THE NEW PROSTITUTION.

The progress of a State can be tested by the variety, the novelty, and the viritity of its ideals. The decay of a community may be seen in the nature, the prevalence, and the founess of its vices. Nobility of spirit and fineness of conduct are unpopular qualities in present-day civilised society, because those who possess them are unwittingly always shaming their lesser fellows. There is no more awful spectacle to men who have sold their honour than the man who has remained unsullied. The virgin and the prostitute, be they male or female, represent two different orders in the world. The woman who sells her body, whether it be for a wealthy marriage, or for a sovereign to it be for a wealthy marriage, or for a sovereign to, or female, represent two different orders in the world. The woman who sells her body, whether it be for a wealthy marriage, or for a sovereign to, or female, represent two different orders in the world. The woman who sells her body, whether it be for a wealthy marriage, or for a sovereign to, or female, represent two different orders in the world. The woman who sells her body, whether it be for a wealthy marriage, or for a sovereign to.
The modern journalist has been in this article compared to the prostitute. The prostitute is, in reality, on a higher plane. The prostitute runs the risk of those bodily diseases which accompany her occupation, but her clients are more likely to succumb to their effects. The journalist takes no such risk. He sells his lies and pockets his pay. He may incite the rich against the poor; but the syphilis of his mind is corrupting others, while he is comparatively free from its influence. His own falsehoods are known to his conscience. He may cover his own guilt with the eyes of the world; but his anonymity is his protection from the tar and feathers.

The prostitute trades in her body. The journalist bargains for the price of his soul. Would a journalist foul a man who is working for the people? There are thousands who would do it for a couple of guineas. There are but a dozen who would refuse the dirty work. During the coal strike one has seen the clique of the mine-owners and capitalists at work. The miners have been described as "thugs," as "blackmailers," as "work-shies," as "cheats who desire to get a full day's pay without doing a proper day's work." The men who wrote these things knew them to be false. The men who ordered them to be written knew they were organising a lying campaign. The drunkards in the Press Club waxed very wrath in their cups at the "selfish strike." Their efforts have not availed them; they have only placed themselves in peril.

A vast body of the public is untouched by the syphilis of the Press. A society must be very healthy which can afford to neglect the journalist. Many persons are not yet enlightened to the extent of the foolishness of modern journalism.

Libertinism and libricity of the Press have replaced the liberty of the Press. Yet this decade will mark the collapse of this evil power. The miners struck a fatal blow at the new prostitution in their manifestations on the Press. The lages of the Press were surprised in their assassin work. The miners are winning many things besides a minimum wage. That is why England is watching the struggle with a quiet confidence. The Minimum Wage Act is as severe a reverse for the capitalist and shareholding class as the Reform Bill was for the landed classes. It is expected that the capitalist and newspaper owners had better take heed. They will receive short shrift from the new influences in the social organism. Their employers may soon discard them as useless. The middle classes are ceasing to trust newspapers which cannot warn them of gigantic social upheavals. The Press will be neglected, and the journalist will be on the streets, where he cannot compete with his feminine rival. Those who hold firmly to their faith in the destiny of their country are strengthened in their confidence by the rapid decline of the influence of the Press. A society must be very healthy which will so soon spew out this poison. Many things are crashing to the ground in these times of turmoil; and it does not require a very keen ear to detect the rumblings of the foundations of Carmelite House, Fleet Street, and Bouvier Street. A general strike, in which the daily papers could not be published, would bring the whole edifice toppling round the ears of the Harmsworth-Levi-Cadbury-Pearson gang. That is a comforting reflection, because the day of such a strike is approaching rapidly. When it is come, and gone, there will be a good many unemployed journalists, and a purified England, as a result. Let the scribes beware!

C. H. NORMAN.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

Women and Labour.

The action of the Parliamentary Labour party during the strike should reopen the discussion regarding the relation of the member of Parliament to his constituents, and the appointment of an independent commission to inquire into the Causes of Failure in the Representation of the Workers. This would make an invaluable preliminary to such a discussion. The question has never been thrashed out, though wiseacres have given their judgments in advance. Is the member of Parliament a Representative or is he a Delegate? That is a problem for democracy here and now. It is not a theoretic argument to be argued with an eye on the year 2500, but a practical question germane to this period of change, 1912 to 1950, let us say. It is commonly argued that to lower the status of a member of Parliament from that of a representative to that of a delegate would be to destroy the prestige and authority which appertain to the representative himself. It is argued that the absence of concentration with the preservation of the representative system. We are concerned to find a solution of the intrinsic difficulties of democracy itself—difficulties which cluster round the central difficulty of finding the means whereby the general will of the nation shall find expression. To this end the representative system has been evolved as the means, and it has deplorably failed; and in proportion as greater numbers have been added to the electorate, the greater has been the failure, and the more careless to hide it have those in charge of the machine become. Mr. Asquith, Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Churchill, and Mr. Redmond dare do as much openly to flout the will of the people to-day as in the seventeenth century cost a Strafford and Charles the First their heads, and James the Second his throne. The fiction of popular consent under which the so-called representative system masquerades in itself gives the excuse for and ultimate protection to this impudent bearing towards the public. Carrots for the donkey at election times are sufficient to induce the stupid animal to cast votes (precious instrument!) to justify further predatory incursions upon its rights. An English General Election is an elaborated piece of State rogery; a candidate at an election must be intellectually a charlatan; the psychology of his election address is a replica of that of the slim-fingered gentleman who indicates the beauty of the view while detaching one's watch. The entire business is farcical and fraudulent. We are not here saying that a representative system is an unrealisable dream. What we say is that at present it is a Utopian dream. It may be realisable when either or both of the two conditions are realised; (1) when we have an educated and leisureed populace; (2) when we can produce a thousand public-spirited men of wide conceptions, rising head and shoulders above their fellows, as Plato rose above his; who would be prepared to spend their energies not in the development of their own thought in the quietness of a study, but in the fretful service of persons of inferior capacity (consideration of no mean importance, be it noted). At the present time neither of these conditions is realised. We are far enough from the first, while our remoteness from the second is great.
enough to place its realisation in the realm of the fantastic. What we are attempting to do, however, at the present time is to endow a body of men who, on the whole, are of rather less than average intelligence with the powers to act as if possessed of the attributes of these ideal social guardians. A Mr. Stephen Walsh, for instance (we take him as a type, and not because he is better or worse than his fellows), whose business it is to represent the miners—to get his teeth into their demands and hold on to them till his teeth are dragged out, if need be—an honest, simple man, at a time of acute crisis for his clients, forgets them and the reason for his political existence to break out into pitiful inanities on the duties of citizenship. Something, undoubtedly, had addled this man's brains. It is not inherent naughtiness. We believe too much was laid upon him. He imagined he was expected to act as a statesman (forsooth!). The current belief that he was a representative rather than a delegate served to befog his simple intelligence. It did not occur to him that, had his constituents required a theoriser on social polity, they would have selected someone better fitted for the task. The sure, if clamorous truth is that he took the election as if he thought that he chose this working-man "representative" rather than the smart lawyer who was his rival at the last election. They vaguely expected he would act as a delegate; but because he, as others, was not so informed in plain terms he falls a victim to the dominator jargon of the "representative" theory, and betrays his constituents in the interests of the nation, as he thinks!

It is mainly on the consideration of the lowering of a "representative" status to that of mere delegacy—which is behind much of the opposition to the Referendum. To our mind, this is a further advantage of the new system of the Referendum, for it is the advantage of thrusting a "status" upon a body of men above that which their natural strength is able to maintain? Not an advantage, surely, but a national peril. Members of Parliament are like so many dry-rotted beams painted to look like iron. They fail the public in every reckoning. They will have the country in their hands much further than they ought to. And it is not their fault, poor souls. The community is to blame. It expects to make silk purses out of sows' ears. It hopefully looks for the quart from the pint measure. It expects individuals, with hardly the brains and character to make a respectably effective delegate, to act as representative men—as statesmen. For half a century and more, this artificial inflation of value of Parliament, its members, and its actions, has been going on. It is a mild thing to say that it has resulted in an utter and national disappointment; and it is no exaggeration to say that it will continue to go on only at the risk of a moral disaster. If the nation is relying on these little thin statesmen to deal with its most serious problems, it is going to neglect to deal with them itself. Let us take this strike as an instance. Had not the nation been relying on Parliament "doing something," it could have done something itself. In place of the impudently meaningless Minimum Wage Bill, which has taken up Parliamentary time for so long, an Act to inaugurate some form of Referendum, with full powers of initiation secured to the people, might, with insalubrious results for good, have been put through. Had this been done, we should now be within sight of the State-appropriation of the mines, the railways, and steamships. The mass of the people are above "leaders" (those who are the beneficiaries of blight!), because they have no axe to grind. At present the "leaders" are holding the pass against the people. The problem for the people just now is how to get round, to elude, or force these same "leaders," whose interests are now all against them. Now that every politician—Labour men and all—steps into a good berth upon entering Parliament, the Parliamentary system becomes their vested interest. To preserve the system, to magnify its importance, to minimise the importance and efficacy of other systems, is all of a piece with the Preservation of the bread and butter. Of necessity, they become suspect. It is in politics' business to see that they are kept tied up at the end of a not very long string—delegates and not representatives, in short. If it be contended that no man of quality would submit to such tethering, it can be counter-contended that no man would, and that, as a matter of fact, hitherto men have not. Club debates at Westminster are not men's jobs, and men do not seek them. If, by chance, they wander in accidentally, or for the sake of experience, they get out, or rapidly lose caste. The powers of delegacy are as much as the usual member of Parliament can safely be entrusted to wsewl, and they are certainly as much as they have the capacity to wsewl.

Now let us see what has happened in relation to the Conciliation Bill. Members of Westminster, being, by nature, incapable of statesmanship, are totally without bearings on the subject of women's enfranchisement. The men, their masters, having no very strong views on the subject, the delegates being given to understand they can go as they please in the matter, as they do. Hence they have been peremptorily told to get their women members into the Referendum, reconversion, and so on, on the subject. By means of cajolery and flattery and "pressure," women have at one time secured a bigger majority in favour of their Bill than obtained in relation to any other Parliamentary measure. As whim and fancy took them, the women lent their support. What is it to them? Everything pointed to a whimsical victory for the women. But for the W.S.P.U. it would have been a victory. That society, however, had its organisation to save. Hence—to the bottom of the deep blue sea with victory. So round we start again! If the W.S.P.U. get their way, we shan't have votes for women the year after next. Much further will this interest to get it. With their policy, with its extra­aneous thrills; their society—a jolly social club; and their organisation, which is simplicity itself, they can get along for another decade very comfortably. It is people with work to do who feel the pinch. The real cause for regret at the failure of the Conciliation Bill is to be found in this: that the granting of the small measure of suffrage would have done much to remove the childish obsession of grown women as to the value and potentialities of the vote. In the more clamant of the suffrage ranks, thought is at a complete standstill. Shoddy sentimentalism, phrase-mongering, repetition of the most trite, banal, outworn arguments take the place of fresh up-digging of thought-soil, which we can and ought to maintain. There has been far more heat than light abroad among Suffragists. "We want the vote, and we want it now," is more heat than light abroad among Suffragists. "We want the vote, and we want it now," is more heat than light abroad among Suffragists. "We want the vote, and we want it now," is what we used to say in stump-orator days. And that is about the position. A splendid show of spirit, and a brilliant show of temper! In the present week's "Votes for Women" (The women's emancipation), the whole of the "votes for Women" (The women's emancipation), the whole of the "votes for Women" (The women's emancipation), the whole of the "votes for Women" (The women's emancipation), the whole of the "votes for Women" (The women's emancipation), the whole of the "votes for Women" (The women's emancipation), the whole of the "votes for Women"

We begin to suspect that there has been far more heat than light abroad among Suffragists. "We want the vote, and we want it now," is what we used to say in stump-orator days. And that is about the position. A splendid show of spirit, and a brilliant show of temper! In the present week's "Votes for Women"

(The women's emancipation).

The bashes of those eminent "votes for Women"

(The women's emancipation).
who ratted in the suffrage division—rotted in fact. The young woman is congratulating herself on getting rid of the "bad fruit." But if we mistake not, all this rattled and rotting fruit was fixed up with great care by the same young lady during many years of truce. Pinned-on, was as much as most of that fruit was. It was never up to much, but at great outlay of energy it was gathered together, and by means of pressure, cajoling, wheeling, arguing, it was trimmed up and placed upon the suffrage tree. No one knew better than Miss W.S.P.U. under what pressure those pledged members had been secured, and she should have known it was dangerous even to blow her cheeks at that tree, much less shake it.

In what we have said we have had in our mind the W.S.P.U. rather than the rest of the suffrage movement. We have done so purposely, for we believe that by some means the other suffrage societies will have to be pricked into awareness to the necessity of making their influence felt, and in this way make the Conciliation Bill defeat the proverbial blessing in disguise. There is great need of this, but surely, in the woman's movement a struggle for supremacy of type, and the finer qualities, the subtler valuations of worth and of being, are being pressed to the wall. Those women who stand for these have no business to let their qualities defeat themselves. How can we make clear what we mean? We mean this: In the interests of peace, one must fight like a lion; in the interests of love, one must know how to hate that which corrodes love; in the interests of decency, one must unvel indecency; in the interests of life and love and freedom, one must be prepared to destroy that which drains the blood of life and love and freedom.

Hence, if the W.S.P.U. occupies the limelight from one point of view, the other suffrage societies must shine in it from another. The limelight is indispensable.

The situation at present amounts to this: Suffragists want the vote; the W.S.P.U. would prefer the vote should be postponed for a few years. As it is easier to frustrate than to effect, the task of the W.S.P.U. is easier and more likely to be successful. Their method is simple. They set their demands high enough to ensure their not being conceded; they bloc their all demands of other societies because they are not high enough. Obviously, there is sufficient warrant in such an attitude to prophesy that the suffrage game will be running ten years hence, as it quite probably will unless Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Edward Grey can manage to dish the W.S.P.U. by effecting the suffrage amendment. Supposing, however, the amendment fails, what are the suffrage societies to do? Play a game with the W.S.P.U.? We sincerely hope not. Let the suffrage societies harry back to their old position as pioneers in the woman movement. It is merely a matter of yesterday that they narrowed their outlook down to Parliamentary politics. Let them get back the breadth of view which enabled them to see that the "higher" education of women was the first part of the woman movement—was the woman movement in fact. Let them take the long way round and do what as yet has never been done—not make it a living movement among women. Let them begin to study the situation and realise that they cannot have the matter every way. Suffrage, as a matter affected by a middle and upper class majority, might, with consummate tact, have been put through, but "tact" rendered unthinkable, and suffrage conceived as an issue of women against men fought out in hostility, it can only be forced through by the weight of numbers, and numbers necessitate the sympathy of the "masses." Let the serious "Suffragists" tackle the second stage of women's emancipation with the indomitable energy with which they grappled with the first. Women require two fundamental things: education, money; the first is available whenever the second is. The women who made opportunities for the first can organise the labour which will make available the second. And with education and money, if there is anything worth while in women, it will find its way out. Let us do with mere statement and counter-statement as to our "equality," our "intellectual superiority," and what not, and let us get to the fundamental conditions which will enable us to do work—which is the proof, and the only proof, of our powers. Instead of being pleased with the fact that there are 200,000 women trade unionists, let us regard it as a danger and menace that we have not 5,000,000. Let us shift our objective from the mere shadow of power to its reality. Let us grasp the truth of the matter of conscious sympathy in the interests of the ill-conditioned women to be used to coerce stupid and characterless members of Parliament is mean beyond comparison with the power of prosperous, convinced, and capable working women to shape their own destiny. We have had enough of shadows and shadows of shadows. What Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Edward Grey did, the pages of THE FREEWOMAN, suggested that the women's forces joined those of Labour. Well and good, but join them where? At the base, perhaps, joining with the workers, creating and uniting with the forces of trades unionism, but could anyone ask a young movement to ally itself with so uncomplimentary a body as the Labour Parliamentarians? We think not. The women's ranks have shown themselves far too liable to the same kind of diseases as the Parliamentary Labour Party: the detestable theory of "Leader"-ism; the childish belief in Parliamentary action; the vain imagining that the masses do not count; to be led docily up the Parliamentary stairs in fact. We have lessons to learn, and the Parliamentary Labour party is to us a warning rather than an ideal. We have other lessons to learn—one—that the Parliamentary vote has not a tithe the power of concerted industrial action; that the organisation of women workers is a matter which should have preceded, or have proceeded pari passu with the demand for the vote; that while our economic condition is infinitely more parlous than that of men, we are in an infinitely worse position to bargain for its betterment; that while the concerted strike for a national minimum wage for men is not only a possibility but a probability, of the near future, the fact that only 4 per cent. (including the women trade unionists of Lancashire and Cheshire) of the 5,000,000 women workers are organised into unions shows how bitterly hard is the struggle on the part of women for a minimum wage going to be.

We have in all conscience, therefore, something better to do than to enter upon a fool's game with an irresponsible Club Party, top-heavy with self-conceit, "intoxicated with the exuberance of its own verbosity." If we were Dictator of the suffrage societies (we would, by the way, rather hang our verbosity.) If we were Dictator of the suffrage societies (we would, by the way, rather hang our verbosity.)
Two Plays by Tchekhof.

At the performance of Tchekhof’s “The Cherry Orchard” last spring I quarrelled violently with fourteen total strangers. Not until then did I sympathise with Cassandra. Here was a great work of art being unfurled in all its gloomy mystery behind the magic footlights, and only I to see it. The rest of the audience made sounds like the cracking of thorns under a pot, cursed all within reach roundly, and I went about for days after in an agony of shame, feeling like one who has helplessly watched the defilement of the altar of the high gods.

So on Sunday night I went to the Adelphi Play Society’s production of “The Seagull” at the Little Theatre, dreading some further laceration of my feelings. But I was spared. The play passed off quietly, chiefly because it is not such a good play. For the audience was largely composed of literary persons, who, as a rule, are grateful for the efforts of people who write bad plays. Moreover, the Little Theatre is the right size for the performance of a realistic drama, where every line either builds up the plot or strengthens the atmosphere. The Stage Society gave “The Cherry Orchard” in a dreadful place called the Aldwych, where the actors, on a remote stage, threw the pebbles of Tchekhof’s lines into the vast pond of the arena, while the audience hardly heard the splash, and only were conscious of the ripples. What an enemy to progress is the architect! How is one to value the problem of improving the conditions of domestic service when there are whole towns—like Brighton—in which there is hardly a house with—but there! And in all London there are only three theatres which are suited to the delicate presentation of realistic plays—the Little, the Court, and the Kingsway. Acting in the Duke of York’s, for instance, is like acting into a long black tunnel. Can one wonder that it is the home of the melodrama of Somerset Maugham and Pinero, the hysterics of which penetrate the tunnel as easily as the steam of the engine does on the railway? Tchekhof played well in the Little Theatre. Though the acting was, on the whole, rather bad, one was close enough to see what the actors meant.

“The Seagull,” I learn from Mr. Calderon’s preface to his translation of these two plays, evidently symbolises the universal frustration of desire. Tchekhof is a depresssing writer, and sometimes a cynical writer, but he is never a liar. And it is perfectly obvious that desire is not universally frustrated. What it really shows is the havoc men and women make of life if they refuse to love life for its own sake, but covet the trimmings thereof. There comes down to the country house by the lake, Arcâdina, the famous actress, one of those women who compel success by the force of greed rather than by service to art by sacrifice, and her lover, Trigrôrin, the successful novelist, who regards the art rather as a matter of personal achievement than as the due he must pay to life, and who is so insensible to the sacredness of emotion that when a young girl offers him her love he says, as one would of a medicine, “Perhaps this is the very thing I need.” At the country house they find Arcâdina’s son, Tréplef, a weak-willed decadent, who wants fame, so that he need no longer be overshadowed by his mother, who wants to establish new standards, not because of any new vision, but simply out of fastidious revolt against the old. And there is his sweetheârd, Nina, a charming child, who longs to be an actress for the sake of the limelight and the tinsel glory. She is “the seagull.” For when Trigrôrin sees a seagull shot on the lake he writes in his note-book: “A subject for a short story. A girl lives from her childhood on the shores of a lake. She loves the lake like a seagull, and is happy and free like a seagull. But a man comes along by chance and sees her, and ruins her, like this seagull, just to amuse himself.” That is what happens. Two years elapse between the third act, in which Trigrôrin takes Nina away to Moscow, and the last. Arcâdina and Trigrôrin have come once more to the house by the lake: they are still happy and prosperous, absorbed in their sterile activities. Young Tréplef has written and published many stories—ploughing the sands, because he has no faith. As he sulks over his worthless manuscripts, while the others are holding a jolly supper-party, Nina runs in through the wind and snow, the shattered seagull. She has had a child, who had died; Trigrôrin deserted her. On the stage she has been crushed by disappointments; She needed to play big parts; she failed; she tours about the meaner towns. She is almost mad with distress, but now she knows the truth. . . . “I see at last, Constantine, that in our sort of work, whether we are actors or writers, the chief thing is not fame or glory, not what I dreamed of, but the gift of patience. One must bear one’s cross and have faith.” But she has learnt the truth too late. The end one may guess—death in the miserable ward of some provincial hospital, or madness in some lonely cell. She slew herself in her thirst for glory; even her lover she chose for his...
fame. Tchekhof paints young Russia as aspiring with one eye on the box-office.

This is a proof of Mr. Calderon's appalling error in saying that Tchekhof does not copy life but explains it. Obviously, this passion for inessential details must have some basic cause. The present British thirst for money—a thirst quite as infantile as Nina's desire for limelight—is, of course, attributable to the present capitalist muddle, which gives money a fictitious value by withholding it. Nations do not suffer from these sicknesses for nothing. But Tchekhof cannot be bothered with explanations. He throws us his masterpiece, crying: “Look at this! It’s life! Isn’t it dirty and stupid and useless and utterly damnable and completely glorious?”

“The Cherry Orchard” is an infinitely greater play. It is a picture of all Russia. The orchard itself is a symbol of the golden age of Russia, the loveliness created by a wise aristocracy in the good old times. Now it has no owner to protect its beauty. Mme. Ramisksy, a dainty trifle who trails over Europe in the wake of a faithless lover, and her brother Gáyet, whose chief interest in life is billiards, sentimentalise over it and sell it to the merchant, Lopákin, who has bought his soul by menial toil, and has no use for the cherry orchard. He levels its beauty to the ground and builds cheap little villas. And this, thinks Tchekhof, is the tragedy of Russia. Life has slipped from the hands of the people who once made it lovely, for they have lost their grip on reality. The lower orders are taking it from them, and that is a bad thing, for they have been kept at dirty work for so long that they make everything they touch dirty work. And there is no hope in any of the other types Tchekhof shows us. There is no wisdom in age; age groans sadly of a time when it was a serf and without the burden of liberty. There is no wisdom in youth: youth drugs itself with words and dreams. And there is a crowd of flunkies, weak things sucking the blood from the carcass of aristocracy before its day and theirs goes by. The desolation of it! In this country we are without religion—and without a master. But in Russia it is the country that is without a master, for the people have arrogated God’s privilege to abdicate. After “The Cherry Orchard” one is filled with the exaltation that always follows the endurance of a tragedy. It brings home to one the sense of one’s inalienable rashness of one’s action in being born, and a proud consciousness of the splendid and devastating adventures waiting for one in the uncharted sea of life. That is why the audience jeered and tittered: because it feared this knowledge.

I hope that if Mr. Grant Richards reprints this volume he will omit Mr. Calderon’s preface and notes. Mr. Calderon is apparently a gentleman of over ninety—unless he is a lady, for sometimes he drops into the profundities of the women novelists of the early nineties—with the most ingenuous views. He solemnly defends Tchekhof’s use of uninspired soliloquies—as obvious and painful a result of the influence of French dramatic mechanics as Ibsen’s “Pillars of Society”—and soberly argues that we should not sympathise with the autocrats in “The Cherry Orchard.” Sometimes his antiquity is quite amusing. “If we examine the causes of suffering in London or St. Petersburg at any given moment we shall find that almost all is caused by people without a master. Then it is the result of conditions over which no single person has any control. ... I am afraid that this new doctrine of irresponsibility looks rather like one of those para-

doxes which the writers of this generation ... are driven to utter in order to get themselves any reputation of originality.” It is strange that Tchekhof should be translated by Rip van Winkle.

REBECCA WEST.

The Woman Offender:

LA NOSTALGIE DE LA BOUE.

C O M P A R A T I V E L Y few writers have dealt with the subject of the woman offender with any degree of personal knowledge. Learned prelates and moralists, philanthropic millionaires and ethical employers preach loudly against the “immoral” and the “dangerous” female, but these givers of good advice make very little effort to remedy the state of affairs which drives women to theft, or impurity. Even those who profess expert knowledge must not obtain it first-hand, for then respectable folk would not buy their books or otherwise subscribe to their maintenance.

The woman offender may be divided into three classes: (1) The thief, (2) the thief-prostitute, (3) the prostitute. There is a large class of “respectable” neurotic people, but as these do not actually earn their living by illicit means, they are not classified in the above.

The woman thief is sometimes a criminal from neurosis, but usually from heredity. The English “gun-moll,” or “schikstor,” descends, in most cases, from a family of thieves, where robbery is looked upon as a perfectly natural method of earning a living.

The most celebrated woman thief in modern police records is S——e L——s, who now lives, on a comfortable income, in a quiet Michigan village. She is of English descent, and on one occasion when she returned to New York after a very successful season in London, she told a little band of newspaper reporters that her father was a cracksman to whom Scotland Yard doffed its cap.

She was turned out by her parents on the streets of New York to steal, and gradually ascended the ladder of successful crime. She married a prince of bank burglars, who, curiously enough, insisted on her leading an honest life, but the call of the underworld was too strong for her, and she toured Europe as Mme. de Varney, a rich widow. She was a singularly handsome and talented woman, educated herself in modern languages, music, and literature. But she was typical of her class. She could not resist the call of the underworld, la nostalgie de la boue. Few women who have dabbled in the crime-world can ever draw away from its associations. This fact has caused many criminologists to say that the woman criminal cannot be reformed, which is nonsense—a rather abrupt, almost impudent remark to apply to the opinions of learned professors, but what these gentlemen never seem to take into consideration is the fact that present laws do not seek to reform the woman offender. On the contrary. More especially is this true in morality cases.

Lombroso, in his book, the “Female Offender,” made a number of observations which were and are true in the generality of cases, but he merely observed certain physical attributes and stigmata, and wrote about effect, but not about cause.
Another book, less celebrated and much worse written than Lombroso's, gives the sociologist more to think. This is "Les Femmes Criminelles," by G. Macé, the famous French detective. His observations are mostly of a narrative nature, but one chapter on the St. Lazare prison in Paris and the fearful physical effects of underworld life on young women is intensely true.

Several Americans have done fine observation work, but also give rather the effect than the cause. Miss Jane Adams, the well-known American sociologist, in a recent address, made some very pertinent remarks about the young woman offender.

"They have no idea that they have committed crimes or misdemeanors. They see that they have run against the social order of things, but deep down in their hearts they feel that they are really not so much to blame. Their natural proclivities of modesty and reserve have been broken down from early girlhood, and, failing, they find themselves against this hard, almost malignant, social order. The moralists and sociologists would say that there is more one that it is not possible to make generalisations—each one must be treated individually.

"In the big cities there are armies of girls with no supervision. When it comes to a question of amusements there is plenty of time between work and home that they can take off with no one being the wiser. It gives chances for all sorts of accidents, and they are taken in the spirit of adventure, and the girls are exploited by people who have a keen appreciation of this."

Then, third of the types, comes the prostitute, who is a type, but represents that sorrowful minority of weak or unfortunate womanhood. The most remarkable thing about the majority of these girls is their honesty.

The night women of London have as many grades as ordinary society. This is quite natural. Thus, there is (1) the well-educated woman, who only receives "friends," and is remarkably discreet; (2) the broken-down girl, often from a shop or a bar, who haunts ugly streets in Islington or Highgate; (3) the "staggerer" woman, who apes her victors, and, after a hard day, goes "wrong" not through necessity, but through inexperience; (4) the "moll" who robs drunken strangers.

These are but a few varieties. Mrs. Bramwell Booth is of the opinion that the number of immoral women in the West End of London who have been barmachs is one-quarter of the total Army of Sorrow.

Many doctors ascribe intemperance as the reason for girls descending to the underworld, but chronic intemperance, in a large percentage of cases, is the result of an immoral and disorganised life, not the cause of it. Indulgence in drink may have bad effects on a woman's morals, yet it does not necessarily turn her into a moral unfortunate.
This woman did not sell herself for money. She was the victim of a disease which will demand as much attention soon as consumption or cancer. It would be given more people who are indifferent or scoffing concerning the night women a surprise to know how these women live. Your bejewelled, gorgeous, flaunting queens of champagne and cold cream are just as rare as queens in ordinary life. The “kept” woman has, economically speaking, a better chance at least for the four-fifths of the unfortunate women in London live in a room which they use for living-room, dining-room, bedroom, and . . . place of entertainment, although, if they be seductive enough, they prevail on the “client” to take them to one of the unspeakable hotels in the neighbourhood of big railway stations. This is more especially the case when the woman underworld, through the “protector,” who will make trouble for the client who may be more than capable of turning the tables on the aggressor.

At first sight it is a most extraordinary thing how these girls, especially the poorer ones, who may earn at most £3 a week by the sale of their bodies, keep such splendid “nut” in their heels. The hairdressings, the beadings, allow him to pawn their clothes and jewellery. This is more especially the case with Continental women. Among the richer members of the underworld, for example, those who can afford flats in Bloomsbury or Maida Vale or Charing Cross Road the “protector” system is universal. If So-and-so, who is known to the underworld, arrives from a Continental racecourse without any money, he is informed of any vacancy that may be going, how much money the woman makes, her temper and peculiarities. Often, the woman suggests to some man who catches her fancy that he live with her, and she will pay him so much a day. Ten shillings a day and so much extra for clothes is a regular rate among the Alphonses and Leons of the West End. These girls are most kind to those in need. They know what it is to walk about in the rain at night.

Undoubtedly this system is tolerated by the police, just as it is in Paris, for purposes of information. Then, again, if all this swarming together of professional sinners were prohibited, how the West End shops would suffer, especially those in the immediate vicinity of Piccadilly Circus. How would places of amusement would suffer, places where they have girls to rehearse for a month without salary, and then pay them £1 a week (sometimes it is only 15s.). Then those big shops, who rather encourage their good-looking models and assistants by giving them latch-keys instead of a reasonable salary. Prostitution is a distinctly good business proposition for a good many perfectly respectable citizens.

Apart from the tremendous social difficulties which cause even kind-hearted people to hesitate before they venture to help the unfortunate, there is the greatest difficulty of all in the unfortunate herself. They are generally willing, but the flesh is weak. It may be six weeks’ time, in six months’, in six years’, but one day she will start to sigh for the “good” times, the night life, the drink and cigarettes, the banter of men folk, the familiar talk of other women “on the game,” the night-lights, the taxable, the much contented, collective purr of a satisfied West End well pleased with food, drink, and fleshy tribute. This woman is only a minor edition of a more fortunate sister (“for the colonel’s lady and Judy O’Grady”) who wants fleshy plays alternated with American rag-time and Parisian chansonnettes, who occasionally likes a clear sky and a bountiful sun, but who usually prefers the white lights of night.
The Present State of the Suffrage Question.

MALE REFLECTIONS.

I.

We hear on all sides that the window-breakers have defeated their own ends, and that the granting of suffrage to women will be delayed by their action. It is the obvious thing to say. Certainly the militant Suffragists were never in worse odour than at present. Nobody can admire their conduct as conduct. But that they have hurt their cause is not so certain as it appears. Principles remain the same, whatever the behaviour of their adherents. Neither mankind in general, nor Governments in particular, act on principles. Expediency, prejudice, and party antagonism are their motives. It is quite in order, therefore, that the Cabinet should throw over the Conciliation Bill, and that the First Lord of the Admiralty should turn his coat.

But man—using the word generically, not sexually—has in his composition, besides nobler qualities, both caution and selfishness. He likes to be hurt neither in his person nor his pocket. Having also courage and pugnacity, he resists those who try to hurt him. But when he finds them irresistible, he submits. The Suffragettes can only justify their policy by being irresistible. Their old game of heckling and disturbing garden-parties did not justify itself, though a little of it, by way of advertisement, had perhaps its uses. It was a half measure. It annoyed without doing material harm. It alienated sympathy without intimidating hostility. But now that bad manners have given way to violence, the women have some chance of wringing from fear what justice would not cede. There is precedent for this belief. Men have burned and have destroyed, and have got what they wanted. It is not magnificent, but it is war.

II.

The principle of the matter, though the politician is so little concerned with it, may receive some consideration from the mere writer. The other day a distinguished disciple of Nietzsche, and a most staunch advocate of the subjection of women, said to me that the official refusers of the vote had not a leg to stand on. He was perfectly right. The aristocratic point of view, whatever its merits, is a logical and consistent point of view. But it does not, at the present day, enter into practical politics. Mr. Asquith and his friends would, of course, be the first to repudiate it. We are a democracy, though a half-baked one. We must start from where we stand. My Nietzschean friend would probably say that our Government is feminine already.

It is historically true that the finest male intellects of the world have never been equalled by any woman's. Nor is disparity of opportunity a sufficient explanation of this fact. It has probably a logical and physiological basis. Women's energies have other functions than men's. But democratic questions are not concerned with the finest intellects, but with intellects of every grade. Even if it could be proven that the sum of male intelligence was greater than the sum of female intelligence, it would not alter the fact that at the present moment an enormous number of male fools have a voice in their country's governance, while an enormous number of talented and able women have none. One of the strongest arguments in favour of women's franchise is the fatuous letters written to the papers on the subject by male electors.

Opposition, on the score of sex, is, from the democratic standpoint, simply absurd. Coming from those who contemplate the introduction of an Adult Male Suffrage Bill, it is indecent. It has been urged, as a serious adverse argument, that to enfranchise women would be to enfranchise prostitutes. There is apparently no objection to the enfranchisement of the man prostitute, or of the more despicable loafer who lives on the street-walker's gains.

To refute the pathetic evocation of the empty cradle and the broken home would be to wallow in platitude. That it should ever become usual for...
the best type of women to take an active and absorbing part in State affairs would be bad for the race. But an intelligent interest in the course of politics, and an occasional journey to the polling station, seem no greater bar to child-bearing and the cultivation of home life than to the prosecution of those non-political occupations by which the vast majority of voting males earn their bread.

III.

A charge sometimes brought against the militant Suffragettes is that they are hysterical. Probably, nay, undoubtedly, some of them are. Balance is the art of life, and concentration on one object is bound to destroy balance and to create abnormalities. Moreover, all violent movements attract to them many who are predisposed to intellectual lopsidedness. Here, again, is no question of sex. In the great movement of men it has been the same. (Whether men or women are the more prone to hysteria is a medical question on which I will not venture an opinion.) It is, however, the misfortune of women that the balance, her weaknesses in her person sooner than man. Her clothes are far more symbolical. Unkempt hair is more conspicuous on her. Her hats are more difficult to balance. The botched and inefficient hangers-on of a woman's movement are, therefore, more in evidence than their masculine counterparts. In the great organised processions it was easy enough to separate the sheep from the goats, and the sheep (the smile is singularly inept) were there in plenty. A cause should be judged by its finest upholders, and it is only prejudice which can withhold respect from the organisers of the women's suffrage movement, whether militant or constitutional. There is no woman in England to-day more worthy of admiration than Miss Christabel Pankhurst.

IV.

But the fact remains that health and mental balance—that is, the seemliness of life—have been affected for many women by this long struggle. Such warfare warps life, turning means into ends and ends into means. Political action should be merely a means to an end, which is the pleasant ordering of their days; and it will probably be found, when women have a reasonable share in the conduct of life, that the struggle for political liberty has become not the end, politics the means. The fighters sacrifice not life itself, but the beauty of life. This is the supreme sacrifice. To be warped is worse than to be slain.

Possibly, when the vote is won, women will find it not so high a prize as they fancied. Men in the past have known such disappointments. The tangles of the law take long to straighten. But one priceless thing will have been gained. It is not too much to assume that, if such labour and sacrifice have made it possible to have their cooking, sweeping, and cleaning done for them, and this, moreover, at a cost less than that of running a separate establishment, then, this has been worth the while. Possibly, when the vote is won, women will find it not so high a prize as they fancied. Men in the past have known such disappointments. The tangles of the law take long to straighten. But one priceless thing will have been gained. It is not too much to assume that, if such labour and sacrifice have made it possible to have their cooking, sweeping, and cleaning done for them, and this, moreover, at a cost less than that of running a separate establishment, then, this has been worth the while.

Abolition of Domestic Drudgery by Co-operative Housekeeping.

II.

It is interesting to speculate on what would happen if all the married men in England were compelled, by force of circumstances, to follow one occupation, irrespective of either inclination or ability. It is, also, that they did not go from home in the morning, but that the scene of their rest and recreation was also the scene of their daily labours. It is not too much to assume that, if such were the case, these men would soon devise a means of doing their work which would leave them free for at least a part of their time to follow some more congenial occupation.

Yet, this has been woman's case from time immemorial, and although civilisation is educating woman, broadening her outlook on life, and developing her talents, it has, up to the present, made no effective attempt to simplify and lighten her burden of domestic drudgery. Under present conditions, women have either to give up the idea of marriage in order to follow a chosen vocation, or, if they marry, they must abandon all hope of congenial work unless they happen to belong to that type to which household work is congenial; a type, by the way, which is not so common as one is led to believe.

It has been conveniently assumed in the past that the woman who marries must, on that account, be devoted to housework, and, conversely, that the woman who shows some special talent and wishes to develop it must be a queer unfeminine creature, to whom wifehood and motherhood are alien and distasteful. It is probably because this theory fits in very excellently with man's scheme of life that it has endured so long and dies so hard; but it is a theory that will stand no logical test. There is no real reason why the marriage of two individuals should involve the confusion of the external machinery of their two lives. They should be able to have their cooking, sweeping, and cleaning done for them, and this, moreover, at a cost less than that of running a separate establishment.

It is only by applying the principle of co-operation to the business of housekeeping that this can be done, and it is to co-operative housekeeping that women must look for relief from the perennial burden that the maintenance of a home now involves.

It is to apply this principle of co-operation to the business of housekeeping and to make house-craft a profession for educated working women that the society for co-operative housekeeping and House-Service has been formed. The society is at the present moment in touch with hundreds of would-be tenant-members and scores of educated women, waiting and training to take up house-craft as a profession in connection with co-operative housekeeping, which could be organised by the society anywhere round London in two ways. First, by forming associations to rent suitable houses adjoining each other, furnishing and fitting dining-rooms, library, kitchen, etc., and providing unfurnished rooms for subscribing members. In such a scheme the educated worker, whether married or single, could obtain all the privacy of an individual home without any of the domestic drudgery, while participating in the benefits of club rooms and dining-hall, etc.

The second, a larger and much-needed scheme, would be an estate developed on co-operative and co-partnership lines, laid out in groups of houses and flats after the manner of a garden village. Each...
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more the central service has to do, the more prosperous it will become, and its prosperity will benefit all the members concerned, inasmuch as it will leave a greater margin of profit to devote to increasing the efficiency of the whole administration.

The one thing needful to all who join such a colony is a genuine understanding of the principle of co-operation. Let a number of educated men and women work together in order to obtain a finer and more restful home life, and a fuller and more generous social life, on the lines that I have indicated, and failure is an impossibility. Middle-class people can, by combining their resources, achieve a far better home life than they have ever known hitherto.

The isolated house system is wasteful and, on the woman's side, narrowing. If the wife be also a mother, she is torn between the claims of her house and her family, and finds herself unable to attend properly to either. How many women would like to give more time to their children if domestic cares were simplified? Her husband must be enabled to take them at home. A staff of skilled domestic workers would be housed at the central hall, and they could be hired by the hour, day, or week, as they were required. Hot water, electric light and power, and a vacuum cleaning attachment would be fitted to every home and all these domestic worries would be taken in the construction of the dwellings to ensure that the work of cleaning them should be reduced to a minimum.

A day nursery, in charge of competent and qualified nurses, would also be established on the estate, in order that busy mothers could at any time leave their children in safe custody, and clean and comfortable surroundings, while they went about their business elsewhere.

Such a scheme not only benefits the married people, but also that large, rapidly growing, and hitherto unprovided for class, the educated women workers. Teachers and professional women generally are at present confronted with a choice of evils. They must either live in a boarding-house, without privacy or congenial company, or else take rooms and do their own domestic work after the business of the day, which has probably been long and tiring; is over. The love of privacy, and a place of their own in which to retire to and to rest, is the latter alternative, and they are obliged to muddle on as best they can. Nothing is more distressing than to come home after a tiring day's work, and then to have to set to and prepare one's own meals, to say nothing of the cleaning and mending which will also demand attention; yet this is what many thousands of women do to-day, not because they like it, but because they have to do it.

It is possible to live in such a colony without availing oneself of the facilities either for meals or for domestic service.

The tenant has complete control over the use he makes of all or any of the advantages offered. But, at the same time, it should be remembered that the

THE FEMALE COLONY
This is a woman's question, and by women it must be worked. Rich women! here is a work for you to help forward. To help house the brain-workers who need an individual home. Give us builders and capital, and within twelve months we could house hundreds of families, hundreds of bachelor workers under the co-operative schemes. The society has now these four schemes in hand, which only want a certain amount of capital for immediate development.

**ALICE MELVIN.**

**A New Name for a New Virtue.**

The ideal of racial unity and international alliance, that ultimate driving-force behind all modern activity, is shaping a new social virtue in the human spirit. Already we feel it transforming our conceptions of life, supplying to faith a firmer basis, to devotion a freer expression, in its operation tireless as wind and sun, like them an elemental force, drawing its energy from the very structure and developments of society. Unlike the social virtues it supersedes, the new virtue transcends personality, institution, and place. It means the union of all men, in conditions as yet undefined. It cannot be confined by any church or state, but institutions and governments will increasingly prove effective only to the extent to which they feel and obey its supreme authority.

Yet the old ideals and virtues, personal and parochial as they are, involving constant dead-centres of moral and material opposition, will not be put away, but absorbed and reconciled; not annulled, but united.

Patriotism, "that last infirmity of noble minds," represents the most complete and enduring synthesis the social necessity has hitherto been able to create. In its plexus gather most of our noblest and dearest traditions; it contains the whole of our legal and economic integrity. It has become allied with our very instincts, so that love for one’s country seems an apparently inevitable virtue, like honesty. The flag, the bugle, the marching of old men in uniform thrill us to tears, inspiring a profound spiritual emotion: gratitude for liberty, reverence for heroism, awe for glory and power, all hallowed by the vision of sudden death.

Yet the national ideal is responsible for that shameful compromise, "a free Church in a free State," which, for the sake of a negative tolerance, has abruptly severed the economic from the moral man, the material from the spiritual necessity. Patriotism, consequently, is a smaller virtue than the new virtue in the same proportion that one country is smaller than all countries, and a poorer virtue in the same proportion that one race is poorer than all races, a less effective virtue in the same proportion that a divided human nature is less effective than human nature perfect and complete. So, little by little, the new ideal will detach the glamour from patriotism, stripping that ancient obligation for defence into the advantage—to herself. Nothing that is fine and magnanimous in human nature will be lost, nothing that is profitable in society will be sacrificed—no, but assembled in a more complete, more enduring synthesis. For this virtue of racial unity could not evoke qualities more delicately spiritualised, more sensitive, detached from contingent attributes of place and time, qualities that cannot enter into patriotism—if it could not also multiply our material values and better safeguard the resources of individual well-being.

What shall we call the new virtue? For new it is, although practised in all times as a personal ideal by a few superior souls, since only now can it penetrate the social consciousness as an economic and legislative, as well as spiritual, value. The purest and most inclusive of the traditional social virtues we call patriotism, after the fathers of the race. But the new virtue is not essentially masculine. It arms against no fellow-men, defends no frontiers nearer than the frontiers of life. Passing onward, then, from love of our country to love of our kind, from thinking in terms of a people to thinking in terms of humanity; in acknowledging the new social impetus at work in our time, let us emphasise also the new ideal it has given existence.

Not from compliment, but reverence for their superiors and abilities in创建和黄生活, let us derive its name from the mothers of the race. Let us call the new virtue patriomism.

**HORACE HOLLEY.**

**Mine and Thine.**

On a wide loggia surrounding three sides of a house not twenty miles from Ayuthia (the old capital of Siam, sixty miles up the river from Bangkok), Luang Laddhako and his wife Nadahn are sleeping. The loggia is raised about six feet from the ground, and their low couches are set where they catch every breath of wind that reaches the house. It is much cooler here than under the mosquito-net inside. Laddhako wakens in the dark dawn to a delicious coolness and peace. He only came up from Bangkok yesterday, and he lies awake enjoying the contrast between the noises that broke his rest in the big city, and the stillness here. It is a delight, too, not to be covered in by the usual netting. The few mosquitoes awake near him might be of a different species from the bloodthirsty biters of Bangkok and Paulnam, so inoffensive are they. There is no moon; a few stars glitter in the space of sky between the trees. In the warm darkness the scent of champak and of the jessamine-like mali growing near it fill the air and pervade the animals of the jungle and of the sun-scorched grass of the open country stretching out to the south. A clump of dimly outlined tamarind trees stirs faintly in the night wind. Laddhako can hear, too, the flapping of the thick leaves of the stag’s ear tree, and the rustling of the mango’s branching foliage. Tall bamboo swing and sway over the high river banks; and in the river itself a big fish leaps high.

There is no wakeful took-hay (the gecko-lizard) near, and Laddhako’s ear, accustomed for some weeks to the full blast of a Bangkok river-symphony, waits, expecting a leading theme. It comes. Far off in the woods, the gibbons cry—Pua, Pua, Pua. But they are heard softly, in the distance at first. Then another takes it up, and another, until the woods palpitate with the sad cry. Sometimes it cheers up a little, as if the seeker felt the sought approaching, and called to guide. Laddhako remembers vividly a night during the whole of which, in his longing for an unattainable mate, he had cursed that cry. But that was long ago; he can smile now as he thinks of it, looking at his sleeping wife.

Nadahn stirs, wakes. Her opening eyes fall on Laddhako, and she smiles.

"What were you dreaming?" he asks. "You cried out."

She leaps closer to his couch, saying softly: "I..."

*Pua*—husband. The tradition is that a woman who lost her husband in the forest was changed into an ape, and that she wanders in search for ever, calling *Pua.*
dreamt again that I had a child— a pause— and, — that someone took it from me."

"Do not think about it," said he. "I do not want a child. I only want you to be happy in
your heart."

"I will try," Then she asks him if he is not glad to be at home again.

"Glad! I wish we lived here always, and never need go back to Bangkok."

"So do I. Mè?" It's good here. It smells so good.

Another peaceful pause; then Nadahn speaks.

"How loud the apes are calling this morning!"

Laddhako: "Yes." He smiles at her. "I was thinking about the time before you were my wife, when my father sent me up here with Angoon—and I was mad for you. And I used to walk round this house all night and curse that monkey-cry. It was like Laddhako calling for Nadahn and unable to find her."

Nadahn turns on her couch and tries to see his face. She never tires of hearing him speak of those days.

Laddhako: "Then, at last, Angoon said he would help me, and we made the plan to go to Bangkok and carry you away to Pakret. Mè! That was good! And all that came after was good, the little house at Pakret and those happy weeks. Remember or not remember, Nadahn?"

Nadahn: "Remember." She keeps very still, lest any movement of hers should stop the narration she knows so well.

Laddhako: "And that day, when Angoon and Sia came to us before daybreak, and told us that your father and mine were waiting in a big boat at the creek-mouth for the tide. He stops to laugh. Nadahn: "How silly I was, and frightened. I wanted to run away before the dawn should come, and the boat float up the creek, and bring my father."

Laddhako: "You were brave when the two fathers did come, more brave than I was. I was proud of you, and I wondered if in all Siam there was so clever a woman as my little wife. ... And afterwards, when my father had stopped being angry, and made a proposal that the two fathers should come to an agreement about the price of the mother's milk,* and your father said 'Dai' ( 'Be it so'), and they both sat down and began to chew."

Nadahn: "We knew then we were forgiven."

Laddhako: "And the journey in the boat to Bangkok, and the floating-house in the Bang Lamput creek—all good, all happy!"

The stars had disappeared, and the spaces of sky between the trees grew less dark. Near one of the outbuildings a light gleamed. It grew rapidly into a crackling flame, lighting up the figures of the awakening community of retainers. One scantily clothed figure squatted on his heels and fanned a fire on the ground. Another placed a big pot over the flames. Nadahn rose.

When she was ready to take her bath, the sun was already shining warm. The bathroom was divided from the verandah by a thin partition of coarse netting swayed in the hot wind between the verandah posts, and into this she lifted the child, still whimpering. Crouching near him on the ground, she swung the hammock, chanting a wild, screeching lullaby that apparently soothed the infant.

"Whose child is it?" shouted Laddhako from his couch.

"I do not know," screamed back Nadahn, retaining the shrill key of the lullaby. "It's a strange child, I think, not one of our folks."

When the sobs had quite ceased, she paused in the loud "Ayo, yow, wow" of her lullaby, and, leaning on the verandah railing, looked across to the servants' quarters. An old woman was creeping slowly towards the verandah. Nadahn made her hurry. "Mè Lecam! Mè Lecam! Come quick!"

"It's my grandson, noble lady, explained the old woman, crouching before her mistress. "Have been looking for him everywhere. Thought he was drowned in the water."

Nadahn: "He has been with you long?"

Lecam: "He came on Tuesday, noble lady. My daughter sent him from Chiangrak for me to see."

"Chiangrak! Then he's Phya Glye's child?"

"Yes, noble lady."

"Why did your daughter not come herself? I want to see her again."

"Noble lady, my daughter is the head-wife. Phya Glye would not let her go away." (proudly)

"Have we not plenty of children here already?" Nadahn asked, indicating the little ones in the shady compound, some clinging to their mothers, some playing in groups, some pottering about alone. There was a slight severity in Nadahn's tone. (She was the only childless wife in the compound.)

"Plenty, noble lady. This child is going back to Chiangrak to-day."

"Who can take him?"

"Leeam will take him, noble lady. . . . Come to Grammy, little one?"

But the child whimpered, and would go only to Nadahn. She held him tenderly. It was quite usual for relatives and hangers-on of the family, slaves and other retainers, to bring their children with them; Nadahn seldom noticed a new one among them. This one, however, appealed to her strangely. The dream of last night was still on
the rows toiled, and as the sudden cooling of the light breeze made by the boat's motion told Laddhako that it was after four o'clock, they sighted a clump of little bamboo houses, with sloping peaked roofs all standing on high piles over the water.

On the wooden ladders hanging down to the water from every one of the houses, were women and children, all busied either in bathing or being bathed. Mé Leeam greeted many of them with smiles. When the rows came to a covered landing beyond the houses, they tied the boat up, and joined the procession that followed Laddhako and Nadahn. Through a wild, weedy garden where pigs rooted, dogs of every sort and size prowled, and crows quarrelled for the remains of food, they reached a wide, low flight of marble steps. Ascending, they interrupted a sleepy man stretched on his back and reading Siamese aloud in a tired singsong.

"Yes, the lady was at home." He did not offer to guide, however; and they groped on in the semi-darkness of the shady verandah and the rooms within. All were silent and empty, until they came on a great hall, and on the floor the wood was inlaid with Mother-of-Pearl. How could I want to talk to Phya Glye about the railway men, and you will like to see the wife again, and give up the child to her yourself. We can come back to-morrow morning before the heat of the day. And," he added, scanning the glittering klong,* "we had better go at once; it's getting hot.

The sun beat down remorselessly as Nadahn and her little procession of retainers followed Laddhako across the paddy-fields to the river. Mé Leeam carried the child on her hip, and they kept close to Nadahn. Like dancing threads of silver the creeks shone amid stretches of coarse grass and stubble, blue-black against the sun. To the right, gleamed white the same wending creek that flowed past Laddhako's bungalow. Sails, red, yellow, white, puffed here and there, scudding in the water. Right in front, a grey line moved slowly amongst the flotilla of buffaloes. As the leader of the troop neared Nadahn, the sun streaming white on its massive grey body glowed also on its small rider's bare, brown skin. A mere child, he sat fearlessly astride the great beast, swinging untrammelled legs, delighting in his power to direct and control the savage herd.

The heat increased. The shadows of the few bushes rising from the dead level through which the creek wound were almost vertical, of deepest black; and Mé Leeam's wizened features vanished in dense shadow. In her loose, wicker hat, the cavity of the betel-fruit mouth showing like a black hole in the darkness of her face. The child, who had snuggled in between Laddhako and Nadahn, soon grew sleepy. Nadahn gathered him up in her arms. ... She did not speak; it was very hot, her husband seemed disinclined for talk, and she could not divert her thoughts from the old subject of desire. Anything fresh, like this little incident of the child's coming unexpectedly into their daily life, would stir it up.

All through the hot hours of the early afternoon

* * *
Late in the night, Nadahn, sleeping on a couch on the verandah, awoke to loud yells, discordant music, and beating of tin and iron vessels; to all the din, in fact, that announced an eclipse of the moon. Nadahn sat up, remembering with a vague pain that Laddhako was not sleeping by her. "I had forgotten about the eclipse," she murmured, as her hostess came out from her room to the verandah.

As they watched the shadow creeping slowly on, the din made by the assembled villagers and servants, Nadahn back to that night so long ago in Pakret, when Laddhako had taken his three days' bride to the theatre. The noise of the people, always alarmed at an eclipse, was incessant for half an hour; then came a lull, although the monster still retained his grip on the pale helpless moon. Nadahn did not believe that all that noise really would hasten the passage of the shadow. What caused the strange phenomenon, she knew not. Perhaps it was a cruel monster eating a piece of the moon. But even if so, why should he care for all the noise made about it on the earth? Laddhako always laughed when his people got their tom-toms and pots and kettles ready; she did not think he believed in the monster. She wished her husband were here now, instead of several hundred yards off, in Phya Glye's private bungalow, where even the favourite wife did not often go, and where it would have been quite impossible for Nadahn to follow him. She should not feel so strange, so frightened, if he were with her. At that moment, the little boy woke up, and came to Nadahn quite naturally for comfort.

"Mé?" said Mom Lamai, the head-wife. ... "I wish you had a child."

"I wish it too," said poor Nadahn.

"How long do you think to wait? . . . Does your husband not want any more wives?"

"My husband—does not—want—"

"Not now, perhaps. But soon, very soon, he will get tired of the dull house, no children. You, too, will like the child—just the same as your own."

Nadahn listened intently.

"It's very bad," continued the other—"and it's not Siamese custom. Is that not reason enough? No good can be where old customs are despised." After a pause, she continued to harangue. Did not Nadahn believe it was bad to disregard the custom of the country? —Buddha! (expostulatory). She would believe, then, that Khoon Bea was not happy? Well! That was because she never would let in another wife, and so, at last, when she and Phya Glye had been married seven years, and no child, and still Beea say always no—then one day, he bring new wife—"

"Mom Lamai, was it not?"

"Yes" (composedly). "And I took warning by her, and chose plenty more wives; and they all work, and are useful. And the master likes me; and we are a very happy family. All except Khoon Beea," she whispered. "She has lived too long alone, and is now very jealous.

Mom Lamai's talk flowed on until interrupted by a fresh outburst of scare-music. The eclipse was now nearly over, and exclamations were redoubled so as to hurry off the glutinous monster as fast as possible. Mom Lamai got so excited towards the end that she rose from her seat on the verandah floor, and, seizing a brass gong that hung on the wall, she ran down the steps towards the lights, violently beating the gong. All the children (except her own youngest, still close to his new friend, Nadahn) swarmed round, delighted to see the "noble mistress" so hilarious.

Nadahn felt a strange want of interest in all the pantomime of the eclipse-frightening. She crouched silently on the verandah, fondling the child. The night was hot and damp, and the wind-lamp on the floor attracted all sorts of creeping things. Grass-hoppers leapt from her hands to her hair, mosquitoes bit, ants swarmed over her, and great winged beetles dashed against the verandah-posts. Nadahn needed them not, there was so much sadness in her heart. She was going to do her duty, but it did not make her happy to do it.

Out of the darkness a deep voice spoke suddenly.

"I have heard what the Mom has told Khoon Ying Nadahn."

"What have you heard, Khoon Beea?"

"Heard the Mom say that Beea did not allow a new wife to come in here. That is not true; I made the noble master bring Mom here. I wanted him to have a child . . . to be happy with plenty wives, and a cheerful house. . . . Khoon Ying Nadahn must do the same . . . but not wait. . . . Do it now. . . . She will be glad some day. . . ."

The low tones ceased suddenly, and the dim figure vanished as a noisy crowd came clattering towards the verandah. Looking up, Nadahn gazed on the whole round face of the moon. The monster had let go!

EPILOGUE.

Four years later Nadahn and Laddhako are supping together on the verandah of their bungalow near Ayuthia, each looking as happy as when we first met them on their honeymoon. The meal over, Nadahn calls "Me Lëeëam," and as the old woman advances slowly with a baby boy on her hip, and a little girl toddling by her, the mother-look shines clearly on Nadahn's face. When Nadahn has settled the girl, she says to Laddhako:

"Khoon Beea, you are as fond of Jeean's child as if it were your own."

"True," says Nadahn. "Jeean's child seems mine too, because she is yours, and I think of them both all day and all night. . . . But I am glad in my heart that the boy is my own!"

B. A. S.

DISCUSSION CIRCLES.

PLEASE NOTE.

Owing to unavoidable circumstances, it has been found necessary to postpone the preliminary meeting of the Discussion Circles from Thursday, April 18th, to Thursday, April 25th, 8.15 p.m., at the International Suffrage Shop.

The hon. secretary asks that suggestions with reference to the Circles should be sent to her some days before the 25th, in order that they may be considered before the first meeting.

Letters should be addressed to Miss Barbara Low, c/o The Freewoman, 9, John Street, Adelphi, London, W.C.
London Orphan Asylum, Watford

AN APPEAL.

M. R. FRANK DEBENHAM, a member of the Board of Management of the London Orphan Asylum, is presiding at the ninety-ninth annual festival at the Hotel Metropole on Thursday, April 25th, and is making a very urgent appeal for assistance.

He directs attention to the work of the institution and its organisation, so admirably adapted to the objects for which it was founded just upon 100 years ago. To-day, as then, it ministers to the sad necessities of the orphan children of our professional and commercial classes from all parts of the Empire.

It provides a healthy and happy home for the 500 children gathered within its walls, and is also an educational institution of exceptional value. No pains are spared to adopt the best modern methods suited to the future requirements of the children in those various commercial and other occupations upon which they enter upon leaving school.

From £15,000 to £17,000 are required from voluntary sources each year, and he concludes by appealing for liberal financial help, which is greatly needed at the present time, and may be sent to him, either at 1, Fitzjohns Avenue, Hampstead, or at the offices of the Charity, 3, Crosby Square, Bishopsgate.

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THE NATIONAL VENDORS' SYNDICATE, 55, CHANCERY LANE, LONDON, W.C.

The Final Scheme of Things and Miss Violet Markham.

PEOPLE in general, and Anti-Feminists in particular, talk far too glibly about "hard facts," "natural law," etc., in connection with sex (and other) questions.

Does it not require the most patient and thorough scientific and historical research to disentangle the basic facts of life, and sex from the jungle growth of custom, habit, creed, and public opinion?

In every generation the thoughtless or superficial (those "fools" of whom Carlyle, I think, said the world was mostly composed) have mistaken contemporary habits and customs for basic facts and immutable "natural laws."

If "autres pays, autres mœurs" be true, "autres siècles, autres mœurs;" is no less true. It certainly seems to be a fundamental and basic mistake to deduce the bi-sexual evolution of a "feminine revolution," or to treat the subject as if it were a closed chapter in the world's history. Yet that is what Anti-Feminists are actually doing. They would, without doubt, consider it desirable that the harem woman should continue to evolve. I can imagine their zealously working to attain such an object. They would listen with amused indulgence to their grandmothers telling them it was once "fast" for a woman to get into a hansom cab, and "indecent" for a woman to skate; and yet with their own fair—I mean capable (and probably tanned)—hands they will drive motor-cars about the country, and these modest violets will (well-sheltered by masculine leaves) lift their heads up and talk boldly on public platforms.

Have they no sense of humour, no sense of proportion? Have they never read history—never studied the present or speculated on the future in the light of the past? Are they kings or gods (or masculine leaves) lift their heads up and talk boldly on public platforms.

People in general, and Anti-Feminists in particular, talk far too glibly about "hard facts," "natural law," etc., in connection with sex (and other) questions.

If, instead of opposing the Feminist movement, the ants left. They would, instead of opposing this great crisis in bi-sexual evolution, strain every nerve to direct it into wise, new, wide channels.

CORALIE M. BOORD.
Correspondence.

MR. UPTON SINCLAIR'S REPLY TO CRITICS.

To the Editor of The Freewoman.

MADAM,—Having been moving about, I have missed the discussion in your columns occasioned by my article on the subject of marriage, divorce, and the abolition of the time just now to attempt to answer all the arguments of your correspondents, I will outline my position on one or two of them.

First, I have spent the greater part of my life advocating revolutionary Socialism, and so I took it for granted that your understanding of the implications of my arguments such economic changes were taken for granted. The private property conventions make against early marriage, even when the fear of childbirth is removed. Second, as to the "morality" of the use of preventative. I was brought up on the ascetic ideal, and I have portrayed it sympathetically in my forthcoming novel, Love's Pilgrimage. That was written two years ago, however, and meantime I have been investigating the question. What I think, in a few words, it is this: I believe in love; I believe that love justifies the sex act; I believe that lovers will, under normal conditions, desire one or more children; but I do not believe that the desire for a child is necessary to the rightness of any particular sex act.

Nature has given us, as your correspondents point out, sex impulse and power beyond actual procreative needs. Perhaps because of the inculcation of the ascetic ideal, we can reduce this. But it seems to me necessary to prove that we ought to, that we should be better for doing it. Perhaps it has been able to prove that seemed to me valid, when I came to consider it dispassionately. I think we are quite safe in taking the normal impulse that we have in normal love, and following it normally. I believe the same thing about food, sleep, and exercise, both of mind and brain. I see no more reason for condemning un Necessary love than for condemning any other music. It is true that I say "love," and that your correspondents who argue with me must not interpret me to mean lust. There is a better music. Paul Lehrs.

The crucial question seems to me this: Is the sex superfluity, or is it functioning? It comes to a physiological problem, and I have tried to get the truth from the few investigators who have faced the facts dispassionately. Popular prejudice to the contrary, I see no reason for thinking that normal genagitation of normal sexual impulse has any bad effect upon either physical or mental energy. Neither do I think that, granted the present normal impulse, that the strength of the ascetic ideal, we can reduce this. But it seems to me necessary to prove that we ought to, that we should be better for doing it. Perhaps it has been able to prove that seemed to me valid, when I came to consider it dispassionately. I think we are quite safe in taking the normal impulse that we have in normal love, and following it normally. I believe the same thing about food, sleep, and exercise, both of mind and brain. I see no more reason for condemning un Necessary love than for condemning any other music. It is true that I say "love," and that your correspondents who argue with me must not interpret me to mean lust. There is a better music. Paul Lehrs.

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It seems to me a little sum in arithmetic clears up the difficult question of who killed cock robin. It is known that 16 Liberals and 10 Unionists went over to the Opposition after the Bill, and that 26 votes to the Noes for the Bill, and how, how many is 234 ayes—196 noes—in other words, a majority of 38 for the Bill.

To me the pity of it all is that promoters of Women’s Suffrage have handed this new weapon to the hands of blackguards.

If Mr. Lansbury wants to see the public, he must be fair, and not rate one cook highly while the two he loves get off with a reprimand. However, he left the battle line, and these two he left for the Tinker, and while hastily agreeing with Mr. Lansbury that we must now get a demand for the vote from the house of Commons, I think we also went up to the knowledge that the continuance of militancy, with which this week’s Votes for Women threatens us, does not recommend itself to the working woman in her present condition. Whatever it does to those who find it useful in political propaganda. As a worker for Suffrage among all classes of women, I always find the working woman dislikes the violence quite as much as any other section of the nation.

Norah O’Shea.

ENDOWMENT OF MOTHERHOOD.

To the Editor of The FreeWoman.

Madam,—I recently became a subscriber to your paper and am struck with admiration of the breadth and fairness of views set forth in such an excellent example. Its subjects are those which women should study.

I am particularly interested in the free and unconventional letters discussing sexual freedom, endowments of mothers, etc. I have often felt the need to discuss these much avoided topics, and was delighted to find them so fittingly expressed through your correspondence that I feel unable to resist the temptation to express my appreciation.

I agree entirely with your answer to letter signed “Russo.” This week’s issue has come to me to show that every self-respecting person should be self-supporting, and such a woman must resist proposals of endowment of marriage, etc.

That a woman should have children if she desires them, and that she would like to see them provided for is only moral, but at the same time, it is by no means moral to sacrifice the remainder of her life to rearing them.

How much, after all, does the average mother contribute to them? The rich mother hands them over to a hired stranger, while the poor mother’s nurse’s house is too small to accommodate them, except to sleep and for meals, leaves them to the doorstep and the street, the garden or meadow, while she wastes her ability in household drudgery.

She is no longer called upon to nurse them when sick, she no longer educates or instructs them, she does not obey them, but leaves them to the care of a trained and competent person, while she follows the garden or meadow, while she wastes her ability in household drudgery.

The fallacy that motherhood is a handicap is easily seen, and fairly stated, and the book ought to be known by every woman to whom it applies. It is, I believe, almost a commonplace of political economy that any improvement of the means of existence to a larger number, without in the least improving the conditions of existence for the average classes, etc. I have often felt the need to discuss these much avoided topics, and was delighted to find them so fittingly expressed through your correspondence that I feel unable to resist the temptation to express my appreciation.

The information contained in this book ought to be known by every woman who is interested in the problems of the lower classes, and who wants to do something to improve their condition.

An enterprising movement.

Rachel Graham.

SOCIAL REFORM AND LIMITATION OF POPULATION.

To the Editor of The FreeWoman.

Madam,—I would like to say a word or two on just one point—but that an important one—raised by Mr. Fred Collins’ interesting and sympathetic letter on “Population and Food.”

Mr. Collins appears to me to have expressed admirably the difficulties inherent in Malthusianism as originally propounded by that philosopher. It is, I believe, almost a commonplace of political economy that any improvement of the means of existence to a larger number, without in the least improving the conditions of existence for the average classes, is not likely to produce any important result.

I think that collateral reforms will then, in the absence of any reason to the contrary, tend to be counterbalanced by the increased fertility of those whom they affect, just as in the past the introduction of cheaper food has, in the case of the lower classes, given them, either let our reforms be accompanied by some means of encouraging moderation in reproduction, i.e., the direct method, or by some means, also, of increasing the food supply, or, even without this, by some wholesale system of emigration, such as has been more than once suggested by Mr. Calverley. Whether such a system is likely to prove so advantageous as the indirect method is, at least in theory, a perfectly possible one.

There is every reason to believe that the increased knowledge and foresight, which improved conditions would bring in their train, would soon lead the whole population (or an overwhelming proportion of it) to follow the latter method, and that the difficulties inherent in Malthusianism as originally propounded by that philosopher are a just criticism of the indirect method.

The information contained in this book ought to be known by every woman who is interested in the problems of the lower classes, and who wants to do something to improve their condition.

An enterprising movement.
And what of the direct method itself? To me there seems little doubt, that if energetically tackled, it is much the easier way. The Neo-Malthusian, at least in their elementary applications, are really not so very hard to grasp. The fact that, say, 20s. or 50s. a week, divided among seven or eight, does not leave so much for each, as divided among four, would seem to be within the powers of even the most hazy arithmetical intelligence. It, when this understanding is added to the realization that it is as easy to produce a family of one or two children as one of five or six, I think that it would not be long before some practical conclusion would be the result. But, if only enough of us set about it. It is true that we have still to reckon with the very considerable opposition which any discussion of this question still seems to arouse in some minds. But, with all our mistakes, we have almost universally adopted Neo-Malthusianism in practice, still profess to object to it in principle. But probably they will see his way to cease wasting his efforts, while desiring to do something better. I will put them again.

QUESTIONS FOR DR. DRYSDALE.

MADAM,—On three occasions Dr. Drysdale has declared that he has shown the fallacies of Henry George, but when or where I have no idea. This refutation of the notion that the earth will produce abundance, is the one element his argument lacks, yet he refuses to give it. Out of his book Information and Solutions of a few years of work by his family, we get only uncertainty. He quite agrees that a better distribution of wealth would help the poor. But it means clear and definite enough that much would be produced to relieve Nature of the charge of parsimony, nor does he offer a plan of an entirely just distribution. Maybe we might help the poor, if there be enough nitrogen (lack of which can be the cause of slighted proof), but how much no one knows. This vagueness is not in accord with the actual knowledge claimed as flowing from the sixty years of study.

MADAM,—We all need policemen—to protect us if we are good, and to correct us if we are naughty. I read these words this very day, and they have fastened themselves in my memory.

A friend of mine is greatly prejudices against the Y.W.C.A. Homes. He says that you and I, if we want to keep people out of the homes, we allow them to go to a theatre in the evening, because no person staying in a Home is allowed to go to a theatre— that the homes are only full of elderly people, with hair parted in the middle, and looking like "texts," and that there are "rules to the right of you, rules to the left of you." The epigram that I had read came into my mind, and I quote it for policemen. Your readers may be interested to hear my impressions after two or three years' residence in these Homes.

I THINK THE Y.W.C.A. HOME is like this : (1) "the wage-earners," (2) the would-be wage-earners, and (3) those whose wages have been earned before for them.

Some of the public places we put away in offices or business houses all day, and a most satisfactory arrangement is made for them by which they can pay for bedroom (or cubicles), breakfast and supper. The next night is spent in a "partial board," as it is called—while others working near (as the Homes always aim to be in a good central position) can easily get in to all meals. I think the Y.W.C.A. Homes are a distinct advantage to three classes of women: (1) "the wage-earners," (2) "the would-be wage-earners," and (3) "those whose wages have been earned before for them."

The second is the one with which I most like to be glad to make it a temporary home whilst on the look-out for another post, and those "with the wages earned before" frequently come to stay when on a visit to us as they prefer the "home-like" and "friendly feeling" of the place to a large boarding house or hotel, and dread the loneliness of rooms.

One of the very few to which I have now in my mind a large airly drawing-room, where, if one feels so inclined, one can enjoy a little music or join in the general chatting, or should one have letters to be written, or study going to be done, a dining-room is always at one's disposal every evening for that purpose.

In London, particularly, the Homes are most cosmopolitan, and I have counted as many as eight or nine nationalities represented at one small dining-table—should you be sitting next to a good talker, your knowledge of things in general is greatly increased, and your rather near horizon "pushed back a bit!"

I have known subjects of the Kaiser, the Sultan, and King George sleeping most peacefully in one bed (cubicles).

Theatre-going is not encouraged—neither are theatre-goers ostracised! Although the closing time is 10.30 to 11 p.m., there are frequent "late nights" the following week! True, there are rules—but then they are only like the policemen, "to correct us when we are naughty."—I have never found any more than in an ordinary well-regulated boarding-house, and then "they are to protect us when we are good."

I have always found the House Secretary most willing to listen to any well-founded cause of complaint, or to make any alteration or re-arrangement, etc., as to the number of meals and other things, though, of course, one has to begin by stating that she cannot legislate for the individual, but for the community.

Members of committee are by no means names only to the boarders in the house, and the social evening is sometimes an emanicipation when the committee meet the individual for whom she gives her time and thought.

It may be that the cosmopolitan character of the visitors in the London Houses creates the general spirit of friendliness and esprit de corps amongst all, but I believe even the most unresponsive feel that they are homes where God is acknowledged and Christ is honoured.

I began with a quotation I must, perchance, end with another—one of the speakers dropped it at the enthusiastic annual meeting of the London Division at Queen's Hall on March 14th last—coming from which, alas! many were turned away—Be a friend to the very stranger who comes to stay in your Y.W.C.A. Boarding House."

I think she generally is, in the truest sense of the word, though I see it as should be!"—G. M. T.
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