

THE FREEWOMAN

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Joint Editors:

DORA MARSDEN, B.A.
MARY GAWTHORPE

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TO THE WOMEN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL UNION.

I HAVE never been desirous of experience for experience's sake, but I would not willingly part with the bitter-sweets of the past few days, and the decisions to which they have brought me.

With the full consent of my colleague in the present enterprise I emerge for a moment from the impersonal attitude of joint-editorial responsibility in order to clear up certain seeming anomalies in a vivid situation: a situation which you, recent events considered, have created equally with us. It must necessarily be that I shall have to make frequent use of the personal pronoun. The more carefully you read what I say, the more easily will you see that the personal equation is not mainly in my mind. You will see that great impersonal considerations are at the bottom of the present statement, which on purely personal grounds I should never make. The only people to whom an apology is necessary for the making of this statement are the many readers of THE FREEWOMAN who are not members of the Women's Social and Political Union.

For a number of reasons which need not be set down here I was not a contributor to the two first numbers of THE FREEWOMAN, although I was aware that the present militant policy of the Women's Social and Political Union would be reviewed adversely in the first copy of THE FREEWOMAN. At the very moment at which some of you were inditing a remarkable correspondence to me, I had barely begun to make the acquaintance of paragraphs which roused you to curses loud and deep. As post succeeded post, it was evident that what angered you most, in the first place, was the question of the Editors' recent connection with the Women's Social and Political Union, in consequence of which brickbats labelled "disloyal," "spiteful," and "traitor," were hurled at both of us; and, in the second place, some of you could not get over the fact that you had actually received a signed invitation from me

to become supporters of the paper. Because of this you did not hesitate to make use of the innuendoes of "dishonesty" and the like.

Now it stands on record in the official W.S.P.U. history, *The Suffragette*, written by Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, that my colleague and I are not much like either cowards or traitors; but that we possess qualities which were greatly in demand during the stormiest days of the W.S.P.U. With this record in mind, what to me is the significant thing about the letters I have received is that they are, unconsciously, so glowing a commentary on the current social philosophy of the writers. The *now-I-know-you-as-you-are* attitude arrived at in face of sudden difficulty postulates at once the belief in the fundamental badness of the human heart. I refuse to acquiesce in that belief. But it is a belief so largely held, and therefore so readily acted upon, that stout hearts indeed are needed to combat its sinister influence. For, mark me! because the "truth" expressed turned out to be other than the "truth" expected and wished for (and I understand this: we like to read what supports us), libel and slander become the order of the day. The comrades and friends of one hour are the degraded beings of the next. What forms of friendship are these that are to suffer shipwreck at the first seeming assault?

As for the occasion I cannot help feeling very glad that the storm, if storm there had to be, should burst on the first number. In face of the obvious prospect of readers likely to be lost by too plain-speaking (those of untempered partisanship, or those who read public criticism in the light of personal attack), the courage and sincerity of the printed page, and hence of the writer, are indisputable.

What member of the W.S.P.U. dare assert and defend, on higher grounds than those of immediate party advantage, that what a former colleague is prepared courageously to express and uphold shall *not* be expressed and upheld? In view of the un-

No!

sporting attitude which is evidently abroad, I think it most essential that a vehicle for the expression of uncompromising and sincere opinions should exist.

One correspondent thinks I have changed my views on the necessity for Women's Suffrage. "My views on Women's Suffrage, and my belief in the immediate necessity for Women's Suffrage, remain unchanged," as I said in the *Standard* only the other day. There are many roads to Rome. There are many roads to a fuller realisation of the varying aspects of that ideal we call Truth.

Still another correspondent asks however I could be taken in by that "lying little hypocrite," Mr. Lloyd George. Her argument is that if I would only look at this wretched man as he really is, and examine his record, I could not trust him. Her own feeling is one of utter contempt for him. The plain truth is that I do not share such a view either about Mr. Lloyd George or any other "opponent" of the cause of Votes for Women. Personally speaking, I have always found the needful inspiration for strenuous work for the Vote in the idea itself. Moreover, but for the accident of continued temporary ill-health, I should most probably have been campaigning on the present situation myself. And I am quite sure that my attitude would have been that of a joyful challenge to Mr. Lloyd George: You want *more* of us to have votes? Very well, then, we will see that you give

them! To believe unduly in the powers and machinations of a supposed enemy is to create the very psychological atmosphere in which defeat is possible. It belongs to a pessimistic frame of mind altogether alien to the joy and enthusiasm and spontaneity of earlier days in the militant agitation. It is the way of fears and doubts, and negations and hesitations. It is the sub-human way. Let the belief in the impossibility of defeat reassert itself. We WILL have the vote! That was the feeling inspiring the militant movement as I know and remember it. That was the magnificent way. That was the royal way. That was the triumphant way. It was the way of glorious affirmation.

A final matter: because of the attitude of THE FREEWOMAN, a friend who is anxious for my reputation, promises "enemies," where before these were "friends." My friend's fear is prompted by the view that enemies are bad things in one's life. Without on the present occasion expressing an opinion one way or the other on a very important aspect of life, let me comfort my anxious friend by the declaration that so far as I am concerned I flatly refuse to accept any "enemies" on conventional melodramatic lines. For every insult they offer I will make them a gift, and for every blow they deliver I will do them a kindness if I get a chance. So I warn them in advance!

MARY GAWTHORPE.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

WE regret to be compelled this week to use so much of our space in reply to personal questions, which to the majority of our readers must appear to have only the secondary value of personal interest. We consider that this attitude has been forced upon us by the over-zeal of certain members of the Women's Social and Political Union, who took our first impersonal reference to their political policy in a personal spirit. We point out to them that personal attacks necessitate personal replies, and such personal replies will not fail to be forthcoming in the pages of THE FREEWOMAN. As we pointed out before, our review waits upon events, and will continue to do so, and, as occasion provokes, we shall give unrestrained expression to our own opinions.

This week Miss Mary Gawthorpe makes her first contribution to the pages of THE FREEWOMAN in an article addressed to the Women's Social and Political Union. For the first and last time, the joint editorial attitude is made separate. This course is adopted on this single occasion on account of the very questionable methods which have been used by certain persons, whereby they have endeavoured to exert influence upon editorial policy through private and personal channels. We have made this arrangement in view of events of the last few days. We ask the consideration of readers other than mem-

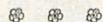
bers of the Women's Social and Political Union, for giving so much attention to criticism of this particular political body. The editorial on "The New Morality," which was indicated last week, has been left over until our next issue.

The lady who penned the offensive letter specially referred to in last week's Notes, writes to say that she does not wish her name to be appended to any communication to THE FREEWOMAN, save to the formal one for publication which accompanied her personal letter of abuse last week, and which we publish in our current issue.

In spite of the fact that mistresses and maids have met in their thousands in the Albert Hall; that Mr. Asquith has been howled down in the City Temple, and Miss Pankhurst has been howled down elsewhere; that Mr. Ramsay Macdonald has threatened to go into the Lobby against Woman's Suffrage; and that Mr. Lloyd George is still driving his Juggernaut car of an Insurance Bill over the objections of all protesters, the feature of the week which we consider of greatest importance to Feminists is the fact that a woman has been appointed Insurance Commissioner at a salary of £1,000 a year, no diminution of salary being made on account of her sex. This is a landmark. We call upon the shades

of Elizabeth Fry, Jane Austen, and the early Victorians to witness that times have changed! Hitherto, a woman possessing some supreme gift—a singer; or supreme charm—an actress; or an easy facility for appealing to the emotions, as a popular woman novelist—such women have done these things; but rarely, if ever before, in a sphere of work which could have been done equally well by men, have women been appointed at such a rate of pay and on such terms of equality. We say this the more readily because we know very little of the lady appointed; as far as we know, she has no special gift, but is chosen on the grounds of an all-round fitness such as would have been considered due recommendation in selecting a man. For this reason we congratulate the new Commissioner, and take new courage in the struggle towards Freewomen. From this creditable start, we shall go on to claim a share by right of our fitness and apart from our sex in all those honours and rewards which a civilised community can confer upon its members. We shall claim a share of titles and places of consideration, but, above all, we shall endeavour to rouse women's ambition in the attainment of high wages. One thing women lack above all others, and that thing is money. Although we do not see how it will coincide with the rest of our theory that all women must have a fair wage if many people are paid £1,000 a year or more, we should

more easily have forgiven every other sin of commission and omission with regard to women embodied in the Insurance Bill than that the woman Commissioner should have been appointed and have received less than £1,000 a year, when men Commissioners are receiving this sum.

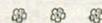


It is following considerations such as these that we cannot force ourselves into any special sympathy with the present mistress and maid agitation. We are compelled to believe that the new domestic servant tax will act in entire accord with our aims in regard to both servants and mistresses. To begin with, we do not believe that the grievance that sick-pay shall only be paid when they leave the house of their mistress is a real one. With the vast majority of servants it is unreal, for the poorer classes of servant-employers, *i.e.*, those who keep one servant, are usually not in a position to keep a servant who is not only unable to carry out her usual work, but who, being ill, is in need of special attention and extra food. It is almost certainly a fact that in four cases out of five, immediately it becomes obvious that a servant is really ill, she is sent away, nor is her place, as a rule, kept open. In boarding-houses, for instance, of which we can speak from years of first-hand experience, the boarders have only just time to notice that the servant is looking a little extra weary, before they learn that she is to go, or has already gone, and another appears in her place.



Even if the servant in poorer houses is permitted to lay up in the house ill, we doubt whether she gets much care, and if she does she is ill at ease, being in an atmosphere where she is expected to work, and feels unable to. In rich houses, where she can easily be cared for, and sometimes is, nothing is lost under Mr. Lloyd George's new concessions, as her sick pay not being drawn upon, she will get it as a deferred benefit. Where she is not looked after, she can go home to friends, and with her 7s. 6d. per week insurance, and a possible 7s. 6d. per week in lieu of notice, free medical attendance, and free medicine, thousands of servant girls will be able to pull round and start afresh in renewed health. Even if she gets only 7s. 6d. and medical care, this sum to her friends will represent all the difference between possibility and impossibility. Another aspect of the servant problem which does not incline us overmuch towards favouring the present agitation is the fact that much of it is based on the assumption that neither mistress nor maid can afford 13s. a year each, and if it is to be paid, the poorer class of mistress certainly cannot afford to pay it, therefore it must eventually come out of the small wages of the servant. Our own opinion is that mistresses who cannot afford adequately to keep a servant

will enable them to keep some part of their soul's freedom intact. The bigger proportion of the day's time they will sell for food and shelter, but they only sell it in order that their real life may begin when they have performed their terms of hire. Then they take off the livery, put aside the subservient manner, and live as they please. So we are compelled to welcome any expedient which enables them to live outside the sphere of their domestic labour. We are wholly undismayed by the fact that under the present conditions there is a dearth of domestic servants. We welcome any expedient which forces housewives to reorganise their households; any expedient which makes the present domestic muddle unworkable. We welcome anything which makes men and women realise that economy and forethought will have to take the place of unpaid, unskilled labour. We welcome any expedient which makes it clear that the money-earnings of a man are inadequate for the proper unkeep of the home; any expedient which makes it clear that domestic service will have to take its place as a regulated profession, served by people who are skilled craftsmen, who fulfil their duties, and are then set free. We welcome any expedient which loosens the personal hold of mistress over maid, which will make it clear to the girls of the coming generation that they are to seek in domestic service just so much honour as comes from any other craft—so much and no more; any expedient which will help them to realise that domestic service need no longer be a necessary concomitant of marriage, and that when it is exercised in the sphere of one small house only, it will not ordinarily be considered a fair substitute for adequate money-earning labour. All such expedients we welcome heartily in the name of THE FREEWOMAN, and up to the present we see no real reason why servants should be excluded from the Insurance Bill.



Concerning the Insurance Bill as a whole, we are not prepared to join in the chorus of general disapprobation which has risen up against it. Although upon occasions previous to the appearance of THE FREEWOMAN we have spoken against the unfairness of the Bill (and the merest babe in politics can see that it is partial in its incidence, and therefore unfair), we should regard with no small amount of dismay the prospect of its failure to become law. Although in its details it is cumbersome and ill-thought out, its imposition falling unduly heavily on the poor and lightly upon the rich, it affirms nevertheless a principle which stands for much in the forward progress of common humanity. In wrangling about detail it should not be forgotten that the Bill goes a long way towards establishing a free medical, nursing, and hospital system. This we beg to say is an overwhelming consideration on the right side. Its importance cannot be over-exaggerated. We note that at a meeting of the London County Council Education Committee last week the statement was made that out of 4,400 children examined, 1,500 (more than 33½ per cent.) were in need of medical attention. This is the case with children, and we have reason to believe that amongst women of the better working class

and lower middle class—exactly the classes which will be affected by the Bill—the proportion needing medical attention would be even larger than this. We should not hesitate to say that 50 per cent. of the women affected would avail themselves of the medical service if medicines and medical service were supplied free. In fact, we can picture the long processions of sick humanity making their ways to the doctors the moment they can do so without cutting into the small pittance upon which they have to live. Of course, objection can easily be made that this free medical service can be provided without laying the burden of it on the poorest part of the community. We agree. We do not see how the poor can stand many more burdens. Our hope and belief is that they will not stand them very long, but by means of industrial warfare they will be able not only to throw off the impositions laid upon them, but to alter their industrial position. On account of the free medical service we would accept the Bill, and trust to its unfairness and cumbersomeness to prove to those responsible for it that they must find other means of working it. For we feel sure that once a free medical service has been established, the country will never let it lapse, and we trust much to the fact of physical health in furnishing the spirit necessary to throw off the chains of oppression. The one really deadly feature of the Bill is that which seeks to make strikes impossible, by tying up so great a proportion of the funds of the Trade Unions against uses other than those of sick benefits. By so doing, the Government is capturing the ammunition of industrial war from the workers, and by depriving strikers not only of their trade union funds, but also of their unemployment benefits in case of strikes. The Government seem bent upon making our industrial strikes as difficult as possible. Also the clause which deprives a man of his benefits who has been dismissed by his employers for an offence comprised under the elastic term of "just cause" is an unfair menace, and it is a great pity that the discussion of other details has tended to confuse the agitation which ought to wage round points such as these. Anything which tends in the last resort to deprive workmen and workwomen of their right to strike, *i.e.*, to refuse to sell their labour, should be regarded as the tactics of an enemy, and should be fought against as such. Regarding the special injustices concerning women, in the present order of things, they are many, but we can see a case for Mr. Lloyd George—which, no doubt, he is unaware of himself—and ultimately a case for ourselves, in supporting the present unfair measure. For instance, the fact that married women who are not engaged in money-earning work should not at present share in the benefits of the Bill, we think stands as a hardship at the present time, but will not do so in the future, when we believe married women will work for money. Inasmuch as married women continue in their money-earning employment after marriage, they are eligible for benefits. This we regard as a direct inducement and encouragement for married women so to continue. Inasmuch as the married non-wage-earning woman is not a wage-earner, it stands to reason that if

funds will only stretch to the proper care of the health of one, that one must be the wage-earner, and that is usually the man. This is no wicked innovation of Mr. Lloyd George; it is the invariable rule in every working-class home, that the one person who must have food if there is any, boots if it is possible, and adequate clothing if it is to be got, is the money-earner, *i.e.*, the father of the family.

The charge which is being made, that the benefits conferred are disproportionate to the contributions made, is, we consider, unfair, especially when the comparison is based upon benefits conferred by Friendly Societies. It goes without saying that, at the outset, a friendly-society system can offer more than a national scheme of free medical service, for the simple reason that in the Friendly Society we get the picked members of the community, while in a national scheme all and sundry have to be catered for—the worse with the better. We are reminded of the objections made to the Board School system when it was first initiated, based on the grounds that the thrifty could pay for their children's education, that they preferred to do so, and that it was unfair they should pay for children's education other than their own when they had fulfilled their own obligations. Just as we all now wrangle about the import and methods of education with the secure feeling that the principle of free education is safely established, so let us establish Free Medical Service, and then thrash out the details later.

Much has been said of the shouting down of Mr. Asquith in the City Temple, and much has been said of the alienation of support from the Women's Suffrage cause on its account. We refer to the statements made by Sir Edward Grey, who threatens consequent incapacity to help in the Suffrage campaign; Mr. Ramsay MacDonald who threatens to go into the Lobby against Woman's Suffrage; a supporter like Sir William Byles stating that such scenes are baffling their efforts; and Suffrage papers like the *Daily News* and *Manchester Guardian* warning their readers of the watering-down of enthusiasm which must follow these escapades. We say that it is grossly unfair for such people to use such arguments. Time and again they have pointed out that the Women's Social and Political Union at present represents the smallest section of Suffrage opinion; they may not now turn round and say that because of the idiosyncrasies of these few they are justified, even for a moment, in threatening to dash the hopes of the great army of Women Suffragists who have not only put their best efforts into the work, but who have watched for any sign of help to appear on the horizon, and have done their uttermost to put such help to a good account. Do they or do they not realise that these protests represent little more than the irritation of a small committee? If Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, and others are going to shape their conduct to fit in with these, we shall know what value to put upon their support. If they consider it means less to ignore the claims of perhaps a million Women Suffragists than to flout these women who are posing as

being driven to political desperation, we are forced to take the view that they are merely playing at statesmanship. They are not serious. We are sick of these poses in politics.

On the other hand, if the souls of the Women's Social and Political Union militants can only be expressed in forms of militancy, we would ask them to exert a spirit of supreme self-repression for a few months, until the suffrage amendment is either lost or carried. It may help them to do so if they realise that their present puerile militancy is doing nothing more than providing excuses on all sides for these very many lukewarm male supporters to cling to, and working in a diametrically opposite direction from the "terrorising into submission" process fondly dreamed of by Miss Pankhurst. It would be only a reasonable demand to make that they should realise that Mr. Lloyd George should be tied up in his own promises and fine sentiments. A politician may betray those who have relied upon him, but he may not, with impunity, betray his own plain-spoken statements. Mr. Lloyd George said: "We must force through the Suffrage amendment, and with it the Bill, next year." We therefore rely upon his fidelity to his own reputation as herein involved. In any case, we see no advantage in putting a premium on failure, as Miss Pankhurst does, by prophesying it—for a thing one prophesies one unconsciously works towards, in order to justify one's judgment. On valid grounds, we prophesy success, and thereby help to create the atmosphere which ensures success. Should the Bill fail, however, we shall feel that we have done our best to avert failure, and if it then appears certain that the argument in words is closed, and that men's representatives have decided that women are to remain permanently in the position of inferiors, we believe that arguments in a form other than that of words would be necessary. We believe such a situation sufficient to justify Civil War. And Civil War is not a thing of bags attached to strings containing stones, artfully directed against "dead matter" as one militant suffragist explained, but Civil War in the sense that it has made itself known in English history when men have risen to assert their rights of self-government.

Present-day militants, finding it hard to restrain their spirits, may ponder over this statement. Having pondered, they may then welcome the respite in order to prepare for such an eventuality. Perhaps those people who have not protested against being likened to John Hampden will then have an opportunity of showing the "mettle of their pasture." We might remind them that John Hampden was not John Hampden because he refused to pay a tax, and was clapped in prison therefore, but because, coming out of prison, he so made his passion for a principle to a people that they, in its defence, were prepared to drench their country in blood and behead a king. We would here point out that many persons in such an eventuality must be prepared to be tied up in their own words. If we are faced with hopeless failure in six months' time, then let the Hampdens stand forth!

Man at Home.

WE hear *ad nauseam* of the Woman at Home. Let us revise ideas that are too much taken for granted, and consider for a moment the domestic man. Home does not signify a place where cooking and sewing is carried on; otherwise it differs not from a restaurant or a milliner's shop. To clear our minds of cant is to perceive that home is an enclosure, not always made with hands, that contains *Monsieur, Madame, et Bébé*. These three persons of the domestic Trinity are interdependent for happiness. For *comfort*, in the landlady's sense of a "home from home," they need, not so much each other, as a civilised community. Lack of civilisation leads in our day to domestic unrest. Hitherto-accepted household conditions are becoming hopelessly out-of-date.

In certain high quarters there sounds a trumpet cry of "Back to the Kitchen, ye Women!" as though there were something sacred in cookery, and that trade alone were to remain unsystematised, while all the world moves on.

Women—and men, too, no doubt—clung to home-spun stuff long after the steam-loom had made the cumbrous hand-weaving unnecessary. Now the hand-loom takes its proper place as an object *de luxe*. The kitchener and the private gas-stove must ere long follow suit. American women herd into hotels in order to escape the incubus. Mrs. Charlotte Perkins Gillman is, so far as I know, a voice crying in the wilderness of a still more excellent way, but we English are slow to enrol ourselves as her disciples. When once we have dethroned the fetish of home cookery from our own hearts and minds, as it were, it will be time to call in the aid of Man. For reform on a large scale needs Capital, and Capital is for the most part under male control. Business men would respond to an effective demand from women, would organise communal cooking on an adequate scale, and release the household from that invader of the sanctity of home-life, the private cook. Those chivalrous men, too, who recognise the burden that is laid upon women will see more clearly perhaps than women themselves how avoidable is much domestic labour, and will work towards the evolution of the New Housekeeping.

The common retort to those who bid woman stay at home and never mind politics is that politics first come home to her. But the New Housekeeping would be part of politics in another sense. For it would not be of the unpaid or ill-paid kind, but a trade of large outlook, in which intelligent human beings of both sexes might have pride. Woman, as at present At Home, bears an unequal yoke. She needs in another sense than the railway men "recognition"—the acknowledgment of her work in the first place as *work*, and in the second place some just division of the labour with her partner. There is a residuum of tasks that must still be done within the four walls of private residences, but the unpleasant and ill-paid of these are not, as a matter of course, peculiarly fitted for female shoulders. As women take more and more all "*paid* labour for their province" (to amplify Miss Olive Schreiner's phrase), and as the cry "Back to the Kitchen" includes boys as well as girls, considerations of capacity will at length become separate in the employer's mind from comments about sex.

Let us go in thought through the daily routine of households even as at present constituted, and sincerity will admit there is nothing inherently unmanly in sweeping, dusting, fire-light-

ing, dish-washing, nor even in the darning and mending of clothes. To some women these things are distasteful, and therefore unsuitable. Sailors and other men whose avocation forces them to independence of women find such tasks congenial, and so do well-paid serving-men. The flunkey is not perhaps considered the most admirable of types, but his occupation is at least as manly as that of the average shop-walker. The employment of men at home is indeed easily adjusted where money is returned for services rendered. But there are still innumerable households where the woman seems bound without hope of escape to the domestic hearth. Reorganisation from above would set her too, in a great measure, free. For the habit of externally supplied meals being once established, a main part of the problem is solved. Provision of meals for school-children shocks the unprogressive. It ought to be welcomed as another nail in the coffin of private cookery. Household labour, apart from cookery, is also to a great extent amenable to organisation. The lamp-cleaner and the window-cleaner we already have with us. Boot and knife-cleaning and other daily necessities might equally be relegated to specialised service irrespective of sex. Even the Utopia of co-operative step-and-window-cleaning in mean streets ought not to be outside the range of practical politics, when once politicians insist upon the provision of civilised houses full of labour-saving devices, instead of the dens of inconvenience that at present go by the name of home. A wage-earning wife is already an asset to a working man. Let him realise that she needs at the same time to be set free at home, and he will welcome her to every occupation, while he helps to organise the most sweated trade of all—domesticity. Household economy is economy of effort, not the planning of an impossible budget, from which even necessities are excluded. And the wits of men, as well as women, are needed for this task. To differentiate in schools between boys' and girls' occupations is beginning at the wrong end. Boys and girls alike need training above all in the faculty of co-operation.

I have not yet spoken of that most necessary adjunct of home, "the baby." Might not the advice, "to go home and mind the baby," sometimes be applied to the fathers? A railway porter or a 'bus-driver—nay, even a stockbroker—dandling his "little nippers," might be as touching a sight as a mother bending over the cradle. The law of England may be in doubt as to whether man or woman be the true parent. But nature has settled the question once for all. Even as a *father* pitieth his children (and acknowledgeth his responsibility towards them), so will the family flourish. Co-education means education *by* as well as *of* the two sexes in common. The suburban household, where papa is known as "the gentleman who carves on Sunday," does not satisfy any definition of the word "Home," and the divorce of men from the domestic hearth is a far more serious evil than the industrial employment of women.

There remains one item which is sometimes overlooked when woman is told to "go home," etc., and that is Woman herself. She is to be queen, counsellor, supreme, and so on, in her sphere, *but . . .* she is to be unconsidered. That woman who most denies and neglects herself is the most belauded. If self-abnegation be a virtue, the neglect and disregard of the labourer by those who profit from her labour is a crime. Wage-earning women who go out of doors to work usually find that their men at home render them instinctively the little attentions that are so welcome to the work-weary, while the very fact that the housewife is not paid

a money fee is apt to make her ignored. Kindly working men, indeed, are known to rise early and make and bring up a cup of tea to the "missis" in bed, recognising that she too does her day's work; but such men are exceptions, and are held pearls of their sex.

Novelists of a certain type picture the room in which the feminine touch prevails—a room full of senseless knick-knacks, such as women love! In pleasing contrast is the den of the male creature, where reigns—as is fit!—a confusion of boots, pipes, papers, and shirt-collars, everything that makes a man defer as long as possible the enforced tidiness of a married establishment. The woman who dilates upon the inconvenience of muddy boots in such novels is stigmatised as a nagger; while the orderly husband (who sometimes occurs even in such books!) tied to a slatternly wife is a martyr.

Order, to tell the truth, may be Heaven's, but it is not Man's first Law—nor Woman's either. When two or three are gathered together voluntarily in a Home, they imply, however, among other things, an intention to respect one another's convenience, and Order is to this end generally necessary, but equally incumbent, if at all, on man and woman. The super-tramp, the prodigal, the feckless genius have had their day in fiction. It might not be amiss to sing in exchange of Man and the Home.

FANNY JOHNSON.

Self-Sacrifice.

WHEN Tom and Maggie Tulliver divided the third jam-puff between them, the contest of generosity serves as an excellent illustration of masculine and feminine points of view.

"'I'll have that with the jam run out,' said Maggie, caring less that Tom should enjoy the utmost possible amount of puff than that he should be pleased with her for giving him the best piece."

Tom, in his turn, made an attempt at nobility, crossly beginning on the inferior piece which fell to his lot by the abstract justice he had invoked in the choice of hands—man, as the Editor of THE FREEWOMAN remarked last week, sacrificing himself only for his own *ideas*. On the whole, in Tom's case the event proved that he would have done better to trust to the more developed feminine virtue which "finds pleasure in the performance" of the act of renunciation. "One is naturally at a different point of view before and after one's own share of puff is swallowed." Maggie would certainly not have repented of *her* offer, in the sunshine of Tom's approval.

In the "Data of Ethics" Spencer brings out the self-defeating nature of excesses of altruism. *Can* one insist on invariable self-sacrifice, the acceptance of which must in the end have a bad effect on the receivers? Clearly, one may thereby be only snatching at a more subtly selfish gratification. To be sure, as Spencer adds, the sacrifice may frequently be allowed by obliging friends—"Let her give up the gratification; she will like to do so." The "she" is significant in connection with giving up! It might be suggested that in the relation between man and woman popular morality has seen no danger in the latter's excessive altruism, as she is assumed to have a taste for such conduct. Indeed, popular morality prefers a division of the virtues, the man taking the pagan and the woman the Christian traits, and is obviously exasperated when Sonia converts Raskolnikoff. The virtues of the Sermon on the Mount are best confined to women in the domestic sphere. So Hannah More, with the complacency of three generations ago, explains to girls their peculiar advantages for, so

to speak, specialising in Christianity. These being in the main the absence of their brother's strength and educational privileges, the modern reader does not take too seriously the virtue of beings, "secured from those difficulties and strong temptations to which men are exposed in the tumult of a bustling world." It implies a life in which sympathy may have its scope without too great cost, where, as Spencer puts it, "there have ceased to be frequent occasions for anything like serious self-sacrifice."

Whether even in the nursery it is entirely wise to allow this feminine specialising in the finer sympathies is nowadays doubted. Of course, there is the girl's maternal impulse to reckon with, but all little girls are not Wendys, with a passion for mothering lost boys and darning their stockings while they enjoy a pillow-fight. Among Mrs. Molesworth's children the boy-hero of "The Girls and I" plays the mothering part. And, as many a teacher knows, classes of girls will indignantly fail to identify in themselves this graceful tendency to take all the trouble and forgo all the excitement.

The quite modern attitude, then, being hopeful, it should be understood by women that self-sacrifice, strictly interpreted, is not a gentle yielding thing, allowing one's nature to slip along the lines of least resistance; nor is it in the highest sense possible except to a strong and energetic soul. Otherwise there may be sacrifice, even acquiescence, but not *self*-sacrifice. Modern psychology is at one with theology in indicating that what is sacrificed is the lower to the higher self, the narrower, more immediate interest to the wider and more remote, the "losing oneself to find oneself" of the gospels.

At certain crises of human development, in certain staggering emergencies in life, a veritable passion of self-devotion is aroused in fine natures to meet the new demand.

So, for instance, Browning's lover exults:—

"To think I kill for her at least
Body and soul and peace and fame,
Alike youth's end and manhood's aim."

Or another laments:—

"Would it were I had been false, not you!
I that am nothing, not you that are all."

Again, when Moses, in interceding for the people, prays, "Blot *me* out of thy book"; when St. Paul could wish himself accursed for his brethren; when Danton cries, "Que mon nom soit flétri, pourvu que la France soit libre," the personal self disappears, not resignedly, but in a glory of identification with the nation's fate. Here is the "exuberance of power" admired by Nietzsche. "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again," are Christ's words concerning His life's sacrifice.

It is not an idle truism, then, to insist that self-sacrifice demands, first of all, a *self*. Energy, character, vitality are shown both in the ecstasy of the lover's homage, and in the chivalry of the leader's devotion to his people. And since the lover is not permanently entranced, nor the hero's host for ever in desperate straits, the character will show itself at other times in other ways, demanding often, no doubt, in the course of its development, that it, as well as others, shall be treated "as an end and not as a means." Whether self-cultivation or self-denial is in any given issue right will be a matter for insight, as the issue arises, and can not be prejudged.

Now, just because so many women in the loose, popular sense have a gift for self-sacrifice, they may be reminded that it is possible to spend one's all, prodigal-wise, at home as well as in the far country. What lot remains but that of the hired servant?

There are homes with helpless female members, invalided or inefficient because undeveloped, a burden and a drag to the male supporter in spite of the pitiful tale of past self-suppression on his behalf.

Why is it possible for a Nietzsche to assert that "women always intrigue in secret against the higher souls of their husbands"? Alas, the *woman* with the muck-rake not only does not see the crown, but sweeps the mud diligently from the path of the man who might reach it. Her salvation as well as his lies in the fact that she sometimes gets in his way!

WINIFRED HINDSHAW.

Mr. Asquith will Die.

I HAVE never written before for any specifically feminist publication, and shall never in all probability do so again. I am one of those people who agree with the ends and detest the means of the current suffrage agitation. I am an adult suffragist. I want to see women have votes because I believe the vote may be a useful educational symbol (even if it prove temporarily a political nuisance) in the necessary work of establishing the citizenship of women. I follow Plato and Miss Cicely Hamilton in this. At present women are not regarded as citizens; they do not regard themselves as citizens; they behave accordingly, and most of the trouble of life ensues. . . . Apart from the material oppositions of sex, I believe there is very little difference between men and women that is not imposed upon them through the extravagant sex-mania of our social system. Humanity is obsessed by sex. I have always been disposed to take sex rather lightly, and to think we make a quite unnecessary amount of fuss about it; I write for an imaginary Reader whom I never think of as specifically male or female, and consequently I have never cared to write for such deliberately and self-consciously female publications as this.

I do my best to avoid the present suffrage agitation, because it over-accentuates all those sexual differences I want to minimise, and shakes my faith in the common humanity of women. It is, unhappily, impossible to escape it altogether. I am waylaid by ladies who sell me *The Vote* in an aggressive manner, shops full of green, white and purple articles of no particular merit are always getting in my way, and I rarely walk upon Hampstead Heath now without hearing some devoted woman doing her best to persuade a crowd of ribald hearers that women are entirely different from men, and should therefore be given the vote upon identical terms. And that reminds me of the thing I had in mind when I began this article: almost always as I pass those speakers one name drifts to my ears. It is the name of Mr. Asquith. Sometimes it is "Mr. Asquith says." Sometimes it is "Mr. Asquith said." Sometimes it is "This will make Mr. Asquith say—" A perpetual nagging of Mr. Asquith.

In some extraordinary way I perceive Mr. Asquith has become the central fact in the suffrage agitation. The whole campaign is presented as the creation of mental states in Mr. Asquith. He has become the Antagonist of Women. He has become the State Husband, the Official Wretch of the Woman Movement, the Depository of Feminine Repartee, the Public Hen-peckee. He plays the rôle of Devil just as the two Misses Pankhurst are the radiant angels in the struggle for this emancipation. At times I am forced to doubt whether the green, white and purple shops, the straining speakers and the rest of it have very

much to do with the cause of women at all, so relatively immense are these personal issues. At times I suspect it is all a trick of Mr. Asquith's friends to magnify his importance. It cools me. I am capable of enthusiasm for my own dream of a woman, level-eyed with a man, brave, absolutely loyal, free and his fellow, but I have never had very much of an opinion of Mr. Asquith, and I do not care a rap what he said, what he says, or what he will say about this or any question; he scarcely exists for me, and I am never going to feel a spark of enthusiasm for any woman who engages in battle for or against him. I do not want to annoy him, any more than I want to gratify Miss Pankhurst. They bore me. I do not want to see the cause of woman hanging up upon Mr. Asquith. And I am impressed more and more by the fact that Mr. Asquith will die. It may not be for years, he may go on to ninety or a hundred or a hundred and twenty or so, but in the end he will die. I take it the feminist agitation, if it is indeed as parasitic upon him as it seems to be, will then die too. . . .

I welcome this opportunity, now that I am writing for the first and perhaps the last time in my life for women as such, of suggesting that they should try to do without Mr. Asquith before it is too late. I propose that the W.S.P.U. shall try to cure itself of its morbid infatuation for this man. I suggest that its members should try to make speeches without naming him, try to write pamphlets without mentioning him, contrive cartoons omitting him, receive his name when he is mentioned in meetings with a studied indifference, pass him in the street calmly and quietly—almost carelessly. All this, I know, involves tremendous self-restraint and a stern struggle against ingrained habits, but I am convinced it can be done. And it will help them very much to remember that the cause of women is immortal, if in moments of temptation and difficulty they will repeat—in- audibly, of course—this melancholy but necessary, and perhaps even in the end consoling, assertion: "Mr. Asquith will die." H. G. WELLS.

Woman, Education and Islam.

THROUGHOUT the Mohammedan East the march of intellectuality on modern lines is evident in every grade of society, and especially does this apply to Egypt. For, whereas in the old days the Moslem was content with such training as the Cairo El-Azhar University could give, spending the evening of his days wrapped in the religious contemplation of sacred books, to-day the cry is new men, new manners. And, despite the "semi-barbarous" charge levelled at the Egyptians by Lord Cromer, Sir Auckland Colvin, and other occupation apologists, the new thought movement had set in long before the advent of the "modern reformer" or that of the Anglo-Indian Financial Controller.

Napoleon, when he descended upon Egypt with his rearguard of savants, unquestionably implanted the desire in the breasts of thinking Moslems for a fuller knowledge of the outer world, and Mehemet Ali was quick to realise the educational requirements of the people if they were to progress on those lines which contact with Europeans and Western customs had made imperative. Although realising this necessity for erudition in Egypt, beyond educating his younger sons he did little for the people, and this mainly owing to his strenuous military life, which left time for little else, except, of course, the erection of irrigation works which were intended to aid the supply of money for his martial exploits.

The Pasha and the Effendi class, however, having also become imbued with the same ideas as Mehemet Ali, and for like reasons, began to supply this intellectual need by sending their sons to European colleges. When Said Pasha succeeded to the Pashalik, having himself received a European training, he not only sent his son Tousoun to be educated in Europe, but also many of the fellah class, whom he recognised by reason of their overwhelming preponderance, the most important element in the social scheme, to be trained in the arts of war in the schools of the West.

But, notwithstanding his good intentions in regard to the mental amelioration of the masses, his later years being burdened with bodily infirmity and disease, he proceeded to steep himself in pleasure, to the entire exclusion and extinction of all higher considerations.

It was, therefore, left to the ambitious and rapacious Ismail Pasha to remedy the defective and almost non-existent educational system of his predecessors. When he came to the Viceregal throne in 1863 there were only 185 elementary schools throughout the land of Egypt. In 1875 their number had risen to the respectable total of 4,685, with an attendance of no fewer than 111,803 children. A large number of higher Government and municipal educational institutions were also established, with special schools for soldiers—one to each regiment—and last, but by no means least, he founded a school for Egyptian girls—the first of its kind, not alone in the Land of the Pharaohs, but in the whole of the Turkish Empire.

It is therefore to Ismail, that the gratitude of the women of the Ottoman Empire and of the Islamic world is due for making the first effort in the direction of their intellectual advancement. Of course, the daughters of Princes and Pashas of Egypt and of the other prominent sections of the Turkish Empire were educated in Europe—principally France—before that date, but their education, beyond enabling them to enjoy the somewhat risqué French romances, was of very little practical value. Ismail, however, by getting at the mass of the female population, established a precedent which was quickly followed in the capital of the Ottoman Empire, and which has continued to spread throughout the Mohammedan world.

Notwithstanding the greater educational advantages accorded women, the Moslem system, by reason of its social seclusiveness, still continues to trammel the advance of female intellect, because, whether the Moslem woman is educated East or West, in the Islamic household she still remains, to a very large extent, a mere cipher, with the veil as her heritage and a husband of her father's choosing—however inferior intellectually—and the begetting of children, preferably boys, as the Alpha and Omega of all her mental endeavour.

There were many causes that contributed to this condition of affairs. In every age and clime woman has not only been considered by man to be the weaker and inferior class, but she has been jealously guarded, because she has been regarded, for the most part, as a sort of chattel or a lust-inspiring toy. And this applies with greater force in the case of Mohammedan women.

In the first place, we have the veil, which dates anterior to the introduction of Islam, and is not a religious rite.

In ancient times the oriental considered woman the richest spoil of war, inasmuch as her productivity made for the increase of a population depleted by constant strife. And, as warrior races were compelled to protect their property with the sword, woman being his most valued asset, she was either

entirely segregated or her beauty veiled. Therefore, the Moslem law which says "if thy beauty cause strife among men, inspiring them to love, or jealousy in others, then it were better for thee it should be hid," is merely a moral safeguard recognising an existing institution.

In the second place, the older Moslem, even at the present day, regards woman in the light of a chattel, whom Allah has conferred, among other blessings, as a slave to her lord, especially dispensed for the adequate satisfaction of man's carnal appetite. Accordingly, although the individual of this class—who is fortunately becoming rare—may and does grant his womenfolk educational advantages, because of his inability to withstand the new moral force which surrounds him, directly the woman returns to the home she is incontinently veiled and shut up a prisoner in the harem, even as her sisters have been for centuries, until she is duly trotted out to be loosely bound to her chosen lord and master. Now, inasmuch as harem life, with scandal-mongers, story-tellers, and female musicians and dancers, does not promote intellectual effort, the Mohammedan woman of the middle class, having invariably completed her education at the age of, say, sixteen, on becoming a wife, finds herself far below the intellectual standard of her husband, who is forced into the companionship of male friends at the cafés, in order to obtain such mental nourishment as has become necessary to his existence, and which is made imperative by his constant official or commercial relations with Europeans.

The young and educated Moslem of the middle class has strenuously set his face against the old marriage system, and the demand for intellectual wives is continually increasing. Nor will he tamely consent to be bound, however loosely, to a woman of whom he knows nothing beyond the representations of her parent. He much prefers the Western woman, with her greater liberty and higher standard of culture. At the same time, realising that a nation's progress depends upon the elevated mental condition of its women—especially does this apply to Moslem countries where boys are mainly relegated to the women's apartments—the young Mohammedan is having his sisters and daughters trained on approved European lines.

The wives and sisters of Princes, Pashas, and Beys, although possessing greater freedom than their humbler sisters of the middle class, are still, for the most part, enmeshed in Islamic tradition and seclusion. Their Western culture and their absolute liberty whilst visiting the West makes the yoke of segregation more galling on returning to the ancestral home. It was for this reason that the cultured women of Constantinople, in addition to sending their jewels to the melting-pot to aid the war-chest, intrigued, in the interests of the Young Turk movement, with the hope of obtaining greater social freedom and intercourse than that which existed under the old régime. A Moslem woman of education and culture, who had not only received her training in the highest seminaries of Europe, but who, on her annual visits to the West, attended the various fashionable resorts in perfect freedom, even as other women, could not well be expected to content herself with the seclusion of harem life and the inevitable veil. It is, indeed, true that in Turkey the Yashmak has almost become a disappearing quantity, owing in part to its extreme transparency when not entirely discarded, but it is the veil, whatever its texture, and becomes odious by reason of its enforced use.

The question of marriage has also irritated the educated Moslem woman. According to Mohammedan law, while a man may possess four legal

wives, there is no limit to his concubines. The law compels a husband to supply each wife with a separate establishment and an adequate income. "The rich shall give according to his riches," says the law, "and the man who has only what he requires, according to that which God hath given him."

It must, however, be observed that during the last quarter of a century polygamy has been on the decrease, and intellectual advancement has contributed in no small measure to this desirable state of morals; and no doubt the example of the late Tewfik Pasha and that of his son and successor, Abbas Hilmi, being both monogamists, has had a tendency to discourage plural marriages. The enormous increase in the cost of living, the abolition of the domestic female slave, have also added their quota of discouragement in that direction, and in this respect the Mohammedan woman has little cause for complaint.

The divorce laws, however, are most galling to the educated women of Islam.

The law says, "If a husband repudiates his wife thrice he is not permitted to take her back until after she shall have married another man, who, in his turn, has repudiated her." It is, therefore, sufficient for a husband to say "Thou art divorced" to repudiate his wife, and the repudiation becomes absolutely final on the formula being repeated thrice. The husband is forced by law to return the dowry the wife brought him, and she must be paid a pension, according to her position, for three months. Should she be *enciente*, he must support her until the child is weaned.

Men of bad principle, in order to avoid repayment of the dowry, have been known to pursue their wives with systematic cruelty, because, should the wife desert her husband, he is not compelled to refund the dowry; and a wife, possessing no other remedy except that of applying to the Kadi, or Moslem judge, for what may be termed "restitution of conjugal rights," would rather relinquish all rights by a precipitate flight than remain in the household of her lord, submissive to his infliction of bodily torture.

Fortunately, the young Moslem, by comparing the Mohammedan marriage customs with those obtaining in the West, observes the necessity for change in this direction; but he is well aware that, notwithstanding educational advantages, the emancipation of his women must be gradual. He feels—and those in Egypt who will read these pages will concur in this statement—that, were the Moslem woman to be immediately let loose, unveiled, upon society, the very seclusion which at present tries her patience, making, as it does, for a limited knowledge of the world, would make her the ready prey of the first plausible adventurer to cross her path.

THE FREEWOMAN

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The most notable signs of prostitution were contemporaneous with the manumission of the female domestic slave, and the mistress would inevitably stumble where the poor slave fell; therefore the Moslem exercises caution in the interests of female purity.

The Mohammedan woman is anxious to obtain her freedom. The Moslem requires intellectual companionship in the household. No great intelligence can be obtained until the woman is untrammelled. The Moslem realises this necessity. As, therefore, these two agree on the main point at issue, self-interest operating in each case, the day is not far removed when a solution must be found for a most difficult and complex problem.

DUSE MOHAMED.

A Strike.

"THE work," said the foreman, "is unskilled. Any number of girls will undertake it eagerly at the new rates. Why should we concern ourselves about these?" Why, indeed! The hundred poor lassies without the factory, pulling their thin shawls round them in the cold, grey morning, and chattering in their helpless, incessant way, must not look for a copper above their market price. How should they? Is box-making become an alms-giving?

For their part, the girls urged that they did not seek more than their worth, and they reeled off the names of many firms who paid better wages than this one. If the listeners were sceptical, they called on one another for corroboration, which came unfailingly from Maggie, who had worked there, or Sarah Ellen, who would have done so, only she "took ill with the fever, and 'ad to go to the 'orspital."

Secondary arguments were based upon length and quality of service. "I've worked for the bloomin' firm ever since I was a kid," said one; "and I've worked 'ard." She coughed as she spoke, and a bright spot in her cheek suggested that perhaps her hard work would not continue very long. Then a dozen voices broke in, each with a tale of long service and poor requital.

One aspect of the dispute roused the deepest anger. There has been "speeding up" to complete Christmas orders, and the girls have responded, well pleased with the thought of the additional shillings they would win. For Christmas this and that jollity has been planned. A month before the feast comes the drear news of the reduced rates, and the vision of plenty—a full board, finery, visits to a theatre with *'im*—flies away. The girls almost wept over their lost carnival; they came to it again and again with a keen perception of the callousness that had shattered it.

"Why couldn't they wite till the New Year," one would say. "'Ow they'd like to 'ave to pawn to git their Christmas dinner!" And in quick chorus would come the certain answer—"Not 'arf."

When we got to facts and figures, the girls were hazy. To a workgirl of this type statistics are "shadows, not substantial things." She will tell you the wages of a given week, but not "average" wages. It appeared tolerably clear, however, that for most of the girls the average weekly payment, taking the whole year into calculation, would be less than 10s. The proposed reductions, by general agreement, would lessen this sum by a third. On the other hand, the firm do not admit that there would have been any lessening of earnings. The girls would work harder, and with increased exertion would receive the same wages as at present. The girls reply that they cannot work harder. They

say, and their worn faces say more eloquently, that they work too hard now. They are sure they would not be able to earn more than 6s. 6d. at the new rates, and, as one of them said at the meeting: "Girls round here can't live proper on less than 'ite shillings."

The statement may be accepted without question. In these bleak, inconsequent streets rents are very high. "Proper life," even with the whole of a weekly eight shillings, must be somewhat difficult of attainment.

It was a weakness that, of the four hundred girls affected, some three hundred were frightened by dread of starvation into submission, and that the unaffected departments held aloof. That this was so was no fault of the strikers, who tried by unwearied picketing and fierce argument to broaden the battle.

"Wat do you git?" said a picket to a wretchedly thin girl from an unaffected room. Not more'n nine shillins, I know."

"I don't git nine shillins," retorted the girl, indignantly.

"Then wy don't you come out?" said the picket. She adding a leading question for the enlightenment of listeners—"You've got to work 'ard, haven't you?"

"'Ard?"—the girl interrogated turned in quick wrath—" 'ard?"—she made an expressive gesture—"I'm tired now; I'm tired of me bloomin' life." Then she vanished, and the gates closed.

The tin-box trade is a rough trade, and its workers win their wages through toil as dangerous as it is severe. These girls are rollers, flangers, and the rest, and they handle heavy machines, which very often roll out more than the material. Many of their poor hands, which should be beautiful, are squashed and marred. One of these strikers has had two fingers ripped. She got them dressed at the local hospital, but after several dressings the foreman decided that sentiment was satisfied.

When the girl was going off once more he thoughtfully pointed out to her that if her impression was that she was employed in a damned nursery she was mistaken.

The girl did not think that she was employed in a nursery, damned or otherwise, and her visits to the hospital were discontinued. This was a pity, for it entailed permanent disfigurement; the ripped fingers did not heal as with further dressing they would have done. They are spread out now, so that each looks as though it was meant to be two fingers.

Over such injuries as these the girls were light. They live in a world of realities, where mere daintiness does not matter. Whether their hands are beautiful is, of course, of little account. What matters is the rapidity with which they can fashion tin boxes.

Their despairing strike is not a protest against risks, which they expect as part of the day's work. It is against a still further reduction of their meagre wage until not even life itself can be maintained on the fruits of their toil.

J. J. MALLON.

The Reward of Virtue.

THIS novel forms very appropriate reading for supporters of the FREEWOMAN. Miss Reeves has depicted with an unerring skill and lucidity, almost worthy of "*Père Goriot*," the anæmic, soulless training of the average young girl, and the coercion of her heroine into a loveless marriage by a sheer combination of maternal *finesse*, shocking boredom, and a feeling that the marriage market

is all against a woman holding out for the man she wants. The characters are nearly all disagreeable, with the exception of the heroine's father, and the reader has a horrible suspicion that he is only likeable because we hear so little about him. The heroine liked him because "he loved her uncritically," and "it never had mattered not telling daddy the whole truth."

In a few simple words Miss Reeves gives the picture of the "tactful" schoolmistress:—

"She carried to perfection the art of educating one hundred girls without influencing their minds. Mental development she left to the parents, as they left it to the school. In this way the school flourished, and nothing happened to disturb anybody."

Again, "Her father's bookcases were always locked, the key of the biggest was certainly lost, and the only kind of novel that fell into her hands was the class of penny novelette she saw in the hands of Susan."

Perhaps Miss Reeves is at her best when satirizing mental indolence, such as one of her characters complains of when she says: "Call a thing a *principle*, and you need never think of it again"; or in describing the psychology of Mrs. Baker, the heroine's mother: "Her thinking was much like wandering through a forest in the dark, a dodging among and a bumping into obstacles that were at once invisible and unyielding."

Yet if Miss Reeves does not spare her own sex, she is even more vitriolic in describing men. Any more odious type of person than Mr. Leonard Day, who marries Miss Baker, would be difficult to find, and he is all the more odious because so convincing. We all know the type of son-in-law who wants to conceal everything from his wife and her female relations, when his father-in-law is dying, and treats all the women like infants in arms. His attitude in regard to his wife's control of her own money is even more disagreeably typical. But Miss Reeves is, perhaps, like one of her own characters, too apt to look for the "secondary and less presentable motives" of any given action.

Any person gifted with acute observation has moods—especially in illness—of seeing everyone and everything as very drab and unsatisfying, and this may be (metaphysically speaking) as true a view of life as any other. There are many such passages in Jane Austen's novels, and Miss Reeves writes so well, and her characterisation is so little affected by a certain paucity of incident, that her work sometimes recalls that of her great predecessor, though the young ladies of 1811 certainly appear more attractive than their successors of 1911.

But it is to be hoped that in her next work she will give us something a little more genial and a little less detached. The reader feels that she could achieve better results if she would only let herself go a little more. The suppression of her likes and dislikes creates an impression of concentrated acidity, which loses its effectiveness when not relieved by any other vein. In "*Pride and Prejudice*" the imbecility of Mrs. Bennett is at least relieved by the qualities of Mr. Bennett and Elizabeth.

E. S. P. H.

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Correspondence.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

How unfortunate we women are! Conservatives may "die hard" and shout that their leader "must go"; the Liberal Press may lecture Sir Edward Grey or gently admonish the Prime Minister himself. We women only are left bound always to servility and blind, unquestioning obedience. Have we leaders? Then from our lips may no question, no breath of criticism issue? Though active in a fight which demands the recognition of women as persons and individuals, yet when the Voice speaks from Clement's Inn we must voluntarily surrender our individual opinions, humbly to fall in and follow.

And the services we may have rendered to the woman's cause are not allowed to us as extenuating circumstances. We think of long days and nights of sleepless work, of the insults and mishandling of brutal mobs, the strain on brain and nerves and health, of all the enthusiasm and devotion we have so freely spent. And you, mesdames, must think of the bare cells of Holloway closing in on heart and brain, and the horrors of the hunger strike. . . .

But you are traitors who "stab in the back those who have shown us all a thousand kindnesses"!

Myself, I confess to a profound admiration for the courage and leadership of Miss Pankhurst, though I reject her infallibility as I reject the infallibility of the Pope, the Premier, or anybody else. I agree with THE FREEWOMAN in condemning her latest move as a mistake, but Miss Pankhurst, I imagine, will suffer less from us, her critics, than from the childish bad temper of her friends. They prove at least that she has partly failed in the task she has set herself; that the women who, we thought, had learned at last devotion to a principle of justice are, after all, only driven, they know not whither, by blind hero-worship. To such a spur the bondwoman has always responded. May the free-woman react to no other!

Miss Pankhurst having been placed above discussion, we next learn that the great living principle of the world—sex—is beneath discussion. Is this to be our attitude when the vote is won? Surely we do not propose merely to force on men the standard they have forced on us. To do so would be to proclaim ourselves not merely slaves, but willing slaves. For heaven's sake, let us temper our enthusiasm with sanity. Let us at least consider where we are going. Let us grasp our individuality firmly and flood with sunlight the arena so jealously guarded by the other sex.

Feminism necessarily includes a belief in woman's suffrage. The Suffrage movement is a coalition of women fighting for very different ends. The Suffrage battles will be won as Germany's were won—by marching apart to strike together.

MURIEL NELSON.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

I have read almost every word of the two first numbers of THE FREEWOMAN with the most intense interest, and will you allow me to say that I think it is the first paper published in the name of women which has not been an insult to their intelligence? I was prepared for adverse criticism from many quarters, but not for the attitude of many of those who are prominent in the women's movement. Their letters prove them to be blind leaders of the blind.

Do they begin to see at all what the emancipation of women really means, or have they the faintest glimpse of the infinite possibilities which it opens up?

It is good to read your "Commentary on Bond-

women," with its steadfast, courageous acceptance of what it means to be *free*. With almost all of it I am in entire agreement, but I think there are one or two points which call for further discussion.

MARY N. MURRAY.

[It is one of the aims of THE FREEWOMAN to encourage sincere discussion, and we invite our correspondent to raise the points which she considers debatable in the columns of THE FREEWOMAN.]

A PLEA FOR COURTESY.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

Having read with some surprise and much regret the extracts from a letter sent in reply to your criticisms of Miss Pankhurst, and also your comments on same, may I say that while totally disagreeing with the attitude which you have assumed, I do deprecate very strongly the terms in which this (at present) anonymous correspondent has seen fit to state her views?

While, personally, I consider that your criticism is not justified in the slightest degree, I write to put in a plea for courteous discussion to be carried on in your columns; for surely few things can do more harm to the Suffrage cause than the spirit of personal abuse and intolerance which has already shown itself. In the name of all that is fair, do not let it be said of any members of the W.S.P.U. that they descended to the use of methods of discussion which were neither just nor courteous.

I have the most implicit faith in Miss Pankhurst's wisdom and political acumen, but I cannot think that the best way of showing it is to indulge in objectionable personalities. Such methods are certainly very far from those adopted by herself, and can only discredit a cause which is, to most of us, the highest ideal in life.

MURIEL DARTON.

December 1st, 1911. ***

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

As a subscriber of a small sum to the Establishment Fund of THE FREEWOMAN, I write to express my utter detestation of the attack made upon Miss Christabel Pankhurst in its pages, and to say that my promise of a subscription was made under the impression that the Editors were still loyal friends to the cause of Woman's Suffrage and to the Women's Social and Political Union.

HERTHA AYRTON.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

Will you allow me to express my admiration for your courage in bringing out a review like THE FREEWOMAN. It has struck a new and clear note in a movement which was in grave danger of being permanently pitched in the rather low key of the demands of the undeveloped and parasitic type of woman whose horizon is bounded by the rim of the guinea. It is evident that your concern is with fundamental things; and your paper will encourage many women to speak out what social bondage would bid them hide.

An extremely interesting article in your last issue is the one on Freewoman and the Birth-rate. I find myself in complete agreement with the writer of the article as to the need for bettering the quality rather than increasing the quantity of the population. The theory of Malthus (the first feminist, albeit an unconscious one) is the strongest possible argument for any reform which proposes, through the complete emancipation of woman, to abolish the fundamental tyranny from which all others spring. The question of the economics of population cannot, however, be considered apart from some criticism of the institution of monogamic marriage as it exists to-day, for there can

be no doubt that under a system in which individuals are exclusively united to each other the increase of population is more rapid than under any other circumstances. It is rightly pointed out in the article under consideration that science has, on the other hand, given to women the power of controlling their fertility; but this does not dispose of the whole question as easily as your contributor appears to think. It is just here that the social problem becomes also a subtle and infinitely important psychological problem, for the common Malthusian practices are, in my opinion, a gross outrage on the æsthetic sensibilities of women, and the final mark of their sexual degradation. There is another objection to the limitation of the family that I have heard put forward by a woman who was concerned with the ethical aspect of the problem. Her point was, that constantly to evade the consequences of one's actions must have a deteriorating effect upon character. It seems to me that whether we take the Christian or the hedonistic view of marriage, we are equally faced with the difficulty of preserving, in that state, the emotional spontaneity and the uplifting sense of Beauty which should be the very substance of all sex-relations.

In conclusion, I should like to thank you for the editorial article in your first number on Bond-women, where you make it so clear that woman's bondage in the last resort is psychological, and that only in the freedom of her will lies her true equality with man.

ISABEL LEATHAM.

• • •

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

Had I clearly understood what "feminism" was supposed to stand for, I might have hesitated to contribute to the new magazine before satisfying myself as to its trend; I expected it to stand for a free and full discussion of the problems of womanhood, especially social problems. Now that we are on the eve of obtaining a measure of enfranchisement, this would be opportune, for many laws will need readjustment, and it is impossible without free discussion for women to decide what they want. I do not even object to the voicing of extreme views of "freedom," because such views had better be frankly expressed and frankly met than insidiously to creep among our rising generation, and appeal in the sacred name of "freedom" to those as yet without experience of life.

But it is a pity that THE FREEWOMAN should from the start show itself "bound" to what it considers "advanced" views, instead of holding an even balance for the expression of all shades of opinion. Free and frank discussion of sex problems is needed, but they should be discussed from the point of view of facts, not opinions, of psychology especially, and a wide and varied experience. For instance, criticism of marriage is so often undertaken by those who have never experienced it. The assumption that happiness is an end in itself, and that even in marriage "happiness," or the reverse, is a test, begs the question. The art of living together is a difficult one, and there are many dual friendships between women in which the suppression of personality in one or the other, and the condition of "bondwoman" is at least as obvious as in marriage. In my young days, the early days of Girton College, the free and frank discussion of many questions relating to womanhood went on amongst us, but the great conservative forces of Nature moulded most of our lives to something very different from what we discussed—yet, after all the discipline of life, I should say, infinitely better for most of us. I take

liberty, therefore, to stand for a belief in the sacredness of wedlock. I believe the child is the centre of both manhood and womanhood, but that for full twenty years the child needs both father and mother for development, and that this is the sanction of marriage. Whatever wild dreams of freedom in sex relations may be dreamed by those who call themselves "advanced," the great solid mass of the women of our country will continue to live in wedlock. Much needs altering, much needs patient study: free discussion, and evolution of both ideals and laws must go on. But, personally, I am old fashioned enough to believe in the religious sanction for "the holy estate of matrimony," founded not on custom, but on facts of human nature.

MARY HIGGS.

[An editorial answer to this letter will be found under "The Editors' Reply," on page 55.—ED *The Freewoman*.] • • •

MARRIAGE AND MOTHERHOOD.

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

I suppose I must take notice of the curious letter, signed "I. D. Pearce," contained in your last issue, though the answer to it is contained in the article she criticises but does not appear to have understood.

Your correspondent imagines my article, "A Definition of Marriage," to have been inspired by what she terms an "insane concern for the continuance of the race," and then proceeds to father upon me proposals for "State-enforced hatcheries" and compulsory child-bearing, which must have their origin in her own exuberant sense of humour. Had she read the article she would have noticed that I declined to say that it was the duty of every individual to reproduce his species, adding that the question was an economic one. The desire, however, to perpetuate the human race is not insane. Sanity consists in a certain conformity to natural instincts and social needs. The desire to eat and to sleep, for instance, is not generally taken to be a symptom of insanity; the refusal to do either might be so taken. (I have to put things very simply to your correspondent.) And though, I repeat, it may not be the duty of every individual to take heed for the continuance of the race, it undoubtedly is that of every organised community. Thought for posterity underlies all human corporate endeavour. What would be the condition of art and literature in a society self-sentenced to death? If existence is an evil, then murderers and suicides are the sanest of men, and the State, instead of offering premiums for babies, as I. D. Pearce fears it may, should offer them for corpses. The "insane" concern for the propagation of the race! I wonder if your correspondent is an adult.

The contention in my article may be summed up in a very few lines. The State has no interest in the cohabitation of a man and a woman, except in view of possible offspring. Marriage was originally designed, and is still intended by the Church, for the reproduction of the race. If people do not want children, let them live together as long as they like, uncensored, unlicensed, unmolested. It has nothing to do with the State. But if it pleases them to advertise their relations, it may be asked, why not humour them? Because, as I have shown in my article, and cannot be bothered to show again, this is to give people who are rendering no service to the State the privileges which the State is interested in reserving to mothers. As I. D. Pearce is not at all interested in my proposals as to the unmarried mother and her child, I need not deal with that aspect of the question.

As your correspondent claims to have a sense of

humour, I ask if it is not tickled by the sight of two persons applying to the State to be bound together for life when they know that they alone will be concerned in the contract? For whom and against whom do they seek protection? If they trust each other, why these solemn bonds? If they don't trust each other, surely it must be all the worse to be tied together for life. In most cases these people do not want to bind themselves, but are at present forced to do so by what your correspondent later on calls "the subtle compulsion of a distorted public opinion." If marriage does not exist for parenthood, I fail to understand for what it does exist. I. D. Pearce protests against the legalised marriage being reduced to a State-licensed human incubating concern. Perhaps she prefers it to be a licensed hothouse for the selfish indulgence of the sex instinct. I presume she will not say that marriage exists for the harmonious cultivation of fraternal relations.

She continues to rave. "Enforced child-bearing is a sin against the human race, whether it be the thrusting of an unwanted child upon an individual unwilling mother, or the more subtle compulsion of a distorted public opinion upon all mothers (wives?)." Of course there is no hint or suggestion in my article of any compulsion on those who are already mothers. The only compulsion I propose is that women who don't want to be mothers should not be entitled to the slender privileges originally intended for mothers. Their complaint reminds me of that of the good people who, never having been Churchmen, expect the Church to marry and to bury them. Is it, then, such a hardship to be deprived of a wedding ring and the glorious title of Mrs.? "I don't want a nasty baby," I hear the unwilling mother whimper; "I want a pretty wedding ring."

Then your correspondent tells me that there is no such thing as being "well born." I never said there was. Neither did I propose that human souls should be incarnated to order. Nor did I suggest premiums, nor tell women that their place was the home, nor say any of the things which your correspondent tells us are the cause of all recent disorders. "We show no faith," she complains, "in Nature's ordination; we act as if she cannot be trusted." Does this mean that the registrar and parson are superfluous, or that babies may be trusted to come anyhow? Well, they don't in France.

A considerable part of I. D. Pearce's letter is devoted to eugenics, a subject which interests me very little. The remarks about spirits seeking incarnation in human form, and true motherhood consisting in the production of ideas, etc., convict her of belonging to a class of "thinkers" about whom I know something, and whose ideas are as extravagant as their life is atrophied and commonplace.

EDMUND B. D'AUVERGNE.



To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

Mr. Edmund B. d'Auvergne, in his article entitled "A Definition of Marriage," in your issue of November 23rd, misses one very important point. Arguing, as he does very rightly, that marriage, as sanctioned—consecrated—by Church and State, is essentially bound up with the production of children (as is plainly stated in the English Prayer-Book), he, throughout his article, is concerned to pour ridicule on the idea that childless marriages, whether wilfully so or not, merit any form of consecration, and his argument is summed up in the sentence in which he says that the wilfully childless (married) couple remind him of a man who

takes out a gun licence without intending to keep a gun. He's wrong. Such couples do intend to keep "a gun," and, further, they intend to use it too, but, and here's the point—*mirabile dictu!*—they don't intend to shoot anything! Now, quite apart from the fact that they are very likely to hit something by mistake (accidents will occur in the best regulated families—we know that), the point that Mr. d'Auvergne so lamentably fails to appreciate is that it is not only marriage that is essentially bound up with the production of children, but that sex itself is inevitably so bound, and that marriage is not only the consecration of the family, but is also the consecration of sex.

Mr. d'Auvergne claims to be reactionary rather than revolutionary. He is wrong again, for he fails to react against the very revolutionary, though very common, notion that sexual intercourse (participation in which is, of course, assumed by him, as by everyone else, when speaking of the living together of men and women) is not to be regarded as the preliminary to the production of children.

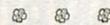
Let Mr. d'Auvergne realise, Agnostic though he be, that, from the point of view of the Church, not only does marriage mean children, but that sexual intercourse means children also, and then let him rewrite his article. I think he will find that it will come out rather different.

ERIC GILL.

P.S.—May I offer you my sincere thanks for supplying, at last, a really clear definition of the meaning of "feminism"? You say: The Free-women are those who consider "their sex just as much an incidental concern as men consider theirs." Now it is out, and the Virgin is dethroned!

Now, she will be able to find time for intellectual attainments, for the mothering of the Son of God has been reduced to an incidental matter.—E. G.

December 2nd, 1911.



To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

I am somewhat puzzled to know whether the article on spinsters in THE FREEWOMAN of November 23rd is a heavy joke, or meant to be taken seriously. I stoutly deny that the majority of spinsters are "bloodless, boneless, meek, or shamefaced." On the contrary, being free lances, we are apt to have too much impetuous, unspent energy, which runs the danger of becoming tiring and tiresome, if not used and turned into a proper channel.

But the particular dictum I condemn is that we take revenge for the insult of our creation by becoming a Social Nemesis. If I live till I am 100, I hope I shall preserve enough gratitude to fate and enough sense of humour about myself never to imagine such nonsense. Old maids are not a Social Nemesis; they do not rule the earth; they are unimportant, but they have their use. They are the second violins in a big orchestra. Their part in life may seem to have no tune and little individual interest, but without it the whole effect of the great composition would be poorer. By all means, let every woman marry, or take a lover if it suits her to do this; but if she chooses to do neither, then let her remember, as Miss Trebell says in "Waste," that her state has its compensations, if she doesn't take them too seriously. As for the everlasting subject of sex, I cannot believe that all spinsters are in a perpetual state of inward moaning over an unfulfilled destiny. Surely by the time they have finally settled into the condition of spinsterhood their sense of the fitness of things should make them put this aspect

of life behind them. They do not need to have violently suppressed it. Can they not think of such things as, at the age of forty-five, one would think of wearing a white muslin gown and pink ribbons?

A SPINSTER.

[We have heard that there are women who can.—
ED. THE FREEWOMAN.]

To the Editors of THE FREEWOMAN.

I have read with regret and surprise the article in the first number of THE FREEWOMAN, entitled "A University Degree for Housewives." As a keen Feminist and Suffragist, and one of those responsible for helping on the movement for the development of Home Science, it is indeed a disappointment to me to find the aims and objects of that movement misunderstood. It would not be possible within the limits of a letter to reply categorically to the accusations of your contributor. May I say, however, that one or the special aims of the Home Science course of London University is the removal of *unnecessary* drudgery from the daily life of women of all classes, and the application of scientific principles to what is called "Woman's Sphere." Your contributor says that much of this "lower grade work will soon be done by mechanical contrivances, and would in all probability have already been so done had it been men's work and not women's." Here we are in perfect agreement. If, however, the writer of the article would take the trouble to read the syllabus of lectures on the Development of the Home, by one of our King's College lecturers, Miss Mabel Atkinson, a woman of the most progressive ideas, she would realise that, far from being a "retrograde scheme perpetuating women's inferiority" (I quote from the article), such

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teaching will stimulate students to rebel against the intolerable, unscientific, and unpractical conditions, with their concomitant waste of energy and brain forces, of the majority of households. There is no idea of a "deliberate pandering to the most sentimental sections of the community." Women have shown and are showing that they are capable of the highest intellectual effort, but in the homes of many of these very women, we too often find the nurture of the children left to the uneducated and the elementary principles of hygiene and economics neglected. Until the education that makes women, and men too—(for our courses are open to both sexes)—fit to rear children receives the same status as other branches of scientific work, those who undertake the physical and mental training of childhood or the conduct of large households or institutions will not be given either the position or the salary which will induce the highest type of intellect to devote themselves to this work, and the community is by so much the loser. Your contributor goes on to say, "the centralising subject-matter of the proposed new faculty is housework," and pours scorn on the idea that housework implies the study of physics and hygiene, economics, ethics, and psychology. Here she is entirely wide of the mark. The centralising idea, actuating the eminent educationists who are leading this movement, is not housework but the care of the household—and I fail to see why, if Universities have instituted a Chair of Agriculture for those students who are to devote themselves to the care of our food supplies, or to the scientific breeding and rearing of animals, and an engineering school for the training of students in the manipulation of factory or Dreadnought machinery, there should be anything derogatory to a University in the systematic and scientific training of those who are to have the physical and mental care of human beings, whether in households, schools, or institutions. Is it intellectual and progressive to know what fuel and manipulation is required to get the full power out of the machinery of a Dreadnought, but retrograde and stultifying to discover in what way the physical and mental capacities of human beings may be made to yield their fullest meed to the world's work? I believe your contributor has misinterpreted the meaning of the King's College for Women Home Science circular. Any programme which is issued to the public at large lays itself open to misconstruction. I still hope, if instead of basing her judgment upon the circular alone, she were to devote a little time to following the lectures there, interviewing the lecturers and students, she would be convinced that our movement is on the most progressive lines, and tends to the uplifting of our daily life out of the morass of materialism and preventable misery. We have called in science to solve the problems of curing sickness and poverty, why not then of preserving health and improving home life?

ADELE MEYER.

December 2nd, 1911.

[We hope to secure a reply to Lady Meyer's letter in our next week's issue.—ED. *The Freewoman*.]

A MANCHESTER RESOLUTION.

Per Miss Lillian Williamson, honorary secretary of the Manchester Branch of the Women's Social and Political Union, one of the Editors has received notice of the following resolution:—

"That this meeting totally disapproves of THE FREEWOMAN, because of its attitude on the Suffrage question, and the spirit of the editorial attack on Miss Pankhurst; it resolves to boycott the paper,

and it regrets the strenuous work done by Manchester members in advertising the paper. It would be prepared to modify or even withdraw so strong a resolution if a satisfactory explanation were forthcoming from Miss Gawthorpe."

Passed unanimously by the Manchester Women's Social and Political Union, November 24th, 1911.

The Editors' Reply

TO MRS. MARY HIGGS.

THE FREEWOMAN is not "bound" to any opinions, "advanced" or otherwise. It is testing opinion. It is quite true that we, as editors, express opinions, but then so do our contributors. We may surely be expected to have some views regarding the various problems with which we deal, and have as great a right as our contributors to maintain these views. Unlike other journals which have an editorial point of view, we do not endeavour merely to secure opinions which support our own. We give direct encouragement to those who disagree with our views to state their case as openly as possible. For instance, if Mrs. Higgs herself would send an extremely hostile criticism of any of our views (not of us, by the way; she will understand that that is another matter), we should be very glad to put the medium for publicity supplied by THE FREEWOMAN at her service. It would then be the simple matter of letting the best side win. It is true that in a certain measure we, as editors, are at once competitors and adjudicators; but considering that the adjudicator's decision has to be given openly on grounds which the paper makes clear to all, we consider that fairness is guaranteed. It is our business to keep our reading public, and if we appear unfair in our editorial awards, we lose the confidence, and therefore the support, of our public. We do hold even balance for the *expression* of all shades of opinion, but we cannot force the balance to remain even when the weight of one opinion outbalances the weight of an opposing one. Mrs. Higgs will, we are sure, understand that while she has a perfect right to state her belief in the "religious sanctions of the holy estate of matrimony," others who have no such belief, but have a belief in other sanctions, or in no sanctions at all, have as perfect a right to be allowed to state theirs. We point out to Mrs. Higgs that as yet no editorial views on the subject of marriage have been expressed, and those contributors who have approached the subject, as it happens, *have* been married. The burden of Mrs. Higgs' arguments, therefore, should be directed, not against the "open" editorial attitude, but against the opinions of contributors who, with the same sincerity as herself, hold these opinions seriously, and who secure the publicity afforded by the pages of THE FREEWOMAN to give them public expression.—ED.

• • •

TO DR. HELEN GORDON CLARK.

May I ask a few questions?

Is THE FREEWOMAN a Suffragist or an Anti-Suffragist publication? H. G. CLARK.

We have a vague impression that this question is meant to be regarded as wit, but in case we are mistaken and it should turn out to be a groping for light, we may say that THE FREEWOMAN is a Pro-Suffrage review, but is intended only for those who by native endowment and elementary training have the understanding and education to discriminate between sentimental affirmation and prejudiced denial. It is a Pro-Suffragist journal for "Some," not "All."—ED.

The paragraph, "It appears of more importance to the cause of Votes for Women," etc. (see page 23), suggests that the editors fancy they are forwarding that cause; but a previous statement concerning the cult of the Suffragist as compared with that of the Freewoman is reminiscent of the *Anti-Suffrage Review* in its better moments—a platitudinous exposition of beautiful beliefs unaccompanied by any practical suggestion as to their realisation. H. G. CLARK.

The editor of the Notes of the Week regrets not having a closer acquaintance with the *Anti-Suffrage Review*, and must say if the Anti-Suffragist journal is arguing the same points as THE FREEWOMAN, in no matter how different a manner, it is full proof that we have at last arrived at the root argument in the Suffrage Question. We would point out, apropos of the temper of the above comment, that it is almost always unwise to assume that one holds a "corner" to the exclusion of one's opponent, in intelligence and intellect. If the *Anti-Suffrage Review* contains much of the quality indicated above, a perusal of its pages may help some Suffragists to understand they are dealing with a subject which has a little more depth in it than they lightly imagine.—ED.

Where is THE FREEWOMAN'S definition of "Feminism" taken from? Nuttall gives it as "the quality of the female sex."

H. G. CLARK.

Those who are in the habit of turning to Mr. Nuttall for their philosophical definitions will doubtless find much at which to marvel, when we say that we evolved our definition of Feminism out of our own understanding of that subject. Now that we understand that we have readers who read THE FREEWOMAN with Nuttall at elbow to play commentator, much of the misunderstanding which to us has been dark now becomes clear. We know there are minds who borrow their philosophies from Plato, Rousseau, or Mill, but from Mr. Nuttall! We are driven to repeat—from Mr. Nuttall!!—ED.

Was not one of the editors a member of the Committee of the W.S.P.U. when most of the militant outbreaks chronicled were "commanded"? Did she enter a protest then, or did she "coerce" her conscience, as we are to applaud Mr. Asquith for not doing? When did she resign? Was she still a member when letters were sent round inviting support for THE FREEWOMAN?

H. G. CLARK.

The editor alluded to as a Committee member of the Women's Social and Political Union has not been able to see the questions, owing to the lateness of their arrival, but she will doubtless reply to the questions specially concerning her next week. It might here be stated that the editor responsible for the "Notes" did enter a protest in March, 1910, and entered a further and reasonable protest against other matters in January, 1911. Upon learning the blatantly intolerant and insulting manner in which such a wholly private protest from a fellow-worker was received by this Committee, it became clear that the only course compatible with any self-respect was resignation, and to make criticism, when necessary, from outside. We are glad to give an isolated instance, because of its ease in following up if need arises, but we know that such treatment is not a single case to be specifically explained away, but is indicative of a general practice.—ED.

It is stated that "the W.S.P.U., as an organisation, has received no public criticism whatsoever."

Why was the Women's Freedom League founded?
H. G. CLARK.

Why indeed? To the world in general this is still an untold story.—ED.

Did not the original members of the Women's Freedom League consist of ladies who differed from their colleagues in the W.S.P.U solely on the question of organisation—not tactics?
H. G. CLARK.

Would our correspondent care to press the point, and ask us to request one of the ladies who seceded from the W.S.P.U. in order to form the Freedom League to give publicity to her version of the grounds of secession in these pages?—ED.

What about Mrs. Billington Greig in her lonely furrow?
H. G. CLARK.

Mrs. Billington Greig's criticism was inadequate of necessity because she cut it short. The tale of criticism of one woman against a powerful organisation of thousands has to be told with the persistence of an Ancient Mariner to get it home. Mrs. Billington Greig told it perhaps half a dozen times. Also, her criticism was largely personal, and in the hubbub of personalities what she was saying of the organisation was lost sight of.—ED.

If the principle of non-coercion is so admirable when applied to the conscience of the Premier, why should no attention be paid to that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? Surely THE FREEWOMAN does not look on Mr Lloyd George's conscience as "a negligible quantity"! Yet it must be suffering severely from repression if it really believes all he said at Bath. H. G. CLARK.

Again our correspondent is far from clear. We presume she means that the Chancellor's Suffrage conscience is being coerced by the Premier's Anti-Suffrage attitude. Well, this would be for the Chancellor to answer. We think if the coercion were very painful, he would at least make a protest, and might even threaten to resign. Instead, we find him with the Premier informing a deputation of Suffragists that he is in entire agreement with his leader as to the method of proceeding with the Votes for Women question. We believe that they have arrived at an honourable compromise in a matter on which they differ temperamentally rather than politically. Neither is coercing, nor will submit to be coerced, by the other.—ED.

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

We have endeavoured to extract a meaning from the above phraseology, but we find it difficult, and can only guess that the drift of its meaning may be that we cannot "produce new evidence of creative power" until we get the vote! It is remarks such as these which make it clear to us how impossible it is to explain what the feeling that one may possibly "produce new evidence of creative force" means to any save those who feel it. Arguments can do nothing against statements which emanate from minds clogged with exaggerated values, bombastic metaphors, and distorted symbols. Time alone, with its disillusionment in hard fact, can show that the vote is at most a means of protection, and has little if anything to do in the realm of creative force.—ED.

The impression given to one who looked forward to the appearance of THE FREEWOMAN, and who is bitterly disappointed, is that the editors and most of the contributors picture the average woman as an individual wallowing in sex-consciousness. This may be their unfor-

unate experience. As a medical woman I am thankful to say it has not been mine.

H. G. CLARK.

Why be so exaggerated? Why "wallowing" in sex-consciousness? One would not say of a person who objected to having his eyes constantly bandaged that he "wallowed in seeing," nor of a person who protested against his ears being stopped up that he "wallowed in sound." Why then say to healthy people who object to a total repression of sex that they "wallow in sex-consciousness"? In those who do, does it not argue that they are not yet free from the dark theory which holds that sex in itself is something degrading? That it would be better to have no sex? We think it does so argue. We are not surprised that our correspondent's experience as a doctor is not the same as ours. Of necessity her experience must have been among the sick and not among the strongly alive.—ED.

As to "the species of bird THE FREEWOMAN is," a second glance into the pie is unnecessary. The first enables us to realise that she is the one alluded to in the proverb, "It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest." H. G. CLARK.

This is not argument. This is bad temper. We do not know whether it accords with Dr. Clark's general notion of courtesy to ask a list of questions requiring time, patience, and space to answer, and to round off her long list by a gratuitous insult, merely to show that she is not seeking information in order to make up her mind as to the relative merits of the case, but that she asks the questions in a spirit of mischievousness and from love of gossip. We answer her questions, however, in order to make it clear to her and others that it is not a light matter to ask the editors of THE FREEWOMAN to answer personal questions concerning the Women's Social and Political Union.—ED.

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Feminism Under the Republic and the Early Empire.

III.

I N our two previous articles we have been content to paint the difficulties and restrictions imposed upon women by the Roman law, allowing it to be supposed that the women themselves were wholly passive under such restrictions, and that, even when civilisation had made the immense strides which it did during the later Republic, they submitted to the lot in which they were the property of husbands who were also their judges, the despotic masters of their children, and, until it clashed with the interests of their fathers or guardians, of their fortunes. We have allowed it to be supposed that they bowed to the unequal moral law, whereby, in his famous dictum to which we alluded in our second article, Cato, the Censor, the most "virtuous" man of his age, laid it down that the husband might put his wife to death for unfaithfulness, on his own initiative and with impunity, whereas, under like conditions, she, as the complainant, must not be allowed so much as to presume to touch him with her finger, while we have seen how, in a later age, his great grandson, who also possessed a similar reputation, followed other well-known examples in divorcing his wife, under the most painful conditions, for political and mercenary ends. We have now to show, however, that the Roman woman did not submit to all that those laws and customs implied without making some struggle against what she felt to be the bitter hardships of her lot, and we must again refer to our foregoing articles to the extent of impressing upon our readers that it would be well to bear in mind throughout, that her lack of mental training, her complete severance from the intellectual life of Rome, placed her at a disadvantage in seeking means of redress, or even in selecting, from the many under which she laboured, particular grievances for attack.

That there was a consciousness of hardship, and that this consciousness had penetrated even to the obdurate masculine mind, peeps out in Plautus, when Syra, the venerable maid-servant of four score years and four, meditates on the troubles of her mistress, and exclaims with passion, "I faith the women do live upon hard terms, and, wretched creatures, on much more unjust ones than men. I wish the law was the same for the husband as the wife." She goes on to say that if men were punished for flagrant offences against their wives, in the same way as women were punished for trivial faults, there would, under those conditions, be many more divorced men than women in Rome.

The later centuries of the Republic are filled with the domestic strife shadowed forth in Syra's speech, the tale of which, at first obscure and legendary, at length becomes a matter to be reckoned with in dealing with Roman social life. To plunge at once into accredited history, we find that in 331 B.C. there was a most curious secret rebellion organised among wives, and that 170 women suffered death for attempting the lives of their husbands. This probably means that they were tried by the domestic tribunals to which the law con-

signed them, the presiding judge of each tribunal being the male head of the family to which the woman belonged.

The story, as told by Livy, is as follows:—

"The following year was disastrous . . . those persons whose death rendered the year signal for the pestilence were carried off by poison. The circumstances, however, must be stated as handed down to us. When the principal persons of the State were dying of similar diseases, and all generally with the same result, a certain maid-servant undertook before Quintus Fabius Maximus, the curule ædile, to discover the cause of the public malady. . . . It was then disclosed that the State was afflicted by the wickedness of certain women, and that certain matrons were preparing poisonous drugs; and if they wished to follow her forthwith they might be detected in the very act. Having followed the informer, they found women preparing certain drugs, and others of the same kind laid up. These being brought into the Forum, the several matrons, to the number of twenty, in whose possession they had been detected, being summoned by the beadle, two of them, Cornelia and Sergia (both of patrician rank), maintaining that these drugs were wholesome, were directed by the informer, who confronted them, to drink some, that they might correct her of having stated what was false. Having taken time to confer together, when, the crowd being removed, they referred the matter to the other matrons in the open view of all, they also not refusing to drink, they all drank of the preparation, and perished by their own wicked device. Their attendants, being instantly seized, informed against a great number of matrons, whom to the number of 170, were condemned. The circumstance was considered a prodigy, and seemed the act rather of insane persons than of persons depraved by guilt." It is important to notice the patrician rank of these women, for that circumstance informs us that they would most probably, at this period, be bound by the marriage rite of confarreation, which rendered them perfectly helpless against their husbands' wills.

It would appear that the women got their idea of this method of freeing themselves from their detested bonds from the Bacchic orgies, introduced into Roman from Greek civilisation. These frenzies of so-called "religious" madness may have been responsible for letting loose the pent-up emotions of the women, and, even when the cult had been put down by law, the memory of the licence, even to murder, inculcated by its devotees, lingered on in the knowledge of the preparation of the subtle poison which might carry off a hated life-partner.

Appian speaks of Catiline's conspiracy as being engineered by women, who had planned, in the confusion arising from the rebellion, to exterminate their husbands. Juvenal alludes to this particular crime under the Empire in the words:—

"But murder now is to perfection grown;
And subtle poisons are employ'd alone,
Unless some antidote prevents their arts,
And lines with balsam all the noble parts;
In such a case, reserved for such a need,
Rather than fail the dagger does the deed."

What escapes Juvenal and all these writers on the subject is that such a crime, at any rate in the earlier days of simpler manners and purer morals, could not be without some instigation to be found in outward circumstances. In no civilisation is it thinkable that 170 women should unite to put to death their lawful partners without an underlying motive. That motive, however, may, without doubt, be found in the bitter exasperation of the women, who were

at the untender mercy of the Roman law, written and unwritten.

We turn to a less gloomy aspect of the women's revolt.

During the early part of the second century before Christ the Roman Forum was the scene of so strange and violent a commotion that there is scarcely a more interesting page in the whole annals of Rome. Then the matrons, regardless of laws and restrictions of public opinion, of the scandal of the Senate, of the commands of their husbands, in short, of the whole sum-total of masculine disapprobation, turned out in a body to agitate for the removal of the Oppian law. This law, passed a few years previously, during the second Punic war, forbade a Roman woman "to possess more than half an ounce of gold, or to wear a garment of various colours, to ride in a carriage drawn by horses in a city, or any town, or any place nearer thereto than one mile, except on occasion of some public religious ceremony."

The law had been cheerfully submitted to by the matrons as long as the war continued, its object being to prevent excessive expenditure and consequent waste of money which might go to the war-chest.

Now the war was a thing of the past, there was no excuse for continuing the restriction, but no effort was made by the Senate to remove it, and this injustice caused the greatest organised rebellion of Roman women in their history. The cause of the ferment was not by any means the most pressing of their disabilities as we now see them, but the Roman women, harassed by restrictions, bound down by legal formulæ, in every circumstance of their lives the complement merely of men, with imperfect training and acquirements, suffered from an inability to formulate their own case clearly, or even to make a clear mental image of the root of their seething and sullen discontent.

Here, however, was a flagrant act of particular injustice, obviously and clearly a wrong, appealing, by depriving them of the finery which formed a staple interest in barren lives, to the most mentally inarticulate of their ranks. Accordingly, we are provided with this curious scene, depicted by Livy with vivid clearness and in such a manner as to bring home sharply to us the realisation of the similarity which exists between one civilisation and another.

Indeed, we can hardly imagine that we are not listening to English politicians on similar occasions. Two of the plebeian tribunes (people's magistrates) had been approached by the women and induced to bring forward in the Senate a motion for the removal of the law.

The day approached; the women were ready. "Amid the concerns of important wars," says the historian solemnly, "an incident intervened, trivial, indeed, to be mentioned, but which, through the zeal of the parties concerned, issued in a violent contest. The Capitol was filled with crowds who favoured or opposed the law, nor could the matrons be kept at home either by advice or shame, nor even by the commands of their husbands; but beset every street and pass in the city, beseeching the men as they went down to the Forum. This throng of women increased daily, for they arrived even from the country towns and villages, and they had at length the boldness to come up to the consuls, prætors, and magistrates to urge their request."

It so happened that Marcus Porcius Cato was one of the consuls for the year, and we have in consequence his truly illuminating speech in opposition to the motion. Rough, rugged, determined, and eloquent, insensible to reason where women were concerned, crude and coarse in his judgments, he

swayed the listening crowd now this way, now that; but, as we shall see in the sequel, the very violence of his epithets and dogmatism of his pronouncements appear to have alienated the senators and actually to have aided the women in gaining the day.

"If, Romans"—so began the pugnacious, indomitable old Roman from the bottomless depth of his prejudices—"If, Romans, every individual among us, had made it a rule to maintain the prerogative and authority of a husband in respect of his own wife, we should have less trouble with the whole sex. But now our privileges, overpowered at home by female contumacy, are even here in the Forum spurned and trodden under foot, and because we are unable to withstand each separately we now dread their collective body. It was not without painful emotions of shame that I just now made my way into the Forum through the midst of a band of women. Had I not been restrained by respect for the modesty and dignity of some individuals among them, rather than by the whole number, and been unwilling that they should be seen rebuked by a consul, I should have said to them, 'What sort of practice is this of running into public, besetting the streets, and addressing other women's husbands? Could not each have made the same request to her husband at home? Are your blandishments more seducing in public than in private, and with other women's husbands than your own? Although, if the modesty of matrons confined them within the limits of their own rights, it did not become you even at home to concern yourselves about what laws might be passed or repealed here.' Our ancestors thought it not proper that women should perform any, even private, business without a director; but that they should ever be under the control of parents, brothers, or husbands. We, it seems, suffer them now to interfere in the management of State affairs and to introduce themselves into the Forum, into general assemblies, and into assemblies of election. For what are they doing at this moment in your streets and lanes? What but arguing, some in support of the motion of the plebeian tribunes, others for the repeal of the law?"

"Will you give the reins to their intractable nature and their uncontrolled passions?"

"This is the smallest of the injunctions laid on them by usage or the laws, all of which women bear with impatience. They long for liberty, or, rather, to speak the truth, for unbounded freedom in every particular. For what will they not attempt if now they come off victorious?"

"Recollect all the institutions respecting the sex by which our forefathers restrained their undue freedom, and by which they subjected them to their husbands, and yet, even with the help of all these restrictions, you can hardly keep them within bounds. If, then, you suffer them to throw off these one by one, to tear them all asunder, and, at last, to set themselves on an equal footing with yourselves, can you imagine that they will be any longer tolerable by you?"

"*The moment*" (the italics are the writer's) "*they have arrived at an equality with you they will have become your superiors.*"

"My opinion is," he concludes, "that the Oppian law ought not to be repealed."

Perhaps it was a woman who was responsible for the epigram on Porcius Cato found in Plutarch:—

"Red-haired, grey-eyed, and savage-tusked as well,
Porcius will find no welcome even in Hell."

Now came the turn of the Minister proposing the motion to reply to the words of the Censor, and, as has since been the case when women have sought

a champion among the opposite sex, his language must have been such as the more introspective among the women can have cared little to hear, showing, as his words do, a complete lack of comprehension of the problem at the root of all this passion and determination.

His opening sentences, however, were praiseworthy. He began by citing other instances of the women coming out from their homes to the Forum, as when, for instance, a body of matrons intervened to stop a pitched battle being waged in the Forum between Sabines and Romans in the reign of Romulus, and, again, when they turned away by their arguments the army which Coriolanus was bringing against the city, or, again, when they brought their gold ornaments to the public treasury in order to buy off the attack of the Gauls. Later, he reminds the Senate, the women gladly consented to the curtailment, by the Oppian law, of their splendours, in order that the war-chest might be replenished.

"Shall the men," he continues, "alone feel the removal of the war pressure and the return to luxury and ease? . . . It will be a source of grief and indignation to all (women) when they see those ornaments allowed to the wives of the Latin confederates of which they themselves have been deprived, when they see those riding through the city in their carriages and decorated with purple and gold while they are obliged to follow on foot. This would hurt the feelings even of men, and what do you think must be its effect on weak women, whom even trifles can disturb? Neither offices of State, nor the priesthood, nor triumphs, nor badges of distinction, nor military presents, nor spoils may fall to their share. Elegance of appearance and ornaments and dress—these are the women's badges of distinction; in these they delight and glory; these our ancestors called the women's world.

"But then, it may be said, if you repeal the Oppian law your daughters, wives, and even the sisters of some, will be less under control. *The bondage of women is never shaken off without the loss of their friends*, and they themselves look with horror on that freedom which is purchased with the condition of the widow and the orphan. Their feeble nature" (this of the women whose deeds he has just been recounting, and who were the mothers of Romans) "must submit to whatever you think proper to enjoin, and the greater power you possess the more moderate ought you to be in the exercise of your authority."

The women in this instance carried the day, for we read that "although these considerations had been urged against the motion and in favour," they were not satisfied with an academic discussion, but "poured out, next day, into public places in much greater numbers, and in a body beset the doors of the tribunes, who had protested against the measures of their colleagues; nor did they retire until this intervention was withdrawn." The law was annulled and the excitement died away, but the record of the firmness, resolution, and cool determination of the women, in contradistinction to the excitement and violence of the consul, remains imperishably in our memory. That they did not fight for a greater measure of freedom may possibly be deplored, but his glance is not singularly penetrating who cannot discern in this incident that women were already feeling painfully and obscurely what Juvenal put into their mouths as a shameful statement so many years later:—

"Tho' Men yourselves, and Women us you call,
Yet Homo is a common name for all."

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