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THE IMMORALITY OF THE MARRIAGE CONTRACT

A COMMENTARY.

THERE was an interesting remark in our last week's correspondence, to which, owing to limitations of space, we had not the opportunity to reply. As this remark illustrates so well the point of difference between ourselves and those who have disagreed with us concerning the immorality of the marriage contract, we reproduce it here. "We are out against *cheap women* in any shape or form" was how it ran. It was used in connection with prostitutes and wage-slaves, but it illustrates remarkably well a difference in direction which exists between the two lines of advance in what is called the forward woman movement; between a certain kind of reforming suffragist and the feminists. A fight against *cheap* women indicates an effort to establish *dear* women, to lay a bigger price on them, an augmentation of price which will in itself guarantee good treatment and adequate protection. Men naturally value that which has cost them much. Property which they acquire for an old song they are notoriously careless of. They value horses, for instance, and look carefully after their well-being. The cost of a horse is considerable. Horses, or motor-cars, cannot be had for the asking. As property, they are *dear*. Workmen, on the other hand, are cheap. They can be had without the asking. And women are cheaper still. Hence, make them *dear;* give them that which, as property, will enhance their value. In accordance with the idea that women are to be made dear, marriage, by establishing a monopoly, outside which the better kind of women cannot be bought, is a very successful effort to raise the price of women. Marriage makes women a highly expensive commodity. By means of a bond which the whole weight of the community, religious, social, and legal, goes to enforce, protected by the marriage contract, a woman can only be bought into sexual relationship at the price of sustenance for life, during the lifetime of the man who effects the purchase. That is a price dear enough to satisfy any. Provided the married woman makes no attempt to reassert her power of fresh choice in the sphere of sex, nothing interferes with this claim of hers to maintenance. Such modifications of the marriage contract as are involved in judicial separation and divorce, for instance, do not interfere with it. She remains "provided for."

In the eyes of freewomen there is in the position which these statements outline fundamental immorality, for there can exist little difference between a cheap woman and a dear woman. Both are equally offensive, viewed as human phenomena. Both are property, and no matter how matters may be gilded with tactful deference and outward forms of equality, the position is one which to free people would be intolerable. That it is not intolerable to the vast majority allows of only one inference, which is that they have not the instincts of free people. To be well cared for and protected is not, therefore, offensive. If it were, the immorality of the marriage contract would be a self-evident proposition. As it is not, we reaffirm some of the

fundamentals of morality among free people. For instance, a person cannot be absolved from the necessity of providing his own maintenance. He may not so put himself into the power of another person or other persons, that his circumstances preclude him from being a free agent. He may not morally barter control over any of his functions. A birthright is not to be bartered for a mess of pottage, and a contract affirming any such barter is on the moral level of Antonio's contract to barter his own flesh. Again, among free people, qualities assert their own essential nature and exert their own authority. Love, for instance, requires as much scope for its reserves as for its abandonments. Its intimacies demand new modesties; its impulse to sacrifice everything, individuality included, creates a new fastidiousness that nothing shall be sacrificed, and because it holds that material things do not matter, it holds correspondingly that it must not be fretted by them. In short, there is in love a morality to protect love.

Hence, a contract which encourages persons to absolve themselves from the first necessity of their existence, laying it upon another; to barter the control of a human function; and to do this in respect of the same person upon whom the necessity of the first has been laid, establishes the triune immorality to which most of the sexual miseries which beset a complicated civilisation can be traced. A person may be in the position of being dependent upon another—a "guardian"—for maintenance. It would be an unpleasant enough position, but it would become fairly well intolerable if such "guardian" demanded sexual exchanges in return. Yet marriage is merely this in legalised form. To assert that love is the additional factor to be taken into account is an assertion which aggravates rather than assuages the evil. Love is too rare, coy, and evanescent to be mixed with considerations of a person's upkeep.

Perhaps one reason why the unsavourinesses of the marriage "deal" are so little resented is to be found in the fact that persons are unashamed of that parasitic form of existence which is involved in having an "independent income." There are so many women who, apart from marriage, make no attempt seriously to create the value of what they eat, wear, and get in comfort and pleasure, that they slip into the notion that what they use and enjoy falls like manna from a bountiful heaven, and that in marriage their maintenance will fall from the same beneficent source. When all is corrupt, the differentiations of more and less are barely apparent. Hence the difficulty in making a special iniquity realisable. We must, however, here deal with the specific arguments which have been advanced in defence of the marriage contract, the one, for instance, which maintains that a goodly number of marriages are the result of genuine affection, the desire for children, and the need of companionship. It is, perhaps, necessary to insist that we keep within the limits of discussion, the immorality of the *marriage contract*. We are not affirming the immorality of Betrothals, of Parentage, or even of Home Life. When, therefore, we are told that the motive which induces women to enter into the marriage contract is not a materialistic desire for maintenance, but something to do with affection, loneliness, and love of children, we have to point out that these can be had *outside* the contract, and can not, therefore, be considered adequate motives for entering inside. The motive, apart from mere convention and thoughtlessness, is desire for security and permanence, and this, though affection be dead, companionship out of the question, and children not forthcoming.

Again, as a defence of the marriage *contract*, the statement that "countless wives contribute a fair share of the common expenses from their own income or earnings, and the majority render services which are more than equivalent to their maintenance," while it is true, is irrelevant. According to the contract, they *need* not, and a vast number *do* not. Just as decent human feeling in many men prevents some from pressing certain rights which the contract gives *them*, so decent feeling leads women to give far more than *their* side of the bargain would compel. Still, they take the precaution to fortify their position by the contract, in advance! It is further alleged that the safeguarding of the family is the motive which explains its acceptance. But surely it is the *child* which creates the family, and if the contract were intrinsically connected with the family, it would come into operation with the appearance of the child, *i.e.*, the beginning of the family. But nothing could be further than this from the monopolist spirit of the marriage contract. In fact, it is so far from being concerned with the interests of the child, *i.e.*, the family interest, that it nullifies the power of contract to protect such interests. For instance, in the course of our efforts to draw up such a civil contract such as would protect the interests of children born outside the sinister bar of marriage, we have it as legal opinion that such contracts would be annulled in a court of law, because they are based on "immoral considerations." This is trade unionism in excelsis! It is a close corporation indeed which exerts its influence to discourage the protection of children. But, indeed, the entire status of the unmarried mother, and the unprotectedness of the illegitimate child, is proof that the marriage contract does not seek first the interests of the "family." The case of the young servant girl against whom the death sentence has just been commuted is an apt illustration. A young woman who had been almost five years employed in a hospital has an illegitimate child. Her mother refuses the child house-room, and it is lodged with another woman, to whom the girl out of wages of 7s. 6d. weekly pays 5s. for its upkeep. She is dismissed from her work, and her payments are a month in arrears. She takes the child, aged fifteen months, away from the house, wanders about with it, *ashamed* to pass through the village, and afraid to take it home. She accordingly throws it in a pond, and in due time "Justice" is done, the judge assumes the black cap, and she is sentenced to death. The father, a local man of position, is quite out of the reach of any penalties which the marriage contract should have imposed for neglect of responsibilities towards this *family* of his. He is a *married* man, and has not helped the girl, by as much as a penny, so she said. And she was afraid to declare the child's parentage, because, forsooth, he was married! Could blackleg labour be more conscious of its sins?

Another correspondent objects that, as long as there is reasonable hope that drastic reforms in the sphere of divorce may be effected, there is no

occasion to attack the marriage contract in itself. Here, again, the issue is confused. Divorce has to do only with power to terminate a contract. It does nothing to alter the nature of the contract. If, as we hold, its nature is bad, the question as to its dissolubility is a secondary affair. The primary question is the rightness of entering into a bad estate, though only for ten minutes.

Mr. C. H. Norman points out what he calls a "most serious error" in that we said "a man can claim total conjugal rights over the woman he marries, and can also obtain sexual intercourse elsewhere, without prejudice to his claims upon his wife," whereas "one act of adultery on the part of a man, without anything else, entitles a woman to a judicial separation and to alimony for the rest of her life." There is a technical error in the statement, and we are obliged to Mr. Norman for drawing our attention to it; but it can scarcely be called a "most serious error," inasmuch as what the correction involves does not compel us to alter our conclusion nor even, indeed, to modify the statement of our case, which was that, by means of the marriage contract, the woman sells out her sexual rights over herself to the man who becomes liable for her maintenance. Mr. Norman might say that if the man buys up the sexual rights of the woman, the woman, by the same contract, buys out the same rights over the man. Technically, this may be made to appear so, but the actual practice in the courts does not bear it out. Though, for instance, "one act of adultery on the part of the man" should entitle a woman to judicial separation and alimony for life, public opinion, judicial prejudice, and the sexual restraints involved in judicial separation, all militate against a woman obtaining a "right" which, technically, is hers. For instance, promiscuous relations between men and prostitutes, public opinion condones in a man; and public opinion expects the wife to condone it likewise. This prejudice is reflected in the practice of the Law Courts. The following extracts from "The Law and Practice of Divorce," by Hardy, will show the reality of "legal" prejudice in this respect:—

"*Condonation by the Wife.*"—In *Beeby v. Beeby* (*a*), Sir William Scott said: "But the effect of condonation is justly held less stringent on the wife; she is more *sub potestate*, more *inops consilii;* she may entertain more hopes of the recovery and reform of her husband; her honour is less injured, and is more easily healed." And in Note A to the same case: "Condonation is objected. But the Court is not to hold that strictly as to the wife; it is a merit to her to bear, to be patient, and to endeavour to reclaim; nor is it her duty, till compelled by the last necessity, to have recourse to legal remedy." In *Dance v. Dance* (*b*): "But the Court does not hold condonation so strictly against the wife, from whom it looks for a long-suffering and patience not expected nor tolerated in the husband; he is expected to complain to the Court immediately. The wife is more *inops consilii;* she may hope to reclaim her husband." In *D'Aguilar v. D'Aguilar* (*c*): "Condonation with respect to women is not held to bear so strictly; a woman has not the same control over her husband, has not the same guard over his honour, has not the same means to enforce the observance of the matrimonial vow, his guilt is not of the same consequence to him; therefore, the rule of condonation is held more loosely against the wife." Sir John Nicholl, in *Westmeath v. Westmeath* (*d*): "But the forbearance of the wife, and her repeated forgiveness of personal injury, in hopes of softening the heart and temper of her husband, and under the feelings of a mother anxious to continue in the care and nurture of her children, are even praiseworthy, and create but a slight bar, removed by the reasonable apprehension of further violence." Finally, in *Durant v. Durant* (*e*): "All the authorities show that it is not so readily presumed as a bar against a wife as against the husband; all lay down (and the common feelings of mankind confirm them) that it is the reverse; that the injury is different; that the forgiveness on the part of the wife, especially with a large family, in the hopes of reclaiming her husband, is meritorious, while a similar forgiveness on the part of the husband would be degrading and dishonourable."

Turning the case round, however, the same authority, writing of condonation of a wife's offences by a husband, says: "Condonation by the husband is viewed with great strictness by the Court." In *Westmeath v. Westmeath* (*y*), Sir John Nicholl said: "The force of condonation varies according to circumstances; the condonation by a husband of a wife's adultery, still more repeated reconciliations after repeated adulteries, create a bar of far greater effect than does the condonation by a wife of repeated acts of cruelty committed by the husband. In the former case the husband shows himself not sufficiently sensible to his own dishonour and to his wife's contamination."

These instances are given to show that a wife is not expected to be sensitive on the ground of infidelities. It is, we believe, extremely doubtful that a judicial separation would be granted for any promiscuous "single act of adultery." We think the case would have to be aggravated by considerations more likely to shock conventional morality, and a woman seeking for a judicial separation on the grounds of a single act of promiscuous adultery would, it is highly probable, be told to try "moral suasion." Moreover, in view of current morality, a woman's conduct would be considered questionable in bringing such an action into court. The law, therefore, is without virtue, similar to that which maintains the unlawfulness of a nursemaid to wheel a perambulator on the pavement.

The accounts of Law Court practice are profoundly instructive as to the assumptions which lie behind marriage contracts. They make it quite clear that such contracts are not those which are made between equals. They are rather those between owner and owned; this accounts for their intolerable offensiveness. All the protection a woman gets, she gets because she *is* property. The kindly offices which the law performs in protecting women are done in the same spirit as that which prompts the activities of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. They illustrate the common sentiment that if a man elects to own living property he must do his duty by it. He must feed it, be moderately kind to it, and so on; a spirit very estimable—towards property; towards free people, galling enough to rouse the spirit of murder. The truth is, women are of all grades. A large number *are* property, and love to feel themselves property; others are only partially endowed with the slave-instinct; they are partially instinct with free-will. So the grades rise until we get the small but growing number of free-women: women who would prefer to close their account with life rather than accept the status of property. This accounts for a seeming contradiction which a correspondent asks us to explain, to wit, how it comes that, "if the writer's surmise that 'the vast majority,' in the future as in the past, 'will scuttle into the safe shelter of the house of bondage' be true, marriage can be dismissed with the remark that it is 'an institution whose dissolution is already at hand.'" The solution is simple enough. Many women who are only partially property have in-

voked the wide name of Freedom. They have been answered with bigger visions of Freedom and its responsibilities than they dreamt of or are mindful to accept, and, understanding the responsibilities of Freedom, they cry out, "Enough." They are too late. The big vision will stay with those able to receive it, and those who refuse it will never again recover their old innocence. Their condition will be deprived of the *moral* support which formerly they believed it had. Moral institutions are dissolved, not by the multitude, but by the higher moral consciousness of the few. A handful of moral, thinking, articulate freewomen are more than a multitude of the unmoral, inarticulate bond. In these things the battle is decided by rank and not by numbers. Moreover, even the strength which comes of numbers is being undermined by forces setting out from shifting thought. The divorce reform movement, while it will not alter marriage, will act as the solvent of that sense of permanency and security which is the chief asset of marriage. If marriage is not necessarily until "death doth us part," a woman must be prepared for changes and vicissitudes. And this preparedness will be a factor of incalculable strength. Prepared—a woman will more readily dare to adopt the attitude of a free agent. Another dissolving agent acting on marriage is the emphasis which is being placed upon responsibility to the third party, the "family," the child. The world-wide efforts to give the "illegitimate" child whatever advantages a "legitimate" child may have will effect changes of very far-reaching importance. It is, indeed, felt to be only inasmuch as our actions affect a third party that law has any right to interfere in mutual relationships, and consequently the new law, asserting the responsibilities of parentage, will be the one about which the forms hitherto clustering round the immoral marriage contract will gather. Christenings, shall we say, will then become the formal public event to which law administrators, busybodies, and ritualists can rally at their heart's content; for the keeping of the vows made then will have public significance. But betrothals, which will take the place of the aforetime marriage, will be mutual and private affairs, into which, unasked, it is an impertinence for the Public to interfere. And even more so the Law.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

Why Revolt Drags.

SOMEONE wants to know what Capital is. Capital is the limb of the Devil. Capital is Accumulated Money. It is not, therefore, the root of evil, but it is the sturdy trunk, the leaves and branches of it. The root of evil is the malappropriation of land. Capitalism grew up out of that. "Capital is Money." Most people would object to this definition because it is understandable, and "Capital" is the favourite nucleus for economic word-mists. Here are a few definitions. J. S. Mill: "Capital is stock previously accumulated from the products of former labour." A Socialist definition: "Capital is not simply any instrument of production, but all wealth which serves to provide its possessor with an income independent of his labour." "To wealth not fit or not intended for consumption we apply the name Capital." Adam Smith's definition: "A person's capital is that part of his stock from which he expects to derive an income." Marshall: "A store of things, the result of human efforts and sacrifices devoted mainly to securing benefits in the future rather than in the present." Marshall: "Capital regarded from the social point of view will be taken to consist of those kinds of wealth other than the free gifts of nature, which yield income that is generally reckoned as such in common discourse, together with similar things in public ownership, such as government factories." The *Daily Herald*, in one of this week's issues, under the heading of "Where We Stand," says: "Capital we call that part of wealth which is used in the production of further wealth. Under the term 'capital' are included the factories, the mills, the mines, the railroads, and machinery. Capital, thus understood, is not harmful, but necessary to society." It is small wonder, therefore, that out of these misty definitions there should arise a respect for "capital" in itself, which induces Socialists and even revolutionaries to call it good even when they call capitalism damnation, and capitalists the blighters of humanity. This respect for capital is one of the most real sentiments of the "advance-guard," and it is because of it that the advance-guard fail to advance. They press back rather. This respectful attitude towards capital is an arresting phenomenon. It demands consideration, for as long as it exists there will be no revolution; and when it is turned into contempt revolution cannot be stayed. It is strange, therefore, that so little attention has been given to the function and nature of capital, that is, to money and its manipulations, finance. When, therefore, we find revolutionary Syndicalists such as Labriola in Italy (we quote from A. D. Lewis' work on Syndicalism) describing Syndicalist intentions in terms such as these, "It can be imagined that at a certain point of its development the workers' union might *hire the capital of the capitalists for a fixed return*, and then use it co-operatively, either working in one mass or by constructing so many separate co-operative bodies, having separate and distinct accounts. And, finally, the federation of various Syndicates could become so strong as to refuse all return for the use of capital, and so become master of it without compensation," the conviction is forced home, how little the nature of capital is understood. If the day which is Repudiation Day, the day when the masters are locked-out and given their *congé*, is not also the Day of Repudiation of landowners and their claims, and of capital and its claims, we might as well spare our labours. For the money-owners will outstrip all the producers of the earth. The manufacturers, even the wealthiest, are the small fish of the sea. It is the financiers who are the leviathans; and the revolution which still leaves it possible for these to work in their own medium, in the accumulating and lending out of money for hire, is the essence of anti-*climax*.

Money in a form which permits of being hoarded, is hostile to the purposes for which it was created. Money, as a medium of exchange, was intended *for* exchange. Anything, therefore, in the special form which a particular currency takes, which tempts a possessor to hoard it, is something which disqualifies it for the useful services it was intended to fulfil. If the hoarding were done merely to please an individual's idiosyncrasies, as people hoard used stamps and old china, there would be nothing wrong in the hoarding; a shortcoming would only be apparent if there were something in the nature and quality of the currency to put a premium on such

hoarding. (With the gold currency this premium on hoarding is high.) When the hoarding is done, however, with the intention of making currency difficult, and when it is scarce letting it out on hire for a consideration—usury—a state of affairs is reached which should properly be regarded as criminal, as it was in times when religions had moral force. Shylock himself would have been astonished to find his type of person the ideal of the business world.

But let us look again at our definition of Capital, *i.e.*, Accumulated Money, and compare it with rival definitions, that of "Accumulated Wealth," for instance. If we define "wealth" as "that which tends to satisfy human needs," we recognise as wealth, not money, but specific commodities, food, clothing, houses, railways, and so on, and upon considering the nature of the things which comprise wealth, we recognise an element which militates against accumulation, an element which makes the consumption, the using up of wealth, the lesser of two evils for persons who have the itch to hoard. Real wealth unconsumed becomes useless. Food decays, materials rot, the elements disintegrate uninhabited dwellings. So money, which should be a "tally" to real wealth, something which should follow its fortunes, being created and consumed alongside wealth (its only distinction and function being that it should be more fluid and divisible), becomes not a "tally," but an opposite, and it is just this characteristic in money which is absent from real wealth, which lends itself to the machinations of the capitalists, and makes the definition of capital as "accumulated money" truer than that of "accumulated wealth." "Accumulated wealth" comes near to being a contradiction. "Accumulated *money*" is the foundation of the capitalist system. Let us take another definition. "Capital represents tools and instruments of production," or—following the *Daily Herald*—machinery, with mills, mines, and railways thrown in. If capital represents these, it seems a pity that the term was ever invented. One could so easily have kept to the specific terms themselves, or covered them by the general term of stock. It would have saved much confusion of thought. But it becomes, upon examination, quite clear, that "capital" does *not* mean these things. For men could possess all these things, and would still call out they were in need of "capital" to make them "go." That is, they need money, which appears to be a factor over and above all these, which has somehow become necessary where originally it was not. Land is the common base of existence of everything which lives. Neither plant nor animal can survive divorce from "use" of land. The thing which is meant by capital cannot be present here. A bird in the trees has not to be capitalised, financed. Again, if man, by definition, is "the animal which contrives tools"—always had tools since he became man—then Man plus Tools plus Land present what should be an indissoluble Trinity, and these three together produce *all* wealth. There is no call from primitive man for *capital*. He worked with his tools, which by nature he creates, upon the land, which of itself gives the surplus which carries him on to further produce. Production is inherent in the Trinity itself, and would take place without *capital* if circumstances were normal—that is, if some evil genius had not divorced the three. This divorce *has* taken place, and it has taken place through the introduction of a feature which is different in character from the products of land and tools and wealth, in that it can be hoarded up. This factor—the evil genius—is money. Intended originally as a tally, a medium of rapid exchange of perishable wealth, it has by protective laws taken the place of wealth, and is now, under Capitalism, *i.e.*, Moneyism, able to control all wealth by laying its dead hand upon them as the instrument of acquirement. Access to land cannot now be obtained without money. Shades of Adam and Eve! Through the action of money man has passed beyond the limits of the curse with which they were driven from Eden. They may not even labour. Tools cannot now be obtained without money, for since land furnishes tools, by taking land, the possibility of forging tools is likewise taken away. And revolutionaries still call out that money is good! What *is* good is *wealth*, but that can easily be forthcoming. Exchange, too, is necessary, but that the wit of man can surely effect without forging an instrument which by its nature is fitted to do all those things it should *not* do, and to fail to do all those things it was intended to do. Money was intended to hustle round. That was its only business. Instead, it is heaped up, accumulated, and always will be accumulated as long as it is made imperishable in kind and valuable in substance. Surely men who can look years ahead towards revolution can devise an instrument of exchange which will serve their purpose, and not defeat it. Some months ago, two contributors gave details of the workings of certain "new money," which it is intended shall be experimented with upon a new land settlement. Experiments in exchange can be said to be "tried" only when they are tried for service and not for theory. Scheme after scheme should, therefore, be demanding trial, and somewhere among them there should be a "best."

The reason for the appearance of the above non-topical remarks is the present display of the terrifying, shameless, inhuman patience of men. Consider the dockers' strike. These men from their babyhood have been toiling incessantly to produce wealth. Now they strike to obtain a few more pence, and though they and their children are starving, and though they know that their unceasing toil has created a claim upon existent wealth, they stand like sheep, or blocks of wood, waiting, waiting,—for starvation by inches! And their leaders tell them to go quietly home. Home! And then their papers talk of the capital which is "good in parts." More brains, O Lord, more brains! If only men could *see*, could understand, where the cause of the crime of their present existence lay, they would wipe it out. But as long as they are in doubt, so long will they fear to break the system, lest with the bad they should destroy the good. It is of infinitely great importance that what is good and permanent should be extricated from that which is bad. The work in which the workers for ages long have been engaged has made them too moral to revolt and *destroy* without cause. They are too instinct with the knowledge that Effect follows Cause. They will *never* destroy until they know it is *evil* they are destroying. And destroy they must. Never save by repudiation will they break away from the invisible thug-like embrace which enfolds them, and they will never repudiate Capital, the Thug, until they realise it is hateful, malevolent, and without admixture of good. To rail at capitalism and capitalists, but still to half-bless capital, is a brain-turning, purpose-destroying business. To acquiesce in the function of capital as money, and then to define capital as instruments and stock, is to render all revolutionary effort abortive. But define capital as Money, and then set out ruthlessly to destroy it and its pretensions, and we shall arrive. Brains will make way for the Spirit.

War and Finance.

ARE war and finance "absolutely antagonistic," as asserted by Mr. Normal Angell, Sir Edward Tritton, and other members of the Peace Society, or is it possible that, in attempting to destroy one illusion, these gentlemen are simply creating another?

The popular impression is that wars furnish unrivalled opportunities for personal gains too great to be resisted.

Not a little of Mr. Angell's popularity is due, I think, to his remarkable announcement that that which most people regard as a constant menace to the world's peace is one of its most powerful allies.

Needless to say, this "discovery" (if I may call it so) was nowhere received with greater surprise and ecstasy than among the financial circles.

There can be no greater satisfaction for one hitherto suspected of fomenting crime than to find himself suddenly held up to universal esteem and admiration as a model of virtue.

Upon what foundation does Mr. Angell's "discovery" rest? So far as I can ascertain, merely upon the fact that war means the destruction of much credit, entailing loss universally.

Mr. Angell and his supporters have fallen into the error of supposing that the financial world consists of one organisation, or one group of men, who have to bear any and all financial losses accompanying a general decline in prices.

The truth is, that the financial, like the industrial world, is peopled with thousands of fierce and active competitors, and the same conditions which mean prosperity to one member spell ruin to another.

Like the ocean, the world of finance contains both big and little fish, and an occasional storm brings the little ones more readily within the grasp of their bigger adversaries.

We have surely enough evidence of this fact in the two great financial panics of 1893 and 1907, which devastated the two Western Continents, and were both precipitated by a group of New York bankers, who emerged from the storm not only unscathed, but enriched with the wealth of their victims!

I maintain that Mr. Angell's "discovery" rests mainly upon assertion, and a careful investigation will convince us that it is as much of an illusion as the one he ridicules.

That finance engenders warfare, both international and industrial, may be seen from the following:—

(1) The most important events disturbing the peace of nations during the past thirty years were:—

(*a*) The Egyptian Campaign, undertaken by Mr. Gladstone.
(*b*) The Spanish-American War.
(*c*) The Boer War.
(*d*) The Russian-Japanese War.
(*e*) The Spanish-Morocco affair.

Every one of these events had its origin in financial matters.

The bombardment of Alexandria was due to British bond-holders. The intervention of the United States in Cuba would not have occurred but for certain American investments in that island. It is needless to say that Kruger's overthrow was due to the gold discoveries of the Rand.

Since the publication of General Kuropatkin's "History of the Japanese War," all the world knows that the investments of members of the Russian Royal Family in the Far East led up to that sanguinary conflict.

Similarly, the Spanish-Morocco affair started over a mining claim owned by some Spanish bankers.

Now, the only instance I have seen mentioned in favour of Mr. Angell's contention is the Algeciras affair, which rests mainly on a mere rumour!

(2) Since no wars can be undertaken without the assistance of finance, the mere fact that war exists is a flat contradiction of Sir Edward Tritton's assertion that "war and finance" are "absolutely antagonistic."

(3) The mainspring of finance is interest (better known to our ancestors as usury). By this "it lives and moves and has its being." Anything which tends to increase the rate of interest, or the necessity for loans, without seriously weakening the security, is advantageous to financiers, whilst anything that tends to lower or destroy interest, or the necessity for loans, is regarded by them as injurious.

Our National Debt, like that of all other nations, was created by war, and to ask whether war benefits financiers is the same as asking whether National Debts are advantageous to the money-lending class!

During the discussion following the reading of Mr. Norman Angell's paper entitled "War as a Capitalistic Venture," before the Economic Circle of the National Liberal Club on January 31st last, Professor J. H. Levy said, "Were it not for war—international and industrial—capital would increase at such a rate that, very soon, interest would disappear. It is that fact which stands behind the disposition on the part of capitalists to favour what looks like a suicidal policy." It is quite true they lose in a certain direction by war, but they are between the devil and the deep sea. If they did not lose in that way, and the accumulation of capital went on in time of peace, interest would go down to zero, and the gains from capital would be extinguished. The question which the most selfish of them might put to themselves is, "Is it not better that we should lose occasionally by war than be snuffed out entirely by peace?"

Neither Prof. J. A. Hobson, who followed, and who endorses Mr. Angell's assertion, nor Mr. Angell himself, were able to answer what I believe to be a complete refutation of Mr. Angell's and Sir Edward Tritton's assertion.

My only comment upon Prof. Levy's remarks is, that so long as legal tender is restricted to a commodity or instrument the demand for which is greatly in excess of the available supply, and so long as land remains private property, interest cannot fall to zero, no matter how capital increases.

So long as wars are financed by loans instead of being met out of taxation, and so long as finance is practised for gain, so long must wars find favour in the sight of those who live upon interest.

(4) The very nature of our financial system is antagonistic to the interests of the industrial classes, and tends to industrial warfare. The system depends upon—nay, it breeds—increasing loans, the burden of which rest upon the shoulder of labour.

Every nation is piling up mountains of inextinguishable debt, the interest charges upon which

limit the returns to labour, and is largely the cause of the present unrest. The payment of these debts, even if possible, would create such a rise in prices as would end in panic and revolution. There is, therefore, but one alternative to perpetual industrial bondage, and that is—repudiation.

Few people are aware that our National Debt has already cost in reductions and interest charges no less than £3,000,000,000!

(5) It can, I think, be shown that the tendency of interest charges on loanable capital is to increase at a greater ratio than the production of wealth, and, therefore, the system can only be maintained by the bankruptcy of individuals whose capital is taken to pay interest charges on other capital.

This tendency of interest charges to outrun wealth production is at least one reason why prices advance whilst wages remain stationary.

Mr. Angell is undoubtedly doing a good work in trying to convince people that wars do not pay, but he will have to find a much safer and more reliable weapon for attacking the War God than the one he has chosen if he means to succeed.

ARTHUR KITSON.

The Economic Freedom of Women.

IN order to make women permanently valuable as wealth producers, and to enable them to attain to even that degree of economic freedom now enjoyed by men, it is absolutely essential that the great bar to progress, the great burden adding to that already borne by those who do the productive work of the world, the dependence of grown women as well as of little children, shall be removed, and that mother as well as father shall discharge the duty of maintaining children. To bring girls up to earn a living, to train them for it, and then to arbitrarily draw a line of demarcation between their condition before marriage and after, is an illogical and preposterous position in which to place them. No wonder they are not inclined to take their work seriously, to the great hurt of themselves and everybody who works with them, and indirectly of industrial conditions generally. Or those who do take their work seriously, and who earn a comparatively decent livelihood before marriage, are faced with an intolerable position—that of a worker becoming a shirker. But that women have age-long slave tendencies and a well-developed liking to "cling" and to "look up to" and to be "worked for" by a man there would be a greater tendency than there is to put off or to reject marriage, and there is already an outcry!

It is argued by some people (since we do not use plain terms when dealing with such "sacred" matters as this) that the wife and mother in the home is as economically free as her husband. Some husbands, indeed, aver that their wives have a monopoly of freedom, but there are not many men who have not at some time in their lives felt devoutly thankful that they are not women. The idea is that the wife and mother does give something to the community, something for which the community either does or ought to pay for. To those who argue that she is paid, one would ask, How? By her husband's wages, earned by taking part in economic processes? But if he is paid for her work, too, and she dies, is he therefore paid less? "No," is the reply, "but her work is necessary; therefore, when she dies, he has to get somebody else to do it." On the same terms paid to the wife? No, the work now has an economic value—a low one, naturally, since so much of it is done for nothing—thrown in, as it were, with the wife's body—and the husband now has to pay for it in money wages as well as food and shelter. To get it done on the same terms as before he must enter into sex relations, and marry again. A married women dependent on her husband earns her living by her sex. The man's wages do not alter, whatever his domestic relations are. And the fact that he must keep his wife in sickness, when she is sexually valueless, as well as in health, is one of those necessary parts of a system which guarantees a livelihood by means of sex, so long only as the rules are observed and the women are respectably married, and therefore within the folds of the trade union. And if the man dies, what is the wife's position? If she is also a mother her responsibility is now doubled, and the upkeep of the home is dependent on her. Her work, therefore, is more valuable than ever. But is she now paid extra for it? On the contrary, she must now herself take part in economic processes, in order to live at all, because, with her husband's death, her means of living ceased. It is abundantly clear that the work of the average wife and mother (and she of the working classes is perhaps the hardest worker) is performed, not as a service in return to those who daily serve her, as thousands do, but as a personal service to her husband. It is not an adequate answer to say that a working man can only have a home at all if a woman consents to give him her whole power as a worker as well as her person. The Lancashire man is notably amongst the most prosperous working men in the country. His home and his standard of life and comfort are much higher than that prevailing among men who are the sole bread-winners. His wages are not less because his wife earns, too, and he is one of the most obstinate fighters for what he considers his rights. Why not? For there is another "man" in the house as well as himself—his wife—and he need not put up with anything because the children will starve if he does not. Two are better than one, for they can help each other to rise. If women are paid—by means of their husbands' earnings—for "making the home happy" (which in most cases means doing all the dirty jobs about the house), how is it that other women who do nothing except wear handsome—or costly—clothes and look pretty at dinner (which another woman has cooked) are paid more? We extol the value of the work done by the working man's wife, which we say is equal to that of her husband. But it is more valuable still to look pretty and to spend money. That is why the butterfly woman is so well paid? As a matter of fact, this aspect of our study will not bear examination, for it becomes more clear at every step that it is the economic position of the husband which is the deciding force governing the life of the married woman, and that, in a strict economic sense, she has no value or place at all as a worker. She is "kept" for the sexual satisfaction of her husband, and earns her living by selling her sex, just as does her outcast sister of the streets. It is true that she sells herself to one man only (that is an essential condition of belonging to the trade union and the necessary equivalent for life-long maintenance), and that the woman of the streets, who is not bound by the union rules, may sell herself to as many as she pleases.

The two classes (only) of women who do not come under that heading would be the women who work for their own living all their lives, and who

marry with that intention, or those women who are "economically free" in the usually accepted version of that term, and who have an income derived from the labour of others. The former class is so small as to be a negligible quantity, and the latter are already being "kept" in so immoral a way that their being "kept" by one man for his sexual uses only would seem to be a matter of which the iniquity quite pales beside the former sin. There *is* a difference between the two ordinary classes of women who sell their sex. Those who sell it frankly to any who will buy have no other obligations to their purchasers. But she who elects to be a trade unionist, and becomes the life property of one man, must, if he cannot afford to pay her more than food and shelter, perform the domestic jobs which are inevitable to the maintenance of a home for both. This is a gratuitously frank way of putting what appears to be an obvious truth. But it would not be admitted by ninety-nine women out of every hundred, or by nine hundred and ninety-nine men out of every thousand, because they do not want to believe it. So we have the soothing proposal accepted in some quarters as economic fact, that the wife is her husband's partner, and that their economic position, both being necessary to the upkeep of the home is equal; as a matter of fact, both are not necessary, as the many homes kept by women only prove. But this house of cards, too, has a tendency to tumble to pieces if we attempt to examine its construction. Let us take, for instance, two partners in a business or profession. Is it ever considered to be enough that one of them shall shoulder all the work and responsibility, whilst the other does the spending? The position is not altered by the working man being unable to provide so little to spend that his wife's life is one long torment in the effort to perform the impossible—to make every shilling buy two shillings' worth—and that she is a domestic drudge into the bargain. If a partner in any business or profession die, a readjustment is necessary, without which the profits and income will suffer. But wives can and do die every day, and the income brought into the home suffers not at all. A doctor's wife is not a doctor, an engineer's wife is not an engineer, a miner's wife is not a miner; and though each man may suffer much unhappiness at the loss of his wife his income suffers not at all—except that he may have to pay a small sum to have the jobs done by his wife performed by some other woman, and, in the case of the classes "above" the workers, that might quite easily mean a saving of income. Excepting always mutual obligations to children—which are not relevant at the moment—it is only when a wife adds by her earnings to the family income that she can be said to be her husband's partner, and only in this case does she become an economic asset.

But women are mothers! we say with hypocritical reverence. And surely as mothers they are an economic asset, as without mothers all economic processes would cease. Just the same argument is applicable to men as fathers, since now, at any rate, whatever may have been the case in prehistoric times, fathers are as necessary to the production of children as mothers. But nobody excuses them from earning their living on that account! But the work of mothers in *rearing* children is incomparably greater than that of fathers, say the sentimentalists, and it is *this* work which is economically valuable. If that be so, why then do we pay wives who are not mothers at a higher rate? Since they have no children they have more of their husbands' income to spend on themselves. Again, our house of sentiment falls about our ears, and brings us now to the point where we are obliged to recognise that wives and mothers are really—and there is no way out of the disagreeable and distasteful conclusion—dependent on men. And to many people it *is*, instinctively, a disagreeable conclusion, in spite of the fact that most men want women to be dependent, and very many more women want to be dependent than otherwise. Sentimental men — those who are usually described as "a decent sort"—would like to keep wife and children under a glass case, labelled, "These are *my* goods. Hands off!" And sentimental women, whose whole lives have been a negation of responsibility and initiative, much prefer to be "supported" and to have a comparatively easy life of dependence than an equal sharing of the kicks and ha'pence.

But there is a growing sense of unrest, even in these quarters, and proposals are afloat, and are seriously advocated as a way out of economic dependence, that a wife and mother shall be paid for her work. Some propose that her husband shall pay her, and others propose that the community shall do so. These proposals are not really intended to mean that women shall be paid for loving their husbands and adoring their children, and for all the wealth of service of which that is an integral part. What is meant, in plain terms, is that the house a family live in must be kept clean, the family must be fed, the clothing must be washed, ironed, and mended, and that helpless babies die unless mothers come to their rescue. So, as the economic position of so many men is of such low value that marriage for their wives means undertaking to be the husband's cook, laundress, and general bottle-washer, all for nothing, she must have a legal title to half his wages! It would be as reasonable to argue that, if the wife earned money, her husband should have a legal right to half her earnings (as a matter of fact, the whole of a wife's earnings were her husband's property at one time, but few people would be found to defend that "right" to-day). "Oh, no," say the advocates of this "reform" (oh, Reform! what crimes are perpetrated in thy name!), "we simply want to ensure the wife and mother being paid for her work." So she really *is* employed by her husband, and we propose to compel him to pay her wages? "Oh, no!" again says our shocked sentimentalist. "We should not put it that way at all. We realise that the work of wife and mother is an economic asset, and we want it recognised as such." Which really means that we are at last dimly beginning to realise that domestic work, though despised and rejected of men, and worshipped as a fetish by most women, because women are human, and work is a human necessity, and this is the only kind of work they can do (and the only kind they will ever be taught to do if most "reformers" get their way), is none the less necessary work, and, since the already sufficiently burdened working man must be made to pay for this, like his more fortunately placed fellow-man higher up in the economic scale, and the only servant he can afford is his wife, he must be made to pay her, that's all! And, since it takes every bit of his wage to provide for the needs of the family, the only thing to be done is to call half of it his wife's! Then what more can she want? She will, at any rate, be his paid servant instead of his unpaid one. What an advance! No wonder the poor working man revolts! To be obliged to employ and pay somebody on a life contract, whom you have no power to dismiss! To be obliged to pay for work which may be inefficiently performed! Besides, taking him in the mass, he does more than this already. Except a few shillings for his own pocket —which his wife grudges him much less than do meddlesome outsiders—all he earns is his wife's,

and it outrages his sense of fair play that the law shall step in and interfere with the disposal of the trifle of money for which he works so hard. The majority of men are too good for this proposal to carry weight, and the minority are not good enough. And it is difficult to see how such an arrangement would benefit wives, except by publishing a fact which is hidden in sickly sentiment—that wives really are employed by their husbands. Unless the law regarding parentage, which now recognises the father as the sole parent of the child, were altered at the same time, the quite dependent position of wives would be altered no whit by such "reform." And even if the law were altered, and the mother became the parent, whilst the economic value of so many men remains so low, such an arrangement would not relieve her dependence, because the sum paid would be too small to enable her to keep her children. And a mother's relation to her children is more binding on her than her relation to her husband. So long as he only provides for the children's needs he owns the body and soul of his wife as if he bought and sold her in actual fact. Wherever a woman's children are, there is she, bound by cords which were forged in the primal past, and which she is powerless to break, even if she would. And she would not! The obligation to the child is honoured even by the slave-woman. It will be acknowledged and honoured by the freewoman as it has never been before. We may make a present of so much to those who would prefer economic bondage to freedom—that in one vital sense we women will ever and always be bound—to our children's need of us and our need of them. So it is an absolute essential to our freedom that we shall be capable of providing for the needs of those who are necessary to us. That we may share this with the father of our children is a matter of mutual arrangement and obligation; but whilst one parent only has the sole privilege of doing that which is the glorious duty of the mother, women will always be bound, so long as motherhood is a necessity.

But the work of "wife and mother" should be paid for! we cry. Why? Is the work of a father paid for? A man may be a parent or not. It is his work which is paid for, and he is not paid more, though he be father of a dozen and the man working next to him be father of none. Why have we so different an idea of motherhood that we actually propose to weigh its value in coin of the realm? House service can be paid for; so can cooking and mending, and of course ought to be. But is there any reason why, because a woman desires to be a mother, and loves one particular man enough to allow him to be the father of her child, that she shall thereafter wash his dirty linen and prepare the particular dishes which his masculine soul loves? Is there any particular reason why she, and she only, shall sweep the hearth shared by both? Because a woman loves her baby, and spends the most delightful hours of her life in admiring its soft, fat, delicious little body; worships it, indeed, so much that she rapturously feels that no sacrifice would be too great to save one hair of its head from harm—that she, and she only, out of all the world of women, many of whom are debarred by a cruel economic system, and by conventions equally cruel, from ever having a child of their own to love and to serve—that the mother is the only person capable of guarding a child from harm; that she, and she only, is fit to perform the many duties required to keep it healthy and clean? That a mother delights to serve her child is a commonplace. It is a characteristic shared by nearly all female animals. That the human mother may need to get a substitute for a time, if engaged in a profession or trade, whilst actually engaged in bearing and nursing her baby, is easily conceivable. But a baby does not remain a baby long, as all fond mothers know to their sorrow; and it is not necessary now that women should be child-bearers only. One or two well-cared for children are much more valuable to their country than a whole host of babies born but to die, or at best to live out a weedy, half-starved existence. Why, in the name of reason and common sense, should we condemn a mother to be a life-long parasite because she has had one or two babies to care for? Why not put our absurd sentimental hypocrisy behind us and recognise frankly that baby-culture needs expert knowledge, just as does later child-culture, in which the love and care of the mother should be supplemented by the work of others, as is the case when the child is older. Many hands and brains, besides the mother's, go to the making of the citizen. Hers are the first and the indispensable, but the child, once out of its infancy, is fed and clothed and housed and educated and trained for work by a multitude of supplementary hands and brains. And yet we still speak and act as though the "duties of wife and mother" lasted from the moment a girl-baby is born until she dies seventy years later, a great-grandmother.

Women no more require payment for being wives and mothers than do men for being husbands and fathers. The proposal to bribe them to follow natural laws is, in its essence and form, a degradation which could only have emanated from slaves, and which could only be tolerated by slaves. But the way to economic, social, and national advancement would certainly seem to lie in frank recognition of the necessity for domestic work being placed where it can follow natural developments, so that wifehood and motherhood can be divorced from the tyranny of primitive domestic conditions, and women may be enabled to earn their living, apart altogether from marital and parental relations, just as men do. That this transitional stage will take time goes without saying. Age-long habits, either of mind or body, are not changed in a day. The married women of the present day have, as a rule, no alternative than to submit to make the best of conditions which are galling to the freewoman, but which are so loved and hugged by the bondwoman and by her owners that they will be the bitterest opponents of change. Meanwhile, the way of immediate advance would seem to be to insist on the same training for girls as for boys, and a persistent insistence on the supreme importance of their regarding their work as a human, ecomonic necessity, to last their lifetime, as a due to society, and not merely as a pastime, to play at for a few years until a Prince Charming comes along to carry them off to his castle. In the interests of men as well as of themselves, women *must* take their industrial and professional work seriously, and *must* insist on equal pay for equal work; and to insist effectively they *must* organise, industrially and politically. And a necessary corollary, an imperatively necessary condition of organisation, is a sense of impelling necessity, of permanent advantage. It is, therefore, essential that women shall take a serious view of their position as industrial and professional workers, and they can never do this whilst the bulk of them take no part in the world's work, but are content to fritter their lives away either as domestic drudges or "ornaments" The conclusion reached, therefore, is that marriage must not affect women's work any more than man's, and that men and women together must make that effective demand for a more equitable system of providing for the world's economic needs than that which prevails to-day.

ADA NIELD CHEW.

"Shadows Out of the Crowd."*

ALTHOUGH inclined, like Mr. Henry James, to make a fuss about nothing, Mr. Richard Curle writes excellent short stories. It is his medium: as he has at present no power of characterisation he would be intolerably monotonous as a novelist. As it is, this deficiency sometimes wrecks his stories altogether, as in the case of "Fire Within and Without" (which reads like the pathetic attempt of a person with the *English Review* type of mind trying to write a story for the *London Magazine*). And at the best of times it prevents his stories being supreme art, holding them down to the level of Garshin rather than Tchekhov. But in the description of one particular phase of human existence—the agonising moments before the tides of madness break down the dams of self-control and invade the shuddering levels of the ordinary mind—he is magnificent. He describes it proudly but wistfully. . . . "The normal has little creative energy, though it is the most to be desired because it is the happiest." The perception of the abnormal has widened his outlook as much as it has distressed him; just as the visit to a new country is worth while because of the new art and a new people, even though one has to pass through unimagined perils on the way.

At times Mr. Curle makes the mistake of writing of madness for the mad, which limits his public. I think I understood "The Life-Illusion" when I first read it a week ago, at three o'clock in the morning after having had five hours' sleep out of the last forty-eight. But by broad daylight I cannot imagine what it means; nor can the eight people I have forced to read it. When the nation steadily refuses to pay out four-and-sixpence for the novel, which it dearly loves, it is not likely to stay up all night in order to understand short stories, which it so heartily dislikes.

But there is a real terror, to be perceived by all, in "The Crisis," where Somers sits alone in his flat waiting for the crisis of his mania to break over him like a wave of the sea. "Through all that flat, where every door was flung wide open and every light was scintillating brightly, there seemed to hover a suppressed emotion. Anyone entering at that moment would have known that something unusual was about to happen. So it is occasionally as if things could suggest dumbly the contortions of the soul." He sits in his library watching the men and women whom he knows to be phantoms walking quietly from room to room. His distress unconsciously sends out a cry for help to the woman he loves, who comes through the night to him. The sound of her knocking on the door, the words that she cries out, seem to him the last, the most infernally intimate intrusion of his mania into the sacred, normal things of his life. So to dispel this worst illusion he shoots himself.

The best story in the book is "Disordered Minds." It is the drama of a tired, quiet little middle-aged man from whose shoulders sanity slips like a cloak, set under the molten skies of last August. In the suburban neatness of Andromeda Walk he struggles with almost unseemly strength against his madness. He shouts numbers aloud, he runs incessantly from basement to attic, but sleep and his sanity evade him like frightened animals. "I am *not* mad! I'm tormented, that's all. One has to work it out for oneself. . . . What plan do you think I hit on? I reasoned like this: if only I could clear my brain for a second I could start all afresh. . . . I saw little by little that my illness was slipping past my guard, just as sleep overtakes the sentry though he is certain that he will be shot in the morning. . . . And I knew that I might still be saved. So I stood thinking and thinking till light dawned. There wasn't too much time. Light dawned, I say. I realised what must be done. I went down to the kitchen, and, collecting my energies, began to rush backwards and forwards between there and the attic. What's this? I see you looking at me again in that fashion! Don't you get away with any of your ideas till you've heard me out! That running up and down the stairs in the darkness with every faculty, every nerve, every muscle at full tension was to serve a purpose. It was to clear all disordered thoughts from the brain, to make it blank like an unused sheet of paper. Then it would happen as it happened in my dream—a sudden clarity, all simple, all plain. Do you follow? Everything would be plain to me. And it was I who diagnosed all this! There's your madman!—for, listen, it came true; fancy, in a flash, a great light, a great bright light. I've settled it all." So he throws himself out of a top-floor window into his trim little garden, painted so gay by the sun. When they found him "he had the semblance of digging treasure out of the ground."

This extraordinary sympathy with madness probably arises from the fact that Mr. Curle—judging from the two tales of childhood, "Our Quicksand Years" and "The Happy Past"—was brought up in that most eerie country, the Scottish Lowlands. "They began to enter a deserted, rolling country. On the horizon were rounded hills, topped by cairns, by stunted firs, by the open moors. Clumps of beech and young larch grew by the roadside, and occasionally across a field there would stand out a thick, black wood of pine, assuming the clear-cut shape of a gigantic serpent. And above it would be seen the white wings of wood-pigeons glinting in the sun, as they wheeled over the topmost trees. Behind the grey stone dykes, the fields of rough tufted grass, the wastes of moorland heather stretched away with long undulations like silent, arrested waves. The Cheviot sheep raised their heads and stared at the travellers; the shrill whistle of curlews resounded from afar, seemed to sweep across the air, and, echoing faintly, to die away in the hollows of the Lammermuirs. A few rooks flew lazily overhead, now and then a rabbit lying in the bracken on either side the road would jump up and scurry across the track. And everywhere there was the stillness of an inviolable rest, the kind of untamable stillness of a primeval and changeless existence.

It is a strange, empty land, ribbed with gaunt hills. On the white roads that run straightly east and west between the wastes of black moss-hags and rusted heather brent with heat, one may for fifteen miles meet no one but an Irish tramp carrying home his bent scythe from the harvesting. It is a ghostly place, full of memories of dead peoples. For into these bleak, high places crept the conquered Picts; for many years afterwards the little knavish black people stole down among their prosperous invaders, on malicious errands that laid the foundations of Scottish fairy-lore. That is why the Scottish fairies are so much uglier and crueller than the "little people" of England. Later on, in the Middle Ages, the Templars built their castles on these hillsides, and their chapels lay in hollows where now the grey waters of reservoirs lap over their hidden towers. This civilisation, too, was slowly wiped out.

The mystery of this land, whose edges stretch to

* "Shadows Out of the Crowd." By Richard Curle. 6s. (Stephen Swift and Co., Ltd.)

Glasgow and Edinburgh, is in the blood of all Lowland Scotsmen. It inspires them with a grief for the past which makes them incurable and sometimes maudlin Romantics. In their dissatisfaction with the present and its circumstances they set out for distant tropics, hoping to find their lost paradise in the heart of some jungle, while the Englishman has his nose in a ledger, and the Irishman, practical far beyond the point of immorality, is picking his pockets. Everywhere one looks one sees a Scotsman out of touch with life. Lord Haldane sits in the Cabinet with the silent pathos of some great lonely, mountainous animal, his blindish eyes averted from his colleagues, patiently listening for the voice of a dignified Liberalism that died a little before Gladstone. Sir William Robertson Nicoll goes on editing the *British Weekly*, that most romantic of all journals, wherein he persuades a vast mob to rally like Jacobites round the old standards of morality. While, as a matter of fact, the indignity of modern life is largely due to the fact that we are all going about trying to get rid of these standards in various furtive ways, like thirsty tramps dropping dry bread down areas. On every possible anniversary Scotsmen herd together to honour dead champions of liberty such as Bruce and Wallace, although in the everyday world they act like slaves, even to the point of refusing to join trades unions.

This lack of interest in the present and its circumstances is shown in an extreme form by Mr. Curle in his determined refusal to consider the normal state of mind wherein most of us live. It seems to him as well charted a sea as the English Channel. That, of course, comes very largely from his lack of sense of character. The brightness of a man's eyes, the gleam of his teeth, the agitation of his hands, strike him as so portentous that he dare not look behind the mask.

It would be easy to mock at these stories as decadent, and sneer at Mr. Curle for his hyperæsthesia. But there is something worse than hyperæsthesia: there is anæsthesia. It is a bad thing to be insane through too strong a consciousness of the horror of the world; but it is far, far worse to be so sane that you are unconscious of any horror at all. We ought to avoid this sanity which is buttressed up by brutish insensibility, in Art. So that the public, accustomed to a heightening of its sensations in Art, may begin to feel strongly about Life. Then they might rebel against magistrates like Mr. Mead, who on Monday was kind enough to bind over a man to keep the peace and order him to "keep his feelings better under control in the future" for having protested against half a dozen policemen twisting a docker's legs and wrenching his jaw. So that even the wilful, perverse abnormality of Mr. Curle's book is of value, because it destroys for a time the sense of comfort and security which is the precursor of death.

REBECCA WEST.

AT DAWN.

The day breaks bright; but not for thee!
Unless a spirit sun arise.
The flaming pennants blaze the skies;
But not for thee! but not for me!

The birds sing blithe; but not for thee!
Unless thy soul hears spirit notes.
The merry music shrills and floats;
But not for thee! but not for me!

E. H. VISIAK.

The Signing of the Will.

AMONG the papers of a country solicitor who died about five years ago there was found a meticulously sealed document. Its contents are unique, and at this distance of time identification of the real persons is impracticable. The date, which was in the early nineties, is omitted. The document runs as follows:—

"I think it as well to note down particulars of what happened to me yesterday in case, during my lifetime, some discovery may be made in psychical research which may shed some light on the matter. Without any belief in personal immortality, I have always found it difficult to conceive the instantaneous extinction of the human will and personality when the human body takes so much time to dissolve. The doctrine of Conservation of Energy seems to demand more than meets the eye. Thus, if a body is cremated, one finds a fairly exact equivalent in gases, water, calcined bone, and other materials, but there is no equivalent for all the force we know as human character or volition—often so tense and vivid at the very moment of physical death. The same sort of phenomenon occurs, of course, if a charged electric battery is burnt. The chemical equivalent of the battery itself is there, but there is no trace of the electricity. Centuries hence both the human volition and the electricity may be perceptible by means as yet unknown to us, and my own experience seems to point to something of the kind. So also does the instinct of the savage to protect himself from the dead. I am at least convinced that some kind of volition may possibly survive bodily death, whether consciously or unconsciously, though, as this force is the highest function of the organism, it probably perishes before the physical *substratum* is completely dissolved.

"Such is my theory, and these are the facts. Yesterday I was summoned by telegram to make the Will of a client who was dying in a nursing home. On arriving there I heard from the nurse that he had sustained, on the previous day, an abdominal operation which not only gave no hope of recovery, but also indicated rapidly approaching death. He might, in fact, die at any moment. He knew this, and was only concerned about making his Will. From some chance remark the nurse inferred that he might have made some other informal Will in his own writing which he desired to alter.

"Without further delay I went with her straight up to the room where my client, an elderly, clean-shaven man, lay. He looked relieved as I came in, but his eyes were glazed and bright, and he urged me to begin at once. In all my experience of him I had never before seen him look so grimly set and determined.

"There was a fading sunset out of doors, so I asked the nurse to light up the pale little gas globe which hung in the middle of the room, to prevent interruption, and started making pencil notes of the heads of the Will. The nurse left a tumbler and a bottle of brandy on the table beside me, in case my client should have any sort of collapse.

"After naming executors, he began dictating various legacies in thin, low, but unfaltering tones. He was lying flat on his back, and I saw that it would not be easy to get his signature. He was particularly emphatic as to the disposal of the residue to a certain relative, and this residue would (I gathered) amount to about £30,000. He did not mention any former Will to me, nor had I ever made a Will for him before, but from his earnest-

ness I guessed that some previous Will, the provisions of which he now detested, might be in existence. He then quietly remarked that he might die at a moment's notice, and asked me to write out the Will for signature at a desk which stood at the bottom of the bed, the bed being at the right hand of the desk. I took my paper and fountain pen, and concentrated all my forces on copying the document with as much speed as precision allowed. I thought no more of the dying man, and never turned round even to look at him. . . . Just as I was getting near the end of the legacies I began to feel a sort of nightmare sensation that I should never finish the Will. It seemed, too, as if I were being oppressed by some terrible weight on the heart without being able to move or even to speak. This was succeeded by a kind of somnolent lethargy, much as if I had fallen into a nap after dinner. . . . Suddenly I woke with a start and a feeling of nausea. With a hideous kind of astonishment I perceived not only that the Will was completed, but that it had been *signed by my client*, and the signature attested by myself. Simultaneously it occurred to me that I had meant to summon the nurse as the second witness required by law, because the signature would not be valid unless *both* witnesses were in the room at the time of the Will being signed by the Testator. I again looked at the signature. . . . The ink was dry, as in the case of my own; the handwriting, though sprawling and shaky, was clearly my client's. I tried the nib of my fountain pen. It gave signs of vigorous and unaccustomed use. I have often imitated signatures to amuse myself, but this particular signature was not easy to imitate. All this time it had never occurred to me to look at anything but the Will on which I was absolutely engrossed. Suddenly I turned round to the right to where my client lay. There, along the level line of the bed, I saw, in the twilight and pale gaslight, the upturned tip of a nose, a gaping jaw, and a red stain on the sheets below. I wanted to move, but I could not. . . . For some period of time that I cannot exactly define I felt rigid and paralysed in my chair. . . . Then I seemed to get drowsy again, and felt as if some person or thing were standing just behind my right shoulder. I felt impelled by this influence to call the nurse and make her attest the Will, and explain that just as I had attested it death had occurred. I was further to tell her that she must attest it as if she had been in the room at the same time. She would probably consent, as she knew how imperative the dead man's wishes had been.

"Recovering my normal consciousness, I swung round my chair *to the left*, and stepped to the bell, which I rang, without caring to look again at my client. Waiting for her to come in, I reflected that if there was any dispute or litigation over the Will I should have to give evidence on oath, and that it was, therefore, necessary to tell her the truth. Just as this flashed through my mind I again felt as if some person or thing stood behind me, and this time I shivered with terror and became icily cold. It was borne in on me that I was under a professional obligation to disclose nothing in regard to the mysterious signature, and, further, that my life was not worth an hour's purchase if I did. I dared not look behind me or at the bed. The nurse came in and closed the eyes, tied up the jaw, and put everything in order. That done, I proceeded to give her the explanation which seemed to have been communicated by someone else. While doing this I was continuously aware of some third presence, and by this time I could feel each separate root of hair, and the top of my head seemed to be gripped in a vice. The nurse looked uneasy, but was positively eager to carry out the evasion of the legal technicality, and signed below me under the usual kind of attestation clause, which stated that the Testator had signed the Will in the presence of both of us, and that both of us had attested his signature in his presence. As she signed I grabbed the brandy bottle and took a large gulp. I felt warmer inside, and vaguely realised that that Will would, in no circumstances whatever, be disputed. I had no personal interest in the contents, nor anyone belonging to me. When the old Will came to light I found that the residuary legatee under it had inflicted some deadly injury on my client. The operation had had to be performed at half an hour's notice to relieve an agony of physical pain, and he had probably only remembered the old Will just when recovering from the operation.

"I may think it desirable to destroy this record before I die myself, but the exact facts may be interesting to refer to while I live. They constitute a pretty problem for the Councils of the Incorporated Law Society and the Psychical Research Society."

[Our contributor desires to remain anonymous.]

A National Gallery Reverie.

WE cannot now sever art from life. No real artist ever did. The artist feels; he does not reason. Like life itself, he works by instinct, and if his instincts are sound his work will necessarily be sound also, provided that he has trained his ability for expressing on canvas everything he feels. The artist who hesitates, whose critical faculty is exercised during the actual production of his work, instead of being bound up with his primary instincts and exercised subconsciously before the brush touches the palette, betrays himself in his work unmistakably. Look at Millais; look at Watts; look at the "British School."

Art is an inspiration for higher minds. The brain, dulled and jaded by the cares of existence, by sickness, death, and the commonplace routine of work and play, may find in art its invigorating medicine. Art, if the comparison may be permitted, is a stimulant for the higher sides of our nature; a medicine of which, if we would purify our soul, we must take periodical doses. Lines from the noblest poets may float in our memory; we may carry with us the recollection of some superb work in imperishable rock left us by Michelangelo and his peers; and in our mind's eye we may still see some beautiful painting or some striking architectural design. Yet this is not enough. We may stand on Ben Nevis or on the shore at Valentia and breathe the pure air from the mountain or the sea; but let us once go back to the capital and the effect is lost amid the smoke and roar and din of London. In like manner the mere recollection of works of art, however inspiring and lasting, is not enough. We must renew our acquaintance with the great masters from time to time; and thankful indeed ought we to be if we have sufficient facilities for doing so. Paris, Venice, Munich, Florence, Rome, may call to us; but if the Louvre and the Uffizi Galleries are out of reach, let us at least be thankful for small mercies if we live near Trafalgar Square.

For an artistic education—using the word

artistic in its narrower sense, and applying it to painting only for the moment—our National Gallery is not good enough. Spain, for example, is not well represented, nor is the Italian Renaissance "school," nor is Oriental art. Still, the National Gallery is interesting; and ample, even, if we have seen other galleries, and wish merely to keep our mind and soul fresh. We can look in now and then, pick out a masterpiece, and find something new in it—one always finds something new in masterpieces. At every inspection they tell us a different tale, they help us in a different way, they convey to us some new point of view, some new idea. And in the National Gallery there is one masterpiece in particular which I am never tired of recommending to connoisseurs who happen to be visiting London; one masterpiece which I am never tired of looking at myself. I refer to No. 1172: the "Equestrian Portrait of Charles I.," by Sir Anthony van Dyck.

Nobility, greatness, superiority, may be expressed in as many different ways as there are artists' thoughts. Yet here Van Dyck has risen to an uncommon height. Charles I. was to the tips of his fingers an aristocratic ruler; all we know of him confirms this. Being aristocratic, he was well liked: remember the story of the weeping crowds dipping their kerchiefs in his blood after the execution. He laughed, as well he might, at House of Commons or House of Lords' debates—what do ruling minds care for the chatter of public assemblages? Withal, Charles was too delicate, too refined, too hesitating for the period in which he lived and the country over which he ruled. In Italy, a hundred years or so earlier, he would have been in his element. His better qualities were crushed by the restlessness of his epoch; and refined weapons were of no avail against the clamour of the multitudes—the multitudes, that is, of what we should now call the middle classes; and not the "multitude," for the multitude, the vast majority of the people themselves, loved the monarch.

How well Van Dyck has expressed Charles's weakness, nobility and refinement let a glance at his picture show. Weakness is suggested by the careless attitude of the king on his horse, by the very bend of his right arm. And there is, indeed, a touch of genius in this small detail; for carelessness rather than weakness was the undoing of the monarchy. But we must take the picture as a whole; and when we so consider it the superb effect is at once apparent. Nobility is suggested by the general effect; and if we seek for nobility in the details we shall see it at once in the horse. It may sound very odd to talk of a refined horse; but I think that THE FREEWOMAN public will understand what I mean. Note its small head, a head which seems at first too small in proportion to the body, and especially to the neck. But this, in an animal of the type, is a marvellous indication of—shall we say?—pure pedigree. The poise of the horse's head and neck, and the poise, too, of its near foreleg, are among the supreme things of art. And the background harmonises, I need hardly say how admirably, with the general aspect of the picture. To contemplate the combined effect of the deft touches of the artist is to be uplifted; to delve among the details is a pleasure, rather than a task, of the most engrossing interest. The horse's mane is a gem; but it is no more artistic in its way than the angle formed by the king's leg and his sword. And so on, and so on: every look will show us a new detail; every look will bring the effect of the artist's genius more and more home to us.

Stand in the spacious room where this Van Dyck is hung; stand there on a Saturday afternoon, as I have more than once done. Listen to the remarks passed by all and sundry; look at the people who pass them—underpaid clerks with their frowzy "girls," sedate patresfamiliarum, whose stern, prim wives peer round suspiciously lest there should be anything to shock the morals of the hopeful children; art students from the provinces, fuddled with wrong theories and bad beer; and those persons who "opine" that the 'oss would fetch a "fency proice," and that the "frime ain't bedd, not 'arf it ain't." Man has come through stage after stage of evolution; and we may discern signs of reaction when we see people looking at a masterpiece and hear them criticise the frame. There, however, but for the grace of God, go we ourselves. The race is struggling towards some goal: vainly have philosophers sought to tell us what; vainly do rationalists strive to uproot the old beliefs. For this forward impulse in humanity is older than any of its religions, and all our faiths are but as stages on the road. It is art that embodies, more than anything else, the expression of this everlasting striving upward and onward; and as we look at this portrait we forget for a brief space the king who sat for it and even the artist who painted it. For it expresses not merely one king and one artist: it expresses the ultimate goal towards which the human race is consciously and unconsciously struggling: it is a guide-post pointing out to humanity the direction that must be followed. This is the connection between art and life; and in a supreme artistic achievement, such as this Van Dyck, we have at once an inspiration, a hope, and a euthanasia.

E. K. GUTHRIE.

New York at 99° in the Shade.

I.

Walk with me down through the furnace-like street;
Feel the hot paving-stones under your feet;
Breathe the dead air; smell the vile human smells;
Don't lag behind though your stomach rebels.
Now it is night, and the sun has long set;
Still how his rays seem to blister us yet.
Elbow your way through the sweltering mass.
Moist, pallid faces are turned as we pass.
Some are of men who have toiled all the day.
Children are screaming in dirt as they play;
Woe-begone women, with babes at the breast,
Sit in the doorways unkempt and half dressed.
All talk at once; the night passes in din.
Soon will the work of a new day begin.
Ah, 'tis enough to make angels despair;
This is the thing they call taking the air!
Enter this hallway; climb five flights of stairs;
Visit the dens where the poor have their lairs,—
Kitchen and bedroom and parlour in one,
Cooking the life that was left by the sun,—
Windowless cupboards where men try to sleep,
Heedless of roaches and bugs as they creep.
Some burn with fever, and here they must die,
Crowded like litters of pigs in a sty.
One narrow house, rising floor above floor,
Holds a full hundred of mortals and more.
Up on a roof see a score or two lie,
Seeking for slumber beneath the dull sky.
Let us be proud of the city we've made,
After a day ninety-nine in the shade.

As I look up at the stars, lo, behold!
Comes to my ear, as to shepherds of old,
Strains as it were from a heavenly choir,
Singing, "O brothers who toil, never tire!
Justice will come if you look for it higher."

II.

Follow me now to the streets near the Park.
Palace and mansion loom up in the dark.
Windows are closed; all the people have fled.
Surely this seems like a town of the dead.
Gone to the mountains or gone to the sea,
Travelling in Europe for two months or three;
Here they have left in the heat and the gloom
Houses as empty of life as the tomb.
Come, I've a latch-key, let's go in and roam
Ghost-like through halls of what once was a home.
Look at the tables and pictures, and all
Covered each one like a corpse with its pall.
Beds of the softest invitingly stand,
Luxury wickedly cumbering the land.
Here, were the waifs of the slums to repose,
Soon they'd forget all their trials and woes.
Think what a blessing,—I say it with wrath,—
Could they but dip in this porcelain-lined bath.
Miles upon miles of such houses stretch forth,
Bolted and barred, from the south to the north.
Children may perish like flies in the heat,
How could we let them pollute a fine street?
Let us be proud of the city we've made,
After a day ninety-nine in the shade.

Down on the curb again, what do I hear?
Up from the sewer comes a song harsh and clear;
List to the words of the devil's own choir,
"Sodom, Gomorrah, with Sidon and Tyre,
Wait for New York in the depths of hell-fire."

Interpellation.

TO MEN AND WOMEN OF ALL CIVILIZED COUNTRIES.

LIFE is evolution. The sense and aim of all evolution is perfection. The first condition of progressive evolution is the maintenance of the health of the race.

Viewed from this standpoint, actual sexual life shows us symptoms which not only hinder progress, but which threaten it in the gravest manner. These symptoms are not merely a flagrant contradiction of the external brilliance of our civilisation, but are also violations of our knowledge of the conditions of evolution, gained by science.

We see that to-day the sexual life of all social classes is governed by prostitution, state-regulated and clandestine, that is, by compulsory sexual abandonment, for material profits. Sexual maladies, consuming the strength of nations, are rife, and in innumerable marriages baulking the realisation of the highest functional aims of the race. By hypocritically misrepresenting the nature of the sexual impulses, which are in our blood, we create that dissimulation and secrecy which forms the most propitious soil for the development of these diseases. By the association of money and love, and by the deplorable influence of economic interest in the choice of marital partners, a great and adverse influence is exerted against marriage, the most important territory of sexual selection. Marriage itself, as monogamy without constraint of the one or the other, is the ideal of the sexual union. But in the present conditions marriage is not estimated according to the advantages it confers upon the common life, according to its effects upon personality and responsibility in regard to the family, but according to an inflexible formality. It thus forms a perpetual constraint by its systematic indissolubility. Without happiness in the majority of the cases, marriage is leading, in fact, to countless adulteries, and to still more, in thought. Thousands of men and women, in the prime of their lives, are constrained to live in celibacy, renouncing human happiness and progeny, coerced by the social and economic considerations which marriage imposes on them. Thus marriage, nowadays, hinders evolution instead of assisting it.

So sexual intercourse, out of marriage, was created by marriage, and at the same time condemned by it. The girl mother is laid open to *méprise* and outlawry, and the "natural" child—harmfully alike to mother, child, and society—is laid under a ban, and often allowed to starve and die in neglect.

A great work is to be done in the sphere of sexual reform and in the care of motherhood, and in order to unite all the forces which are trying to effect this object, an International Federation for Mother Protection and Sexual Reform was formed at Dresden, September 30th, 1911.

Admitting that the attainment of healthy relations between the sexes and the idea of a higher evolution of the human race is not to remain the concern of one country only, we ask everybody—singly or in societies, men or women—to join us with their efforts in the fight against existing abuses, especially in fortifying the sentiment of responsibility for offspring. All those who will fight with us for the realisation of these aims are welcome.

HELENE STOCKER.

The Executive of the International Federation for Motherhood Protection and Sexual Reform:—Justizrat Dr. Max Rosenthal, Breslau; Dr. phil. Hélène Stöcker, Berlin; Ines Wetzel, Berlin; Dr. med. Iwàn Bloch, Berlin; Marie Hübner, Breslau; Dr. phil. Eduard David, M.d.R., Berlin.

Correspondence.

IDEAS OR NO IDEAS.

To the Editor of THE FREEWOMAN.

MADAM,—Permit me to clear the decks a little. First, I am certainly a member of the N.U.W.S.S., though in no official position, being merely on the committee of a local branch. Second, I shall hope, with the Editor's permission, to contribute from time to time to THE FREEWOMAN. I regard it as a valuable medium for free discussion and as a means of learning what the more insidious enemies of Feminism have to say—those who prefer warfare rather by undermining than assault.

As to the points in dispute between the Editor and myself. She stated that suffragism had no programme. I answered that it had only one item in its programme, that of the principle of political sex equality, which, in itself, covers all sides of human activity. My other contention was that the first principle of freedom is violated when anyone demands of Suffragists a statement of precisely how they mean to vote as a condition of their being enfranchised. This the Editor leaves unanswered, for merely to charge failure in "repudiation of marriage and of living by rent, profit, and interest," to "acquiesce in social injustice" is to leave the question at issue precisely where it was, if it be still maintained that those who "acquiesce in social injustice" are not worthy of enfranchisement unless they change their ways. To enfranchise only those persons who agree with any special creed is not to uphold liberty, but to use that pernicious double standard of justice for men and women, which is tyranny.

The specific charges against suffragism are that it has (*a*) no programme, and (*b*) no philosophy—that it goes in for "suffragism neat."

We will take that as confessed; but what does "suffragism neat" mean?

It means the establishment of political equality between men and women, that is—(1) Equal electoral rights in both Parliamentary and other elections. (2) The removal of all sex disabilities in both local and imperial legislatures, that is, in Cabinet and Parliament, in City and Borough Councils, etc. The establishment of the principle that power, not sex, shall decide public office. (3) Equal rights in marriage, including the abolition of the double standard of morality, equal rights in the children, and in all other subjects of marital dispute—in fact, the removal of the last trace of the idea of possession by the male. (4) The removal of every legal barrier to women's entrance into all professions. (5) And, consequently, the eligibility and appointment of women in all departments of the legal executive—on juries, on the magistrates' bench, on the judicial bench, and among the "working members" of the legal apparatus, by the swearing-in of women constables. (6) The permeation of the spirit of Trade Unionism, and of all developments of Trade Unionism, with the recognised principle that it is the worker as worker, and not as man or as woman, who is to be defended by industrial combinations.

In short, since politics now cover the whole outward organisation of the State, this simple item means a claim to the open door for women everywhere, and an entire reconstruction of civilisation in its governmental basis. Assuredly "suffragism neat" is a vast piece of work. Assuredly, also, it demands a philosophy.

And this small item of political equality, which the editor so overlooks, is based on a philosophy which, doubtless, many Suffragists have not yet altogether realised or even faced. It is still tacit, unexpressed, but—it is emerging. I will give it in a moment. But here I should like to say that the Editor of THE FREEWOMAN is still, I consider, unaware of the fundamental fact of suffragism—that it is not a movement which originated with "intellectuals." If it had done so, it would assuredly fail, as it failed with the intellectuals of the eighteenth century. No; suffragism, which I should define as the active side of feminism, is, like all other revolutionary movements of the past, a thing born of instinct, drawing into its net every class of woman in all the nations. Like the spirit of the Renaissance, it takes different forms in different lands, though always remaining, in essentials, an expansion of the life-force. It is too vast an upheaval of the spirit to be under the thumb of mere intellectuals, though they must ultimately play their part in crystallising the thought formation which will one day be the centre of the movement: its final expression in the eyes of history. The spirit of feminism, and therefore of suffragism—for the two are inseparable—is a wind from the unseen. That is why it is invincible, why no foolish legislators, too dull to read the signs of their time, can for ever defeat it. It comes from the same depths from which have come all the conquering impulses of evolution by which the race has raised itself.

But the philosophy is emerging. Put crudely, it is this—that since the subjection of women is based on the economic law that he who pays the piper should call the tune, if woman is to share in calling the religious, political, social, and industrial tune, she must also pay the piper, and cease to live upon man by the sale of herself. She must cease to earn her living by sex. This is a new principle in evolution: hitherto it has been as an exception to natural law when woman has not, under some excuse or other, been dependent on man, fed through him. It is a reversal of the practice of all ages that will alter not only the governing organisation with which suffragism is concerned, but the way in which children are born and reared, the way in which woman holds man, and man woman, in that bond which recreates the race both spiritually and physically. From the sea of revolt against the sole rule of the male into which evolution is now forcing us, this philosophic idea emerges like an island. And this concerns the Editor's remark that prostitution has existed in every age. True; but so, too, has the subjection of women. Never at any time has the world known the joint rule of woman and man; never has the woman been free, with the weapon of knowledge in her power. Hence man's so-called physiological "necessities," those "necessities" into which he has hypnotised himself by thousands of years of self-indulgence, are, of course, permitted to turn certain parts of our cities into hells. That will always be the case when the male alone rules, and the philosophy of dependence on the male is the law of life for women. For, of course, under that principle, prostitution, like marriage for a living, is entirely logical. Marriage slavery, the maintenance of a huge class of demi-mondaines, the practice of prostitution, in short, male promiscuity by purchase, will always be the law of life as long as the man alone rules. Hence, again, the cynical farce of the "White Slave Traffic" Bill.

The Editor charges the suffrage societies with wishing to suppress thought and to refuse scientific investigation. And her proof of this is Miss Royden's letter condemning THE FREEWOMAN. Surely a small matter on which to base so general a charge? In this connection it should be noted that the letters which have appeared in THE FREEWOMAN describing various erotic experiences are not by any means scientific, though they might possibly form part of the raw material of scientific investigation. Nor can lusciously worded articles lauding the practice of æsthetic prostitution be considered science. Dr. Wrench's article on the Yoshiwara was not only vague in language, it was inaccurate in thought, since it begged all the root questions by loose assumptions. No attempt at the scientific treatment of sex questions, other than of Malthusianism, has yet appeared in the paper. Further, equally with the editor who calls Suffragists "idealess," Miss Royden is entitled to express her opinions. She did not, of course, speak for the 30,000 members of the N.U. who were not consulted. It is, too, a far greater attack to call one "idealess" than "nauseous."

The truth is that Fear rules. Mrs. H. Ward dreads the wicked licence (as exemplified in THE FREEWOMAN!) which she expects will follow on the coming of the vote, and the editor of THE FREEWOMAN fears the pious sentimentality of Suffragists (as illustrated by Miss Royden!). Neither fear is, I think, justified, and certainly not by such paltry "proofs" as these. Women are both narrow and wide; both intellectual and emotional; strong here, weak there. The heart of woman, like the heart of man, is a dark forest, as the Russian proverb says. But that a great evolutionary force has arisen within her none can deny. Our part is to guide it, not to condemn on the slightest pretexts, those who work on other lines than ours.

M. P. WILLCOCKS.

[We feel that Miss Willcocks misses the point of our arguments. We are quite aware that there is quite a long bill of demands for alterations in electoral and administrative organisations. But readjustments and the demand for them need not necessarily represent *ideas*. Miss Willcocks says that Suffragist ideas—their philosophy—are emerging. We sincerely hope so; but we are entitled, we think, to point out that this emergence has been so slow that it can truthfully be asserted that Suffragists do not know now where they are, even in respect of such subjects—intimately vital to women seeking freedom—as women's economic independence and prostitution. We are sorry if our remarks gave Miss Willcocks to understand that we based our judgment upon one individual statement. We based it, in actual fact, upon many years' close connection with official Suffragists. We used the letter to the *Times* to prove that, though

there are individual Suffragists who are seeking out after ideas, the official ban upon them is such that when one person chooses to speak officially in the name of all Suffragists, even those who are earnestly seeking after a philosophy do not feel that the cause of ideas is sufficiently important to challenge openly the officially expressed embargo. Judging by experience, it is conservation and fear of ideas, and, under the circumstances, protest is salutary.—ED.]

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MR. McKENNA AND FORCIBLE FEEDING.

MADAM,—None of your correspondents in last week's issue denied the underlying principle of my letter, namely, that Mr. McKenna has the duty of seeing that offenders against the law are duly punished. Mr. McKenna is not responsible for the law; he has merely to insist upon an impartial and just administration of the law. Forcible feeding is a practice which he has been compelled to authorise, because the convicted militants have chosen to refuse food. I wrote my letter in defence of Mr. McKenna, because, having put the question to myself, I cannot see how otherwise Mr. McKenna could have acted. That is the practical test—what would one do oneself?

I attacked the editor of the *Christian Commonwealth* because he, having put the same point, evaded the dilemma by the weak sophistry of a carping irresponsibility. In his second attempt, he has become merely rhetorical and declamatory. My theological knowledge is not sufficient to enable me to appreciate the relationship between the Holy Ghost and forcible feeding; it seems to me an indecent analogy and entirely prejudicial. My Christian critic apparently agrees in my surmise that the majority of men and women is against woman suffrage; yet he denies the right of that majority to decide whether they will be ruled by men $\frac{\text{and}}{\text{or}}$ women! But the right to vote is based upon an admission of the democratic principle of the right of the majority to govern as against the exclusive rule of a despot, an oligarchy, a monarchy, or a plutocracy. To say woman suffrage is a matter of "inherent human justice" is simply begging the question, considering that the opposition to woman suffrage is founded on an equally strong belief in the injustice of "votes for women."

Had the Government been compelled to release the women on the threat of a hunger strike, Miss Slater's argument that forcible feeding is of no value would be a true one. Those are not the facts. The women have been released in a state of health far worse than the ordinary prisoner. As the object of prison administration is to punish law-breakers, this object has been attained, though not through the methods prescribed by the Government, but by methods forced on the Government by the policy of hunger-striking.

My words, "no majority of the House of Commons has ever voted for woman suffrage," meant that 345 members had not voted for woman suffrage.

My only comment upon Miss Bain's letter is that the militant women tried at the Sessions were all invited not to commit acts of violence against innocent persons. That undertaking was refused, so the rank and file had had an equal opportunity with the leaders.

The whole difficulty about the militant policy is this. It is quite true that it has drawn many recruits to the ranks. But it has also created a formidable and bitter opposition. Would the suffrage have been granted in Australia, Norway, Finland, or New Zealand had there been this accompaniment of ineffective violence? From what I know of English statesmen, and Engish men and women engaged in public affairs, their characters are not such as will make them yield to personal assault, private insult, and petty injury. A man or a woman may admit defeat on the battlefield, but not in a petty brawl in a public street. Feminine militancy is not war; it is brawling.

C. H. NORMAN.

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ILLEGITIMACY.

MADAM,—I ask the hospitality of your pages to invite the co-operation of those of your readers who favour the reform of the laws affecting illegitimate children. The subject has recently been ventilated in the *English Review* and *John Bull*, as well as in your own columns, and this seems a favourable moment to take some sort of action. For the present I only wish to have the names and addresses of sympathisers. Later a conference might be held at some convenient centre to decide our further course of action.

Whatever views your readers may hold on the subject of sex relations in general I presume that none will be unwilling to relieve perfectly irresponsible children of the very real disabilities imposed on them by the English law in consequence of the action of their parents. Socialists, I am aware, often say that they want to illegitimatise everybody; but till this can be done, I hope that they do not favour an unjust discrimination which causes an immense amount of misery and destitution, without, as far as I have observed, helping the cause of Socialism or Sex Freedoms.

EDMUND B. D'AUVERGNE.

[A communication which we publish from Dr. Hélène Stocker in this week's issue is of importance.—ED.]

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SHALL THE YOSHIWARA BE REBUILT?

MADAM,—If I have hurt Dr. Wrench's feelings in seeming to think him ignorant of his subject, I humbly apologise and bite the dust before him, assuring him that such was not my idea. That he lives in a country where prostitution is State protected, I am, indeed, surprised to hear, as I should have imagined his opinions scarcely possible under those conditions, although it is true that they are shared by a certain number of Continental medical men; but I never for an instant doubted that he had widely studied the subject, or that he had read Forel—I presume that every thinking medical man who has any opportunity to get hold of the book will have done so—and I merely quoted the Swiss scientist for the benefit of those of your readers who have *not* read him, and whose interest in the subject may have been aroused by Dr. Wrench's article. I am perfectly aware that the latter does not compare the English and the Continental systems, but our occidental systems with the Japanese; but, at the risk of a further reproof from his pen, I would remind him that the occidental mind differs so widely from that of the Japanese that a system which might flourish in that country without abuse, even with a certain beauty and dignity of its own, would soon fall into abuses in our corrupt civilisation, and would end in differing very little from that employed in most Continental countries at the present moment. This is the thought which was in my mind when I wrote the letter which appears to have aroused Dr. Wrench's ire; and if I failed to express it as clearly as I might have done, it is obviously my own fault. In conclusion, may I thank Mr. Rubinstein also for his very courteous reply to my letter on Strindberg? In it he certainly clears up one or two points which his article left somewhat vague, or which were even misleading; but I would like to ask him one question. He says that it was from a *pecuniary* standpoint that he regarded Strindberg in stating that he came from the lower middle class. Does he, then, consider that *any* poor aristocrat—a poor count or baron, for example—belongs to that class? If so, then the poor nobles of Italy do well to hide their diminished heads in the safety and silence of their ancient and dilapidated palaces!

(MADAME) AMY SKOVGAARD-PEDERSEN.

July 13th, 1912.

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CONCERNING THE YOSHIWARA.

MADAM,—May I ask Dr. Wrench four questions on matters of fact and four on matters of opinion?

(*a*) Are the Yoshiwara women able to dispose of the money they earn or of any portion of it, or are they leased to capitalists for certain terms of years, in return for food and lodging? Have these women any freedom of movement? Are they allowed to refuse any client who is repugnant to them, or not? Are venereal diseases decidedly less prevalent in Japan than in Europe generally?

(*b*) As prostitution is inevitable under present economic conditions, *and is also* a necessary corollary to the compulsory chastity of the majority of women before marriage, and the legalised reservation of a woman to one man in marriage—would Dr. Wrench, as a believer in marriage and property, advocate the establishment of a minimum wage for these necessary women? Would he permit them to sue for debts owed them for the exercise of their profession? Would he pension the small percentage of these women who live to old age? Would he recommend that venereal diseases be made notifiable by *men* as well as women?

May I add, for the benefit of certain of your readers, that I am *not* advocating the State endowment of prostitution, though, if regulation by the State be insisted on, endowment is the barest justice! I do not advocate the State regulation of prostitution; but then I do not believe that the present structure of society (with all it implies) is sacrosanct and permanent.

July 12th, 1912. F. W. STELLA BROWNE.

[Dr. Wrench intimated that his last communication was his final rejoinder to the criticism which his article on the Yoshiwara has called up. He may, however, be able to supply the information for which our correspondent asks.—ED.]

CONCERNING THE IDEA OF GOD.

MADAM,—Your note on p. 155 of your issue of July 11th sent me back to a re-perusal of your article, entitled "Concerning the Idea of God," and what in it moved me specially was the convinced personal confession of a creed and view-point it contained. It is refreshing in an age where mechanics is deified in Church and State, in science and art, in politics and sociology to meet somebody who not only has the courage to champion the principle of individualism, but to see its ground in the constitution of things. I am not, for one, much moved by the argument from comparative religion, for that can at best but lengthen the chain of cause and effect without revealing the Power behind the chain; but the claim made, without hedging or qualifying, for the approach of each individual to his own God by himself is as a charge of dynamite exploded at the base of society as at present constituted. Each Church imposes a collective creed on its members; the State is thirsting for greater and greater power to limit individual freedom; custom, whether ethical or fashionable, depresses the individual and exalts the community. All this has been said before, and said better, but it is not the really vital thing in your "extraordinary article."

The vital point in it was the tracking of individualism to its lair in God as the one and only Individual in the full sense of the word, and the implication that each human being is not so much an individual at present, but is on the way to become the Individual. You say rightly that this proposition has an absolute meaning, and that it covers all others as relative to it. For it insists that codes of ethics and religious creeds and conventions are all made for man, and not man for them, and it rules out for all who follow your lead the attempts of Socialism in all its hydra-headed forms to employ its physical force in order to compel the individual to dance to its tune. Perhaps we shall some day come to see that Herbert Spencer was nearer to Christ than all the Established Churches when he said that the base of citizenhood is the unimpeded exercise of faculty for each individual limited only by the equal right of all other individuals.

There is no necessary contradiction, as you clearly see, between God as transcendant and God as immanent, for the God within is a spark from the central fire, whose mission it is to wend his way back to the transcendent Father, and so by experience of the Many to become the One. If this be true, then all interference with this indwelling God in each of His forms is pernicious; and when we are so far evolved as to recognise him, such interference is probably the unforgiveable sin. Your article will help to gain this recognition more widely.

July 13th, 1912. W. F. COBB, D.D.

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SELF-ABUSE AND INSANITY.

MADAM,—Every doctor I have met is disposed to think that self-abuse, to any harmful extent, is merely the *effect*, and not the *cause*, of insanity. Those who put the cart before the horse are usually quacks with electric belts and patent medicines to sell. All these topics—particularly that of abstinence—are admirably and exhaustively treated in Mr. Havelock Ellis's last volume, entitled "Sex and Society." After reading this volume, it may be profitable to discuss these matters, but I doubt if it is worth doing so *before* reading it. A. B.

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"WHAT IS JUSTICE?"

MADAM,—Under the above heading, Dr. Whitby says: "It is, in my opinion, a tenable position that there are certain actions and even certain agents which and who cannot safely be tolerated by any community, and that, consequently, the community, on grounds of mere self-preservation, is practically compelled to take precautions against the commission or repetition of such actions, and against the existence or, at any rate, the freedom of such agents. *But these are questions of expediency, not of justice in any ideal sense.*"

Will Dr. Whitby give his reasons for thinking that justice is *anything else* than society's method of preventing those actions which it conceives to be harmful to itself, or, in other words, why justice is other than expediency? S. E. HADDEN.

July 6th, 1912.

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CHILD MARRIAGES.

MADAM,—I cannot help thinking that Miss Oliver is judging Mr. Woods rather harshly. In reading his article, I found nothing to incite her passionate outburst, nothing which was conducive to child-marriage. She seems to have had other correspondence with him which, perhaps, gives her some ground for this explosion.

Like herself, I think child-marriages undesirable, and I am sure there is no need for fear. They are things of the past. We have all heard from our grandmothers of the good old times, when girls did not ask embarrassing questions about sexual matters, of the meek and dutiful way they allowed themselves to be bartered in the marriage market, and from which they found it out for themselves through a piteous series of shocks. That has all gone. Our girls to-day have an intelligent, persistent curiosity, and this, with their education and economic independence, helps them to see through the pictures of spiritual happiness and holy motherhood, with its God-sent babies and domineering husbands.

The young girls of my acquaintance seem to be of the opinion that marriage under the present system is very undesirable. A youthful marriage is perhaps advantageous, insomuch as the parents live to see their offspring safely launched into the world. In that sense, it may be a wise precaution to have children in early youth, but the disadvantages are great, especially when the duty of rearing numerous children falls on one person, the young mother, who, "though perhaps a skilled worker at a trade," is wholly inexperienced and incompetent in regard to rearing children.

When some of us go to our homes in the country for a holiday, we feel sad when we see the girls with whom we went to school tied to their homes with many babies. One who knows the care children entail, falls to imagining that perhaps the married woman often envies her spinster sisters their freedom. Then we look at the young father, and we see how tired he is with the responsibility he is so reluctant to share. In summing up, we find that the only point of advantage they have lies in their sexual satisfaction, which they indulge freely, under the shelter of the moral code approved of by society.

If there is a desire for sexual intercourse in early youth, it must be with the male, for I also have been observant, and have questioned many on this topic. I have found that the idea of sexual indulgence is repugnant and almost foreign to girls of less than twenty-three years. Many young girls walk out with men before that age; but I am convinced that the affectionate attitude they take is purely the social love of a fellow-being, such as one sees in the delight of a petted child or dog. They are entirely without sexual passion or any desire to excite it.

Above this age—and it was about this age I imagined Mr. Woods was writing—I am convinced that there is a general desire for sexual intercourse. The desire is held in check by a false moral standard, by a dread of child-birth. I find that few indulge secretly, many scorn to, because circumstances prevent them doing it openly. Many abstain from it because of a desire for marriage and an idea that man demands absolute chastity of his bride. Many forego marriage and the desire for children because they dread being bound for life under our barbaric marriage laws.

My idea of an idealist is a person who, knowing human necessities, endeavours to treat them. Now, without doubt, sexual intercourse is a necessity, therefore an idealist should be prepared to accept a marriage for that purpose as the ideal state. Marriage for sexual convenience is the ideal marriage, I have always thought; and if this is the case, there is no need to fear child-marriages, because the girls at the least do not feel the need of it.

No harm could come of telling the young of both sexes the fact that they may need each other. In addition, the boys should be made to feel that bearing children is no light affair, and that it is highly immoral and selfish to be instrumental in bringing an undesired child into the world. They should learn that a child has two parents equally responsible, and, more than anything, they should be taught that the desire for the sex-act with a woman is

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identical with the similar desire with them, and quite a different thing to the desire for a child.

Girls should be taught that it is immoral to live with a man whom they no longer desire, because he happens to be the father of her child. They should be taught that self-respect is better by far than self-sacrifice. They should be answerable to their instinctive desires, and should realise that much of the talk of motherhood is the remains of ignorance and prejudice.

Mr. Woods' suggestion is well worth considering. It is an earnest attempt to supplant the two evils, prostitution and compulsory celibacy. There is urgent need for these opinions, experiences, and suggestions; and in view of arriving at something, I pass on my paper every week to others who feel the necessity for it.

Another correspondent puts forward a suggestion which is very unacceptable to independent women. The State regulation of maternity is as repulsive as the State regulation of prostitution; in fact, it is the same thing. I and others of my class feel assured that we are capable of choosing our own mates and the fathers of our children. We do not need the State there. That the State should recognise our children is a different thing; but, at the same time, we know that they are not entirely ours, and we have hopes that the fathers feel some ties of relationship.

I think he will find that most women contemplating child-bearing do so from selfish reasons. The country does not come in at all. The individual does, to this extent—that the woman knows well that the child she may have will not bear exact resemblance to herself, so she chooses a man whose physical and psychical characteristics will blend well with hers for reproduction in her offspring. Another error he makes is in suggesting the occupations for which we shall bear children. We will see to that; and, to say the least, thinking women will not encourage their children to take up the trade of butchery. They hope that their children will by that time think less of country, and more of the world and humanity.

These suggestions of remedies for prostitution show that the readers of THE FREEWOMAN do not accept prostitution as inevitable. In concluding, may I say that "A Plea for Marriage Reform" is so moderately framed that it is acceptable to many who are not so advanced as the readers of THE FREEWOMAN. Writers in THE FREEWOMAN are apt to write for themselves, forgetting all about the people whose surroundings will not enable them to look too far ahead.

RACHEL GRAHAM.

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CAPITAL.

MADAM,—Capital is a Latin word which conveyed much the same meaning long before our present capitalistic system commenced. It is useless to say "we do not accept this definition of capital," *i.e.*, "the tools of production," for it is a common word in our language, having a common and definite meaning.

You may call saved-up wealth, functioning to produce, by some other name, but by any other name it would be the same thing, and you cannot deny machinery to produce wealth is good.

Suppose the Boot Operatives' Union confiscated the boot factories, and with the factories the boot workers produced boots, selling them with no added charge to the cost of labour, except enough to secure the wear and tear of the factories. Those factories would still be capital, because by the aid of labour they produce more boots.

The right use of capital does not exact rent, interest, and profit.

It is the immoral use of capital that is wrong.

ARTHUR HEWSON.

[The above letter will find an answer in the current Topics of the Week.—ED.]

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COOKING AND DRUDGERY.

MADAM,—In answer to your correspondent of July 4th, there is not much further to be said.

The opening remarks of her letter point to the question, What exactly constitutes "drugery"? Probably there are no two individual minds which place an exactly similar construction upon the word. To a woman of what I hope we may term, without offence, the primitive type of mind, housewifery may not be drudgery. She is perhaps quite happily engrossed in the interest of mere living from day to day, without any aspirations beyond it, and she may enjoy doing housework for its own sake. Intellectual minds, also, may be so constituted as to enjoy making a recreation of housewifery—"in small doses." If, however, this latter class of persons were limited to this department entirely, they would soon come to consider it as anathema maranatha.

With regard to its "variety"—yes! it possesses an absolutely bewildering amount of variety. The poor housewife cannot quietly pass from one occupation to another. She is, so to speak, boxed about in a fairly dizzy fashion all day. For her occupations simply run into one another.

Professional men and women receive comfortable salaries for doing far less than the housewife accomplishes. Their working hours are legally regulated, as are also their holidays, and even their meal-times. They can partake of their food in comfort. The housewife has no claim to pecuniary remuneration, and no holidays whatsoever. Where a large family has to be waited upon at meal-times she is often half-starved—or perhaps even more than half-starved. For the lack of fresh air, and the weariness of her limbs, together with an inappreciative home atmosphere of nagging and grumbling, often nauseate her from food when it proves obtainable.

ALICE C. BURNETT.

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LEGALISED PROSTITUTION.

MADAM,—It is doubtful whether any woman would welcome the idea of a State fertiliser, as suggested by your correspondent, Mr. Richard Tayleur. What revolts so many of us against the marriage-tie is that it so often means children begotten of parents indifferent to each other. Mr. Tayleur's arrangement would be even worse than this, for the marriage pair may be supposed to have once been attracted by each other. Their first-born at least did stand some chance of being decently begotten. Men and women should be celibate save when under the influence of a great passion. Marriage is disgraceful inasmuch as it is simply legalised prostitution. It encourages men and women to indulge in base, artificial passions when they ought to be chaste. And even as these artificial passions are but shadows of the real thing, so the children that come to life in these conditions are but shadows of the real thing. One of the writers of the Elizabethan age asks why it is that the "love-child"—with everything against it apparently—is yet stronger, handsomer than the child born in wedlock and "the first in all great enterprises." The women that Mr. Tayleur mentions have, most of them, loved and "been beloved again," and could then have had the child they long for had not "respectability" barred the way.

If women are once free, there will be no more of these unhappy ones. Most of the women who say they care nothing for men have once cared for one man. Others have not had the opportunity of meeting kindred souls. How limited an acquaintance many well-to-do women have of men is described—with the results ensuing—in Madame Grand's "Beth Book." This, however, is their own fault nowadays, for the world is now open to them, and they need no longer sit in a corner with folded arms.

With respect to the suggestions of other correspondents *re* Co-operative Housekeeping, I should like to add mine, which is that buildings devoted to this purpose should be arranged as flats, each having its own front door, for privacy is all-important. A notice on this door announcing "Out" should be taken to signify that the person inside wishes to be alone, and it should not be resented. So many city-bred people—used to crowds—seem to think that the wish to be alone is a "piece of side." They have been so city spoiled that they are miserable if they are alone, and cannot understand anyone else not being in the same condition. They should, however, be made to play fair, and understand that the desire to think in solitude sometimes instead of talking eternally does not argue unkindness.

Even free-lovers should each have his or her own separate flat, and respect each other's "Outs." How many married couples would have loved each other all their lives had they been free to be alone when they wished—had they not been linked together by a short chain, like the dogs in Hogarth's "Marriage à la Mode" picture.

Meals should be served in the flats, if preferred, and this should not entail hot viands being served lukewarm or cold. In University towns hot meals can be served streets away. A proper hot-water apparatus, hot water

dishes, and tin covers would obviate this sort of folly. The restaurant below should be laid out with separate small tables, and not the long, narrow ones beloved of boarding houses. Two meals a day only should be served, so as to give the housekeeper and servants time enough to call their souls their own. Tea should be made by each person in his or her own flat. The "tea-things" could be collected by the maids and washed up at the one great wash-up after dinner—which meal is best eaten in the evening, after the work of the day is done The work of the housekeeper and her maid would not, of course, be done, but they would have had the afternoon free—five hours at least, which is three hours more than many nurses have, though cooped up in sick-rooms.

A good breakfast and a good dinner, with a tea of biscuits, cake, and the like, in between, ought to satisfy anyone. Those who require more meals than this are distinctly greedy and inconsiderate of others.

July 12th, 1912. F. LANGWORTHY.

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QUESTIONS OF SEX-OPPRESSION.

MADAM,—Arising out of my address to the Discussion Circle, Bessie Heyes asks me five questions in last week's FREEWOMAN. These I propose to answer as raised:—

1. For a woman to be economically independent, does Mr. Aldred mean her to be self-supporting?

No; any more than when one talks of a man being economically independent, one means that he is actually self-supporting. He may, of course, bring up a family, boast servants, keep up magnificent hospitality, have an ever-open purse for the needy, and live extremely well. "Ah," some would say, "he is not only self-supporting, but he supports others both within and without his family circle. He is a self-made man, a splendid citizen." But he would NOT be self-supporting. Under the society that is, I believe woman should have the same right of entry as man into all the professions, and should enjoy the same reward. But that would not mean she was self-supporting, although she would be just as much so as her male colleagues. For man, economically viewed, is a social, not an individual animal. His greatness costs his fellow-humans so much labour power to develop; and if, being a doctor, for instance, he becomes "self-supporting" by taxing them with the cost of his superior well-being, because he cost them so much more to produce than did the ordinary labourer, he is not actually self-supporting, but parasitical. As a matter of fact, this phrase, "self-supporting," has a meaning to us only because we live under an unhealthy and cut-throat commercial system. In a natural state of a society, the right of all to live would be recognised, as would the duty of all to serve the community. As each person would be assured of economic security because of that person's individual wants, he or she would be *socially supported.* In return, such service would be rendered as the person was most capable of, and found a joy in, rendering. Consequently, woman, as an *individual* would be independent of any man for her economic wants, whilst her friendships would depend on temperament. And she would be just as *self-supporting* as any male member of the community. I want our correspondent to see that economic independence is something foreign to present-day society for all of us; and that, so far as self-support is concerned, the infamous borough-mongerers of last century "supported" themselves and their families out of the wealth produced by the labourers who *could not support themselves.* Not the labourer, but the borough-monger, was economically independent.

2. Will not the child be dependent on the mother for its sole support, seeing there will be no laws in the new state of society to compel the father to contribute to his child's support?

Supposing the child to be dependent on the mother, seeing that the mother receives from society all that she requires, there is no hardship in this. There will be no laws to compel the father to contribute to his child's support, because there will be no private property for the father to enjoy at the expense of the community. The problem is how to feed a man, a woman, and a child. Does it matter whether the father or the mother does the actual carrying of the food to the child, so long as society sustains the child. If the mother provides its food, she takes that which she requires for herself, plus that which the child wants. Then the father takes what he requires for himself. But if the father provides the baby its food, then the mother only needs to help herself. Private property, the great evil of to-day, relates to distribution. Production is not individual, but social. If ownership is social also, there is no need to trouble about distribution; each will have what each needs. Let me illustrate the sanity of this attitude from present-day society even. A man has only himself to keep. He can live fairly comfortably on thirty shillings a week. Another man has a wife and family to keep. He cannot live comfortably on £2 a week. A third has a larger family, and also a mother to look after. He demands three pounds a week. It cannot be said that the second and third man costs society more individually than the first. Supposing all three men had their incomes reduced to thirty shillings, then the latter two would throw part of their responsibilities on the community. Supposing the mother in the one case, and the families in the two cases were granted separate incomes, then the men might fetch these incomes with pleasure, but their own incomes could be reduced to the level of the first man's. Again, if unable to keep things straight on the money received, both the second and third man are liable to draw on some of the income of the first man who receives less nominally. Actually, therefore, our economic standing is a social condition. Under a natural system of society, this fact would be recognised, and the free access of all to the means of life secured. The question put by Bessie Heyes, *re* the child's support, could not arise therefore.

3. Will not sex-oppression weigh very heavily on a woman of large sexual appetite, as, without neo-Malthusian practices (which Mr. Aldred condemns) there is the probability of her having a child every year? Consequently, if the woman is to remain self-supporting, she must be celibate.

The first half of this question is an individual concern, quite unrelated to my particular prejudices. My point is this. I know of NO neo-Malthusian practice that satisfies the woman's sexual appetite; I know of some which satisfy the man's. Consequently, for the type of woman instanced, celibacy seems to me to have equal claims with neo-Malthusian practices. But might not a free and natural society—with its abolition of the family barracks and that hideous joint sleeping apartment—check the development of this sex-appetite? How much of the latter is natural, how much aggravated by the conditions of family life? The second half of the question has been answered by my answer to the first question. But I will develop the reply, should our correspondent wish me to.

4. Does he think State endowment of motherhood would be the way out in such a case?

No. The future free society will have NO *State.* Besides, where everybody has the right to live, how can you endow one person at certain times *for limited periods, apparently, in some cases?* All State endowment schemes are founded on social distrust, and pre-suppose private property.

5. Am I right in supposing that he considers the intellectual woman to have less sexual instinct than the ordinary woman?

That depends on how much the ordinary woman's large family is due to submission to forced intercourse, agreed to through ignorance rather than desire, or to her own sex-appetite. Certainly, I believe the intellectual woman is averse from child-bearing, and, from mental revolt, opposed to excessive sex indulgence. This must necessarily involve a decay of the sex instinct, which, coupled with the *individual* life of the new social order, can only mean less sex-desire and more human comradeship.

❀ ❀ ❀ GUY A. ALDRED.

A mistake was made in a letter signed "A Pro-test-ant," appearing in last week's issue. "Unlimited Unions" should have read, "Unlicensed Unions."—ED.

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