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WOMAN AND EVOLUTION



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# WOMAN AND EVOLUTION

By  
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and  
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LONDON  
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14 RED LION COURT, FLEET STREET, E.C.  
1909



## Woman and Evolution

ALTHOUGH the Woman's question has been considered from many different points of view, very little attention appears to have been paid to its biological significance.

We hope here to show that the present demand for the enfranchisement of women is not an isolated phenomenon, but an inevitable movement forward, in accordance with the great evolutionary scheme which has led life onward and upward, from the minutest microbe that we can discern under the most powerful microscope, to Man, in his present state of social development, and which will, we believe, carry on that development to some far higher level than the present.

The need for some great forward movement, some reconstruction of society is becoming more and more apparent to the thinkers of to-day, and what we hope to show is that, in the social life of the future, women have a vital part to play. If this is the case, if their development is a necessary and inevitable part of the great evolutionary whole, the question of women's suffrage rests upon a philo-

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sophic basis, and we shall find that it can be discussed, not only without passion, but with heightened interest, for the woman's movement then appears as one of the indications of the dawn of a new and happier era. The demand for the vote is but the first cry. The last will have carried us far into a reconstruction of society little dreamt of by the public of England to-day.

To the ordinary person, a reconstruction of society is almost unthinkable. He is hypnotised by the daily working of the only social machine he knows. Having been whirled around by it so long without catastrophe, he cannot believe that anything else could work equally well. Hence the very idea of change except, perhaps, in a few trifling details, fills the majority of people with dread, as of something that must inevitably be bad and break down. The habit of applying the word "good" to those who appear to fill the places assigned to them in the present social system without slip, makes it difficult to think of goodness apart from conformity to the conventions of the day. Though we do not usually admit the fact, morals are based as much upon convention as on principle. Hence people almost instinctively assume that any change in human relationships, especially if there is any kind of delicacy attached to these relationships, must end in licence and in loss of moral stamina. This is especially the case with regard to any suggested changes in the position of women.

The "ordinary person" is now confronted with an agitation in which a large number of the women

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of the country have joined, demanding their right to take part with men in the political life of the country, an agitation, not of a transient nature, but clearly destined to be perennial. In each coming generation, the "young bloods" among the women of England, whose fathers live again in them, as well as their mothers, lend the movement an ever-increasing vitality. It has already survived more than half a century of obloquy and derision, merely gaining in strength. Now, at a significant period, at the beginning of a century, it has emerged as an active political party, no longer to be mistaken for surface froth, for it is profound enough and vital enough to alter the whole social fabric.

There is something Homeric about the situation. Women, after centuries of subjection to "man-made" laws and conventions, step forward into the arena, claiming the right to emerge from the obscurity and confinement to which they have been condemned. They claim to be endowed with all the faculties exhibited by men, and yet, for ages past, they have not been allowed to develop their limbs, their brains, or their hearts freely. They have been looked upon primarily as child-bearing and nursing machines, with additional aptitudes for cooking and house work. Forced into marriage when mere children, they had no chance of maturing into intelligent adult human beings. Many generations of child marriages are alone enough to account for that inferiority to men with which they are taunted.



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The superior intelligence of which men boast is, women maintain, merely the human intelligence they also possess, developed by constant contact with a large number of complex problems that have never come within woman's sphere—national and international affairs have trained the faculties of men, the nursery and the home those of women. Even insufficiently cultivated as they have been, women claim to be not much inferior to men to-day, and assert that a few generations of free mental and physical development would fit them to take their full share in the more serious duties and responsibilities of social life. Such full freedom of development is, they maintain, a right and rational demand. Women do fully half the drudgery of the world, not only in domestic life, presumably under the beneficent protection of some man householder, but now very frequently on their own responsibility and at their own risk in offices, shops, fields, and factories, and yet they are not allowed to have any say as to the conditions under which that work shall be done. They see all round them the inevitable effects of a cruel competitive system which knows no mercy, no sex, no age, while they, whose gentler instincts are among the few unquestioned by men, are debarred from taking their share in the humanising of our social life.

This is a serious indictment, not merely an indictment against Fate, but a direct impeachment of Man. For it is men who have been responsible for the general dwarfing of the intelligence of half the human race. It was men who systematically plunged women into

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their sex functions too early, and thus robbed them of the chance of growing to what they might have been. Being mothers before they had ceased to be girls, their brains were left dormant and their energies directed to the unintelligent and almost automatic dandling of babies. In these days, when the call is for brains, even for supermen, it is startling to realise that the brains of half the race, and those the mothers', have never been allowed to ripen, the bloom of youth, the sweet ignorance of the child, being preferred in a wife to the most god-like of all gifts, the power of reasoning. As this power is the last human faculty to develop, women have been systematically debarred from its cultivation.

Even the "higher education," the right to which was wrested with such difficulty, has not, so far, been designed to bring out all the faculties of women, but rather to fit them for positions inferior to and subordinate to those of men. There is still some force in one of the first recorded complaints on the subject, made two hundred years ago by Mary Anstell, that "the other sex, by means of more extensive education, have a vaster field for their imaginations to rove in, and their capacities thereby enlarged." The demand for education has led on naturally to the demand for the Suffrage, and beyond this Suffrage agitation will come others, until women enjoy the full freedom now accorded to men.

The appeal of woman against man is, as we said, Homeric, and the question is, who will step in to judge between the contending parties. The older



gods have left a sceptical world in disgust, and the oracles are dumb. The doctrine of the subjection of Woman to Man, founded on the early chapters of Genesis, and endorsed by the utterances of Paul of Tarsus, is no longer widely accepted. Man himself cannot, of course, be both judge and defendant in the same case. The court sits, Woman has brought forward her charges; from without come the impatient clamours of the supporters of the plaintiff, and the impotent abuse or futile assertions\* of those of the defendant. But who is to fill the judgment-seat?

We venture to submit that Evolution is the new authority that should be called in to decide the question, and that to Evolution women may turn with confidence, for in the record of the Evolution of human societies abundant justification will be found for their claim to take a higher place in political and social life than has yet been accorded them; indeed, we hope to be able to show that their freedom, and fuller life, is essential to the welfare of mankind.

If we are to treat this subject biologically, we have, in the first place, to think of human beings, not as individuals flung separately into the struggle of life, but as integral parts of the social organism and, conversely, we have to regard human societies as living organisms, made up of a large number of component parts, or units.

\* e.g. that "Nature has made women what they are, and they have no right to try to be anything else."

We have probably all seen single animal cells under the microscope, swimming about and living a complete and independent life on a very lowly level, and we know that such cells, instead of each splitting up and producing two "daughter" cells, may form colonies or groups. By only partially dividing and then fusing together, cells can give rise to the tissues, organs, etc., of a many-celled animal such as the Sea-anemone, which is more complicated and therefore what we call "higher" than any single cell. For this reason, cells have been called the "units of structure" of animals higher in the scale of life than themselves. There is reason for believing that the grouping and fusing together of such "units" of a relatively low type to produce one of a higher type is not confined to the cell, but has occurred periodically during the evolution of life; once, at least, before the cell level, and several times since the cell built up the simplest type of many-celled animal. This seems, indeed, to be the method by which each new *type* of living organism has been developed, and by which life has gradually risen from the level of the minute lump of living jelly which, to our limited vision, is its earliest form, to that of Man. Or, to use an image from another sphere of Nature's activity, organic life may be said to have advanced out of the dim past in great waves, each one sweeping it upward to a higher level. The first wave that we can trace brought it up to the level of the Cell, while the one that is now bearing it forward to an unknown future carries Mankind on its topmost crest.



Man, as the culmination of the highest type of animal, the Vertebrate, has to be regarded as the unit that has built up the complicated organism of human society. There is one very important difference, however, between the grouping together of human units and that of cells. The cells that build up higher organisms never, as we said, entirely separate. They remain connected physically; but the "higher animals," even animals much lower than the Vertebrates, are separate individuals, the young animal, at birth, becoming separated from the parent. And yet, among these higher units as among the lower, there is some binding force, powerful enough to hold the units together in so intimate a manner as to produce an organism more complicated than any one of its component units. The binding element which takes the place of physical continuity comes very gradually into view as animals rise in the scale of life and develop what we call intelligence. It is the Mind or Soul element, the Psychic, as distinguished from the Physical element.

When and how this psychic element arose is, of course, far too large a question to be entered upon here. No one is at present able to say exactly at what level of life it first developed. But we shall not be far wrong in assuming that it had its source in the clinging together of mother and new-born child. Physically separated though mother and child become at the birth of the latter, there is still, in the higher animals, a very close clinging together; a very real and powerful bond exists between the

two for a length of time which varies with the period of helplessness of the young animal. In the case of human infants, so long unable to take care of themselves, the bond between mother and child is specially close, and this primitive "psychic" connection seems, by gradually widening out, to have given rise to all the other psychic bonds between human beings.

We must now attempt a very brief sketch of how the human units which built up the aggregates we call human societies became welded together, and how the latter developed from their earliest form into that in which we now play our parts.

As living organisms, human societies have naturally, from the first, been subject to the same laws and have developed on the same general lines as other organisms. Now the life of any living organism, from the simplest cell to human society, is the result of the constant interplay between it and its surroundings or environment. Every living organism has to adapt itself to its environment, and its success or failure in developing into a "high" form of its special type depends upon its success or failure in thus adapting itself.

It is, of course, difficult to picture the first groups of men and women, without the aid of any historical records. But, by trying to realise their surroundings, we can get some idea of how the units of the social organism were welded together by the influence of their environment.

It seems fairly certain that primitive men and women lived in forests. In our feet, modified from



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the prehensile hand-like feet of Ape-like ancestors, we have a clear indication of man having once lived in trees. But, even in their savage condition, men and women did not wander about like separate wild beasts; they were gregarious, moving about in groups, and it was probably in order to forage for food that small groups of primitive men first left the shelter of the forest from which they may easily have been cut off, and so came under the influence of new environments and were forced to adopt another manner of life. It would be absolutely necessary for the individuals of a group thus cut off from the shelter of the forest to keep close together and to act in unison if they were to escape destruction from wild beasts or other dangers in the open. Here the psychic bonds we have spoken of would come into play and be strengthened by use; those individuals in whom they were strongest would be more likely to survive than others who, straying from their fellows, would be devoured or lost. Common dangers, as well as the advantage gained by co-operation would tend to knit the little society together, i.e. to weld the human units into a compact body. As in any other living body, certain parts would gradually become differentiated for the performance of special work. Some one individual, stronger, perhaps, or more intelligent than the others, would become the leader, the brain, as it were, of the organism; the swifter, keener, and more daring young men would act as scouts, like sensory organs, scenting out prey, or spying the whereabouts of the foe who had to be

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avoided or attacked. The strongest men would act as the teeth and claws of the whole body, useful for attack or defence, while the females and the young, the members most needing protection, the most vital organs, indeed, of the whole social body, in that they were those needed for the continuance of the race, would be placed at its centre for safety.

Women were primarily of use to the human community as mothers, and their special function was brought into activity as early as possible. Being made mothers when little more than children, and having to take care of the helpless young, and also to do the work neglected by the men while engaged in hunting for the purpose of obtaining food, or when fighting enemies, their other potential powers as human beings remained in abeyance. The stress of life, the necessity of keeping women undeveloped for the sake of the safety of the little community, for adding to its numbers, and for taking care of the young, it was these that retarded the development of women in the first place.

After many generations of wandering, human societies learnt to triumph over the dangers that at first threatened to annihilate them. Having successfully repelled or tamed the wild beasts,\* and either conquered or made peace with other roving groups, it became possible to obtain the necessaries of life without constantly moving from place to

\* The wolf that hung about the groups of early men, first to attack them and then to profit by the pickings from the game they hunted, became, in time, man's best helper in the chase, his faithful ally and friend.



place. The habitual wanderings slowed down to periodic migrations and, finally, the social aggregates settled down in places where all the needs of the growing community could be supplied and, with this new manner of life, the habits of the community gradually underwent modification. The "organism" found itself in a new environment to which it had to adapt itself. We can picture these early groups or tribes as gradually expanding, and having more varied experiences, partly through coming into contact with other groups, fighting them in the first place, and then entering into friendly relations, calculated to call out some of those latent possibilities of human beings which had no earlier chance of development. One of the most striking results of the relaxation of the original strict organisation, made necessary by the constant moving about in search of food and in fear of foes, was the development in the component parts of the community of a degree of individuality formerly incompatible with the safety of the whole.

History tells us—for we are no longer dealing with that dim figure, prehistoric man—how the early communities fought together, each under some leader, and what constant quarrels there were within the different communities about the leadership; rivalries of kings or chiefs, indeed, form the material of our oldest epics. But, by degrees, comparative peace was found essential to the life and development of the settled communities; the feuds became less frequent and the "arts of peace" began to develop. Some of the men, no longer

needed for constant warfare, became the cultivators of the soil, and the foundation of the agricultural and the industrial arts was laid. And, little by little, the manifold activities of modern life were developed, and the many latent faculties of human beings found exercise and expression in countless ways. The social organism, like a human infant, developed its mind and soul (its psychic faculties) through wider commerce with men and things.

But what of the Women? How were they affected by the changes in these early societies in which they had so vital a part?

In living organisms, the changes caused by a new environment always begin at the surface of the organism which is in contact with that environment, and the central part is the last to be affected by them. And so, in the social organism, women were the last to be changed by the new surroundings. They remained undeveloped, and became the easy prey of the stronger and more developed men. They were no longer the most precious possessions of the whole society, but became the property of individuals, fought over as possessions and treated as such, prized for a time, if beautiful, cast off remorselessly when no longer attractive. They had no rights, and their only status was that accorded to them by chivalry. Physical beauty might raise a woman to a pinnacle of fame, and make her arbitress, like Helen of Troy, of the fate of thousands of men, or, like Cleopatra, alternately the fascinator and destroyer of world-famed heroes, but the lot of the millions of women whose names



are unrecorded in any history is deplorable to contemplate.

In spite of the enlightenment and the achievements of a few distinguished women, it may truly be said that, until recently, women have accepted their hard fate almost unconsciously and automatically. But now, at last, the transformation which began long ago among the leaders and the fighters of the community, has reached the very heart of the whole body; now, at last, women have waked up from their age-long torpor and are claiming to occupy a higher place in the community, and to exercise higher functions.

They have waked up not a moment too soon; their work lies ready to their hands.

In spite of all the advance that the human organism has made, it is very evident that it has not yet attained to the highest stage of its development. That organism alone can be healthy in which all the constituent parts are properly developed, and are efficiently performing their special functions, working harmoniously together. In an organism composed of human units, it is only by the free development of these and their conscious and deliberate co-operation that the whole body can be healthy. And the harmony that is essential to health has to be, not the mere physical well-being needed by lower organisms, but a psychical harmony in keeping with the highest psychical development of human beings. It must be clear to every one who thinks, that human society is still far from such a high level of development.

Instead of full freedom of development for all the units, and instead of harmonious co-operation, we have a fierce competitive struggle for the very necessities of life, a struggle of individual with individual, and of class with class, which cannot fail to injure the efficiency of the whole body, and which tends continually to arrest the development of the higher and humaner social instincts. Men, instead of co-operating for the benefit of the whole community, prey upon each other. The wealth produced by the nation enriches only the few, who may well be termed "parasitic" upon the many. The cruder form of parasitism of the past, when feudal lords crushed down the serfs upon whose labour they lived, is no longer tolerated, but civilisation merely conceals, under the guise of "contracts" and "agreements" a parasitism which is no less merciless; the minority still live on the labour of the majority, while a large proportion of the community are reduced to absolute destitution, and a vast number have but the barest requisites of physical life, and are deprived of all psychical advantages. Of all the human instincts, personal greed is the one most fostered by the competitive system, the instinct of competition, in itself healthy, being developed chiefly in a blindly automatic way, as a rivalry for possessions.

Does not all this indicate that the present stage of social development is unsuccessful and unsatisfactory, and point to the necessity for further reconstruction?

It is not difficult to see along what lines the



higher development of human societies has to be attained. We are constantly hearing of the necessary "struggle for existence" and of the "survival of the fittest." But these laws are interpreted by the greedier and less feeling members of the community in a sense to suit themselves, and the psychic bonds between man and man are ignored, or else treated as mere sentimentality. And yet we know that all the struggling human units are bound together by ties that are quite as real as, if less evident than, the disruptive forces. In the humaner sentiments, we see the chief difference between human beings and wild beasts—an element which, if social life is to attain its highest development, has to be fostered and brought into full play. Co-operation and mutual aid, factors in the social life of insects, have still to be deliberately and consciously adopted, and scientifically worked out by human beings.\* Man, whose superior psychic qualities have already found some expression in Art, Music, Literature, and in the finer developments of human intercourse, has to rise to the full height of his possible development along this line. As the wings of the Eagle, its peculiar specialisation, carry it up to the inaccessible mountain crags, so will the fully developed psyche carry Man to social heights far greater than any hitherto attained. It is the full development of the humaner instincts in co-operation and mutuality that alone can bring

\* Indeed, bees and ants might justly claim, in respect of the order and efficiency of the colonies they form, to have risen to a higher social level than Man.

about a fair and efficient distribution of the necessities of life, the necessities not merely of physical but also of psychical life, for man does not live "by bread alone." In this way alone can every unit of the social organism develop to the utmost, both physically and psychically, and rightly fulfil its function, thus contributing to the health of the whole body.

It is in the working out of the highest human ideals, of the humaner social instincts, as at last definitely aroused in Mankind, that the help of the women of the community is specially needed. We are seeking for new light on pressing social problems. Have there not been signs in thoughtful women, of a psychic perception somewhat different from that of men which, when allowed full development, may greatly add to our common psychic wealth? A new force is urgently needed to help to raise social life to a higher level. May not the women, freed from the trammels of the past, become this salutary new force? Are they not to be welcomed, as they rise above the horizon, carrying a new hope for humanity on their brows?

Whatever the evil woman has wrought in the past, by being the sharer in and the panderer to man's wilder passions, or, on the other hand, by being his servile attendant, and the too submissive mother of his children, she has wiped out with her sufferings. Even in the ages of struggle and confusion, it was she who, unconsciously, kept alive the humaner instincts, and now, as a conscious unit of the social organism, as once more the vital



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centre of the whole body, in a far higher sense than in ancient days, what may she not accomplish?

And now, very briefly, we have to point out the part women have to play in the reconstruction of society.

They have to rescue the women and children who have been the chief sufferers in the fierce struggle of the present day, and who suffer not only as individuals, but with fatal consequences to the race, from brutalising conditions. They have to raise the central mystery of motherhood from the depths alike of social degradation and social respectability. It is their special function to care for the coming generation. Their innate instinct of caring for the young has to be widened out and placed on a higher plane than ever before, no longer being exercised merely individually, each woman caring for her own children, as every animal does. There is need of some new national motherhood of which every adult woman, married or unmarried, shall be a member, so that no child born of woman may run the risk of slum-life, or other degradation, but that each may be treated as one of the chief gifts from the Infinite to our human race, a being endowed with untold possibilities, and ready to respond to cultivation.

Women, further, by rising above their mere instinctive and selfish loves, may widen out the conception of self, not only from their own children to the children of the nation, but to all humanity, and in so doing may gradually eliminate the element of personal greed now so disastrous to our national

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life, and transform the competitive spirit of to-day from a rivalry for possessions into a rivalry for personal service in the cause of humanity.

In order to accomplish this, their noblest work, women must necessarily aspire to every attainable height, both of personal cultivation and of political influence, not only to the political vote, but even to that of membership of the central council of the nation and, fully justified by the evolutionary story of the race, speak with no uncertain sound. They may thus become the most beneficent force as yet developed in the race; indeed, we believe that the future welfare of mankind depends less upon the intelligence or genius of men than on the intelligence and genius of women, utilising their fully matured powers for the humanising of social life.



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“GENTLES, LET US REST!”\*

(A PAPER ON THE POSITION OF WOMEN,  
REPRINTED FROM *The Nation*.)

A MAN asked to define the essential characteristics of a gentleman—using the term in its widest sense—would presumably reply: The will to put himself in the place of others; the horror of forcing others into positions from which he himself would recoil; the power to do what seems to him right without considering what others may say or think.

There is need just now of aid from these principles of gentility in a question of some importance—the future position of women.

The ground facts of difference between the sexes, no one is likely to deny:

Women are not, and in all probability never will be, physically, as strong as men.

Men are not, nor ever will be, mothers.

Women are not, and never should be, warriors.

To these ground facts of difference are commonly added in argument, many others of more debatable character. But it is beside the purpose of this paper to enquire whether women have as much political sense or aptitude as men, whether a woman has ever produced a masterpiece of music, whether the brain of a woman ever weighed as much as the brain of Cuvier or Turgenev.

This paper designs to set forth one cardinal and over-

\* Adam Lindsay Gordon.



mastering consideration, in comparison with which all the other considerations affecting the question seem to this writer but as the little stars to the full moon.

In the lives of all nations there come moments when an idea, hitherto vaguely, almost unconsciously held, assumes sculptured shape, and is manifestly felt to be of vital significance to a large, important, and steadily increasing section of the community. At such moments a spectre has begun to haunt the national house—a ghost which cannot be laid till it has received quietus.

Such a ghost now infests our home.

The full emancipation of women is an idea long vaguely held, but only in the last half-century formulated and pressed forward with real force and conviction, not only by women but by men. Of this full emancipation of women, the political vote is assuredly not, as is rather commonly supposed in a land of party politics, the be-all and end-all; it is a symbol, whose practical importance—though considerable—is as nothing beside the fulfilment of the idea which it symbolises.

The Will to Power, and the Will to Love have been held up, in turn, as the animating principles of the Universe; but these are, rather, correlative half-truths, whose rivalry is surely stilled and reconciled in a yet higher principle, the Will to Harmony, to Balance, to Equity—a supreme adjustment, or harmonising power, present wherever a man turns; by which, in fact, he is conditioned, for he can no more conceive with his mental apparatus of a Universe without a Will to Equity holding it together, than he can conceive the opposite

of the axiom, "*Ex nihilo nihil fit.*" There is assuredly no thought so staggering as that, if a blade of grass or the energy contained within a single emotion were—not transmuted—but *withdrawn* from the Universe, that Universe would crumble in our imaginations to thin air.

Now social and political equity emanates slowly, with infinite labor, from our dim consciousness of this serene and overlording principle. There would seem, for example, no fundamental reason why limits should ever have been put to autocracy, the open ballot destroyed, slavery abolished, save that these things came to be regarded as inequitable. In all such cases, before reaching the point of action, the Society of the day puts forward practical reasons, being, so to speak, unaware of its own sense of divinity. But, underneath all the seeming matter-of-factness of political and social movements, the spirit of Equity is guiding those movements, subtly, unconsciously, a compelling hand quietly pushing humanity onward, ever unseen save in the rare minutes when the spirits of men glow and light up, and things are beheld for a moment as they are. The history of a nation's spiritual development is but the tale of its wistful groping towards the provision of a machinery of State, which shall, as nearly as may be, accord with the demand of this spirit of Equity. Society, worthy of the name, is ever secretly shaping around it a temple, within which all the natural weaknesses and limitations of the dwellers shall be, not exploited and emphasised, but to the utmost levelled away and minimised. It is ever secretly providing for itself a roof under which there shall be the fullest and fairest play for all human energies, however unequal.



The destinies of mankind are seen to be guided, very slowly, by something more coherent than political opportunity; shaped steadily in a given direction, towards the completion of that temple of justice. There is no other way of explaining the growth of man from the cave-dweller to his present case. And this slow spiritual shaping towards Equity proceeds in spite of the workings of the twin bodily agents, force and expediency. Social and political growth is, in fact, a process of evolution, controlled, directed, spiritualised by the supreme principle of Equity.

This is to state no crazy creed, that because equality is mathematically admirable, equality should at all times and in all places forthwith obtain. Equality, balance, is a dream, the greatest of all visions, the beloved star—ever to be worshipped, never quite reached. And the long road towards it travels the illimitable land of compromise. It would have been futile, as it was in fact impossible, to liberate slaves, when the consciousness of the injustice of slavery was present only in a few abnormal minds, and incommunicable by them to the mind of the surrounding society of the time. The process is slow and steady. Equity well knows that there is a time for Her, as for all other things. She is like the brain, saying to the limbs and senses: You are full of queer ways. It is for me to think out gradually the best rule of life, under which you must get on as you can, the Devil taking the hindmost; and from trying to devise this scheme of perfection I may not, nor ever shall, rest.

Social and political justice, then, advances by fits and starts, through ideas—children of the one great idea of Harmony—which are suggested now by one, now by

another, section or phase of national life. The business is like the construction and shaping of a work of art. For an artist is ever receiving vague impressions from people unconsciously observed, from feelings unconsciously experienced, till in good time he discovers that he has an idea. This idea is but a generalisation or harmonious conception derived subconsciously from these vague impressions. Being moved to embody that idea, he at once begins groping back to, and gathering in, those very types and experiences from which he derived this general notion, in order adequately to shape the vehicle—his picture, his poem, his novel—which shall carry his idea forth to the world.

So in social and political progress. The exigencies and inequalities of existing social life produce a crop of impressions on certain receptive minds, which suddenly burst into flower in the form of ideas. The minds in which these abstractions or ideas have flowered, seek then to burgeon them forth, and their method of doing so is to bring to public notice those exigencies and inequalities which were the original fuel of their ideas. In this way is the seed of an idea spread amongst a community. But wherever the seed of an idea falls, it has to struggle up through layers of prejudice, to overcome the rule of force and expediency; and if this idea, this generalisation from social exigencies or inequalities, be petty, retrograde, or distorted, it withers and dies during the struggle. If, on the other hand it be large, consonant with the future, and of true promise, it holds fast and spreads.

Now, one may very justly say that this is all a platitudinal explanation of the crude process of social



and political development, and that in taking a given idea such as the full emancipation of women, the fight only begins to rage round the question whether that idea *is in fact* holding fast and spreading, and, if holding fast and spreading, whether the community is, or is not yet, sufficiently permeated with the idea to be safely entrusted with its fulfilment. None the less must it be borne in mind, that if this idea can be proved to be holding fast and surely spreading, it must be an idea emanating from the root divinity in things, from the overmastering principle of Equity, and sure of ultimate fulfilment; and, the only question will then be, exactly how long the rule of expediency and force may advisably postpone its fulfilment.

Now, in order to discover whether the idea of the full emancipation of women is in accord with the great principle of Equity, it will be necessary, first to show the present inferiority of woman's political and social position; then, to consider the essential reason of that inferiority; and, thirdly, to see whether the facts and figures of the movement towards the removal of that inferiority, clearly prove that the idea has long been holding fast and spreading.

To show, however, that the present political and social position of women is not equal to that of men, it will certainly suffice to state two admitted facts: Women have not the political vote. Women, who can be divorced for one offence, must, before they obtain divorce, prove two kinds of offence against their husbands.

And to ascertain the essential reason of this present inferiority, we need hardly go beyond the ground facts of difference between men and women already mentioned:—

Women are not physically as strong as men.

Men are never mothers.

Women are not warriors.

From these ground facts readily admitted by all, the reason for the present inferiority of women's position emerges clear and unmistakable: *Women are weaker than men.* They are weaker because they are not so physically strong; they are weaker because they have to bear and to rear children; they are weaker because they are unarmed. There is no getting away from it, they are weaker; and one cannot doubt for a moment that their inferior position is due to this weakness. But—so runs an immemorial argument—however equal their opportunities might be, women will never be as strong as men! Why then, for sentimental reasons, disturb the present order of things, why equalise those opportunities? This is the plea which was used before married women were allowed separate property, before the decision in *Regina versus Jackson*, which forbade a husband to hold his wife prisoner. The argument, in fact, of expediency and force.

Now there are no finer statements of the case for the full emancipation of women than Mill's "Subjection of Women," and a pamphlet entitled: "Homo Sum; being a letter from an Anthropologist to an Anti-Suffragist." The reasonings in the former work are too well-known, but to the main thesis of "Homo Sum" allusion must here be made. The most common, perhaps most telling plea against raising the social and political status of women to a level with that of men, is this: Men and women *are* already equal, but in separate spheres of activity. The difference between their physical con-



formation and functions underlies everything in the lives of both. The province and supremacy of women are in the home; the province and supremacy of men in the State. Why seek to alter what Nature has ordained? A plea, in fact, which glorifies *sex quâ sex*.

But the writer of "Homo Sum" is at pains to show that "the splendid and vital instinct of sex" with all its "singular power of interpenetrating and reinforcing other energies" is in essence egotistic, exclusive, anti-social; and that besides and beyond being men and women, we are all human beings. "The whole woman's movement," the writer says, "is just the learning of that lesson. It is not an attempt to arrogate man's prerogative of manhood; it is not even an attempt to assert and emphasize woman's privilege of womanhood; it is simply the demand that in the life of woman, as in the life of man, space and liberty shall be found for a thing bigger than either manhood or womanhood—for humanity."

In fact the splendid instinct of sex—for all its universality, for all that through and by it life is perpetuated, for all its power of bringing delight, and of revealing the heights and depths of human emotion—is still essentially an agent of the rule of force. We cannot but perceive that there is in both men and women something more exalted and impersonal, akin to the supreme principle of Equity, to the divinity in things; and that this something keeps men and women together, as strongly, as inevitably, as sex keeps them apart. What is all the effort of civilisation but the gradual fortifying of that higher part of us, the exaltation of the principle of justice; the chaining of the principle of force? The

full emancipation of women would be one more step in the march of our civilisation; a sign that this nation was still serving humanity, still trying to be gentle and just. For if it has ceased to serve humanity, we must surely pray that the waters may rise over this island, and that she may go down all standing!

If, then, women's position is inferior to men's; if the essential reason of this inferiority is her weakness, or, in other words, the still unchecked dominance of force, to what extent do the facts and figures of the movement towards removing the inferiority of woman's position prove that the idea of the full emancipation of women is, not petty and false, withering and dying, but large and true, holding fast and spreading?

In 1866, a petition for the vote, signed by 1,499 women, was presented to Parliament by John Stuart Mill.

In 1873, petitions for the suffrage from 11,000 women were presented to Gladstone and Disraeli.

In 1896, an appeal was made to members of Parliament by 257,000 women of all classes and parties.

In 1897, 1,285 petitions in favour of a Women's Suffrage Bill were presented to Parliament, being 800 more petitions than those presented in favour of any other Bill.

In 1867, Mill's amendment to substitute "person" for "man" in the Representation of the People Act was rejected by a majority of 121.

In 1908, Stanger's Bill to enable women to vote on the same terms as men passed its second reading by a majority of 179.

In 1893, 1894, and 1895, the franchise was granted to



women in New Zealand, Colorado, South Australia, and Utah.

In 1900, 1902, 1903, 1905, 1908, and 1910, the franchise was granted to women in Western Australia, New South Wales, Tasmania, Finland, Norway, Victoria, and the State of Washington.

In 1902, a petition was signed by 750 women graduates.

In 1906, a petition was signed by 1,530 women graduates.

In 1910, the membership of the various Women's Suffrage Societies, and of bodies of men and women who have declared in favour of the idea of women's suffrage, is estimated by some at over half a million—a figure subject, no doubt, to great deduction; but certainly also to very great addition for sympathisers who belong to no such societies or bodies.

These, briefly, are the main facts and figures. From them but one conclusion can be drawn. The idea of the full emancipation of women having fulfilled the requirements of steady growth over a long space of years, and giving every promise of further steady growth, *is in accord with the principle of Equity*; intrinsically gentle, intrinsically just. How long will it remain possible in the service of expediency and force to refuse to this idea its complete fruition; how long will it be wise? For when the limit of wisdom is reached, expediency has obviously become inexpedient, and force unworthy.

When out of six hundred and seventy members of a House of Commons four hundred have given pledges to support women's suffrage; when a measure for the enfranchisement of women on the same terms as men has

passed its second reading by a majority of one hundred and seventy-nine, and in face of this declaration of sentiment Government has refused to afford facilities for carrying it into law, there must obviously be some definite hostile factor in the political equation. In a country governed as ours is, it is but natural that those who are, heart and soul, bound up with one party or the other, who are, so to speak, trustees for its policy, should not look with favour on any measure which may in their opinion definitely set back that policy, or affect it in some way which they cannot with sufficient clearness foresee. The cause of women, in fact, is a lost dog owned by neither party, distrusted by both. While there is yet danger of being bitten, each watches that dog carefully, holding out a more or less friendly hand. But when the door of the house is safely closed, she may howl her heart out in the cold. The Press, too, with few exceptions, is committed to one or other of these parties. To the Press, also, then, the cause of women is a homeless wanderer to whom it is proper to give casual alms, but who can hardly be brought in to the fire, lest she take up the room of the children of the house. And so out of the despair caused by this lost drifting in a vicious circle; out of a position created by party expediency, the inevitable has come to pass. Militant suffragism has arisen—ironically, and, to my thinking, regrettably, since the real spiritual significance and true national benefit of the full emancipation of women will lie in the *victory of justice over force*; and to employ force to achieve the victory of justice over force, is both strangely paradoxical, and so befogging to the whole matter that the essential issue of Equity is more



than ever hidden from the mind of the public. Militancy may have served certain purposes, but it has added one more element of fixity to an *impasse* already existing, for the woman of action is saying: "Until you give me the vote I shall act like this"; and the man of action is answering her: "So long as you act like that I shall not give you the vote. To yield to you would be to admit the efficacy of violence, and establish a bad precedent."

None the less, human nature being what it is, militancy was inevitable, and the wise will look at the situation, not as it was, or might be, *but as it is*. We must consider what effect that situation is having on the national character. Every little outrage committed on men by women, is met by a little outrage committed on women by men; and each time one of these mutual outrages takes place, tens of thousands of minds in this country are blunted in that most sensitive quality, gentleness. It is idle to pretend that women have not stood, and do not still stand, to men as the chief reason for being gentle; that men have not, and do not still stand to women, in the same capacity. By every little mutual outrage, then, the beneficence of sex is being weakened, its maleficence awakened, throughout the land. And the harm which is thus being done is so impalpable, so subtle, as to be beyond the power of most to notice at all, and surely beyond the power of statesmen to assess. That is the mischief. The scent is stealing away out of the flower of our urbanity. It will be long before the gardeners discover how odourless and arid that flower has become.

For it is not so much the action of the militant

women themselves, nor that of those who are suppressing them, which is doing this subtle harm. It is the effect of this scrimmage on the spectators; the coarsening, and hardening, and general embitterment; the secret glorification of the worst side of the sex instinct; the constant exaltation of the rule of force; the rapid growth of a rankling sense of injustice amongst tens of thousands of women. To say that hundreds of thousands of women are opposed, or indifferent, to the full emancipation of their sex, is not, in truth, to say very much. No civilising movement was ever brought to fruition save in the face of the indifference or opposition of the majority. What proportion of agricultural labourers were actively concerned to win for themselves the vote? How small a fraction of the people actively demanded free education! But when these privileges were won, what number of those for whom they were won would have been willing to resign them? If women were fully emancipated to-morrow, many would certainly resent what they would deem a blow at the influence and power already wielded by them in virtue of their sex. But in two years' time how many would be willing to surrender their freedom? As certainly, not ten in a hundred! To compare the disapproval of women raised against their wills to a state of emancipation in which they can remain inactive if they like, with the bitter resentment spreading like slow poison in the veins of those who fruitlessly demand emancipation, is to compare the energy of vanishing winter snow with that of the spring sun which melts it.

In an age when spirituality has ever a more desperate struggle to maintain hold at all against the inroads of



materialism, any increase of bitterness in the national life, any loss of gentleness, aspiration, and mutual trust between the sexes, however silent, secret, and unmeasurable, is a very serious thing. Justice, neglected, works her own insidious revenge. Every month, every year, the germs of bitterness and brutality will be spreading. If any think that this people has gentleness to spare, and can afford to tamper with the health of its spirit, they are mistaken. If any think that repression can put an end to this aspiration—again they are mistaken. The idea of the full emancipation of women is so rooted that nothing can now uproot it.

But apart from the political *impasse*, there are those, who, satisfied that women have not the political aptitude of men, are chiefly opposed to the granting of the vote for fear that it will come to mean the return of women to Parliament. Now, if their conviction regarding the inferiority of women's political capacity be sound—as I for one, speaking generally, am inclined to believe—there is no danger of women being returned to Parliament save in such small numbers as to make no matter. If it be unsound—if the political capacity of woman be equal to man's—it is time Parliament were reinforced by women's presence. New waters soon find their level. Nor are such as distrust the political capacities of women qualified to prophesy a flood. To debar women for fear of their competition is a policy of little spirit, and not one that the men of this country will consciously adopt, unless we have indeed lost the fire of our fathers. There are many, too, who believe that the granting of the vote to women will increase the emotional element in an electorate whose emotional side they already distrust,

and thereby endanger our relations with foreign Powers. But it has yet to be proved that women are, in a wide sense of the word, more emotional than men; and even conceding that they are, it must not be forgotten that they will bring to the consideration of international matters the solid reinforcement of two qualities—the first, a practical domestic sense lacking to men, and likely to foster national reluctance to plunge into war; the second, a greater faculty for self-sacrifice, tending to fortify national determination to persist in a war once undertaken. It is well known that during the American Civil War the women of the Southern States displayed a spirit of resistance even more heroic than that of their men folk. But in any case, to retain women in their present state of social and political inferiority for reasons which are so debatable, savours, surely, somewhat of the sultanic. We have, in fact, yet to imbibe the spirit of Mill's wisest saying:—"Amongst all the lessons which men require for carrying on the struggle against the evident imperfections of their lot on earth, there is no lesson which they more need than not to add to the evils which Nature inflicts, by their jealous and prejudiced restrictions on one another."

In fine, out of the practical perplexities brooding over this whole matter there is no way save by resort to the first principles of gentility. If it be established—as it has been, and uncontrovertibly—that there are in this country a great and ever increasing body of women suffering from a bitter sense of injustice, what course compatible with true gentility, is left open to us men? Our whole social life is in essence but a long slow striving for the victory of justice over force; and this



demand of our women for full emancipation is but a sign of that striving. Are we not bound in honour to admit this simple fact? Shall we not at last give fulfilment to this idea—with the due caution that should mark all political experiment? Has not, in truth, the time come for us to say: From this resistance to the claims of Equity; from this bitter and ungracious conflict with those weaker than ourselves; from this slow poisoning of the well-springs of our national courtesy, and kindness, and sense of fair play: "Gentles, let us rest!"

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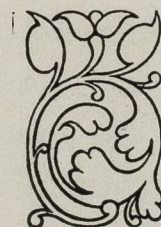
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# PHYSICAL FORCE AND DEMOCRACY.

BY

A. MAUDE ROYDEN.



April, 1912.



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“PHYSICAL FORCE.”

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NOTHING is more delightful to a certain type of mind than the construction of a logical theory, the perfection of whose argument depends on a determined ignorance of facts. It is therefore not wonderful that such an argument as that commonly known as the “Physical Force Argument Against Woman Suffrage” should be put forward at regular intervals by those to whom “absolute maxims” are more congenial than hard facts. Such maxims have a very understandable fascination, and the business of laying them down will always be as delightful as it is unprofitable. Here is one, for example: “that every vote cast at an election represents the physical force of the man voting\*—which is so neat and clean-cut, that it would be unanswerable if it had any connection with fact. Unfortunately, it seeks in vain for any contact with the solid ground, and its success among the doctrinaire opponents of Women's Suffrage is only equalled by the blank indifference to it shown by the more practical on either side. Nothing is more remarkable in the latest contributions to the “Physical Force” controversy than their complete disregard of facts. Loudly boasting

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\* This “maxim” is the first assumption made by Mr. MacCallum Scott, Sir Almroth Wright, and other supporters of the “Physical Force” argument.



that they alone are "practical," these logicians make one assumption after another from which the merest schoolboy knowledge of history should have saved them. On every page is "laid down" as "an absolute maxim of statesmanship,"\* some new and astonishing principle with which facts have nothing at all to do. The first of these—and the fundamental one—has already been enunciated: it is that a vote represents physical force and a General Election is held to decide on which side the greater physical force is to be found.

Clearly this can only be even approximately true where the Government rests on Manhood Suffrage and every man has a vote to cast as the expression of his individual strength. But through hundreds and thousands of years of the world's history no such method of government existed. Even to-day it is exceptional; and nowhere is it old. Where it has been adopted, it has already, in several cases, been discarded, and some or all women are admitted to a share of political power.

Yet it is asserted with complacency by these "practical" politicians that only a Government based on manhood suffrage can hope to be stable†—nay, this is "laid down" as an absolute maxim of statesmanship.‡ In vain do we hungrily ask for facts—for proof; in vain do students of history point to the Republic of Venice as the stablest of all Governments, the admiration of the civilised world, existing for eleven

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\* "The Physical Force Argument Against Women's Suffrage," A. MacCallum Scott, p. 4.

† "The Physical Force Argument," Scott, p. 4.

‡ Ditto, p. 4.

hundred years, and for seven hundred of them practically without change, ruling for a considerable part of its history over a great Empire and never admitting to any share of political power, more than 1,400 out of its hundreds of thousands of citizens. Such facts as these (since after all they are *merely* facts) are ignored with a calm that is sublime, by the Anti-Suffrage logician engaged in the more august business of laying down absolute maxims of statesmanship.

But is it perhaps that he is thinking of Great Britain alone? That whereas in those inconsiderable places, Australia, America and New Zealand, women may vote without disaster, there remains some splendid virile force in the mother-country which makes her (male) citizens amenable to brute force alone? Not at all. It is indeed difficult to know of what country these Utopians are thinking; but it is certain that it is not Great Britain. Even the Anti-Suffrage intellect will hardly assert that a General Election *here* "declares which policy and which Government has, for the time being, the physical force of the nation behind it";\* since in this country, such an Election is taken on a franchise which makes of equal weight the vote of the member for Romford, with 58,000 electors, and the vote of the member for Kilkenny, with 1,730; which excludes nearly all soldiers, sailors and navvies, but confers a special franchise on the clergymen and the University don; which gives several votes apiece to some individuals, and ignores altogether between three and four millions out of eleven or twelve millions of men; and which finally returns triumphantly to power a Government by a majority of 160,000.

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\* "Physical Force Argument," Scott, p. 10.



But we are mistaken. The intrepid intellect of one at least of the Anti-Suffrage stalwarts does not hesitate even before this obstacle. If men did not *know*, he solemnly assures us, that physical force was "clearly and unmistakably"\* behind the victoribus party, they would not obey the laws it passed. Ah, but how do they know? How does anyone know? How is it possible (without the aid of absolute maxims) even for Mr. MacCallum Scott to know?

But there is better than this to follow. Not content with laying it down as an absolute maxim of statesmanship that the only stable form of Government† is one which is exceedingly modern, still very rare, and in our own country non-existent, the Anti-Suffragist hastens on to fresh and yet more astonishing assertions. "We have learned," he says, "that in the long run, the majority are certain to prevail."‡ Where has he "learned" this? Alas, he does not tell us! In that gracious fairy-land, no doubt, where every man is bursting with chivalrous protection, and every charwoman defends her interests with the weapon of a lovely and submissive charm, here it is that strange things happen and the majority always prevails. In the more dusty realms of mere historical fact, we "learn" how different a lesson! Our fore-fathers, we learn, inspired by patriotic feeling, defeated the Spanish Armada, despite the size and number of its ships, the weight of its guns, and the hosts of its men; despite the

\* "Physical Force Argument," Scott, p. 10.

† This astonishing error, contradicted by all history, is proudly stated by Mr. Scott, in his preface, as being the "text" of the entire sermon.

‡ "Physical Force Argument," Scott, p. 1.

indignation of the King of Spain and the outcries of Mr. MacCallum Scott.† We learn that the little country of the Netherlands, inspired by religious feeling, held out against the might of Philip II., when master of the widest Empire, the greatest wealth and most powerful army of the time. How much had they been saved, had but a sage adviser then been by, to ask: "*Why endure all the pain and loss and sacrifice of such a struggle when the result is already a foregone conclusion?*"\* All ignorant of absolute maxims and foregone conclusions, they fatuously persisted in the hopeless struggle, and—*horribile dictu!*—they won! So did the Greeks against all the odds at Salamis; so did the early Christian Church against the might of the Roman Empire. They had not "learned" that all good government rests on physical force, and the majority are certain to prevail.

Let us not fall into the opposite error, and with an equal disregard of facts, assume that physical force is not needed at all. No one can live or breathe, or work, without it. No one can govern without it. Neither can they govern without brains; neither can they govern well without morals. It took Joan of Arc some physical strength to mount her horse and grasp her sword; but it was not her physical strength that caused the English to offer a king's ransom for her person, and it was not her physical force which, added to the French army, converted it from a defeated to a conquering host. It took considerable physical force to do the work of Florence Nightingale, but it was not

† For outcries see "Physical Force Argument," Scott, pp. 1 to end.

\* "Physical Force Argument," Scott, pp. 1 and 2.



because she was muscular that she saved the British army. It took some degree of physical strength to send Ex-President Roosevelt to Central Africa, and some to lift and point his gun; but it is not therefore by physical force that man holds dominion over the brute creation.

And so of the State. The State requires all kinds of strength for all kinds of work; the muscularly strong to fight and to keep order; the intellectually strong to direct and organise; the morally strong to rule. We do not demand the muscles of the navy in the Minister of War, nor the brain of the Prime Minister in a policeman. We cannot do without any of these forms of strength, or base our Government on the possession of one alone, as the one thing essential. If we must choose, most of us would choose, for governing, brains or morals before brawn. But it is idle to choose at all where all are necessary for different works. To fix one's eyes on the policeman and cry "here is the one essential thing," is at least as ridiculous as to fix one's eyes on the mother of children, and say, "it is here!" It is far more ridiculous. A State cannot exist well without order; but it cannot exist at all without motherhood.

A strange weapon indeed has recently been snatched up to meet the disagreeable fact that before 1867, there were not a million voters in the country, and consequently all the rest of the adult male citizens must be assumed to have had no physical force at all. This looks a little awkward for the upholders of Government by Physical Force. But (we are assured) it is Education which has made all the difference: Education which has made of Government a matter of brute strength. Singular! To most of us (looking at history) the

tendency seemed all the other way. Education has indeed taught us all our strength—and our weakness. "Education," it is said by a particularly naïve Anti-Suffragist, "Education is the *mortal enemy of despotism and autocracy.*"\* Why yes, indeed. But the initial error was—to educate the women. Rightly did convinced Anti-Suffragists in their student days at Oxford, lead debates against the higher education of their fellow-students when female.† For "absolute maxims" have a disagreeable obstinacy in refusing to go "so far and no further." Education is as much a sworn foe to autocracy when applied to women as to men. One has indeed only to paraphrase what has been so well put in the latest tract for the times: "Even under autocratic government, we can trace the growth of education by the growth of the spirit of Democracy, and revolt against despotic government. In Great Britain,‡ the spread of education is accompanied by a vehement demand on the part of women§ for a share in the Government of their own country."

Alas! Had we never learnt to read, how much easier for the masculine mind had been the delightful task of laying down absolute maxims of statesmanship! But the education so lamentably mis-applied to women, has taught us that Governments can rarely impose their will by force. It has taught both men and women a deep reluctance to resort to force at all, knowing that its victories are dearly bought, often at the expense of

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\* "Physical Force Argument" Scott, p. 6.

† See e.g. fine record of Mr. Mackinder, now M.P. for Cam-lachie, in records of the Oxford Union.

‡ "India" in Mr. Scott's pamphlet, p. 7.

§ "Natives" in Mr. Scott's pamphlet, p. 7.



all that is best in a nation's life. We are not more but less eager than we used to be to force any man's conscience. We realise not only the cruelty but the futility of destroying by violence those whose opinions happen to differ from ours. Violence indeed may be met with violence, and "militant" tactics with force. But what army could compel the miners to work if they refused to, or crush the warfare waged by the constitutional suffragist? Are these not problems of government? And how shall physical force help in their solution? "This agitation for Women's Suffrage must be stopped!" cry some. Yes—and how?

The strike of 1911, we are told, drew aside the veil . . . . to reveal to us the physical force basis of law and order."\* And the far more terrible strike of 1912? What has that revealed? The impotence of physical force; the power of reason and justice.

Problems may still arise, indeed, on which feeling runs so high, that civil war may result. In that there is nothing new. At all times, every man (*and every woman*) reserves to himself the sacred right of rebellion against intolerable wrong. Such revolt is never due to the assurance of success, but to the intolerable nature of the wrong. "The Scottish Covenanters were few in numbers, and naked, and defenceless. They knew how overwhelming was the force arrayed against them . . . . but they did not hesitate."† It was not—even in the opinion of the Anti-Suffragist—because they were in a majority that they resisted, but because they felt their wrong intolerable.

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\* "Physical Force Argument," Scott, p. 10.

† "Physical Force Argument," Scott, p. 5.

Such occasions will not be increased but lessened by Women's Suffrage. Every advance in the direction of freedom, every extension of justice to the unrepresented and unheard makes less the possibility of such intolerable wrongs. Every point of view will at least be heard, and every claim weighed. Here are the elements of good government. For the resort to physical force is always a confession of failure. Such failures will be fewer than before.

All extensions of the franchise to men have been claimed and granted on grounds like these. They needed the vote to protect their interests, and the State needed them for its own guidance. These two are really one, for it is assumed (and rightly) that it is well for the State and well for every class, that none should be subjected to injustice and none left without defence.

But this assumption involves another—that the well-being and contentment of its citizens is the object for which the State exists. This is a wider and a nobler ideal than the Anti-Suffragist admits. To him the State exists only to keep order, and the one essential person is the policeman. Hence the simple conclusion that only potential policemen should have votes. It is easy to argue triumphantly when one ignores all that conflicts with one's argument; but though easy, hardly worth while. The State is far more than a policeman, its duties more complex than his. And all who prefer historical facts to absolute maxims are aware that every extension of the franchise among men was claimed on precisely those grounds on which its extension to women is claimed to-day—that it will make for their well-being and the service of the State.



No one has ever suggested—either in 1832, 1867 or 1884—that any class should be enfranchised because of its physical strength. No one has ever attacked or defended a Plural Voting Bill on the ground that the plural voter was or was not muscular in proportion to his votes. In vain do we bend a listening ear from the Ladies' Gallery—in vain do we search the debates for this argument. Even the intrepid MacCallum Scott has not (unless the reporters have done him grievous wrong) ventured to adduce in the House of Commons an argument so exquisitely fatuous, except when arguing against women. Does he suppose we do not read history or Hansard? Or is it too much to ask that he will not reserve a special brand of argument for our consumption?

But after all, when we read the last pages of the latest tract upon Physical Force, it is to find that we are slaying the slain. Horrified at the absurdity of his own absolute maxims of statesmanship the author proceeds to demolish them, with terrific blows. "For heaven's sake," he seems to say, "let there be something in this pamphlet, with so much that is ingenious, something that is even true. And he begins:—"You cannot base a permanent policy on injustice!" "They are wrong who think that physical force can triumph without the aid of moral ideals, for *moral ideals are the most powerful of all motives of human action.*" "That faint, flickering spark" (of the ideal) "*is the most powerful thing in the world.*" "The name of a martyr for the right is *more terrible than an army with banners.*"\*

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\* "Physical Force Argument," Scott, pp. 14 and 15.

Will it be believed that those sounding statements issue from the pages of an Anti-Suffrage tract to prove that government rests upon physical force? Or must we assume that it was written by mistake, published in error, and sent to every Member of Parliament by accident? For they afford the most crushing reply to all the absolute maxims that preceded them. They constitute an admission that the vote cannot longer be denied to those who possess, equally with men, that spiritual and moral force, which is justly described as "the most powerful thing in the world." For the vote is the democratic way of bringing that force to bear on the problems of government, and we are committed to democracy.

A. MAUDE ROYDEN.



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Parliament Chambers, 14, Gt. Smith St., Westminster, London, S.W.

*President* - MRS HENRY FAWCETT, LL.D.

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**Methods.**—Constitutional and Law-abiding.

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15248<sup>1</sup>✓

**HOW WOMEN USE  
THE VOTE.**

BY

**A. MAUDE ROYDEN.**

*Author of "Votes and Wages,"  
"Physical Force and Democracy,"  
"Hints on the Organisation of  
Suffrage Work," "Plain Answers  
to Tangled Statements."*

**ERRATA.**

*On p. 10 delete paragraph 3, and substitute*

*"The age at which a young girl may legally consent to her own ruin has been raised in nearly all countries where women vote. In Wyoming it is 21."*

*(Note.—It is exceedingly difficult to get exact information on this point, owing to the loose way in which the phrase "Legal Protection" is used, and the varying senses attached to it even by lawyers. I hope to give a complete list of reforms on this point in my next edition.*

*A.M.R.)*



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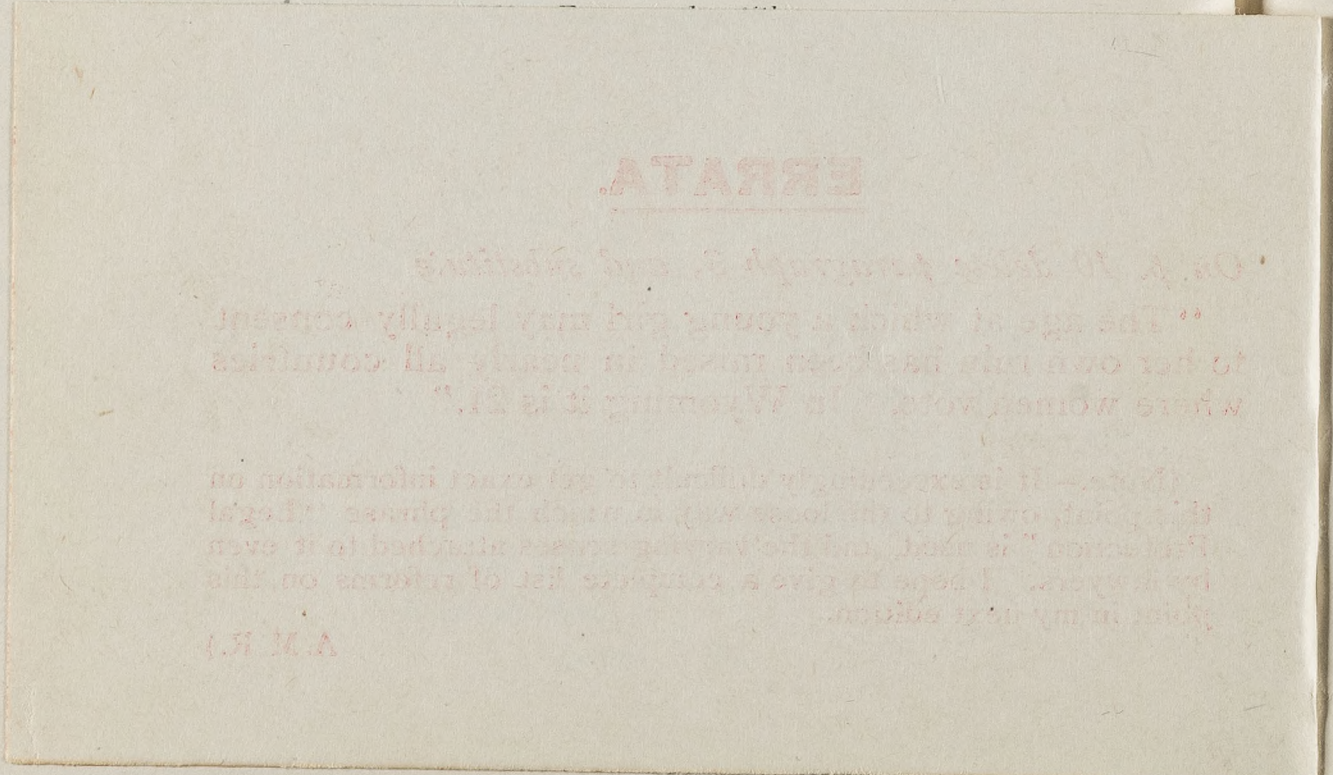
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# HOW WOMEN USE THE VOTE.

BY

A. MAUDE ROYDEN.

*Author of "Votes and Wages," "Physical Force and Democracy," "Hints on the Organisation of Suffrage Work," "Plain Answers to Tangled Statements."*

2ND EDITION.  
July, 1912.



THE object of this little pamphlet is to supply the cogent reply of facts, to those who doubt whether Women's Suffrage will "do any good," or who fear it may do positive harm. Against the dark and horri- fic prophesies of disaster put forward by our opponents, I have set the less exciting but more re-assuring evi- dence of sober fact, and shown "How women use the vote."

I have drawn largely from Lady Stout's "Woman Suffrage in New Zealand," and Miss Vida Goldstein's "Woman Suffrage in Australia," both published by the Woman's Press (price 1d.). To them I commend readers in search of fuller information.

I also owe much to the admirable series of leaflets on "Equal Suffrage in America," and to the pamphlet, "Where Women Vote," published by the National American Woman Suffrage Association.

A. MAUDE ROYDEN.

MAY, 1912.

## HOW WOMEN USE THE VOTE.

WHAT have women done with the vote, when it has been granted them? Just what we should expect. There has been no antagonism with men: no "sex-war": no division of men and women into hostile camps, each seeking to over-ride the other. They have *co-operated* in the State, as they have always *co-operated* in the Home.

Of what use then has the vote been to women? Were they not just as well off without it?

We are constantly asked for facts; constantly urged to show cause why we expect that women's votes will be of real use to them, and of service to the State. Such facts are not far to seek; and they are destructive of the vague but awful prophesies of disaster put forward by our opponents to terrify rather than to con- vince. Here, in the countries where women vote, may be seen what use they have made of political power. They have pushed forward with special zeal, *and with expert knowledge*, laws protecting *the children and the home*.

Is not this "just what we should expect" from women? Are they not the Mothers and Home-makers of the race? Look at this list, and it will be seen that voting has not changed their natures.

WYOMING, U.S.A. (women enfranchised 1869)—  
Age of consent for girls raised to 18 (Revised Statutes of Wyoming).\*  
The employment of children under 14 in public exhibitions forbidden. (Do.)  
Child neglect made illegal. (Do.)

\* Raised again, later on, to 21.



- 1895 Free kindergartens established.  
 1897 Pure Food Bill (including penalties for the adulteration of sweets).  
 1901 An Act making it illegal to license gambling.  
 1903 An Act providing for the care of neglected or orphaned children.  
 1911 Creation of Offices of State-Chemist and Assistant State-Chemist, to administer revised Pure-Food Laws.  
 1911 State Industrial Home for Juvenile Offenders established.

COLORADO, U.S.A. (Women enfranchised 1893)—

- 1893 Insurance of Children under ten forbidden.  
 1895 State Home for dependent children established. (Two of the Board of five to be women.)  
 1895 Mothers made joint guardians of their children, with the father.  
 1895 Age of protection for girls raised to 18.  
 1895 Three of the six County Visitors to be women.  
 1895 Kindergartens established.  
 1897 State Industrial Home for Girls established. (Three of the Board of five to be women.)  
 1899 One woman-doctor to be on the Board of every Insane Asylum.  
 1901 Detention and protection of the Feeble-minded.  
 1901 State Bureau of Child and Animal Protection.  
 1903 Joint signature of husband and wife necessary for mortgage on homestead or household goods used by the family.  
 1903 Eight hours' day for children under 16.  
 1903 To contribute to the delinquency of a child, or neglect to support aged, infirm parents when possible, made a criminal offence.  
 1903 Fathers and mothers made joint heirs of deceased children.  
 1903 Receiving tribute from prostitutes made a criminal offence.

[The Inter-Parliamentary Union has put it on record that the laws relating to child-life in Colorado are

*"the sanest, the most humane, and the most scientific to be found on any statute books in the world."]*

IDAHO (women enfranchised 1896), UTAH (women enfranchised 1896), and WASHINGTON (women enfranchised 1910), have passed many similar laws, and the women of California (enfranchised October, 1911) have a similar programme of work for the future.\* We notice especially that Idaho has established a "Department of Domestic Science" in the State University, and in the Academy of Idaho (1903), and passed a series of Pure Food and Public Health Acts (1911); while Utah has required teaching in physiology and hygiene to be given in all State schools (1897); protected neglected boys (up to the age of 14) and girls (up to 16) (1903), and compelled wife-deserters to pay a weekly sum in support of their families (1911).

Is there anything revolutionary in all this, or anything suggestive of sex-antagonism? The men of the suffrage States do not seem to think so, for they have recorded again and again their belief that the enfranchisement of women has done good, and not harm. "For fourteen years active Anti-Suffrage Associations in New York and Massachusetts have been diligently gathering every scrap of evidence against it that they could find. So far as appears by their published literature, they have not yet found, in all our enfranchised States put together, a dozen respectable men, in or out of office, who assert over their own names and addresses that it has had any bad results."† While, on the other hand, men like Governor Shafroth, Judge Lindsey, Governor Bryant Brooks, Hon. J. W. Kingman (of the Supreme Court), Attorney-General W. E. Mullen, Governor Brady, Governor Cutta, Governor Hoch, ex-

\* Californian women are working for the following legislative reforms (among others):—The regulation and restriction of child labour; recognition of the mother's rights of guardianship over her children, equally with the father; placing women on all Police Boards and Commissions; raising the age of consent for girls to 21; laws against the White Slave Traffic.

† "The Test of Experiment." Published by the National American Women Suffrage Association.



Chief Justice Horton, Supreme Court Justices Valentine and Johnston, many United States Senators and Representatives, and ex-Governors of States have recorded their conviction of the good results of Women's Suffrage.

"Submit the question to those who have tried it," says Governor Shafroth, "and scarce a corporal's guard will be found to vote against it."\* "To me it all lies in this," writes Judge Lindsey; "It is important for the nation, the child and the home, that women have the right to vote."† And a United States Senator adds, "Our women are intelligently active in public affairs, but withal womanly and devoted to home and family."‡

Many bear witness to the purifying effect of Women's Suffrage in politics.

The verdict—"It tends greatly to purify corruption, and to promote better government,"|| and "politically, the effect has been immeasurably uplifting and beneficial"¶ is given again and again, too often for quotation.

But most weighty of all is the testimony of those who were converted, not by argument, but by experience—who did not believe in Women's Suffrage until they saw it. "I did not myself approve it until I saw it," writes U.S. Senator Teller; "Wyoming's experience largely influenced Colorado in adopting it."‡ And the Attorney-General (W. C. Mullen), "I must confess that I was greatly prejudiced against equal suffrage. . . . *I have observed the practical results here, and I have changed my mind.*"§

\* "The Test of Experiment," p. 1.

† Ditto p. 5.

‡ Ditto p. 9. (U.S. Senator, Francis E. Warren, of Wyoming)

|| Ditto p. 10. (Chief Justice Fisher).

¶ Ditto p. 13. (Governor James H. Brady).

§ Ditto p. 4.

§ Ditto p. 10.

It is useless to multiply quotation,\* and it is unnecessary. For nothing can equal in value the testimony afforded by looking at a "Suffrage Map" of America. There it will be seen that all the Suffrage States are close together. The honesty of any man's opinion may be questioned; but how explain the fact that when men see how Women's Suffrage works in one State, they are willing to give it in the next? The only possible explanation is that they see with their own eyes its benefits, and are convinced.

#### AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

In our own colonies the women have done equally well. Here is their record:—

##### NEW ZEALAND (women enfranchised 1893)—

- 1894 A Legitimation Act protecting the rights of illegitimate children, and legitimizing them on the marriage of their parents.
- 1898 The Testator's Family Maintenance Act empowers the Supreme Court to cancel a will leaving the testator's wife, husband, or family unprovided for.
- 1898—The Succession Act ensures a fair division between widow, widower and family.
- 1898 The Divorce Laws made equal between the sexes.
- 1905 Adoption of Children legally regulated.
- 1905 Protection of Children Act prevents baby-farming.
- 1905 Maternity Homes Act.
- 1908 Maintenance Act for wives and families.
- 1910 Destitute Persons Act provides for the maintenance of relatives.
- 1910 Inalienable Annuities Act ensures special maintenance for defective and invalid children.

\* "The Test of Experiment" gives many others, note especially:—"I confess that I was not in favour of Women's Suffrage at the time it was adopted by the State in 1896. From practical experience with it, however, I am become a convert."—Representative French, of Idaho; and "When it was first put into operation, I very much doubted the wisdom of the idea, but my mind has changed on that point."—U.S. Senator G. Sutherland.



The Education Act of 1875 has been amended many times, and Technical Schools now give equal opportunities to girls and boys.

AUSTRALIA (women received the Federal franchise 1902, and the States granted it as follows:—S. Australia 1894, W. Australia 1899, New South Wales 1902, Tasmania 1903, Queensland 1905, Victoria 1908).

The different States have, of course, different laws, passed at varying times, but the following are now general:—

Affiliation Acts, protecting and providing for illegitimate children, and compelling the father to bear part of the expense of the mother's confinement.

Acts suppressing indecent literature and advertisements.

Maternity Homes and Allowances Act.

Destitute Persons Act, making the maintenance of aged or infirm relatives compulsory where possible.

Legitimation Act.

The evidence of public men is as striking here as in America. Mr. Pember Reeves (late Premier of New Zealand), Sir Robert Stout (also late Premier of New Zealand, and now Chief Justice), Sir Edmund Barton (late Premier of Australia), the present Prime Minister (Mr. Andrew Fisher), and many others\* have recorded their belief in the good effects of Women's Suffrage. A resolution expressing the same was *unanimously* passed by both Houses of the Federal Parliament of Australia in 1909.

But again no "opinions" are so irrefutable as facts; and the fact is that, beginning with S. Australia, every

\* See especially the Bishop of N. Queensland in a letter to the *Times*, April 10th, 1912:—"I believe that the women's vote is a very valuable asset to the State. It is almost without exception thrown into the scale for the maintenance of law and Order. It is a very effective deterrent of notoriously bad-living candidates being put up for election."

Australian State has enfranchised its women. *Why*—if it was seen to be a failure? It may be difficult to take away the vote, once granted; but why grant it in a second State, if in the first it has worked badly?

What argument or what "opinion" can possibly persuade us that it did work badly, when men were so willing to extend it further?

#### NORWAY.

The Norwegian women were granted the vote in 1907. They have therefore not had much time for legislation. But they have already given to illegitimate children the right to bear their father's name, and to inherit a share of his property. They have also provided for the care of the mother during her illness.

They are now working for the establishment of schools of domestic training, and for certain constitutional reforms.

#### FINLAND.

The women of Finland were enfranchised in 1906. They have:—

- (1) Appointed an authorized midwife for every parish;
- (2) Established schools of domestic training;
- (3) raised the legal age of marriage for girls from 15 to 17.

[The women of Finland introduced 26 Bills into the first Diet, in which were embodied most of the reforms carried by women elsewhere; but the tragic history of their country makes such reforms almost impossible.\* Of the Bills introduced, or specially agitated for by women, fifty per cent. were concerned with the interests of children.]

\* See also Miss Zimmern's "Demand and Achievement," published by the N U. W. S. S., 14, Great Smith Street, Westminster; and "Where Women Vote," by Frances Maule Björkman, published by the National American W. S. Association, 505, Fifth Avenue, New York City, U.S.A.



Are not all these laws exactly "what you would expect" from the women? They surely prove that women do not become unwomanly or "un-sexed" by the exercise of the vote, but have used it in the sacred interests of home and childhood.

But the child's history begins before it is born into the world. It begins with the mother. And so the women have tried to protect womanhood as well as childhood.

The age at which a young girl may legally consent to her own ruin has been raised to 18 in all countries where women vote; except in Wyoming, where it is 21.

In Colorado, it has been made a criminal offence to exact tribute from prostitutes (1903); in Utah, laws have been passed to prevent the traffic in women (1911); in New Zealand women can obtain redress for slander without having to prove special "damage" (1902); "Criminal Amendment Acts" (1906 and 1910) have secured adequate punishment for sexual offences, and made it possible to detain moral imbeciles and degenerates of both sexes; and a "Servants' Registry Office Act," by compelling the registration of all Registry Offices, has been effective against the White Slave Traffic. In Australia, also, heavy penalties have been attached to trading in prostitution.

But it has been rightly felt that the harsh conditions under which women work for their living, and the low wages paid to them, are responsible for much immorality, and consequently, wherever women have votes, they have improved economic conditions. In Wyoming, there is equal pay for teachers, men and women. In Colorado there is equal pay for teachers,\* clerks, and stenographers, and in all State employment; an Eight

\* As this has been specifically denied by Anti-Suffragists, it is worth while quoting the reply of Anne Martin, M.A., who lived for many years in Colorado:—"Women receive equal pay for equal work, but the positions are graded, and men still hold most of the highly paid posts, so that the average wages of women work out lower than the average wages of men."—Letter to the *Standard*, December 1st, 1911.

Hours' Day is the maximum for women in any employment which requires them to be continually on their feet (1903). The Factory Inspection Acts have been widely amended (1911). In Utah, there is equal pay for teachers, men and women (1896), and a nine hours' day for all women industrially employed (1911). In Washington, there is an eight hours' day for women, except those employed in the fruit and fish canneries (1911). In New Zealand, there is a Minimum Wage, which is equal for men and women, and equal wages are paid for equal work throughout the State service. The Factory Acts have been amended again and again, the most important changes being in 1894, when "Conciliation Boards" were set up, with power to fix a minimum wage when applied to; and in 1900, when the awards made were given legal and binding force. These Acts have practically abolished sweating, which had previously existed in New Zealand as well as in the older countries.\* They are superior in several important particulars to those passed in Victoria, before women there had the vote.††

In 1895, women were admitted to practice as barristers; in 1904, the Shop Assistants' Act provided for the health and protection of women employed in shops.

In Australia, the wages of men and women throughout the Federal Public Service are equal, and in the Junior Grade of the State Education Department. There is an equal minimum wage for men and women. Women Inspectors have been appointed in all Government Institutions.

\* "Thirty years ago, instances of underpayment, exactly on all fours with those exhibited in the Queen's Hall in 1906, were to be found in New Zealand." (Sweated Industry, page 230, by Clementina Black).

† The "Anti-Suffrage Handbook" indirectly suggests that the emancipation of women in 1893 had nothing to do with the passage of this Arbitration Act in 1894. Mr. Pember Reeves, Minister of Labour and author of the Bill, states that the General Election of 1893 (in which women voted for the first time) returned to power the party which was responsible for this Bill (and passed it in Dec., 1894), after a keen and hotly-contested struggle lasting roughly from 1890 to 1894. (State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand, Chapters II. and III., by W. Pember Reeves).

† See "Sweated Industry," by Clementina Black (Chap IV.) for particulars.



In Norway, as soon as women had the vote, without waiting for them to use it, the Government *at once* equalised the pay of men and women employed in the Post Office.

Does all this mean that women are *only* interested in themselves, their homes, and their children, and forget the wider life of the nation as a whole, or (in the case of English women) of the Empire?

Certainly not. Their influence in politics has been for good here, too, if we may judge by results. "New Zealand was the first British Colony to send her sons to stand side by side with the sons of Great Britain in the battle-fields of South Africa; she was also the first British Colony to cable the offer of a battleship to the mother country in the spring of 1909. She, with Australia, was the first part of the British Empire to devise and carry out a truly national system of defence, seeking the advice of the first military expert of the mother country, Lord Kitchener, to help them to do it on efficient lines. The women are demanding that they should do their share in the great national work of defence by undergoing universal ambulance training."\*

It will be observed that the women are, as they might be expected to be, keenly interested in the question of defence. They are not, probably, enthusiastic about wars of aggression. It is to be hoped they never will be. We all look forward, or profess to do so, to the time "when wars shall be no more." But undoubtedly the most justifiable wars are those which are fought in defence of the race, and here it is evident that Women's Suffrage has exercised no ill effect.

But women do feel—and surely they are right—that their greatest contribution to their country and the Empire is their gift to it of children, healthy and fit

\* "Women's Suffrage," M. G. Fawcett, p. 39. (The People's Books). Mrs. Fawcett refers also to the Report of Sir Charles Lucas, who visited New Zealand on behalf of the Colonial Office in 1907; and to "Colonial Statesmen and Women's Suffrage," published by the Women's Freedom League.

to become good citizens. It has therefore been their care to secure such conditions as will make for the birth and up-bringing of healthy children. The infant death-rate in New Zealand has been reduced to 62 per 1,000. (In England and Wales it is 109 per 1,000). In Australia, the rate differs in the different States, but works out at about 70 per 1,000 for the whole continent. In W. Australia, the fall has actually been from 184 per 1,000 (in 1896) to 78 per 1,000 (in 1909).\*

These remarkable figures cannot be put down to the perfection of the climate; since Women's Suffrage has not changed the climate! In Chili, with an almost perfect climate, the death-rate among children is 320 per 1,000.† In Canada, which like Australia and New Zealand, is a comparatively new country (but, unlike them, has not enfranchised its women), the rate has hardly changed. It was 125 per 1,000 in 1899 (first record made), and 125 per 1,000 in 1908 (last record).

Nor is this all; for the children who die are not the whole of the tragedy, nor even, perhaps, the worst part of it. It is those who just manage to live, who are more tragic still, and more disastrous to the race—the dwarfed, the stunted, the unfit, who grow up somehow, to burden the gaols, work-houses, and insane asylums later on. *The death-rate and the damage-rate go together*, it has been truly said.

The general death-rate is low in Australia and New Zealand, as well as the infant death-rate, for the children not only live, but grow up healthy. There could be no more splendid tribute to the work of the women than this, and none of greater import to the race. "It is more sensible to pay serious attention to the health of the nation than to sing 'Rule, Britannia.'"<sup>‡</sup>

\* For all these figures, see the Report on Infant Mortality, of the Registrar-General, 1909.

† "The Conservative and Unionist Franchise Review" calls attention to these terrible figures. See also the Infant Mortality Report, 1909.

‡ The Bishop of Stepney at the Mansion House, April 26th, 1912.



On the other hand, the birth-rate in Australia and New Zealand is rising; while in England it is already lower than in New Zealand, and is falling.

In England and Wales (1911) the birth-rate was 24.20; in New Zealand (1911) the birth-rate was 27.42.

From all this testimony—some directly, some indirectly, witnessing in favour of Women's Suffrage; none witnessing against it—it becomes evident that the answer to the question "How do women use the vote?" must be that on the whole they use it well. *Two heads are better than one*, in the State as in the Home; and the fact that in this country we have problems to solve such as these, and some more difficult still, makes it the more urgent that we take counsel of both.

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## The Sword and the Spirit.

BY  
ISRAEL ZANGWILL.



### NOTE.

*The occasion for the delivery of the speech by Mr. Israel Zangwill which is printed in the following pages was a great meeting held by the Women's Social and Political Union in the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Thursday, November 10th, 1910, a few days before the re-assembling of Parliament after the summer recess. The whole of the lower part of the hall, consisting of some 5,000 seats, was filled by those members of the Union and friends who had purchased tickets. The upper parts were opened free to women. In the course of the evening a sum amounting to £9,000 was subscribed by the audience to the campaign fund of the Union.*

## THE SWORD AND THE SPIRIT.

BY  
ISRAEL ZANGWILL.

---

CABINET MINISTERS, whether for or against Female Suffrage, were last year unanimous in assuring us that the cause had been put back by the militant tactics of the body which is responsible for this mammoth meeting. Never had Female Suffrage stood so remote and uncertain. When I remember our majority of 110 in Parliament I am tempted to say to those Ministers, in the words of the Gospel, "Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and the earth, how is it ye do not discern this time?" Never was Female Suffrage so near and so certain. The principle of Votes for Women is now absolutely safe—far safer than the places of those Cabinet Ministers. If Mother Shipton had been a real prophetess, she would have left us as a prophecy—

When shall women vote?

When men fly.



I believe that in the drowsy circles and old-world haunts of the Anti-Suffrage League, the question of Female Suffrage is still regarded as open to debate. Not so in live political circles. Not even in Parliament. There the question is no longer "Whether"; it is "How?" It is not now "Shall women have votes?" but "Which party shall collar women's votes?" The settling of this little question is the only thing that delays our triumph. Till the other day both parties banged the door in woman's face. Now both are fighting to hold the door open for her, and it is only because this excess of chivalry blocks the doorway that she is still outside. But the object of our movement is not votes for Conservatives nor votes for Liberals, but votes for women. And having come thus far across every obstacle—over hedges and ditches, over bogs and mountains, over policemen and Premiers—we are not going to sit down patiently while Parliamentary parties work out their mutual long-drawn intrigues. That may take years, and, as Bacon reminds us, delays are dangerous. We demand that our victory shall be translated into legislation forthwith. We denounce the mean trick of denying us the chance of a third reading. That is not playing the game.

The Suffrage movement has brought many useful side-lessons. The penetration of its martyrs into our prisons has thrown most valuable illumination upon the abuses in those prisons, and the penetration of the cause into Parliament has turned a searchlight upon the abuses in Parliament. Laymen like myself, driven from our desks to the platform by the stupidity of the professional politician, stand in amaze before the defects

of the political machine. Any blockhead in Parliament can block a bill, any parrot can talk it out, while even when a large majority has endorsed it, the Prime Minister can cut it dead. We men at least imagined we were living under representative government. But where is our representative government if a majority of 110 can be thus mocked and nullified? Mr. Asquith can see the mote in the eye of the Lords. Let him first remove the beam in his own.

### **The Prime Minister's Paradox.**

Mr. Asquith last night dubbed the international situation *re* armaments a tragic paradox. I doubt if British history has ever produced a more comic paradox than the position of Mr. Asquith, who while his hands are raised to heaven in protest against the veto of the Lords is standing with both feet on a majority in the Commons. Three hundred members of Parliament voted for our Bill and twenty-four more paired in its favour, yet because this solitary autocrat regards Female Suffrage as a social calamity that would let loose upon the country the element he describes as fickle and capricious, these 324 men, including the leaders of all the other parties, count for nothing. We demand the removal of this Asquith veto; we demand the liberties of Parliament against the tyranny of the Cabinet. "I invite you," said Mr. Asquith in this very Hall, "to consider the veto of the Lords as the dominating issue in British politics." I am sorry to tell him there is no such dominating issue. If the subject was ever burning, the Conference has quenched it. But even at the height of the flame, what majority



did Mr. Asquith obtain for his Veto Bill? One hundred and three. One hundred and three after the last ounce of pressure had been put on, after every possible political combination had been exhausted! We have a majority of 110, with 130 absentees still squeezable. I invite Mr. Asquith to consider Female Suffrage the dominating issue in British politics. I call on the Liberal leader to bow to the Liberal majority. I say Liberal majority, though I know that the majority comes from both sides of the House. But one result of the searchlight which Female Suffrage has turned upon the House has been to disclose who are the real Liberals and who are the real Conservatives. For what can be more Radical than to admit a new sex to the franchise, and what can be more Tory than to cling blindly to the *status quo*? The unhappy Members of Parliament, driven by Whips to vote with the Party into which they were born, pitchforked, or seduced by their ambitions, were for once allowed to be true to their own selves. The House of Commons was turned into a Palace of Truth. What strange sights we saw then! Asquith stood revealed as a Tory, Balfour as a Liberal, Winston Churchill as a wobbler, and Lloyd George as a lawyer. We witnessed the Gilbertian situation of the Tory leader instructing the Liberal leader that government rests upon the consent of the governed. That both parties are bitterly dissatisfied with their leaders is an open secret. I can only suggest they should swap them. Perhaps this is what the Conference has been discussing. Perhaps this is its jealously guarded secret. I am sure it is a solution which Suffragists would welcome.

### Democrats in a Dilemma.

The case of Winston Churchill and Lloyd George differs from the case of Mr. Asquith. These gentlemen are not too Tory; they are too Liberal. They are afraid—and I believe honestly afraid—that the ladies enfranchised by our Bill will turn them out of office, and with them all their cherished programme of social reform. Panic-stricken, they count the Tory chickens before they are hatched, and protest that they will eat them out of house and home. I am not concerned to dispute their figures or their calculations, however questionable. They are entitled to their point of view. But it is the point of view of purblind party politicians, not of far-sighted statesmen. These bouncing democrats show little faith in their own speeches, or in the large forces that they declare to be shaping the future. For if, as Mr. Lloyd George told us in his City Temple speech, the storm-cone has been hoisted in social politics, does he suppose that the world-wide waves of disturbance which make the weather can be seriously modified by a petty majority of Tory women of property, even if it be true that the Conciliation Bill would produce such a majority? Can a few thousand maiden ladies ride the whirlwind and direct the storm?

If any party should complain that the Conciliation Bill is not democratic enough, it is the Labour Party. If any party stands to lose by an increased Tory vote, it is the small, struggling party that puts Socialism on its banner. Yet what is the attitude of the Labour Party? Is it counting votes? Is it calculating maiden ladies? No; it is regarding justice. While Messrs. Lloyd George and Winston Churchill are giving up to



party what was meant for womankind, it is a member of the Labour Party, Mr. Shackleton, who is bringing in this Bill, and the overwhelming majority of his colleagues cry with him, "Let justice be done though the party fall." But the party will not fall. These Labour leaders show a larger and a shrewder statesmanship than the Liberal leaders. They understand that there is no item of social progress on the programme of Messrs. Lloyd George and Winston Churchill which can for a moment compare in importance or fruitfulness with this Bill of ours, none so calculated to break up crusted conceptions of life and stimulate a fresh current of thought on all social questions. It is a limited Bill—we do not need Lloyd George and Winston Churchill to tell us that—but the enfranchisement of even one woman would be more politically momentous, more historically pregnant than the passage of any of these gentlemen's projects. That single vote would for ever sweep away sex as a barrier to the suffrage. Indeed, if I had my way, I would begin by giving the vote to a single woman. And I would give it first to that woman who, by her public zeal, her oratorical talents, and, above all, her passionate and unrelenting political activity, has shown herself most worthy of a vote—need I say I refer to Mrs. Humphry Ward? It is because all Suffragists realise the expediency of small beginnings rather than endless postponements that they have accepted the Conciliation Bill with a unanimity baffling to their enemies and surprising even to their friends.

What do the long-winded speeches of Lloyd George and Winston Churchill against this Conciliation Bill amount to? That it is a Conciliation Bill. It does not

go far enough. As if a Conciliation Bill *could* go far enough! As if the very object of a compromise was not a compromise! As if some of us were not as eager as these gentlemen for a more democratic charter! Or as if the Bill would have stood half such a chance had it been broader! Oliver Twist asked for more—it is not recorded that he got it. On the contrary, we are told that the master aimed a blow at Oliver's head, pinioned him in his arms, and shrieked aloud for the beadle. Messrs. Lloyd George and Winston Churchill, indeed, profess their willingness to give us more—despite of the master! I quite believe them. But when? In some vague to-morrow. But we are hungry to-day. And what assurance have we that they will be in power to-morrow? Or that the Lords will be out of power? No! We prefer a bird in the hand to two mocking birds in the bush.

Not that the Conciliation Bill is beyond further conciliation. Just because it is a compromise and not our full formula, we do not cling to every letter and comma of it. If Messrs. Lloyd George and Winston Churchill can find any way of broadening the Bill without narrowing its chances, why, so much the better. We are sweetly reasonable. All we insist on at this stage is the abolition of the sex-barrier. And these gentlemen must induce Mr. Asquith to be equally reasonable and not to insist on the enfranchisement of the entire sex at one fell swoop. For, strange to say, the Prime Minister will only permit his misguided henchmen to mislead us into Female Suffrage on condition the evil is wrought on the largest possible scale, and the whole of this fickle and capricious element let loose upon the country at



once. But Mr. Asquith must content himself with a smaller social catastrophe. If he is ready to compromise with the Lords, why should he not compromise with the ladies?

### **Arms and the Woman.**

But if Mr. Asquith hardens his heart and persists in his veto, then there is nothing left but a return to militancy. The truce will be at an end, the era of conciliation will be closed. Mr. Asquith will have to face the question which Mr. Balfour put to him on that magic day when Parliament was turned into a Palace of Truth. How are you to govern in the teeth of all this passionate discontent? No doubt we shall again hear Pharisaic deprecations of militancy, platitudinous appeals for constitutional tactics. But woman is outside the Constitution. The House of Commons has been built woman-tight. Even the friends she has now won inside it cannot fight for her with the true passion that makes history. "Who would be free," said Lord Byron, "themselves must strike the blow." Mr. Asquith is not blind to the consequences of his obstinacy, and in his last speech in the House on this subject he solemnly warned women against taking up arms. He—the busy builder of *Dreadnoughts*—dared, in a voice grave with religious emotion, to commend to you the words of Christ: "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Well, we know who can quote Scripture for his own purposes, but I doubt if Scripture has ever been quoted with such ludicrous inaptness. For what is the sword which you women are taking up? What

are these militant tactics so portentously rebuked by the Prime Minister? He cannot object to your fighting against him at by-elections—for election warfare is the very breath of his nostrils. He cannot mean the interruption of speeches by questions and comments—for this has always been a feature of British politics. The only new feature is the brutal militancy of the men, the hysterical panic into which the sight or sound of a woman throws them. Mr. Asquith cannot have in mind the threatened campaign of "No vote, no taxes," for since the days of John Hampden the refusal to pay taxes has been regarded as a legitimate political weapon. He cannot be denouncing the old English right of access to a Minister with a petition, for a petition is the very antithesis to a sword. Least of all can Mr. Asquith's language be justified by the acts of physical aggression of which women have been guilty—for, apart from merely technical assaults, these are so rare and petty, counted, as they can be, on the fingers of one hand, that in so vast a movement involving so many myriads of women of all classes they vanish into utter insignificance. In fact, women throughout this whole long fight have wrought fewer casualties than the motor-car containing Mr. Asquith's detectives. One dare not mention it in the same breath with a single riot of miners in Mr. Lloyd George's country. What, then, is this sword? Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Asquith has been misled by a metaphor. There is no more sword in the Suffrage movement than in the Salvation Army. Its militancy is not the militancy of murder which Christ condemned, but the militancy of suffering which Christ commended. The prison and the hospital, hunger, and



darkness, and loneliness—these are its weapons. And they are more terrible than swords. Mr. Winston Churchill understands this, if Mr. Asquith does not, for he designs to blunt your weapons, to pad your prisons with those comforts which male politicians have carefully provided for their own contingencies. You are to be almost first-class misdemeanants. Mr. Winston Churchill in thus drawing the sting of your martyrdoms would weaken you far more than by his vote against the Conciliation Bill. But even this new policy of killing you by kindness must automatically defeat itself. For the easier prison is made the more numerous the applicants will be. Prison has already become an honour, when in addition it becomes a luxury it will be a fascination. Woman's place will no longer be the home: it will be the prison. And how is the Home Secretary to provide prisons (with first-class apartments) for all the multitude of female rebels? He will be driven back on the old harshness; repression will grow severer and severer; and the old miserable round will recommence. Mr. Balfour was right, you see. No Government can govern in the teeth of all this passionate discontent.

For this discontent is no passing petulance, no fit of the vapours to be dissipated as artificially as it arose, but a righteous indignation that has its roots in basic facts and must grow deeper and wider with every rising of the sun. It is not a discontent which is limited to one country, it is an unrest which is stirring everywhere. Even in Turkey the harems are seething with the new spirit; even in India, Lord Curzon told his Oxford audience the other day, there is a movement towards

the emancipation of the native women in the zenanas, and this pillar of anti-suffrage calls for English women to help their dusky sisters who are freeing themselves from the shackles of their old traditions and customs.

### **The Unanswerable Argument.**

The demand for Women's Suffrage has behind it many reasons. It will bring to the State many advantages. And the economic causes which have created a surplus of women and pushed a large number of women of all classes outside the home, there to support themselves, have accentuated the consciousness of these reasons and these advantages. But these economic causes, these reasons and advantages, which we have had to expound to our opponents *ad nauseam*, because they offer those gross material aspects which the Philistine can lay hold of; these causes, reasons and advantages, though they are true causes, true reasons and true advantages, do not touch the true essence of the question. Were these the real, the inmost truth of the matter—were, for example, the vote needed simply as a protection for the female wage-earner—the Suffrage movement would be open to the set-back of the reform proposed by the brilliant Mr. Chesterton, that Western civilisation, having taken a wrong turning when it exposed its women to the greed and competition of the labour market, should boldly retrace its steps and rescue women from the typewriter, the factory, and the coal pit. Looking at the chain-makers of Cradley Heath, Mr. Chesterton, though anti-suffragist, has the frankness to recognise what wretched cant underlies



the anti-suffragists' contention that woman's place is the home, and he at least would not withhold the franchise without proposing another remedy for our present discontents. But alas! our civilisation cannot be turned upside down as easily as Mr. Chesterton's sentences, and the typewriter, the factory, and the coal-pit will long continue to enslave women.

It is true the reasons for Women's Suffrage would remain just as potent were every labouring or professional woman restored to the home and supported by the State. For the home is not an isolated point in the void. Just as light travels to it from every star, so every social force crosses and recrosses it. The law of divorce, for example, affects the very foundations of the home, yet not till the appointment of the Divorce Commission now sitting was woman's view ever consulted. And yet the very fact that women are assisting at this Commission, both as Commissioners and witnesses, leaves it open to the anti-suffragists to argue that ways might be found of weaving women's demands into legislation without the direct agency of the vote. What then is the unanswerable reason for Women's Suffrage? The reason that would remain in being were every practical argument of ours faced and countered by the anti-suffragists? It is that votes for women are demanded by women's spiritual dignity. It is a spiritual unrest which is stirring the world of women. It is in female politics that the storm-cone has been hoisted. That wind of the spirit which lifts the curtains of the harem and shakes the walls of the zenana gathers itself here in England to a higher force and threatens the ancient foundations of Parliament. It is urged by Mr.

Chesterton and others that this isolation of our women from politics springs not from man's contempt for woman, but from a tender consideration for her. It is an attempt to shield woman from the rough realities of life. It may be so. But the Turk or the Hindu would doubtless allege a similar chivalry for the isolation of his womenkind. Indeed, does not the very word "harem" mean a sanctuary? But whether contempt or consideration inspired these phases of woman's status, they are both outgrown. The Doll's-House is too small for the woman of to-day; she wants a house with more breathing-space, nor do we hold her less immaculate because she concerns herself with the drainage. It is not the least respected members of her sex who are assisting in the Divorce Commission. Woman no longer desires to be wrapped in pleasing illusions and to bask in that man-made social order whose foundations are laid in ruined souls and bodies. We are witnessing, in fact, a new phase in human evolution, and blindness to this phenomenon hardly goes with the type of mind recently recommended to the students of Aberdeen University by their Rector, Mr. Asquith—the mind always open to the air of reason and the light of new truth. As the demand throughout the Orient for Parliaments marks the awakening of the men of the East, so the vote is the seal and symbol of the evolution of the women of the West. And because this evolution is a spiritual phenomenon, it needs no arguments, no statistics. It is its own justification. Vainly is it urged that only a minority of women feels with you, that you must first convert all the others. Why should the higher type be dragged back by the less



evolved? No! When you have based the claim of votes for women on the spiritual dignity of women, you have based it on elemental and eternal rock. You have formulated a demand which cannot be out-argued by the stupidest politician or the cleverest epigrammatist. You have said the last word, the word that can neither be added to nor answered. The testimonies it can bring to its truth are not words. The only arguments of the spirit are works, and these arguments you have brought—and stand ready to bring—in overflowing measure. From the lady of quality enduring the torture of the feeding pump to the ill-nourished factory girl saving her ha'pence for the cause, from the amateur news vendor facing the scoffs and chills of the street to the speaker braving the rowdiness of the public meeting—you have raised up a very cloud of witnesses. Self-sacrifice, fearlessness, endurance, unrelaxing labour, sisterly co-operation and cheery comradeship of all ranks and classes, these are the testimonies of your spirit, as they are the guarantees of your speedy and ineluctable victory.

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# The Hithertos

BY

ISRAEL ZANGWILL



## NOTE

*The occasion for the delivery of the speech by Mr. Israel Zangwill which is printed in the following pages was a great meeting held by the Women's Social and Political Union in the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Thursday, March 28th, 1912, the day of the debate on the Second Reading of the Conciliation Bill. The whole of the hall was filled by those members of the Union and friends who had purchased tickets. The promenade gallery was opened free to women. In the course of the evening a sum amounting to £10,000 was subscribed by the audience to the campaign fund of the Union.*

## THE HITHERTOS

By ISRAEL ZANGWILL

*A Speech delivered in the Royal Albert Hall, March 28th, 1912.*

I HAVE never valued the honour of addressing your Union so much as now, when it stands criminally indicted, despised, and rejected of men. The strongest group, like Ibsen's strongest man, is the one that stands most alone. It is a tragic paradox when the path of righteousness becomes the road of lawlessness. But the right to rebel is an elemental human right, just as the right to repress rebellion is an elemental public right. It is a fair trial of strength—the spirit of force against the force of spirit. Let the Government, then, do its utmost, let it torture by hard labour or forcible feeding, or even penal servitude. But the question will remain: Who is on trial here?—your Union or the Government? Who has been condemned?—



Mrs. Pankhurst or Mr. Asquith? Whom will these punishments hurt?—you or the Anti-Suffragists?

We know what History will answer. Indeed, Lord Haldane, speaking at Oxford after the raid, has already admitted that a time will come when the very existence of the present controversy will cause amazement. But History will ask, with no less amazement: How did it come about that, under a Liberal Government, a Government of which Lord Haldane was himself an ornament, a Government that plumed itself on vindicating against the Lords the right of the People to self-government, women of distinction in science, art, and literature, wives and mothers of the highest domestic ideals, aged ladies of unimpeachable dignity, could see no other way of securing for themselves the rights of citizenship than by securing for themselves sentences of hard labour? Convicted felons when they come out of prison resume, if they are male, the rights of voting. But these heroic gentlewomen, when they emerge, broken with suffering, may still be voteless.

Nor is their suffering the only distressing feature of the situation. We have heard a good deal of the damage to property. But there is spiritual property far more precious than plate-glass, and far less replaceable—

there is the respect for public order, and the majesty of the law, the slowly-gathered acquisitions of civilisation. It is an asset of the State that prisoners shall be held in contempt and statesmen in reverence. It is an injury to the State when prisoners are held in reverence and statesmen in contempt. And by tens of thousands of women Holloway is now held in more honour than Downing Street. Tens of thousands of women look on the State as an enemy to be thwarted. Tens of thousands of women would shelter a refugee from justice. Tens of thousands of women refused to fill in their Census papers and the State dared not take action. It is the negation of Government.

The responsibility for this disastrous situation lies mainly on the shoulders of Mr. Asquith, that political half-breed, who is neither true Tory nor true Liberal. But no small responsibility lies too on those powerful Members of his Government who, while preaching Women's Suffrage outside the Cabinet, remain the bondslaves of Mr. Asquith within. These gentlemen, when they fêted the Master at Covent Garden Theatre, assured him of their boundless love and reverence. But outside this theatrical atmosphere, Lord Haldane says bluntly that the refusal of votes to women will amaze pos-



terity, and Mr. Lloyd George that it is a barbarous anachronism.

This Government has often been contemptuously dubbed a Coalition Government, because the Liberals could not hold office without the Irish Party. But I see no shame in that. The Irish Party are certainly not Unionists. No, the real mongrel horror of this Government is that it is a Coalition of Suffragists and Anti-Suffragists. It is the alliance between Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George that is an unholy alliance. Politics makes us acquainted with strange bed-fellows. But what spiritual sympathy can there possibly be between a man who says every woman should have a vote and a man who says no woman should have a vote? For Women's Suffrage is not one more reform like the others—it is a complete re-reading of life, a revaluation of all values, a transformation of the whole political area. Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Birrell, Lord Haldane, Mr. Lloyd George are all more or less alive to the great industrial and economic changes that have led up to this demand, to the great spiritual movement that is sweeping it onward. They see where we are. But Mr. Asquith sees nothing. The blind leading the blind is pitiful enough. But for the blind to lead the seeing is grotesque. And the pretence that the Premier's differ-

ences with the bulk of his Cabinet do not matter is an insult to your cause. It is an insult that would never have been offered to a cause with votes. Some ambitious underling would long since have risen on the ruins of Asquith as Disraeli rose on the ruins of Peel.

To gloss over these differences in the Cabinet there has been proposed a Referendum. A Referendum, it is admitted, may not suit all questions, or indeed *any* other question, but for settling the Women's question it is the heaven-appointed instrument. On the contrary, that is the one question that cannot be submitted to a Referendum. For it concerns personal rights and personal dignity. If a woman is content with the political status of children and lunatics, that is her affair. But how dare the slave-soul dictate to the free? The free souls are in revolt. And you cannot meet a revolution with a Referendum. Rebels do not submit their case for consideration. They fight through. On one condition alone I would favour a Referendum—that it be confined exclusively to women. I know it is said that an overwhelming majority of women are against the vote. Very well. Let us see. Enfranchise all women. Then, at the next election, those whose answer is "Ay" will



go to the poll, and those who say "No" will stop at home. That is a perfectly ideal Referendum—simple, infallible, inexpensive, and satisfying the demands of both parties; and I recommend it to the consideration of the country.

There is another Referendum which would be reasonable—a Parliamentary Referendum. Mr. Asquith is already committed to a Referendum to the whole House. But that is an impossible Referendum, because the whole House will not answer a simple "Yes" or "No." Each party wants a different measure. The large measure that pleases the Liberals revolts the Conservatives; the moderate measure of the Conservatives outrages the Liberals. Each party is thinking not of Women's Suffrage, but of women's suffrages; each is anxious to capture them for itself. And the Irish Party is impartially ready to upset any Suffrage Bill that interferes with its own prospects. That is why the idea of a Liberal-Conservative majority has proved a mirage. Between two stools one falls to the ground. The machinery of the House is constructed for party, not for reason and justice. To have a coalition majority is useless—two and two do not make four; they make zero. That is what your leaders came to see, and that is why your Union demands a Government measure. If,

instead of a Referendum to the whole House, Mr. Asquith would agree to a Referendum to the Cabinet and the Liberal Party, the whole trouble would be over. For, as Mr. Lloyd George has told us, two-thirds of the Cabinet and three-fourths of the party would answer "Ay." And since Mr. Asquith has already promised to sacrifice his personal views to the House, I do not see why he should not rather sacrifice them to his party, nor why the Liberal Anti-Suffrage minority should not equally bow to this Referendum.

There is a still better alternative for Mr. Asquith. He can become converted, as Peel was converted to the Repeal of the Corn Laws. His dignity may wince at the idea, but I assure him a Prime Minister yielding to reason and justice is a far more dignified figure than the figure he himself has suggested—a Prime Minister carrying as an alien amendment a reform he regards as a disastrous political mistake, and overtly relying for its destruction on that House of Lords which it is his historic boast to have paralysed.

But if Mr. Asquith hardens his heart and continues to block the way, Mr. Asquith must go. As a leader of the Liberal Party he is impossible. If from one point of view he is a statesman of unbending honesty, from another he appears as one of those tragi-



comic figures whom the gods, wishing to destroy, first make mad. He may succeed in staving off Suffrage for this Parliament, but I defy the Liberal Party to go to the country without "Votes for Women" on its programme. Even the patient Griseldas of the Women's Liberal Federation would rise at that. Mr. Asquith may have broken the Lords, but the ladies will break Mr. Asquith. They will break him as with hammers and shatter him as with stones.

There are members of your Union who have tried to do this literally—for, of course, Mr. Asquith and not the innocent windows was the object of their attack. The public calls them maenads. The magistrate calls them maniacs. Mr. Fordham actually wished to have Mrs. W. W. Jacobs' mind examined because she said her action was compelled by her duty to her boys and girls. What is to be thought of that magistrate's mind? How is it possible to remedy this public evil when those who should be specialists in human nature make such a diagnosis? Judges, unless they are great men, are apt to be great fools. Not maenads nor maniacs are these women, but martyrs. Maniacs do not operate by a time-table; maenads do not observe truces. Mr. W. W. Jacobs, whom I congratulate upon his wife, rightly laid the blame upon the

Government. "The Government," he said, "have played with the question." And how they have played with the question! What is death to the women has been sport to them.

Look at the situation which strained the patience of our maenads to breaking-point. At last Women's Suffrage was coming, we were told, by Minister after Minister, and myriads of women, with the immemorial credulity of Eve, hung upon their assurances. Yet the hollowness of these assurances was exposed by the faintest cross-examination, not to mention the crushing arithmetical analysis of our departed Christabel. The Suffrage members of the Cabinet overflowed with gratitude to the Prime Minister because he had consented to tack on an amendment that could not possibly be carried to a Bill that was unlikely to be introduced. Not one of them could answer what Government measure would be brought in, nor when the measure would be brought in, nor what the amendment to it would be, nor how the amendment could possibly be carried, nor even whether there would be an amendment at all. "I have not seen the measure," said Sir Edward Grey as late as February 19th, 1912, "I do not know what its scope will be, I do not know at what period of the session it will be brought in, nor do I know if the question will



be submitted to a Referendum." In short, wait and see. It was just because your leaders could see that they would not wait.

No two Ministers could even tell the same story. A Conservative Government has been called an organised hypocrisy. A Liberal Government, it would seem, is a disorganised hypocrisy. Mr. Lloyd George told us that the Conciliation Bill had been torpedoed, and Mr. Birrell that it was still in being. For Mr. Winston Churchill it was too small, and Mr. Lloyd George's alternative too large. What Mr. Winston Churchill was ready to see was women in Parliament, and even in the Cabinet. But the People, alas! was not ripe for *any* measure. "Votes for women this session," cried the Chancellor. "No, no—we haven't consulted the People," cried the First Lord. That was part of the fun. As neither party would adopt Women's Suffrage it was never made an election cry; as it was never made an election cry, it had never been before the country. If you enfranchised married women, you were merely duplicating votes while at the same time sowing dissension in the household, and if you excluded married women you were ignoring the only women with real experience of life. What one Minister could vote for, another must veto; what a third brought forward, a fourth

must toss to a Referendum. Codlin is the friend, not Short. Spenlowe would be delighted but for Jorkins. In this chaos of indecision and insincerity, it was positively restful to turn one's eyes on the figure of Mr. Asquith standing like a rock for the great Liberal principles of Taxation without Representation and Government by the Male Minority. We know from Dickens that the great art of the British Government is how not to do it, but surely in this Suffrage question the Government has beaten its own proud record. For over forty years our legislators have been engaged in not doing it. They have drafted it and laughed at it, they have talked it out and walked it out, they have circumvented it and circumlocuted it, they have conciliated it and torpedoed it. They have even coal-struck it.

And above all, they have read it for a second time. They may have sometimes been slack and sometimes slippery, but their grim, unwearied determination to read it for a second time is a rebuke to the pessimists who croak that England's power of not doing it is failing her. Time after time the clock at Westminster has struck two. But somehow it never strikes three. At first we wondered what was the matter with that clock. And then we remembered. It was a Govern-



ment clock. Always some Ministerial hand was tampering with the works. It is the Government, not the W.S.P.U., that has put back the clock.

The situation, in fact, was exactly like a nightmare, where you endlessly pursue some ever-retreating goal, when you miss every omnibus and break down in every taxi on your way to catch a train which, when you at last get to the station just in time, you are told has been cut off by the coal strike. And suddenly through the oppression of the dream comes the crash of falling glass and you wake to truth and reality.

That crash of glass said, "An end to this farce! How not to do it may amuse men. Women are in earnest. If you immure them in a vicious circle, they will break through." That is what the crash said to all whose ears are not too long. The glass was a mere symbol. Nobody wanted to damage tradesmen. They are the sufferers in a war, as if a shell should fall in their shop windows, but a shell that knew better than to hurt human beings. That is the characteristic of the women's war—they will hurt nobody except themselves.

The whole damage was not equal to the sum it cost us in Belfast to guard Mr. Winston Churchill against the effects of Sir Edward Carson's eloquence. It was not equal

to an hour of the coal strike. And what is broken glass compared with the broken promises of the Cabinet—from the thin, transparent assurances of Mr. Churchill to the plate-glass promises of Mr. Lloyd George? Above all, what is broken glass compared with the broken lives of your martyrs, the shattered nerves of Mr. Ball, the cancer inflicted on Nurse Pitfield by a brutal blow, the sufferings of your prisoners, of your hunger-strikers, of your women who have passed winter nights on roofs or in cellars for one glad instant of rebellious utterance, of your deputations assaulted and tortured by hooligans in uniform? All this spilth of suffering has stirred not a ripple in the nation of shopkeepers. The long, heroic vigils of the Freedom League at the gates of Parliament went as unregarded as the vigils of street-walkers.

Alas, that glass should be so dear  
And flesh and blood so cheap.

Even the Archbishop of Canterbury rebukes you in company with the coal strikers for substituting self-will for Christian order. He forgets who it was that overturned with violence the tables of the money-changers.

And what was the object of your self-willed violence? "Fox"—"Are you prepared to go to prison?" So ran your deadly criminal



code. To go to prison—that bulked larger than the militancy proper. For if to render tradesmen's windows insecure would produce an intolerable situation for those responsible for public order, still more intolerable for the Government is the spectacle of noble-minded women in prison. The more numerous the prisoners and the more distinguished, the greater the exposure of the Government's unreason and injustice. At first the Government had not imagination enough to understand this—at first it played "Goose" to your "Fox." But presently, growing foxier, it bolted and barred its prisons against you, and over the portal of Holloway was written up, "Abandon hope all ye to enter here." Your next deputation to Westminster was met by a gang of rough country police, charged not to arrest you, and it was their barbarous and indecent behaviour—a horror the Government has steadfastly refused to inquire into—that drove you to stronger militancy and a surer way of entering prison. "All safely arrested!" your Liverpool comrades wired home after the window-breaking. Now if it is a criminal conspiracy to conspire to go to prison, I could only wish all the criminal classes would engage in that conspiracy. And what would be the result of proving it conspiracy? More prison! More success to the

conspiracy! Really, since "The Mikado" made suicide a capital offence, there has been nothing so ludicrous. But, it will be asked, why, then, has Christabel Pankhurst fled? If larger advertisement, deeper embarrassment for the Government, and wider sympathy can be procured by escaping prison, Miss Pankhurst does not fanatically insist on going to it! And already we see there is a Christabel legend—a popular myth, as of Robin Hood, or De Wet, or Bonnie Prince Charlie. Even in my village, steeped in Toryism and anti-Suffrage, the failure of the entire police force to find her in my house was received with relief. I was rather sorry for the poor man—he missed his one chance of world celebrity.

And all the while the question of "Where is Christabel?" is really so simple. "Where is Christabel?" Gentlemen of the police, she is here—in our hearts. As Emerson said of Proteus, her very flight is presence in disguise. And Christabel is not only here, she is on the lips of all the world, advertising and prospering our cause everywhere, since where an article is good and a cause righteous publicity and prosperity are one.

It is often said that the militant policy was a mistake. But is this a country where reason is sufficient? Look at us poor dramatists who have for years been demanding the



abolition of the Censor. All we have got has been a Parliamentary Commission. The only mistake of the militant policy lay in not beginning it earlier. If it had been developed in the days of Campbell-Bannerman you would never have been driven to break the law. In those days there was not only a great Liberal majority, there was a great Liberal statesman at its head. And he it was, C.-B. himself, who recommended militancy. "Make yourselves a nuisance," he advised you. You took the advice of that experienced statesman, though at first your ideas of a nuisance were humble. You asked questions at meetings. Well do I remember the horror at your first interruptions. The panic over the broken glass was not greater than the panic over those shattered meetings. From time immemorial questions and comments had been the recognised feature of British politics—indeed the mildest feature. Yet when *you* began to interrupt, it at once proved your unfitness for politics. A Lord Hugh Cecil may howl down a Prime Minister in the House itself without bringing disfranchisement upon himself, not to mention his whole sex. But for you mildly to interrupt a Minister at a public meeting was a positive crime—the new sin. In a wave of masculine hysteria, stewards of the chivalrous sex

hurled themselves upon you and ejected you with violence.

To-day you are ground between the Government and the mob, between the upper mill-stone and the nether. But you have that in you which cannot be crushed. It is not for me, a mere platform understudy, debarred by sex from membership of your Union, to dictate to you your policy in this dark hour. Nor will I exhort you in the commonplaces of metaphor to hammer away and spare no pains and leave no stone unturned. But if I may be permitted a reminder, there is abundant scope for militancy within the boundaries of law. What Lord Haldane contemptuously called "a policy of pin-pricks" is not yet played out. His taunt or Mr. Hobhouse's need not ruffle you. It is not for the enemy to choose your weapons. Pin-pricks, ubiquitous and innumerable, may be more wearing than battering rams, as mosquitos are more formidable than elephants.

But it is not on your tactics that the certainty of your triumph reposes. It is on the justice of the demand which those tactics enforce and drive home. Without that all your raids were as vain as they would be criminal. And this is the answer to the frequent fear that any faddist hereafter may find precedent in your violence. Faddists



are doomed by their own folly. Your invincibility lies in the unreason of your opponents.

And having opposed you without reason, they now make a last desperate effort to find a reason in *your* method of opposing *them*. How—they ask—can we give votes to a sex so hysteria-ridden and tarantula-bitten? You see what you have done! You have sometimes, I know, been accused of arrogating this struggle to yourselves, but never in their vainest moments have the two hundred women in prison claimed to represent their whole sex. It was reserved for your enemies to put them upon this proud pedestal.

These two hundred rioters shall not indeed have votes, but they shall represent their sex, constitute a sort of Women's Parliament—sitting in gaol. Even Mr. Sydney Buxton, who admits that there are Suffragists who do not riot, proposes to punish them for the sins of those who do. A real statesman would have said, "Let justice be done, though the windows fall." But Mr. Buxton prefers to postpone the Suffrage till the militants are no longer in the ascendant. But that means for ever. Poor Suffragists, lured through bog and bramble by these Parliamentary Pucks! As for the Suffragists, "these women," says Mr. Buxton, "are clearly unfitted for the

vote." Why, even if these women were criminals, crime, as I have already reminded you, does not disfranchise the male. But would to heaven the average male elector were as fitted for the vote as these women! Would to heaven the policeman were the equal of his prisoner! In an age of unexampled cynicism, when the law of force is unblushingly proclaimed in all the Chancelleries of Europe, in an age of low living and high feeding, when mammoth hotels and music-halls multiply and churches decay, the self-sacrifice of this new sisterhood of faith, of this sisterhood drawn from all ranks and classes, is an inspiration and a reassurance. Sodom might have been saved had there been ten righteous men. London will be saved by the Suffragettes.

Thanks to them, Anti-Suffrage, once so formidable, is now a forlorn hope. Its very leaders do not believe they can do more than delay the inevitable. In their hearts their cause is already lost, just as in yours it is already won. They know that Women's Suffrage, having already established itself in the British Empire, must sooner or later spread to the heart of the Empire. They know that the Imperialism which most of them advocate demands one law and one standard of British citizenship. Mrs. Parting-



ton, when she started mopping the Atlantic, did at least think that her broom would keep it out. Mrs. Humphry Ward has no such delusions. And this makes her responsibility for prolonging the warfare all the greater.

But perhaps I do her and her fellow-workers wrong. Perhaps it is not wilful obstinacy: perhaps they are too old to know better. Perhaps they belong to that unhappy race of which the schoolboy told us. The schoolboy was asked the meaning of the phrase, "A hitherto uninhabited island," and he replied, "An island inhabited by a race called the Hithertos." Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings cometh wisdom, and the race called the Hithertos is a valuable addition to ethnology. They are the people who do not know that they are dead. They are dead but not departed. The island these poor folk inhabit is in the Dead Sea, but the very sea has receded from those ancient shores, so that on the same beach where once they bathed they now disport themselves in imaginary water. The whole world has changed round them—but they still see the world of their childhood. Their Science is antiquated, their Psychology out of date, their Politics obsolete. They are Hithertos. Men and women once great dwell among these strange dead-alive people—rulers of Oriental lands,

lawyers, novelists, statesmen, and sometimes, saddest of all, a youth with his life still before him, vigorous as a Smith, is washed to these somniferous shores. And when these Hithertos orate, their speeches still sound to themselves like the thunder of the gods. But to us their voices come from that far-off island like the horns of Elfland faintly blowing, and when, as we sit cosily in our Clement's Inn, we hear them borne on the wind, we shudder and breathe a prayer for these poor undeparted souls.

For we, we are the Henceforwards. We have done with their man-ridden world. Our feet are set towards an equal future, in which men and women in joint council may haply shape a better world than that ghastly nightmare described by Mr. Winston Churchill in his great speech on the Naval Estimates—a world of giant armaments, obsolete almost as soon as created, begotten merely of men's mutual fears and suspicious surmises, abhorred by their own creators, the peoples whom they crush, yet fated as in some cumulative horror of Greek tragedy to grow ever more monstrous. And to this burden from without is added the burden of labour-strife from within, and at the base of the structure stand sweated men and ruined women. Such is the world they are afraid you will spoil.



Women of the Social and Political Union, this Hall, which was like the Cathedral of your movement, had been defiled by a meeting of the Hithertos. To-night you have reconsecrated it by sacrifice. You have broken, not the law, but your financial record. You have vindicated your leaders. It is as though you had figured to yourselves that they were in the hands of brigands and that it was necessary to ransom them, and there was no price you would hesitate to pay for these sacred heads! How the news will rejoice Mrs. Pankhurst! Your gold will not indeed serve to liberate her in the body, but it will enlarge her spirit with the knowledge that the seed she has sown is living, that the sap is rising, and the blossom preparing: the walls of her prison will melt away, and, though her cell be dank and dark, she will see that in the great world outside it is Spring!

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## WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE AND MORALITY

AN ADDRESS TO MARRIED WOMEN.

BY LADY CHANCE.

NATURE has so made women that they are necessarily the greatest sufferers in any falling from virtue. Theirs is the harder punishment *by nature*: men escape *by nature*. This fact, which no laws can alter, would, one might have supposed, have inclined people to be less hard on the immoral woman than on the immoral man, but far from this, we find the exact opposite is the case. A woman who has left the path of virtue is considered an outcast, and has immense difficulty in regaining a foothold among respectable people, indeed in returning to a respectable life at all, once she has fallen.

Why should this be so? We know a woman cannot fall by herself. Why then is she to be the only one cast out? Is not the partner of her fault equally to be blamed? But no. He retains the respect of his fellow-creatures, he is not looked upon as an outcast. He can go on associating with decent people; he can take a respectable woman for his wife. He will be



little less thought of in his after life for having brought a woman, or women, to shame.

Now the answer to these questions is not entirely a simple one, and in order to arrive at it I must go back rather far, and try to explain how this state of things which I have described has come about.

The fact is that this double standard of morality, this condition in which there is one law of conduct for the man and another for the woman is the necessary outcome of the position women have occupied for long ages past.

It would take me too long to tell how it has come about that women, who in the very earliest times of all, were men's equals, companions and helpmates, gradually lost that free and independent position, and in the course of countless centuries became little better than slaves; though of course it would be absurd to say that in civilised countries women are slaves at this present time.

In the time of the ancient Romans, about 2000 years ago, we read that women never came of age. They were the property of the men of their family as much as if they were cows or sheep. If a woman married she passed from her father's hands to those of her husband. If the husband died, she passed back again to her nearest male relation. She could never, however long she might live, be her own mistress.

It may be said that on the whole women's position in the State has almost everywhere been for many hundreds of years past, and still is in most parts of the world, one of inferiority to men. The woman, because she is a woman, and for no other reason, is thought to be of less value to the State than the man. She is just as necessary, of course, but not so important.

Even in this civilised country of ours, and at this present time, it is literally true that women are not equal to men in the eye of the State or of the Law. And the reason of this inequality, this inferiority, is that up to now men have not only made all the laws that exist, but have also the administration of the laws in their hands as well as the making of them.

Now I do not at all want you to think that men have had any conscious grudge against women, or any desire to be other than just to them; but all men are not perfectly good and just, nor are even good and just men perfectly wise, and although they may have the best will in the world, it is impossible for men to see quite with the same eyes as women, especially in the matter of sex morality.

It is hardly to be expected that the ordinary man of to-day, with all the inherited unconscious feelings and traditions of male superiority in him, should help believing that he must know better what is good for women than women can know for themselves. We must not blame the men too much, for they are only human, and many of them are also very ignorant. I think we ought rather to remember that at this day we have working with us and for us an ever-increasing number of noble and disinterested men who are doing all that lies in their power to help the cause of the enfranchisement of women.

At no time in history have men come forward in such numbers to press a woman's question and women's interests, and I am glad to say that we have a great many working men with us as well as men of the wealthier class. The Independent Labour Party, for



instance, has stated officially that no further extension of male suffrage will be acceptable to them unless it includes some measure of suffrage for women. When, besides these working men, we have Cabinet Ministers and professional men of all ranks, many of them famous and distinguished, speaking and agitating and forming themselves into Leagues in order to help the women's cause, we may be assured that our movement is not, as our opponents so often try to persuade people, a sex-war, and a struggle between men and women as to which shall rule the other, but on the contrary, a movement towards friendly and peaceful co-operation between the two sexes for the benefit and advancement of the whole race. I may mention too that the Women's Movement is not confined to this country alone, but is now world-wide, and that every year sees the enfranchisement of an increasing number of women, mostly of the English-speaking race or of other Northern races closely related to the English.

This being so, we should not allow ourselves to feel bitter or hard about the injustice or unfairness to women that undoubtedly exists, but rather thankfully determine to work with all our strength to help those noble men I have spoken of, who are doing all they can to improve the position and status of women.

It will be found that everywhere *the demand for women's political enfranchisement is rooted in and springs from one main fact.* In the mind of every man and woman who has studied the subject lies the deep-seated and firm conviction that *so long as women are men's inferiors in the State—that is, are not full citizens—so long must the evil continue of the double standard of morality for men and women.* I do not of course

say that if women had the vote this bad state of things would be changed immediately as if by magic. That is impossible. People's customs and habits of thought are not changed in a day. It may take many years, and possibly a whole new generation for the improved ideas to sink into the minds of the people and to bear fruit in better thoughts and actions. But this is certain—until men and women are politically and legally equal, the improvement cannot be seriously begun, and there can be no sure and lasting foundation for a better condition of things.

It will be remembered that in November, 1911, the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, made an announcement that he intended to introduce a Manhood Suffrage Bill in 1912, which would give the vote to every male over 21 who had resided for six months in the country. These were his words:—"We believe that a man's right to vote *depends upon his being a citizen*, and every man who is of full age and competent understanding ought to be entitled to a vote."

Now think for a moment what this means. It means that a man, merely by virtue of his being born a male, *is a citizen of the Empire.* He need not serve the nation in any way, he may refuse to train himself for the defence of his country, he may be a ne'er-do-weel, a drunkard, a wastrel, or a criminal who has undergone a term of penal servitude—no matter—he can get a vote. But no woman, however competent, however patriotic, no matter what her age or position, or her services to the State as trained Teacher, as Nurse, as Graduate of a University, or as Lady Doctor—no woman can ever claim what practically every raw youth of 21 may take as his right and privilege. The



opponents of Women's Suffrage say there is no real slur cast on women by this, and that they have so much influence and indirect power that the vote would be quite a superfluity to them. The answer to this argument will quickly be got by asking any man whether he would submit to being disfranchised, and whether he would be content, in return for giving up his vote, to exercise such indirect influence as he might or might not possess. I think there is no doubt as to what his reply would be. The great majority of men highly value the vote and the political freedom it stands for, and rightly. They fought for it on a good many occasions in the past, and no person in his senses doubts that they would fight for it again if such an unthinkable proposition were ever made as to take it away from them. Now, must not that which men consider of so much value to themselves be of value to women also? In fact, what is "sauce for the gander is sauce for the goose"—to turn a homely proverb the other way about. But there is this difference, and it is an immensely important one. The question of sex morality which lies deep at the root of the Women's Suffrage question is one that affects the lives of women infinitely more closely than the lives of men. As I have said, immorality is almost always accounted a sin of the worst description in a woman, while in a man it is a slight offence easily forgotten and forgiven. Now we Suffragists want to change that false view. We want to make everybody feel that it is equally wrong for both sexes to transgress the moral law. I say especially *we Suffragists*, because our desire to win direct political power is founded upon our belief that in that way only shall we become possessed of the power and the weapons necessary to fight this terrible

evil. The Women's Movement is in fact a great Moral Movement. It means the lifting up of women to be the equals of men in the eyes of the whole nation. It means giving them the right not only to *say* what they wish in those matters which concern themselves, their homes and their children, but it means giving them the right and the power to get those wishes *carried out* with reasonable despatch, exactly in the same way as men do, and what is even more important, it means giving them the power effectively to oppose measures of which they disapprove.

Anti-Suffragists often say "Women do not want the Vote." It is true that some women may not want it, but all women—or rather—women as a sex, *need* it. It is true that rich women need it much less than poor women, and I am afraid those women who are going about to-day trying to persuade people that women do not need it and therefore should not want it, belong to the well-to-do classes. Many of them are titled and wealthy ladies, who from their position and education ought to know better, and perhaps do know better in their hearts; but human nature is a very selfish thing, and what these ladies do not need themselves for their protection they cannot understand that other less fortunately placed women may need most sorely.

Now I am writing for women, and principally for working-women, and they will know that I am telling the truth when I say that the women who supply the market of immorality, who recruit the great army of prostitutes are not drawn from the well-to-do classes. The daughters of the rich stand in very little danger—certainly not in the danger of having to sell themselves in order to buy the means of existence.



We hear a good deal of "Rescue and Preventive Work." I was present at a meeting some time ago, which was held in support of this kind of work, and I came away feeling that only one side of the question had been really dealt with, and that the most important part of the subject had hardly been touched upon. Much was said about the fallen "women"—most of them, be it remembered, young girls of 15 to 18 years old, and some, terrible to say, children as young as six or seven. But I heard scarcely a word as to the part played by men in the ruin of these unfortunate lives. There is probably no subject in the world more distasteful to women than this: most women avoid speaking about it, and many even refuse to know about it. This is especially true of well-to-do women, whom it does not touch at all in the same way as their poorer sisters. But it is most certainly the positive duty of every woman of full age to know what is going on in the world around her. And even though all women may not be competent or suited to take an active part in combating the "social evil," all women can and should be armed with clear knowledge and understanding of it. Through a knowledge of facts alone can a healthy opinion be formed among women, and such opinion is of course of the utmost value in influencing men. Indeed, it is probably the only way in which men can be brought to realise the evil of their ways. Certainly no Acts of Parliament alone will make people moral, but on the other hand, laws do express the opinions of those who make them. The laws of this country as they are made and administered by men, naturally do not and cannot reflect the opinions of women correctly. It is therefore not at all surprising that we should find the way of the male transgressor made very much easier

than that of the female. Take as an instance the law as it affects the maintenance of illegitimate children. In the large majority of cases the father will only under compulsion, that is, under a Magistrate's Order, make any payment towards the support of his child. And when this Order is obtained (at her own expense) how is the mother to enforce it? The man changes his place of residence, and the woman, for want of means and knowledge of how to proceed, is helpless. According to the existing law the man is only liable when the demand for payment is made by the woman in person. This for all practical purposes makes it impossible for her to claim if he has removed from the neighbourhood. In consequence of this most defective law the great majority of illegitimate children are entirely supported by their mothers, with the aid of charity and the Poor Law. It is no easy matter for these unfortunate women or girls to obtain decent employment, and consequently they have great difficulty in earning enough to support both themselves and a child, and here we come upon one of the most fertile sources from which the army of prostitutes is recruited.

Another gross injustice to the mother of an illegitimate child is that the greatest payment the father can be ordered to make is 5s. a week. The man may be a prosperous tradesman or a "gentleman," and as not seldom happens, the former employer of the girl, or he may be earning several pounds a week. But this makes no difference. He is often, if in receipt of small wages, ordered to pay as little as 1s. 9d., but never more than 5s.\*

\* In Norway, where women vote, an excellent move has been made in the shape of a law enabling illegitimate children to bear their father's name and to inherit a share of his property.



Now, which are the more to be blamed—men or women—if these girl-victims of men's unrestrained passions turn to the streets for a living, or, in their despair, kill their offspring? The White Slave Traffic, of which everyone has heard so much lately, is another example of the terrible results of men's immorality, because you must realise that this traffic *exists to supply the demands of men*, and *unless there were buyers* there could be no sellers. Is there any other trade or business in the world in which the seller of a thing is looked upon as a nameless and shameless outcast, while the buyer and user of that same thing remains a respectable member of society? And is there any other trade or business in which the merchandise bought and sold has to be stolen and supplied by fraud and force? For what is the meaning of the girls having to be kidnapped and decoyed? It shows plainly that there are not enough of them to supply the demand of their own free will. It also means that there are enough men willing to pay so highly for their so-called "pleasure" as to make the purveying of human merchandise for the vilest of all purposes an exceedingly profitable business, out of which large fortunes are made. But the misery and early death of these thousands of poor girls (it is said that the majority perish after about five years of such an existence) shocking as it is, is by no means the greatest evil that follows upon the practice of vicious living, and this is one of the things I had especially in my mind when I said it was the absolute duty of every woman of full age to have accurate information and understanding of these unpleasant sides of life.

The dreadful fact is that many horrible diseases are caused and spread, among the innocent as well as the

guilty, by vicious living. If these results could be confined to the guilty alone, perhaps we might leave them to this natural punishment, and even feel some satisfaction that they should suffer it. But we know on the highest and most modern medical authority that the wives and children of vicious men suffer even more than the men themselves. The origin and causes of many diseases which were formerly unknown are now recognised by all doctors to lie in the immoral practices of men. How many people, I wonder, know that a very large proportion of inherited blindness is due to this, and of premature and still-births? Epilepsy, convulsions, mental affections, including acute madness, paralysis and deafness are among the other serious disorders that must be laid to the account of the immoral man, and as I have said, it is his innocent wife and unfortunate offspring who may have to suffer more than himself.

It must be borne in mind that these awful things are not the result of a fall from virtue on the part of an otherwise decent man and woman, but are the effect of vice *as a trade*, and are the result of the horrible conditions which are a necessary part of that trade.

Now what was (and still is in many places) men's remedy for this state of affairs? Was it to teach boys continence and to train them to control their natural passions? No; it was to keep them in ignorance of the evil results of vice and to try to do away, as far as possible, not with vice but with its consequences. Until 1883 there was a system in force in England by which prostitutes were compulsorily examined by doctors, and if found in an unhealthy condition, were compelled to go into special hospitals, where they were treated until they were considered fit to go out and ply



their trade again. It was the splendid courage of a woman that put an end to this shameful state of things in our country. That woman was Josephine Butler, who almost single-handed fought the battle which ended in the repeal of what were known as the "C.D. Acts." Those who are interested in her and her work should read a little sketch of her life which can be bought or borrowed from any Suffrage Society. She had to fight a battle in the cause of righteousness such as few human beings, whether men or women, would have had the strength to go through. She was assailed with vile abuse, and even with stones and mud; and on more than one occasion she had to fly secretly from the place where she had been holding a meeting, to escape the violence of the mob; and once the building where she was speaking was set on fire, and she barely got away with her life.

These wicked laws which she succeeded in getting done away with in England are still in force in some of our Colonies, and to a modified extent in India, while similar ones are the rule and not the exception in most foreign countries.

The fact is that the only weapons which women have are their prayers and their tears, and although they can and do accomplish wonders, it is pitiful to think of the waste of strength and time and money which this unarmed battle entails on them. It is as though a man and woman had each a piece of ground to dig, and the man, already the stronger, were allowed a spade and the woman nothing but her bare hands. As an old lady from America said to Josephine Butler: "Tears are good, prayers are better, but we should get on faster if behind every tear and every prayer there were a vote."

When women have the vote they will not suddenly bring about the Millennium, or the end of everything evil, but at least they will be free to put all their efforts and strength into the real constructive work of reform. Now we are having to fight with bare hands at breaking down senseless obstructions, which do not bar the path of progress to men, but only to us because we are women.

December, 1912.



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## The Soul of Women's Suffrage

*An Address given, under the auspices of the Irishwomen's Reform League, at the Aberdeen Hall, Dublin, on April 16th, by the Rev. Hugh B. Chapman, Chaplain of the Royal Chapel of the Savoy, London.*

FEW movements have had to face more misunderstanding than that which is concerned with the political enfranchisement of women; and it is matter of intense regret that its leaders should have become credited with characteristics almost opposite to those for which they are really conspicuous. It is no easy task to convince an audience that these pioneers are not to be confused with breakers of the peace or (such is the power of misrepresentation) with ordinary criminals, whilst it is common talk that they are out for notoriety, to the destruction of family life in general and the degradation of their own sex in particular. To discuss how such fallacies have come to obtain is neither pertinent nor advisable; but I cannot refrain at the outset from insisting that they are the falsest possible fabrications. Knowing to some extent, as I do, the inwardness of the Movement, I am too proud to plead for these victims of slander who have thus incurred social martyrdom from the noblest motives, and I have too much respect for an educated audience to think that, whatever their sentiments, they can feel anything but profound admiration for those who are willing to suffer for their opinions. Our special task on this occasion is to deal with the spirit of the enterprise, which, it is well to remember, is confined to no country and to no creed, but is a side issue of that wave of Feminism now making itself felt throughout the world. Our opponents will, at all events, grant us this concession, viz.: that nought but immense good is bound to accrue from such cohesion, spelling, to my mind, true catholicism, than which no word has been more constricted, abused, or disfigured beyond recognition. Ladies and gentlemen—It is a fine thing to realise this new kinship among the female part of humanity, and the wonder is that thinkers and poets are not more enthused thereby, let alone those who profess and call themselves Christians, whose chief aim is nominally the union of mankind.



To come to close quarters with the subject in hand, I wish to put before you as tersely as I can, seeing the limited time at my disposal, the salient points which appeal to me with irresistible force. Shuffle the cards as you please, you will discover that they invariably come out in temperamental suits; and when you cut them again, the more difficult the issue the smaller the pack will become, until only the court cards remain. Precisely the same rule prevails in our own creed, where it is comparatively simple to believe in the goodness of God, distinctly harder to be a good Churchman, and desperately difficult to be a Christian, and you will recall how, when it came to the breaking of bread, few of His disciples walked with the Master. The analogy holds good as to any great ideal in human affairs, seeing that the most thoughtful and refined of the community are generally, in a vague way, to be found on the side of the angels. On the other hand, when it approaches anything like action, or, still more, when it touches the vexed question of morality, its academic supporters fall away, and, with a polite farewell, revert to the majority.

Three great principles appear to be embodied in the Movement for Women's Suffrage, which have made me not only a keen advocate of the cause, but convinced that it contains within itself the germs of grand possibilities for the betterment of the Empire. In the first instance, it is an expression of the law of *evolution* which must eventually assert itself, on the same principle as the advancing tide, which no mechanical obstacles can prevent. We were probably all brought up to be satisfied with the poetic description of creation in the Bible, containing, as it doubtless does, elements of deep mystical truth; but there are few who will not acknowledge that, when they commenced to think, they were more or less dissatisfied with such an account of the origin of man. There appeared to be some serious ellipsis in the narrative, and unconsciously we found ourselves demanding an explanation for the differences existing in the physical as well as the mental variations by which we were faced on every side. Certainly, in our own case we intuitively felt the necessity of development as though an imperious voice was for ever saying to each, "Move on!" Try as we would to resist the conclusion, the Biblical standard seemed too stationary and fixed, so that we floundered in a morass of doubt and painful hesitation until Darwin appeared on the scene, and in evolution we once more found our balance without losing our reverence. When this came home to us

we had a new hope, and we dimly saw, as in a glass darkly, how the race was intended to progress, though no greater goal could ever be aimed at than the original ideal underlying the legend of Eden, to sinning against which all our tears are traceable. The same Book is also a source of inspiration for which we can never be too grateful, nor can we compute the debt we owe to the writers of the Psalms or to the Prophets, who have done more to gird against carnality and Materialism than any other force in ancient literature. The explanation of such a paradox may be found in an eloquent statement by a well-known Hebrew scholar, who describes the typical patriarch as sitting up to his neck in a sewer while his head touches the stars.

In the Pauline Epistles we find the same anomaly, seeing that their author still consigns Christianised women to virtual slavery, though hinting at a divine republic where there is neither male nor female, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free. It is a monstrous and reactionary doctrine that woman should have taken her beginning, not from God direct, but from man, for his convenience, to minister to his delights, to act as his housekeeper or his chattel, whilst, when her charm ceased, younger members of the same sex might be added without limit to satisfy his desires. Yet, broadly speaking, our education has been based on these lines, and I seriously maintain that no thoughtful or developed person can for one moment rest content with this position. I am well aware that the very name of Darwin was held in abhorrence by the orthodox, until he achieved such popularity that, after his death, the Church claimed him as one of her children. Nor does this surprise me when I consider how she has reduced the cult of success to so exact a science that, in the eyes of the ignorant, there is hardly a single triumph on any plane which she is not ready to bless, and of which she does not claim to be the origin.

Ladies and gentlemen—I hold this to be unfair unless that same Church proclaims herself a believer in that same theory of evolution, and I would appeal to you, with all earnestness, publicly to declare yourselves in favour of a law which no sane person can deny. We are not meant to stand still, and the purely animal stage is beneath contempt; while if any argument on the subject is required, you need go no further than the words mother, wife, or daughter—let alone the entirely different footing attained by womanhood in civilised countries.



What I rebel against is—the retrograde attitude of a vast proportion of men, aided by their primeval tendencies to sensuality and tyranny; though, thank God, a better age is dawning in which the champions of such a system, at least in the Western world, relegate to secrecy habits of which they are heartily ashamed. As for women, it equally behoves them to resist their inclining to sloth and servitude, no longer to count themselves with being the appendage of man, to become entities on their own account, to use their brain, to share the dignity of work, and to correspond to the forward call which is just as incumbent on them as on the male sex, if God is not to be mocked by resistance to His Will.

The *political* aspect of the case brings with it increasing difficulty, though practically most people worth considering accede to the principle of evolution. It is when action has to be taken that collisions occur; but all the talk as to general advance is, if not wholly useless, at any rate seriously menaced unless women are treated by the State as equal to man, and have the opportunity of influencing the law of the land within the limits of justice and reasonable freedom. At the back of the desire for the vote lies this craving for freedom, and no words are needed to point out the barriers of prejudice, force and convention with which it has to contend. As to the methods adopted to gain it, I have neither the wish nor the right to speak; but it would be the height of ingratitude on the part of an army not to applaud the pluck of that ruddy young hero who slings a stone at the giant, thinking, no doubt, to kill him and cut off his head, so that the main body may gain. If he proved over-sanguine, and if the giant, comparatively unhurt, wreaks his vengeance, I fail to appreciate the ridicule or cowardice of those who would have been more than ready to walk over his corpse to victory.

In any case, action of some kind is the only proof of sincere enthusiasm, for which reason I trust that Irish women, so well-known for their recklessness and indifference to danger when the occasion warrants it, will attach themselves to this Movement, prove the metal they are made of, and take such steps as may bring to bear on our legislators the weight of a unanimous demand. To believe in a thing and yet to hold back is treachery to oneself, and I feel confident that many amongst you will be only too willing to prove the value of your convictions. This vote, which is the crux of the whole business, will ultimately be seen to be the only road

towards realising the development of the sex in its fullest sense, nor ought women to rest until laws are placed on the statute book worthy of their new revelation. Speaking after thirty years' experience in the slums, I regard it as a crying shame that the word father is too often a subject for tears, and the name of husband a cause for fear. It is an appalling thing that women should be brought to dishonour through lack of bread, and, in numberless instances, should suffer from disabilities which will never be removed until they are enfranchised.

As I have confined myself to main principles, you will forgive a designed lack of detail; but I would beg of you, whatever the inconvenience, to take your stand on the side of your poorer sisters, and to preach this gospel of freedom throughout Ireland, until our politicians shall be compelled to grant your demands, and the whole state shall become immensely improved.

The last and highest motive which I would mention is the *moral* aspect of the affair, though, as I said when I began, they who dare to treat it on these lines will always be in a minority, considering the personal criticism which they invite. It were a grand achievement, ladies and gentlemen, if in our laws we could virtually declare in favour of the sanctity of our women far more than at present obtains; and surely in Ireland of all countries this challenge on behalf of the ideal of chastity should meet with an exceptional response. Who can doubt but that when men and women are recognised as fellow-workers for the public good, with a dignity common to each, homes would be more worthy of the name: which is too often a theory rather than a fact? Has it never occurred to you that ignorance and immorality are closely allied; and that the radical cause of divorce amongst the educated classes is traceable in the first instance to more than disloyalty? Surely it is a patent truth that if wives were credited by their husbands with more intelligence, and if the interests of women were more enlarged, without for one moment neglecting their special sphere, there would be infinitely less friction, and monogamy would no longer be regarded as an act of grace but as a continuous delight. You may accept it from the speaker, though mercifully it is a closed book to most of the audience, that apart from the stress of poverty, vice among women is largely due to their having failed to grasp the high vocation of citizenship.



So strongly is this view impressed on me that I honestly believe this movement for Women's Suffrage to be destined to do even more good in this direction than religion by itself, between which and the emotions it seeks to regulate there would seem to be too much in common to effect its object. The blending of these two forces, as designed in the fellowship in good works continually set before the student of the Prayer Book would, indeed, be perfect; and I would lay it on your hearts that at the back of the passionate zeal which has made women willing and even desirous to suffer this is by far the strongest cause. Therefore, when you hear them abused, and when men find it possible to sneer at a pain which they lightly call self-imposed, never forget that the instinct which moved them was akin to that which landed the Man of Sorrows on Calvary. I am aware of the cynicism of certain statesmen who have become too permeated with Eastern ideas suggestive of the harem and the zenana to warrant the title of British; but in the face of it all I hold that some day the world will regard these exceptions with supreme contempt, and will accord the subjects of their sarcasm a place among the heroines of history. I also fail to understand those ladies, of whatever shades of opinion, who use women for all they are worth at elections in order that, whether by their beauty, youth, or other attractions, they may turn the scale in the desired direction, while they themselves are supposedly too occupied at home, or have not sufficient mentality to register a vote on their own account. Anything more ignoble or illogical than such a subterfuge I cannot imagine; but it is not surprising that society should follow in their wake, seeing that sacrifice and altruism are for such a type to a large extent unknown quantities. The suggestion that Women's Suffrage will divide husband and wife is a base insinuation, seeing that no union can prove permanent in its freshness unless it be founded on mutual interest in something outside and greater than both, viz., the State, to the service of which each is equally pledged. The truth of this assertion is soon enough recognised when the children are grown up, and the parents are thrown back on one another; but it is pitiable to mark its postponement until its recognition proves too late to be put into practice.

The possession of the Municipal Franchise, however satisfactory, still evades the vexed question of sex relationship, and it is astonishing that many whose private character preaches the consecration of the latter, are blinded by the

former and trivial concession. The late Lord Salisbury was right when he suggested that woman was the soul of the State as she is of the home. And when I consider the condition to which politics are being reduced, and the party machine which ruthlessly rides over every obstruction in its path, I wonder that men do not welcome such a movement which would introduce more religion, more humaneness and more heart into what threatens to become a mere source of official tyranny. I am in such dead earnest about the vote because I not only believe, but am persuaded that it would mean a great step in the direction of purity, temperance and peace, to all of which women, when unspoilt, have a natural bias. In the present state of unrest, and tendencies to anarchy, for which many find grave grounds for excuse, no thoughtful person can afford to despise the dangers by which we are menaced. For this reason the value of attachment to the Throne, which apart from sycophancy, stands for the highest emblem of law and order, becomes enormously enhanced, and the acquisition of the vote by women will do more for its attainment than any conceivable scheme within the region of practical politics.

I cannot forbear quoting two instances which I have no doubt will appeal to all present: the first, of a suffragist who confessed to me that since she had become one she had ceased to flirt, because she desired to be worthy of herself; and the second, of a woman engaged in the White Slave Traffic, who constantly attended Suffrage Meetings, and, being asked the reason, answered with a callousness beyond words that her object was to entrap young girls in the audience because she felt that the movement would ruin her trade.

After that little more remains to be said, and I am convinced that henceforward, if you do not actually support this cause, none of you but will look on it with profound respect. If you wish to cleanse your streets you will immediately become a member; if your ambition is to cure the evil of drink, you will boldly range yourself on its side; and, if your aim is the abolition of war, you will not hesitate for an instant to become a convert, though I trust it will prove only a step towards apostleship. You may be laughed at, you may be traduced, you may be regarded as unwomanly, and you may even be called upon to endure hardship and shame. All these things are in the commission of the cross which the disciples of this crusade elect to bear, but of this you may



rest assured, that evolution will prove a dream, and the affairs of the city will remain *in statu quo*, unless you are ready to unfurl your flag in the name of the Son of Mary, whose chivalry towards women was one of the chief ornaments of the Gospel. If only this position were maintained, divisions would become impossible, and a new enthusiasm would sweep over the land. The real fact is that men don't want to be too virtuous, and women don't want to think or to work, which puts the case into a nutshell; but religion, through the channel of private conscience, insists on the equalisation of both in God's sight, made as they were to be helpmates to one another and not a mutual temptation.

Whether the vote is won now or later, it is bound to arrive, in spite of every difficulty, and of the meretricious argument that the only rôle of a woman is to influence man through her feminine charms. All in due time civilization will look back on such an argument with unqualified disgust, and woman will recognise that she is an immortal being, gifted of God with an intelligence of her own, and that it were a despicable thing to regard her body as the main excuse for her existence. The truth that we are brothers and sisters will then be understood: a doctrine which the Church has for centuries enunciated but to the application of which in civic life she not only brings no help, but even offers a passive resistance. A tribute is here due, however, to the manliness and integrity of many of the clergy, fully abreast of modern life, who have not hesitated to show their hand lest they should appear to be misusing their high office for political ends. Take courage, then. Do your part, so that, when the war is over and peace is signed, yours may at least be the retrospect of having shared in the conflict.

If I may be allowed one word of warning in conclusion, it is that you should take special care to retain all your sweetness, all your humour, all your charm; so that, without once having lost your temper, you may give the impression that you were prepared to lose yourselves in order that the world might be the gainer, and God might be glorified.

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# Women's Influence on the Progress of Knowledge

A DISCOURSE

BY

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education of children, in the tone and spirit of literature, in the forms and usages of life; nay, even in the proceedings of legislatures, in the history of statute-books, and in the decisions of magistrates, we find manifold proofs that women are gradually making their way, and winning for themselves a position superior to any they have hitherto attained. This is one of many peculiarities which distinguish modern civilization, and which show how essentially the most advanced countries are different from those that formerly flourished. Among the most celebrated nations of antiquity, women held a very subordinate place. The most splendid and durable monument of the Roman empire, and the noblest gift Rome has bequeathed to posterity, is her jurisprudence—a vast and harmonious system, worked out with consummate skill, and from which we derive our notions of civil law. Yet this, which, not to mention the immense sway it still exercises in France and Germany, has taught our lawyers their best lessons; and

which enabled the earlier jurists to soften the rude maxims of our ancestors, and adjust the coarser principles of the old Common Law to the actual exigencies of life. This imperishable specimen of human sagacity is, strange to say, so grossly unjust towards women, that a great writer upon that code has well observed, that in it women are regarded not as persons, but as things; so completely were they stripped of all their rights, and held in subjection by their proud and imperious masters. As to the other great nation of antiquity, we have only to open the literature of the ancient Greeks to see with what airs of superiority, with what serene and lofty contempt, and sometimes with what mocking and biting scorn, women were treated by that lively and ingenious people. Instead of valuing women as companions, they looked on them as toys.

#### WOMEN'S INFLUENCE IN MODERN EUROPE

In modern Europe, the influence of women and the spread of civilization have both



advanced with almost equal speed. But if you compare the picture of Greek life in Homer with that to be found in Plato and his contemporaries, you will be struck by a totally opposite circumstance. Between Plato and Homer there intervened, according to the common reckoning, a period of at least four centuries, during which the Greeks made many notable improvements in the arts of life, and in various branches of speculative and practical knowledge. So far, however, from women participating in this movement, we find that, in the state of society exhibited by Plato and his contemporaries, they had evidently lost ground; their influence being less than it was in the earlier and more barbarous period depicted by Homer. This fact illustrates the question in regard to time; another fact illustrates it in regard to place. In Sparta, women possessed more influence than they did in Athens; although the Spartans were rude and ignorant, the Athenians polite and accomplished. The causes of these inconsistencies

would form a curious subject for investigation: but it is enough to call your attention to them as one of many proofs that the boasted civilisations of antiquity were eminently one-sided, and that they fell because society did not advance in all its parts, but sacrificed some of its constituents in order to secure the progress of others.

In modern European society we have happily no instance of this sort; and, if we now inquire what the influence of women has been upon that society, everyone will allow that on the whole it has been extremely beneficial. Their influence has prevented life from being too exclusively practical and selfish, and has saved it from degenerating into a dull and monotonous routine, by infusing into it an ideal and romantic element. *It has softened the violence of men; it has improved their manners; it has lessened their cruelty.* Thus far, the gain is complete and undeniable. But if we ask what their influence has been, not on the general interests of society, but on the progress of



knowledge, the answer is not so obvious. For, to state the matter candidly, it must be confessed that none of the greatest works which instruct and delight mankind have been composed by women. In poetry, in painting, in sculpture, in music, the most exquisite productions are the work of men. From these facts it has been inferred, and it is openly stated by eminent writers, that women have no concern with the highest forms of knowledge; that such matters are altogether out of their reach; that they should confine themselves to practical, moral, and domestic life, which it is their province to exalt and to beautify; but that they can exercise no influence, direct or indirect, over the progress of knowledge, and that if they seek to exercise such influence, they will not only fail in their object, but will restrict the field of their really useful and legitimate activity.

#### FALSE IDEAS EXPOSED

Now, I may as well state at once, that I intend combating this proposition, which I

hold to be unphilosophical and dangerous; false in theory and pernicious in practice. I believe, and I hope to convince you, that so far from women exercising little or no influence over the progress of knowledge, they are capable of exercising and have actually exercised an enormous influence; that this influence is, in fact, so great that it is hardly possible to assign limits to it; and that great as it is, it may with advantage be still further increased. I hope, moreover, to convince you that this influence has been exhibited not merely from time to time in rare, sudden, and transitory ebullitions, but that it acts by virtue of certain laws inherent to human nature; and that although it works as an under-current below the surface, and is therefore invisible to hasty observers, it has already produced the most important results, and has affected the shape, the character, and the amount of our knowledge.

#### KNOWLEDGE AND COMMON SENSE

To clear up this matter, we must first of all understand what knowledge is. Some men who



pride themselves on their common sense—and whenever a man boasts much about that, you may be pretty sure that he has very little sense, either common or uncommon—such men there are who will tell you that all knowledge consists of facts, that everything else is mere talk and theory, and that nothing has any value except facts. Those who speak so much of the value of facts may understand the meaning of fact, but they evidently do not understand the meaning of value. For, the value of a thing is not a property residing in that thing, nor is it a component. It is simply its relation to some other thing. We say, for instance, that a five-shilling piece has a certain value; but the value does not reside in the coin. The value consists solely in the relation which the five-shilling piece bears to something else. Just so in regard to facts. Facts, as facts, have no sort of value, but are simply a mass of lumber. The value of a fact is its relation to the total stock of our knowledge, either present or prospective. Facts, therefore, have merely a

potential and, as it were, subsequent value, and the only advantage of possessing them is the possibility of drawing conclusions from them; in other words, of rising to the idea, the principle, the law which governs them. Our knowledge is composed not of facts, but of the relations which facts and ideas bear to themselves and to each other; and real knowledge consists not in an acquaintance with facts, which only makes a pedant, but in the use of facts, which makes a philosopher.

#### THE MOST IMPORTANT FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE

Looking at knowledge in this way, we shall find that it has three divisions—Method, Science, and Art. Of method I will speak presently; but I will first state the limits of the other two divisions. The immediate object of all art is either pleasure or utility; the immediate object of all science is truth. As art and science have different objects, so also have they different faculties. The faculty of art is to change events; the faculty of science is to



foresee them. The phenomena with which we deal are controlled by art ; they are predicted by science. The more complete a science is, the greater its power of prediction ; the more complete an art is, the greater its power of control. Astronomy, for instance, is called the queen of the sciences, because it is the most advanced of all ; and the astronomer, while he abandons all hope of controlling or altering the phenomena, frequently knows what the phenomena will be years before they actually appear ; the extent of his foreknowledge proving the accuracy of his science.

#### TENDENCIES OF CIVILIZATION

One of the most conspicuous tendencies of advancing civilization is to give a scientific basis to that faculty of control which is represented by art, and thus afford fresh prominence to the faculty of prediction. In the earliest stages of society there are many arts, but no sciences. A little later, science begins to appear, and every subsequent step is marked by an

increased desire to bring art under the dominion of science. To those who have studied the history of the human mind, this tendency is so familiar that I need hardly stop to prove it. Perhaps the most remarkable instance is in the case of agriculture, which, for thousands of years, was a mere empirical art, resting on the traditional maxims of experience, but which, during the present century, chemists began to draw under their jurisdiction, so that the practical art of manuring the ground is now explained by laws of physical science. Probably the next step will be to bring another part of the art of agriculture under the dominion of meteorology, which will be done as soon as the conditions which govern the changes of the weather have been so generalised as to enable us to foretell what the weather will be.

#### FUTURE CONSEQUENCES

General reasoning, therefore, as well as the history of what has been actually done, justify us in saying that the highest, the ripest, and



the most important form of knowledge, is the scientific form of predicting consequences ; it is therefore to this form that I shall restrict the remainder of what I have to say respecting the influence of women. And the point which I shall attempt to prove is, that there is a natural a leading, and probably an indestructible element, in the minds of women, which enables them, not only to make scientific discoveries, but to exercise the most momentous and salutary influence over the method by which discoveries are made. And as all questions concerning the philosophy of method lie at the very root of our knowledge, I will, in the first place, state, as succinctly as I am able, the only two methods by which we can arrive at truth.

The scientific inquirer, properly so called, that is, he whose object is merely truth, has only two ways of attaining his result. He may proceed from the external world to the internal ; or he may begin with the internal and proceed to the external. In the former case he studies the facts presented to his senses, in order to arrive

at a true idea of them ; in the latter case, he studies the ideas already in his mind, in order to explain the facts of which his senses are cognizant. If he begin with the *facts* his method is *inductive* ; if he begin with the *ideas* it is *deductive*.

#### INDUCTIVE AND DEDUCTIVE EXPLAINED

The inductive philosopher collects phenomena either by observation or by experiment, and from them rises to the general principle or law which explains and covers them. The deductive philosopher draws the principle from ideas already existing in his mind, and explains the phenomena by descending on them, instead of rising from them. We call geometry a deductive science, because, even if its axioms are arrived at inductively, the inductive process is extremely small, and we are unconscious of it ; while the deductive reasonings form the great mass and difficulty of the science.

To bring this distinction home to you, I will illustrate it by a specimen of deductive and in-



ductive investigation of the same subject. Suppose a writer on what is termed social science wishes to estimate the influence of different habits of thought on the average duration of life and taking as an instance the opposite pursuits of poets and mathematicians, asks which of them live longer. How is he to solve this? If he proceeds inductively he will first collect the facts, that is, he will ransack the biographies of poets and mathematicians in different ages, different climates, and different states of society. He will then throw the results into the statistical form of tables of mortality, and on comparing them will find, that notwithstanding the immense variety of circumstances which he has investigated, there is a general average which constitutes an empirical law, and proves that mathematicians, as a body, are longer lived than poets. *This is the inductive method.* On the other hand, the deductive inquirer will arrive at precisely the same conclusion by a totally different method. He will argue thus: poetry appeals to the imagination, mathematics

to the understanding. To work the imagination is more exciting than to work the understanding, and what is habitually exciting is usually unhealthy. But what is usually unhealthy will tend to shorten life; therefore poetry tends more than mathematics to shorten life; therefore on the whole poets will die sooner than mathematicians. *This is the deductive method.*

#### WOMEN THE BETTER REASONERS

You now see the difference between induction and deduction; and you see, too, that both methods are valuable, and that any conclusion must be greatly strengthened if we can reach it by two such different paths. To connect this with the question before us, I will endeavour to establish two propositions. First, That women naturally prefer the deductive method to the inductive. Secondly, That women by encouraging in men deductive habits of thought, have rendered an immense, though unconscious, service to the progress of knowledge, by



preventing scientific investigators from being as exclusively inductive as they would otherwise be.

In regard to women being by nature more deductive, and men more inductive, you will remember that induction assigns the first place to particular facts; deduction to general propositions or ideas. Now, there are several reasons why women prefer the deductive, and, if I may say so, ideal method. They are more emotional, more enthusiastic, and more imaginative than men; they therefore live more in an ideal world; while men, with their colder, harder, and austerer organizations, are more practical and more under the dominion of facts, to which they consequently ascribe a higher importance. Another circumstance which makes women more deductive, is that they possess more of what is called intuition. They see as far as men can, and what they do see they see quicker. Hence, they are constantly tempted to grasp at once at an idea, and seek to solve a problem suddenly, in contradistinction to the

slower and more laborious ascent of the inductive investigator.

#### THEY THINK QUICKER THAN MEN

That women are more deductive than men, because they think quicker than men, is a proposition which some persons will not relish, and yet it may be proved in a variety of ways. Indeed, nothing could prevent its being universally admitted except the fact, that the remarkable rapidity with which women think is obscured by that miserable, that contemptible, that preposterous system, called their education, in which valuable things are carefully kept from them, and trifling things carefully taught to them, until their fine and nimble minds are too often irretrievably injured. It is on this account, that in the lower classes the superior quickness of women is even more noticeable than in the upper; and an eminent physician, Dr. Currie, mentions in one of his letters, that when a labourer and his wife came together to consult him, it was always from the woman that he



gained the clearer and more concise information ; the intellect of the man moving too slowly for his purpose. To this I may add another observation which many travellers have made, and which any one can verify : namely, that when you are in a foreign country, and speaking a foreign language, women will understand you quicker than men will ; and that for the same reason, if you lose your way in a town abroad, it is always best to apply to a woman, because a man will show less readiness of apprehension.

HER KEENER INSIGHT AND VALUABLE AID  
TO SCIENCE

These, and other circumstances which might be adduced—such, for instance, as the insight into character possessed by women, and the fine tact for which they are remarkable—prove that they are more deductive than men, for two principal reasons. First, Because they are quicker than men. Secondly, Because, being more emotional and enthusiastic, they live in a more ideal world, and therefore prefer

a method of inquiry which proceeds from ideas to facts ; leaving to men the opposite method of proceeding from facts to ideas.

My second proposition is, that women have rendered great though unconscious service to science, by encouraging and keeping alive this habit of deductive thought ; and that if it were not for them, scientific men would be much too inductive, and the progress of our knowledge would be hindered. There are many who will not willingly admit this proposition, because, in England, since the first half of the seventeenth century, the inductive method, as the means of arriving at physical truths, has been the object, not of rational admiration, but of a blind and servile worship ; and it is constantly said, that since the time of Bacon all great physical discoveries have been made by that process. If this be true, then of course the deductive habits of women must, in reference to the progress of knowledge, have done more harm than good. But it is not true. It is not true that the greatest modern



discoveries have all been made by induction; and the circumstance of its being believed to be true is one of many proofs how much more successful Englishmen have been in making discoveries than in investigating the principles according to which discoveries are made.

#### NEWTON AND THE APPLE

The first instance I will give you of the triumph of the deductive method, is in the most important discovery yet made respecting the inorganic world; I mean the discovery of the law of gravitation by Sir Isaac Newton. Several of Newton's other discoveries were, no doubt, inductive, in so far as they merely assumed such provisional and tentative hypotheses as are always necessary to make experiments fruitful. But it is certain that his greatest discovery of all was deductive, in the proper sense of the word; that is to say, the process of reasoning from ideas was out of all proportion large, compared to the process of reasoning from facts. Five or six years after the accession of Charles II., Newton was sitting in

a garden, when an apple fell from a tree. Whether he had been already musing respecting gravitation, or whether the fall of the apple directed his thoughts into that channel is uncertain, and is immaterial to my present purpose, which is merely to indicate the course his mind actually took. His object was to discover some law—that is, rise to some higher truth respecting gravity than was previously known. Observe how he went to work. He sat still where he was, and he thought. He did not get up to make experiments concerning gravitation, nor did he go home to consult observations which others had made, or to collate tables of observations: he did not even continue to watch the external world, but he sat, like a man entranced and enraptured, feeding on his own mind, and evolving idea after idea. He thought that if the apple had been on a higher tree, if it had been on the highest known tree, it would have equally fallen. Thus far, there was no reason to think that the power which made the apple



fall was susceptible of diminution; and if it were not susceptible of diminution, why should it be susceptible of limit? If it were unlimited and undiminished, it would extend above the earth; it would reach the moon and keep her in her orbit. If the power which made the apple fall was actually able to control the moon, why should it stop there? Why should not the planets also be controlled, and why should not they be forced to run their course by the necessity of gravitating towards the sun, just as the moon gravitated towards the earth? His mind thus advancing from idea to idea, he was carried by imagination into the realms of space, and still sitting, neither experimenting nor observing, but heedless of the operations of nature, he completed the most sublime and majestic speculation that was ever conceived. Owing to an inaccurate measurement of the diameter of the earth, the details which verified this stupendous conception were not completed till twenty years later, when Newton, still pursuing the same process, made

a deductive application of the laws of Kepler: so that both in the beginning and in the end, the greatest discovery of the greatest natural philosopher the world has yet seen, was the fruit of the deductive method. See how small a part the senses played in that discovery! It was the triumph of the idea! It was the audacity of genius! It was the outbreak of a subtle mind. To pretend, therefore, as many have done, that the fall of the apple was the cause of the discovery, and then to adduce that as a confirmation of the idle and superficial saying "that great events spring from little causes," only shows how unable such writers are to appreciate what our masters have done for us. No great event ever sprung, or ever will spring, from a little cause; and this, the greatest of all discoveries, had a cause fully equal to the effect produced. The cause of the discovery of the law of gravitation was not the fall of the apple, nor was it anything that occurred in the external world. The cause of the discovery was the mind of Newton.



## IDEAS AND IMAGINATION

The next instance I will mention of the successful employment of the deductive method concerns the mineral kingdom. If you take a crystallised substance as it is usually found in nature, nothing can at first sight appear more irregular and capricious. Even in its simplest form, the shape is so various as to be perplexing ; but natural crystals are generally met with, not in primary forms, but in secondary ones, in which they have a singularly confused and uncouth aspect. These strange-looking bodies had long excited the attention of philosophers, who, after the approved inductive fashion, subjected them to all sorts of experiments ; divided them, broke them up, measured them, weighed them, analysed them, thrust them into crucibles, brought chemical agents to bear upon them, and did everything they could think of to worm out the secret of these crystals, and get at their mystery. Still, the mystery was not revealed to them. At length, late in the eighteenth century, a

Frenchman named Haüy, one of the most remarkable men of a remarkable age, made the discovery, and ascertained that these native crystals, irregular as they appear, are in truth perfectly regular, and that their secondary forms deviate from their primary forms by a regular process of diminution ; that is, by what he termed laws of decrement—the principles of decrease being as unerring as those of increase. Now, I beg that you will particularly notice how this striking discovery was made. Haüy was essentially a poet ; and his great delight was to wander in the Jardin du Roi, observing nature, not as a physical philosopher, but as a poet. Though his understanding was strong, his imagination was stronger ; and it was for the purpose of filling his mind with ideas of beauty that he directed his attention at first to the vegetable kingdom, with its graceful forms and various hues. His poetic temperament luxuriating in such images of beauty, his mind became saturated with ideas of symmetry, and Cuvier assures us that



it was in consequence of those ideas that he began to believe that the apparently irregular forms of native crystals were in reality regular; in other words, that in them, too, there was a beauty—a hidden beauty—though the senses were unable to discern it. As soon as this idea was firmly implanted in his mind, at least half the discovery was made; for he had the key to it, and was on the right road, which others had missed because, while they approached minerals experimentally on the side of the senses, he approached them speculatively on the side of the idea. This is not a mere fanciful assertion of mine, since Haüy himself tells us, in his great work on Mineralogy, that he took, as his starting point, ideas of the symmetry of form; and that from those ideas he worked down deductively to his subject. It was in this way, and of course after a long series of subsequent labours, that he read the riddle which had baffled his able but unimaginative predecessors. And there are two circumstances worthy of note, as confirming what

I have said respecting the real history of this discovery. The first is, that although Haüy is universally admitted to be the founder of the science, his means of observation were so rude that subsequent crystallographers declare that hardly any of his measurements of angles are correct; as, indeed, is not surprising, inasmuch as the goniometer which he employed was a very imperfect instrument; and that of Wollaston, which acts by reflection, was not then invented. The other circumstance is, that the little mathematics he once knew he had forgotten amid his poetic and imaginative pursuits; so that, in working out the details of his own science, he was obliged, like a school-boy, to learn the elements of geometry before he could prove to the world what he had already proved to himself, and could bring the laws of the science of form to bear upon the structure of the mineral kingdom.

#### POETRY AND FLOWERS

To these cases of the application of what may be termed the ideal method to the inorganic



world, I will add another from the organic department of nature. Those who are interested in botany are aware that the highest morphological generalisation we possess respecting plants, is the great law of metamorphosis, according to which the stamens, pistils, corollas, bracts, petals, and so forth, of every plant, are simply modified leaves. It is now known that these various parts, different in shape, different in colour, and different in function, are successive stages of the leaf—epochs, as it were, of its history. The question naturally arises, who made this discovery? Was it some inductive investigator, who had spent years in experiments and minute observations of plants, and who, with indefatigable industry, had collected them, classified them, given them hard names, dried them, laid them up in his herbarium that he might at leisure study their structure and rise to their laws? Not so. The discovery was made by Göthe, the greatest poet Germany has produced, and one of the greatest the world has ever seen. And he made it, not in spite of

being a poet, but because he was a poet. It was his brilliant imagination, his passion for beauty, and his exquisite conception of form, which supplied him with ideas, from which, reasoning deductively, he arrived at conclusions by descent, not by ascent. When the discovery was announced by Göthe, the botanists not only rejected it, but were filled with wrath at the notion of a poet invading their territory. What! a man who made verses and wrote plays, a mere man of imagination, a poor creature who knew nothing of facts, was he to enter the sacred precincts of physical science, and give himself out as a philosopher? It was too absurd. But Göthe, who had thrown his idea upon the world, could afford to wait and abide his time. You know the result. The men of facts at length succumbed before the man of ideas; the philosophers, even on their own ground, were beaten by the poet; and this great discovery is now received and eagerly welcomed by those very persons who, had they lived fifty years ago, would have treated it



with scorn, and who even now still go on in their old routine, telling us, in defiance of the history of our knowledge, that all physical discoveries are made by the Baconian method, and that any other method is unworthy the attention of sound and sensible thinkers.

#### THE POETIC TEMPERAMENT

One more instance, and I have done with this part of the subject. The same great poet made another important physical discovery in precisely the same way. Göthe, strolling in a cemetery near Venice, stumbled on a skull which was lying before him. Suddenly the idea flashed across his mind that the skull was composed of vertebræ; in other words, that the bony covering of the head was simply an expansion of the bony covering of the spine. This luminous idea was afterwards adopted by Oken and a few other great naturalists in Germany and France, but it was not received in England till Mr. Owen took it up, and in his very remarkable work on the "Homologies of the Vertebrate

Skeleton," showed its meaning and purpose as contributing towards a general scheme of philosophic anatomy. That the discovery was made by Göthe late in the eighteenth century is certain, and it is equally certain that for years afterwards the English anatomists, with all their tools and all their dissections, ignored or despised that very discovery which they are now compelled to accept.

You will particularly observe the circumstances under which this discovery was made. It was not made by some great surgeon, dissector, or physician, but it was made by a great poet, and amidst scenes most likely to excite a poetic temperament. It was made in Venice, that land so calculated to fire the imagination of a poet; the land of marvels, the land of poetry and romance, the land of painting and of song. It was made, too, when Göthe, surrounded by the ashes of the dead, would be naturally impressed with those feelings of solemn awe, in whose presence the human understanding, rebuked and abashed,



becomes weak and helpless, and leaves the imagination unfettered to wander in that ideal world which is its own peculiar abode, and from which it derives its highest aspirations.

#### LITTLE THINGS NEGLECTED

Much more could I have said on this subject, and gladly would I have enlarged on so fruitful a theme as the philosophy of scientific method ; a philosophy too much neglected in this country, but of the deepest interest to those who care to rise above the little instincts of the hour, and who love to inquire into the origin of our knowledge, and into the nature of the conditions under which that knowledge exists. I trust that I have done at least something towards vindicating the use in physical science of that deductive method which, during the last two centuries, Englishmen have unwisely despised. Not that I deny for a moment the immense value of the opposite or inductive method. But I venture to submit that all discoveries have not been made by this inductive process. I submit

there is, for aught we know, a spontaneous and uncaused element in the human mind, which ever and anon, suddenly and without warning, gives us a glimpse and a forecast of the future, and urges us to seize truth as it were by anticipation. In attacking the fortress, we may sometimes storm the citadel without stopping to sap the outworks. That great discoveries have been made in this way, the history of our knowledge decisively proves. And if, passing from what has been already accomplished, we look at what remains to be done, we shall find that the necessity of some such plan is likely to become more and more pressing. The field of thought is rapidly widening, and as the horizon recedes on every side, it will soon be impossible for the mere logical operations of the understanding to cover the whole of that enormous and outlying domain. Already the division of labour has been pushed so far that we are in imminent danger of losing in comprehensiveness more than we gain in accuracy. In our pursuit after special truths, we run no small



risk of dwarfing our own minds. By concentrating our attention, we are apt to narrow our conceptions, and to miss those commanding views which would be attained by a wider though perhaps less minute survey. It is but too clear that something of this sort has already happened, and that serious mischief has been wrought. For, look at the language and sentiments of those who profess to guide, and who in some measure do guide, public opinion in the scientific world. According to their verdict, if a man does something specific and immediate, if, for instance, he discovers a new acid or a new salt, great admiration is excited, and his praise is loudly celebrated. But when a man like Göthe puts forth some vast and pregnant idea which is destined to revolutionise a whole department of inquiry, and by inaugurating a new train of thought to form an epoch in the history of the human mind; if it happens, as is always the case, that certain facts contradict that view, then men rise up in arms against the author of so daring an innovation; a storm

is raised about his head, he is denounced as a dreamer, an idle visionary, an interloper in matters which he has not studied with proper sobriety.

#### GREAT MINDS

Thus it is that great minds are depressed. This false standard of excellence has corrupted even our language, and vitiated the ordinary forms of speech. Amongst us a theorist is actually a term of reproach, instead of being, as it ought to be, a term of honour; for to theorise is the highest function of genius, and the greatest philosophers must always be the greatest theorists. What makes all this the more serious is, that the farther our knowledge advances, the greater will be the need of rising to transcendental views of the physical world. To the magnificent doctrine of the indestructibility of matter, we are now adding the no less magnificent one of the indestructibility of force; and we are beginning to perceive that, according to the ordinary scientific treatment, our investigations must be confined



to questions of metamorphosis and of distribution ; that the study of causes and of entities is forbidden to us ; and that we are limited to phenomena through which and above which we can never hope to pass. But, unless I greatly err, there is something in us which craves for more than this. Surely we shall not always be satisfied, even in physical science, with the cheerless prospect of never reaching beyond the laws of co-existence and of sequence ? Surely this is not the be-all and end-all of our knowledge. And yet, according to the strict canons of inductive logic, we can do no more. According to that method, this is the verge and confine of all. Happily, however, induction is only one of our resources. Induction is, indeed, a mighty weapon laid up in the armoury of the human mind, and by its aid great deeds have been accomplished, and noble conquests have been won. But in that armoury there is another weapon, I will not say of a stronger make, but certainly of a keener edge ; and, if that weapon had been oftener used during the present and

preceding century, our knowledge would be far more advanced than it actually is. If the imagination had been more cultivated, if there had been a closer union between poetry and science, natural philosophy would have made greater progress, because natural philosophers would have taken a higher and more successful aim, and would have enlisted on their side a wider range of human sympathies.

#### INVALUABLE SERVICES OF WOMEN

From this point of view you will see the incalculable service women have rendered to the progress of knowledge. Great and exclusive as is our passion for induction, it would, but for them, have been greater and more exclusive still. Empirical as we are, slaves as we are to the tyranny of facts, our slavery would, but for women, have been more complete and more ignominious. Their turn of thought, their habits of mind, their conversation, their influence, insensibly extending over the whole surface of society, and frequently



penetrating its intimate structure, have, more than all other things put together, tended to raise us into an ideal world, lift us from the dust in which we are too prone to grovel, and develop in us those germs of imagination which even the most sluggish and apathetic understandings in some degree possess.

#### REMARKABLE MOTHERS

The striking fact that most men of genius have had remarkable mothers, and that they have gained from their mothers far more than from their fathers; this singular and unquestionable fact can, I think, be best explained by the principles which I have laid down. Some, indeed, will tell you that this depends upon laws of the hereditary transmission of character from parent to child. But if this be the case, how comes it that while everyone admits that remarkable men have usually remarkable mothers, it is not generally admitted that remarkable men have usually remarkable fathers? If the intellect is bequeathed on one

side, why is it not bequeathed on the other? For my part, I greatly doubt whether the human mind is handed down in this way, like an heir-loom, from one generation to another. I rather believe that, in regard to the relation between men of genius and their mothers, *the really important events occur after birth*, when the habits of thought peculiar to one sex act upon and improve the habits of thought peculiar to the other sex. Unconsciously, and from a very early period, there is established an intimate and endearing connection between the *deductive mind of the mother* and the *inductive mind of her son*. The understanding of the boy, softened and yet elevated by the imagination of his mother, is saved from that degeneracy towards which the mere understanding always inclines; it is saved from being too cold, too matter-of-fact, too prosaic, and the different properties and functions of the mind are more harmoniously developed than would otherwise be practicable. Thus it is that by the mere play of the affections the finished



man is ripened and completed. Thus it is that the most touching and the most sacred form of human love, the purest, the highest, and the holiest compact of which our nature is capable, becomes an engine for the advancement of knowledge and the discovery of truth. In after life other relations often arise by which the same process is continued. And, notwithstanding a few exceptions, we do undoubtedly find that the most truly eminent men have had not only their affections, but also their intellect, greatly influenced by women. I will go even farther; and I will venture to say that those who have not undergone that influence betray a something incomplete and mutilated. We detect, even in their genius, a certain frigidity of tone; and we look in vain for that burning fire, that gushing and spontaneous nature with which our ideas of genius are indissolubly associated.

#### A PLEA FOR WOMEN'S INFLUENCE

Those who are most anxious that the boundaries of knowledge should be enlarged, ought

to be most eager that the influence of women should be increased, in order that every resource of the human mind may be at once and quickly brought into play. For you may rely upon it that the time is approaching when all those resources will be needed, and will be taxed even to the utmost. We shall soon have on our hands, work far more arduous than any we have yet accomplished; and we shall be encountered by difficulties the removal of which will require every sort of help, and every variety of power. As yet we are in the infancy of our knowledge. What we have done is but a speck compared to what remains to be done. We are too apt to speak as if we had penetrated into the sanctuary of truth and raised the veil of the goddess, when in fact we are still standing, coward-like, trembling before the vestibule, and not daring, from very fear, to cross the threshold of the temple. The highest of our so-called laws of nature are as yet purely empirical. You are startled by that assertion, but it is literally true. Not one single physical



discovery that has ever been made has been connected with the laws of the mind that made it; and until that connection is ascertained our knowledge has no sure basis. On the one side we have mind; on the other side we have matter. These two principles are so interwoven, they so act upon and perturb each other, that we shall never really know the laws of one unless we also know the laws of both. Everything is essential; everything hangs together, and forms part of one scheme, one grand and complex plan, one gorgeous drama, of which the universe is the theatre.

#### WORK TO BE DONE

Before us and around us there is an immense and untrodden field, whose limits the eye vainly strives to define; so completely are they lost in the dim and shadowy outline of the future. In that field, which we and our posterity have yet to traverse, I firmly believe that the imagination will effect quite as much as the understanding. Our poetry will have to

reinforce our logic, and we must feel as much as we must argue.

#### WOMEN ACCELERATE PROGRESS

Let us, then, hope that the imaginative and emotional minds of women will continue to accelerate the great progress, by acting upon and improving the colder and harder minds of men. By this coalition, by this union of different faculties, different tastes, and different methods, we shall go on our way with the greater ease. A vast and splendid career lies before us. We see looming in the distance a rich and goodly harvest, into which perchance some of us may yet live to thrust our sickle, but of which, reap what we may, the greatest crop of all must be reserved for our posterity. So far, however, from desponding, we ought to be sanguine. We have every reason to believe that when the human mind once steadily combines the whole of its powers, it will be more than a match for the difficulties presented by the external world.



## VICTORY

As we surpass our parents, so will our children surpass us. We, waging against the forces of nature what has too often been a precarious, unsteady, and unskilled warfare, have never yet put forth the whole of our strength, and have never united all our faculties against our common foe. We, therefore, have been often worsted, and have sustained many and grievous reverses. But even so, such is the elasticity of the human mind, such is the energy of that immortal principle which lives within us, that we are baffled without being discouraged, our very defeats quicken our resources, and we may hope that our descendants, benefiting by our failure, will profit by our example, and that for them is reserved that last and decisive stage of the great conflict between Man and Nature, in which, advancing from success to success, fresh trophies will be constantly won, every struggle will issue in a conquest, and every battle end in a victory.