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INTERPRETATION OF SEX.

II.

ARE men and women happy? In the vast majority of cases—no. They are not even "happy on the whole." They are merely content, or, rather, without articulate reasons for discontent. Yet, though happiness is not our "being's end and aim," its widespread absence is a serious matter. Happiness is a thing by the way; it is not an essential thing, but it *is* an indicator influenced by essential things. Happiness is the pervasive effect of joy experienced, or of the known presence of the capacity and opportunity for joy. It is the overspill from joy, and it is a matter for astonishment how far even remote joy proves effective. The essential thing is joy, again not as an end, but as the invariable concomitant of vital forces in liberation. Joy is a kind of thanks which the Spirit of Life pays to the individual, which has enabled its forces to come into play. This life principle never remains in debt to the individual for the conscious summoning together of the psychic forces which are life. It pays in pure joy. Thus passion—which is just this summoning together of psychic force—is always co-existent with joy. Now, although joy is not a conscious end in life, even when its value is known, it is a tremendous factor for the evolution of life, more than equal in force, an prior in precedence, to that *satisfaction* which proved sufficient to lure the sub-human race up to the level of the human. Hence, what sex was up to the fringe of the human, passion is to the limits of the super-human. What the lure will be in the super-super-human, human mind totally fails to apprehend. But swinging now midway between human and superhuman, we can have intuitive knowledge of the human as we have biological knowledge of the sub-human. What, then, are the new features which stand out from the sublimation of animal sex into human passion? As all passion is alike in its main effect of bringing the vital principle into play, to describe the attributes of passion in one sphere is tantamount to a description of it in any other. The greatest difficulty in connection with the elucidating of questions in the sphere of passion, as indeed in any sphere of psychological inquiry, lies in the ambiguous use of terms. We get bound up in mere word-spinning, and consequently get landed anywhere and nowhere. We, therefore, choose to describe an experience and label it passion, and in speaking henceforward of passion roused by no matter what cause, we shall in main features mean phenomena with characteristics such as we describe. The case described relates to an incident which arose in connection with the woman's movement, and no one, we think, will dispute that this movement in its main aspects is animated by passion: A feminist rebel, who vouches for the accuracy of the experience was arrested in connection with circumstances, the leading up to which had involved moral decisions sufficiently serious as to involve the risks of life and death in regard to other persons. These decisions were arrived at alone, and involved individual responsibility. In the consequent trial, this individual responsibility was accepted with a clear consciousness as to what it implied. In prison, passive resistance to prison routine led to collision with officials, which naturally led to rough handling. Food was refused, but actual lack of food had not gone far enough to account in any way for the

subsequent mental phenomena, which were as follows: Shut up for the night in the cell, suffering acute physical pain, with the quiet came an extraordinary sense of "spirit" expansion. The sensation of increased size was the first marked, but this was followed by the sensation of unlimited power. There was, too, a conscious sense of lightness of weight, and a distinct "seeing" of the atmosphere in vibration. The whole was suffused with the consciousness of calm, radiant, *abiding* joy. The entire experience *lasted*, how long cannot be stated, but it was extended enough to appear "long." It was extended enough for the mind to be able to move round in it, and get its bearings. How it disappeared is not now clear to memory, but for shorter periods it returned on the following days. It seemed, however, that the violent headaches which the hunger-strike developed were later too acute to allow the experience adequately to fix itself.

The incident described, although arising from passion inspired by a Cause, is not in our opinion in any essential feature different from what might be inspired by human "love." It has, indeed, features which immediately suggest similarities with the exaltation of momentary semi-physical sex-experience. The chief difference would lie in the prolongation of time length of the experience given, as compared with that of sex. This prolongation not only allows of the character of the experience being "fixed" mentally; it allows for an accumulation of force of impression, which permits of the experience being recalled in memory, and reverted to for reconfirmation. This is not the case with sex as commonly experienced on a semi-physical basis. The body defeats the experience, as one naturally might expect. The acutest bodily sensation realised, there is nothing left over to experience in the region of the physical. Its next stage must be found in the mental, and the mental cannot be reached through the physical. The mental can include the physical, but the physical cannot include the mental, and it is the prolongation of the mental experience which is desired, even as low down in the scale of human sex-passion as we find it in the "born" prostitute type. The physical is a prison to sense, even with those who make their ultimate appeals through it.

It is, therefore, our belief that passion is the first necessity of human life as opposed to the sub-human. It is only in passion (of one kind and another—the various kinds are, doubtless, interchangeable) that the conscious vital forces can get their full opportunity of action, and when opportunity fails them they work mischief by overcharging the physical. A passion represents a directed vital force, and these forces undirected, are as dangerous as live wires would be left lying haphazard. In the sphere of sex passion alone the lack of direction accounts for the mass of perversions which increase in variety and extent as civilisation advances. In our belief, men and women, from the beginning of adolescence to extreme old age, are liable to perversion, to lust, or to a deadening level of ease at every stage which finds them bereft of passion. Especially is this so among the more strongly vitalised. Only in the interval when one is regathering one's forces together after the waning of passion is one not only free, but safely free. If, for instance, we are going to say that elderly people should more fittingly have done with passion, we must expect to find many strange twists in emotional expression, for when passion is done, life is done, and not all old people are waiting for their coffins.

Leaving the consideration of passion in general, and coming down to sexual passion, after having granted that the physical desire which was the whole of sex in the sub-human sphere, and which will be eliminated in the super-human—and which, moreover, we have only in the form of a remnant in the human—we are brought face to face with the question whether the vital principle which is working upwards will have anything in an increasing sense to borrow from the realm of sex. Obviously, it will have proportionately less to borrow from the physical; but will it have anything to make use of from sex as a passion; or is it as a contemporary journal this week expresses it: "Balcony scenes, bedrooms; after bedrooms, babies; after babies only a gynæcologist dare say what." We think the promulgator of the sentiment is wrong both as to tendency and fact. We waive the right to say even unpleasantly wrong. The vital principle is only just beginning to make use of sex passion. What a Beatrice effected, for instance, for a Dante, men and women are just beginning to divine. In the first place, the selection involved in sex passion implies that one spirit has found another of sufficiently near kinship to make heightened understanding possible. It becomes possible for each of two to project into the kindred but variant mind qualities of the other, those qualities desired but known to be missing in the individual self; to project also those qualities, not missing, but barely nascent; in short, the highest possible in the conception of oneself is projected into an atmosphere which heightens their worth; in this atmosphere they are loved, and so made, by adoption, one's own. Thus passion returns to us the image of our own qualities made perfect, together with the qualities we would have desired for ourselves could we have chosen. Sexual passion in this respect indeed fulfils the service of a nearer deity: even as we more remotely make our god the highest we can conceive, in passion we create for ourselves a more intimate divinity.

So Beatrice served for Dante. The more perfect this projection, the more alien does passion become to the call of the physical. Not because it chooses to forego the physical, but because its joys are intenser and more lasting—such joys as we can conceive bespeaking a force which, far from being overthrown in the physical, can carry us on beyond its threshold. Moreover, emotions which arise from sexual passion are responsible for that aspect of spiritual growth which we may call other-mindedness, and which is behind the little understood, though widely practised, principles of chivalry and self-sacrifice. The intense passion, with its implied concentration and sympathy with one, quickens attention and sympathy with all. More than all, however, in thinking upon sex passion, we are led to consider the very mystery which lies in the heart of sex from its earliest beginnings, *i.e.*, the need which life force appears to have of a duplication or multiplication of forces in order to intensify its potentialities. The amalgamation of cells with group-cells prior to bifurcation found among the earliest forms of life finds an echo in the linking together of souls consequent from the spiritual loneliness of human lives. So in the interknitting of two human souls there is an intensification of force which brings a quality different in degree and kind from either considered separately. That this force spends itself primarily on the begetting of human babies we do not believe, but discussion of that we leave to a further article.

(*To be continued.*)

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

Browning.

HOW gentle Time is with our limited intellects. How little he cares to thrust his truths upon them. If they jib at unfamiliar truths, Time, like an indulgent nurse, removes them, and lets them return only after completing a wide circle round. But they *do* return. The return is as certain as their temporary eclipse. They are eclipsed indeed only that they may return more effectively in a later season. The ways of Time and the patience of Truth are insistently in our minds when we think of Browning and his message. The centenary of his birth, which we commemorate this week, fixes a landmark which invites us to look forward and backward in the light of his message. By the hundred, notices of Browning, and estimations of his work and influence, will at this time be made. Most of them, we venture to say, will speak of a work which Has Been, of an influence which has run down. We shall note with keen eyes those reviews which recognise in Browning a force whose work has not yet been utilised, and whose influence lies mainly in the future, and in the near future at that. Those who *know* Browning, and are not merely acquainted with him, and those who recognise the new forces in philosophic thought to-day, must of necessity see that the day of Browning is yet to come. The ignorance of vital methods which lay thick about the last century; the preoccupation with the material and consequent ignoring of the essential; the undue emphasis placed upon the value of physical law—these, happily, are passing. The new era dawns. No longer will Browning be as a Voice crying in the Wilderness. He will be the Sage. The most intrepid, dogged, skilful experimenter in the intuitive world, in an age of intuitive valuations, Browning will find the audience which, in the years of his human lifetime, he was too early for. Browning preceded Bergson; but Bergson makes Browning pertinent. Bergson says what might be done without diminution of scientific dignity. Browning throughout half a century—through an age of doubt, scepticism, and impatience—*did* it. Through close-packed volumes, he applied the intuitive method, with the insight of genius, the passion of a believer, the giant's strength of a great soul roused to defend its inner voices against its gainsayers. But the winter of doubt is past; the springtime of belief is at hand. Bergson, like a schoolmaster, with pointer and blackboard, has made clear to slow understandings that their greatest achievement, their subtlest inductions and deductions, are less than the creative knowledge which has resided immanent in the sluggish depths of soul; projections of life into Being greater than the subtlest co-ordinations of results ready made from material lying created to hand. And who has pushed back the confines of life as Browning has? Standing on the common level, by thrust, strain, striving, swelling of sense—by that inflation of sense which is so rare that we yet have to coin the words to tell it in—Browning's works embody a vision of mankind greater and more wonderful than anything which has preceded it, or, indeed, followed it. The striving to attain this vision, and the nature of the vision when attained, accounts for the supposed difficulty and eccentricity of Browning's poems. With the prescience of "novel splendours" to burst forth, Browning follows his creation along the track of the wonder—every turn and twist of the soul he follows, "watching to see some wonder momently grow out—all heaven meanwhile condensed into one eye, which fears to lose the wonder should it wink." Visions drawn forth at such cost to their creator are not then to be apprehended by the spectator from the outside, if approached in the spirit of the sentimental snippet-taster, who is a fair sample of those who "love poetry," the "lovers of beautiful" poetry, such as they find to their fill in, for instance, Tennyson's Idylls. Browning is difficult they say—difficult for all unable to sit at attention and watch the creation evolve under one's eyes. And so with Browning's lack of "beauty." What is beauty? The maid sallies forth from the kitchen wearing the "beautiful" garb the mistress would shudder to wear. And in inverse degree, there are those who see in Browning a beauty which far transcends the "beauty" which the less virile find in Swinburne, Arnold, or Tennyson. How, indeed, can people unable to apprehend that a strange new spiritual creation stands complete before their eyes, apprehend the beauty of that creation? No wonder Browning withdrew within himself and refused to parley with the popular crowd:

> "Here's the work I hand, this scroll,
> Yours to take or leave; as duly
> Mine remains the unproffered Soul."

No wonder he refused to explain himself while his work remained uncomprehended:

> "Outside should suffice for evidence,
> And whoso desires to penetrate
> Deeper, must dive by the spirit-sense—
> No optics like yours, at any rate!"

It is to be expected that the man whose powers of vision so out-topped the age should rapidly be out of fashion, even though his brilliance should encourage the spread of a cult among the intellectuals for a brief period. This sense that he would have to bide his time, that his meat was too strong for his age, finds evidence in his work.

> "'The poets pour us wine'...
> One pours your cup—stark strength,
> Meat for a man; and you eye the pulp...
> ...grumble: 'Good!
> For it swells resolve; breeds hardihood.
> Despatch it then in a single gulp!'
> So, down, with a wry face goes at length
> The liquor; stuff for strength."

In "Paracelsus," for instance, the most pregnant poem in the English language, he shows knowledge of the faith of men who persist in work not understood of their fellows.

> "....If I stoop
> Into a dark tremendous sea of cloud,
> It is but for a time; I press God's lamp
> Close to my breast; its splendour, soon or late,
> Will pierce the gloom; I shall emerge one day."

In our opinion, Browning will emerge sooner than even True Believers expected. It appears humanity has reached a stage when it is impossible to tolerate the domination of a mere mechanistic, logical interpretation of life for any length of time. Materialism can only hold sway as a mood. Time removes it as rapidly as the sun moves morning mists.

How far Browning was ahead of his contemporaries is shown by the following lines taken from "Charles Avison." These lines might be inserted

into parts of Bergson's "Creative Evolution," without any appreciable lack of germaneness. Speaking of Soul, he writes:—

"You exact
An illustrative image? This may suit:
We see a work. The worker works behind,
Invisible himself. Suppose his act
Be to o'erarch a gulf; he digs, transports,
Shapes, and through enginery—all sizes, sorts,
Lays stone by stone until a floor compact
Proves our bridged causeway. So works Mind by stress
Of faculty, with loose facts, more or less,
Builds up our solid knowledge; all the same,
Underneath rolls what Mind may hide, not tame,
An element which works beyond our guess,
Soul, the unsounded sea—whose lift of surge,
Spite of all superstructure, lets emerge,
In flower and foam, Feeling from out the deeps,
Mind arrogates no mastery upon—
Distinct indisputably. Has there gone
To dig up, drag forth, render smooth from rough
Mind's flooring—operosity enough?
Still the successive labour of each inch,
Who lists may learn: from the last turn of winch
That let the polished slab-stone find its place,
To the first prod of pick-axe at the base
Of the unquarried mountain—what was all
Mind's varied process except natural,
Nay, easy, even, to descry, describe,
After our fashion? 'So worked Mind; its tribe
Of senses ministrant above, below,
Far, near, or now, or haply long ago
Brought to pass knowledge.' But soul's sea—drawn whence,
Fed how, forced whither—by what evidence
Of ebb and flow, that's felt beneath the tread,
Soul has its course 'neath Mind's work overhead—
Who tells of, tracks to source the founts of Soul?
Yet wherefore heaving sway and restless roll
This side and that, except to emulate
Stability above? To match and mate
Feeling with knowledge—make as manifest
Soul's work as Mind's work, ...
. . . . . .
How we feel, hard and fast as what we know—
This were the prize and is the puzzle!—which
Music essays to solve."

It may be said this is philosophy as distinct from poetry, that he is explaining the How, rather than portraying it. But this is easily forgiven, welcomed even as plain statement of doctrine in a poet who has left so many a canvas, on which is painted creative life, in the Act of Becoming. No poet treads with so familiar a foot in the realms of ecstacy.

"Ecstasy's utmost we clutch at the core," and Browning does it in a multitude of ways. In "Abt Vogler" ecstatic creation in Music is portrayed in a poem of loftiest, unflagging beauty and exaltation from beginning to end. It is, indeed, through Music that Browning holds we have our best medium of making vital force manifest; doubtless because the medium is the least material and most mobile; doubtless, too, exactly on this account is Music the most evanescent in manifestation. In the poem referred to above, "Charles Avison," Browning gives utterance to the profoundest observation on Music and its relation to kindred arts. It is, however, in "Abt Vogler" that he lays bare the soul of the creative musician, and his "feel" for the possibilities of his art.

"Here is the finger of God,
A flash of the will that can."
. . . . . .
"The rest may reason and welcome: 'tis we musicians know."

"Would it might tarry like his, the beautiful building of mine,
This which my keys in a crowd pressed and importuned to raise!
Ah, one and all, how they helped, . . .
. . . . . .
Up, the pinnacled glory reached, and the pride of my soul was in sight.
In sight? Not half! for it seemed, it was certain, to match man's birth,
Nature in turn conceived, obeying an impulse as I;
And the emulous heaven yearned down, made effort to reach the earth,
As the earth had done her best, in my passion, to scale the sky;
Novel splendours burst forth, grew familiar, and dwelt with mine,
Not a point nor peak but found and fixed its wondering star;
Meteor-moons, balls of blaze; and they did not pale nor pine,
For earth had attained to heaven, there was no more near nor far."

In another sphere, religion, we get the same dramatic passion of attainment:

"There's heaven above, and night by night
I look right through its gorgeous roof;
No sun and moons, though ere so bright
Avail to stop me; splendour proof
I keep the broods of stars aloof;
For I intend to get to God,
For 'tis to God I speed so fast,
For in God's breast, my own abode,
Those shoals of dazzling glory, passed,
I lay my spirit down at last."
. . . . . .

Thus meditates Johannes Agricola.

In yet another, the sphere of social sympathy, we get the most wonderful of all. In "Saul," after David has poured his spirit through the strings of his harp to recreate the soul of the King, he goes out into the night

"I know not too well how I found my way home in the night,
There were witnesses, cohorts about me, to left and to right,
Angels, powers, the unuttered, unseen, the alive, the aware,
I repressed, I got through them as hardly, as struggling there,
As a runner beset by the populace famished for news—
Life or death. The whole earth was awakened, hell loosed with her crews;
And the stars of night beat with emotion, and tingled and shot
Out in fire the strong pain of pent knowledge; but I fainted not,
For the hand still impelled me at once and supported, suppressed
All the tumult, and quenched it with quiet, and holy behest,
Till the rapture was shut in itself, and the earth sank to rest.
Anon at the dawn, all that trouble had withered from earth. . . ."
. . . . . .

We have omitted the more obvious aspects of Browning in order to emphasise that part of his work which will lead to his early revival. The part of him and his works which is of more general interest we barely touch upon. What would the eugenists have to say to his elopement with an invalid, middle-aged woman? What would a certain school of young men have to say to his reverence for women, for love, for religion? Just gape, we suppose, as they are gaping at many unexpected modern phenomena. We have only space to indicate the limitless humanity of Browning, how it extended from the mystic down to rogues. His picture-gallery of rogues is enough to establish the authority of any ordinary poet—yet in Browning they are tucked in along with scores of equally brilliant essays—Guido, Bishop Blougram, Mr. Sludge, the Medium, and the rest. Of adverse criticism we have none. To have the happy chance of finding Browning's works in early youth, before it was possible to know he was difficult, or obscure, or worse still, fashionable, is to have had the opportunity of drawing the best from them; so much so, that any "worse" there may be, does not exist for us, however that may be for others.

The Problem of Illegitimacy.

I.

"If it was clearly put before anyone, he could not seriously assert that to be 'virtue' which could only be practised at the expenses of another's vice."

—JAMES HINTON.

THE Problem of Illegitimacy is threefold. There is the abstract moral question, whether it is right for women to bear illegitimate children. This is a barren inquiry; an Irish stew of Religion muddled inextricably with the second question—whether it is expedient for the State that illegitimate children should be born. There can be no doubt that, whatever may be the case in other countries, in England the consensus of opinion would be that Religion—none specified, because the generality of English people only recognise one, and that a vague, shadowy thing called Religion—decreed against it, and therefore it must be bad for the State. It is wicked, and therefore must not be talked about. If any case comes to our notice, we must hush it up. With public opinion so certain and determined, the third question is easily answered. Given the fact that illegitimate children are born, do we make the best of a bad business? Public opinion would reply, "We are too gentlemanly to talk about it; but we do all we can—we drive the sinner out." Exactly! But that is not all. The millionaires may wring their hands, the rich may declare it a lie, but there is, and perhaps there always must be, one law for the rich and one for the poor. And in saying that, I mean that law is overwhelmingly on the side of the rich. The *Titanic* is a ghastly record to this fact, and the Problem of Illegitimacy is but another example. Anyone who is economically independent can speculate in mistresses and children as easily as he can in the fashionable shares of the time. He is allowed to speculate in stock and shares. And if his daughter, or anyone connected with him or in whom he is interested is careless or unfortunate enough to be about to bear a child, she goes to some quiet place where she is not known; a visit and a large fee are paid to the family solicitor, and subsequently some mute, inglorious country parson increases his income. Adultery, a vice of the poor, is a pastime for the rich. If further proof for this self-evident truth be required, it is to be found in the fact that so conventional a dramatist as Somerset Maughan wrote a play on this very subject. But our business is not with the rich: they can quite well look after themselves. The object of this first article is to discover what actually does happen to unmarried women who are not economically independent, but who are unfortunate enough to bear children. And this inquiry is entirely irrespective of whether the actual women are wicked or not. It has equally to do with the children and the conditions under which they are born. But, at the same time, some very remarkable words of Mrs. Craik should be remembered, "The women who fall are by no means the worst of their station. . . . 'I don't know how it is, . . . whether their superiority makes them dissatisfied with their own rank . . . so that they fall easier victims to the rank above them, or whether, though this theory will shock many people, other virtues can exist and flourish entirely distinct from, and after the loss of, that which we are accustomed to believe the indispensable virtue of our sex—chastity. I cannot explain this; I can only say that it is so, that some of my most promising village girls have been the first to come to harm; and some of the best and most faithful servants I ever had have been girls who have fallen into shame, and who, had I not gone to the rescue and put them in the way to do well, would infallibly have become "fallen women."'" ("A Woman's Thoughts About Women," 1858, p. 291.) Can anyone honestly deny this?

This Public Opinion of Morality, Religion, and Wickedness hits those classes hardest who are directly dependent upon the rich for their livelihood, and who perforce must copy the shibboleths the rich set up and pretend to reverence; those classes who falsely call themselves "the Backbone of the Nation"—the Upper and Lower Middle Classes, who typify England in this that it is practically impossible to get new ideas into their heads. They are the National Sheep. They follow (very slowly) the progress started from above or below them. They are the people who believe that the triumph of England's greatness lies in the fact that she has "muddled through" so grandly! And they have evolved a complete way of dealing with this problem for which we are seeking a solution. If you don't want to see a thing, it is not there. If your friends and neighbours do the extraordinary, cut them. If your children are wicked, "cut them off and cast them from you." There has grown up a complete ostracism for persons who are unusual in their sexual lives—unusual in the sense that they have been found out or have not been ashamed of the part they have played. And this ostracism is the crucial point of our problem, because it

embraces all those persons who, having had sexual intercourse and having to face the consequences, are least able to fend for themselves. These are the economically dependent. Below them, it is true, we find another class who regard promiscuous child-bearing with wonderful tolerance; but these are a special group, who are astounding biologically, but do not, because of their give-and-take proclivities, actually come under the head of the economically dependent.

The results of this ostracism are many and various, but all pernicious. Initially, it breeds the fear of discovery and indiscriminate methods of prevention. Do these latter fail and the fact be known, to satisfy the respectability of the class the ostracism is completed, the result being that, for every new soul born into the world, two at least are damned.

When a girl of this class finds that she is in danger and her whole chance in life is at stake, she is ready to take any means of prevention. Nor is she usually in possession of any special knowledge. Our girls are too innocent in their ignorance, and too ignorant in their innocence. She will use every kind of preventive, believing in every quack, regardless of her future health, and, in the event of these failing, will submit to an illegal operation. (It is so like the English nation to make a moral law that no unmarried girl shall have a child, and then pass an administrative one to make it a criminal offence if she takes steps to stop that child.) The result is usually extremely prejudicial to her health and to the health of her future children. But expense is incurred by this means; and if she and her man have—or as it is too often, she by herself—to go through with the child's birth, all those months when a woman most requires special rest, special quiet, and, in particular, special mental repose, will be spent in anxiety and fear. And, in passing, let me point out to those who believe vaguely that a "love child" is the finest type that can be born, that this is only true in so far as the atmosphere in which the potential mother spends her months of pregnancy is one of love and unruffled calm. And then a first child is very often not as fine a specimen as subsequent ones, from the fact that in undergoing such a tremendous adventure the new mother is naturally anxious, and the child suffers accordingly. Unfortunately, Life is often hard upon this form of romance. Ostracism, then, is responsible for a poor type of child. But that is not all. In too many cases the girl has to keep herself, and it is mighty difficult to get a job without a character. You cannot bring babies up upon air. If the choice comes, is it to be wondered at if she sacrifices her baby? Your righteous officials, judges, and juries will condemn the Daisy Lords till this ostracism is broken down by Freemen and Freewomen. And is it not better for the mother to kill her own child than that there should be, *as there are in every part of England to-day*, men and women making a living by Baby Farming—that is, deliberately buying children and doing them to death either by starvation or actual violence. Those who are curious about this particular form of the dignity of labour can find a superabundance of evidence at the offices of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, or in their little book, "The Baby Farmer." These are the results of our morality, of our carefully considered punishment by ostracism. Our virtue is paid for in this way; but the worst is to come. Ostracism is the policy whereby we convert women of proved capacity for childbirth into prostitutes.

WILLIAM FOSS.

(To be continued.)

Two Poets.*

THE last few days have seen the publication of two very interesting books of poems: "Moods, Songs and Doggerels," by John Galsworthy, and "The Hill of Vision," by James Stephens. There is a serious fault common to both these books. There is too much God in them. When in doubt Mr. Galsworthy trims the tail of his poem with a neat and well-timed reference to God. And Mr. Stephens leaves one with the impression that God is an old gentleman who has in some official capacity full control over the agricultural conditions of Ireland, but often spends the day in Dublin. One expects this unconvincing familiarity with the divine in the pietistic poetry of Mr. Alfred Noyes, which is frankly designed for the vicarage, but not in the work of such honest men as Mr. Galsworthy or Mr. Stephens. In the case of the latter it is more explicable, for this is the distinctive vice of the Irish school. The other day, seeking light upon the subject of co-operative dairy-farming in Ireland, I turned to "Co-operation and Nationality," by Mr. George W. Russell, well known as a poet of the Celtic Renaissance under the initials A. E. In this agricultural discourse there was more about the Milky Way than about milk, and one could not see the cow for the mob of minor deities and spirits with which Mr. Russell peopled the pastoral districts of Ireland.

This inability to take God for granted is positively a sign of the lack of the religious sense. It is annoying, as though a lunatic should pull us by the sleeve and say—"That thing in the black cloth coat and trousers, with the black top-hat on its head, and black boots on its feet—that's a man, that is." William Blake was so accustomed to regard every leaf, every bird, as a direct manifestation of God that he never thought it worth mentioning, and so His name occurs quite infrequently in the verses that are more fully conscious of Him than any other.

But apart from this fault these two are poles asunder. Mr. Galsworthy's poetry is the outcome of effort, while Mr. Stephens' is the Act of God—to borrow a phrase from the terms of the Workmen's Compensation Act. For poetry is as natural and imperative a function of Mr. Stephens' being as breathing. You might hoist Mr. Stephens on to the chill peaks of an Arctic iceberg, or drop him into a coal-cellar, or make him a member of Parliament, but you could never stop him writing poetry. Reading "The Hill of Vision" is like looking on some stupendous manifestation of natural force, like Niagara.

But Mr. Galsworthy writes verses because, like all artists, he has a keen curiosity about the technique of his art to its most remote and unfamiliar developments. Other authors play with the baser manifestations of their craft, such as the detective story; but Mr. Galsworthy fastidiously keeps to the pure air of the uplands, even though the path be stony. It is such a wild scramble to the peaks that the work sustains several concussions by the way. For one thing, it seems such an achievement to have produced anything in lines

* "Moods, Songs, and Doggerels." By John Galsworthy. 5s. (Heinemann.)

"Insurrections." By James Stephens. 1s. (Maunsel and Co.)

"The Hill of Vision." By James Stephens. 3s. 6d. (Maunsel and Co.)

that scan and rhyme that he cannot bear to suppress any of these experiments. So bound in with poems of real beauty like "A Dream" or "Errantry," we find trivial and unlovely verses like "Old Year." And in the agitation of the moment he loses all decent respect for craftsmanship. Mr. Galsworthy of the silver style ought not to let the world read lines like these:—

"Are we the griefs buried deep in dear hearts—
Sore left—mourning us gone?"

—which sounds like a literal translation from the German. And the man who wrote "Fraternity," that masterpiece of economy in which not even the loveliest word was used for vanity alone, but had to help the book to the fulfilling of its artistic purpose, ought not to commit such pointless anecdotes as "On a Soldier's Funeral." This perfidy towards 'Art shows the blacker beside the passages where he has achieved beauty, such as this:—

"Ah! for the summons of a challenge cry,
Which sets to swinging fast the bell that tolls
The high and leaping chimes of sympathy
Within that true cathedral of our souls,
Set in our bodies' jeering market-place."

It is worth while considering why Mr. Galsworthy, a genius and one of those who have built new mansions of Beauty and Tragedy along the road of Art, is not a poet. Unless the poet loses his life he shall not find it. He must sacrifice the intensity of individual existence that allows moralists and philosophers to look on the world and hold aloof to study it, and diffuse himself through the wave of passion the crest of which we call Life. As the Bergsonian would say, he must sacrifice the "intellect," or the power of arranging the data of Life, so that we can make laws therefrom, for "intuition," or the consciousness of Life. The poet must be the man who loves the woman, and the woman who is loved: he must be the creative energy that brought to being the brightness of her hair, the strength of his body. He must be the wind that blows in their faces, the wild thyme they lie on, the very breath of Life the earth exhales to the stars, and the light the stars burn in answer. "I am the mouth that is kissed And the breath in the kiss, The search and the sought and the seeker, the soul and the body that is."

Mr. Galsworthy's genius is of another sort. His refusal to be influenced by the emotional waves of other people make the valuable critic of Life that he is. Because of his singleness of eye he recognises Tragedy, however much disguised it enters the market-place. But of its secret birth and solitary growth he knows nothing. "The Man of Property" and "The Country House" were great art, because he described with sympathy and truth the effects of a collision between human lives and a hard social law. But when in "The Patrician" these effects included the silent, private love of a man for a woman, a thing existing only in the spiritual world, intangible, unobservable, the book was weak. It was like a dream, in everything like life yet not life.

This inability to become another person leads Mr. Galsworthy into positive misstatements. The "Slum Cry" is an example of this:—

"Of a night without stars—wind withdrawn,
God's face hidden, indignity near me,
Drink and the paraffin flares to sear me—
Dust-coloured hunger—so was I born!
Of a city noonday—sand through sieve,
Sifting down, dusk padding the glamour—
I of the desolate, white-lipped clamour—
Millioning fester—so do I live!
Of a poor-house morning—not asking why,
Breath choked, dry-eyed—death of me staring;
Faces of strangers, and no one caring—
God! who hath made me!—so shall I die!"

This gives an excellent idea of what Mr. Galsworthy would feel if he was exposed to the physical discomforts of slum life; but as an attempt to express the soul of a human being it rings false.

In vivid contrast to this are the dramatic verses of Mr. Stephens, who has the intuitive passion of the poet by nature. His drunken peasants poetising in the bar, his rebellious, loving women, his tramps mourning over the gloom of the world, all speak truly and according to their nature. They speak beautifully with a young largeness of speech. When Tomas an Buile saw God

"He was not satisfied;
His look was all dissatisfied.
His beard swung in a wind far out of sight
Behind the world's curve. . . ."

And the hair of the primeval woman, hunted over the hill,

"Swung far behind,
Straight as a stream balanced upon the wind.
O it was black, dipped
In the dregs of midnight with a spark
Caught from a star that smouldered in the dark."

But these are from "Insurrections," a book published three years ago. There is a hopeful gulf between it and the book published to-day. Mr. Stephens was in that stage of immaturity when we dabble in the black waters of horror, because we are so full of health and joy that in reaction against ourselves we seek the gloomy. Mr. Stephens would not now, I think, write a poem about an old gentleman, apparently a widower in reduced circumstances, who hung himself on a bent tree against the moon on a hill beside the sea—

"My God!—a demon up from hell,
Jab-jabbered as the old man fell."

Which is very young.

But in his new book he has left that ingenuous world, and sees the earth from "the Hill of Vision, which the gods call Mount Derision." His poems no longer treat each human being as a separate entity complete, but deal with universal types, the precious fragments of a precious scheme. He is building up his own world of imagination, in which, as Blake said, exist "the permanent realities of everything which we see reflected in this vegetable glass of nature." Already he has peopled it with sprites of his own invention, a lonely God who plants in Eternity the seed of man so that—

"The topmost blossom of his growing, I
Shall take unto Me, cherish and lift high
Beside Myself upon My holy throne,"—

an old and haggard Satan sitting on a rusty throne, and restive, gleaming angels who scatter the poppy-seed in the corn. Now that Mr. Stephens has provided his world with a mythology, he must go forward and make a religion, and then a philosophy. At present the nearest he gets to a philosophy is the idea set forth in a poem called "Treason," which tells how a peasant sees a black brood of demons driving down from behind the moon on to a fair meadow where stand an assembly of radiant angels. He rushes on to fight for the angels, but finds them embracing the happy demons—

"I heard them plan
Of time and space and man,
And what to do each in a different way,
And far apart, and when they'd meet again.
Alas, we are betrayed! The devils are
Blood-brothers of the gods. . . ."

Beyond this conception of good and evil as friendly powers working in amity to lift man to the throne of God he has not yet travelled.

Mr. Galsworthy's maturer philosophy is expressed in the most beautiful poem in "Moods, Songs, and Doggerels," which retains in its verse the colour and swift strength of his prose. He

dreams that God comes to him and leads him out to a tall and lonely tree hung with ropes of yew-dark bough, then bids him confess his faith or die. So he speaks:—

"I see two equal laws obey
One sovran, never captured Law—
For all this world would melt away
If Heart of Mystery we saw.
And first of these twin equal laws
Is that dynamic force which flows
In life—of every birth the cause—
That spirit force which cannot tire
Of franchisement, and keeps no troth.
Nor ever rests from building spire,
And painting colours on the moth,
A quenchless flame that licks all air,
And lights and drives the wandering star,
That dyes with gold the maiden's hair,
And rives with frost the granite spar.
The second equal law is this:
Implicit deep in all increase
And stir of living things, there is
A nothingness, a fate of peace, . . .
All forms upswelling have within
Their hearts a static decadence;
In utter stillness does the thin
Reverberation lose its sense;
To ash the spark of spirit dies,
Each revolution of each sphere,
Each swoop of every bird that flies
To its own stilly death draws near.
And there's between these laws the leap,
And drive, and stir of endless war; . . .
Yet these two laws, so fixed apart
As day and night, are brought to fold
Within that one and Sovran Heart
Whose secret never shall be told. . . .
That Sovran Heart is Harmony!
Its eyes unseen, its ways unknown.
'Tis utter Justice; boundless Sea
Of Unity; and Secret Throne
Of Love; a spirit Meeting Place
Of vital dust and mortal breath,
That needs no point of time or space
To bind together Life and Death."

The Sovran Heart of Harmony, that is the goal to which all the human spirit makes its ways, whether it be the scientific or artistic or religious spirit. It has come about through the conditions of modern industrialism, which have overworked our motor centres and almost atrophied our sensory centres, that this ideal of Harmony, of the ultimate union and fusion of all the forces of the Universe, has come to be hated. People dislike the idea of peace, because the only peace they know is death. They like the competitive system, because it keeps the State in a ferment. They will let the scientist investigate only a part of life; they prefer to wander through the blackness of ignorance, stumbling against obstacles, because only by feeling pain can they realise that they are alive. That is why even the best of us have a brutish instinct towards a religion of violent repentances and renunciations, those insensate excisions out of the lovely breathing body of Life.

While the crowd runs hither and thither in the sterile passion of Civil War, the artist stays at home guarding Life, like some loyalist who makes his humble house the treasure chest of the Crown jewels. Since Spenser wrote, how England has wandered into the houses of misery and vulgarity and slavery! Yet John Galsworthy inherits untarnished the gold of the spirit that wrote—

"Then gin I thinke on that which Nature sayd,
Of that same time when no more Change shall be,
But stedfast rest of all things, firmely stayd
Upon the pillours of Eternity,
That is contrayr to Mutabilitie;
For all that moveth doth in Change delight:
But thenceforth all shall rest eternally
With Him that is the God of Sabaoth hight:
O! that great Sabaoth God, grant me that Sabaoth's sight.

REBECCA WEST.

The Way of Circumstance.

A TRUE INCIDENT.

HE was a raw young man of twenty-one years, a greenhorn from the West Country. He had dashed away from a quiet homestead to the great world-city to seek his fortune without notice to his parents, who had refused his request to be allowed to go, tired of the round of rural duties, of the tending of sheep, and of the bartering of oxen. Something within told him that he was made for life amongst men, was destined to rank high among those who obtained place and distinction in human affairs. Assiduous self-culture had made him bold, and strengthened him in his determination. "Certainly," he had argued, "the paths may be hazardous; but what were hazard and failure in great cities compared with the tragedy of rural life?" He had read Hardy, and every tale of rural woe had increased his loathing for a life that he felt to be unworthy of his mental powers and equipment.

He had failed. Failure was a certainty in such a case, but he had not dreamed of failing. Nobody wanted him even as a clerk. He had not the mechanical skill required nowadays for this rung of the ladder of civilisation; he could neither use a typewriter nor write in shorthand. "I can use my head," he had explained to many an employer of labour, only to be met with: "We only want machines; the heads of our departments are men of experience." And he was not a man of experience, however good his head might be.

He would not return to his parents. His failure implied ignominy, and he could not face the jeers of his elders. He had the "pride" of his age.

But things had got to a desperate pass. A week's board had become due that morning, and he had slunk away from the house at an early hour, determined to renew his efforts with redoubled energy and vigour. The end of the day, however, had brought him no nearer the goal of an employment.

Up to midnight and through the early hours of morning he had paced Oxford Street, Regent Street, and Piccadilly. He had avoided the parks and the Embankment, turning from them with a shudder of horror. He had set out upon his wanderings bravely enough; but the hours and their content of experience for him had sickened and depressed him. He was famished and weary.

He left Piccadilly, and sauntered to Trafalgar Square and into the Strand as a splash of light in the Eastern sky notified the approach of dawn. At the sight he breathed more freely, for with dawn hopes rise again; the black shadows of despair flee with the silent gloom of the night.

He suddenly remembered Fleet Street and certain ambitions he still cherished. He would go to hear the pulsing of the great printing presses, and see the disgorging of the world's news. He had heard, in the boarding house, of Fleet Street in the early morning hours. There was a fellow-boarder who had frequently enlarged upon the wonder of the sight and the strange emotions it was wont to rouse in him. But after he had gone a few steps in the Strand he changed his mind. He found himself watching with interest the great country carts that lumbered into Covent Garden; then he followed them.

The market was alive with movement and the sound of voices, and splashed with a hundred colours. The colours, the scents, even the bartering, for a moment filled him with a great desire. Could he not realise himself in this milieu? Could he not find some satisfaction in barter in the heart of a great city? It would be something to live amongst his fellows. The monotony of life experienced in a spot remote from larger communities would no longer be felt. His was an occupation ready to hand. Moreover, he was in the centre of intellectual life. London would prove a never-failing supply for his mental needs. If he could only start life in this simple way! If he had even a few shillings, like the fellows who were buying flowers at his side, and filling their barrows, what would he not give!

"Why, it's Mister Dick!"

He turned round and looked upon a painted face, such as he had turned from in disgust a hundred times in Piccadilly and otherwhere last night.

"Mister Dick, don't you know me?"

Mister Dick looked stupidly at the face before him.

"Martha Dawe! What brings you here? What are you doing here?"

"Mister Dick you look as though you were starvin'."

He did not know what to say in reply. It seemed as if the sound of the word "starving" brought more vividly to conscience than ever the pangs of hunger. Yet how could he confess hunger to Martha Dawe? Martha Dawe had been long given up in that village in the West Country as a bad lot. She had deliberately left good service in Belgrave Square for another life—the life of the streets. So folks had said, and certainly she never came back to the village. Mister Dick was aware now that the gossip of the village was true. Martha Dawe stood before him a painted and gaudy thing like all the others.

"Martha," repeated Dick, somewhat solemnly, "what brings you here?"

"I'm buying flowers, Mister Dick. I always come here a' mornin's after—well, when I've got a bit. It so brings me back to the old country. But Mister Dick, you're hungry. I've an eye for such things now."

"I'm not," said Dick angrily, turning his back upon her.

Martha Dawe seized his arm and pressed half a sovereign into his hand.

"I couldn't a-bear to see you starvin', Mister Dick!"

The coin dropped out of his hand on to the ground. She picked it up and offered it to him. He shook his head, and tears welled in her eyes.

"Come along into Lockhart's," she urged. "It's the only place this time of the mornin'."

Some soft influence suffused his being, and he followed her.

"I ought not," he stammered.

"With life, oughts have nothing to do. I've learned that," she said. "Life is bigger than oughts."

He suddenly realised her wisdom, and did not hesitate.

"People who live by oughts have no hearts. We put oughts aside, keep our hearts, and live."

"I thought prostitutes bad people."

"They're made out so," she replied. "But at least we help one t'other along."

As he sipped his coffee his vision became clearer. He had learned his first lesson in unconventionality, and incidentally started as a Covent Garden merchant.

CHARLES GRANVILLE.

"Talking About Shakespeare."

SO far as I know, no satisfactory reply has yet appeared to the argument, or rather, challenge, that since woman has never produced a genius in any way comparable to the great men of the world, she is, on the whole, inferior to man, and consequently on the whole better dispensed with in the affairs of State. That bumptious but astute philistine opportunist, F. E. Smith, in the course of a recent debate, made so bold as to declare that no woman had ever produced anything (barring children) of any real value to the world. Shakespeare was dragged in with the usual patronage, while trumpets were blown in honour of the sex which had apparently proved its capacity for government by its possession of so eminent and respectable an ornament. And no really adequate answer was forthcoming. The retort to the effect that F. E. Smith's mother had certainly produced nothing of any value to the world if her efforts in that direction had been confined to the production of F. E. Smith, while undoubtedly true and quite pardonable under the circumstances, could hardly be considered the last word on the subject; the somewhat more sober query as to how many Shakespeares were to be found round a modern polling booth begged the question, if anything, still more blatantly. One was left with an uncomfortable feeling that a score had been registered against one. And yet I venture to say, in view of modern scientific revelations, that the question is one which Feminists can not only afford to meet, but might with advantage press home with a good deal of emphasis.

The idea of a Shakespeare at the polling booth

suggests at once an interesting enquiry: How would the Bard, so situated, compare with his brother electors? In what frame of mind would he make "one of them" in their plans and conspiracies for the various questions at issue? I warn the Smithites that any attempt to deal with this side of the question will lead them to the sad discovery that Shakespeare in their hands is a boomerang of a decidedly dangerous—not to say, fatal—character.

I wonder, by the way, if Mr. F. E. Smith has ever attempted to get through a work of Shakespeare's since the unavoidable encounters of his school-days; I wonder how many of those who, like him, prate so glibly about the glory of his genius, are capable of an intelligent appreciation of it. . . . But let me be honest: I do not really wonder at all. I would—to use a vulgar expression—bet my last button that the Smithites' knowledge of Shakespeare is limited to a dim recollection of some dull and literally blank verse in an impossible dialect, coupled with a few rather obvious quotations for use in cultivated conversation and for impressing womenfolk. Do not let it be imagined that I mean this by way of a reproach to these inestimable persons. On the contrary, it is about the only thing that can be said in their favour. It is true that

> "The man that hath no music in himself,
> Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
> Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils:
> The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
> And his affections dark as Erebus:"

nor can one reasonably dissent from Shakespeare when he adds:

> "Let no such man be trusted."

But it would be unfair and uncharitable to blame a man simply because he hath no music in himself. A physiological incapacity to appreciate the delicate sentiments and phrases of the "swan of Avon" covers a multitude of sins. It is, to my mind, as worthy and justifiable a plea as insanity. And I am all for making our asylums as comfortable as may be practicable.

It is, however, unfortunate—not for my argument, but for Shakespeare's influence—that the man that hath no music in himself is, as a matter of fact, trusted, and trusted very considerably, by the people of this country. A man professing somewhat different views on most academic subjects, but of substantially the same calibre as the man Smith, and equally unmusical, is trusted by the people to the tune of the Premiership of the Realm! Indeed, I think Shakespeare would be disinclined to trust any single member of the present political gang, all of whom come notoriously within the category of the unmusical—to judge, at any rate, from the records of their public lives. It is a mere platitude to say that self-interest is the sole motive in our political system to-day—and self-interest not only on the part of the governors, but especially and most markedly on the part of the so-called governed. The candidates for Parliament will sink to any depth to catch the votes of the electors: the votes of the electors are caught by appealing to their greed and their personal interests. It is pretty evident that Shakespeare at his mildest would say of the modern lawmaker: "Let no such man be trusted."

And this is the Shakespeare whom these very politicians vaunt in the faces of women who demand admission into politics on humanitarian grounds! Can anyone doubt that they do not understand Shakespeare? And not this alone: there is, in my opinion, a far deeper significance in the paradox. I submit, on what seem to me irrefutable grounds, that the reason the mass of men do not understand Shakespeare is this: *he is not of the same sex.* We have all heard the despairing admission that men cannot understand woman—that she is a mystery, an enigma, "beyond them." They do not understand Shakespeare for the same reason. Shakespeare is "beyond them" to precisely the same extent and in precisely the same way. So, too, if I may appear to wander for a moment outside my subject, is that other and even greater "male" genius, Jesus Christ.

I do not propose to enter into a detailed comparison of Shakespeare and Christ. I assert in all brevity that their deepest sentiments were substantially the same. It is a matter of intuition. Anyone who knows his Shakespeare and his New Testament—anyone, that is to say, with the necessary music in himself—is bound to come to the same conclusion. Besides, Frank Harris mentions it in his monumental "Women of Shakespeare," and Frank Harris' word on the subject is spiritual law.

No one will deny that women in general have always found a personal affinity in the figure of Christ—least of all the unsympathetical, unmusical man. It is one of his most constant and most typical sneers. Nay, it is one of his strongest objections to Woman Suffrage (her capacity for recognising and appreciating genius is apparently even more damning than her lack of genius in herself!). And the Art of Shakespeare, like the Art of Christ, has always found a readier following among women than among men. Art and religion are, indeed, fundamentally akin. The "artistic temperament," the capacity for emotion, is inextricably bound up with heroism, martyrdom, and the sympathy in general which is the root of all religion. Wilde, in serious mood, always insisted on the artistic side of Christ. To a corresponding degree, Shakespeare may be said to be fundamentally religious.

We must recognise the fact that the normal man—the "manly" man—is really incapable of religion—at least, of religion as understood by Christ and His followers. The "manly" man's religion at most is that of those survivors of the *Titanic* who, according to the account of one of them, passed the night on a raft reciting the Lord's Prayer—or so much of it as they could recall from childhood: it is a form of cowardice pure and simple. Fortunately, the purely "manly" man is a very rare phenomenon—as Weininger showed. Most men have at least a certain amount of womanliness in their composition. Manliness is only a convenient term for one of the two elements of which all human life is composed—so-called because it is the element infinitely more common in man than in woman. It is the element of hedonism. As soon as man stoops to unselfishness or heroism, he loses it—the womanly element in him gains the upper hand. The womanly element—the element correspondingly preponderant among women—is sympathy: sympathy for all things living, sympathy, in particular, for the manly (generally mistaken for weakness). The male egoist (*i.e.*, the completely "manly" man) is selfish; the female egoist (the completely "womanly" woman) is self-sacrificing. And this self-fulfilling self-sacrifice is as clearly at the root of the Art-Soul as of the universally recognised Mother-Soul. Indeed, the close connection between these two (out of many) expressions of the womanly element has been admirably explained in a well-known passage in the first act of "Man and Superman."

The fact that creative Art appears to thrive best in the male frame does not in the least affect its

nature: it is womanliness, the element common to most of the female population of the world.

Remove the artist from the Smithian list of "male" geniuses and what remains? Is there, indeed, no such thing as a really male genius? I think we may find a very distinct form of it. Napoleon was undoubtedly a genius, a man of abnormal intellectual capacity—and there was nothing of the woman about him. He was completely "manly," wholly selfish—in love as well as in war. He had no concern for other people except as instruments for his own personal advantage. But he is, I find, a very rare instance of that genius appearing in a physical male—for, just as womanly genius appears generally in the male frame, so manly genius may be observed chiefly among the "female of the species." The utterly and unscrupulously selfish never attained such dazzling heights as in the person of the "woman" Cleopatra. The Cleopatras throughout the ages have made history; their fame is as immortal as that of Christ and Shakespeare. They are the brilliantly manly—the nearest parallel we have to the womanly genius of the artist. We may note in passing that these *male* geniuses, at least, have never accomplished anything of value to the world —that they have, on the contrary, wrought infinite harm and destruction.

Frank Harris has summed up Shakespeare's life and tragedy in a single sentence: "Hamlet in love with Cleopatra." Let us think for a moment what this implies. How clearly we can see the tortured soul of the Dane with its introspection, its music, grovelling in a blind obsession before a creature which every fibre of reason warns it is worthless and wanton. And does not this picture bring home to us uncontrovertibly the fact I am seeking to establish? Is it not the conventional idea of love between man and woman—*only with the sexes reversed?* What is Cleopatra but Don Juan—if anything, a little more so? What is Hamlet, in this position, but the Eternal Gretchen? As Harris points out, Shakespeare, like Jesus, has always been "gentle." Even Baconians are forced to admit this. In a recent effusion of this school, "Francis Bacon wrote Shakespeare," the author, Mr. H. Crouch-Batchelor, takes care to emphasise the fact that Bacon was "almost feminine." How grotesque, after this, sound the facts as forged in the Smithy of political special pleading!

It is singularly unfortunate that Shakespeare did not himself realise the nature of his genius. Over and over again he dogmatises on the genus Cleopatra under the name of Woman. (Rudyard Kipling to-day is guilty of the same fallacy—he imagines himself a man, whereas, in fact, of course, it is his Vampires who represent the manly element in his work.) Of the tragic phenomenon of male inconstancy Shakespeare writes: "Frailty, thy name is Woman." On the most womanly of his characters, he reflects:—

> "His life was gentle, and the elements
> So mixed in him that Nature might stand up
> And say to all the world: this was a man!"

The irony of it when we compare Brutus, who

> ". . . only in a general honest thought,
> And common good to all made one of them,"

with the corrupt politician of our present unmusical system! Why, it is precisely Brutus with her overwhelming sympathy that is clamouring and suffering for power to deal with the dirt and disease and poverty bred by the scramble that, in male parlance, goes by the name of Imperial government.

But if Shakespeare did not understand himself, a somewhat later genius made the matter perfectly clear. No doubt, if F. E. Smith had ever heard of Goethe—or, shall we say, had been sure of the pronunciation of his name—he would have included him in his list of those whose genius proved the male alone fit for public responsibility. Yet it is Goethe who gives the Smithian bubble its final prick. Goethe's message to the world is contained in the last two lines of Faust. It was only with a mystical understanding of his own genius and the force behind it that he could write:—

> "Das Ewig-Weibliche
> Zieht uns hinan."*

Christ and Shakespeare and Goethe at the polling booth to-day would be in a hopeless minority. Open the doors of politics to the sex of which they were exceptional but entirely representative manifestations, and their spirit will at once flood and purify the whole of our public life.

H. F. RUBINSTEIN.

"Max!" †

EVERYBODY is very kind to-day to everybody else. It is, indeed, the age of civility. Authors praise each other in public—with private conversations what concern have we?—reviewers deal gently with authors—it is, of course, nothing to do with the case that reviewers are usually also authors, and authors turn an honest penny by reviewing—and caricaturists treat their subjects with such consideration that their sketches may be mistaken for flattering portraits. The fact of the matter is we are not virile. Also we all know one another. How can we lunch with a man whom we have unmercifully laid out in a (signed) review, or spend a week-end with him whom we have gibbeted with our pencil? Once upon a time there was a dramatic critic who declined to meet actors and actresses, so that he might be at liberty freely to speak his mind upon their performances. He was thought to be a strong man, a model for the rest; but really his determination arose from a knowledge of his weakness. And, anyhow, it made no difference, for if he did not meet the actors and actresses, he met their mothers and their cousins and their aunts. We have set up, in self-defence, a shibboleth of "good taste," that is to say, we insist upon being let down easily. Woe to him who outrages this convention: to such an one the more dire punishment would be awarded.

At least, so it was thought until "Max" arose, and did with impunity what everyone declared dared not be done at all. I can remember the excitement when, in 1896, the young artist published his "Caricatures of Twenty-five Gentlemen"; and as I write the remarks come back to me as to the brutality, the cruelty, and, the artists said, the crudeness, of his work. I heard it said that such an act of bravado could never be repeated, that the public would not submit passively to another such outrage. What exactly the public would do—what exactly the public could do—was not, I fancy, very clearly indicated. Indeed, the public had no remedy—save to tear the artist limb from limb—a deed of derring-do to which resort has not yet been made. More collections of caricatures have come from the same hands, nay, exhibitions of his works have been held, and the man who was to have been ostracised has become a cult. "Max" has become a household word, and if he does not circulate so widely as the *Daily Mail*,

* "The Eternal-Womanly draws us upwards."

† "Cartoons: The Second Childhood of John Bull." By Max Beerbohm. 21s. net. (Stephen Swift and Co.)

the fault is with his publishers, who will not issue his caricatures at a halfpenny.

The truth is that when the public recovered from the shock to its nerves occasioned by the publication of the "Twenty-five Gentlemen," it took rather kindly to a style of caricature to which it had not been accustomed. With "Max" we return to the age of Rowlandson and Gillray, of "Peter Pindar" and "Anthony Pasquin"; but while the wit and audacity of these satirists is retained, their grossness has been abandoned. We want to laugh, and "Max" makes us laugh. He is often a little unkind, sometimes he is cruel; but, perhaps for that very reason, we laugh not the less heartily. At "Max's" last exhibition I have seen tears of joy streaming down the face of an eminent man of letters as he gazed at "The Centenary of Edward FitzGerald," under which runs the legend: "Mr. Clement Shorter: 'Here! Don't be standoffish, FitzGerald! We literary men ought to stand shoulder to shoulder.'" I have seen a staunch Conservative delighting in "Mr. J. L. Garvin, giving ideas to the Tory Party," and "Lord Lansdowne trying, with all the amenity of his kind, to understand just what Mr. H. G. Wells means about the barrenness of official politics." There can be no doubt a spice of malice makes the whole world kin.

"Max," having shown the absurdity of everybody who is everybody, from Mr. George Grossmith, Junior, to Lord Rosebery, has turned his attention from individuals, and in the present volume of cartoons pokes mordant fun at the nation. The result is admirable, and to the full as effective as anything the artist has ever done. There is nothing narrow in the issues brought forward, nothing political except in the broader sense, certainly nothing inspired by party spirit. "Max" holds a brief for England, but, none the less, does not spare the rod. He puts in the pillory the public taste in art and letters, and its determination to have its dramatic fare entirely simple. "Melpomene," an aged John Bull says to the two handmaidens, "you're dismissed. I ain't so young as I was, and that gloomy face of yours is more than I can stand about the 'ouse. Thalia, you can stay on. Not as 'ow I've been puffectly satisfied with you either, o' late. Don't let me 'ave to make any more complaints about you tryin' to get *Ideas* into your 'ead. You keep to your own station; or, I cautions you, *you'll* 'ave to go too, my girl." These sketches are in lighter vein, and amusing enough; but "Max" is at his best in this volume when he is serious, and serious enough he is for all his jester's cap. His cartoons designed at the time of the Boer War give one furiously to think. We have the "ideal" John Bull, with the look of a bulldog, saying, "I'm going to see this thing through"; on the next page we have the senile "real" John Bull, entirely ignorant and self-satisfied, convinced that the glorious traditions of the nation must pull him through his present troubles. "Ah, well," he is mumbling, "but I ain't doin' so bad neither. There's Boney under lock an' key at St. Helena. An' Drake he have stopped that there Armada. An' Burgoyne's goin' to teach them Colonists a lesson. Just you wait. What I say is, 'Old England's old England still,'" etc., etc., etc. The indifference, the carelessness, the conceit, the fatuous self-confidence of John Bull, these are the themes of other cartoons. While the newspapers are writing that "the admiration and envy of the whole civilised world had been excited by the exemplary fortitude and self-control with which, during that dark week, the public received the news of the disasters (Colenso-Magersfontein-Spion Kop)—a fortitude and self-control . . . no other nation," and so on, Max sees John Bull sleeping peacefully, unable to realise that not only the prestige, but the very life, of the Empire is at stake. So, at last, we see "The Twentieth Century pressing the English Rose between the pages of History." The lesson is needed: whether even "Max," who shows he can teach it, can make the nation learn, time alone can show. If the nation can be roused, if it is again to be strong, not only in war, but in the time of peace, when the fate of war is decided, perhaps the cartoon of "Darby and Joan at Dover Castle" might do it. Else when the next struggle for the existence of the Empire comes, perhaps "Max's" revised version of "St. George and the Dragon" may come true, and the Dragon make a mouthful of the Knight.

"The Second Childhood of John Bull" contains the caricaturist's most ambitious work, and it is throughout instinct with humour and informed by a clear insight into the truth of the state of things. It is presented in a worthy setting, in a handsome folio volume, which enables the cartoons, reproduced in colour, to be given without reduction from the original size. LEWIS MELVILLE.

The New Order.

II.—THE NEW LANDHOLDER; SOCIAL FREEDOM BY SECURITY OF SUBSISTENCE.

[*I.*—"*The New Parliament: Social Reconstruction by Free Concert.*" *To be followed by III.*—"*The New Money: Free Exchange between Free Organisers*"; *IV.*—"*The New Worker: Free Production by Concerted Exchange*"; *V.*—"*New Maids for Old.*"]

I. TENURES PAST AND PRESENT.

IN considering land tenures and the actual conditions of their development, it is well to bear in mind that there are only a few possible alternatives, and that the races of men have everywhere oscillated between these, with many overlappings and interweavings. There may be individual use or common use, in whole or in part, a blend of the two being both feasible and frequent. The ruling factor may be climatic, or it may be the degree of security from invasion, and these again may alternate, both in time and place.

Since the dawn of history, among the varying forms of land tenure found jostling one another in the British Isles, and, indeed, throughout Western Europe, the prevailing system, except among the Celts, may be characterised as one of feudal tenure tempered by customary law,* *i.e.*, the leading idea was service to a chief who distributed the land at his will, and could confiscate it if his claims for service were not satisfied, the idea of personal ownership being entirely absent. Amongst the Celts, however, a system of village ownership existed alongside of the clan leader, clan chieftainship as such conferring no control over land, and the same blend seems to have existed in part among the early German tribes.

In the long procession throughout the centuries "from status to contract" as the feudal idea gradually waned, and the conceptions of Roman law were carried all over Western Europe by wandering students with the Latin tongue, the doctrine of *meum* and *tuum* (mine and thine) became increasingly applied to land, while side by side with this went the industrial development by which the serf, retainer, family servant, mercantile apprentice, etc., gave place to the contract worker, and ultimately to wage slavery in general. Along with these dual developments, and necessary to their mutual rela-

* See the "Ancient Coutumier de Normandie."

tions, went the extension and perfecting of the modern money system. (See The New Order, pp. 5-6.)

The rapid increase of commerce meanwhile engendered the Mercantile Theory, summed up by practical economists in the trade maxim: "Buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market"—*i.e.*, get as much for as little as you can—and its spirit by degrees infected the land system, where, being applied from above downwards, it is reduced to its last pitch of tragic absurdity in the case of the impoverished landsman, whether Irish peasant, Scotch crofter, or Indian ryot, who finds himself confronted with the demand to pay away in rent or taxes, or both, his actual means of subsistence, more or less. This goads the victim to revolt, the theory of free contract (in a non-free environment) breaks down, and a reaction sets in whereby, as in recent years, the relative rights and powers as between landlord and tenant have been changed, the latter gaining fixity of tenure at the expense of the former, or compensation for improvements, if disturbed.

It has been reserved for a later school of scientific thinkers in the West to perceive—what the Slav and some Asiatic races seem never wholly to have lost sight of—that the application of the *mine* and *thine* rule to land is an absurdity in itself, since Nature does not enclose within metes and bounds just those products which must be combined to form a diet, whether for man or animal, on a given spot where he stands. On the contrary, they must be sought for and conquered, whether by spade or by tooth and claw, over the whole range of the habitat. Yet the tie that links man to the land he must consume for his subsistence is none the less binding and imperious on account of this diffusion of the several products over a wider area than he can or should enclose for his own private use. It is the one fundamental social necessity which none can evade. His health, if not his life, in fact, depends upon it.

II. The Untaxed Subsistence Minimum.

From the blend of these two natural laws, the inevitable subsistence minimum and the wide diffusion of its component parts, are developed the basic principles of land tenure in the New Order, as follows:—

1. The area of subsistence is definable by reference to scientific standards.
2. This area can never be made subject to rent or taxation.
3. It can never be allotted in the form of single plots, but must be cultivated in free organisation by groups.

In regard to the second of these principles, it need not be taken to imply that either groups or individuals are obliged by the Theory of the New Order to become tax resisters or rent resisters in the ordinary sense. It is true only in respect of the land tenure within the group, under present circumstances, though ultimately it should be of universal application (as natural laws are) when the principles and practice of the New Order have spread throughout the two hemispheres. The duties and rights which the enactors of the New Order recognise amongst themselves must be clearly distinguished from those common obligations which their relations with the old order compel them to assume together towards it. The immediate practical adjustment of the latter would differ according to persons and localities, and to the differing conditions under which the different groups hold their land—*e.g.*, whether they buy or rent it, in whole or in part. To meet the landlord's or rate collector's point of view, certain individuals will, no doubt, be rated or rented, as neither of these two gentlemen can reasonably be expected to recognise the joint method of cultivation involved in the scientific rotation of crops as practised in the groups, but these selected individuals, having the group at their back, will be recouped through the medium of the accounts or New Money system (see The New Money, Tract No. 3).

In order to determine the extent of the minimum area of subsistence, recourse can be had to the results obtained by doctors, food specialists, and land experts, in countless experiments with rations and crops.*

In relation to the third principle, a three-fold necessity is involved in the common cultivation of the subsistence area by the group: (1) The wide diffusion, above referred to, of the products needed, to form a complete diet; (2) the necessity for scientific rotations of crops to obtain the best results from the land; and (3) men's innate social instinct which tends to avoid isolation operating through the free exchange system (see Tract 3, The New Money). Here also the natural and the human are brought into harmony in the New Order.

The land tenure of such land as may be used communally by the group for baths, wash-houses, schools, stores, etc., will be governed by the reasoning already applied in the case of land co-operatively cultivated for food—*i.e.*, selected individuals, preferably trustees, appointed by the group, may be set up as holders of the land for them in order to satisfy the landlord or the tax collector, the burden of the rent or taxes being distributed over the group by means of the new exchange system. (See Tract No. 3.)

While in principle the law of the untaxed minimum area of subsistence governs the group from the outset, being a physiological necessity and not subject to revision from time to time, all land over and above that minimum will be held as from the group, questions of rent, occupation, etc., being determined by free concert as required. The syndicates of action described in the New Parliament (Tract No. 1) will be available for arriving at and recording decisions, and the rent payable by individuals or sub-groups can be reckoned in terms of the new money, or translated into terms of the old money, according to convenience by the methods described in Tract No. 3. For the sake of clearness, however, two or three specific illustrations may be given here.

All the cases assume that the group controls a surplus area over and above the untaxed subsistence minimum of its members, as well as what is necessary for housing, common buildings, etc., where the new sense or art of free organisation can be practised by the aid of the new money system in any one of the following ways:—

1. Supposing A wishes to take up land to grow the material for his own clothing. After he has obtained the group's consent, he will pay, in terms of the new money, for the area of land he

* The estimates relied on by the authors of the New Order for both aspects of this problem give one-third acre per adult, and this figure is assumed to be correct for the purposes of this series. The average time required to work this area is reckoned from similar experiments to be an hour a day.

secures. This payment being in the form of work-time (see Tract No. 3), the nature of the work will be determined by reference to the organising syndicate of group services. The amount of rent payable may be fixed by the ratio between the third of an acre and the hour a day in working the subsistence area, but as the result of experience it may be necessary to change the rates from time to time that the group services made be efficiently maintained.

2. Next B and C, inspired by A's example, and eager to practise free organisation, take up land with him, and they co-operate in the production of their own clothing. All the three now pay rent to the group, as in the case of A alone.

3. Let us now suppose that A, B, and C, being admired for the beauty of their clothing, are approached by D, E, and F, who ask if they will produce for them also. Agreeing to do this, A, B, and C rent more land from the group accordingly, and complete this transaction by charging D, E, and F a price which is made up of the work-time paid in rent and that devoted to production. These simple cases must stand as typical of all similar transactions.

4. While the money world continues, the group will need coin money for many purposes, and amongst its members there will be some people earning and some owning money. Here it is possible for the ordinary terms of tenure, payable in the old money, to be arranged between the group and the member—say G—for a strictly limited period, and for specified uses. This can happen but rarely, since the Theory inspires the group to keep their land, as much as possible, sacred to experiments in the new form of organisation and exchange, as well as to hold a reserve for prospective comers. Members with means can probably find better methods of supplying the group needs in coin of the realm than that of paying rent on the old money terms.

III. Security with Mobility.

The fundamental basis of the new land tenure is designed to make each man free, since no tyrant can actually coerce him so long as his food supply is secure. The objection may here be raised that if he is obliged to remain where his food is grown, this freedom may be of very little use to him, for he may experience all sorts of practical difficulties in supplying his other needs from that centre. For this very reason it is eminently desirable rather to start several small groups near large industrial centres—*i.e.*, under civilised or old world conditions—than to concentrate all the free organisers in a large group in one place where this difficulty might be acutely felt. This would mean that any member of a group could pass to any other group where more congenial work might be procurable for him inside the group or outside. His food supply, so to speak, goes with him, which means that by the aid of the new money (see Tract 3) his credit, as it stands in the account books of the group he leaves, will avail him equally in the group to which he goes. In other words, if he has not yet worked out his full number of hours, equivalent to the production of his subsistence minimum, he can do so on the land of the new group; if he has already worked it out before he removes, he has earned his supply in advance for the rest of the term, and has a claim on the combined resources of the group therefor.

The importance of this social result, in combining food security with freedom of movement from place to place, can hardly be over-estimated, and it follows from this that funds devoted to the New Order should not be wholly sunk in land, buildings, and tools, but should partly be applied for securing convenient modes of communication and transport between group and group by purchasing or making bicycles, motors, steam waggons, aeroplanes, etc. In its further development, this would naturally apply equally to international groups.

In a secondary sense, it will readily be seen that a man's freedom is constantly enhanced step by step, in proportion as he can supply his needs on and from the land of the group, this enabling him to escape more and more from the tyranny of the old commercial system, and the new land tenure here comes to his aid by allowing him to pay his rent for land so taken up in the new money (see Tract 3), which he makes himself and which requires no minting.

IV. The Age of Responsibility.

It must not be forgotten that the primary factor which governs the whole of the new land system is that every adult, man or woman, on attaining the age of responsibility, becomes by that very fact a landholder (yet not by metes and bounds) to the extent of one-third of an acre with fixity of tenure in the sense above described—*i.e.*, that he may hold the land he needs in any group or at least he eats its products—by virtue of his having contributed his allotted hours of work-time on the land. The peculiar form of land title to this area which he acquires on becoming an adult will necessarily be upon quite new lines. Thus a department of experts (call it, perhaps, the land record office) will receive from him his education certificates showing his degree of progress, and by comparing these with his weight and food consumption—guided by standards long since worked out by scientists—will determine for him and his parents, and for the benefit of the rest, the precise time at which he may enter into full adult responsibility. Up to this time, as will be seen, in Tract 6, The New Education, his work on the land, or elsewhere, will be arranged by consultation with his teachers, as well as with his parents, the latter remaining responsible to the group for the production of his food supply. The amount of time he spends upon the land while under age will depend upon the rapidity with which he acquires that all-round practical skill and scientific knowledge of the production of human food, which is the irreducible minimum of education under the new system. Equipped for life with this inalienable land title, the free organiser stands, if he so wills, secure from all human mastery through this one basic revolution. The hunger rule becomes for ever impossible, in the New Order, for child or adult, for man or woman, and the human spirit is freed for the outworking of its higher destinies.

W. A. Macdonald.
H. M. Macdonald.

THE FREEWOMAN

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Correspondence.

NOTE TO CORRESPONDENTS.—*While quite willing to publish letters under noms de plume, we make it a condition of publication that the name and address of each correspondent should be supplied to the editor.*—ED.

CHIVALRY.

To the Editor of THE FREEWOMAN.

MADAM,—The position in your "Topics" is clear, and amazing. You believe literally that a man is called upon to commit suicide if he is the "scapegoat of fate"—if he is mainly responsible for remissness that has resulted in casualty of human lives. And you add: "That this should fail to be acted upon horrifies a part in us. . . ." If however, Mr. Ismay had committed suicide, his action would have "horrified a part in us." Everyone would have said: "He killed himself because he was afraid to face the music."

"God requires of us no sacrifice." Otherwise few would be left alive. We are all of us "scapegoats of fate." Who more so than that cruel lynching nation, one of whom (for the writing is American) has sent me an anonymous postcard libelling Mr. Ismay with inane words? As for your doctrine of "hari kari," I beseech you to reconsider it.

E. H. VISIAK.

I am loth to dissent from you. There is not among all your readers one who is more grateful to you for your magnificent "New Morality" Articles, which attain "the highest arc that human contemplation circling upwards can make from the globy sea on which she stands."

May 2nd, 1912.

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PRAISE AND BLAME.

To the Editor of THE FREEWOMAN.

MADAM,—Amazing as it must seem to you, I, too, would join with Mr. Visiak in his protest against the cruel persecution of Mr. Bruce Ismay. To me nothing has been more painful in connection with this great disaster than the vindictive virulence with which large numbers of the community have sought for a scapegoat, abandoning in their search all thought of justice or fair play. They, at any rate, have shown none of the "chivalry" which they profess to admire.

I wholly disagree with the way in which you apportion the responsibility for the loss of the *Titanic*. If anyone should be deliberately drowned for this disaster it is certainly not Mr. Ismay nor the White Star directors, but the Board of Trade. Two methods of obtaining safety at sea are possible; either leave the shipowners free to provide security, and to bear the blame if they fail; or have, as we have, a public authority regulating the matter. In that case, it becomes absurd to blame shipowners who have more than fulfilled these regulations; the Board must bear the blame, and, perhaps, the public a little also for its own supineness.

Those who are now, with all the absoluteness of the Day of Judgment, but with none of its knowledge, engaged in dividing the sheep from the goats and the heroes from the cowards, decide on the principle that life is always preferable to death; therefore it must be braver to die than to live. That is always so, as even the story of the *Titanic* shows. It was the duty of the captain to remain on the bridge till his ship sank, but when we learn that afterwards Capt. Smith refused an offer of rescue, what is our first thought? Not that he was braver to die, but that he was happier to die. We know that even the voice of censure—and censure it would seem there must be—speaks more softly by the side of an open grave. I do not myself believe for a moment, however, that even the death of Mr. Ismay would have stilled the orgie of malignant hysteria in which the Yellow Press of America has been indulging; it would have then been declared that he committed suicide deliberately from fear of an inquiry; and the same writers would have slandered the dead as eagerly as the living.

No one but Mr. Ismay himself can know what his thoughts were when he stepped into that last boat into the seat that no one else was there to occupy; and he probably knows them but imperfectly, and, in any case, is debarred from expressing them. But even in that moment he had some realisation of the bitterness that life would bring can only appear impossible to those mean souls to whom life is everything and honour nothing, for they judge others by their own limitations. On the sinking wreck he had done all he could; no other life could be saved by his exertions; but living he could do much to insure that such a tragedy should never again occur. You appear to think that the mistake you believe he made in allowing himself to be saved might have been partially redeemed by his suicide on the *Carpathia*. On the contrary, that would have seemed to me, and, I am sure, to many, a cowardly action. Mr. Ismay proved himself far braver when he went forward to face obloquy and slander, and still more bitter, the doubts of his own conscience, by which the sensitive must ever be assailed.

The souls of men, their actions, and their motives at such crises are far too complex to be measured by the commonplace foot rules in current use; that is why we would all do well to remember the warning, "Judge not that ye be not judged."

A WOMAN.

[(1) To hold that from a ship which sank with over 1,500 people on board there was no one (save Mr. Ismay) to occupy a seat in the boat to us is as incomprehensible as to say two and two make five. It boggles intelligence, and we cannot argue it; but (2) supposing there was no one to get in the boat because the multitude did not realise the danger, who, save the Captain and Mr. Ismay, was responsible for lack of knowledge. Knowing the extent of the danger, and knowing that the rest were largely ignorant of that extent, for the President of the Line to take the place of safety, to come ashore, and have the effrontery to make the statement that there was no one else to be saved (on that deck!) makes one reel. *Where* were the fifteen hundred, including the children, that this seat was going begging? (3) We totally disagree with our correspondent as to the persons responsible. Surely the people who plan the ship, and accept passengers' money for fare, are the people responsible. *They* are the people who should keep the Board of Trade up to scratch. Who *knows* but they themselves? Not the Board of Trade, and not the general public. How much more work is the general public going to have thrown upon it? We shall find it impossible to live, if we are to be burdened with the responsibility for efficiency among private companies. If we are, through the Board of Trade, to bear the responsibility, then we should rightly appropriate the ships, and draw the profits of the company, as, evidently, the directors of the White Star Line have no office, save to exploit the travelling public, take their money, receive praise when it is forthcoming, and dodge blame behind a parliamentary body when such a disaster as the loss of the *Titanic* is directly traced home to their management. The Board of Trade, in the circumstances, is merely a stalking-horse for the company. (4) What the Yellow Press would have said . . .! "They say! . . . What say they? Let thame say!" It was an affair for a man to settle in his own soul.—ED.]

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SAVING WOMEN FIRST.

To the Editor of THE FREEWOMAN.

MADAM,—Mr. Nello asks us to say whether we approve of saving women first. To me that course seems only fair so long as women are *brought up to be helpless* in order to gratify the taste of men. It should be remembered that most girls are, from their earliest childhood, repressed in every effort towards dexterity and quickness of resource. For example, if the nursery pony-cart is going out, and little Mary sees something wrong with the harness, and tries to correct it, the watchful governess will say, "No, dear let your brother do that," and the possibly slower Tommy at once receives a useful lesson in the mystery of straps and buckles.

The mere impediment of conventional female clothing is also such a handicap on women that those who insist on it are simply bound to save women who have been made unable to save themselves. There is, of course, no doubt that the senseless scheme of women's attire is by the wish of men—witness the dislike shown towards those women who endeavour to adopt any form of rational dress, allowing the free use of their limbs.

So long as men refuse fair play to women in the matter of dress, the development of their muscles and physical dexterity, they are in honour bound to mitigate, so far as in them lies, the very great additional dangers to which women are exposed.

April 27th, 1912. "FAIR PLAY."

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SOME THOUGHTS ON RELIGION.

To the Editor of THE FREEWOMAN.

MADAM,—It has often struck me that the most inelastic and brittle fibre in all the fabric of human consciousness is what we call religion. Knowing that it will not bend, and that a breath almost would shiver it to a thousand fragments, people surround it for the most part with a semi-opaque covering prejudice and ignorance. After reading your recent article entitled "Some Thoughts on

Religion," I am more than ever convinced that little in the way of sense is to be expected from a man when religion is his theme.

Revealed religion has had its day. But traditional prejudice and a plebeian love of ghost stories makes it die hard. Yet it is significant (a *Freewoman* will admit that on the whole women are at present more gullable than men) that ministers complain of their pews being filled with women's hats and babies' bonnets, and their collection bags with halfpence. Men are, in the natural course of things, just *dropping* the church, but women, even many advanced women, still contribute time and money, in spite of the fact that the Lethe-stream of Pauline theology is the thing which has kept our sex asleep for centuries.

The writer of the article mentioned claims to possess a religious sense, and tells us that we who lack it must wait patiently for the descent of the Holy Spirit. I like this. I like to have the matter brought down to a simple proposition to be either asserted or denied. It saves a lot of time—and ink. But at the same time, it is easy to say that the author's sixth sense is a relic of the nursery, which he will grow out of as he attains to years of discretion.

I was puzzled at first to read that "He who thinks he will rise again in the body doubtless will," and that had the Gospel "not been forged two thousand years ago, it would have to be forged now." But the author, in his benignity, gives us the clue in the words, "A person who has to explain his religion is without it." Which is very true and applicable to more than Mr. Shaw.

When religion puts its dependence on historical data such as those of the Bible, it falls foul of natural law, and, of course, gets severely mauled in the conflict. When it sets up for a philosophy, it shares the fate of all other systems of thought. Definite our religious beliefs cannot and need not be. It must be vague in theory, but to be of any use it must also be eminently practical. The great thing is to *Do*. Suffragists, Socialists, and all other "ists" whatsoever know that an ounce of effort is worth a pound of abstract piety. A rule of life we may aspire to, but as for the so-called spiritual all is clouded with a doubt. D. CAMERON, B.Sc.

April 29th, 1912.

[Our correspondent, we think, rather happily illustrates our argument. Like so many others, being unacquainted with the religious sense, she scouts round tilting at irrelevant arguments. We welcome, however, the remark, "I like to have the matter brought down to a simple proposition, to be either asserted or denied." It is doubtless meant to be ironical, but, as a matter of fact, it states the truth very accurately, and makes our point quite clear that there is little use in argument when there is lacking a fundamental basis of agreement. It would, perhaps, give our correspondent a clue to the meaning of the sentences she found so puzzling (and incidentally drag in Authority—beloved of the scientific mind) if we quoted a phrase from Bergson. "Suppose," he says, "suppose physics are just psychics inverted." Just suppose!—ED.]

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HOBBLED MINDS.

To the Editor of THE FREEWOMAN.

MADAM,—I have been interested in being introduced to your paper—one more token of the truth of the saying, "The Woman Question is up, and will not down."

On some occasions, truth *will* out. To begin with, I am not a "sweet woman," nor a "charming woman," nor a "clever woman." I am not even "such a *nice* woman"! In little more than twelve months I have been threatened with the law courts by three men for speaking the truth. This does not happen to "sweet, charming, nice women," and "clever women" are too clever to encounter such hard things. I cannot even claim to be "a womanly woman." Possibly your readers will class me with "the sexually deficient and disappointed" culprits—"impervious to facts and logic, and deeply ignorant of life." So be it.

It will not concern me—for the sense of humour is ineradicable, and there is a curious inclination to laugh at the way your correspondents abuse those who are not in line with their own views.

There is a girl friend of mine—a joy to me and a *promise* of the future—who often says, "I'm sure there's something lacking in *my* make-up"; maybe she is "undersexed," and that's why she is such a jolly creature!

Another girl friend says she is "sick of this sex question." So am I. She has my deepest sympathy, for I often feel inclined to say, "Oh! be done with this wrangle; let's go out and play." Honestly, it has occurred to me that it would be a good, wholesome thing if all the people lecturing and arguing on the subject of "sex" would come out to play in the fresh air, as human with human, ignoring sex and sex questions, for a considerable time.

It is absolutely certain that each Ego has to work out the matter for itself, and no amount of legislation will touch the fringe of it.

For ages, sex and specialisation in sex has *cursed* humanity, from Cleopatra, who stands (rightly or wrongly) as the type of the "fallen woman," luring the world's "Great Men" to their ruin—to the present day, when a man attributes a young friend's ruin "to one of those beauties," and would secure the man from possible harm by legislating the matter, "giving out licences as they do to publicans."

I have passed the period of being pained or infuriated by the callousness of all this. It is like a child playing with destructive forces, and neither seeing nor caring about the issue.

A man I know writes with profoundest conviction in a preface to a book of poems bearing the date 1893.

"Man and woman are fellow-slaves. They are not only slaves to each other; they are also fettered, sometimes even crushed, by a still more remorseless slavery—the slavery of Fate or of God.

"Both man and woman are simply agents of the immense Cosmic Power which has worked through them from the very earliest dawn of sex."

And he follows the argument until he ends by saying, "It is not man who ought to ask forgiveness of God, but rather 'God' (i.e., the ultimate world power), who, as the creator and sustainer of evil, ought to seek forgiveness of man." And refers to the "crucifixion" mutually imposed, each upon each, "and of both by God"—mark the significance.

These admissions from a man, who has written volumes in praise of sex-love, should win our serious attention. If, as he says, man and woman (Humanity) has been "crucified," all down the ages by this power, conceived of as "God"—slavishly obeyed as "God"—cringed to as the arbiter and director of human destiny. If, further, man *can* awaken to the need of that power to "ask forgiveness" of the Humanity it has "crucified," does not that argue the power *beyond* sex, which calls up

this sex-god to judgment, and bids "him" bend before a power that *was* before "the dawn of sex," and which will continue to exist when sex-consciousness no longer damns a doomed world.

Well, let those who choose "protest with their utmost energy against the cruel stupidity which would enforce complete abstinence." I do not find it necessary to call up any "energy" to "protest" against "enforced sexuality." The simple fact is that nobody *can* "enforce abstinence," neither can anyone "enforce" sexuality.

You "cannot cross a bridge till you come to it," and when the Ego returns to its "normal" consciousness—the actual consciousness of its own Divine Origin—wherein masculine and feminine no longer exist as separate consciousness. There is no power on earth—nor in the hell, that sex-consciousness has created—which can "compel" that Ego to return upon the path it has followed to the end—the glad end!

It has been said that "the greatest of the illusions is sex," and it is "the last to be obliterated."

That may be so. A time may come, in future ages, when the incarnating Ego will create for Itself a material body from the earth's elements, and so be independent of any parental assistance in procuring a vehicle for manifestation on this planet.

When the necessity for sexual union on the physical basis has ceased—when no possible justification remains for its continuance—what bond will unite us if we have based our union on the physical? Therefore, I say, be done with this worship of sex (as "the one ultimate world-power"). Is it not time to cease building on sand, which the tides of time will shift—erasing every scrap of semblance of that with which we built?

"Hibernian" struck the true note! Oh! ye gods! How that "full, vivid, ecstatic life" calls us! A life free from the *awful* alternations between "pleasure" and agony! A life which brings ever a new joy, and which "adds no sorrow thereto!" Life—expanding and ever-expanding, till *no* door is closed, *no* road barred to bliss and joy unspeakable! "Undersexed"! Perhaps we who are "undersexed" are the balance on the wheel of life—lest over-specialisation in sex end in the total destruction of the Hope of the Future.

And here a voice says, "But what about twin souls? Ask me of that I have *known*.

Frankly, I do not know! But *this* I know. If it be true (and it may be!) that a special relation exists between two Egos, *exclusive and complete*, then I am morally certain those two, who have found "the Perfect Love all other Love beyond," will *not* fall prone at the feet of that poor puny "God," who can be called up to judgment, and forced upon "His" knees by the creatures "He" created! To worship *such* a "God" is to stamp one's soul as a "licker of the dust"—a craven, cringing, creeping thing, fit worshipper of that which was condemned to "creep upon its belly," because it had *lost* the power to stand upright, as at first created, and which has ever since tried to stand upon its tail to delude human beings into taking it for "God." What a farce it all is!

Women have recently taken to "hobble skirts," fit emblem of hobbled minds! But—pray excuse me—I'm "going out to play!" Thanking your readers in advance for the glorious fun of calling ME,

"A DEFICIENT AND DISAPPOINTED WOMAN."

May 1st, 1912.

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WOMEN'S GROWING ANTAGONISM TOWARDS SEX.

To the Editor of THE FREEWOMAN.

MADAM,—As a woman, may I suggest a point of view that has not, I think, been touched on, namely, the absolute indifference or dislike of the sexual act in many women? There is a great deal more to be "got over" by women than by men, and throughout married life a fair proportion of women look on that side as a necessary evil. This is not a cultivated feeling; I have known it in girls who had been "unwise"; they liked admiration and love-making, but they consistently hated the sexual act itself. I have found this feeling existed in women who had been twice married. It does not depend on lack of sex attraction clearly. Does it depend on the training of girls, which, in spite of admirable advances towards knowledge and freedom, are still instinctively ignorant of the facts of sex when carried to their logical conclusions? Men have the advantage of knowing exactly what they want It is quite impossible to "explain" to people what they can know nothing about, till they experience it, as it is to "explain" the sensations of excessive drinking to an abstainer. I would be glad to know if my experience—a fairly wide one—is exceptional or not, and if not, whether, in view of as thorough knowledge as we can possess on a wide basis, a few people will write frankly. I think many women, besides their life-long training in personal modesty, feel instinctively that, as Weininger expresses it, the man does despise them and hold them in contempt, and they despise themselves.

They are not so aware when young of sex instincts as are men, and often tempt without the slightest knowledge. From this fact grew up the parable of the Garden of Eden, from which probably we may learn that without the knowledge of evil (or animalism), a race could have been produced probably infinitely higher than the human race as we know it.

I will ask a final question: Is it within your readers' knowledge that a young woman with decent bringing up has *consciously* tempted any man? If not, Weininger's theory is nearer practice than many imagine.

A GRATEFUL READER.

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THE RIGHT TO LOVE.

To the Editor of THE FREEWOMAN.

MADAM,—Some of your readers must have been slightly irritated, though somewhat amused, by the looseness of thought and expression of it displayed in Mr. Schvan's article, "The Right to Love."

One wondered at first on reading paragraph six if he could really be serious. Surely the ludicrous and tragic in modern marriage is largely due to the *absence* of a time-limit, and our clumsy and revolting divorce laws afford us the only practical time-limit available. On a second reading, however, one decided that Mr. Schvan *was* serious, but that he had merely failed to express his own ideas with any clearness. Surely his meaning might better be made clear thus: "That love in its highest form must be (spontaneous) *unfettered* is as clear as it is in reality denied by the institution of the prevalent marriage laws which tacitly imply that human beings ought to dominate their love. If love is, and ought to be (spontaneous), *unfettered*, the introduction of a no-time—but only a death-us-do-part—limit (short, that is, of facing the filth of the divorce court) is as ludicrous as it is tragic.

Mr. Schvan's example, too, of the way birds mate seems, in this connection, ill-chosen. For they, too, after all, are bound. The fettering is of Nature, perhaps, of

evolution more probably, and, since Mr. Schvan likes the expression time-limit, let us use it here. The birds *have* a time-limit, suited, no doubt, to their often migratory habits and shorter terms of life than ours, but they are neither exactly promiscuous nor apparently "spontaneous"—Mr Schvan's word for unfettered.

Far be it from me to defend our existing marriage laws, but in every community of human beings, birds, or even of sheep, there are probably some customs, and customs are apt to take their rise at the source of life, and the source of life is—here we agree with Mr. Schvan—Love.

Perhaps, however, Mr. Schvan's finest stroke of unconscious humour is to be found in the following passage: "To exact taxes for the education of other people's children is ridiculously unfair, and puts the welfare of the community before that of the individual." Is he, then, a reactionary, or merely antediluvian?

Let him and his "dull and gloomy" friends look to their sense of humour. Let them lay to heart the following pasage from the writings of that past-master of subtle humour, G. Meredith: "If you believe that our civilisation is founded in common sense (and it is the first condition of sanity to believe it) you will, when contemplating men, discern a Spirit overhead. . . . You must, as I have said, believe that our state of society is founded on common sense, otherwise you will not be struck by the contrasts the comic spirit perceives, or have it to look to for your consolation. You will, in fact, be standing in that peculiar oblique beam of light, yourself illuminated to the general eye as the very object of chase and doomed quarry of the thing obscure to you."

But to return to the article, or rather to the sentence in paragraph 6 that I have had the temerity to meddle with. It is, after all, the redeeming sentence in a somewhat dull article, for it gives one a peg for thought.

"Love in its highest form must be mutual," and also "Love without response is not love," says Mr. Schvan. There speaks the Western and Materialist. Who shall presume to say that he who gives love without return has not touched the highest? Enthusiasts on their crosses loving those who hate them; the mother giving always more than she receives; the martyr at the stake dying for his spiritual ideals?

Is love like this then of a low form, even though it be not the passionate co-mingling of two beings in the great pure sex embrace of body, soul, and spirit?

I wonder!

There seems to be, perhaps, a deeper truth in those wonderful words that have come to us from the sunlit lands where men care more to Be than to Have or to Do. "He that loseth his life [love] shall find it."

HIGHWAY MAN.

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HOW THE STATE PENALISES THE UNMARRIED MOTHER.

To the Editor of THE FREEWOMAN.

MADAM,—Some of your readers may not be aware that the Income Tax Commissioners do not allow the £10 relief in respect of a child where the child is illegitimate. This injustice presses most hardly upon the professional woman who wishes to become a mother, and at the same time to retain her legal and domestic independence by remaining unmarried. Her expenses are heavy, both for herself and her child, and every shilling is of value. But apart from the financial aspect of the question, what right has the State to "punish" a woman merely for fulfilling a natural function? P. W.

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THE FUTURISTS.

To the Editor of THE FREEWOMAN.

MADAM,—Instead of reading the critics I went to see the Futurist pictures in the proper way—in ignorance, to see if the new language could tell its own story. I took the precaution of not buying a catalogue until afterwards, as to imbibe without explanation is the only test. I wish pictures were always labelled with the artists' names, for it is so irritating in one's search for them to come upon long literary descriptions of what the painter has already had a fair chance of telling in his own medium. If a handbook is more comprehensible than the exhibition, why not just issue handbooks instead, and save a lot of worry?

Since then I have read a good deal about Futurism, and it seems to me that in most criticism a point which matters has been missed; which is, that though we may object to its exponents, none of whom is a Ganguin or a Van Gogh, or anything at all world-shaking, its principles are a perfectly legitimate development of accepted beliefs.

Once admit the subjectiveness of art, and the admission may carry you anywhere. It must carry you just so far as there are artists capable of expressing their views. One's shocks, therefore, only depend on the breadth of the gulf between respective minds, and one's difficulties are moral rather than intellectual.

I think most people will find a few pictures in the Futurist show with which they can dimly sympathise, such as Signor Russolo's "Train at Full Speed," "The Jolting Cab" (Carrà), and the rather beautiful "Leaving the Theatre" (No. 18). They are common impressions of half-realised movement, of some charm, unless one is inside the cab. Many will recognise, even in the most chaotic, sensations of their own. Whether the recognition will give pleasure is another matter. Some of us know a mood when colours seem horrible. When, wherever we turn our eyes, they fall on ugliness. We shut our eyes, and evil colours still are there, clothing our thoughts. It is a state common to childhood, but happily capable later of modulation and evasion. Those who haven't experienced it could possibly induce it artificially by a channel passage or by a cigarette, if unaccustomed. Enfold in such a mood your most agitated imaginings, contract a few degrees of fever, and then wallow in your own sensations! I for one am filled with admiration of the virility of these Italians, who can do all this, and then paint, paint. But I doubt if many picture-gallery visitors are robust enough to enjoy, for instance, such an orgy as Severini's "Dance at the Monico."

A very interesting point which the Futurists have driven home is that in rapid movement, confusion, or even noise, our sense of perspective becomes disintegrated. Instead of Pater's hackneyed "art aspiring to the conditions of music," we get works which aspire to the conditions of din, and attain their aspirations. They do succeed in merging the different senses. It is all quite simple, and I believe with practice the habit grows. As I write, a mother cat, playing with her son in the passage outside my door, scampers with a sudden rush of pattering feet. Instantly I visualise, on a vague grey ground, little feet fading upwards into another vagueness, and somewhere, a cat's ears. So it is with most impressions; they are incomplete, and the senses co-operate. To get such impressions recorded by men with some painting capacity is valuable psychologically. Sir Francis Galton and Mr. Leadbeater might profit. If they were recorded by great artists so much the better, but that point has hardly been reached. The suggestion that perspective is perhaps merely an intellectual faculty opens vistas—vistas all palpitating like "The Motion of Moonlight."

Think what scope this new art has. The motor-bicycle, the gramophone, our dreams, and our diseases afford infinite variety of copy. They may even be interpreted decoratively, as we have seen the state of mind of "Those Who Remain Behind." If a man paints, the public will know him by his works as intimately as a doctor.

I believe most dissentients are suffering from jealousy of the things they didn't do because they never thought of them. We are surprised, for instance, to find that kaleidoscopic colours, such as result from a blow on the head, can be turned to account. And we could all have drawn higgledy-piggledy if we only had the enterprise.

GLADYS JONES.

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THE STATUS OF MEN.

To the Editor of THE FREEWOMAN.

MADAM,—If not already forestalled by some nearer reader, perhaps there will be room in the next issue of THE FREEWOMAN for this suggestion from an admiring American subscriber, namely, a possible common ground for Mr. Wells, the editor, and some of the vehement correspondents. They all want the same things—security for children, equal footing for men and women, and the full fruit of labour for every adult. Mr. Wells lays stress on the security for children, and hence urges

the endowment of motherhood on the grounds that mothers are the natural guardians of children; the editor emphasises the fact that a woman is a human individual as well as a parent, and so pleads for unhampered opportunity for her, as such; the various correspondents present widely diverging views. But with scarcely a single exception, they all want the present status of women altered. Thank Heaven for that!

But I have been waiting for someone to speak a definite word for improving the status of men, to indicate a plan for widening their opportunities, and relieving the narrowness and burden of their lives also. And this I should hope for, even if I had no interest in the welfare of men themselves, but only cared for the future of women and children; indeed, it would be necessary for that very reason. Helen Winters' vision of a glorious freedom, in which she could bear children for her own ends, seeking no aid from anyone, is a perfectly natural reaction for a bounding vitality that has been cramped and strained. It may be helpful—even necessary—for some women like her to boldly and suddenly toss custom overboard and work out their own salvation according to the plan of Florence S. Howard Burleigh (in her letter to THE FREEWOMAN of March 2nd), who says: "Only the women who are courageous enough to bear and rear healthy-minded and healthy-bodied illegitimate children, and to educate them so that the jeers of semi-civilised society only rouse their pitying contempt, will really assist the movement." This can be understood, sympathised with, and accepted by almost any woman who dares to think below the surface, but after her first deep breath of relief at the freedom from all the galling complications of married life as most of the world has known it will surely come the conviction that this is a plea for an abnormal individualism that is permissible and necessary, just as hospitals and vacations are necessary, as remedial and temporary measures, but cannot be a proper or permanent basis for a normal life.

Instead, may not the ideal life be founded on these three great basic necessities—the absolute economic independence of women, absolute knowledge of legitimate means for controlling the birth-rate, and the absolute abolition of special privilege? All else would then fall comfortably into line.

The abolition of special privilege, by whatever reformatory means one chooses—socialism, syndicalism, the single-tax, or what-not—would relieve the glutted labour market, so that there would be more jobs than men, instead of the reverse; the complete economic independence of women—all women—would mean an *unprecedented leisure for men.* And this is largely the key to the situation, for it would give men the opportunity to make up in direct service to the children for the extra work that women will always do in bearing them. It is the only plan by which real equality between the sexes can be hoped for.

It has been said that "the greatest effort of civilisation up to date has been attaching man to the family." Very likely, but he has been attached in a way that is bad for him and bad for the family. A pernicious pride has been developed in him which has led him to deem women and children as possessions, a pride no less false, even when sugar-coated with sentimental or chivalrous talk of the "*my* wife, *my* mother, *my* sister, *my* children" variety. Men's families have been for the most part either a source of this bad pride or else a millstone round their necks. Most middle-class men are hopelessly dulled and stupefied by mere grubbing to pay the family bills. In the wage-slave class, the men and women share the same stupid fate, the women getting the worst of it always, for child-bearing is added to their labours. Men have been apt to assume that their responsibilities to women and children were wholly discharged by merely paying over cash, without personal service, while women's whole law and gospel has been the duty of personal service. Here is an inequality that must be adjusted. But how? Suppose that all normal adults were workers; assume that our various social regeneration schemes have gotten special privilege really abolished, and that each worker receives the full fruit of labour, that production is for consumption primarily and not for profit primarily, that the parasitic class—both men and women—has died off or been put to work; assume that men and women have won political, social, and economic equality of opportunity; then what? The woman will still have an unfair share of labour, because they have to bear the children, unless men will deliberately undertake to even things up by assuming a much larger share than ever before of the duties of child-rearing. Child-rearing should be human work, not limited to either sex. But it should be limited to those who are fitted for it. Mere physical parenthood does not necessarily qualify one for child-rearing. If we look forward to a future home life of the same general type as at present, then let the fathers personally "do" for the children as mothers have always done, but let them do *more* of it—far more. And if we look forward to a much modified future home life, due to a great increase in State care for children, then, just the same, let men have more of the direct care of the children as State employees—more, even, than the women, and make it enough more to counterbalance the child-bearing.

Think what this would do for all concerned! It would give mothers their first chance in ages for a long breath and some time to catch up; it would give children two *real* parents instead of one; it would give men the surest guarantee in all history for deepening and glorifying their own characters, and for becoming truly civilised. Moreover, it would be a proof of the only chivalry Freewomen will ever care for.

Already men have made excellent preparation for this phase of their evolution. It was men who established the kindergarten idea, men who have mostly developed educational systems, men who have invented labour-saving household devices, men who have devised improved housing methods, and even men (physicians) who have perfected the science of infant feeding; so it is not a complete affront to their natures. It is simply a logical next step in their development. They will presently find their places quite naturally in the family, the crêche, the school, and various publicly conducted child-welfare institutions, as well as in the trades and professions—just like women.

And if—as economists are wont to prophesy—three or four hours' daily work from every adult, in an unexploited society, will keep any community well provided for, then men can readily add this new work of child-rearing to their programme without being a bit over-burdened. They can do it as amateurs in their own homes, as mothers have always done, or they can do it as professionals, in the crêche, the kindergarten, and the school, as women will presently do; but do it somehow they must, if they are to become complete human beings instead of mere males, if children are to have the benefit of fathering as well as mothering, and if there is to be real equality between the sexes.

MARY WARE DENNETT.

National American Woman Suffrage Association,
505, Fifth Avenue, New York,
April 17th, 1912.

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RABBI BEN EZRA.

To the Editor of THE FREEWOMAN.

MADAM,—O! O! How *could* you! On page 464 of your last issue you quote Rabbi Ben Ezra excruciatingly amiss.

"Look not thou down, but up!
To uses of a cup . . . ."

is correct. PEDANT.

[We really do not know! The misdeed belongs to the category of perverse things in print which lie docilely on sheets in proof, and spring to meet the eye with an irrevocable air from the pages of the copy bought at a bookstall. The quotation, for such a small one, is heavily mauled. The errors of wording might have been repented, but the pointing reduces it to jingling nonsense. Under the circumstances, therefore, the best amends we could make would be to disconnect it with its original and to consider it home-grown.—ED.]

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