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WOMAN: ENDOWED OR FREE?

OF the various characteristic features of the Freewoman doubtless the most prominent is that which insists upon the necessity for women engaging in money-producing work, and it is not the least important side of the characteristic that this necessity is based not merely upon women's need to live, but upon their equally important need to live upon the value and sale of their labour in the open market, and not in that special incalculable market where all sales are questionable—i.e., that of sentiment and passion. In this market, all values are personal, and in sentiment and passion personal values should not be for sale.

To borrow a much-used term, in the women's world there is great unrest, an unrest of which there is an almost humorous misunderstanding of the cause. It is, however, amusing merely for the moment. Unless more light breaks in on the situation, women will land themselves into a position by comparison with which their former condition was the embodiment of freedom. The truth is, some men (not all!) have allowed their women a latitude so extended that they have wandered abroad and picked up a conception of freedom which they have carried back to their regions of captivity. Now they are busying themselves with plans to make freedom settle down comfortably in captivity. They would like to retain the essence of both freedom and captivity—the comforts of the one and the exhilarations of the other. The bitter pill of experience which the women yet have to swallow is

made of this, that the essence of the one destroys the essence of the other. We are fast approaching the moment when women will be compelled to make a clean choice between the comforts of protection and the harsh responsibilities of freedom. Many and ominous are the signs among leaders of women that their emancipatory faith will falter when they are face to face with the leaving behind of fostering care, the soft cheek, the smooth brow, the unworn face of the sheltered women, with all that these imply. Tens of thousands will turn back. Only in the few dare we steadily believe that the passion for freedom will in itself be a goad sufficient to urge them forward. No more than men are women devotees of the austerities of freedom. Already they seek to dress up their old slavery with the merest flummeries of freedom. The old parasitism is scouted for, far ahead, to forestall freedom. Already schemes such as the State endowment of motherhood, the compulsory payment of wives, are discussed, schemes which are so absolute in their repudiation of the human responsibilities of women that it appears some women are prepared not only to slam the door in the face of freedom, but they would lock it and throw away the key. However, women have much to do before such dread plans round to their completion. Those emancipated women whose humorous sense still remains intact have much merriment in store for them when such schemes are mooted in real earnest.

Setting out to combat them, we found the difficulties with which the subjects were beset so

numerous that we decided to leave the solution of them to their promoters. It is enough for us and, we believe, for our readers merely to state them—which we do. We venture to present the backers of these proposals with one-half their catechism. We will first set out the questions which come into our mind regarding the State endowment of mothers. This, we understand, has nothing to do with wives as such, though wives who are expectant mothers may possibly be considered part of the scheme.

To our mind, the following questions await an answer:—

1. Does State endowment of mothers mean an adequate subsistence grant to mothers—say, £100 a year or so? or is it a dole to mothers—perhaps 5s. a week?

2. Endowing the mother, does the State propose to make her subsistence grant sufficient for the child also, and, if not, on whom does the cost of maintenance of the child fall?

3. For what period before birth is the grant to be in operation—nine months, six months, three months, or one?

4. If the child lives, how long is the grant to continue—one year, three years, or seven years, or what?

5. If the child dies, is the mother to continue to be endowed, or, being deprived of her child, is she to lose her endowment as well?

6. If the period during which endowment is fixed extends through a number of years, will not women be able to earn their livelihood by continuously giving birth to a small number of children?

7. After spending the best years of their lives in bearing children, are women to be thrown aside when their bearing period is over? If not, will not a State pension be necessary at the close of the period?

8. If this be so, does not this amount to a permanent State maintenance of all adult fertile females?

9. If to the number of those females maintained by the State there be added on the number of children they bear (perhaps also State endowed; certainly not self-supporting), can such a State avoid bankruptcy?

10. Of whom, for financial purposes, is this State which is to provide such maintenance composed other than money-earning men and a few sterile women?

11. On whom is the motherhood tax to be levied?

12. Is it to be a poll-tax on adult men and women, including bachelors and spinsters?

13. Is it worth while taxing mothers in order to refund them their money?

14. Will the protected position of mothers lead to a rush into motherhood?

15. If so, is this increase in the population wanted?

16. Is there to be any limit to the number of a woman's family?

17. If so, on what grounds is limitation to be made?

17a. Will endowment increase with size of family?

18. Are all women to be eligible for motherhood?

19. If not, what is to be the standard of eligibility?

20. Who is to set the standard?

21. Will the standard be a physical or mental one, or both?

22. Will the State require to exercise restricting rights over the selection of fathers?

23. If so, by what standard will fathers be judged?

24. Will the State-endowed mother have full control over her allowance? or

25. Will the father be able to exercise rights over it?

26. To whom does the child of the State-endowed mother belong?

27. If it belongs to the State, will not the State have to provide for its maintenance until capable of earning its own livelihood?

28. Would marriage be necessary as a qualification for endowment?

29. If so, and the mother should complain of the poor quality of her child from the particular stock, would the State allow her to choose a father outside the marriage bond?

30. If so, why enforce marriage?

31. If it should be maintained that the mother should choose rightly at the outset, can it not be counter-maintained that in these things you never can tell?

These questions, put almost haphazard, will open up a few of the difficulties which State endowment of mothers will have to meet. Between this State proposal and the far from equivalent compulsory payment of *wives*—not mothers—proposal which is being put forward with considerable persistency, there is a proposal which a few advocates here and there put forward for the endowment of mothers by respective fathers. It is advocated that a mother should be able to claim damages for “physical disablement,” before, during, and after confinement, the last period being debatable as to length. At present, a mother, as such, can make no claim against the father. The only claim which the woman, as mother, can make is one for maintenance of her children, if she is married, and if she is unmarried, a small pittance for her child until it reaches a certain age. As mother, she can claim nothing, though as *wife* she can claim maintenance. It is to the wife, and not to the mother, that the father is forced to recognise liabilities. It is interesting here to note how small is the outcry from any quarter on behalf of the marital maintenance of the *mother*. The clamour circles round the marital maintenance of the *wife*. When we deal with the compulsory payment of wives by husbands, we are dealing with a matter which is spoken of familiarly from most platforms on which “advanced” women speak. To deal with compulsory payment of *mothers* by husbands is to deal with one which is but rarely mooted.

Passing on, therefore, to the proposal for compulsory payment of wives by husbands, we must logically eliminate the consideration that she is a mother as well as a wife. The present law of maintenance has no essential connection with motherhood, nor has the much-advocated “reform” of “payment” of wives any more essential connection with motherhood. Let us, then, in respect of the compulsory payment of wives, put a few questions, in order to find out what is intended and to see what such intentions may involve. The wife, distinct from, but not exclusive of, the mother, gives to the husband three things, on all or any of which she may propose to demand payment. She gives him companionship, physical intercourse, and domestic service. Let us inquire:

1. Is a wife prepared to acknowledge she receives payment on account of companionship? If so, why should not the husband receive payment for same?

2. Is a wife prepared to acknowledge she receives payment on account of physical intercourse? and, if so, why should not the husband claim the same?

3. Is there any difference between the last and prostitution?

4. If a wife repudiates the above claims as grounds

for payment, and instances domestic service, how is her service to be defined in respect of quantity and quality adequate for payment received?

5. In the event that a wife is paid, what proportion of the husband's earnings is she to be entitled to, for instance, (a) in the case of the man "earning" £50 a year, (b) the man "earning" £10,000 a year?

6. What will be the penalty for non-compliance on the part of the husband?

7. If her domestic service is unsatisfactory to the husband, what form of redress is there open to him?

8. As in other organisations, such as the Army, where masters and subordinates work together, each unable to dismiss the other, what forms of punishment for ill-service can be meted out other than those of the detention-room and corporal chastisement?

9. On the other hand, should the wife (the employee) be dissatisfied with her employer (the husband), by what means could she obtain better terms?

10. Would not the fact that the women, not being free agents in regard to their employers, but bound to them by law, prevent them from entering into free organisations such as trade unions of wives, and thus make mutiny their only form of rebellion as in the Army and Navy?

11. Would not even mutiny prove abortive, in view of the fact that there would be exactly the same number of employers as employees; and, as the employers would hold all the funds, would not

the employees—i.e., the wives—be forced into submission by starvation?

12. Are the women prepared to occupy a permanently inferior position in regard to men with whom they must perforce live on intimate terms?

13. If husbands demand certain qualifications from the wives they pay, are women to regard wifehood as a trade, and undergo a course of training such as is arranged by the University of London, for instance, for those who are proposing to adopt wifehood as a profession.

14. Seeing that the attractions which have led to the selection of wives have, in the past, but rarely been those of domesticity, are women to understand that the principle of selection with men is going to be transformed side by side with women's increasingly domestic outlook?

15. When every man pays his wife for house-keeping, must not then every wife in England become a paid domestic servant? and is the position of paid domestic servant the ideal of the women in the emancipation movement?

16. Finally, in view of such questions, have the wives who are smiling in the knowledge that the affectionate regard of their husbands will lead the latter to wink at the non-return of the equivalents in service for money and maintenance given, examined to its foundations the kind of bargain they are secretly expecting to effect?

When these questions have been answered, we shall be able to state the case of Endowed Women versus Freewomen. We hope the enthusiasts for endowment will not shirk their preliminary catechism.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

Miss Mary Gawthorpe.

LAST week, just at the moment when our comments upon the criminal inhumanity of the Pentonville Prison authorities in regard to Mr. William Ball were issuing from the press, totally without our knowledge, and with her intention unknown to anyone save herself, Miss Mary Gawthorpe, to whose notice the Ball case had been vividly brought by accidental circumstances which we are not at liberty to specify, left her sick-room, determined to do what lay in her power to quicken public imagination to a keener realisation of this almost unbelievable crime.

Miss Gawthorpe, as many of our readers know, has been seriously ill during the last twenty months, and has not, save upon one occasion, we regret to say, yet been able to contribute to the pages of THE FREEWOMAN. It was, therefore, with very keen pleasure that we learnt she was considered well enough by her doctor, a fortnight ago, to come to London to undergo special treatment connected with her long illness. It was while undergoing this treatment that the accidental circumstances to which we have referred so increased her indignation against the Pentonville crime that she decided to make a personal and public stand against the lethargic spirit in which the story of this ghastly outrage has been received by the public, and the intolerable frivolousness with which it has been treated by the Home Office.

Having, by breaking the Home Office windows, repeated exactly the offence committed by Mr. Ball on December 21st last, Miss Gawthorpe surrendered herself to the police, and handed to them a document which ran as follows:—

A PROTEST.

"(1) Against the forcible feeding of all prisoners and captives, whether Suffragist or not,

who have sustained the heroism of a hunger strike when deprived of privileges to which they are justly entitled.

"(2) Against the barbaric treatment meted out to Mr. William Ball, Suffragist prisoner, whereby, as testified by prison officials, he was rendered insane after five and a half weeks of forcible feeding, following on a hunger strike.

"(3) Against the cruel manner in which this intimation was made to Mrs. Ball, who, like her husband, is a self-supporting member of the working class.

"(4) Against the degradation of prison officials, who, for the sake of their respective livelihoods, have hitherto felt themselves compelled to share in Governmental blunder."

On Thursday last, Miss Gawthorpe came up for trial before Sir Albert de Rutzen at Bow Street. Miss Gawthorpe's statement of her case followed these lines: She committed an offence with the deliberate intent of being placed in the dock and making it clear that, when sentenced, she would begin the hunger strike, and, with public attention drawn to the situation, she would challenge the authorities to meet her resistance with forcible feeding. If forcible feeding was the fit and proper method for dealing with such resistance, the authorities would not shrink from applying it in her case when public attention was roused and fixed upon the circumstances. If, on the other hand, the authorities did *not* consider forcible feeding a fit and proper procedure, but merely a hole-and-corner device for crushing the life and spirit out of poor and unknown men and women, of whose circumstances the public had largely lost sight, it was high time the public learned what could be done in its name under the ægis of the State. At the trial, Miss Gawthorpe defended her own case, though

Mr. Blanco White, at the instigation of her friends, attended to watch the case in Miss Gawthorpe's interest. Miss Murray, a woman doctor, having given evidence that change of diet would probably result in serious consequences for Miss Gawthorpe, Sir Albert de Rutzen, who was very obviously embarrassed with the situation, remanded the case for a week. Miss Gawthorpe, feeling that nothing serving Mr. Ball's interest was to be gained by waiting a week, refused to provide sureties for her bail, and was therefore transferred to Holloway Gaol. She began a hunger strike which lasted until Friday evening, when, acting on information based upon the prison doctor's report, Sir Albert de Rutzen had Miss Gawthorpe again brought before him for trial. He thereupon dismissed the case.

Miss Gawthorpe's challenge in respect of the practice of forcible feeding in English prisons, therefore, gallant, daring, and public-spirited as it was, has not proved itself the test case which she hoped it would be. The state of her health gave the authorities full excuse for shirking the issue. The question to which the country is entitled to a plain, unequivocal answer is this: A person, in ordinary health, committing an offence, civil or criminal, and being consigned to gaol, and therein entering upon a hunger strike, does the prison system sanction, as a normal and integral part of its *régime*, an application of the principle of forcible feeding? Without any rhetoric, that is the simple question we ask the authorities, and we are entitled to a straightforward answer from the Home Office. Given an answer, we shall know where we are. If the answer should be in the negative, we shall know what is to be done to those screened persons who put enforced feeding into effect against poor or unknown prisoners. If it is in the affirmative, we shall have had the last necessary evidence for the binding together of all humane people into a common unity to effect the overhauling of our present dangerous and inhuman prison system.

In any case, we require to know who is going to be the scapegoat in this Ball affair. We want to know whether Mr. McKenna is screening the governor and doctor of Pentonville. If so, his protection is insufficient to cover their offences. They should be dismissed. The public can only be fearful, knowing that the most pitiable portion of our society lies wholly at such men's mercy. If, on the other hand, the governor and doctor of Pentonville are merely the tools of the Home Secretary, for the latter, as an inadequate, unimaginative, and incompetent paid servant of the State, a responsible Government could find no uses for his services.

The Suffrage Barometer.

Although during the last week no essentially new developments have taken place in respect of female enfranchisement, the atmosphere with which it is surrounded has been charged with currents which will materially affect the nature and manner of its enactment. Mr. Lloyd George's statements regarding the Government's relations towards it represent nothing more nor less than those formally enunciated by the Prime Minister and Mr. George in November last; but the lid has been lifted for a period off the pot of the personal opinions of those members of the Cabinet whom we have been accustomed to regard as the Ministerial Suffrage section, and we have been allowed to see the seething differences even among this supposedly united group. Mr. Birrell, aforesaid friend of Suffrage, scholar, humanitarian, and, we hoped, man more than politician, is now, we learn, "neither excited nor enthusiastic" about Woman's Suffrage, though he is prepared to go the wild lengths of the Con-

ciliation Bill in its behalf. Mr. Churchill, whose Suffrage opinions have been so varied and various that we will not attempt to recite them here, a Minister who we think, with more tactful nursing from Suffrage societies, might have been made a supporter, has given what can only be construed as an unreserved expression of hostility to every conceivable form of practical application of the principle.

It is perhaps Mr. Churchill's intention to put himself at the head of the Referendum cohorts. It would be an interesting individual position for him to take up; but should he, we feel sure that it will be realised among Radical ranks that his political genius is of too varied a quality to be accommodated easily among these somewhat stolid—not to suggest stodgy—ranks. In his Albert Hall speech, we noticed Mr. George was permitted his one flight of eloquence to curse the Referendum with. He said, among other things, the Referendum would destroy Parliamentary authority. We agree. So it would; and not a bad thing either, Parliament being what Parliament is. All the same, women will not have a Referendum on the Suffrage. And we agree with them, too. It would doubtless go against the Suffrage women, but that would not make a ha'porth of difference to the women who want the Suffrage. They would still want it, and would get it, notwithstanding. The Suffrage demonstration in the Albert Hall was magnificent, and the National Union of Suffrage Societies has reason to be proud of it. Mr. Lloyd George, we are glad to say, has confirmed us in the opinion which we chose to hold months ago, on politic grounds, and on grounds of courtesy and good feeling—i.e., that he has staked his reputation on the success of a Suffrage measure this session. Quite apart from any statement he made, his general bearing was such as to give us an assured belief in the sincerity of his Suffrage championship, an assurance we are glad to be possessed of in these days, when one has become accustomed, far too often, to being told that credence lent to the pledges of politicians denotes merely the quixotic naïveté of the politically unversed. Such is not our view of the tact of statecraft. We consider such an attitude a blunder, in addition to expressing the cynicism of fundamentally bad taste. The political situation, as we gather it from Mr. Lloyd George and his colleagues, is this: the Suffrage is about to be submitted to a tug-of-war. On the anti-suffrage side there are convinced supporters, who will pull their hardest for their side. On the suffrage side there is a large majority, which would be sufficient to decide the issue in its favour were this majority not made up, to some extent, of nominal supporters, who are looking round for an excuse to justify themselves in pulling soft. The work of suffragists, parliamentary and others, is to deprive the waverers of all such excuse. Now that we are sure of the championship of Mr. Lloyd George, and have his pledge that he will support the widest measure which can command a voting majority, from the Conciliation Bill limits up to unlimited Adult Suffrage, we think that the right thing to do is the thing which is being done, namely, to call the parliamentary suffragist conference suggested by Mr. Lloyd George of all the suffragists in the House of Commons. Already the Adult Suffrage group and the Liberal group have met, and the Conciliation group can be relied upon for their own measure. The crux of the situation will have arrived when it becomes clear how much support the last-named group will be able to offer to the two former. Indeed,

the onus of responsibility for failure to pass the Suffrage Amendment will lie at the doors of the Conservative suffragist members. If the latter are sincere suffragists, they can make the situation simple. It is in no way necessary for them to vote for the Reform Bill if they dislike the principle of Manhood Suffrage. The women's amendment, at the stage when their votes are necessary to it, will be distinct and separate from Manhood Suffrage, and, once passed as an amendment, the safety of its remaining stages will be assured without further claims upon their assistance. We are, therefore, in agreement with the views expressed by each and all the speakers in the Albert Hall on Friday last—Mrs. Fawcett, Mrs. Snowden, Lord Lytton, and Mr. George—in thinking that the present situation is rich with promise for Woman Suffrage. To us who have not been within their range for some time, it came as a little shock of surprise to encounter again the Rip Van Winkles of the W.S.P.U., who haunted the Albert Hall meeting, evidently under the delusion that they were back living in the old times when Cabinet Ministers spoke only in sealed halls, brooked no questions, and answered none. They compelled us to reflect how the weaknesses of society epitomise themselves in brief in organisations where members who receive their opinions from authority and learn their texts by rote are found chanting the opinions and chattering the formulæ when the circumstances which rendered these apposite have long since fled into the past. We regret that the meaningless hubbub interfered with the answers of Mr. Lloyd George to their own quite sensible questions. To us it seemed odd to ask questions and then gag the reply; but perhaps it was the human instinct to prevent statements being made which would publicly render futile that policy of theirs which must be made good at any cost. It had to us, however, its cheerful side. It seemed to justify afresh that difficult and cantankerous Democracy which, with all its faults, does not produce the rapid disintegration of intelligence which is the fruit of delivering up one's intelligence bound to the easy worship of a blind autocracy.

Mind the Paint.

Mr. Pinero is quite certain that his reputation is invulnerable, but one cannot help fearing that even the widespread fame of a popular playwright would fail to win through more than two exhibitions of the kind of ineptitude shown in his new play, "The Mind-the-Paint Girl." In our opinion, it is one of the worst plays we have ever seen. It is too uncertain of purpose for satire, too cheap for romance, too false for realism, too maudlin for comedy, too antiquated for problem, too immoral for propaganda. Of what mongrel species of the world of drama is this play? No doubt it was because the audience was turning over this knotty problem in its minds that it omitted to show any signs of interest in the performance, hostile or friendly. Some idea of the ungirtness of the plot may be gathered from the following incident. At the end of the third act we were only prevented from leaving the theatre under the impression that the play was over by a realisation that the mass of the audience were still retaining their seats. We sat down, and by consulting the programme, found there still remained another act of the play. So much for the plot. This is an outline of the play. A "Pandora" girl, pretty, poor, and good, in her struggling days is "helped" by the "poor" and fascinating Army captain. Like a star, she rises to wealth and musical comedy fame.

Her captain's love increases (quite nicely) even as her wealth. At one time unprepared to marry, his life now becomes a torture of fear lest she abandon him and marry another. His profession given up years ago, that he might become a nightly occupant of the stalls at the Pandora, he is now acutely aware of his blighted and slighted existence. He spies upon her, and finds she is "encouraging" a noble young lord. A storm bursts thereupon, and a great scene follows. Noble lord has just told the heroine of his love (meaning marriage, no less) with the delicate homage of another Raleigh to another Elizabeth. She has just refused him with the nobleness of a Cromwell refusing a crown, "*because of his mother.*" The air is heavy with nobility and renunciation, when, at four o'clock in the morning, in stalks the blighted captain. She tells him what she thinks of him. He retorts by telling the noble lord how she has shattered *him*. Compunctious, she offers to marry the captain, making the noble lord swear friendship to the same, not failing to insinuate, however, that if she marries the one she loves the other, to such a degree that she must never be tempted by seeing that other. They depart (6 a.m.), blighted lord and betrothed captain. They return hand in hand at twelve noon, having agreed to an exchange. Exchanged she is, to become my lady, and the blighted captain consoles himself with inviting the pair to visit him in exile, in Buluwayo. So much for the skeleton. One would be fearful to back the gods faced with the task of breathing life into these dry bones. Mr. Pinero has made the dialogue to match the nature of the structure. Miss Marie Löhr impersonated the Pandora heroine, and showed a young lady so refined, so noble, and with such renunciatory qualities as would have turned an early Christian martyr stiff with boredom at their fatuity. She handed round blank cheques to graceless young gamblers, with a touching little catch in her voice, asking them to make them out for a sum no bigger than they could help; also with a sobbing catch she tells how she maintains the far-sighted old man who led her steps to Pandora gates; she brings her old mother, "with not an aitch to her name," to live in her sumptuous flat; long and moving monologues come at regular intervals from various members of the caste, who proclaim her virtues from her youth up. These, unhappily, may be true, but should they be, they represent a bread-and-butter miss such as never in this cold, hard world was raised to affluence as a Pandora girl. Still, Mr. Pinero has a gospel to preach, and preach it he must, even should he be compelled to quarrel with the nature of things. Miss Pandora is destined to become a perfect lady, and therefore she must be made to possess all the Ward-cum-Corelli-cum-Ouida qualities of the ideal refined and aristocratic female. He fails to see that the fundamental shiftings which are taking place in female society which unconsciously led Mr. Pinero to write this play are due to this fact: that the pure, proud, sweet, chaste aristocrat, beloved of Ouida, has become violently nauseated with herself, and that when Miss Pandora metamorphosed into a real lady appears after the six months' probation which she considered would enable her to take her place "with the best," she will find the drawing-rooms vacant, and the notice up, "Too Dull." The daughters of the aristocracy will have fled, and slipped the fetters of the perfect lady, to find a sphere where they can exercise the liberated vitality of natural human beings. This is the determining factor in the rapidly changing fabric of society which Mr.

Pinero has tried to paint, and failed to comprehend. He also has not understood that Miss Pandora is, or should be, rightly proud of herself and her achievement, and far too fond of living to be able to welcome the prospect of lounging in drawing-rooms with idle ladies of perfect manner. Regarding the social value of refinement, Mr. Pinero seems to be floundering in an utter quagmire of incomprehension. When the heroine proceeds to describe the captain, very naturally, if somewhat inadequately, as a spy, a lout, and a cad, Mr. Pinero makes her grovel in an apology for her vulgarity, and allows that lay figure, the noble lord, of whose type as parasitic loafer Mr. Pinero further does not appear to be aware of the "passing," to forgive her in a noble and soothing phrase. Mr. Pinero may sometime learn that women of every class are finding out the satisfying pleasure of occasionally telling people the truth about themselves, and that once tasted, it is a joy but rarely abandoned. This "vulgarity" is a sign that women are beginning to act as they feel instead of living up to their accredited pose. It is much more likely, and certainly to be desired, that the manners of the class of the noble lord's mother will gravitate in the direction of the Pandora girl—and not the reverse. Some day, unless we much mistake the situation, Miss Pandora will be able to tell her aristocratic mother-in-law, whom Mr. Pinero believes she respects so profoundly, a few home-truths about the relative value of aristocrats and hard-worked, underpaid chorus girls which will make the aristocrat realise that in the scheme of things, far from being the last note of perfection, she is a mere hanger-on, living by the toil of others, and very far from having attained the level of usefulness of the chorus-girl, who at least has provided cheer for the gallery which seeks it after a day of monotonous toil. It is perhaps not as surprising as it at first appears that Mr. Pinero should fail to understand the contradictory currents of a social transition period, and the types such periods produce. Mr. Pinero is unerring when he depicts stock types. Mrs. Upjohn, the heroine's mother, is exquisite, so is the genuine Pandora girl, who while on the stage is "the spirit of elfish gaiety and fun," but off the stage feels that only the gift of a motor car from one of the "boys," will raise her drooping spirits. The "boys" themselves are convincing. They at least convince the audience that they exist. Naturally enough, the two lovers of a heroine who is noble beyond her station must inevitably be lay figures who rave and adore by turn, according to formula. The faked heroine of necessity destroys the play, because she is incomprehensible, both to herself and to her creator. We believe the play will have a run, however, as most women, respectable ones, have a vulgar, healthy curiosity to look upon the ways of life of the people who sup with the "boys" in the foyer of the theatre. Things certainly appear folly enough, and invite an abandon which seems foreign to the kind of men whom their "own" women know only in the rôle which they adopt towards perfect ladies. In the setting of the play as it stands, with the complete recasting of the heroine, and a consequent recasting of her two lovers, and the further and consequent recasting of the main scenes, something might be made of it. In short, the same subject would lend itself to masterly treatment with a wholly different interpretation of its meaning. Miss Marie Löhr, who was pretty and refined as the Pandora heroine, contributed on that account to make matters worse.

The Great Unclassed.

I.

EXCEPT for a few volumes, mostly out of print and forgotten, and an occasional reference to the question in the writings of reformers, such as Mr. Charles Booth, Mr. Arthur Sherwell, and Mr. Stead, no serious and honest attempt has been made in this country to determine the causes and explain the conditions of prostitution. A large number of religious and moral crusaders against "the social evil" are prone to regard the matter as easily remedied by "self-control"; while several sociologists of a somewhat more scientific order assert that no woman would sell herself if economic causes were removed. Among this second order of meliorists there are at least some signs of a desire to reach the root of the problem.

But the economic factor is by no means the only factor. It is quite true that poverty drives thousands of women into the profession; but want is not the incentive in the case of the ambitious chorus girl in regular employment, or of the forewoman in a factory who earns steady wages. The causes are, in fact, manifold, and until we understand them it is rash to speak dogmatically of one or even two primary sources.

Having devoted some years of close study to the question of hetairism, as it exists to-day in the United Kingdom and on the Continent, by the acquisition of first-hand information and by a comparison of treatises in various languages, I may be able to contribute a word or two of worth to this very complex social phenomenon. There was a time in my youth when I glibly repeated the moralisms that my elders advanced as "remedies" for an institution well-nigh as old in its origin as man. Experience, travel, social intercourse, reflection, and reading have taught me that it is useless to speak of a cure until a case has been rightly examined and diagnosed.

My doubts as to the efficiency of the reformers of the study were deepened when I learned from the lips of some of them that they were unacquainted with any of the members of a calling which they sought to suppress by legal means, or by other measures, such as early marriage, better wages for women, moral education, the censorship of literature, and so forth. One well-known and painstaking collator of facts about prostitution admitted to me that he had never conversed with one of the sisterhood. This remarkable admission seems to me representative of the attitude of a vast number of "students" of social questions in this country. Hence arises that habit of reiterating eternally postulates and platitudes that passed for wisdom somewhere and at some time under conditions that have vanished. Axioms of the study, statistics, scientific theories, and moral presuppositions become curiously undependable in the light of practical research. Bishops are beginning to loom in the social mist as unreal, almost mythical, beings, because bishops never go into four-ale bars, and hobnob on equal terms with the populace, nor sit down, as Whitman did, among those who drink, and joke coarsely, and are not afraid of the fundamental instincts. How can the bishops, or anyone else, "save" people whose real lives, and thoughts, and actions are unknown to them?

Essentially this is a woman's question. What do women know about it? The few women who know a little are those engaged in "rescue work." The great mass are as uninformed as to the status, outlook on life, commercial position, moral, mental, and physical traits of "the fallen" as they are concerning the extinct fauna. And yet every woman

who dares to speak at all on this great burked subject has a "remedy" to hand, and copious denunciations for "the men who are responsible."

Such is "social reform," as we know it in scores of circles professing advanced and progressive views and a zeal for sound amelioration. Women cannot continue to shirk this part of their civic duties. The mothers of the community, "the straight women," the shielded wives of the respectable home, are accountable, in a degree that they do not imagine, for a traffic whose very name is spoken in hushed tones.

My effort to reach bedrock facts about the demi-monde has taught me that seduction, as practised by men, is another of the putative causes requiring careful examination. Certainly a large proportion of the half-world have been tempted by men, betrayed, and deserted. Personal inquiry has proved that the confession, "I have a child to keep," is not always a fiction used to touch the emotion and to loosen the purse-strings.

But very little stress has been laid on the fact that a great number of men—some observers say the majority—receive their initiation into sexual gratification by the teaching of erotic women. I do not make this statement without ample proof. Thousands of youths are incited by girl companions, or by women older than themselves. This seduction of men by women is often the starting-point of a young man's association with courtesans. The stimulus has been given, the desire awakened. "It is always the woman's fault," cries Esther Waters. I do not go quite so far; but it is time to assert that if there are a number of men always lying in wait for women, there are a number of women always lying in wait for men from before adolescence until advanced middle-age.

If a boy escapes the allurements spread for him by domestic servants, governesses, and girl playmates during his tutelage, he encounters further temptation when, in the vigour of early manhood, he begins a city career in a profession or business. The streets, restaurants, and places of amusement abound with seductive lights o' love, many of them pretty, amiable, and well-versed in all the arts of feminine fascination.

When we reflect that in every big city there are thousands of lonely men who rarely converse with women, through sheer lack of opportunity, and thousands who know no woman well enough to address her by her Christian name, should we be greatly surprised when we learn that many young men consort, in utter desperation, with the women whose business it is to attract and please the lonely bachelor?

Poverty, seduction, expulsion from home, following upon a breach of conventional chastity, the incitement of example, the yearning for finery and luxury, inherent sensuality in some cases, are among the causes of mercenary commerce between the sexes. Another powerful factor is the existence of a large number of virile men in the army and navy, who are debarred by regulations from a licit outlet for their desires. In all civilised nations the celibate army and navy provide a demand that rarely fails to produce a supply.

But one of the most potent causes must be sought in that strong craving for adventure and excitement arising, not unnaturally, among girls of the wage-earning class, debarred, by circumstance and the conditions of labour for a wretched pittance, from change of scene, healthy recreations, the gratification of æsthetic instincts, and the variety which gives a zest to life. The education of "the masses" tends to heighten this craving for something brighter, gayer, less poignantly monotonous than the common round of drudgery and sleep.

Hence we find an increasing augmentation of the army of "the frail sisterhood" by young women who labour by day for pence, remaining ostensibly "straight," and who roam out of the "long, unlovely streets" by night to the wide West End thoroughfares, bedecked for the market.

This class of courtesan becomes more numerous yearly. It is one result of the almost complete disappearance of those establishments formerly conducted by the procuress, and the increase of the number of householders, in almost every district of London, who offer facilities to women of the pavement and their patrons.

The movement of independence among women has undoubtedly penetrated into the half-world. The London courtesan is now a free lance. She has a flat in a respectable neighbourhood, and often owns the furniture. She has escaped from the brothel servitude, and her status has improved, inasmuch as she now trades on her own account.

The new order has no doubt brought many recruits into the ranks of prostitution. The "gay woman" of twenty years ago was most frequently the slave of a woman capitalist with an establishment and a *clientèle*. She was a subordinate, a paid accomplice of the often wealthy procuress, and she was stamped and stigmatised as a "fallen woman." To-day a host of women employed in reputable callings conduct a supplementary profession, frequently without arousing the suspicions of fellow-workers, friends, and relatives. "I don't only do this; I work every day from eight till seven at So-and-So's," is a very common admission.

"Why? Don't you earn enough to keep you?"

"Oh, yes, if I chose to wear shabby clothes, live like some of the other girls, and walk several miles every day to business and back. But I want to see a little life, and I must have pretty hats and things."

A courtesan interrogated by Tolstoy, a cook by original profession, said that she could not endure the heat of the kitchen and the inadequate wages. I have met more than one skilled cook who has left service on the same plea, and gone "on the streets."

It must be recognised that "want" is not the incentive to the demirep. She yearns passionately for comforts, luxuries, and dissipations that respectable industry will never secure for her. She is usually a high-spirited girl, and often romantic and emotional in a sentimental way. Frequently, too, she is cynically philosophical, and will express the opinion that, as things are, no woman can have a good time without the pecuniary assistance of men, who are always so much better off than women.

The "typical prostitute," so elaborately analysed and labelled by Lombroso and his school, is certainly not common. It has been often stated that the congenital courtesan may be recognised by certain manifest physiological and psychological traits. The signs and temperamental tendencies are, however, far from obvious in an enormous number of courtesans.

Among the thousands of women in this vast trade there are many abnormal types; but the great majority are, apart from the matter of free choice in their business, practically undistinguishable from the women of any other class. They have, as a class, varied temperaments, and are, in fact, like millions of ordinary women in aspiration, point of view, tastes, and general habits. Some are gentle, amiable, naturally affectionate, and, strange as it may seem, an immense number are innately conjugal and domestic. Very many of the sisterhood marry, and a proportion prove good wives and housekeepers.

From the Magdalen to De Quincey's kindly, compassionate Ann of Oxford Street, men of refined feeling, whether lax or strict in their obser-

vance of chastity, have testified to that quality of sympathy which is often deeply expressed by, and rarely quite lacking in, those women whom society at large condemns and despises.

Even men of extremely dissolute life, and a tendency to cynicism in speaking of women as a sex, have frequently confessed to me that the demimondaine is not without certain conspicuous virtues. Certainly pity may seem wasted when lent to the flaunting, painted, hard-drinking, gross-minded courtesan who has not the least pity for herself, and exults in her professional success. But many gentle and affectionate girls are driven into prostitution through the insensate moral harshness of the community, and most of these victims are ready for any way of escape, provided that escape does not spell starvation.

WALTER M. GALLICHAN.

(To be continued.)

The Home Office Blunderer.

MR. McKENNA'S appointment to the Home Office was a matter of political expediency. His predecessor, Mr. Winston Churchill, foresaw the Dundee strike, and, fearing the consequences of having to send troops down to his own constituency, was inclined to go to the Admiralty. After McKenna's record of failure as First Lord, and his undignified squabble with Lord Charles Beresford, Churchill's breeziness and energy came as a welcome sign of life. There is a certainty of success about the latter's opportunism—a sense of individuality, which lends him an air of statesmanship even in his demagoguery. At the Home Office he was a success, and attained a great measure of popularity, notwithstanding the rôle his department played as the agent of capital in the great labour troubles of last year. The contrast between him and Herbert Gladstone was so great that one would have thought McKenna would have learnt a lesson from it. But no. The man whose career as First Lord was one of absolute failure was foredoomed to failure at the Home Office. There is a fatalism about his incompetency. It is no use changing him from this office to that in the hope that, by ringing the changes of statesmanship, he will one day blossom into a great Minister of the Crown. What is needed is his entire disappearance from public life; and I am writing this article in order to encourage an enlightened public opinion to edge him off the political stage. For the failure of Mr. McKenna has been written in such terms that his continuance in office is one of the gravest public scandals of political life. A safe seat may guarantee his membership of the Westminster debating society; an irresponsible Cabinet may continue him in office until its own security becomes involved; but public opinion can make his position so unbearable that even his colleagues will call out for his sacrifice.

I do not say McKenna's sacrifice will alter the social problem. It will not. I do not urge it even as a palliative; but I hate to witness the continued elevation of undisguised time-serving and brutality, the enthronement of authority at the expense of reason, with all the attendant jobbery, despotism, and corruption. Besides, Mr. McKenna has but emulated Herbert Gladstone; and, notwithstanding his name, the latter, as a Viscount and with a colonial appointment, was returned to the obscurity from whence he came in response to public indignation that all

the Ministerial screening could not appease. If only from a love of order and method, a sense of placing like things in the same category, we should insist on McKenna being relegated to the oblivion Gladstone now enjoys. Like failures must produce like returns.

Let us analyse McKenna's Home Office career, and then compare it with that of his predecessor, Gladstone. The crowning infamy in the former's record is, of course, the Ball case. I dealt with the horrors of Mr. Ball's treatment in my recent article in these columns on "Our Prison System." I would now turn to McKenna's apologies and attitude. Answering a question put by Mr. Lynch, on February 19th last, McKenna said:—

"William Ball was convicted at Bow Street on December 22nd last of doing wilful damage, and sentenced to two months' imprisonment with hard labour. He was, therefore, not eligible for the special treatment which may be accorded to certain classes of prisoners under the prison rule recently made by my predecessor, as that rule applies only to persons placed by the Court in the second or third division, and does not apply to those sentenced to hard labour. This was explained to Ball, but from his reception into prison he refused all food, and on December 25th it became necessary to feed him artificially."

This statement contains a deliberate lie, for Mr. Churchill's regulations contain no reference to their being inapplicable when hard labour is imposed; and, as has been pointed out, the Home Secretary implies in the above statement that there is a fourth division in prison, although, of course, there is nothing of the kind. The text of the Churchill regulations are:—

"243A. In the case of any offender of the second or third division whose previous character is good, and who has been convicted of, or committed to prison for, an offence not involving dishonesty, cruelty, indecency, or serious violence, the Prison Commissioners may allow such amelioration. . . ."

As a matter of fact, however, this apology on the part of the Home Office is but an evasion, as will be seen from the answer McKenna gave to a question put by Mr. Lansbury on the 19th inst. Mr. Lansbury asked whether it was not in the power of the Home Secretary to order an alteration in Mr. Ball's sentence by placing him in the second division instead of the third, thus relieving him of the sentence of hard labour. To this McKenna said:—

"No doubt the Home Secretary could remit that part of his sentence which gave hard labour; and, if that were done, I suppose the prison rule made by my predecessor would then apply in such a case."

Challenged by the same questioner to state whether Mr. Ball was other than a political offender, the Home Office hero declined to come up to the scratch.

Describing the effects of forcible feeding on Mr. Ball's sanity, in the answer to Mr. Lynch from which I have quoted already, Mr. McKenna said:—

"He was fed twice daily by mouth tube. . . . No force whatever was used towards him. . . . His weight and physical health were fairly well maintained, and on January 21st his wife, in answer to an inquiry by her, was informed that he was in his usual health. *No disturbing mental symptoms were observed until the night of January 25th, when he was restless, and talking wildly.* On January 29th he began to take food naturally, and continued to do so until his discharge on February 12th. His mental condition, however, became worse. On February 9th he was reported to be certifiably insane, and it was decided that he should be removed to an asylum. A letter notifying this decision to Mrs. Ball was written from the prison on the 10th; but, by an unfortunate mistake on the part of a messenger, it was not posted till the following day, Sunday (the 11th), and, presumably, reached Mrs. Ball by the first post on Monday. No application to delay the prisoner's removal was made to the governor, and although the contrary has been stated the

prisoner himself made no protest. He was removed from Pentonville to the asylum at 2.30 p.m. on Monday. The prisoner's treatment while in Pentonville was strictly in accordance with the law as laid down by the Lord Chief Justice in the case of Leigh v. Gladstone, and I am satisfied that he received every care and attention from the medical officers of the prison."

It must not be forgotten that the Churchill regulations rendered the Leigh v. Gladstone decision obsolete; and McKenna's appeal, therefore, is to the letter of a judge-made decision as opposed to more recent constitutional law. The concluding piece of cant in this answer will be appreciated by all who have seen the inside of a gaol as one of his Majesty's guests. In view of McKenna's admission above as to when the first disturbing "mental symptoms" were observed in Ball, the following answers, given immediately afterwards in reply to further questions from Mr. Lynch, are interesting reading:—

1. "My memory is that there was nothing in the prisoner's conduct at the time of his admission which led the medical officer to think he was not of sound mind."
2. "I think it would be so unlikely [for the treatment he received in prison to have driven him insane] as to be impossible."

Another stage in McKenna's evolution and progressive official impertinence was witnessed on Wednesday, February 21st, when, having had further opportunities of consulting his colleagues, our consistent Minister stated that *the prison doctor had reported that, in his opinion, the man Ball's mind, never a very strong one, was not affected by his treatment in prison. His insanity, in the doctor's opinion, was caused by continually dwelling on votes for women and political prisoners.* This puts us in mind of the discovery of Lady Constance Lytton's weak heart. And, by the way, if Mr. Ball's mind was never very strong, was not this a reason for reducing the sentence to second division. What impertinence, too, for official hirelings, whose knowledge is a sort of jelly production, to talk of the weak mind of a man who has shown the dauntless resolution Mr. Ball has evinced!

As I have said, the Ball case is but the crowning infamy of McKenna's career. We will now consider some of his other "errors of judgment." On December 21st last, George Baker was wrongly convicted by the Uckfield magistrates for trespassing in pursuit of game, and sentenced to six weeks' hard labour. Two days later, two other men, named Hall and Pagden, confessed to the offence for which Baker was convicted, and their confessions were sent on the following day to the Home Office by train. A day or two later, the Chairman of the Uckfield Bench and a colleague came to London, and had an interview with one of the Home Office officials. After this, a request was sent to the magistrates' clerk for his notes of the proceedings, and there the matter dropped for the time being. On January 18th Hall and Pagden were sentenced by the Uckfield magistrates for the very offence of which they had found Baker guilty, and for which he was still in gaol. Two days later, McKenna woke up, and signed an order for Baker's release. Baker has received, and is likely to receive, no compensation. Such an injustice deserves restatement in a concise form, viz.:—

- Dec. 21st, 1911.—Baker sentenced to six weeks' hard labour.
 Dec. 23rd, 1911.—Hall and Pagden confess, thus establishing his innocence.
 Dec. 24th, 1911.—Home Office informed of Baker's innocence.
 Jan. 18th, 1912.—Hall and Pagden convicted.

Jan. 20th, 1912.—Baker released on Home Office order, *having served over four weeks of his sentence.*

In the Stewart-Gott case of last year, McKenna refused to modify the sentences imposed by pious knavery for the wholly impossible offence of "blasphemy." At the best the sentences were imposed purely and simply for "bad taste," and nothing more. After considering the various cogent arguments urged in favour of the prisoners' release, many of them based on the grounds of public policy, McKenna declined to interfere. My friend, Mr. Gott, went down with pluck, and determined to make no appeal against the sentence upheld by the man who is to introduce a Government Bill for Welsh Disestablishment in justice to Nonconformity! But here is the sequel. Gott and his wife were devoted to each other, and she inwardly fretted over his incarceration. I have not communicated with him yet on the subject of his imprisonment; but I believe that, notwithstanding the Churchill regulations that would apply to "blasphemy" convictions, Gott received the normal treatment of an ordinary prisoner. If so, this would add to Mrs. Gott's grief. However, she grieved to death, McKenna refusing to release Mr. Gott up to the last moment possible. When it was known she had died, fearful of public indignation, he signed the order for Mr. Gott's release, so that the latter could attend his wife's funeral. Mr. Gott was released on Friday, the 16th inst., and his wife received a secularist burial at Scholemoor Cemetery, near Bradford, on Monday, the 19th. Let this fact be added to our indictment of Mr. Reginald McKenna.

The stage censorship has proven itself an impertinent folly. Mr. McKenna has accordingly defended it. He has also interviewed a dozen persons connected with cinematograph manufacture and exhibition, with a view to securing the more effective supervision of subjects for public entertainment, and the appointment of a censorship of films. We all know what this means. He also intends to introduce a Bill "to prevent the publication and dissemination of demoralising literature" during the coming session. On the same day as he made this announcement, he stated that he could not find time to deal with the Poor Law Commission's report. The problem would not have been altered if he had been able to; but the sense of proportion possessed by the man shows how his mind runs to policemanism and terrorism. He has also upheld outrageous police assaults on the rights of free speech at Streatham, and, still more recently, at Hull; and placed a premium on hooliganism and the incarceration of upholders of public rights. In

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the matter of censorship he would do well to recall the following passage from Shaftesbury's "Characteristics": "Fain would they confound licentiousness in morals with liberty in thought, and make the libertine resemble his direct opposite."

McKenna's attention has also been called to an inflammatory speech recently made by Mrs. Pankhurst; and from the manner in which he announced this fact in the House of Commons, one would gather that he was struck dumb at the very thought of Mrs. Pankhurst's incitement to violence. Yet he has made no mention of the speech made on the same evening as Mrs. Pankhurst's outburst at Bristol, by his fellow-member of the Cabinet, Mr. Hobhouse. Speaking at an anti-suffrage meeting, Mr. Hobhouse said:—

"In the case of the suffrage demand, there had not been the kind of popular sentimental uprising which accounted for [the burning down of] Nottingham Castle in 1832, or the [overthrow of] Hyde Park railings in 1867. There had been no great ebullition of popular feeling."

What is this but an incitement to violence—an inflammatory speech made by a so-called responsible Minister of the Crown?

There is no need to labour further details of McKenna's inglorious career at the Home Office. It is a sustained record of iniquity, pettiness, time-serving, officialism, and incompetency. He has not the name "Gladstone" to excuse him; and his relegation to obscurity is essential to the partial correction of many public scandals. To emphasise the necessity for his immediate passing, let me call attention to a few incidents of Gladstone's Home Office régime, and the Government's failure to save him. Gladstone's stock defence of every public abuse was: "I take full responsibility." Some of the things he took "full responsibility" for are thus summarised in a paragraph I wrote in the *Indian Sociologist* for August, 1909:—

"Mr. Gladstone assumes full 'responsibility' for giving his standing sanction to the police to confiscate whatever papers they consider may lead to a breach of the peace. He is also 'responsible' for blasphemy prosecutions, which are afterwards justified on the ground of the defendants' 'obscenity' in such cases. This 'responsibility' enabled Russian spies to photograph and mark down Revolutionary members of the Duma during their recent visit to London. For the legal murder of Dhingra on the 17th, Gladstone's 'responsibility' was the final 'responsible' cause. Whether Dhingra's body is to be cremated or buried in the usual way Mr. Gladstone will decide. For all these things does Mr. Gladstone assume 'responsibility.' The Speaker thinks the public control over Mr. Gladstone's actions of no importance, and agrees that it is a sufficient reason for police coercion if Mr. Gladstone is 'responsible.' But who, or what, in the wide world, is 'responsible' for Mr. Gladstone? That it should be necessary to put this question proves how unconstitutional is the rôle played by the present Government in the matter of repression. Its existence is a conspiracy against the liberty of the people."

The Government made every effort to defend Gladstone in his assumption of this rôle. On my trial for sedition this paragraph was quoted as tending to bring contempt on the Government and one of its Ministers. The prosecuting attorney was almost fanatical when quoting it. *Still Gladstone went.* And I doubt whether he was as dangerous a reactionary as McKenna. McKenna, then, must be made to go. Public decency requires so much, and public opinion will be content with no less. It is time he was packing.

"Gone from us, but not forgotten,
Never shall thy infamy fade;
Bitter thoughts shall ever linger
Round the record thou hast made."

GUY A. ALDRED.

Correspondence.

CHASTITY AND NORMALITY.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

I guess I am not far wrong in surmising that "A New Subscriber," who in this week's issue protests against the plea of E. M. Watson and myself for Purity as well as freedom among men and women, is of the male persuasion.

I quite anticipated when I stated in your columns that abstinence had no bad effect on my health, I should be accused of not being normal.

I have been told this before by another of the male persuasion. But from my knowledge of many single women and girls I deny that I am not a normal woman. Of course, girls and women do not discuss the sex question as it affects themselves, but from my observation of unmarried girls and women whom I have known intimately, there is not the least ground to suppose that they are in any way troubled or affected diversely by complete chastity. I think I speak for most women when I say that until they love, the idea of the sex relationship seldom enters their thoughts, but if it does it appears repulsive rather than attractive.

Personally, I never desired the sex relationship until I "fell in love" at about twenty, and then I did desire it, and occasionally have desired it ever since. (Perhaps "A New Subscriber" will now concede that I am at least fairly normal.)

For reasons which it is unnecessary to explain here, we couldn't marry, and from then till now I have had to crush and subdue the sex feeling. As I said, this feeling awoke in me when I loved, but it never did, and it never will, govern me as it governs and enslaves the majority of men. My intellect and reason rules my lower instincts and desires, and it is this fact which raises me above the lower animals (including man). I repeat, these years of abstinence have not diversely affected my health, though they have affected my spirits. I become at times very morbid and depressed when I see life slipping by and youth going, going, going, and myself still loving, but unable to marry. Yes, at times it affects my spirits, but it will never affect my reason, because I have other interests and ideals in life, which are quite as real and as beautiful and as worth while as love and the sex relationship.

As a suffragist and a feminist, I often talk of the equality of the sexes, but in sex matters it is surely indisputable that we women are miles above and beyond men. Some men would have us believe that their laxity in this matter and their inability or lack of desire to restrain or control their lower appetite is a sign of their superiority, but to me it only proves that, in spite of their advance in many directions, they have still a long way to go before they are really emancipated and evolved from the lower animal. But, alas! they hug the chains which bind them.

February 24th, 1912.

KATHLYN OLIVER.

[Last week's correspondent, "A New Subscriber," was a lady, who sent her card.—ED.]

A PSYCHOLOGICAL MORALITY TEST.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

While so many of your readers are disputing about grave problems of conduct, and seem to agree on no guiding principles, the words of a Christian writer in the last century come to us as rare and refreshing fruit:—"It would be no bad method to find out the lawfulness or unlawfulness of our pleasures, and the spiritual or worldly state of our affections, were we to ask ourselves this question in the midst of every enjoyment, 'Can we put up a hearty hallelujah at the end of it?'" How many of your progressive readers can properly face self-examination like this?

INQUIRER.

SEX INSTRUCTION AND THE YOUNG.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

After reading in your interesting paper the varying opinions on the interminable sex question, I should like to uphold the writer, E. M. Watson, in her views expressed in the letter on "Asceticism and Passion," and also for those of Mrs. Sherwin and Jane Craig, as against others whose motives are towards licence, and whose pseudo-philosophy preaches indulgence. "Hitch your wagon to a star," teach high ideals to get individual wills under perfect control, so that mind triumphs over body, and I say begin with the children when they are young. My object is to express my opinion on the matter of educating children in matters relating to sex. As matters

stand at present, there is an undue secrecy about these important facts which form the moral and economic basis of life—the most important thing which governs life is left to chance to disclose and explain, and chance so often does its work so disastrously that fine characters and good intellects are wrecked. I feel convinced that a great deal of misery, prostitution included, and unhappiness is caused by ignorance, the neglect of parents carefully enlightening their young children, and training them to have a greater care and reverence for their bodies. If as much time were devoted to the physical needs of the body in this direction as is given to the spiritual, there would grow up men and women of greater fastidiousness, and with more disciplined wills, and there would be lessened that riotous wastage of life, resulting from indulgence, ignorant of the tragedy behind. Having been at school with young boys under my charge, I speak from sorrowful experience of the prevalence of vicious practices, and for healthy-minded children, in whom no such thing occurs, it is dangerous for them to mix with those of weakened wills and morals, caused either by inheritance or chance, unless they are armed with a parent's careful, thoughtful, warning education in this direction. "Instruct thy son, lest his lewd behaviour be an offence unto thee." I think all Freewomen will agree that to tell the children truthfully is more noble and far-seeing than to let them grope in dark ignorance to their own undoing. Train them up in the idea that "the noblest monument a man can have is the record of a pure and well-spent life," and we should do away at least with one of the causes of prostitution.

With every good wish, from

A MOTHER.

URANIANS.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

The writer of the letter signed "Scython" deserves the castigation meted out to a small boy who from a hiding-place hurls filth at the passer-by.

Beginning by alluding to me—I presume ironically—as "that gentleman," he (or she?) accuses me (1) of "disturbing generalisations"; (2) of implying that every woman is a "potential prostitute"; (3) of "denying to the whole luckless Uranian class, where the male is only apparently dominant, the virtues of chastity and modesty." These outrageous and libellous accusations I repudiate with scorn, and nail them to the counter as the base coin that they are.

I shall not condescend to argue with "Scython"; of what use would it be to bandy words with a person who imagines that a wild guess at his own or anybody's sex-formula has the slightest evidential value? But there is not one syllable in my articles which implies a lack of sympathy with or an imputation upon the conduct of "Uranians" in general. On the contrary, I was careful to indicate the heroic possibilities of their predicament. But that is not enough, it seems; they must be heroes without doing anything heroic.

C. J. WHITBY.

P.S.—I take this opportunity of correcting a misprint in your issue of February 15th. The seventeenth of my "Aphorisms" should read: "Progress implies decivilisation: that is to say, the slow and painful reconquest by the individual of the powers usurped by the community." "Recivilisation" (as printed) is obviously meaningless.

PRURIENCY AND SEX DISCUSSIONS.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

Mr. Frank Watts writes that the "over-emphasis of sexuality as a factor of life is dangerous," and that "the inevitable consequence of concentrating too exclusively on sex matters is that the thoughts, *in spite of our better selves*, tend to run towards sex oftener than we can approve." The italics are mine. Both these sentences are utterly inapplicable to all that has been written on the subject in THE FREEWOMAN. Uncivilised persons are frightened of sex because they often find themselves incapable of thinking out such problems scientifically, and without a more or less prurient interest in the subject. This timidity, reinforced by the tendency of many religious people to exclude scientific analysis, in order to preserve a kind of superstitious tabu, has been exploited by all those who have a vested interest in preserving things as they are (e.g., by the libertine who desires to create a convenient and secret hunting ground for his pleasures, or by the husband who conceals from his wife the nature of a disease with which he has infected her). I do not suggest that Mr. Watts is more than timid and uncertain of himself, nor do I desire to inflict on him discussions which he fears may deprave his morals in a paper which he apparently persists in reading.

I do, however, suggest that women are more victimised than men by the artificial ignorance which Mr. Watts presumably wishes to uphold, and that the vitally important questions which he wants to stifle ought to be openly discussed, whether Mr. Watts likes it or not. Mr. Watts calls sex "one of the blind, irrational, and purely animal tendencies of human nature," and it will certainly continue to be so for everyone who shares Mr. Watts' point of view. Another correspondent calls sex "one of the most beautiful things in life," as it certainly ought to be, and is, when frankly recognised as a natural faculty capable of education and civilisation. The Freewoman need burn no incense to timidity and ignorance.—Yours, etc.,

E. S. P. HAYNES.

"FREEWOMAN" CLUBS.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

May I say that I think a club for the discussion of some of the matter which appears week by week in THE FREEWOMAN would be a very useful thing. It is quite true that it is absolutely impossible to digest properly such large topics as are treated in the paper, and I fear both writers and readers are in great danger of falling into superficial and vague generalities, without ever properly thrashing out any one subject.

I would like to suggest that the best thing to do is for all those desirous of joining such a club—to start with *one* only, I think—to send in their names and addresses to you (if you will kindly receive them); then, when you have a list of, say, twenty or thirty names, a preliminary meeting can be held at some central room, at which we could discuss the best way to run the club, or circle, and the means of obtaining a room or rooms.

I am not in favour of calling the club, anyhow at present, by the actual title of "Freewoman" Club—rather would I prefer "Discussion Club," or some such name.

Perhaps you will put this suggestion before your readers, and then perhaps other suggestions might be forthcoming. I should think in a week or two we might hold a preliminary meeting. The International Suffrage Shop, I may mention, has a room which would do quite well for that purpose, and all of us who send in names will be willing, I am sure, to contribute towards the expense of the housing for the evening.

B. L.

GROUP-HOUSES.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

As a regular and appreciative reader of THE FREEWOMAN, may I make a suggestion to you, or, rather, a request? Could you, I wonder, get someone to write an account for THE FREEWOMAN of any actual scheme of group-houses in working, of which he or she may have any knowledge? I mean any system of group-houses with a common kitchen, for example. I do not know if any such exist; if not, it is quite time, in my opinion, that they did, for I consider this housing and housework problem at the bottom of the whole question of "Freewomen," and it struck me that an account of any actual scheme, if such exists, especially as regards financial arrangements, might be of interest to your readers—it would be to me.

With apologies for troubling you,

(Miss) DOROTHY CHAPMAN.

[We expect to publish very shortly an article containing the information asked for.—ED.]

A GROUP OF THE "FOURTH PARTY."

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

We most ardently hope that THE FREEWOMAN, instead of being discontinued, will acquire the extended circulation it asks for, and so richly deserves.

It holds, in our estimation, the premier place in sociological journalism, in that its breadth of outlook affords opportunity for both sides of every question to be fully discussed.

The most unique feature of the paper is absolute absence of dogmatism on the part of the editors, not only over correspondence, but throughout the entire paper.

For weeks past Thursday has been our red-letter day—it is the day of THE FREEWOMAN, and this generally means fresh fields for thought and discussion.

If personal recommendation and influence can procure subscribers, be assured that ours will be exercised to the uttermost.—Yours faithfully,

LILIAN ANDERSON, B.Sc.

CHARLOTTE HUNTER.

JANE CRAIG, LL.A.

ELIZABETH P. CUMMING.

TEACHERS UNDER THE INSURANCE ACT.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

May I be allowed to remove the misapprehension with regard to the Insurance Act, from which the writers of the article on "Teaching" must be suffering? It is quite incorrect to speak of "the doctor indicated as the one whom, under the Act, they (the secondary teachers) may consult." The Insurance Committee in each county or county borough will publish lists of practitioners who have agreed to treat insured persons, and the arrangements must be such as to secure (S. 15 (2a) of the Act) "a right on the part of any duly qualified medical practitioner who is desirous of being included in any such list as aforesaid, of being so included," though he or she may be removed for inefficiency; and, further, the arrangements must secure (S. 15 (2c)) "a right on the part of any insured person of selecting . . . from the appropriate list the practitioner by whom he wishes to be attended and treated, and, subject to the consent of the practitioner so selected, of being attended and treated by him." It is only when the insured person neglects to make any choice, or has been refused by those she has chosen, that any doctor will be "indicated" as the one she may consult.

As far as this provision, at least, is concerned, I should think the panels of doctors working under the Act would be very useful to the woman doctor. They give her an opportunity of becoming known, not only to the insured person whom she treats, but also to his or her dependants and acquaintances. I confess that if my sister required the services of a woman doctor neither she nor I would know where to find one. When this part of the Act comes into operation we shall at once know whether one is available.

With regard to sickness benefit, it is possible, but not inevitable, that the woman teacher will have to depend solely on her 7s. 6d. a week. If the Insurance Commissioners declare that it is the custom in the teaching profession, either generally or in a particular locality—and they may do so either on their own initiative or on the application of an employer in the profession—for employers to pay wages during sickness, it is open for the employers to guarantee to pay full wages during the first six weeks of any illness to all the teachers they employ. The employer then pays a premium of 2½d. per week, and the teacher (woman) 2d. It is entirely a matter for a business calculation on the part of the employer, and it may not be worth his while to guarantee the payment of wages during sickness, but the possibility ought not to be overlooked. After the six weeks, of course, the teacher would be entitled to twenty weeks of the ordinary sickness benefit, followed by another twenty-six weeks' disablement benefit.

R. J. P. MORTISHED.

February 19th, 1912.

A MOTIVE FOR SUFFRAGISM.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

In reference to the many questions raised by your article, "The Drudge," and in correspondence, may I suggest that your readers obtain a book by Edward Carpenter, "Love's Coming of Age." Evidently many do not know it. I should also like to express appreciation of the letter of your contributor, R. W. Carey, in the last issue of THE FREEWOMAN. Let us not in clearing away the mounds of rubbish now covering marriage, and obstructing all sane, pleasing, and necessary intercourse between men and women—which is the thing above all else that will "cut pathways east and west" for us out of our present perplexities—let us not raise other mounds larger and denser to take their place, by materialism, and denial of our higher selves.

One correspondent writes: "Some day a woman will be able to choose whether she will bear her children to the State (or to a husband)." What is this but grossest bondage—State prostitution! A very hell of nethermost darkness! Then we may look back at the mother cow and pig of to-day, breeding for slaughter, as a being superior to ourselves. She is but doing as she must, without knowledge of aught else.

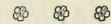
But surely in those neat and tidy days to come, when "the multitudes of things" will have been sorted out, arranged, and put into their places by scientific minds—for the State—we could go "one better," and obtain our babies, if we still desire to have them, nicely put up in hygienic jars, with nothing but the label to suggest origin. We may then be truly refined, and devote ourselves to the things that really matter. But as those days draw near, we of warmer blood must needs draw close our shawl of love, or hasten on. Cold, cold it will be!

May I give a quotation—not in its entirety—from an

account of an interview given by Bernard Shaw to some young men and women? "The human race, as it at present exists, is an extremely rotten lot. . . . Honestly, I see no hope for the species, unless there is a very considerable improvement in human material. . . . There is this mysterious thing happens—you fall in love. There is no getting away from it—a peculiar physiological attraction does exist between certain people. And isn't it a fairly reasonable deduction, that if you have that curious selective instinct, it must be to some purpose? I suggest that it is upon that purpose that we have got to depend for the improvement of the race. It is the method by which Nature desires to improve the race. I believe in a force that is working for a higher purpose. I see no reason to doubt that in the course of the infinity of the future some superman and superwoman will be produced, who will be above us, as we are above the pieces of slime in the ditch. And the selective impulse of which I speak is the power behind evolution, working with the purpose of producing something better."

Personally, I looked forward to the time when a babe may have two parents. Not one poor one—the narrow undeveloped woman, and about one-sixteenth or less of the other—the man who is so much away that he knows hardly anything of his children. Should the fairies leave a changeling he would be no wiser! When two people have the time, over and above their work, together to bring up the children that they have in love and forethought brought into the world, it will not be in the days of grinding Industrialism. Surely this desire explains in large part the vast agitation over the getting of that small thing—the Vote!

THE DESPISED SUFFRAGIST.



FOOD AND POPULATION.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

May I have a little space in which to criticise some of Mr. Drysdale's arguments?

Take first the alleged "connection between the birth and death rates." Mr. Drysdale says "if the birth-rate rises or falls, the death-rate will rise or fall with it," and interprets this to mean that in *different* countries the death-rate is proportional to the birth-rate.

The figures in the "Statistical abstract for . . . [the years] 1898 to 1908-09" (Cd. 5,446) give for 1909 the United Kingdom with 25.5 births per 1,000, and 14.8 deaths; while France has 19.6 births per 1,000, and 19.3 deaths; and Denmark, with 28.3 births per 1,000, has 13.3 deaths. This is quite contrary to Mr. Drysdale's theory. Again, if the birth-rate were 10 per 1,000, would the death-rate be 0 per 1,000?

The evolutionary doctrine of Darwin. I will merely remark that man is an exceptional animal, who has spread over the earth more than any other animal has. We know more about man than about other animals, and it is safest to argue about other animals by analogy with man, and not the other way round.

The absence of nitrogenous products in the sea. Does Mr. Drysdale assert that the whole of his possible food supply has already been obtained by man? Otherwise, this point seems to be of no immediate interest to man, although it may be to fishes, because it means that if we grow more cabbages, there will be fewer herrings, but until man is occupied in eating the last cabbage, or the last herring, he need not trouble about it.

Destruction of fruit and fish. Mr. Drysdale's argument is obviously not at all applicable to fruit which does not suddenly appear ripe in a day. If it is destroyed, it is to keep up prices, and not because trains to market it cannot be run. If Mr. Drysdale will inquire in Kent of fruit-growers, he will find his idea as to the "inevitability" of the waste is incorrect. After all, food could possibly be given away.

The actual deficiency of the food supply. I do not think that Mr. Drysdale intends to deny that the deficiency in the world's supply of food is accompanied by such a deficiency in the purchasing power of large classes as to make it clear that an alteration in our ideas of property is necessary, in addition to any decrease of the birth-rate that may be required; and such an alteration in the distribution of wealth will necessarily promote an improved weekly demand for, and therefore an improved weekly supply of food, by transferring purchasing power from those who are at present over-fed to those who are at present under-fed.

Wages in France and England. Mr. Drysdale asks me to look at the Board of Trade *Labour Gazette* for November, in order to find French wages and their alterations between 1900 and 1910. I find that in Paris, where wages

are highest, "the current hourly rates of wages in 1911" are as follows:—

	PARIS.	LONDON.
Bricklayers and Masons	9d.	10½d.
Carpenters	9½d.	10½d.
Joiners	7½d.	10½d.
Plumbers	8¾d.—9½d.	11d.
Painters	8½d.	8½d.
Turners (Metal)	6¾d.	{ 40s. for 50 hours week minimum, say 9s. 6d.
Smiths	7¾d.—11½d.	Same as Turners
Cabinet Makers	8¾d.	"
Upholsterers... ..	9½d.—10½d.	"
Coopers	6¾d.	"
Compositors	7¾d.	{ 39s. for 50 hours week, say 9½s. 6d.
Navvies	7¾d.	7½d. minimum.
Day Labourers	4¾d.	7½d.

I have added the London rates, obtained from the various Trade Unions concerned, for ten out of the thirteen trades mentioned above. The figures seem to me quite unfavourable to Mr. Drysdale's theory. Even if wages have risen in France, they are still lower than in England.

I may say that the index figures used by Mr. Drysdale for the cost of living in France, showing an increase from 100 to 104 between 1900 and 1910, are probably quite misleading as regards the cost of living for a "normal" workman's family. The figures given by the Ministère du Travail show this normal expenditure as 104 in 1900 and 96 in 1910, the base year being the average of 1895 to 1904. If, however, sugar and wine are omitted from the articles, the prices of which are included in arriving at these index numbers, the index numbers become 98 for 1900 and 114 for 1910. This shows how difficult it is to arrive by statistical study at any conclusion as to the changes in the cost of living in a country, and it is still more difficult to compare the actual welfare of peoples in different countries with different ways of living.

The ignorance of the working classes and their rate of increase. I have a prejudice (probably it is unscientific) against answering an opponent by merely saying his statements are "quite untrue," and I will, if I may, defer replying to this paragraph until I have made further inquiries, but meantime I may point out that its meaning is ambiguous, as it may mean (1) that the working classes do not know how artificially to limit their families, or (2) that they ignorantly consider the use of such means immoral, or in some way injurious. The first statement seems fairly incredible.

Scientific reasoning. I do not think there is a separate way of reasoning called scientific reasoning. Reasoning is of various degrees of accuracy. Great scientists, being men whose imaginations play with special ease with some parts of the phenomena of life, are usually peculiarly inaccurate when talking about any subject except the one in which the necessities of their trade have trained them to be accurate. As for the text-book logic which Mr. Drysdale esteems so highly, it is only of use for checking the results, obtained first by a quite different kind of mental process.

ARTHUR D. LEWIS.

POPULATION AND THE FOOD SUPPLY.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

The neo-Malthusian position, as stated by Dr. Drysdale in your issue of 22nd inst., ought to be met in your columns by a clear exposition of the fallacies which underlie it.

Superficially, it may sound convincing that the population is increasing, or may increase, faster than the food supply, but one need only go a little deeper into the problem, and from a somewhat broader outlook, to discover its mistakes and absurdities.

Dr. Drysdale evidently belongs to the chemical school of diet—he is even here not logical from his own standpoint—and he has not reckoned with the vital school at all. I have taken considerable pains to adjust the standard ration for an average man to the exact area of land needed to produce this amount of food. Taking the average production of the United Kingdom for ten years as my basis—i.e., without going into the possibilities of intensive culture—I find that, no matter what food, or combination of foods, be selected, practically the same area of land is drawn upon to obtain the useful nutrients, viz., one-third of an acre. It is where the consumer lives mainly on animal food or animal products (not including fish, which needs no land) that an enormously larger area is required to produce his ration. A cow, for instance, would need fully four acres, on an average, for its subsistence, and an average man could

easily consume two cows in the year without much lessening the area he would still need for the fruit, vegetable, and cereal portion of his diet. In fact, the man who lives largely on animal foods or animal products would require between twenty and thirty times more land for his sustenance than the man who lives exclusively on the output of the vegetable kingdom. This, again, fails to reckon with the theory of the vital school, which points out that if plants were spontaneously grown, their yield would be enormously increased, due to the fact that cultivation, in the long run, lowers the vitality of the plant, making it less productive.

From this computation it follows that the population of the United Kingdom could be increased more than threefold without importing any food, provided that the food supply be drawn from the vegetable kingdom, which would postpone the scarcity question to the far distant future. Instead, therefore, of interfering with the natural productivity of the human being himself, why not change the basis of his diet? This would surely be a less drastic and more humane method of solving the problem. If Dr. Drysdale rejects this solution, will he kindly tell the readers of THE FREEWOMAN who ought to be eliminated as the more unfit, the man who consumes the one-third of an acre, or the man who needs the twenty or thirty acres for his support?

It is the present money system which stands between the man and his food supply—also this fact Dr. Drysdale ignores—so that he, as well as his school, brings forward a difficult and unnatural solution, while disdaining to consider the simpler, more practical, and more natural factors of the problem.—Yours truly,

February 26th, 1912.

W. A. MACDONALD.

POTENTIAL FOOD SUPPLIES AND AN UNLIMITED POPULATION.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

As we proceed in our research in the beautiful theory of starvation of infants, let us not neglect Dr. Drysdale's laudation of "the advantages of race suicide." If we are to deny the patent fact that all food products may actually increase manifold faster than man can possibly increase, we must come to admire all schemes for promoting death. Suicide clubs should be encouraged, for it is only fair that elderly persons should pass on, so that babes may be fed. Turn-about is fair play, and the young have thus far been the victims of Moloch Nature—suffering for the crime of being born. In the December *Malthusian* I saw an appeal to help an elderly woman. This is wrong. We must let Nature do its work; when Nature cannot starve the unwelcome children fast enough, she begins on the aged. This woman may have worked long years to pay someone unearned rent, but why should the landlord not be considered Nature's agent in the work of starving the surplus population? I know "race suicide" usually refers to "prevention," but we must make it include all who are unfit to produce for the landlord.

Malthusianism has produced a new logic. Dr. Drysdale says he "referred to the fallacies" of Henry George, but this is all he has done. He has not mentioned one particular fallacy, and proved it such. If I refer to Huxley's reply to George as a fallacy, that reply would be fully met and refuted, according to the new logic; but I will mention that, after a long argument against "Natural Rights," Huxley admitted that if natural rights meant that one may do as he pleases, he saw no objection to it. It is not safe to support a theory merely by the weight of names of great men who have departed from the line in which they proved their ability.

C. F. HUNT.

A CHALLENGE TO THE MALTHUSIAN POPULATION THEORY.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

May I be allowed to point out just a few facts relative to Mr. Drysdale's theoretical "connection between the birth and death rates"? It is unfortunate that in this sordid and practical world, theories, so neatly elaborated and so glibly illustrated as the one expounded by Mr. Drysdale, are formulated only to be dust-crumbled by the blinding force of statistical and practical experience. But Mr. Drysdale's formula does not even possess the common virtue of theoretical justification, and the supposed connection between the birth and death rates is purely illusory. I propose to clarify this argument by showing that his statement is fallacious, when judged both from the theoretical and from the practical point of view.

Two varying quantities (such as the birth and death

rates) can only be connected (in the manner supposed by Mr. Drysdale) if their superior and inferior limits are similarly connected. Now the superior limits of both rates is obviously the same (being the theoretical maximum), but the inferior limits differ radically, and it is here that the theoretical justification for Mr. Drysdale's arguments disappears. The birth-rate may fall to 0 per 1,000 (this may be a practical impossibility, but it is a conceivable theoretical possibility, and I am now concerned with the theoretical point of view only), as an inferior limit, and may rise to the superior limit of the theoretical maximum. But the death-rate can never fall to 0 per 1,000, for people must die—even assuming no deaths from disease, accidents, etc., people die from old age. Consequently our inferior limits in the two rates differ greatly.

This is the theoretical criticism of Mr. Drysdale's argument. Now for the practical point of view. He seems to point out that no natural increase can possibly exceed the rate of 10 per 1,000—otherwise we must be running short of food. A mere glance at the statistical abstract will show the utter fallaciousness of this idea. The following are a few figures I have selected at random:—

RATES PER 1,000 OF THE POPULATION.

	Births.	Deaths.	Natural Increase.	
England and Wales ...	1894	29.6	16.6	13
" " " " ...	1905	27.2	15.2	12
" " " " ...	1910	25.1	13.5	11.6
Scotland ...	1896	30.4	16.6	13.8
" " " " ...	1903	29.2	16.6	12.8
" " " " ...	1909	27.3	15.8	11.5

In no case will the natural increase be found to be less than 10 per 1,000 (except in the case of Ireland, where there are special circumstances).

In conclusion, I am inclined to think the supposed connection between the two rates finds its origin in the marked correlation between infantile mortality and the birth-rate, but there are absolutely no indications whatever of any such connection between the birth and death rates.—Yours, etc.,

ISRAEL HORWITZ.

February 23rd, 1912.

[Owing to the rapidly increasing volume of our correspondence, we are compelled to limit the number of letters in any week's issue to those letters received before or by the second post Monday morning.—ED.]

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Home Science.

KING'S COLLEGE FOR WOMEN.

IN my last article I proved, at least to my own satisfaction, that the King's College scheme in Home Science did not provide an education in science, nor, on the other hand, did it provide training in the Domestic Arts of a standard equal even to that provided in the Schools of Domestic Arts.

It was therefore apparently with a view to anticipate such criticism as this last that the authorities stated in the London University Calendar, for the information of those intending to teach Home Science, "The student who has taken the Three Years' Course will offer *rather less general science than the science graduate*, but will have more specialised knowledge in Hygiene and Economics, and will undertake the practical teaching of simple Cooking, Laundry Work and Housework to school-girls. *The student will not, as a rule, offer lessons in Advanced Cookery, nor will possess necessarily any high degree of manipulative skill in the Domestic Arts.*" (The italics are mine.)

In view of these statements, it is clear that nothing but the glamour thrown over the scheme by the prospect of a University degree, without the adequate study, blinds the young student until she shirks examining the import of such a statement. Proof of this is given by the fact that when I left the College a month ago there was not one student taking the Intermediate course for a pure science degree, yet I have no hesitation in saying that had many of the students understood the situation, they would have chosen either a training in pure science or a thorough course in Domestic Arts in a Domestic Arts School.

But for this glamour regarding a degree, a serious student of any of the branches of study touched upon in this course would have despised the scheme and sought a serious education in the subject of interest to her, and she would have sought it in courses in which Hygiene, Medicine, Biology, Economics, Chemistry, Cookery, and the rest are not subordinated pell-mell to Housecraft, but are studied for their own intrinsic worth.

There is but one consideration that retains the student at King's College after she has detected the sham, and this consideration the authorities do not scruple to use quite frankly; in the words of the circular, "There appears to be a large and widening field of employment for women trained on these lines." So there does, and more's the pity.

One might have hoped that a University Council would have shown the less highly placed educational authorities a better leading. As it is, by its commercial appeal to head mistresses for the favourable consideration for posts, the University has merited a snub, which we hope the head mistresses of serious schools will not fail to administer. It can be done by insisting that if they appoint either Science mistresses or Crafts mistresses, both shall be up to their jobs, and in this hotch-potch, situation-leering degree course of the London University they fail to produce either. Superficially trained young women will then find themselves unable to secure posts, and the scheme will die of its own shallowness. Up to the present time the number of students turned out as qualified teachers after taking this three years' course has been so small as to be almost negligible. Otherwise, both Science teachers and teachers of Domestic Arts would have been heard protesting against the filching of their jobs by unqualified persons.

There is, we only too well recognise, at the present time an urgent need for an extended know-

ledge of the laws of health and for improvement in the conditions of houses and housekeeping. So we are not surprised to find in the *British Medical Journal* for this month an article headed "Home Science," commenting upon the deplorable waste of infant life, owing to the ignorance of mothers, not all, by any means, belonging to the poorer classes. All will be in entire agreement with the writer to the extent of deploring such a state of affairs. As to the remainder of the article, however, a little thought will be sufficient for anyone who possesses a knowledge of science and of the King's College scheme to mete out to it very short shriving. The article states that, conspicuous among the signs of the awakening of the national conscience is the recent movement for the education in Home Science as carried out at King's College for Women.

This is the flamboyant enthusiasm of a person who talks of something he knows nothing about. The writer evidently has been deluded by the fact that the promoters of the scheme point out that "our object is to foster a sounder knowledge of the laws which govern health, sanitation, and household economy. The moral and physical welfare of our country depends primarily on the training and healthy upbringing of its children. This is the special work which Nature and custom has assigned to women, and it is in directing attention to the type of education provided for girls that the true remedy lies. By ensuring that in future every girl's education shall include some knowledge of the science which affects her home problems, and some practice of the domestic arts, the whole standard of home life would be raised, and trained experience substituted for instinct and tradition, which have hitherto been the chief guides for mothers."

We presume that the writer of the eulogistic article in the *Medical Journal* is a trained medical man. When did he begin training for his life's work? About the age of eighteen, we suppose. Did he spend his youth in such work? How would his future career have suffered had he been compelled to spend his childhood learning to wash, scrub, cook, clean, and mind babies? So to specialise in the education of girls in their school-time is to deprive them of the broad educational advantages secured to boys. We shall have a law to make it compulsory for girls to become domestic servants, if we do not nip this kind of scheme in the bud. Until men who have had the good fortune to be well educated stop this malevolent tilting at what meagre advantages the children of the poor have secured, we shall never find the basis for a working agreement as to general education.

Most people will agree that women do need more knowledge in Biology and sex matters (Hygiene and Sanitation, you may less pretentiously call it), if they are to avoid the pitfalls of marriage and motherhood, but we are not prepared to agree with the first ill-digested scheme that may come along, pretending to provide such. Under present conditions, schools where such instruction is given, together with training in cookery, laundry work, cleaning, care of infants, and so on, may be a national need, but these must not oust out the normal schools. We have, indeed, "Welcomes" for poor mothers, and schools for mothers extended to all grades of society which, with encouragement, will supply the need.

The sentimentality of the writer in the *Journal* completely getting the upper hand of his reason, he concludes with "Every member of the medical profession and every patriotic citizen will heartily wish success to a scheme which strikes at the roots of

the national decay, such deplorable evidence of which confronts us throughout the land."

It is regrettable that a scientific organ of the standing of the *British Medical Journal* should give space to such sentimental babble and countenance such a travesty of science. To allow matter of this kind to appear in its columns is to cause grave misunderstanding and to delude the public not only as to what ranks as education of a University standard, but buoys it up with false hopes as to the solution of a national difficulty. It is impossible to take the article seriously. One can only believe that it is a little more of the valueless approval and applause which men give to schemes for women before they have taken the trouble to give the matter thought.

How did the scheme arise? To begin with, there was the need I have already mentioned, and an earnest desire to get a short cut out of the difficulty. The inefficiencies of the house and home were to be turned into efficiency. But how? No one knew. So they decided upon a University scheme. There were among the promoters of the scheme a few men and women conspicuous for powers of initiative. These recognised that, whatever the scheme, it would require financial backing if it was to have power. For what kind of scheme would financial backing be obtained? Certainly not for a progressive scheme. Only for a re-entrenchment of the ancient order of things would money be readily forthcoming. Hence the first thoughts were given, not to the intrinsic merits of the scheme, but to considerations for loosening the purse-strings of financiers. So business zeal outstripped all else, and whatever progressive ideas were in the minds of the few were rapidly swamped.

The actual course became nothing more nor less than that required to turn out the "womanly woman and perfect housewife"; but by masquerading as pure science it lured into its toils women who otherwise would have shunned it, and, by seductive offers of post-graduate posts, attracted students who were sincere scientists.

I give it here and now, as personal testimony, that even the members of the staff at King's College for Women are in no way sure of the rightness of the scheme which they have undertaken to carry out. Even with their pupils, they are often unable to sustain arguments, and when the argument has broken down they continue to make the appeal to bear with the scheme, because *it is a new one*. Each lecturer declares that the present scheme is not ideal, but so vague is the ideal itself in their minds, and so wild and little thought out the experiment, that the post-graduate student is requested at the end of the course to hand in a criticism of the scheme and a statement of her views as to how it can be improved.

This, surely, is not the way to start a University scheme. Should not authorities have at least some cogent scheme *in their minds* before applying for a degree for that scheme? One can understand people groping their way into a subject, but one cannot understand such gropers asking for a degree for such vague processes. Women are to get knowledge of a quality inferior to any supplied in crafts or applied sciences, and then for the sum total of over-numerous, inadequately apprehended smatterings they are to receive a degree!!

Cannot the authorities see that an ordinary college course simply will not supply the time to do all these subjects even decently well? Can they not grasp the fact that the home is a little cosmos in itself, each one of its sections lending itself, on the one hand, to much searching study, and, on the other, to great manipulative skill? In attempting

to run a course in "Home Science," they are attempting something as wild as those who should offer a degree in the science and art of living.

In considering the future treatment of Housecraft, it must be realised that at certain periods of history, as the need arrived for improvement through specialisation, Housecrafts, one by one, left the house. The time has now arrived for further specialisation, and to imagine that things can be directed back to the old position merely by granting women a "B.Sc." degree in "Drudgery," is as absurd as to imagine that mankind can be induced to return to a primitive stage of civilisation by the reward of a University degree in "Devolution."

The inefficiency in Housecraft is due to the complexity of it; yet the promoters of the Home Science scheme saw fit to increase this complexity by adding a study of Economics, Biology, Chemistry, Bacteriology, and Psychology, and what not. To old dabbling they added new dabbling, and have yet to realise that, so long as women dabble in the many trades and professions found in a house, and refuse to loose their grasp on them, so long will these remain undeveloped so far as the house is concerned.

When the various sections of Housecraft are brought out of the home, then, and then only, will they be recognised as skilled trades requiring the same thorough training such as skilled work requires. Considerable advance has already been made in these crafts, yet the house has not received the full benefit, for the incompetent housewife separates her little piece of the craft from the specialised trade. Cookery, laundry work, and cleansing processes have advanced considerably outside the house, but surely such crafts are the same whether found in the house or outside it. The cleaning of paint, for instance, requires the same processes, whether that paint is found on the walls of a house or on those of a tube station. The care of woodwork is the same, whether in a house or in a hospital ward. With regard to the application of science to household matters, all must acknowledge that wherever science is applied in the household such application has been brought about by agencies from outside the house and not from within. The great advances in the application of gas and electricity to cookery, heating, and cleaning have come into the house from scientists through commercial enterprises, and *not from the skill of the housewife*. Even now, Edison is preparing concrete furniture and planning an electric dish-washer. The "domestic" brain might well swoon at the thought of such a revolutionary household appliance as this last.

Future generations may see such detailed developments of household concerns that science degrees may be possible in the applied sciences of cookery and laundry work, perhaps even of cleaning processes; but these, so far as my imagination can conceive, will be worked out as branches of applied Chemistry and Physics, in exactly the same way as, for example, Chemistry applied to colours and dyeing and to leather manufacture, have been carried out in subjects for the science degree of one of the Northern Universities.

Should such changes take place, however (and they will), in regard to house development, it will not be possible to conceive of a degree in "Domestic Science." Such application of pure science will be no more "domestic" than the science of brewing is to-day. Brewing, at one period, was domestic. At that period it was amateurish. History (King's College calls it Economics) has shown that so long as occupations remain in the house, so long do they remain amateurish. Before domestic anything becomes science, it must lose its domesticity

—it must leave the home. For the present women must realise that knowledge of pure science, and the power to apply it, are chiefly in the hands of men, and to men they must appeal for application of science to the household, unless they themselves are prepared to become serious scientists. If women in the future are to have a place in household development work they must go through the science mill in the Universities and in the workshops, and not rely upon a butterfly course in Home Science and Economics *for women*.

The King's College scheme can never succeed except financially, and then only through the exercising of an intellectual bluff and dishonesty which has always been considered beneath the academic, not to mention the intellectual, mind. Efforts have ever been made in the Universities to preserve the respect for scholarship, to the honour of academicians be it said; and it is an insult to women and a degradation of University standards that in offering their first specific University scheme for women to women they should depart so far from the age-long traditions of the Universities.

Why should they insult women by this scurrilous slur upon their intellects, by this presumption that women will wink at, even hail, this differentiation in the quality of work accepted to qualify women as compared with that demanded for men?

I, at any rate, as a very humble but very sincere science student indignantly repudiate both the insult and presumption, and regret that for one term, by holding the Gilchrist Scholarship, I should seem to have acquiesced in this humiliation. I herewith express my thanks for this opportunity to make public my position, and to state that I abandoned the Gilchrist Scholarship on account of my unspeakable detestation of the principle that women should receive—for dabbling—honours which men receive only for honest workmanship. At present the King's College scheme in Home Science and Economics is a piece of the purest charlatantry.

RONA ROBINSON, M.Sc.

"What Diantha Did."*

"WHAT Diantha Did" is a book which women will find worth reading, in spite of its irritating sentimentality. Mrs. Perkins Gilman, like many other reformers who fear the adjective "revolutionary," has chosen to make her appeal, not to the enterprising people who might possibly be roused to take action, but to those prejudiced opponents whose enmity is based on their habits of mind. She asks us to solve the servant problem by clearing our houses of cooks and kitchens, hiring maids by the hour, and having our meals delivered, ready cooked, in silver-plated aluminium food containers; but she gives us a heroine who, in the intervals of effecting these reforms, conceives "an overwhelming instinct of service—personal service," for her husband, and regards with "positive jealousy" the hireling whom she sees waiting on the adored young man. Diantha, in fact, besides her excellent head for business, has a real, womanly, pulsing, American heart, and though she does not seem to think the Deity can do much in the way of pushing a cooked-food delivery concern, she throws herself heavily on His mercy in moments of emotional crisis. Nor was she ungrateful, for the book ends thus: "Then she gave way to an overmastering burst of feeling, and knelt down by the wide bed, burying her face there, the letter still

* By Charlotte Perkins Gilman. 4s. 6d. net. (Fisher Unwin.)

held fast. It was an odd prayer, if any human ear had heard it. 'Thank you!' was all she said, with long, deep, sobbing sighs between. 'Thank you! —Oh—thank you!'

However, we do not see very much of these estimable deeper feelings; they serve merely to lift Diantha's business enterprises to that higher plane where the American mind feels most at home.

The real heroine of Mrs. Gilman's book is the modern household. She asks us to think of a million or so of our homes. Each of these contains people who consume food and create disorder and dirt, and under the present system each employs a separate person or group of persons to cook their food, remove their food, and tidy their disorder. Each group struggles along as best it can, and makes its own mistakes, an incompetent mistress or servant brings misery on her household, and the greatest genius for domestic work can benefit only her immediate dependents. There is no guarantee of competency, no certainty that the women engaged in this industry are suited for it, no recognised standard of proficiency. The whole thing is a muddle. What is bought is bought in small quantities, expensively, often unintelligently, and much of it is wasted. Moreover, the conditions of work are bad. The mistress of the house, placating her husband on one hand and directing dependent servants on the other, busied with innumerable small duties which are important only when neglected, tends to develop a narrow mind, a mean outlook, and the defects of temper natural to those whose work is performed not under the criticism of equals, but among their inferiors and for the benefit of a more powerful being. The evils of the servants' position need hardly be enumerated here. This state of things the author proposes to reform by abolishing. She wishes to relieve educated women both of the task of training and superintending servants, and of the serious moral responsibility which is incurred by having young and inexperienced women living in the house. Servants, like the charwoman and the man who cleans the windows, will come in, do their business, and vanish. The work will be more quickly done because several of them can do in an hour what one takes a day to accomplish; it will be better done because each servant will be a specialist carefully trained. Cooking and marketing are arts too complex for the average brain and the ordinary kitchen. One first-rate cook can control a dozen subordinates and prepare the meals for twice as many families. The families, meanwhile, enjoy the privacy of their homes. Mrs. Gilman does not mean to involve her mistresses in any of the difficulties of co-operative housekeeping. There is, she says, no reason why "the inefficiency of a dozen tottering households should be removed by combining them." The mistress is to be in the position of a simple customer, giving orders for so much service and so many meals, and she will be supplied as she is now supplied with her band and her supper when she gives a dance. We admit at once that for the mistress the solution seems complete.

There may be women who prefer the company of servants, who like to direct the lives of other people, and who never go without a thing they want because they are ashamed to bring a maid upstairs to get it, and afraid of hurting the maid's feelings by getting it themselves. There may be women who endure bad dinners for the pleasure of bullying the cook, and enjoy good ones for the pleasure of outshining their neighbours. We hope and believe that they are the result of their environment, and that their numbers would soon decrease.

The difficulties of the scheme come in, not here,

nor in the matter of supplying meals, but when we begin to think of organising the servants. Mrs. Gilman is very anxious to show that there is money in it, that as great careers may be carved out by supplying maids as by supplying soap. That is, we think, the principal danger. Many servants in private houses are disgracefully treated now, but we doubt whether the majority endure conditions half as unhealthy as those of a waitress, a servant in a great hotel, or a girl in a shop. Flocks of ignorant women have before now been organised to their own undoing; and an extension of Mr. Whiteley's admirable activities would be a high price to pay for the extinction of the kitchen fire. The small voluntary servants' societies Mrs. Gilman seems to suggest do not sound convincing when one tries to imagine one of them set down in a modern city. To succeed, it would have to be either a great exploitation of labour or a great trade union. And it is the first, not the second, which an able man could form out of servants as we have them now. Perhaps the Insurance Act will pave the way with its servants' societies. Here, at any rate, is a fresh field for enthusiasm. A. F.

Luang Sawat, B.A.

II.

IN a large room in a Siamese house in Bangkok, a house of palatial size, and of unkempt rooms all open to the air on at least one side, Mom Sabai, the owner of the house, and the mother of Sawat, sat on a rickety chair, chewing betel. She sat on a chair because it was easy from that height to superintend the embroidery class, as she could see if anyone looked up or dawdled. The workers were all seated on the floor before a long low frame, on which were stretched yards of white satin.

Mom Sabai would have been more comfortable on the floor, too. She longed for sunset, when the work would stop, as lamp-light was expensive. Meantime, she rested one leg at a time by lifting it on the chair and holding the knee up to her chin. Occasionally she put them both up, and so got a really good rest, clasping them together with skinny fingers heavily bejewelled. A shrivelled brown woman, with an inscrutable, wary expression, she looked, in spite of her elegant silk *panung* and *pahom*, rings on her fingers, and bangles at wrists and ankles, like an able anthropoid ape. Her hair, hardly grizzled, and still thick, stood up in a bristle all round her head; and her lower lip, full of tobacco, bulged far out beyond her small nose. Every now and then, as she talked, she paused to eject a mouthful of red saliva, betel-nut, and tobacco. For this purpose, a kneeling slave-woman held out to her a small gold spittoon.

The embroiderers were women and girls, all, if not actually slaves, subservient and obedient to Mom Sabai. From a drawing fixed near her, each worker copied some detail of a large Japanese picture hanging on a screen. They stitched in dead silence, hardly breathing or lifting their eyes. All were dressed in *panung* and *pahom*, the brown neck and arms bare. All but one wore the hair cut short and bristling erect.

The room was dingy, hardly furnished at all, except in the far corner, where two or three mattresses were prepared as beds, with mosquito-netting bundled up over them during the daytime. Direct light entered the room only from one side, and even that side was shaded by a deep verandah. The verandah itself was darkened by heavy clumps of rustling bamboo growing in the compound below. Through the bamboos a glimpse of flowing

river, of boats and houses, was possible here and there.

As they bent over the low frame in the dark room, all the workers strained their eyes. One of these, though not old, had an actively careworn expression, very different from the dumb animal-like patience on the other faces. The curves of her mouth were beautiful still, though the habit of betel-chewing showed in the black glistening teeth. This was Ying, Sawat's wife. She wore her hair differently from the others. Instead of being cut in a dense upstanding bristle, it was long, and wound in a large coil on the top of her head, Lao fashion. She wore the Siamese *panung*, and an accordion-pleated apple-green silk *pahom* covered a beautifully curving bosom. The brown skin of her neck and arms was delicate in colour, and fine as satin; and the hands that plied the needle in and out were exquisite in shape. She sat on one haunch, her legs tucked away on the opposite side. She smiled happily as she threaded her needle, musing. "Will Sawat come to-morrow; to-day?"

Mom Sabai, her mother-in-law, noting the happy smile, pounced viciously. "Wasting time again, Ying. How do you suppose the embroidery's to get finished?"

Ying dropped her needle, and, placing the palms of her hands together, she raised them high above her bent head. "Kaw todt" ("I beg forgiveness"). And she looked for her needle. "I cannot find it," she murmured, and she searched in vain, the worker on her right having hid it while Ying was saluting.

"Work, I say, Ying," Mom Sabai insisted.

"I've lost my needle, Mom."

"Mè!" And Mom Sabai got up and waddled across the floor. She potted about, finding fault, betel-chewing, urging them all to greater diligence.

The heat was stifling. Voices were heard outside, and a chattering girl stalked in from the verandah. She was followed by several slave-women bearing sailor-like bundles, the contents bulging and falling out. Behind her came a younger girl, slim and sweet-faced. These were the two "childrens" of Luang Sawat, B.A. Both were dressed in stiff *panungs*, and beribboned Europeanised jackets with tight sleeves. They wore high-heeled shoes and openwork stockings. The elder, seeing her grandmother, dropped on her knees and saluted, with both hands high. The younger looked round the room eagerly for their mother, Ying. The grandmother turned on her angrily. "Gom hua, gom hua" ("bend your head"). And the child dropped suddenly, walking on all fours, and creeping in with downcast head beside Ying. Ying smiled furtively. Mom Sabai then turned pleasantly to the older girl. She never forgot that Raut (the elder) was her son's daughter, while Dockmye (the younger) she looked on persistently as the child of the despised and upstart Ying, without reference to the father. She had always influenced and petted Raut, with a curious ignoring of the mother's own right in the child; and Ying had long ceased to fret about it, spending her love and care chiefly on her younger child. Raut herself acquiesced contentedly in the arrangement.

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"Where's your new hat, Raut?"

"Mè! I forgot. Where is it, Jeean?"

The woman crouching near the bundles ejected a mouthful of betel into a hole in the verandah floor. She then shook out of one of the bundles a remarkable feathery and flowery hat. Of commonest millinery, coarsely beribboned and belaced, it was such a hat as a Walworth Road shop-girl might think she had bargained well for at 5s. 11½d.

"Kru (teacher) does not like the hat," said Raut. "She said I must not wear it at school."

"Not wear it! A hat that cost sixty *ticals* (nearly four pounds) at the English shop!"

Raut diverted her grandmother's attention. "The Kekh (Indian) is in his boat at the landing. He wants to see Mom about the contract for making Chinese trousers."

"Now?"

"Now. He's waiting."

The old lady went off, followed by half a dozen women.

When the cat's away, etc. They all stopped work suddenly, and began to chatter.

"Watch, Jeean, and tell us if you see her coming back."

Ying turned to her little girl. "Are you tired, Dockmye?"

"Tired. . . . Mother, I'm top in Standard III. And Kru says I may get the scholarship next year."

"Scholarship? What's that?"

"It's money—for saying lessons well. Thirty *ticals*, mother; what shall we do with it?" They talked on, unheard in the Babel of voices.

A wretched hag, half naked and dirty, crept in on her knees from the verandah. She carried a large wicker tray piled high with luscious mangoes. She crawled to Ying's feet, and, laying the tray on the ground, saluted profoundly.

"What is this, Mom Jeean?"

"A present for Mom Sabai."

"You must give it to herself," said Ying, hastily. "Wait outside on the verandah until she comes back."

The old woman saluted again, but lingered.

"Has he come yet?" she whispered eagerly, hitching up a ragged cloth that partially covered her breast.

"Not yet."

"When will he come?"

"Bradēō, bradēō." ("Very soon.")

"You have said that for months and months. I am so weary waiting for justice. He has been in Europe eight years."

"I know it," said Ying, smiling and hopeful. "He will be here soon"

She offered her betel-box to the old woman, speaking low. "How is your daughter now?"

"Ill, very ill. She never comes out of prison now."

"Why?"

"Her ankles are so swollen, they can't get the chains on."

"Why don't you ask the governor to let her out sometimes without chains? She wouldn't run away?"

"Run away! She can hardly crawl, or eat, or speak. And she has not touched betel for a whole week."

"It's horrible," said Ying. "Take some more betel. Sawat will soon come, and he will put all right."

The old woman filled her mouth with the national consolation for all woes, and crawled out to the verandah with her tray of fruit.

She would wait for Mom Sabai, and try to propitiate her.

"Mother, when *will* my father come?" asked Dockmye in her turn.

"Bradēō, bradēō," assured Ying.

"Will he live here with us?"

"Not here," smiling, and in a whisper, with an eye on the squatting girls, gossiping loudly as they chewed and expectorated. "He will take us away alone with him, as *farangs* do."

The child's face fell. "Will father be like a *farang*?"

"Like a *farang*. The *Rajatut* (ambassador) in London wrote about him to the noble grandmother, and said he was quite *farang*; had forgotten Siamese, and went to the English church."

"Mother, will he take Mom Jeean's daughter out of prison?"

"Certainly." (A pause.)

"Mother, if father is quite *farang*, will he be like the *Nai farang Wentah*?" ("the spectacled European"). This was the only European man that Dockmye knew. He came sometimes to talk business with Mom Sabai. The old lady was a capital trader, and she had no scruples in aiding the fulfilment of base desires. So to her the old European went, if in want of a new chattel, male or female, alive or inanimate. Dockmye was horribly afraid of him; he was so fierce and fat and red and loud-voiced.

Ying smiled at the idea of comparison between her husband—good, kind, and young—with the brutal old European.

"Mother, is *Nai Wentah* a *farang*?"

"Of course."

"But *he* has more than one wife. He has! There's *Beea*, and *Loon*, and *Maun*, and *Jeean*, and . . . oh, I know there are some more. And, mother, I heard the noble grandmother promising him a new wife for fifteen pounds. I don't know who it was; but she isn't old enough yet, they said."

"Hush, child," whispered Ying, all her brightness clouding. "You must never repeat what you hear."

"Only to you, mother. I'm very cautious. . . . What's the matter, mother, darling?"

"What else did they say about the *Nai's* new wife?"

"I did not hear any more. The noble grandmother told me to run away. Why do you look so sad?"

A vague fear of months was taking shape in Ying's mind. Would her mother-in-law's ultimate cruelty be the selling of her darling to the old European? Dockmye clasped her mother's hand and raised it to her face, smelling it like a flower. Ying brightened. "Father will put all right when he comes," she repeated.

Suddenly, warning was given that Mom Sabai was coming back. All the women crouched lower on the ground, and shuffled back to the silent stitching.

The old lady was now quite in a good temper, having out-bargained even a Cingalese. She swaggered down the room and squatted among the women. She turned patronisingly to Dockmye.

"How do you like school? Did you pass your examination well?"

"Yes, well," Dockmye said, proudly, but not omitting the deferential salute.

"Where are you?"

"Top of Standard III."

"And where are you?" to Raut, the elder daughter. Raut hesitated, pouting, disliking to tell the truth. The grandmother insisted.

When it was explained to her that Raut had not been able to pass at all, she was furious. *Her* pet below Dockmye! "I don't think that school's any good," she burst out. "They don't know anything.

They don't know how to teach. When I asked the head *Kru* how long it would take to teach you all she knew, she laughed. Laughed! Showing her white dogs' teeth; and she said, 'One year!' *One year!* She must be a lazy woman to want all that time."

The slave girls stitched on silently, while Mom helped herself to a fresh quid of betel and strutted about the room. The rolled-up part of her *panung*, tucked into the belt behind, being too stiffly starched to keep firm in its place, got loose, and, falling down, trailed on the ground between her feet as she walked.

"What are you smiling about, Jeean? And you, Looa? And you, Dockmye?" But no one dared to tell her that her *panung* was trailing.

"There's to be no laughing here, Dockmye," she continued; "this is a real working school, not a place of amusement, like *Arunapah*." Then she added, with vicious decision: "I will send Dockmye to the school at *Kong Beng* next month."

Dockmye started, flushing in indignant protest. But she dared say nothing, so thoroughly had the lesson of silent submission been learnt. Ying forgot hers for a moment.

"*Arunapah's* a better school than *Kong Beng*," she said. "I don't want Dockmye to go to the school at *Kong Beng*. They will teach her to despise Siamese religion."

Mom Sabai glared, resenting all protest against her will.

"She *shall* go to *Kong Beng*. It's only five ticals a month there; and that's enough to pay for Dockmye. And she may learn good manners at *Kong Beng*."

"Is Raut to go too?"

"No. Raut is worth the expense of the *Arunapah* school."

"It isn't fair," burst out Ying, forgetting the price she would pay for relieving her mind. "I will tell Sawat when he comes; he will not allow it. Dockmye's his child, too; and he cared for her as much as for Raut."

There was an awed hush among the slaves. Ying must be mad to speak so plainly to Mom. The old lady's face was livid with anger as she said, slowly and distinctly, in her harshest tones: "You will not see *my son* unless I allow it. If you argue with me and contradict me, I will send you up the river to *Pakret* for a year; and *Sawat* shall not know where you are. He can get other wives."

"He will find me out," thought Ying, forcing back her tears of dumb misery. "He is *farang* now; and *farangs* are always just, and have only one wife."

B. A. S.

(To be continued.)

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