I

In the Prelude to "The Egoist," Meredith has mentioned an endless great book, "the biggest book on earth; that might indeed be called the Book of Earth; whose title is the Book of Egoism." The leaves of this monstrous tome, it is said, are "now capable of a stretch from the Lizard to the last few poor pulmonary snips and shreds of league dancing on their toes for cold... on the edge of the Pole."

As an image to evoke in us a sense of the all-pervading Spirit of Self, this is perhaps supreme. Yet we are placed by it upon that topmost pinnacle of perception whence we can view with nothing but distrust the line of verse at the end of this same Prelude, wherein we learn of our Egoist, by way of epitaph, that "Through very love of self himself he slew."

For is there not in all this metaphor, grand though it be, a something discrepant with the destiny of Willoughby as foreshadowed by his epitaph and amplified in the narrative? Or are we to believe that Mankind does not persist by virtue of its more catholic and (consequently) more enduring qualities? Had Meredith intended to portray the special rather than the typical, the anomaly would not have seemed so great; but the Prelude leaves no doubt in our minds of the author's belief in the universality of the traits attributed to the Egoist. Willoughby Patterne, so conscious of his Nature's needs, was beaten in the contest for Clara Middleton by nothing but his own obtuseness—the utmost, I believe, of which the man was culpable. Vernon Whitford, whose passion for her none had the imagination to perceive, carries off the coveted prize, very much to the chagrin of De Grays, who had thought himself well in the running. Whitford, no doubt, knew very well what he was doing when he assumed his pathetic, watch-dog rôle; and even if he did not, Nature's purpose was no less imperative in him, and he no less an egoist, than Willoughby. But if, as I have hinted, Willoughby was blamable for no more than his own obtuseness, how shall we praise Vernon for more than his subtlety and tact?

With prolonged gazing in the Pool of one's own Soul the waters become troubled, the reflection distorted. One catches an occasional clear glimpse of the Soul itself, but no longer can tell of what it is compounded, for all detail is lost in the large rhythm of the whole. Meredith, from a too keen searching for the Self in man, became imbued to its obvious aspects, or he must have discerned in Whitford a more formidable, because more finished, egoist than there were even the elements of in Willoughby. Of this Comedy in Narrative, criticism is chiefly prompted by the author's too rigid conception of a duty to his title, and a certain failure to bear out the promise of his Prelude. We feel that an early emphatic "to the deuce with duty" might have cleared his mind in this, and assured us greater art under a less impossible title.

There is a rhythmic unity of purpose in Nature compelling and directing human thought and action, whose influence on persons is neither good nor ill, but necessary and non-moral. No special manifestation of misery or of happiness in an individual can be regarded as a final result of natural causes and events. It is merely that the attainment of Nature's aim in him (involved in the rhythm of her broader aim) requires of him a certain attitude towards Life, so that he may react upon Life in the specific manner dictated by his environment.

The forward march of Systems to their ultimate unknown goal has no reference to the welfare of their units, except in so far as that is consonant with the trend of its progress thither.

With a fine faith in the value of contrasts, in which alone of all surviving values the utmost, I believe, of which the man was culpable. Vernon Whitford, whose passion for her none had the imagination to perceive, carries off the coveted prize, very much to the chagrin of De Grays, who had thought himself well in the running. Whitford, no doubt, knew very well what he was doing when he assumed his pathetic, watch-dog rôle; and even if he did not, Nature's purpose was no less imperative in him, and he no less an egoist, than Willoughby. But if, as I have hinted, Willoughby was blamable for no more than his own obtuseness, how shall we praise Vernon for more than his subtlety and tact?

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impelled by laws transcending our volition. And here we must pause to consider whether we know what is meant by volition. Every effort to widen the scope of our everyday life has found itself limited by the need for new words, fresh phrases; and in the same way, one might expect that the mode of expression called by them into being would sink to desuetude when these systems have had their vogue. But this indeed seldom happens, so that in our day we find ourselves constantly perplexed by words of a past period, fit only for the stating of anachronistic notions, and of these the word Volition may be called the supreme pattern. Avoiding the compromise of "limited free-will" as an enemy that will not scruple to hit below the intellect, and without stirring too fateful the compost of that decayed old controversy, let us review such phases of it as may help us here. For this purpose we cannot perhaps do better than analyse the word Goodwill, which, apart from containing the fallacies we are seeking to disperse, has the virtue of referring directly to our title.

Goodwill in action implies conscious volition tempered by moral aim, but very little probing will be needed to reveal the allusions contained in this definition. My use of the word "implies" will be noted and probably condemned as evasive. But how else can one define a term which to one's self has no meaning, than by stating what it signifies to such as constantly employ it? Volition may be named as that quality in man which enables him to believe that he can mould an universal process to his use, for the promotion of his personal well-being. Yet to the arrogance of supposing that he can do so, Nature cares not whether he exists happily or in misery, or at all, there is but one appropriate parallel: that of a belief in a Diety who is willing (nay, anxious) to forego his entire plan of action at the merest plea of a solitary prayerful sheep, and with a total disregard for the claims of the flock!

Seeking to discover the seat of the Will we must prepare to pass beneath the threshold of Consciousness and delve in the soil of Desire; but if in any way we cherish a regard for the Freedom of the will, we must go accessible to disabusement; for if in any place we discover (nay, anxious) to forego his entire plan of action at the merest plea of a solitary prayerful sheep, and with a total disregard for the claims of the flock!

The outstanding fact is that the net outcome of our cry for "equal pay for equal work," "equal conditions for the same toll for a woman employee as for a man," has decided the case with the employer against the woman employee, the moment the Bill emerges in its final form. We quote an extract from the remarks of an employer of female labour in the silk industry—Mr. Frank Farrell—managing director of a firm of silk manufacturers, which appeared in the form of an interview in the Morning Standard.

"An objectionable feature of the proposed Bill is that immature labour, the Bill may include men's as well as women's work. The concern of the Bill is taxed at practically the same rate as that of the employers. Women's work is going to be shown up for what and for how much it is. No sentimental considerations can be a kind act, we are able to perceive what we take to be the moral of it, that we attribute the deed wholly to our own volition. In the same way, when we act selfishly we often become conscious of a sense of shame merely because we cannot see that Nature's purpose controls our every choice, working through our very egoism the design whereof we are not more than a very minute portion.

"An instructive commentary upon this point is provided by the returns under the Census of Production Act, giving the total number of persons employed in each industry, and the value of the respective outputs of workers in such industries. The outstanding fact is that the net out-
December 21, 1911

THE FREEWOMAN

put for female worker is much less than that of the male worker, in some cases amounting to as much as one-fourth of the net output in industries where males are employed. For example, in the silk industry, where three-fourths of the employees are females, the net output per person is £2.5 per annum. In the paint industry, which is only of recent growth, the output per female worker is £8.5 per annum.
Roosevelt and Mr. La Follette are preparing to fight the American Presidential Campaign. So far ahead you say, Yes; for Capital, if not Labour, takes long views; and the attempted conquest by plutocracy will be a long campaign. Let us refer to the fact, however, that they call 'scientific management,' but to the mind, yes or no, or King George the Fifth. To make and keep him efficient, to its belief in The People, by assisting the amendment shall take. Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Edward Grey appeared to have any preconceived idea as to the exact form which we go on to explain, and we propose to take the preface of delegates which has been held, under the chairmanship of Mr. Henderson, at the House of Commons, of which were delegates from the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, the Women's Co-operative Union, the Women's League of Women's Suffrage, the Women's Liberal Federation, the Professional and Industrial Women's Suffrage Society, the Woman's Co-operative Guild, the People's Suffrage Federation, the Women's Labour League, and the Fabian Society.

A resolution was passed that the societies represented at the conference be invited each to appoint one delegate to the Central Committee to cooperate with the committee of members of Parliament for the purpose of co-ordinating the work of the societies throughout the country in support of the campaign for the extension of the franchise to women on broad and democratic lines.

Further, the Independent Labour Party have announced their intention of conducting a Womanhood Suffrage Campaign throughout the country, and of utilising their 800 branches for the same purpose. At the Horticultural Hall meeting last Saturday, a united audience were convinced by Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Edward Grey of the necessity of the Pro-Suffrage section of the Government, and were made to realise that Mr. Asquith's opinions made a Government Woman's Suffrage measure an impossibility, unless the Liberal Government were prepared to split asunder on the measure, which it is not.

In the words of Sir Edward Grey: "If those in favour of the Suffrage in the Cabinet resist because it is not put into the Bill at all, the Government will be broken up, and there would be no Government Bill. If we insist on putting it into the Bill, those opposed to it, including the Prime Minister, must resign. Whatever we are on the question of the Suffrage, we are, if united in loyalty to the Prime Minister, not going to do anything that would cause him to resign. If another party came into power, that party is no more united on the question than the present Government." So, in an atmosphere of confidence and conviction of good faith all round those who earnestly desire the extension of the franchise to women on broad and democratic lines, we are extremely glad to note that neither Mr. Lloyd George nor Sir Edward Grey appeared to have any preconceived ideas as to the exact form the amendment shall take. Mr. Lloyd George dreads the type of woman voter who would vote enfranchised on a household suffrage basis—as most of us do and say when we see a chance of anything better. He, at present, appears to have a penchant for a "fancy" woman's franchise, to be made up of women-householder plus the wives of men who have votes. We do not care for it, for reasons which we go on to explain, and we do not think that Mr. Lloyd George himself is flaming with the enthusiasm which is usual with him in support of his own solutions. Our own preference would be for a complete franchise for women as for men, a complete abolition of the property qualification necessary in the present franchise, and—in order to obviate what is an understandable prejudice against women of means—giving women a higher age of qualification for women than for men. If twenty-one years were a qualification for men, the married woman might reasonably be accepted for women. We are anxious to make clear the very real danger of accepting the solution of disfranchisement suggested by Mr. Lloyd George. It is an overwhelming one, and we believe Mr. Lloyd George himself will be ready to recognise it. It is this:—In a woman-householder, plus a married woman franchise, there are deliberately cut out from all benefit almost the entire business and industrial earning class of women. It would be a deliberate exclusion of the class of women for whom alone an adequate amount of political power—the industrial worker. The unenfranchised industrial worker is not usually in a position to be a householder, and after marriage, her industrial work, more commonly than not, would be stopped. Of all the classes of women who need the vote, the woman worker needs it most. Of all the classes of women, a certain conviction of the coming difficulties of women workers, we should protest very passionately against her complete lack of political power. Of all the classes of women who need the vote, the woman worker needs it most. Of all the classes of women, a certain conviction of the coming difficulties of women workers, we should protest very passionately against her complete lack of political power. Of all the classes of women who need the vote, the woman worker needs it most. Of all the classes of women, a certain conviction of the coming difficulties of women workers, we should protest very passionately against her complete lack of political power.
Women and Government.

THAT women who desire emancipation from the old sex-servitude should desire to see that emancipation expressed in concrete manner in the machinery of life is reasonable and commendable. But the common attitude to-day seems to be to rely upon the machinery and to leave the emancipation alone. The small class of thinking women recognise that the present suffrage agitation is only of indirect value, but that it is of service so far as it tends to create the new spirit by the struggle for the new machinery and to stimulate a new practice by the exposure of the old, and only so far. But even among these women an undue importance seems to be attached to institutions and systems and mechanical devices. The reality is lost sight of; the machinery blocks the way.

This obsession shows itself in many ways. It shows itself in the exclusive concentration upon the winning of the Parliamentary vote. This is the obvious example, though in truth it is only an aspect of something bigger and more significant—the assumption by women that they can obtain and enjoy emancipation under existing institutions, and simply need to set up a paper-and-ink equality within them to be secure. This assumption is practised on a universal scale, with nine out of every ten thinking women it passes as an axiom. They limit their speculations to life moulded by the present institutions, to society based upon the present conventions; they assume that this is the material through which and with which they must work.

It is my purpose to ask whether this attitude is justified, and I take democratic political machinery for my first inquiry. Before I begin it I desire to assure the reader that I am writing, not as a dogmatist, but as an inquirer, and that I am not prepared to substitute for the machinery I criticise destructively any personally devised alternative machine. I do not intend to make any concessions to those to whom the nakedness of a machineless land is an offence. Those who want machines may make their own machines; I am concerned with the realities behind them.

Our present governmental machine claims to be democratic and representative. Now, apart entirely from the fair argument that it cannot be either democratic or representative in the full sense of the words until it includes women in its franchise, I claim that the words used are inaccurate and untrue even for those who are supposed to control the government. The voters of the country are not represented in the Houses of Parliament. They do not get from the Legislature the laws that they want. They do get from the Legislature the laws that they do not want. They do not control the police or the Post Office, or the army or the navy. They do not control the private member of the Commons; and, much more definitely, they do not control the Cabinet. To listen to the speeches of some Suffragists, one would think that voters did all these things, getting from a perfectly oiled machine the perfectly formed legislative product. But this is not true. It is not too much to say that our democratic governing machine is an utter failure. It does not perform the work which it was constructed to perform. It is a penny-in-the-slot machine that won't work.

Our democratic machine suffers from two classes of faults: the first are inherent in all democratic governing machines, and the second are peculiar to the special one which we have preceded. The latter may be briefly dismissed. They are: Government by the secret Cabinet caucus, control of the private member by the party, the collision of the two parties in the alternate governing game, and the numerous conventional devices by which liberty of speech and independence of action are denied and restricted within the House of Commons. If our democratic system were a perfect and ideal machine, the addition of these devices would render that machine ineffectual. This is recognised by a younger school of politicians who are devoting their talents to the work of purifying the machine. Many women sympathise with this attitude, and declare, absurdly enough, that all the present corruption and dishonesty will be swept away with the coming of women into the political world. Let me admit for the moment that it may be that women will purify politics. How long will it take? And what reform of value are they likely to obtain in the interval? A survey of history will show that there have almost always been some aspiring politicians seeking the purification of the machine, and equally that governing machinery has always continued in spite of every mechanical change to be corrupt and dishonest. It is pertinent therefore to ask why women seeking emancipation should try to get it through this particular existing governing machine.

But even if women should accomplish the Sisyphus task and purify politics, even if they should come into possession of the democratic machine perfected and completed with all the other missing devices, it is still pertinent to ask if it would serve their need. To answer this question it is necessary to consider the essential and inherent imperfection of all democratic machines that have ever been devised. The democrat believes that by natural right every unit in the State is entitled to share in the national government. To achieve this ideal it has been supposed that it was merely necessary to give to every citizen a tool of some sort to play with. But this is another example of hiding the reality with the machine. What each unit in a democratic country needs is not a tool to play with or a name entered in a book, but a share of power sufficient to ensure self-protection. Under a real democracy no normal citizen could be subjected to coercion except for criminal incursion upon the rights of others. The bureaucrats have always met the democratic clamour by saying that such a system was an impossibility; and so far every democratic governing machine has proved that they are right. In practice every democratic system reduces itself to government by the majority and coercion of the minority, or government by the privileged and coercion for the unprivileged. Every democracy in action has become a bureaucracy; there is only a quantitative and not a qualitative difference between these two systems. The widest device of popular government still leaves a section of the people under compulsion, and it becomes interesting to ask what units are likely to form this slave section. At this stage I will content myself with the suggestion that there can be no certainty of full human liberty for women under a system from which the element of coercion cannot be removed.

The democratic machine is unwieldy, and with every extension of its powers and franchises it becomes more unwieldy. This means that it is always overweighted, that, as a result, legislation is always behind the demand, is unco-ordinated and unconsidered, and that there are always some victims suffering from these imperfections. The law under which we live at any given time is the registered opinion of the past. It may be the narrow prejudice of the middle ages, the outlived morality of the
last century, the half-truth—become—a-whole-lie of the last generation; but it is always the dead hand of the past. The more unwieldy the machine the more complex becomes the conflict between the living thought of the living race and the dead thought that is embodied in law. The mind and the soul grow and grow, to new heights, to new understanding. But the law crawls ever behind. Pulling there from behind it does not only hold the world back, but its administrators punish and crucify whoever rises beyond its conceptions and transgresses its outworn creeds. And this tendency is increased by the unwieldiness of all democratic machinery.

A vote?—a thing of value when one has room to use it, when its possession confers some real power upon the holder. It is a thing of no value when the arena is so crowded that no effective use can be made of the weapon, and when by multiplying the voters the fraction of power which attaches to the use of one vote is so negligible. With universal suffrage the vote value is reduced to zero, and the real power is transferred definitely to the bureaucracy that controls the working of the machine—the officials, the political cliques, the vote-catchers. It will be gathered together that under the worst conditions these fractional powers of the voters can be added together to control the bureaucracy. But this is a fallacy. In practice it has been possible at all times to divide the electorate in such manner as to make the claim of control a farce. The one real power that the combined fraction wielders do possess is the power of dealing death, of destroying. It can unmake what it cannot control. And it is to be noted that this power of dealing death has always belonged to the populace, and has been used under and against every tyranny. We have travelled rather a long way from the autocratic government of John, from the oppression of Charles, to secure to ourselves only this same old right. For it is obvious to the most superficial that the right of destruction of a government inheres in the people themselves, and not in the democratic machinery. We already possess that which such democratic systems can give.

The value of political power may be assessed anew after these considerations; the disproportion between the cost and the gain may be seen in a new light. The machine-mongers have had a long day. The systems can give.

As one having a great respect for junior district visitors, I felt bound to declare a little of my faith.

“You don’t believe in women?” said Prudence ing the grading of beer; but she is under vows, and whatever you may say,” she asserted.

“Most improper,” she said. “Suppose that I can see exactly ten healthy temptations?” I asked, as a preliminary; but of course she shook her head.

“You’re not afraid of mental impotence?” I asked. "It’s quite evident you don’t believe in them," I said quite impersonally; but Prudence Grumjaw has been trained to blush at the word “moral,” and in conjunction with ruin, she flamed. Not for the first time, of course, but I often wondered whether Prudence had any glimmering of the effect these exhibitions had upon me.

“Most improper,” she said. "Suppose your curate can only see one, and that he hasn’t; and to the problem of whether a newly-saved vegetarian might pay for bacon consumed in the darker days, I could find no solution, except Prudence, or the shorter ways of the County Court.

“Most improper,” said Prudence again, and in front of her, with the two wooden eyes of a female Christian.

“You oughtn’t to give way,” she said. “I saw a promise of clipped claws. But you know what it means, don’t you?”


“It’s something shocking,” she continued.

“They’re not the same thing,” I retorted. “For instance, you are something shocking; but up to the present, no one can really say that you’re improper.”

Prudence raised half of another blush, and it was becoming depressing.

“The curate’s just gone by,” I said, and the white flower seemed quite pleased that I should notice the presentation. “And so dull,” I added. "That doesn’t matter so much,” she said, and I began to laugh.

“You’re not afraid of mental impotence?” I asked presently; but Prudence Grumjaw has been carefully nurtured, and can miss an analogy on occasion.

“He’s a very good man,” she said, just as though I had challenged.

“Yes,” I said, “he’s too dull to see temptation.”

“It’s a pity you’re not,” she said primly, and in that I saw a promise of clipped claws.

“Prudence,” I said, in a clerical voice; and the flutter began, but soon ended, for the attack was of another kind, “don’t you think one ought to see every possible temptation?” Prudence knows all the Saints’ Days, but her theology is as mixed as her father’s pickles, and more demoralising.

“But you oughtn’t to give way,” she said.

“Suppose that I can see exactly ten healthy temptations?” I asked.

“Yes,” she said, a little doubtful as to the propriety of discussion. "Suppose your curate can only see one, and that of no consequence,” I continued.

Teresa Billington-Greig.

**Prudence—Preserver.**

A MORALITY PIECE.

"You don’t believe in women?” said Prudence Grumjaw, soulfully drumming her fingers on the table.

As one having a great respect for junior district visitors, I felt bound to declare a little of my faith.

“Some are better than others,” I said, remembering the grading of beer; but she is under vows, and one must not tantalise.

“It’s quite evident you don’t believe in them," I said quite impersonally; but Prudence Grumjaw has been trained to blush at the word “moral,” and in conjunction with ruin, she flamed. Not for the first time, of course, but I often wondered whether Prudence had any glimmering of the effect these exhibitions had upon me.

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Teresa Billington-Greig.
"But he wouldn't fall," she said, shaking her head.

"It's not a question of percentage; it's to be decided on the aggregate," I said.

"What does that mean?" said Prudence.

"Well, if I fall to nine out of my ten, and he falls to his one, it's a win for me; one up.

"Why, you've fallen nine times," she said.

"I dare say I shall," I answered. "But I do the trick with the tenth; in any case, if the worst happens, it's a draw in my favour. You think it over.

"I'd never forgive nine out of ten," said Prudence.

Think of the good it does you; even if you don't want to resist, there's the moral stimulus," I urged.

"Where?" said Prudence scathingly.

"In the mere acquaintance," I said. "Afterwards, how much better you would be, for instance.

"I'm sure I shouldn't," said Prudence.

"Then you're a hopeless case," I said firmly.

"Thank you," said she. "There's no need," I said; "it's my duty.

"I should want a higher authority than you," she said.

"Well," I said, "you can ask the curate.

"I will," I said thoughtfully.

"Ask him," said I, "if it isn't true that the old saints have been young sinners, and all the old sinners have started as young saints.

"Of course," she said; "I know that.

"Very well, Prudence," I said; "it would be better to finish good.

"I'm going to," she said arrogantly.

"Then you must start as a sinner," I said. "You admitted that just now.

"It's not a thing to laugh at," said Prudence, severely.

"I quite agree," I answered; "these struggles are really affecting.

"I know you thought that all along," said Prudence devoutly, and I wonder she didn't say, "Father has put paid to the bill." My guardian angel glittered violently, not understanding the situation; but I was only going to tempt Prudence.

"Have you got them already?" she asked.

"Five-shilling tickets," I said, remembering her commercial strain.

"They were sent," I answered unblushingly.

"Have you any more tracts to deliver?" I asked sympathetically.

She looked at the clock, and then at the table.

"Never mind," I answered. "Your father wouldn't allow you to go; besides, there's the second line of defence—your principles, and I might have likened these to Falstaff's milites.

"It's not a question of percentage; it's to be decided on the aggregate," I said.

"Where is it?" she questioned.

"Never mind," I answered. "Your father wouldn't allow you to go; besides, there's the second line of defence—your principles, and I might have likened these to Falstaff's militia.

"If it's anywhere not really nice, I shouldn't dream of going," she said.

"Why not?" I enquired.

"Why not!" said Prudence. "I can't believe you would ask me to go to anything not nice." Her trustful voice and eyes to match might have thrilled the curate, but to a sinner they were merely irritants.

"Your simple faith appals me," I said acridly, but Prudence only sighed; she has been taught to regard this as a religious duty, and performs it at times of spiritual stress.

"Shouldn't dream of asking you to a rummage sale," I said, more pleasantly; "but this is something really elevating." Prudence roused herself again.

"I'm getting a little bit tired of them," she said quite confidentially; "but perhaps this isn't really—nice.

"Five-shilling tickets," I said, remembering her commercial strain.

"Have you got them already?" she asked.

"They were sent," I answered unblushingly.

"However did you get them?" she said wonderingly; and knowing that she was considering my ways and means, I regretted the price, but not the effect.

"But you haven't told me where it is," said she presently. "There's no need to do that," I said; "it's the best piece in London.

"Why didn't you tell me before?" said Prudence.

"To prevent you changing your mind," I said, and she laughed almost giddily; but that mood soon passed.

"Father will be sure to hear of it," she said, shaking her head; but I was pleased at the suggested duplicity.

"Tell him you're going with me," I said.

Prudence Grumjaw looked at me and gasped.

"With you! He wouldn't hear of it," and after all it was a sort of a tribute.

"You don't understand the competitive system," I said calmly. "Tell him you're going with me.

"I'm afraid I shall have to," she said. "And I know what he will say.

However, it was sufficient for the day, and I looked thoughtfully at the clock.

"Perhaps you're busy?" said Prudence in a science-stricken voice.

When she was gone, I discovered her bundle of tracts, lying forgotten on the table, and in my haste threw them on the fire; but afterwards I regretted the waste, for these might have been used.

I looked thoughtfully at the ashes, and began to consider the ways of investors; from thence it was an easy step to the general question of sanctity.

"We go up and down, in the balance," I said; but the philosopher fled, at the remembrance of Saul Grumjaw's nearly-a-pound weight.

My forecast turned out to be quite correct, when Prudence called on me the next morning—fairly early.

"Well?" I said.

"He's awfully wild about it," said Prudence, fingering the crucifix.

"What did he say?" I inquired placidly.

"What didn't he say!" said she. "And at last he said that he would wash his hands of the whole business."

"It's too late to do that now," I said; but of course Prudence misapplied it.

"I knew he wouldn't like it," she said.

"Couldn't you take George?"

"The pit is the place for him," I said. "Are you going, or not?"

"I don't know," she said doubtfully.

"Very well," I answered, "I'm busy. If you're going, I'll see you at the station."

"I'm sure I shan't be able to," said Prudence and went fearfully away.

I am willing to admit that I might not have been so lofty had I been in funds; but as it was, the hope of saving fifteen shillings grew upon me. Naturally, these grew only to wither, and when I found her on the platform, my hand sought my waistcoat pocket.

At the bottom of Chancery Lane I halted and purchased a ticket for the suburbs, and then turned into the street, and at the last station but one. Even then, Prudence had seen and heard too much to be talkative; and as we drew nearer to our destination, I saw that she was lapsing.

"He'll be like a bear," she said presently.

"Never mind," I said soothingly; "try a dance on him."

Prudence looked reproachfully at me.

"There were a lot of other things, not at all nice," she said, quite in her setting again.

"Nothing but half so nasty as your tracts," I answered; "the chimney has smoked ever since."

"You didn't burn them?" she asked.

"Of course," I said, and Prudence shook her head, as enjoined by authority.

"It was simply wicked," she said, and I was too tired to laugh; but she continued in repentance.

"I don't think I ought to have gone," she said.

"And he'll be in such a rage."


"It's nothing to laugh at," said Prudence. "He'll be waiting."

"I should like to see him," I answered; but she did not understand.

"Now?" I said. "Why, it must be awfully late."

"The darkest hour is before the dawn," I said, quite unaware how soon it would arrive for me.

"What time is it?" she asked impatiently.

"I hardly know," I said, but her eye was upon my watch-chain.

I had always known that she possessed all the requisites for commercial success; and so one was not surprised when she leaned forward and pulled at the chain.

"Wherever is your watch?" she asked, for a moment quite surprised at the sight of the lone chain.

"Must have lost it," I said indifferently; but my guardian angel whispered the truth, and Prudence had attentive ears.

"I know," she said; "I know. I've been wondering all the time why you went into that
place”; but we were then at our journey’s end, and she was silent until clear of the station.

“Oh, how could you do such a thing!” she said indignantly, as soon as we were outside.

“So you think it was quite disgraceful, do you?” I asked hopefully; and Prudence drew a long breath.

“Disgraceful, she said; “I’ll never forgive it.”

“Never?” I asked.

“Never,” said Prudence. “Oh, if father—”

“We can congratulate ourselves,” I said; but Prudence turned on her heel, and I heard her snorting as she hurried towards paternal wrath.

W. L. CRIBB.

Freewomen and the Birth-Rate.

I N THE FREEWOMAN of the 7th inst., a correspondent, signing herself “Isabel Leatham,” refers to my previous communication with, as I am glad to find, practically complete sympathy on what may be called the philosophical side of the question. I wish indeed that all Suffragists and Feminists would realise the truth of her excellent remark, that the over-population difficulty is the fundamental tyranny from which all others spring. This was the main point of my communication, and I am absolutely certain that a realisation of it is badly needed in order to rationalise and animate the whole progressive women’s movement. With unlimited maternity no social institutions whatever can eliminate poverty, disease, and death, and prevent the degradation of women into servitude, nor will Women Suffrage, even if obtainable, produce anything like the benefits claimed by many of its more ardent supporters, except in so far as the education it gives to women in asserting their own individuality leads them to claim the control of what is essentially their own domain. And in the meantime an acquaintance with this doctrine is most essential for Suffragist speakers in order to carry any conviction when dealing with economic questions. For example, Women’s Suffrage will certainly tend to equalise women’s wages with men’s for the same work; but it will not raise wages all round, unless the total supply of labour is reduced in comparison with the demand. There are some classes of women that are already keenly alive to this in many cases, and I have often observed that the Suffragist speakers have failed to carry conviction on the economic side of their arguments, simply because they neglect the fundamental question of population, and Anti-Suffragist speakers have frequently been able to gain the advantage, not because they understand the question any better, but because they can point to facts which are inconsistent with the Suffragists’ claims. Faith in an ideal, however beautiful, such as State Socialism or Women’s Suffrage, is of little value unless it is justified and backed by scientific investigation, and the most zealous of Women Suffragists will make comparatively little headway with the men of the country until they can give some real grounds for the belief that Women’s Suffrage will bring about an improvement of economic conditions. In my opinion, the great apathy which still exists on this question, will never be dispelled to any great extent until the women come forward themselves to deliberate upon the women’s question in a direct, and essentially feminine manner.

Moreover, we have only to consider what is actually going on around us to see that the term “sexual degradation” is hardly a suitable one to apply. Limitation of births is now practised to an enormous extent in every civilised country, and to the greatest extent by the most educated and refined classes. Are we to understand, then, that it is among these classes that the sexual degradation of women is greatest? Frankly, I have always thought that it was entirely the other way, and that the kind of degradation exemplified to the highest degree by the poor woman with her uncontrolled fertility leading to the annual baby, the drain on her health and strength, the despairing fight against poverty and overwork, resulting too often in despair, apathy, drunkenness, and neglect of the children. And even in more refined circles, and just as unlimited maternity must sink woman into degradation, with consciously controlled motherhood nothing can prevent her from taking the place to which she is entitled, as the equal or superior of man, with equal freedom and responsibility, secure of real instead of pretended respect, and look forward to as the fountain of life and humanity. Physical force or destruction cannot weigh as dust in the balance against control of the creation of life, and if women would only calmly refuse to be mothers until the State recognised them as citizens, their enfrianchisement would be professed them with bended knees, with a real hope for any effort or contest—and they would have done a signal service to the nation as well as themselves by the respite. Unfortunately, the idea of self-sacrifice, which has always been drilled into women, makes it difficult to convince them that they will serve their country best by looking after their own self-interest more; and so the weary round of speech-making, imprisonment, and wasted energy must go on a little longer, while the simple, direct, and essentially feminine means of protest lies ready to hand, but neglected.

Unfortunately also, the prejudices which nearly two thousand years of the degradation of the most beautiful and truly sacred functions of human existence have ingrained into us have made it almost impossible for us to look upon this subject with true reverence and with clear and unaltering vision. This is exemplified, I venture to think, by Mrs. Leatham herself, when she tells us that the means whereby restriction of births is brought about are, in her opinion, “a gross outrage on the aesthetic sensibilities of women, and the final mark of their sexual degradation.” Were this true, I should indeed be sorry, as I confess to seeing no hope for the elevation of womanhood and the race in any other direction. It may well be that there are certain methods which would not commend themselves to delicate susceptibilities, but the means of restriction known to-day are far too numerous and varied to be condemned in a wholesale manner. Were Mrs. Leatham to see what is being done by educated and refined women, more especially on the Continent, towards helping their sisters in this direction, she would realise, I fancy, that such help is compatible with a higher level of culture and aesthetic sensibilities than she is inclined to suppose.

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15, ADAM STREET, STRAND, W.C.
what of the wife of the poor curate, such as is painted for us by George Eliot in her “Amos Barton.” Or, again, what of the Czarina of Russia, or the young Queen of Spain? Can anything exemplify the sexual degradation of women more than Luther’s dictum—“If a woman becomes weary, or at last dead, from bearing, that matters not; let her only die from bearing. She is there to do it”? I am only a man, and suppose that my moral senses must be blunted, and aesthetic sense weak. But I would infinitely rather occupy the nethermost depths of that inferno than which some theologians inform us is prepared for those who commit the sin of artificial limitation than share eternal bliss with Luther, at the price of inflicting the continued tortures of undesired maternity upon an unfortunate woman, and of bringing helpless little creatures into the world, for whom there is no prospect of preparing a proper place or welcome. Both for the individual and society this is to me the crime of crimes before which all others are comparatively unimportant. And when I look round and see how the awakening of women is taking place in every direction, step by step, with the fall of the birth-rate, when I see young men and women ready to marry early in the heyday of their youth and love, learning how to live and grow together for a few years first, and to prepare a nest for the two or three children they are prepared to do justice to; when I see the healthy, well-cared-for little ones in our garden suburbs, and when I know that disease and infantile mortality is being rapidly overcome, I feel a glow of aesthetic pleasure which I would not change for anything in the world. And when I compare the status of the Frenchwoman, with her limited perspective, until she is 40, and most men married and women emancipated to marry early in the heyday of their youth and love, I see no either for little ones in our garden suburbs, and when I know that disease and infantile mortality is being rapidly overcome, I feel a glow of aesthetic pleasure which I would not change for anything in the world. And when I compare the status of the Frenchwoman, with her limited perspective, until she is 40, and most men married and women emancipated to marry early in the heyday of their youth and love, I see no either for little ones in our garden suburbs, and when I know that disease and infantile mortality is being rapidly overcome, I feel a glow of aesthetic pleasure which I would not change for anything in the world.
urged the value to the suffrage movement of frank criticism from convinced Suffragists. Owing to the abuse heaped on us by our numerous enemies, it has been not only expedient but practically necessary for the members of the various societies to refrain from adverse criticism of each other, but I consider the absence of that criticism has been a grave mistake notwithstanding; and now that the militant Suffragists have successfully got through the period when every man’s, and almost every woman’s, hairs are on end with fear, they’ll all have an interest in coming disastrous. If we have learnt to pay no heed to the criticism of our opponents, discriminated as it is by its utter unfairness, I can’t imagine ourselves above all criticism, that is our condition lamentable indeed. But I cannot imagine that to be the case, and I cannot agree with those of your correspondents who say that it can be left to the enemies of our cause. The candid friends can be of great use to us, all the more that we are not obliged to consider all their pronouncements infallible; and I hope I am not alone when I express the hope that the editors of The Free Woman will continue freely to publish their opinions of the actions of all the suffrage societies. And in case any of your contributors, in your columns in order that you may not properly that our movement does not merely make appeal to a few high intellects, but also gathers in the rank and file of average Britons. As it is again quite true that the suffrage societies contain women of every sort, I beg for the continuance of that impartial criticism which is productive of ideas to those capable of receiving them, remembering always that “there is no reason that we should deprive a wise man of any advantage to his wisdom, while we seek to restrain from a fool that which, being restrained, will be no hindrance to his folly.”

To the Editors of The Free Woman.

Pon my word, you editors are monstrous and horribly cantankerous young cats. You inveigle a poor male contributor into your columns in order that you may devour him at your leisure. Even you, done it with the kindly, sympathetic air that provokes a horribly lazy man to some sort of reply. Well, I’ve put a false construction upon your meaning of Free Woman. I’m sorry you didn’t accept my interpretation. But I pray you, and all the more that you or I wrote. (I pass THE FREEWOMAN on to likely subscribers.) I agree absolutely with you, that the working-class girl has only Hobson’s choice. But my point is that Miss Hobson’s choice is exactly the same as Mr. Hobson’s. Miss Hobson has to take the best wages she can get, so has Mr. Hobson. Miss Hobson has to choose her mate from among the men that encompass her just as Mr. Hobson must choose his. My case exactly is that “she marries on account of the development of certain common emotions developing in her.” The middle-class young lady has to replenish those emotions—hence much with which I am, as a physician, only too familiar. Of course, the working-class girl has not free choice as to the existence of the emotions any more than she has as to the colour of her eyes. She reads, very sensibly, in her need, about poor things and she doesn’t get round her every day. It’s the middle-class who delight in Mr. Pett Ridge and Mr. Neil Lyons, but no sensible gentleman would like to marry Clara. I have myself a predilection for great beauty, but I regret to see the endowment of motherhood—only I couldn’t deal with it at the end of an article that was already too long. Moreover, an editor was clamouring for copy which was, of course, late. I am reading on the subject this Sunday, and so far as I can I shall go on with the thing, dismissing about it until it becomes the death of M. D. EDER.

A working girl having just come, I asked her if she’d like to marry one of the handsome baronets she was reading about to be like to be is right to be read about; but I shouldn’t know how to speak to him” (the’s are all right), and much more, which I spare you.

To the Editors of The Free Woman.

In spite of your apology for allowing so much of the space of THE FREEWOMAN to be taken up by the W.S.P.U., I feel impelled to say how very regrettable I think it is.

In “Notes of the Week” there is this sentence: “... personal attacks necessitate personal replies, and such personal replies will not fail to be forthcoming in the pages of THE FREEWOMAN.” I am sorry if that is so. It is, I think, one of the grave weaknesses of women that they cannot, as a rule, keep the personal element out of an argument, and so they are unable to see any point of view clearly, and without bias. It is one of the things from which we must endow our own generation. (I pass THE FREEWOMAN to likely subscribers.) I agree absolutely with you, that the working-class girl has only Hobson’s choice. Who in some degree sees what an infinitely greater thing it is that a woman should possess her own soul than that she should have the vote, look to THE FREEWOMAN for intellectual stimulus, and would regret to see it degenerate into a fencing ground for the champions of the W.S.P.U. I write this because I hope for so much from THE FREEWOMAN, and because I am filled with admiration for your courage and your brave venture.

Dec. 12th, 1911.

MARY NEILSON MURRAY.

[An editorially note on “personalities” has been omitted owing to lack of space.—Ed.]

To the Editors of The Free Woman.

The most striking fact about the controversy over motherhood which has been raging in your journal is that so far it has been conducted by men and childless women.

Now, granted that men are unable to comprehend the sufferings of child-birth to which your correspondent I. D. Pearce so sympathetically refers, I fail to see that the childless woman is in any better case.

As a mother, I confess it seems extraordinary to me that mothers generally should be silent while single women are so constantly dinning into the ears of the state its enormity in forcing motherhood upon our sex. To some of us, at any rate, motherhood is a blessing to be sought after, well worth the suffering and giving up of personal inclinations.

To pretend that motherhood (I do not, of course, mean excessive motherhood) is an infliction is an insult and degrading to our sex. Some of your correspondents seem to think that women generally become mothers against their will simply to earn their board and lodging. I fail to see that motherhood is inimical to the creation of “new thoughts, new aspirations, and new ideals,” to quote I. D. Pearce. Of course it would be hardly worth while producing ideas if there were no posterity to benefit by them. It seems to me a queer way of raising the standard of the race to sterilise the women of ideas.

To the Editors of The Free Woman.

In begging you to make me a subscriber for a preliminary canter of three months I do not thereby signify my agreement with all that your paper—judging by its first two numbers—contains. I reserve the right to judge of the all-round enfranchisement of women as I am, your leading articles on “Bondwomen” come with a sort of chill. If freedom can be attained only by an infinitely small number of “Super-Women” it seems to me hardly worth fighting for at all, for privileged women in outstanding positions you can, and anyone who earns for themselves not only a living, but a reputation, have already as much freedom as is good for anyone. If your paper is the true for the future, then it seems to me that its specialised appeal will render it of but little use to the
general cause of freedom. Perhaps, however, subsequent articles will temper the impression made by your first leaders. It is with this hope that I continue to take the present issue;

I am sorry, also, that you found it desirable to attack the W.S.P.U. Whether that society is right or wrong in its present attitude, time alone can assert with an absolute assurance that the articles will temper the impression made by your first publication should be in any way necessary—and avoided.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN. I have been a most interested reader of the first three number of THE FREEWOMAN. What I especially liked about the first two numbers was that the writers did not hesitate to deal with facts plainly, but they never descended to coarseness. But, on reading the paper published December 7th, I was disappointed to find that you had inserted a letter—I think most readers will know to which I refer—which, to my mind, is scarcely in keeping with the tone of your paper.

It seems to me a great pity that the tone of your admirable and necessary publication should be in any way lowered, which in such a paper is the danger, to be expected—and avoided.

DOROTHY G. LEETE.

P.S.—I refer, of course, to the letter from Eve Gill. [We surmise that the reference is to Mr. Eric Gill's remark about the de-stereotyped nature of the Virgin and the accidental nature of the mothering of sin. We gathered that, for some reason, Mr. Gill's indignation was so deep that it could only find expression in ironical form, which form evidently was distasteful to the editors. Personally, we consider that these deep rages are best exposed to the genial air of publicity. It keeps them healthy. We prefer, therefore, to publish such expressions when ever their term will allow of publishing.—Ed.]

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN. You say, "The mutilations referred to is a quotation from a pamphlet written by Miss Gawkwhorp" (sic). The mutilations complained of are:

(1) The numbers heading the questions were deleted.

(2) The paragraph, "Feeling that one can produce..." was removed from the early part of the question.

(The mutilations were numbered in the letter to the Editors.)

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

Please go on! You cannot have any idea how funny you all are. I haven't laughed so much since I was young.

No one would ever have dreamed that people of such portentous intelligence could be so supremely—and quite unnecessarily—divided. But, as it doesn't seem to have struck you, I am sure you will be very glad to be told of it. I hope you will keep going; it is quite as good as Monsieur Plessier.

What I am referring to, whether the doctrine of "feminism," when finally disentangled—with close application and a wet towel round the head of natures—from the sensational columns of THE FREEWOMAN, will result in a heavy crop of "superwomen"? Also, whether, when they do appear, they will cherish so lofty a disregard for the ordinary facts of human life, for a sense of humour, and for ideas of proportion, as the heralds of their day, the editors? Of all the mistakes and misfortunes of which my unlucky sex have been the victims, that would be the worst.

But I am not unduly apprehensive. I do not anticipate a great uprising of "Freedoms" on this occasion. And you are indubitably adding to the gaiety of nations in a world of "dull dogs," for which my hearty thanks and blessing. I shall follow your entertainment, as it will allow me, with joy.

C. NINA BOYLE.

[Miss Boyle's hilarity is infectious! Although at a loss for a reason, we are drawn into sharing her mirth. We hope it will similarly infect our readers, or, as Miss Boyle describes us all, "the dull dogs." It is Christmas, and at such times the dogs should not be dull!—Ed.]

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN. Having read your paper with interest, I should like to ask you a question. Granting existing marriage laws and conventions are about as faulty as possible, what would you substitute? As a Suffragette and a woman for legal equality and exactly divided responsibility. What the Freewoman wants a "new Order of Love."—I cannot make out. I do not think that to make our morality on a plane with men's would improve our position, or that anything but a lasting tie would satisfy a woman. When she marries she gives so much more than a woman for spiritual-mindedness. I have said nothing about many excellent articles in your first two numbers, but I impute my approval by saying that I wish your new venture all prosperity.

E. M. WATSON.

Dec. 11th, 1911.  

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN. As a member of the Men's Political Union I cannot agree with your criticism of militancy at this juncture. I have heard and saw Lloyd George speaking at Bath, and his tongue was in his cheek while he spoke of woman's emancipation. I must ask you to return my subscription to your paper.

G. LEETE.

December 13th, 1911.  

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

I must ask you to return my subscription to your paper. I saw your name on the Clement's Inn list, and under the genial air of publicity. It keeps them healthy.

Keep up your admirable pluck during the present storm, and for goodness' sake don't go and get snuffed out. You cannot have any idea how funny you all are. I haven't laughed so much since I was young.

M. P. U'RE.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

I do not write, however, on this account alone, but because it is impossible for anyone loving fair play to allow such exhibitions as various W.S.P.U. members have made of themselves to pass without a protest. Your paper has very deeply interested me, and, with the exception—and avoided.

G. LEETE.

December 21, 1911.  

The Free Woman, December 21, 1911.
A quotation from "Votes for Men," in support of a remark, was omitted, though why one should be precluded from quoting Miss Garton, because she is out of town, is a loss to the compiler.

The quotation in question springs up this week a pretense of nothing, and having my signature appended, as though I had not sent it. In refunction with other matters, to which it has no relation.

Other paragraphs have changed places. It would be easier for a person who puts one's name to a cheque than one who took a similar liberty with a letter whose form had been altered and the meaning obscured.

The remark that the reviewer (as an editor) can lack their views before their fellow-readers is by means of the time-honoured "letter to the editor." How can fair criticism find its way to the people if such letters be metamorphosed in this fashion? Who is willing to risk sending signed communications to a journal under these circumstances?

I shall be obliged if you will, in fairness, publish this protest.

Subject to present conditions, I will not intrude further on your space.

Helen Gordon Clarke, M.D.

December 12th, 1911.

1. Well, well!
2. We reprint the first questions in the order as gladly as anyone finds that the difference of order puts any more sense into Dr. Clark's observations, we are glad for our correspondent's sake. Question 1: "Is The Free-Woman a Suffragist or an Anti-Suffragist publication?" Question 2: "The paragraph, 'It appears of more importance to the cause of Votes for Women,' etc. (see past issues of the Free-Woman) to the editors fancy they are forwarding that cause; but a previous statement concerning the cult of the Suffragist as compared with that of the Free-Woman is reminiscent of the Anti-Suffrage Review in its better moments—a platitudinous exposition of beautiful beliefs unaccompanied by any practical suggestion as to their realisation."

"Feeling that one 'can produce new evidence of creative force' is not of much use if one is deprived of the instrument whereby the liberty of producing is protected."

"At Miss Garton says in Votes for Men, when speaking of their freedom, 'I want them to see how all the social structures of which they are so proud, their achievements, manhood, trade union, co-operation, centred round the demands for political recognition.'"

"The other alteration of order was in the case of the question relating to Mr. Nuttall. We brought it from the rear to the front. It was too exquisitely funny to be placed in a back seat.

"Dr. Clark may ask questions in any order she pleases. We may answer such questions, if we answer them at all, in any order we please.—[Ed.]

To the Editors of The Free-Woman.

It is with surprise and annoyance that I see my letter purloined by Dr. Clark's Weekly Free-Woman. It is, of course, possible that I neglected to mark it "for publication," but in view of the fact that my previous letters certainly were so marked, and that I made a very clear request that in any case being made on them my anonymity should be preserved, I consider that I am entitled to an apology. If I may be allowed to conclude my part in an unpleasant discussion, I would like to point out that when the editor penned the "Notes" of last week she was apparently herself under the impression that she was offering the W.S.P.U. a brand new idea—an alternative of civil war in this work. The reason for this note is that, although you kindly invited a reply, it had been decided that no official comment as to their realisation."

"As Miss Gawthorpe says in "Free-Love." We might as sensibly speak of cold-ice or black-darkness, with a corresponding implication that there can be warm-ice and light-darkness. So only when our correspondent removes the capitals and the redundant "free" shall we feel we are, in common sense, justified in discussing freewomen and love. All love is free. The editors fancy they are forwarding that cause; but a previous statement concerning the cult of the Suffragist as compared with that of the Free-Woman is reminiscent of the Anti-Suffrage Review in its better moments—a platitudinous exposition of beautiful beliefs unaccompanied by any practical suggestion as to their realisation.

" Feeling that one 'can produce new evidence of creative force' is not of much use if one is deprived of the instrument whereby the liberty of producing is protected."

"At Miss Garton says in Votes for Men, when speaking of their freedom, 'I want them to see how all the social structures of which they are so proud, their achievements, manhood, trade unionism, co-operation, centred round the demands for political recognition.'"

"The only way in which the readers of a paper can lay holds on your space.

To Dr. Eder.

We are obliged to Dr. Eder for the pleasant compliment that we do our work so well. It is our business to inveigle male and female contributors into our columns, as it is also our business to pounce upon anything which appears to lend itself to the process of being pounced upon.

As to Dr. Eder's arguments, we hold there must be some difference between Mr. and Miss Hobson to account for the fact that though each takes what can each get in wages, Mr. Hobson can get more than Miss. That is the difference which Dr. Eder takes no account of.

There is a difference between an average wage of 16s. 6d. a week and an average wage of 9s. 6d. That difference—sex-splitting though it may appear—reinforces all the differentiation as to training and outlook between male and female Hobsons, and it is a differentiation which concentrates itself. It forms the point from which we start operations. Hence our insistence on it.

Agreement even among the very poor, male Hobson looks round with an air of choosing which is unfamiliar to Miss Hobson.

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final; whether it is final as regards its psychology, Dr. Eder may or may not think it worth while to fight out. Consequently, in the realm of psychology, without even approaching the realm of metaphysics, we say we can "move towards" freedom of the will, inasmuch as we can intensify the consciousness of the "free" or "not free" condition of the will. As to the working-girl who has basely betrayed her allegiance to Horner's, we have a suspicion that Dr. Eder "rushed" her in making her decision. Had he offered her, in addition to the beautiful baronet, a free month's course under a "teacher of manners and deportment," and a free run of the frock and bonnet shops, her answer would in all probability have been very different.—Ed.

To Mrs. W. W. Jacobs.

No, Mrs. Jacobs is not entitled to any apology. There was no indication in her letter as to non-publication, and as for the contents, they could scarcely be regarded as the chatty remarks of a personal communication. If the publication has caused Mrs. Jacobs annoyance, we are sorry she did not take the precautions which would have prevented it. At the same time, we do wonder with what motive such letters are written if not for publication. Mrs. Jacobs says "she even taunts us with carrying the Hampden analogy no farther than tax resistance." The "even" is redundant. We taunted them deliberately, and hoped we had laboured the point with sufficient emphasis. Those who have been responsible—and I take it that Mrs. Jacobs has not—for organising actual militant "protests," and therefore have been compelled to differentiate between "spiritual" militancy and "actual" militancy, have long ago realised the overwhelming popularity of the spiritual variety among those militants who limit their "physical" militancy to clapping, and who in return for which services receive the luxurious sensations which are derived from imagining themselves in more heroic situations than their native endowment of courage would lead them to. Perhaps Mrs. Jacobs, like so many other non-militant "militants," is unaware that the militant women who from time to time have had to come forward to redeem the big phrases of the boasters, have had a special category in which they have placed the "clappers" of militant deeds. Now, does Mrs. Jacobs understand our estimation of the advocacy of Hampdenism and Civil War from the lips of "spiritual" militants?

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If purchasers of this useful material for Underwear all the year round would buy the best English make, which can be obtained from all leading Drapers, they would avoid the risks they undoubtedly run with the inferior qualities of Flannelette.

Horrockses' Flannelettes

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Awarded the Certificate of

The Incorporated Institute of Hygiene.
convertites." Here she is pursued by the lust of the Duke who has been her judge; she repulses him, not for the first time; already, to her ultimate undoing, has she refused to wish pardon for the Count Lodovico at the expense of prostituting her- self to the Duke. She escapes with Brachiano, her nature displaying a constancy and depth of passion which is rarely maintained through stress of adversity and sin.

Later, Brachiano is poisoned and strangled by the revengeful Count Lodovico, for whose pardon Vittoria has refused to sue. Her passionate grief for her lover is cut short by Lodovico, who brutally murders both her and Flamino, her last words declaring the happiness of those "that never saw the court,
Nor ever knew great men but by report." The most striking lines in the play, for our purpose, are uttered by Flamino, whose character, in its curious mixture of immorality and devotion to his sister, is peculiar to his age. He says:

"Know, many glorious women that are famed
For masculine virtue have been vicious,
Only a happier silence did betide them."

And, indeed, with the Pageant of Great Women in mind, we may wonder whether it is any "greater " to be a very great queen, and lead a personal life which will bear no close inspection, than to lose throne and life for love. For Vittoria Corombona, endowed with the fatal powers of a Helen, surrounded by a court notorious for its love of intrigue, lust, and bloodiness—what scope had the gifts of this audacious, subtle and brilliant woman? For Guinevere and Isult there was at least the place of presiding genius in the actions of men; but to this vigorous and ill-fated personality what opening could there be but to assure that her "death made amends for all "?

From the examples afforded by Elizabethan dramatists we feel that these women are not besotted by their crimes as are the men. We could not apply in these cases the term "splendid criminal " to the man who becomes merely brutish, or else sinks into insignificance beside the colossal individuality of the woman. Concerning Duke Brachiano we have no very definite feelings one way or the other—he is merely the man whom Vittoria loved.

Macbeth under the influence of blood-shedding sinks into debauchery; his intelligence is entirely lost in physical violence, while Lady Macbeth's is never for an instant clouded, her supreme will piloting herself and him through the awful horrors of the banquet scene.

Again, what of Agathius do we know save that he was the lover of Clytemnestra? We have forgotten Helen's lovers; Antony's glory lives by reason of the heroic death and flaming love of Cleopatra; and the mystery and horror of the Borgias centre for us in Lucrecia.

It would seem then that women even when abandoning themselves on unworthy objects display in their very crimes an imagination and will not easily submerged, like man, in the physical aspect. In another direction, for example, the courtesan in Dekker's forcible old play, "The Honest Whore," shows a simple courage unassailed by her profession, and makes "a good end," while the men with whom she comes in contact are mere beasts.

Alice Arden, again, the lady of Kent who murdered her husband "for the love of one Moshi," stands, dark and sinister indeed, but unwaveringly heroic beside the figure of a poltroon lover debased by crime; neither execution nor the discovery of her lover's worthlessness shakes her courage. She dies a horrible death—reserved then for a woman malefactor, so much more guilty than a man!—with the quiet prayer that death may make amends for all her sins.

It is significant that when the memory is searched for instances in literature of splendid criminals, it is women's names that come to the mind most readily. When Cesar Borjava, lago, Richard III. are said, few names of men occur.

Bloodthirsty bestiality we can find in a Nero, but without the audacity, intelligence, subtlety of some of these women. Beside him, the most bloody of our examples—Cleopatra—seems refined.

In the fact, then, that the term "splendid criminal " may be more frequently applied to woman than to man, do we not see, as well as in her possibilities of devotion to a good cause, signs of a power demanding a larger and fuller outlook? HILDA M. DAVIES.

Feminism under the Republic and the Early Empire.

In our last article we dealt with the manner in which the Roman woman expressed her sense of injustice under the restrictions imposed upon her by the law. We recorded the conspiracy to poison their husbands, for which 170 women suffered death in the year 331 B.C., and we spoke of the remarkable scenes of the year 107 B.C., when a strong and united effort to achieve the removal of the Oppian law was crowned with success.

We have now to discuss a further declaration of rights made by the women. This occurred in 43 B.C.—the year after the murder of Julius Caesar. Octavianus, Marc Antony, and Lepidus, the three triumvirs, were then in possession of Rome; the proscribed were being hunted down by their orders; massacres, assassinations, betrayals, the plundering of houses by the maddened soldiery, the murders of young children, made Rome a scene of agony and horror. Appian tells us of at least two wives of prominent Romans who betrayed them to the assassins, but, on the other hand, he relates also the stories of wives who went to all lengths to procure their husbands' safety.

This dark and painful period in Roman history is illuminated by a scene which took place in the Forum, when Hortensia, leading a deputation of women, defied the triumvirs with success and impunity.

At a time when money was urgently needed to
prosecute the civil war, methods of obtaining it were not of the nicest.

Accordingly, many a rich man found himself on the list of the proscribed for no other reason than that he was rich. Even orphan children were assassinated and their wealth seized. Yet, Appian tells us, buyers of the property of the slain were few, for “some were ashamed to add to the burdens of the unfortunate, and others (feared) that such property would bring them bad luck.” As a consequence of this, there was a considerable deficit in the money needed for the plans of the triumvirs, and an edict was issued requiring 1,400 of the richest women to make a valuation of their property and to give such portion as the triumvirs should require from each.

“The women resolved,” says Appian, “to beseech the female relatives of the triumvirs. With the sister of Octavius and the mother of Antony they did not fail, but they were repulsed from the doors of Fulvia, the wife of Antony, whose rudeness they could scarce endure. They then forced their way to the tribunal of the triumvirs in the Forum, the people and the guard dividing to let them pass. There, through the medium of Hortensia, they spoke as follows, according to previous arrangement:

“As is befitting women of our rank, addressing a petition to you, we had recourse to your female relatives. Having suffered uneasily treatment on the part of Fulvia, we have been compelled by her to visit the Forum. You have deprived us of our fathers, our sons and our brothers, whom you accused of having wronged you. If you take away our property also, you reduce us to a condition unbecoming our birth, our manners, our sex. If we have done you wrong, as you say our husbands have, prescribe us as you do them. If we women have not voted you public enemies, have not torn down your houses, destroyed your army, or led another one against you; if we have not hindered you in obtaining offices and honours, why do you contend against each other with such harmful prises.

“Let war with the Gauls or the Parthians come, and we shall not be inferior to our mothers in zeal for the common safety; but for civil wars may we never contribute, nor ever assist you against each other.

So Hortensia, the daughter of Quintus Hortensius, who was the rival of Cicero.

The historian continues:—

“When Hortensia had thus spoken, the triumvirs were angry that women should dare to hold a public meeting when men were silent; that they should demand from magistrates the reasons for their acts, and not furnish money while the men were serving in the army. They ordered the lictors” (the bodyguard, armed with rods and axes) “to drive them away from the tribunal, which they proceeded to do, until cries were raised by the multitude outside, and the triumvirs said they would postpone till next day the consideration of the matter. On the following day they reduced the number of women who were to present a valuation of their property from fourteen hundred to four hundred.”

The account of another historian who records this scene is worthy of notice. Valerius Maximus writes:—

“Hortensia, the daughter of Quintus Hortensius, when the matrons of Rome were burdened with a heavy tax by the triumvirs, and no man dared undertake their defence, pleaded the cause of the women before the triumvirs with firmness and success. By the faithful reproduction of her father’s eloquence, she succeeded in getting the greater part of the pecuniary impost remitted. Quintus Hortensius lived again in the female line. He breathed once more in the words of his daughter. If his male descendants had been willing to follow this vigorous example, the eloquence of Hortensia, so great a heritage, would not have been reduced to a single pleading of a woman.”

Various facts emerge from the record of the courage of these women. First of all, we see that they had by this time, although the process is somewhat obscured, succeeded in holding property in their own right. The impost of the triumvirs, by its very nature, recognised this right to hold and transfer possessions on the part of women.

Another interesting feature of this account lies in the importance ascribed to the women of the respective families of the triumvirs. The suggestion of powerful influence cannot fail to be noted. We will return to this point at a later occasion.

Yet another inference to be made is, that it is plain that the women were excepted by custom, if not by law—for it is obvious that there could be no legislation concerning taxes on property which the women were not supposed by the letter of the law to possess—from the payment of any taxes. Money given for the actual preservation of the city from a foreign invader, was a free gift.

Hortensia, in her speech, impressed upon the triumvirs that such powerful rulers as Marius, Sulla, Cinna, Pompey, and Julius Caesar had not failed to recognise the logical consequences of being debarred from voicing an opinion as to the application of funds raised by taxation, and that all these leaders had sedulously avoided making any demand on women for money for their enterprises.

Lastly, we find that the strength of the women lay partly in the conviction of the Roman citizen, that their case was a logical one, and that they had right on their side. When the victors began to drive off the women, no doubt with some amount of hustling and rough treatment, a roar of disapproval brought the dreaded triumvirs, who had not feared to assassinate hundreds of Roman male citizens, to reason.

We make no comment upon this interesting revelation in regard to Roman manhood, under the test of the ill-treatment of women by the officials of magistrates, merely remarking that it goes far to redeem much that was unequal and unjust in their personal attitude towards their women-folk.

By this time—the reign of Augustus—we are forced to pause and review afresh the position of women.

AMY HAUGHTON.

(To be continued.)

THE VISION.

Beauty, healer of the soul,

Touch my sight and make it whole;

Open eye of mind and heart:

It is most dread to see in part.

For I have seen, 'mid vapour dense,

A spark dazzlingly intense,

A spark . . . through darkness driven,

My blind soul beats on the walls of heaven.

E. H. VISIAK.
An Old School Book on the Higher Education of Women
(1685).

The advocacy of the higher education of women is to be found in unexpected places in the past, but it is with more than usual surprise that we come across a vigorous plea in a French Grammar (5th edition) in 1685, written by Paul Festeau, of whom little seems to be known, except that he was a native of Blois, "where," as he is delighted to affirm and reaffirm, "the true tone of the French tongue is found, by the unanimous consent of all Frenchmen." He was very confident in the value of his Grammar, and in that of the dialogues by which it was accompanied. "I do not speak for my advantage," he says; "I speak for yours, gentlemen; do not trust me, peruse other grammars, let the learned in our language view them, and desire them to tell you whether their phrasing is as good as mine, and no question but you will be satisfied thereon."

One fact further may be gathered about M. Festeau. His appeal to the study of French is not merely addressed to ladies. It rather seems specially directed to gentlemen. For on the page opposite the dedication of the book (to Mr. Russell, formerly Colonel of the Royal Guards of King Charles II.) is the announcement: "If any gentleman of his Grammar, and in that of the dialogues by which it was accompanied." "I do not speak for my advantage," he says; "I speak for yours, gentlemen; do not trust me, peruse other grammars, let the learned in our language view them, and desire them to tell you whether their phrasing is as good as mine, and no question but you will be satisfied thereon."

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vicious than ours. They prevail above us because they go beyond us in strength of body:"

The Advocate: "That thing should bring them to the knowledge of truth."

The Other: "How so?"

The Advocate: "Because we see that among all creatures, those which Nature gave less strength to she hath furnished them with more skill and understanding. The weakest are often nearer to reason, and have a more powerful instinct than those whom Nature hath endued with other advantages. Are any creatures seen lesser, and yet more vicious than ours. They prevail above us because of understanding. The weakest are often nearer to reason, and have a more powerful instinct than those whom Nature gave less strength unto men than to women, she ought also to have given us more wit and more judgment."

The Other: "Thou dost argue strongly."

The Advocate: "And if it be so, why should we not addict ourselves to the study of good letters as well as men?"

The Other: "It seems, notwithstanding, that it is not the part of a woman to make use of a pen."

The Advocate: "What, we must have a clear sight and mind, and solid judgment, and we must not employ them, but only to curl our hair! That would be to abuse those favours that we have received from heaven. The great early Father Origen was of another mind. He kept his school open for maids and women."

After a further discussion on the great philosopher Origen, the other woman remarks that the Advocate must have been at some good schools to discourse as she does.

The Advocate: "Alas! my dear, my knowledge is but little. But, in spite of all men, I will study to go beyond them, or at least to equal them."

The Other: "How happy art thou to have so much wit!"

The Advocate: "I have no more than another; but I hope by cultivating it to bring it to maturity."

They then discuss how this may be done.

The Other: "But how comes it to pass that men will not have us to be scholars?"

The Advocate: "I cannot imagine the reason."

The Other: "Sure, it is to gain our admiration."

The Advocate: "That would not be the way to come where they aim at, seeing a body cannot admire a thing unknown."

The Other: "It may be to make us the more subject."

The Advocate: "If it be for that end, they have but little generosity, and if they have dominion or command over us, it is but little glorious to rule over stupid and ignorant creatures."

The other woman suggests that the best reason men give for not approving learning amongst women is that it might interfere with the care of children, but the Advocate at once replies that such a reason "hath no place but with them that hath a mind to marry;" and adds: "But how shall a woman bring up her children in the fear of God, and in the love of virtue, if she be ignorant?"

They both agree that men think honesty and learning cannot be found together in women, but those who hold such a foolish opinion show themselves ignorant, though the Advocate readily asserts: "There are some men that are more rational, and that esteem virtue wherever it is."

The Other (who is coming to agree with the Advocate): "Methinks that a learned man that should have a stupid woman for wife would not have much content in her company. Certainly, learning brings one to the knowledge of virtue better than ignorance. Ignorance is the mother of all vices."

The Advocate: "Thou art in the right; for it is the cause of idleness, and idleness is the root of all evil."

Then follows the real outcome of the whole discussion:

The Advocate: "Ignorance is always contemptible in what sex soever it is seen; but learning attracts the esteem and love of everybody."

The Other (quite won over): "Thou hast wholly persuaded me to apply myself to study, in showing me that women are no more incapable of it than men."

The Advocate: "I am glad I have given thee a better opinion of our sex than thou hadst before."

It will be understood that each page of Festeau's text has two columns, one of which (the right column) contains the subject-matter, as above, in English, the other the French. The pupil was thus to acquire sound, idiomatic French by translating the English into French, which he could compare with the French text. But it is clear that Festeau was thus able to offer ideas as well. It would be interesting to know whether the ideas in the above extracts on women's learning were his own, or if (as is, on the whole, probable) they were borrowed from a previous or contemporaneous writer. Anyway, Festeau addressed a considerable audience through his books, for he tells us that the 5th edition might really be called the 8th, for "there were two thousand copies drawn of these three last editions, whereas they used to draw but one thousand," and he claims that the work has received approbation from the "most learned of this nation." This was in 1684, but the nation had long to wait till Festeau's ideas (original or adopted) on the higher education of women became converted into general opportunity for it.

FOSTER WATSON.

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Eager Heart.

There are few things in our modern life of which criticism is a sacrifice, or the critical attitude a profession. In modern drama, indeed, the critic is more often the high priest of aspiration than the playwright. But surely this is not always his rightful place. There are circumstances when criticism is little less than blasphemy; when standards are blundering intrusions which fill us with an unbrotherly anger. Such, for instance, is the imperious delicacy with which we regard the true fairy-tale; to the inner man of us its text is the textus receptus, and its substance and purport the perfect mirror of life. There is no room for critics here save to translate their own pleasure into language—to write out of their own feelings a little less akin to the meaning of the tale than the instinctive perception of the meanest listener in the audience.

One feels the futility of criticism most sharply, however, in the presence of the religious drama. It is evident why it is in the case of "Eager Heart," this form of playwriting is to be revived, the critic as we know him to-day, at any rate, must go. If we are to enter this kingdom, we must all become as little children. For "Eager Heart," Miss Alice Buckton's morality play which is now being revived at the Passmore Edwards Settlement, is aimed, as "Everyman" was aimed, straight at the masses of the people. There is not a subtle phrase in it, unless the inspiration of perfect simplicity be subtlety; not a single trick or turn of phrasing to betray a conscious style. But there is life and death, love and, wisdom, and warmth of heart, all set before us in an ingenuous story of simple devotion, which goes down to the very springs of Christian faith, and especially to the triumphant humility and the boundless goodness to man which we associate with the festival of Christmas. Plays such as this come to us no better through the appreciative estimate of a critic—they come as religion itself comes, through an individual revelation.

To touch on a comparison which may be made, "Eager Heart" was set to a measure much more moving than Mrs. Dearner's "The Soul of the World"; though its spirit was less pretentious, it was more even, and its appeal altogether more direct and naively human. Its story is simply told. It is the old story of the girl whose humble ministrations were pure enough to attract the Christ Child on His annual pilgrimage, especially as she thought she abandoned her little chance of His choice by giving His place to two poor beggars and their new-born child. Coming back with some shepherds under the guidance of the star, she finds the quest ending at her own door, where also have come the Kings of Power, Knowledge, and Love, bearing their choicest gifts to a King more royal than they. She opens the door, to find that the two beggars and their child are astream with the light which had guided them all the way, and that she out of all the city has been visited by the Holy Family.

The piece was acted by the special "Eager Heart" anonymous company, all of whom lent to its portrayal a loving reverence which did perfect justice to its lofty and pervasive mystic quality. The play has great power. And it speaks one thing to the modern world very eloquently, that is, that Christianity can be originally understood and truly expressed by a woman. Woman's proper share in religion as the faithful devotee has for generations been a dogma of the prophets have all been men. But if ever a play can be a prophecy, and its author a prophet, Miss Buckton's "Eager Heart" is such a play. The high note of a hope which heralds a fresh revelation of religion, and foretells an impulse which cannot long be withheld from an age which finds so frantically the spiritual distress signals, Miss Buckton strikes in "Eager Heart." G. L. Harding.

The Editor regrets that the notes last week on the New English Art Club pictures were, owing to pressure upon space, unfortunately crowded down to a few lines. Also, that the distinction between the Grafton Galleries' loan exhibition and the New English Art Club Show was not made quite clear.

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