would track treachery home to its source, search for it in the dens of priestcraft. 'Tis ever, and 'twill ever be a self sacrificing priest of the Divine who crucifies Divinity."

"I say the priests have killed the Christ; and will kill him spiritually a million times again ere earth shall fully comprehend the glory of His message. Aye through the vista of a thousand coming years."

"To possess the earth Petrus has ever been thy dream! maybe thou wilt possess it, thou and thy followers after thee, but Heaven is far distant from thy ken."

"Thou sayest well Petrus. 'Twere hard that Judas should be evermore accursed and thou adjudged a true apostle. . . . but the world loves contrary and falsifications."

"While it takes a month to spread a lie, it takes a hundred centuries to prove a truth."

These are hard words; we can only hope they were not merited. Have they been merited since? Are they merited now?

In speaking of the "Nazarene" after His death, one of the men who gathered here and there in the city—gossiping with each other after their habit, describes him "as one of those who 'insisted on truth as a leading principle of life and objected to shams. Troublesome philosophies' he adds.

Justitia, the wife of Pilate, is splendidly drawn; beautiful, grand and stately, wise also and keen of judgment, a true conception of a Roman Matron. "Doth a god die?" she asks of Joseph of Arimathea? "What power have mortal tortures on immortal spirit? Art sure that He is dead? Is't possible Divinity can perish?"

Later, Pilate asks the same questions, and speaking to Joseph of his new sepulchre asks—"Wilt thou hold embodied Light and Life, and yet not rive asunder?"

The picture of Judith as she surveys herself, sitting languidly before her mirror, is warm and rich with physical loveliness; but Judith's soul has not yet been stirred, tho' far off echoes from its depths, are faintly heard in the stillness of her room. Her one redeeming point is, her great love for her brother, Judas Iscariot; whom yet, she, stimulated by Caiaphas, has induced to betray the Christ. The startling knowledge of the consequences of this action, is revealed to her, when, summoned hastily by her father, she comes into the presence of Judas dead.

Peter visits his wrath upon her, forgetting his own shortcomings, though adjured to be merciful. "God forbid he cries that I should show mercy to the wicked"—

Out comes Melchior's Rapier.

"There spake the truly human Christian. Verily Petrus, thou shalt convey to men in a new form the message of Love Divine."

But Judith through her pure and tender love for her brother is led to Light. Through great suffering and a half-crazed brain she passes to clearer perception, sees the Divine, and dies.

Melchior's comparison is good. "Thou," he tells Barabbas, "art truer man than I, thou art the type of sheer brute manhood, against which Divine Spirit for ever contends." His conception of Death is grand.

"Not an end, but a beginning. That choking of the breath, that blindness of the eyes, these are the throes of birth; the struggles of the newborn soul, fighting, gasping, to take in its first deep breathings of living glory. A darkness and a silence sayest thou? Not so, a radiance and a music."

"The world is never ripe for truth," he adds, "so long as it is well content to hold its business and its social life upon lies."

"If thou rejectest what thou canst not understand Barabbas, thou must reject the whole wide working of the Universe. Talkest thou of miracles? thou art thyself a miracle, thou livest in a miracle, the whole world is a miracle."

So pathetic and so vivid, so full of truths that underlie, are these pictures; they will awaken thought where thought was not; they will be powerful to convey higher ideas, to encourage deeper searchings. Here is one, which from a simple incident brings home a truth open to the observation of most, teaching its lesson also.

It is related that as the dying Christ hung upon the Cross, with upturned eyes, His face full of noble endurance and a passionate peace, a little brown bird alighted upon the Crown of Thorns and pecking, bruised the tiny feathered breast, which bled;—that the people who had gazed calmly upon the supernal agony of Jesus, were touched and shaken by this incident. It is true such an incident might have brought to a climax harrowed feeling, yet how true are these words,—

"Compassion and interest for birds, animals, and creeping things of the wood and field, often distinguish the otherwise selfish and cold hearted. Many a one has been known to love a dog, who in human relationships, would willingly slander a friend or slay a brother."

Perhaps the picture par excellence in the whole book, is the meeting of Barabbas face to face with the "Mother of the Crucified."

"She came on holding her lilies with both hands against her breast . . . her calm eyes clear as heaven regarded him steadily, on her lips rested the tender shadow of a smile. Behind her flamed the sunset,—round her the very air grew dense and brilliant,—at her feet one fallen lily bud opened its satin petals to the light, disclosing its interior heart of gold. . . . 'Mary, Mother of the Nazarene!' Barabbas faltered tremblingly. . . . 'So if the great God Invisible hath filled thee with His mystic spirit, art thou not thereby made a creature marvellous?—a very Queen of wonders? and by thy very life dost thou not glorify thy sex and make it sacred and revered for evermore?' . . . Behind her and around her a sudden great light shone—a fiery halo, radiating to right and left, like two glittering wings, between which her tranquil and majestic figure held its place, in queenly and serene unconsciousness. The unearthly glory palpitated with a thousand hues of delicate and changeful colour."

Then comes the commanding picture of the resurrection, a magnificent delineation, which makes one envy the pen that could write it; envy the glorious sensation of Spiritual Power its description must have produced. Nay, not envy but rejoice, that a woman's pen hath depicted so grand an imagining, so glorious a Vision.

Melchior, makes his last parting with Barabbas when the wicked machinations of Caiaphas, though seeming to culminate in triumph for the High Priest, as the world might judge, really brought the greatest good to Barabbas. The meeting and journey together of Melchior and Simon of Cyrene, is told with great power and pathos; to him Melchior explains from whence he came and what brought him to Bethlehem of Judæa.

Simon tells of Peter's bold preaching. "Aye," he queried with satiric melancholy, "hath he grown so bold? Even so doth he make late atonement. He hath a wondrous destiny, for half the world will grasp the creed devised by him who did deny his Master."

A powerfully truthful sentence falls from the lips of Peter, a sentence so true that it should make man bite the dust in shame:—

"A woman wanton is the dearest joy of man, the very laws he makes, protect her foulness and defend his lust!"

The death of Joseph is thus given:—

"He had quietly passed away into the living splendour of eternal things, where age is turned to youth, and the darkest 'dreams' make their meaning clear."

Such a picture of the life and death of the "prophet of Nazareth" hath never before been given to the world as this "Dream" giveth. The power and force of the Gospel story are great, but this Dream sheds a brighter ray upon it, a light more luminous;—revealing many deeps of thought and action.

'Twere well carefully and seriously to study these pages. They have a message for all who will receive it; a message, we may not be wise to reject. When pens inspired write for the world, that world is condemned if it will not receive the living words. These words are full of truth's radiant meanings; meanings all may receive, with profit, whatever be their creeds, convictions, or opinions.

M.S.S.

#### ANNIE BESANT'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

(London: T. Fisher Unwin.)

"Speak, History! who are life's victors? Unroll thy long annals and say, Are they those whom the world called the victors, who won the success of a day? The martyrs, or Nero? The Spartans, who fell at Thermopylæ's tryst. Or the Persians and Xerxes? His judges, or Socrates? Pilate, or Christ?"

Few persons who have passed the limits of what may be termed the "childhood" of thought can fail to read this volume without being touched in the innermost core of being, even when they differ from the conclusions of the author. For, from the first page to the last it presents in its bare facts the story of a soul intensely earnest, and pulsing with noble aspirations of sacrifice for others, and love of humanity. Annie Besant was not as others are; it was her heart of Love and divine compassion, which men have said the intellectual woman never possesses, which moved her to labour, to sacrifice herself, to face obloquy and scorn, and to press ever onwards to the light. We regard her as one of the women of the future even now in our midst, strong, faithful, pure-hearted, equipped with intellectual power and moral force—one who will for ever give the lie to the assertion that the woman of brains is cold and colourless, and for ever rebuke the selfish desires of many a man for the toys who possess what they regard as "sex" with its heartless and soulless charms, at the expense of humanity.

Being different from the men and women around her, Annie Besant could not fail to suffer, and she suffered in proportion to the strength of her nature. The narrower natures and the narrower creeds, the bonds which she burst as a winged creature must burst its chrysalis or its shell, forced again and again these sorrows upon her as she laid down personal feelings at the feet of duty, and ever accepted the consequences. And in proportion as she suffered she grew in sympathy and the understanding of human needs, for she drained cups one of which might well shadow and embitter a lifetime, each to the dregs. She was tortured as wife, tortured in her motherhood, tortured as friend and co-worker, she knew the pressure of poverty, and the sting of the voice of slander, and amid all tortures she was faithful to the highest light, and highest duty she recognised. Once only did the agony become so keen that she turned to the thought of suicide as the sole relief—and that was during—significant fact!—her marriage. But even in that moment a voice spake to her—"O coward, coward, who used to dream of martyrdom, and cannot bear a few short years of pain!"—and she relates how she flung the bottle from her and fell, in the moment of triumph over the weakness, fainting on the floor.

Her happiest hours seem to have been those of childhood, and of early growth, when she lived sheltered by the devoted love of her mother. The contrast between the mother's love and the husband's was great, and may well inspire reflections on the conditions and beliefs which tend to destroy all genuine love on the part of men,

and make it a selfish and sensual thing. Yet we cannot help also clearly learning this lesson—that had the mother possessed greater insight into human nature, and greater breadth of principle, she would have spared her daughter some of the sharpest pangs which fell to her lot. To begin with, she desired that her child should grow up unacquainted with human sin and all social evils—an ignorance impossible and worse than useless for thinking women: she sternly repressed the growing instinct which bade her daughter wish to withdraw from an engagement entered into at the unripe age of nineteen and with a desire to "do good" as a "clergyman's wife,"—by talking of "honour," just as if it were not a thousand times more honourable to abstain from contracting a marriage when the companionship of the engagement points to inharmony on either side, and especially the woman's; she permitted her daughter to enter into the relation of marriage in profound ignorance of all that it involved—a violation of every feeling and instinct most deeply rooted in her child, for Annie Besant not only did not love her husband, but was one of those who loved with her soul and had outlived passion, hence marriage for her was from the beginning a martyrdom and a jarring note; in her own words:

"Looking back on it all, I deliberately say that no more fatal blunder can be made than to train a girl to womanhood in ignorance of all life's duties and burdens, and then to let her face them for the first time away from all the old associations, the old helps, the old refuge of a mother's love."

Nature gave her no hints, for hers was the temperament which delighted in Platonic love, and knowledge she had none; and further, when the breach of thought, and belief, and feeling became too profound to be healed between the husband and wife, it was the mother "whom she loved as she loved nothing else on earth" who threw herself on her knees before her "imploping her to yield" her conscience and to "live the lie" which was impossible. "I did not guess as she did," she says,

"how cruel men and women could be, how venomous their tongues; now, knowing it, having faced slander and lived it down, I deliberately say that were the choice again before me I would choose as I chose then; I would rather go through it all again than live 'in society' under the burden of an acted lie."

From this may be learnt many things for many people, and also some of the causes of the troubles which beset this brave woman's life, as well as much of her character that has hitherto been little realised.

Her break with orthodoxy was greatly accelerated by the follies of those to whom she turned for advice or explanation, though it must needs have come sooner or later. "It is not your duty to ascertain the truth," said Dr. Pusey. "It is your duty to accept and believe the truth as laid down by the Church." To his mind, saturated with the spirit of ecclesiasticism and rituals, that was all-sufficient. To Annie Besant's, as to numberless other minds who perceive the gulf between the teachings of the Gospels and the creeds which have grown up and overshadowed them, the history of whose

birth is more eloquent than any other impeachment, this very human (and masculine) authority was precisely the reverse. She was seeking for bread and was offered a stone, for light and received dogmas, formulated by those who had forgotten the spirit and true use of sacred writings in mere idolatry of "canonical" books.

The wench came. A vicar's wife, she declined to partake longer of the sacrament, and decided to leave the church. It led to a separation between her and the man who should never have been her husband, and who bade her leave her home; outcast, she found herself guardian of her little daughter, and "possessor of a small monthly income sufficient for respectable starvation." She stitched for a pittance, she cooked, she nursed, she taught, and finally in Mr. and Mrs. Scott, of Norwood, the publishers of various tracts and pamphlets on free thought, she found friends who helped her in many ways, and happily enabled her to employ remuneratively a pen which was to become a power. In one churchman, Dean Stanley, the "heretic" of the orthodox, she found the kindest sympathy in a moment of trial. Her beloved mother was dying and refused to take the sacrament unless her daughter joined with her, and she failed to find a clergyman who would administer it to an unbeliever. At last she applied to the Dean, and he at once acquiesced, declaring that the rite "was never meant to divide from each other hearts that are searching after the one true God. It was meant by its founder as a symbol of unity—not of strife." And he even soothed the mother's last hours with cheering words of the child who had grown beyond the ties which still held herself. "Remember that our God is the God of truth, and that therefore the honest search for truth can never be displeasing in His eyes." Words and thoughts—which had they been practically carried out in the past would have saved the churches from the stain of a veritable sea of blood.

The death of her mother fell on Annie Besant as a crushing blow. The little home, just made, which was brightened by her presence and where they two were to live together with the baby-daughter, was desolate. The depth of her affections, faithful and devoted, was one which women and men living on the mere sense-plane do not realise, and her passionate heart insisted on twining its tendrils round this or that human being who was near and dear to her with a force which cost her hours of the keenest anguish, and almost life itself.

It was at this time that she became acquainted with Charles Bradlaugh, who remained the truest of friends as long as he lived, and in whom she found a strength and a stay which developed her powers, and brought out the courage which almost courted martyrdom for the cause in hand. One can well understand her feelings for the freethinker, reverent and chivalrous to womanhood, after the early experience of the priest, who, in common with his class, believed himself by mere virtue of physical difference of sex exalted to the sole 'headship' of the home,—the one truest and

most honest of men, the other filled with the puerile creeds concerning woman of an earlier age, and cold and unsympathetic to the intellectual courage and the moral demands of the wife who was his superior.

Together they waged a mighty war on the question of free thought on the Malthusian doctrines, in which the celebrated Knowlton pamphlet (bought without their knowledge by the publisher of their works and the *National Reformer*) was arraigned. This pamphlet was followed by one from Mrs. Besant's own pen, on the *Law of Population* which we can testify is an admirable one, and logically unanswerable from the materialist's point of view.

"Seeking to improve the physical type, scientific Materialism, it seemed to me, must forbid parentage to any but healthy married couples; it must restrict child-bearing within the limits consistent with the thorough health and physical well-being of the mother; it must impose it as a duty never to bring children into the world unless the conditions for their fair nurture are present. . . . In all this there is nothing which for one moment implies approval of licentiousness, profligacy, unbridled self-indulgence. On the contrary, it is a well-considered and intellectually-defensible scheme of human evolution, regarding all natural instincts as matters for regulation."

This warfare of the courts cost her the custody of the child, and in 1879, the little one who was her all was torn from her arms, "the absolute right of the father as against a married mother" (note "being upheld." Since then the law has been altered, and "the husband has no longer in his grasp this instrument of torture, whose power to agonise depends on the tenderness and strength of the motherliness of the wife." The decision nearly killed her, and it was Mr. Bradlaugh who daily ministered to her through a terrible illness "more like a tender mother than a man friend" and who saved her life. But Annie Besant was one of the martyrs to the old system of belief which has been fostered by the teachings of a false religion, which elevates the husband to sovereignty and degrades the wife to servitude, and which is alien to the true spirit of Christianity, or of any truly sacred writings.

The pamphlet on the *Law of Population*, though still misunderstood by the bigoted, who remember the hypocritical comments of the Press at the time, and know nothing of the facts, achieved victory. The leading judge of the Supreme Court in New South Wales declared that its teaching was a moral duty. He pointed out that the case of a woman married to a drunkard who was ruining his constitution, and creating semi-starvation for his family, and who insisted on his 'marital rights,' was one in which the wife was justified in using preventive measures as a duty. Of course from the popular point of view, this was an ample vindication of the intention of these principles. But how about the morality of this purely masculine understanding of the entire question? We should say on the contrary that the wife's duty lay in refusing to live with the husband,—nay, that no human being of either sex should dare to claim sexual "rights" in another. But to this point few have yet advanced, and Annie Besant sought to relieve suffering, frightful and widespread among the poor, in which marriage

became literally their destruction, as she saw it and knew it, without attempting to teach the only true preventive in the world, which lies in the fight with the lower nature to be conquered sooner or later no matter what the cost. When the truth did confront her, through the knowledge of the unseen causes and effects, she renounced Neo-Malthusianism publicly, and refused a large sum for the copyright of a pamphlet whose tone was unexceptionable in character. It was from Theosophy this new light came, and Madame Blavatsky, whose mission it has been to make known the hitherto concealed and misunderstood laws of nature which have been realised by the few in all ages, showed her that "however justifiable Neo-Malthusianism might be while man was regarded only as the most perfect outcome of physical evolution, it was wholly incompatible with the view of man as a spiritual being, whose material form and environment were the results of his own mental activity." Mrs. Besant adds—

"Failing to see his past and his future, how should my eyes not have been then blinded to the deep-lying causes of his present woes? I brought a material cure to a disease which appeared to me to be of material origin; but how when the evil came from a subtler source, and its causes lay not on the material plane? How if the remedy only set up new causes for a future evil, and, while immediately a palliative, strengthened the disease itself, and ensured its reappearance in the future? . . . For what is man in the light of Theosophy? He is a spiritual intelligence, eternal and uncreate, treading a vast cycle of human experience, born and reborn on earth millenium after millenium, evolving slowly into the ideal man. He is not the product of matter, but is encased in matter, and the forms of matter with which he clothes himself are of his own making. . . . Man in the past has made his intellect the servant of his passions; the abnormal development of the sexual instinct in man—in whom it is far greater and more continuous than in any brute—is due to the mingling with it of the intellectual element, all sexual thoughts, desires, and imaginations having created thought-forms, which have been wrought into the human race, giving rise to a continual demand, far beyond nature, and in marked contrast with the temperance of normal animal life. Hence it has become one of the most fruitful sources of human misery and human degradation, and the satisfaction of its imperious cravings in civilised countries lies at the root of our worst social evils. This excessive development has to be fought against, and the instinct reduced within natural limits, and this will certainly never be done by easy-going self-indulgence within the marital relation any more than by self-indulgence outside it. By none other road than that of self-control and self-denial can men and women now set going the causes which will build for them brains and bodies of a higher type for their future return to earth-life. They have to hold this instinct in complete control, to transmute it from passion into tender and self-denying affection, to develop the intellectual at the expense of the animal, and thus to raise the whole man to the human stage, in which every intellectual and physical capacity shall subserve the purposes of the soul. From all this it follows that theosophists should sound the note of self-restraint within marriage, and the gradual—for with the mass it cannot be sudden—restriction of the sexual relation to the perpetuation of the race."

To perceive deeper and other aspects of truth with Annie Besant was to embrace them as part of her life, as so many inspirations to action. The only pamphlet she now permits to be placed before the people from her pen is *Theosophy and the Law of Population*.

As early as 1885 she adopted the principles of Socialism, thereby paining many of her

friends, and above all Charles Bradlaugh, "who though tolerant as he was strong," "never again felt the same confidence in her judgment as he felt before. The Socialists were bitterly hostile to him, and she says,—

"My affection, my gratitude, all warred against the idea of working with those who wronged him so greatly. But the cry of starving children was ever in my ears; the sobs of women poisoned in lead-works, exhausted in nail works, driven to prostitution by starvation, made old and haggard by ceaseless work. I saw their misery was the result of an evil system, was inseparable from private ownership of the instruments of wealth production; that while the worker was himself but an instrument, selling his labour under the law of supply and demand, he must remain helpless in the grip of the employing classes, and that trade combinations could only mean increased warfare—necessary, indeed, for the time as weapons of defence—but meaning war, not brotherly co-operation of all for the good of all. A conflict which was stripped of all covering, a conflict between a personal tie and a call of duty could not last long, and with a heavy heart I made up my mind to profess Socialism openly and work for it with all my energy."

What was it that attracted Annie Besant to the ideas of Socialism? The intense sentiment of *fraternity* that inspired their principles. She loved humanity, and it appealed to her through her own experiences among the poor, as a radical reformer, as well as through the voices and pens of those who advocated a higher and less selfish ideal of living. She beheld the starvation year of 1886, and the lot of the unemployed. "Ah! how patient they were for the most part, how sadly, pathetically patient, this crucified Christ, Humanity; wrongs that would set my heart and my tongue afire would be accepted as a matter of course." She projected a halfpenny weekly, *The Link*, with Mr. Stead—

"Week after week we issued our little paper, and it became a real light in the darkness. There the petty injustices inflicted on the poor found voice; there the starvation wages paid to women found exposure; there sweating was brought to public notice. A finisher of boots paid 2s 6d per dozen pairs and 'find your own polish and thread'; women working for 10½ hours per day, making shirts—'fancy best'—at from 10d to 3s per dozen, finding their own cotton and needles, paying for gas, towel, and tea (compulsory), earning from 4s to 10s per week for the most part; a mantle finisher 2s 2d a week, out of which 6d for materials; 'respectable hard-working woman' tried for attempted suicide, 'driven to rid herself of life from want.' And many another wrong. Into this work came Herbert Burrows . . . a man loving the people with passionate devotion, hating oppression and injustice with equal passion, working himself with remorseless energy, breaking his heart over wrongs he could not remedy."

But "ever more and more had been growing on me the feeling that something more than I had was needed for the cure of social ills. The Socialist position sufficed on the economic side, but where to gain the inspiration, the motive, which should lead to the realisation of the Brotherhood of Man? . . . Not only so; but since 1886 there had been slowly growing up a conviction that my philosophy was not sufficient; that life and mind were other than, more than, I had dreamed. Psychology was advancing with rapid strides; hypnotic experiments were revealing unlooked for complexities in human consciousness, strange riddles of multiplex personalities, and most startling of all, vivid intensities of mental action, when the brain that should be the generator of thought, was reduced to a comatose state. Fact after fact came hurtling in upon me, demanding explanation I was incompetent to give. . . . The phenomena of clairvoyance, clairaudience, thought-reading, were found to be real."

What and where was the key of the whole great problem concerning Man? It was at this crucial moment that Mr. Stead handed her the *Secret Doctrine* to review. Let us tell the result in her own words.

"I was dazzled, blinded by the light in which disjointed facts were seen as part of a mighty whole, and all my puzzles, riddles, problems, seemed to disappear. . . . I asked about the Theosophical Society, wishful to join, but fighting against it. For I saw, distinct and clear—with painful distinctness, indeed—what that joining would mean. I had largely conquered public prejudice against me by my work on the London School Board, and a smoother road stretched before me, whereon effort to help should be praised not blamed. Was I to plunge into a new vortex of strife, and make myself a mark for ridicule—worse than hatred—and fight again the weary fight for an unpopular truth?"

Her choice was made. To see light and withhold it for any private or personal reason, for any height or depth of misunderstanding or criticism it might bring her, for any conflict with friends or foes, was alien to her nature. Mr. Bradlaugh quietly dissented from her position, and expressed his "regret" in the columns of the *National Reformer*. Mr. Foote bitterly assailed her. Others said she had been "hypnotised." And she joined the Society. Of Madame Blavatsky she says:—

"From that day until now my faith in her has never wavered, my trust in her has never been shaken. I gave her my faith on an imperious intuition, I proved her true day after day in closest intimacy living by her side, and I speak of her with the reverence due from a pupil to a teacher who never failed her, with the passionate gratitude which, in our School, is the natural meed of the one who opens the gateway and points out the path. 'Folly! Fanaticism!' scoffs the Englishman of the nineteenth century. Be it so. I have seen, and I can wait."

She adds:—

"O noble and heroic soul, whom the outside purblind world misjudges, but whom your pupils partly saw, never through lives and deaths shall we repay the debt of gratitude we owe you."

In the same year, 1891, the new friend and the old, the two who had served her best and brought conditions which developed her strength, passed into the silence.

Only those who understand somewhat of occult law realise the inevitable lot of those who rend the veil of Matter, and point to the spiritual side of Nature and its laws. Faultless on the merely personal and human side they may not be, but highly-evolved individualities they must be,—messengers to humanity and martyr-souls. Against them are arrayed seen and unseen forces, and the fierce opposition of every human being who has not yet gone through the life-experiences which compel response to the light of truth.

Many have charged Mrs. Besant with inconsistency and "extremes." Her life on the contrary was one grand growth and expansion towards the very principles which theosophy revealed. Even as a child she heard the "wailings of the great orphan of Humanity." And why should she have heard them above countless others? She "brought with her the ears open to hear them from previous lives of service paid to men. It was those lives that drew for the child the alluring pictures of martyrdom, breathed into the girl the passion of devotion, sent the woman out to face scoff and odium, and drove her finally into the theosophy that

rationalises sacrifice, while opening up possibilities of service beside which all other hopes grow pale." Even her clerical friend of the past—she had one, broad-minded enough and clear-sighted enough to write to her with the utmost kindness, and admitting he had not the key of life which she was seeking, and which would satisfy heart and conscience and mind alike—said, "there is another and a deeper solution in the hands of our Father, and it will be ours when we can understand it." He, too, saw that "sin is an absolutely necessary factor in the production of the perfect man: it was foreseen and allowed as means to an end, like the child's attempts to build his first rabbit-hutch and failures,—as, in fact, an education," though he knew nothing of the law of reincarnation which made the "attempts" possible, and permit the many who wander on the "broad road" at last to join "the few who enter in at the 'strait gate which leads unto Life' which demands no return, and for whom the knowledge of Good and Evil has become lasting Wisdom. She had been resolute years before "to know," with an intense, eager determination, and to know for the sake of serving, and the door was opened to her knock, for the strong assail the breach which apparently, but only apparently, divides Man from his true kingdom "by violence." And when she had laboured as a materialist or agnostic, it was because she saw the need of working and in supreme self-sacrifice to ameliorate the lot of the poor and miserable untrammelled by any human dictation, that drew her on her path-way. "Little worth," she wrote then, "liberty and equality with all their promise for mankind, little worth even wider happiness, if that happiness be selfish, if true fraternity do not knit man to man, heart to heart, in loyal service to the common need, and generous self-sacrifice to the common good." All this theosophy taught, and showed why. Fraternity was based, not on the physical side of nature, which individualised, but in the deepest recesses of Spirit; the human race was one—because divine. Hence Annie Besant in the true inspiration of her life, neither swerved nor seceded; she pressed up the steep mountain-side, her horizon increasing as she climbed. In accepting the theosophical principles she had to, in the real sense, give up so little, she was free to retain so much—her "brotherhood of man," her selflessness of aim, her zeal for human welfare and redemption, her thirst for higher knowledge, the solution of the mysteries of being, the capacities for labour, sacrifice and study—all were met and more than met, not only for her but for all in proportion to their evolution, and the evolution of the spiritual nature. The Christ of the past was no longer a mystery or a myth, but a living fact in human life—a possibility of Man redeemed from the Selfhood. Did she not know already souls so great that they had passed over "a path of renunciation for the sake of others of which she had never dreamed," and who surpassed her greatest ideal? The threads of her life—the child's worship of the saintlike, the later labour for human liberty and weal, the fraternity of the socialist, were woven into a strand

of strength. The light came, because she had barred no window wherein light could come. Madame Blavatsky exercised no power, no influence, that was not already forged in the soul of Mrs. Besant. Hitherto she had worked in the world of results, hoping for results; now she beheld the realm of causes, and could work for consequences as she had never worked before. It is an inspiration to read this book. In it we behold a woman, ordained not by a theologist in an ecclesiastical institution, but a "chosen priestess" called to world-wide work by a mighty influx of forces which she had drawn around her in a known present and an unknown past. Repudiating this or that outer form of religion, she ever seized on its spirit. Her life-sacrifices were remarkable—made not only once,—this, many are capable of doing, but repeated over and over again, and involving her dearest interests, peace, and popularity. She left home and child for conscience sake; she waged the war of freedom of speech on the population question when it meant loss of reputation; she espoused Socialism in the face of Mr. Bradlaugh's antagonism when she perceived its doctrines had a righteous claim to be heard, and when at last she was beginning to emerge into the sunshine of appreciation, she resigned her seat on the London School-board to devote herself wholly to labours that no other woman could so well accomplish—labour for theosophy, the most unpopular, the most profound mission of all. Always she took the scorned and discredited side when she beheld its uses. It is a splendid record of a Woman's life. Like Joan of Arc two mighty forces pulsed within her, aspiration and the love of liberty. Her labour was ever a religion; her soul was ever fired with the impulse to free, to elevate, to purify humanity. Many will read the story of her life who will not realise its central law, and some will cavil at what they blindly call its "shifts and changes," but others—not a few—will learn from its pages noble and lasting lessons. It has been said here and there by some that theosophy will not be Mrs. Besant's finality. This is because they misunderstand theosophy, wherein no finality exists. It is a part of its teaching, founded on practical experience, that nature unveils in proportion to the spiritual purity of the student, and the plane of consciousness reached. Hence to-morrow is not bounded by to-day. In Annie Besant we behold among us now, a Woman who is Free, consecrated by divinest powers to holiest work, full of the moral strength beside which physical force withers to pales. She has explained herself while she can, and the guess-work of interpretation of motives and actions which runs through so many biographies is henceforth impossible. It is significant that women have begun to stand forth as the world's teachers, apostles and messengers in things relating to the deepest problems of being. And it points like a risen star of the morning, to the dawn of the new day, the race that is to be—the Victors over the senses, dwelling in Peace

"which must spread broad in other suns and lift  
In later lives a crowned head to the sky."

Not yet shall these pioneers be understood—their work recognised and welcomed. This generation has not yet won its way to the intuitions and the perceptions which transcend the intellectual conclusions of the Schools, and bitterly still is the Truth assailed which throws light on Religion and Science, and is bound by neither. But when they have passed into the silence, their works shall follow them, and no matter what the conflict of the hour may be, some of us at least know we could then truly say in looking backward with gratitude over Annie Besant's triumphant and faithful life,—

"Take comfort, thou hast left behind  
Powers that will work for thee; air, earth, and  
skies;  
There's not a breathing of the common wind  
That will forget thee; thou hast great allies;  
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,  
And Love, and man's unconquerable mind!"  
S. E. G.

THE CHILDREN'S LEAGUE OF PITY PAPER, gives us interesting accounts of the labour of love carried on by the "League of Pity," and the encouraging results. The kind workers are full of plans and mean to do so much, filled with hope and strength by what has been already the outcome of their work in the past. "We seem," says the cheery Editor, "to step out of our bed on New Year's morning into a beautiful, clear, fresh world—ready to begin again." The children this Christmas have been made happy by cards and little presents sent by kind friends, and the "good, kind matron" so beloved by the children, so full of love to them—of whom we have a most delightful sketch in this number, January 1894—has been made happy by many garments sent. How easily many persons could send garments, cards and picture books to these little ones. All that is wanted to enable us to do it and to help many is thought and active kindness.

"THE HUMANITARIAN" always excellent, contains this month, some articles of special interest. First, in point of arrangement, in literary merit, and in matter, comes that by the editor herself entitled "The Humanitarian Movement." It is deserving of close study. In "an Italian view of the Woman Movement" we have many sentences worth remembering, clever, keen and to the point. At the close a proposal is made which if well carried out would produce some powerful results; we give it verbatim. "Would it be possible on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary (1895) of the restitution of Rome to Italy, and the fall of the Pope's temporal power, to hold an International Woman's Congress in Rome, for the furtherance of the Cause."

We can only say it ought to be possible, and that if so, we should hope to be present at such a gathering. Many women would embrace such an opportunity.

"When in company forget the faults of others."  
—Chinese.  
"A wise man's day is worth a fool's life."  
—Arabic Proverb.

## Mice and Rats and Such Small Deer.

In a world like ours, where nothing is without its use, where either religion or common sense teaches us that everything has its place, its *raison d'être*, it is not in reason for us to treat with contempt any part of the marvellous whole of which we ourselves are but a part. Hence, while at this time there are grave matters, and of serious import, under consideration, I yet am moved to say a few words to such as will listen on behalf of the much-despised Rat.

I think I will speak chiefly to the working classes, and more to men than to women, because it is the men of the working classes who mostly deal with rats, and who are in the habit of treating them with great contempt and with consequent cruelty. What has led me to write this paper is a very sad sight that lately came under my notice. My sister having to be in the garden late at night heard issuing from behind the stables a most piteous cry, and at the same moment the dog rushed to the spot where the cry came from. He searched at first in vain, but finally under a heap of timbers I heard a sound, and we knew that whatever was in pain, lay there. With difficulty we removed the pieces of wood from a narrow space behind the building, and there we saw what I shall not easily forget. A young rat, caught by one hind leg, in an iron spring trap. The limb was nearly severed, and so mangled by the cruel teeth of the trap and with the efforts of the little creature to escape, that it bore scarcely any resemblance to its original form—blood and fur and torn flesh were mingled all together. All that was left for us to do was to kill the rat as quickly as possible, and a pail of water was procured for the purpose. Meantime the courageous animal busied itself in efforts to gnaw off the imprisoned limb. It uttered no more cries now and seemed to understand that we wished to help it and gazed with large, frightened, but intelligent eyes at our movements. It made no effort whatever to bite although in freeing the trap from the pieces of timber under which it lay, I know that great pain must have been caused to the poor mangled body. All was at last finished and the unhappy little creature, that but for the accident of its cry being heard might have lain in torture there for hours, released from pain. But the thought that was in my mind all the while was this,—at this moment there are thousands of these traps set, thousands of miserable animals thus being tortured, and thousands of men and boys are responsible for the suffering so heedlessly caused, so courageously endured.

Now, rats must doubtless be killed when they over-run a place, but I see no reason why they should be tortured. We are in the habit of considering them as "vermin"—a word that I wish might be expunged from our dictionary since the use of it actually leads to cruelty. And I have heard it related by an officer of the R.S.P.C.A. that being one night late at a country inn, he heard piercing screams issuing from the yard.

Going out to see, he found the (in this case) woman of the house in the act of throwing a number of rats into a fire. He remonstrated, but was met by the answer that it was done purposely, because the cries of the perishing rats would drive away others. He could do nothing to punish, nor even to prevent, this brutal act, for rats are "vermin," and upon them, therefore, it seems that any cruelty may be perpetrated with impunity. This, however, does not release the perpetrator from the moral responsibility of his act.

Perhaps if men realised that the animal they ruthlessly torment suffers no less than their own faithful dog would suffer under the same circumstances, and that it is, in fact, a highly intelligent animal, they would not treat it so mercilessly. Perhaps on reflection they would also realise that while they are within their rights in destroying an obnoxious animal, they have no right whatsoever in the sight of God or of Humanity to put any animal to torture and leave it lingering in agony as rats are left to linger. There are methods of getting rid of these animals that do not incur protracted torture, and no person is justified in seeking to protect himself and his property by means of so cruel an instrument as a spring trap, nor to use any such brutal artifice as the one above mentioned (fire), for to the humblest even we have duties, as the highest have duties to us.

E. M. BEEBY.

### QUIDA in "The New Priesthood."

"It is a fact well known to all who have given any attention to such subjects, that the fear of a disease increases enormously the susceptibility to it; and that nervous apprehension will often cause the very evil which it dreads. Fear lowers the tone, and predisposes the whole system to the ready reception and incubation of contagion. Yet it is this timidity which is inculcated and intensified by the medical science of the age." (In reference to this the following quotation is given from the writings of Comte Charles de Macey:—"A sickness, a momentary breakdown of any organ, does not imperil one's life if force sufficient to eliminate the morbid principle is exerted, if one makes use of the necessary remedies in time, does not lose courage or give way to despair, but fights against it with vigour and perseverance.")

"A portion of the teaching of physiologists and bacteriologists to the world is, that everything which is seen, touched, lent, borrowed, or employed in the intercourse of daily life, teems with atoms which are the active purveyors of disease; even a bank note in one's purse may teem with germs of pestilential maladies, and the parrot in our chamber may swarm with parasites deadly to human life. Death is not only in the pot, in the scriptural phrase, but in the hansom cab, in the milk jug, in the doormat, in the linen from the laundry, in the gutter of the street, in the splinter of wood which breaks in our fingers as we strike a match or feed a fire. It is the *reductio ad absurdum* of bacteriology, no doubt, but it is nevertheless the kind of teaching which makes cowards of the whole human race."

## Who are the Anarchists?

IN the inevitable confusion following closely upon the heels of the recent dynamite outrages on the Continent, much loose talk has been indulged in, concerning Anarchy and Anarchists. In the eager anxiety of thoughtless journalists, to fasten blame upon political and religious opponents, the term *Anarchist* has been variously interpreted, until at last it includes such widely varying schools of thought as Atheists, Conservatives, Socialists, and Home Rulers.

Readers of *SHAFTS* will have been amused to watch the *Daily Chronicle* and *Daily News* commenting upon the Parish Councils Debate, labelling the Unionist Opposition, as Political Anarchists. The *Manchester City News* considers "that the Socialist, and Secularist parties will have to dissociate themselves from, and denounce the practices of the homicidal Anarchists." The *Standard* referring to the organised search parties in France swooping down upon the residences of well-known Anarchists, complained bitterly that the houses of several well-known Socialists were exempt from these inconveniences. The *Pall Mall Gazette* however, on January 3rd out-distanced even these absurdities, by minimising the attempts of the "half educated, half crazy individuals, who perpetrate outrages in the name of anarchy." The *P.M.G.* reserves its chief blame for those French statesmen, who a few years ago criticised the Balfour regime in Ireland. These are the people, says the *Pall Mall*, whose speeches and doctrines are responsible for most of the outrages.

It seems astonishingly difficult for partisans on either side to realise that on the opposite side may occasionally be found some share of truth, a love of justice, and an enthusiasm for the welfare of one's country. But if these misrepresentations take place concerning those who, whatever their misdeeds, are at least innocent of the principles of Anarchism, what measure of justice or even of comprehension, is to be meted out to those who profess and call themselves Anarchists? Let us clear our minds of cant, and endeavour to differentiate between murderers and partisans, between criminals and thoughtful adherents of a philosophical school. Anarchists are not necessarily assassins. They are simply those who have come to the conclusion that as a family can exist very comfortably and happily with no binding tie save that of love, so the commonwealth might rest securely with no written law and no enforcing authority.

The Socialists' case against the Anarchists is concisely and convincingly stated in a recent Fabian tract, entitled "The Impossibilities of Anarchy." But Anarchism like any other system, must be met by argumentative criticism, and not by the policeman's truncheon. If there are, as seems likely, judging by recent events, certain anarchists whose unfortunate surroundings, or vicious tastes, induce them to pose as enemies of society, they must be treated as any other kind of criminal. Society has every right to protect itself, and the ordinary law is powerful enough for the pur-

## Recreations.

MISS ROSE SEATON gave recently two Recitals at the Marlborough Room, Polytechnic, Regent Street; the first of which in December last we were so unfortunate as not to be able to attend; but of which we heard great things. On January the 10th this gifted artiste was at her best, and gave well-chosen selections from Tennyson's "Queen Mary" and Sir Edwin Arnold's "Light of the World." They were well worth the trouble we took to reach the rooms in time to hear them. Miss Seaton gives her pieces with wonderful power and effect. One is carried away by her pathos, wit, and character representation.

Maligned as "Queen Mary" has been, it was impossible not to enjoy the clever impersonation. The Mary of history stood before us, the imperious manner, the hasty uncontrolled judgment, the envy, cruelty, the evil passions with which history has delighted to endow her, all complete. The pathos, pain and exultation—culminating in great heights and depths of love and gratitude—of the Magdalen in Arnold's "Light of the World" were executed in a manner that proved Miss Seaton to be mistress of her subject and of herself; and left nothing to be desired. A little thing (Dutch) an irresistible blending of sweetness, comedy, and pathos concluded this most delightful evening.

### WOMAN'S PROGRESSIVE SOCIETY.

Under the auspices of this Society, and in aid of its funds, some Tableaux Vivants, followed by a Dramatic performance were given at the Drill Hall, Chenies-street, on the evening of Wednesday, the 10th inst. at 8 p.m. The performance was exceedingly good, and well merited the encomiums bestowed upon it by the audience. The large Hall was filled in every row, by an audience who knew how to appreciate, and whose enjoyment was very apparent. Monacella, (by Agnes Stonehewer (Mrs. Morgan Browne), was well arranged; the tableaux picturesque and exceedingly beautiful, the dresses both in this part and in the Princess were artistic and charming, and contributed greatly to the success of the interesting pictures, also to the effective acting of the *dramatis personæ* in the Princess. We are indebted to the Misses Burnham for the arrangement of these pretty, quaint dresses harmonising so well with the scenes represented. Miss Beatrix Morgan Browne made an admirable Princess Monacella, and a special interest was added in the reading by Mrs. Morgan Browne of portions explanatory of the scenes presented.

Each part in Tennyson's Princess was well sustained and full of interest. Though the poet's sentiments with regard to women, as expressed in the poem, and in the drama taken from it, cannot recommend themselves to earnest, thoughtful women, the interest in the acting and the actors, was not lessened by that fact. Some songs were sung with much feeling and capitally accompanied which contributed not a little to the unqualified pleasure of the evening. Several members of the W.P.S. were present. Among

them we observed the energetic Secretary Mrs. Grenfell, to whom so much of the success of the Society is due. Mrs. Messingberd a member of committee, an ardent worker for Temperance, also the President and Founder of the Pioneer Club; Madame Veigélé, an enthusiastic little French lady, a very earnest worker, for women, and for vegetarianism, with her daughter and several friends. Many Pioneers were also present, and though the performance lasted long there were no signs of weariness. Mrs. Morgan Browne and the W.P.S. certainly deserved the thanks so lavishly bestowed.

## Arrows.

Be just even to injustice, if you would give it the death-blow.

Class wrongs are growths from sex wrongs.

Most religions are founded on the assumption that if God gave you your being, some Devil gave you your reason.

She who makes paying capital of her wrongs, does not want rights, for then, her honest sister would be at even with her.

There is a perpetually blushing, perpetually shocked, immodesty which poses as modesty.

Men invent a religion that they may profit by it; and that women may follow it.

Serve the weak and grow strong.

E. WARDLAW BEST.

### RUSSIAN FREEDOM.

Mr. George Kennan, the well-known American Traveller, has been lecturing in the interests of Russian Freedom, before a large audience, gathered to hear him in Prince's Hall, Piccadilly, and delivered the first of a series of lectures on "Political Exiles at Siberian Convict Mines," on the evening of Monday last Dr. Spence Watson presiding. In the course of the evening, Mr. Kennan put on a Siberian convict dress, including the leg fetters, which he had smuggled out of the country. The lecture was at once deeply interesting and moving, while the pathos was relieved by passages of fine dry humour in which the enterprising journalist described the awkward situation in which the pursuit of the truth in relation to Siberia had repeatedly placed him.

The friends of Russian Freedom are fighting a hard battle, hardest perhaps of all battles for freedom, the cruelties described are revolting, and almost beyond belief, were it not that we all know only too well how terrible is the hate and rage human beings can cherish towards each other. Help is sorely needed to encourage the often dismayed toilers in this dark field of labour, and there are many who when they know how they can help will gladly do so.

Mrs. Charles Mallet is one of the foremost of English workers, for the deliverance of the Russian Slave.

pose, even if an epidemic of such crimes rendered necessary a large addition to our police and detective forces.

Anarchists, while they agree as to their ultimate aim, are as widely sundered as to methods, as the two poles. The best known Anarchists in this country are three typical persons, between whom there is not the remotest likeness as far as immediate work is concerned. They are Prince Krapotkin, the Russian Nihilist; William Morris, who expects to reach Anarchy, via "the living wage" and general trades union organisation; and Mr. Auberon Herbert, the aristocratically connected Conservative, who lives in daily dread lest even the Tories should become too progressive. While such differences as these exist amongst Anarchists, it is exceedingly foolish to contemplate them as a happy family meeting together to plan outrages, and generally to unite in the destruction of society.

Is it too much to hope while we leave no stone unturned to secure our lives and comfort from the depredations of criminals and madmen, that our most serious attention will be devoted to the problem of how these dangerous classes are manufactured. Are our slums the breeding houses of virtue? is our unjust competitive system quite certain to produce fruits of justice, mercy, and love? Ruskin says: "It is better and kinder to flog a man to his work, than to leave him idle till he robs, and flog him afterwards."

GEORGE BEDBOROUGH.

## Music.

Among Messrs. Ascherberg's latest publications may be mentioned the following, all of which are pretty, some well worthy of mention.

First.—An Album of six charming songs by Denza; easily learnt, harmonious and pleasing.

Second.—An Album of four songs, pretty and suggestive of tender thought, by Paston Cooper.

Third.—A Book containing six short sketches for the Piano called "The Children's Garden," by Edward Cutler; which are instructive as each sketch is in a different style of playing.

Fourth.—"La danse des étoiles," by J. M. Glover; light, graceful, pleasing.

Fifth.—A very pretty waltz by Daisy Sopwith, harmonious and inspiring throughout.

Sixth.—"Charmian." A Pas de quatre, by Popplewell Royle; rather taking.

Seventh.—"Mignon," by Guy d'Hardelot; a pretty, light little song.

Eighth.—"Bolero," by Raymond Roze; very satisfactory, very pleasing, sung by Madame Marie Roze.

Ninth.—"A Last Appeal," by Alfred Plumpton; a song that will please, pathetic and pretty.

Tenth.—Though last not least come two very good songs, touching and tender especially the latter, sung by Miss Florence St. John. Both songs composed by R. Leonravallo.

## A Woman's Invention.

IT has often been objected,—among many other objections to the claim of women for political and social equality with men—that women are obviously inferior in the creative and inventive faculties. It is therefore agreeable to an ardent advocate of "women's rights" to meet with an inventor whom Mother Nature has perversely thus endowed, altho' of the non-inventive sex.

I know an inventor who is a woman, a gentle little Scotchwoman; and, of all the things that the world still lacked, she has chosen perhaps the most useful, certainly one most urgently called for—viz., a Torrent Washer. One has heard—without enthusiasm—of the American woman who invented a machine for turning out barrels, with astonishing ease, speed and accuracy; thus enormously diminishing the cost, and improving the quality of that useful article. The consideration which damps enthusiasm for this woman's invention is the curse which barrels bear in being made the receptacles of such quantities of a fluid that destroys. But, after all, she could not help that, and was probably thinking of the apples, sugar, and molasses requiring barrels also, when her mind began to work upon a better way of making them. Anyway, her invention was certainly a clever one, and helps to prove that the inventive faculty is not absent in women. But, that a lady should invent a machine for purifying things, and that without a finger touching them—is so singularly appropriate,—so naturally the outcome of her ordinary life, with its special experiences, that the "Torrent Washer" seems one of the most beautiful inventions ever thought out, and finally perfected by human genius.

One has heard with pride mingled with compunction, that it was a woman who originated the idea of the Shot Tower, which drops that fatal little missile, by quintillions, upon a shuddering world: but in the case of the "Torrent Washer" there is nothing to qualify the pleasure one feels in the fact that this simple and beautiful idea proceeded from a woman's brain.

I have it from Mrs. Mackie herself, that she "was first set a-thinking" in the direction of the Washer by observing the foreign plan of pouring boiling lye through the clothes all day long; a lengthy and most laborious process, which, however, certainly obtains the excellent result of a snowy wash. Mrs. Mackie thought it over, aiming at the same result with less labour and time; and one evening, *à propos de bottes*, she asked her husband the following question. "Suppose one fitted a pot, with a hole at the bottom, into a larger pot in such fashion that there should be a vacuum between the two everywhere, except at the top, where they should fit perfectly; and then, suppose one poured water into the inner pot, until it was full; would not the water rise to the top in the space between the two?"—"Certainly, it would," said he—"But, what of that?"—"Why this"—she cried, "that I have invented something which will make our fortunes!"—and I am happy to believe that her joyous prophecy is likely to prove a true one.

The "Torrent Washer" consists of a zinc or copper pan, fitted to an ordinary copper or to a larger pan. Beneath the inner pan are a steam trap and a funnel, by means of which, when in use, a constant and powerful circulation of hot water is produced and maintained. The funnel almost reaches the bottom of the outer pot or copper, and so prevents the boiling water there from rising into the inner vessel, within which the water never attains the boiling point. Boiling water, as is well known, fixes the stain in clothes; but water below the boiling point dissolves and rinses out the dirt. When a kettle boils on the fire, the steam confined by the lid forces the water out of the spout. The steam trap beneath the Washer in like manner forces the boiling water up between the two pans, and jets it in powerful streams through the ring of holes which encircles the top of the inner pan; and as the hot suds percolate thus unceasingly through the clothes, these are rapidly and completely cleansed, without friction of any kind; so that our cherished "things" need no longer come back to us worn into holes or torn into ribbands by clumsy fingers or machine! The "Torrent Washer" then, performs the operation, described above, automatically and perfectly, and takes only from twenty to forty minutes to gain the same result which, by the foreign plan, it needs a laborious day to produce. This most beneficent of labour saving machines need not, as so many must, throw anyone out of work. It will only make laundry work less laborious, by abolishing all rubbing and scrubbing, with the painful stooping attitude involved; and less unwholesome and unpleasant, by doing away utterly with the steam of soiled clothes, in which the work is now generally carried on. For, by some mysterious alchemy of nature—unexplained as yet at all events—in the use of the "Torrent Washer," there is no such steamy unpleasantness. It will allow of more cleanliness for the money we pay at present; but it cannot supersede the Laundry or the Laundry Woman, while clothes must be starched, dried, ironed, and mangled—which operations need more space, and special skill, than are to be found in most homes. It would be well for all housekeepers to set up a small Washer, if only for kitchen clothes and rubbers—disagreeable, ill-paid work, very inefficiently done under the present system,—and for laces, and such precious things as no one would send to a Laundry. For infected clothes, too, it would be invaluable—as it is able to purify and cleanse them thoroughly, by the mere automatic circulation through them of the hot, soapy water, to which might be added some simple disinfectant;—and this without labour, unpleasantness or risk to anyone.

The Washer is made of all sizes and prices to suit all needs and means; but that which will be most interesting to the readers of SHAFTS—as to most housekeepers—is the domestic or kitchen variety, which my inventor—without knowing anything about the Pioneer Club, or the Pioneer movement among women—has spontaneously christened the Pioneer Torrent Washer. This is made

in an oval shape like a fish-kettle—and is as moveable as any other pan. It can be set to boil like a kettle upon the range, or over a gas ring, fed by a tube from the nearest burner. It may be fitted with a tap to run off the dirty water—to be replaced by clean until it runs off pure—and it is just perfect of its kind. It has been awarded medals and prizes at several local exhibitions—and is now pictorially advertised in the A. & N. Circular—to which or to Mrs. Mackie herself, 17, Howley Place, Maida Hill, W., I beg to refer any of your readers who may wish for more details.

In making much of this exquisitely simple invention, I have two objects. First, to give to the woman inventor her due meed of praise; secondly, to stimulate other feminine brains to exercise and develop any rudimentary inventive powers they may possess. We must all be aware of defects in the existing machinery of social life. Let those amongst us who are the happy owners of original ideas, who are full of resources—who feel, in short, that they are, to some extent at least, endowed with the inventive faculty men deny to us—let them set to work at once to remedy these defects. Let them not be discouraged by male jeers, or daunted by the doubts of the male critic; but read up the subject at the British Museum,—examine what has been already done in the line they fix on, at the Patent Office, and then improve upon it. There are thousands of opportunities for talent, in the improvement of the domestic hearth, of the kitchen range; in domestic ventilation; in the means for economising space in house furnishing; in improved methods for cleansing the different parts and adjuncts of a house; in the combination of the useful with the beautiful, in the multifarious articles in daily use in a family,—not to mention that great desideratum the rationalisation of dress.

Let our inventive geniuses then follow the example of my friend Mrs. Mackie, and help the world to be clean and comfortable—at the same time helping also to remove a time honoured reproach from their sex.

ISABEL GWYNNE.

SOCIAL life began, centuries ago, just where legal life stands to-day. It began with the recognition of men only. Woman was nothing; she was a drudge; she was a toy; she was a chattel; she was a connecting link between man and the brute. That is oriental civilisation. We drift westward, into the sunlight of Christianity and European civilization, and, as Milton paints animal life freeing itself from the clod, and tells us, you recollect, of the tawny lion, with his mane and fore-feet liberated, pawing to get free his hinder parts—so the mental has gradually freed itself from the encumbrance of the animal, and we come round to a society based on ideas, based on thought, based on soul. What is the result? Why, it would be idle to say that woman is man's equal. She is his superior. . . . But law is halting back just where that old civilisation was; we want to change it.

WENDELL PHILLIPS.

## Current News and Notes.

Mdme. Köchlinswartz, the President of the Union des Femmes de France (for the relief of soldiers wounded in action), has been made Chevalier of the Legion of Honour.

Scholarships are open to competition for girls at the Horticultural College, Swanley. Terms for residence and instruction are £80 per annum.

Mdlle. Dorothea Klumpke, has just passed a brilliant examination for the degree of Doctor of Mathematics, before the Faculty of Science, in Paris. Her thesis on the rings of Saturn has been highly commended, and she has been connected for some time with the Paris Observatory.

A number of women have successfully passed examinations in various subjects, and appear in the Honours List issued by the Science and Art Department.

Among the ladies who have gone through hospital training, is Lady Griselda Ogilvy, the sister of the Earl of Airlie.

Madame Nahida Remy, a German, who published a work on *The Jewish Woman* which has been widely read, and has lectured on *Woman and the Talmud*, etc., has just completed *Culture Studies in Judaism*. She is an excellent Hebrew scholar and is deeply versed in Jewish history.

Mrs. Louie Gallaher has been appointed one of the two inspectors chosen by the Corporation of Dublin to supervise the regulations of the recent Shop Hours' Act.

Miss Clare Collet, one of the Labour Commissioners, has been reporting on the lack of seats for shop-assistants still existing, which force the latter to stand the entire day.

Mrs. Bloomfield Moore's work on *Keely and his Discoveries* has just been published by Kegan Paul, Trubner and Co.

The High School system in France for the higher education of girls has recently received a great impulse by the establishment of a College at Sevres, near Paris, which sends out thoroughly qualified teachers.

Mrs. Josephine Butler has published a pamphlet on the life of St. Agnes, in the interests of social purity.

The women of New Orleans are organising anti-pugilistic leagues. If women would organise against all kinds of brutal cruelty—the killing of birds for ornament and the slaughter of animals for food etc.—such cruelty would be short lived.

THE ignorant physical nature grovels in its worship before the image of a great ideal; the intellectual nature reasons about it; the spiritual nature seeks to grow to the ideal's standard.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

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

### "FAILURES OF THEIR SEX."

DEAR MADAM,—It is instructive to note the real opinions men entertain with regard to our sex, when, in unguarded moments, they speak from the heart and not from the lips upon subjects which concern us.

Mr. Gibson Bowles, M.P., made two remarkable statements when the House was in committee on the Local Government Bill on Tuesday November 21st and was considering the question of the women's vote.

First, he said it was "a bill for turning women into men."

This is extremely interesting. According to Mr. Gibson Bowles, the operations of Nature can be controlled or altered by Act of Parliament. At least, this is what his remark might lead one to suppose!

Then, he observed that "women who were not married were the failures of their sex."

This opens up a vast field for discussion, upon which I shall not enter, but I should just like to ask how Mr. Gibson Bowles proposes to get over the little difficulty of there being, in this country at any rate, about two women to every man? *A propos* of this, I have heard men suggest that they should not be limited to one wife, and if it could be arranged, I have no doubt that a Bill for The Extension of Domestic Felicity According to Mormon Principles would be an extremely popular measure amongst the male members of the community, for every man is at heart a polygamist.

Finally, Mr. Gibson Bowles remarked that "this was not the proper way to deal with a very serious question."

On this latter point, I quite agree with him, and strongly recommend him to leave the matter to those who can, and will, deal with it in a "proper way."

Yours faithfully,  
AMY MONTAGUE.

### AT THE ANTIPODES.

DEAR MRS. SIBTHORP,—I will not let the New Year go by without sending you and your work a word of good wishes and God speed in the coming year. I am sending also an article from the *Sydney Morning Herald*, on the subject of the Woman Franchise in New Zealand, which, as you know, is there a 'fait accompli.' The *S. M. Herald* over there represents our *Times* in England, and is more or less a Conservative Organ, but reading between the lines one sees how the vested interests of Publicans, and Professional Politicians are likely to be shaken to their foundations by the disinterested attitude of New Zealand Women. The Publicans and the various caterers for Vice were the bitterest opponents in Sydney of the Woman's Suffrage League; the *flower* of the Labour Members were all with us! I am also enclosing a very noble letter from the President of that League in answer to some of her recent critics. The present Government under Dibbs are averse to the measure, but Sir

Henry Parkes had already introduced it in his last electioneering programme.

Some extracts from the article might perhaps be of interest to your readers who scarcely realise perhaps what a useful field are our Colonies for political experiments. They have led the way with payment of Members, and to New Zealand now belongs the honour of having first granted the Suffrage to Women; whilst "One man one Vote" finds an ardent supporter in that venerable and truly liberal Statesman Sir George Grey, and is echoed by the whole community of workers, and of—women.

FRIEND TO SHAFTS.

### FINANCIAL.

DEAR MADAM,—Your efforts in the cause of Justice and Purity are noble, but how unfair that you should yourself bear the whole burden of setting this splendid paper upon its feet!

Cannot a hundred women be found who will join hands in helping to bear the responsibility with you, by taking up small shares (say £1 shares) upon the understanding that they shall have their money back in one, two, or three years? I will procure holders for, or will take myself, 5 £1 shares if 95 others will come forward and lend £1 each; this they may rightly feel—however generous-hearted—that they would not be justified in *giving*.

Since you stake so much I earnestly hope a sufficient number will be found willing to risk this trifle.

With sincerest good wishes, I am, yours faithfully,  
S. HEBDITCH.

### A SUGGESTION.

MADAM,—All who are interested in SHAFTS and the work it is doing, should try to increase its circulation by all means in their power. I have adopted the following plan. In addition to the copy I receive from the office, I subscribe for a second copy which I get through the local newsagent, with the understanding that it is to remain on the counter until I call for it. If anyone wishes to look at it, the newsagent is at liberty to sell it to them, thus giving him or her an interest in calling the attention of customers to the paper. I hope to gain a few more subscribers by this very simple plan. Yours faithfully,  
AMY MONTAGUE.

### THE STREETS FOR THE HORSES.

DEAR EDITOR,—Is it possible by combination to force the authorities, in the interest of the long suffering horses, to look after the condition of our streets and to cause sand or gravel to be thrown down regularly, so as to save unnecessary suffering by falling, or nervous terror to the horses, our faithful uncomplaining servants. It is astounding to many of us, how people can ride to and fro, day after day, and raise no voice against this most culpable want of thought, and absence of a sense of duty. No peace should be given to the newspapers; they should be stormed, until this cruelty, this wanton carelessness, is effectually put an end to.

A. SHURMER.



## WOMEN AS BARMAIDS.

DEAR MADAM:—May I, through the columns of your valuable paper, draw the attention of your readers to the above heading? and also ask one question, Does the position occupied by this class of women-workers tend to *raise or lower* the moral and social standing of women? Trusting to receive some answer from intelligent, earnest thinkers (women or men), and if possible to discuss this matter.—I beg to remain

A WOMAN.

## FRANCIS WILLARD in "How to Win."

"The trouble is, we women have all along been set down on the world's programme for a part quite different from the one we really play upon its stage. For instance, the programme reads: "Woman will take the part of Queen in the Drama of Society," but oftentimes, before the curtain falls, the stage reveals her as a dressmaker, a school teacher—perchance that most abused of mortals—a reformer! The programme reads: "This august actress will be escorted to the stage by Man, her loyal and devoted subject, to whom has been assigned the part of shielding her from the glare of the footlights, and shooting anybody in the audience who dares to hiss." But, alas! oftentimes the stage reveals her coming in alone, dragging her own sewing-machine, while her humble and devoted subject, with tailors' goose in one hand and scissors in the other, indicates by energetic pantomime his fixed intention to drive her speedily behind the scenes. The programme, my beloved innocents, attires you all in purple and fine linen and bids you fare sumptuously every day, but not infrequently the stage reveals you attired in calico gowns, and munching your hard-earned crackers and cheese.

\* \* \*

As we behold woman now, in this or in any other country, she is such as she has become after centuries of a certain treatment, positive and negative, which has assuredly been modified from time to time, and with an increasing tendency, it will not be denied, to acknowledge her right to a higher and freer position than that which she once held, and in which a certain progress, as we may safely call it, is clearly perceptible. It follows that in regarding her at the present stage of her career, we are no more entitled than we should have been at any former stage, to assume that here we have reached the ultimatum, and to say, "Thus far has she gone, no further shall she go; this, and no other, is the position, educational or social, for which by the nature of things she is fitted and ordained."—W. B. HODGSON.

GENEROSITY may come with holiday gifts, but justice fills our cup with every-day comfort. We cannot live upon gifts; if we do we are degraded. Justice offers nothing but what may be accepted with honour, and lays claim to nothing in return but what we ought not even to withhold. There is indeed no generosity so real as that of conceding rights.—*Woman's Rights and Duties.*

## Pure Farm Produce Depot.

MRS. HEBDITCH, of Ilminster, Somerset, has just started this depôt, connected with the Offices of SHAFTS in this way, that the arrangements are made to be the means of contributing a little towards the funds necessary to keep SHAFTS afloat. In a letter under the heading of Correspondence, Mrs. Hebditch writes very kindly in reference to the paper, makes a proposal and a promise. I, and all who are interested in SHAFTS, have much cause to thank Mrs. Hebditch heartily.

The Depot is started primarily, with the intention of supplying Londoners with good, fresh fruit of every description, while in season; also such fruits preserved and bottled when out of season. The bottled fruits are quite a treat, the preserves capital. Dairy Produce, Devonshire Cream, Butter and Eggs can be supplied to regular weekly customers. Everything is fresh and good; *of the very best*; the wholemeal is excellent, wholesome, delightful. An account of a holiday spent at the Farm will appear in next month's issue giving a description of the improvements being carried out there, and the ultimate aim of the owners. Annexed are a few recipes sent from New Cross Farm.

## WINTER DELICACIES.

Apples and pears preserved whole in a delicious fruit syrup. This is made at New Cross Farm, and can be obtained in 2lb. jars at the Farm Produce Depot, Granville House, Arundel-street, Strand. All enquiries to be sent to SHAFTS Office.

These preserved fruits make an excellent accompaniment to all kinds of milk puddings, and to blanchmanges, and custards. It is also nice for breakfast with semolina or hominy porridge, and a pleasant addition to the evening meal, served in glass dishes and eaten with bread and butter. It is particularly good with macaroni, thus making a substantial as well as a tasty dish. Naples macaroni is simply boiled with milk, and slightly sweetened, or made into a pudding, and served with the preserve, or with milk alone.

A Macaroni Pudding may be made in these ways:—

1—Simmer 3 oz. of pipe macaroni till tender with a little lemon peel and cinnamon; drain and put into a buttered pie-dish; add one or two well-beaten eggs, a breakfast cup of the fruit syrup, milk and sugar to taste; place a crust round the edge of the dish and bake  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour. Serve with or without a dish of the preserved fruit.

2—Prepare 3oz. macaroni as above, and place in a pie dish. Sweeten 1 pint of milk with 1oz. sugar, boil and pour it over the macaroni. Bake in a hot oven. It may be flavoured to taste, and an egg may be added. Serve with a dish of preserved apples or pears.

Boiled custard. Put 1 pint milk, 2oz. sugar and the rind of  $\frac{1}{2}$  a lemon into a double saucepan, or gourmet boiler. When it boils remove the rind and stir in 1 tablespoonful of cornflour; simmer a few minutes, draw to

the side of the fire, and add 3 eggs well beaten. Stir till the custard thickens, but do not let it boil. Pour into little glasses or a glass dish. Grate a little nutmeg on the top, and when cold serve with a glass dish of preserved apples or pears. One or two extra eggs may be substituted for the cornflour.

The syrup, of which there is abundance, is nice for fruit salads.

Here is a simple one, but one that is much liked.

Apple and orange salad.  
Pare and core 2 juicy apples, and cut them transversely to form rings. Peel 3 oranges and cut them in transverse slices. Arrange the slices of apple and orange alternately in a glass dish, sprinkle with a very little castor sugar, and barely cover with apple and pear syrup. A few blanched almonds may be added, if liked or some sliced Brazil kernels. This salad should be prepared over night, it requiring several hours to soak. If the oranges are sour, castor sugar must be sprinkled over them.

## DEATH OF LADY GEORGIANA WOLVERTON.

A much wider circle than that of her personal friends—will mourn the loss of Lady Georgiana Maria Wolverton, who died on Wednesday at her town house in South Audley-street. By her death thousands of poor and suffering men, women, and children lose a staunch friend. She helped them, not only with her ample means, but with incessant endeavour to show them the way to help themselves. There is hardly an institution for miles round her home which she did not help, and helping herself infused her enthusiastic spirit into others. The members of the Needlework Guild which she established in the interests of the poor, have grown in number from hundreds, into thousands and tens of thousands. Her death is felt as a personal loss by more than can be estimated.

## HELEN GARDNER, in "Pray you, Sir, whose Daughter?"

"I tell you gentlemen with my one term's experience in the Legislature and what it has taught me—I tell you that there is no outrage which wealth and power can commit upon men that it cannot and does not, commit doubly upon women. There is no cruelty, on all this cruel earth half so terrible as the tyranny of sex! . . . To woman, every man is a capitalist in wealth and in power. . . . The destruction of the poor is their *poverty*. It has been doubly woman's destruction. Her absolute financial dependence upon man has given him the power, and, alas that I should be compelled to say it!—the will, to deny her all that is best and loftiest in life, and even to crush out of her the love of liberty and the dignity of character which cares for the better things. Look at her education! Look at the disgraceful 'annexes' and side shifts which are made to prevent our sisters from acquiring as good an education as we claim for ourselves. Look at the awful, the horrible, the beastly laws we pass for women."