

# THE NEW FREEWOMAN

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SIXPENCE.

*Editor:*

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## ON INTERFERENCE WITH THE ENVIRONMENT.

By STEVEN T. BYINGTON.

### I.—THE PRESUPPOSITIONS I START FROM.

I WANT to start a discussion which may be of some length, especially if I get replies from those who disagree with me, as I hope I may, and I think it will pay if first I lay down, like Euclid, a few of the axioms and postulates with which I begin.

I observe that men universally hold that certain types of action are to be approved and certain others are to be disapproved. They differ as to what actions should be put in either class: Herodotus noted this in the case of the nation where it was a disgrace to eat one's father, and the other nation where it was a disgrace not to eat one's father. They differ as to what names should be used for the classes: most people say right and wrong or good and bad, but some object most strenuously to these terms and prefer to say high and low, noble and base, fine and sordid, and I know not what. But everybody has some name for some sorts of actions that he thinks well of, and another name for those of which he thinks ill. The question whether it is well to speak of "right" or "wrong" is a very dry dispute about words; but the question whether a given action belongs in the black class or in the white class is a question of intense interest wherever there is a difference of opinion about it. Look at any book that has been written to prove that there is no such thing as moral good or evil, and see with what a relish the author will stigmatise the moralist's attitude by the names of such vices as he recognises to be vices, such as

cowardice or laziness. Well, I will try to avoid using terms that are objected to—I am entirely willing, in order to get neutral terminology, to revive the Stoic's names of *proegmena* and *apoproegmena*, and to use these names in a way directly opposite to the Stoic use—but I want leave to talk approvingly of some actions and disapprovingly of others, as everyone else does; and if I carelessly let a bit of moralistic language slip in, I hope those who believe that there is no crime will allow that I have committed none.

Similarly, I observe a general consensus that society will be best ordered by letting a man feel secure that certain things shall not be done against him. Once more we have the dispute over names, some objecting strongly to the words "right" and "ought" because of the moralistic associations of these words. But, though they do not offer such a flood of substitute names as in the other case, I do not see that they are any less disposed to claim for themselves or their clients some of the things commonly called rights, and to use strong objurgatory language in expressing their disagreement with those who will not acknowledge some of these claims. I am interested in some such claims myself; if in discussing them I ever say that a man "ought" to have a "right" to something, I shall not intend those words to prejudice the case in my favour, and I shall not think well of one who tries to make those words prejudice the case against me.

I believe in debate, not because I ordinarily expect either debater to convince his adversary, but because

bystanders are occasionally convinced, and more especially because one's understanding of his own ideas and of his opponent's ideas is mightily clarified by seeing what explanations of those ideas have to be given in meeting the objections of the unappreciative. I love clear-cut ideas, and would get myself a complete set of them in two weeks if I could.

For this reason I like best to talk about things concrete and definable. I would rather publish two paragraphs in favour of making coins octagonal, so that they should not annoy us by rolling, than two pages on the grandeur of the individual as the true inspiration of vital art. I am afraid that my fondness for formulas may get me into trouble in a paper which appears to have declared war on formulas; but I have for some time had too much peace to suit me. So far as I see, the most effective fight against worn-out formulas has always been made by those who were ready to offer counter-formulas at once, such as Jesus Christ. Arnold Toynbee said "Languor can only be conquered by enthusiasm, and enthusiasm can only be kindled by two things: an ideal which takes the imagination by storm, and a definite intelligible plan for carrying that ideal into practice." The words ought to be printed in italics in all text-books of rhetoric and psychology, with the title "Toynbee's Law." Observe, it is not denied that a striking presentation of the ideal without the definite intelligible plan may win a vast deal of applause, particularly from that part of the population that objects to hard thinking; but in the morning there is nothing left of that applause except a reputation for eloquence. The action which ought to follow (was not this what Demosthenes meant by naming action as the first, second, and third consideration for an orator?) does not come. This is the reason why there can be such a flood of supposedly effective speaking and writing, with great audiences of idlers, and so little done in consequence of it.

The reason why definite plans of social reform are so often ridiculous is not that the demagogue with a plan is at all a shallower thinker than the demagogue without a plan, but that the man who makes a definite proposal makes it possible to prove the wisdom or folly of his ideas. For this reason the man who seeks applause, and who does not care to have this applause take the form of practical discipleship, does well to avoid definiteness; but the man who seeks for truth, and who wants to be corrected if he is making a fool of himself, does well to put his propositions in definite shape for convenience of proof or disproof.

As a fundamental principle of social order, I believe in letting every man have the constructing of his own life, with voluntary co-operation but without compulsory co-operation. We commonly call this liberty, and formulate our demand as Herbert Spencer's law of equal freedom. It strikes me that there is a bit of a fallacy here. Just as some of our friends, in their rage for simplification, reduce all human motives to the one impulse towards pleasure, not only setting aside all moral motives but setting aside the fact that the impulse away from pain is not an impulse toward pleasure—that nature gives them different functions, assigning the pain motive to things that our safety requires us to do at once, and the pleasure motive to things about which we may take our time—that the effort to escape pain as far as possible is not practically compatible with the effort to secure as much pleasure as possible—that the two are so disparate that you cannot add the pleasures and the negative of the pains together into a total which we should try to raise to a maximum, any more than you can add together a girl's beauty and her intelligence and select as bride the girl who has the largest total—just so the same fondness for simplification leads us to say that a man infringes my liberty when he slaps me on my right cheek, and that our objection to this action is based on our

loyalty to liberty. He does indeed infringe my liberty in so far as he compels me to pay attention to a matter not of my choosing; but that is no more than is done by any man who accosts me by my name. Jesus' well-known advice to turn the other cheek is meant simply as a way of insisting on the maximum of liberty: I am presumed to be concerning myself with something that is more to me than a slap on my cheek, and I am not to let myself be so far enslaved by the aggressor as to be jostled out of my self-determined line of thought and action into a line determined by him. Which is very sensible in the case of a single slap; and it is mere reasonableness, not sophistry, to note that Jesus says nothing about a series of slaps wherefrom there results more interruption to one's work in the continuance of the outrage than in stopping to knock the impudence out of the fellow. Yet, whatever course of action may be recommended to the sufferer from his personal standpoint, I hardly expect anyone to contradict the proposition that as between man and man the merits of a slap in the face are identical with those of a violation of liberty. That is, a man equally insists on having the control of his own personal life whether liberty is involved or not. In a sense this is fundamental to what I am starting to say: in another sense, nothing depends on it; if a man insists on classifying the slap as an invasion of liberty, all I need ask of him is that he will impartially give the idea of liberty the same breadth of application in considering the points that follow.

Call it liberty or not, one corollary follows from this principle: we must not let the acknowledgment of any right, claim, or whatever you may call it, be determined by counting noses. Otherwise I am not aware that a way has been found to prevent my life from being altogether dependent on my neighbours' preference. One may, to be sure, divide liberty into water-tight compartments, and allow freedom of religious creed without allowing freedom of international trade; but in regard to each individual point the alternative still holds—either I must be free to attempt to cure diseases without satisfying the majority that I am on the right track, or the freedom of attempting to cure diseases does not exist except for those who agree with the majority.

I hold that when one person injures another by aggressive disregard of these principles, the injured party may justifiably use a reasonable amount of violence in repelling the aggression. The word "justifiably" need not, for the purposes of my argument, mean more than that you can get a workable social equilibrium by counting on this as a thing that he is likely to do and is to be permitted to do, while you cannot get a workable equilibrium by undertaking consistently to negate such use of violence. What amount of violence is reasonable, is a question fortunately irrelevant to my present purpose.

I have frequently called people's attention to some of the revolutionary conclusions which follow from these premises; and sometimes the people have replied by challenging me to produce a list of the applications of my principles to all the most fundamentally important things which men may do to each other. I thought I saw how such a list could be made useful, and a while ago I tried to compile it. Much of my work went swimmingly, for it was nothing but writing down propositions already familiar. But I found also a number of points in which I could not conceive of a practical social order getting satisfactory results from what I had accepted as the orthodox views of my school of thought. After worrying a while over this state of things, I found that my points of special trouble seemed to be related to each other. And at length I concluded that we—I and my allies—had been failing to apprehend the application of our principle to a very important part of life.

The thesis to which I was thus led is this:

If one person injures another by making the material environment unfit for that other's use, the injury should be regarded as on the same level with a direct assault on another's person or on the products of his labour. I say "material environment," meaning such things as the air, the water, the hosts of birds and beetles and bacteria; not the social environment.

I do not claim the honours of a first discoverer. Herbert Spencer made this a chapter in the new edition of "Social Statics." But, as the insertion of that chapter seemed to be part of the process of cutting the radicalism out of "Social Statics," he got very little hearing from radicals; and I never appreciated the value of the idea until I re-discovered it for myself.

## VIEWS AND COMMENTS.

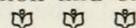
It is not our intention to embarrass the pages of this journal with a parent's fond praises: its praises like its misdeeds we leave for other tongues to frame. We merely desire for the profit of our readers and for the elaboration of our own solitary views, to point out, how, arising out of the unique character of THE NEW FREEWOMAN, in that it unlike any other English journal, has succeeded in evading the insular stamp it becomes possible to draw from its pages a comparison of extreme interest bearing on the different attitudes of the differing national temperaments, towards the nature and prestige of the "idea." For the French (represented with such consummate brilliance in THE NEW FREEWOMAN) ideas are very easily detachable. They spin them like coins, and with as little ceremony, and take the ring of them to test their quality. They can offer hospitality easily to all thoughts alike, of whatever colour, blue or golden, jolly little devils or morose, because all being real they must needs be accorded a place. Though quizzical of the value of all, they doubt the reality of none. Thoughts may be evils and as such are merely to be put up with, meriting scant respect; but evil or good, they are real.

For the advanced Americans, as is natural for a young and vigorous nation keenly sensitive to impressions, ideas though likewise detachable, loom larger in size. They are forces to be grappled with in earnest. Their importance increases with their dimensions; and as the area of France is to that of America, so is the dimension of the French idea to the American. In like proportion also is its authority. It naturally behoves the American to labour for the right idea. If honesty and hefty dealing can do it, he needs will be on the side of the angels. That is why he goes forth sword in hand like the knights of old to battle for and against—ideas.

Unfortunately for the symmetry of our comparison, the orthodox English heterodox-idealist is not represented in the pages of THE NEW FREEWOMAN. The atmosphere will not permit it. For unlike the Frenchman and American, with the advanced Englishman ideas are not detachable. They are so much part and substance with himself that he is unconscious of them. The Englishman's idea is built into his structure, like mortar into a wall-facing. Formerly the offspring of thoughtful Englishmen were born little Tories or little Liberals, and thereafter the rest of their personality was added unto them. Nowadays they are born little Fabians, little Suffragists, little Guild-Socialists, little Heraldites: but all have the same character, mortar dried-in. This explains why there are no thought-battles in England: no battles of ideas that is: no intellectual sport. There are quarrels about systems built about ideas taken ready made and for granted, among

It will be apparent why I expect contradiction. In assenting to the use of violence for the repression of this kind of injuries, I am in danger of upholding the enforcement of a whole series of laws on which we friends of liberty have always looked with the greatest contempt: game laws, public health regulations, Berlin police restrictions of piano-playing, and the like. However, if I have regard for consistency I shall not uphold indiscriminately so inconsistent a mess as these laws now are; and if I have no regard for consistency, logic cannot drive me to uphold anything whatever; so I advise my angry friends to wait a fortnight or two and see what particular applications I make of my principle, before they decide at which part of my body to aim their shots.

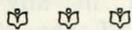
persons who primarily represent the ideas, but there are no intellectual quarrels: they are all personal. A lunge at a system is resented in the same temper as would be a jab at a person's vital regions. Where ideas are detachable, attention can be, and is, centred on the idea, as players in the football elevens can and do fix attention on the ball. If for the ball were substituted the players' shins, the sporting relations would resemble the ones which exist among those who stand for diverse ideas in England—too painful for the game to be worth while. That is exactly how things stand: the game is non-existent: intellectual sport is ruled out. Those born under the same star, all the little Liberals, all the little Suffragists, all the little this, that and the other idea-ists, cluster together in their special groups to keep each other warm in their allegiance to their one idea. They remain at once the most thought-ridden and the least conscious of thought, like a man with fever, too delirious to know he is ill and in need of attention and care.



The only person in England who makes a pretence of liking—and therefore inviting—intellectual sport is Mr. Gilbert Chesterton, but his choice of adversary as a rule falls either upon someone half his own intellectual size, or if nearer his own measure, someone whom he invariably touches upon a well recognised constitutional numb-spot, too paralysed therefore by the fixed idea to have the power to react. While, consequently, Mr. Chesterton's sham fights do not in any appreciable degree affect the accuracy of the statement that intellectual stagnation is the rule in England, it must be conceded that in the main, what stirring of the pool outside the FREEWOMAN influence is done, is done by Mr. Chesterton. Recently he has been rallying Mr. Robert Blatchford upon the failure of the supporters of "Free Thought" to assume the lead in the onslaught upon corruptive laxity in public affairs. The obvious retort from Mr. Blatchford is a "Tu quoque," "Free-Thought-er yourself," for it is as one who has given Thought control of the reins, to another who has done likewise that Mr. Chesterton must address the author of "Merrie England," and it is preposterous to expect a man who has abdicated in favour of a Thought to act as though he were a free agent. He has sold out his claim, and become a bondman carrying out orders, a tamed steed harnessed up, with the bit in his mouth and the rein on his neck, with Free-thought in the saddle. The only difference between Mr. Chesterton (who recently we believe entered the fold of the Roman Catholic Church) and Mr. Blatchford, is that Mr. Chesterton has been more select in his choice of drivers. His free thoughts are limited in number: Mr. Blatchford's are in number, legion, a Mafeking night mob. The Christian Trinity with the Vierge

Mère, is a select family-party, and picturesque at that, but the Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, Humanity, Justice, Democracy, Evolution, beloved of Mr. Blatchford are only the first drops which prelude the deluge, of thoughts each powerful enough when free, to hold a man's face to the earth, while those not given to Free-thought follies wreak on him their will. Still Mr. Chesterton most certainly is not the one to rail at the embarrassments to a man's spirit of Free-thought. The fitting person is the successful master of men. He is the one who knows what it profits such as he for other men to kneel with crossed hands and bent head under the free and rampant idea. The Socialists have been calling aloud for a defence of capitalism, which is too strong to value a defence. What needs defending, were defence possible, is that crossed hands, bowed head attitude of the idea-ridden, towards honesty, equality, brotherly love, peace and order which befriend them not a feather's weight, but which obstruct them wholly in a self-appropriatory career.

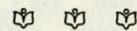
Special occasion and an honest mind suggest that it is time again to hurl a shaft against liberty—the subtlest among the Sacred, established on pedestals. What is liberty? Whether it be something, or whether it be nothing, we have no respect for it. We do nothing in its behalf. We neither act nor refrain from acting in its name. Liberty, for us, lends no criterion for judging actions. We seek to do anything and everything which ministers to our satisfaction. Our limitations lie only in our ability and lack of it. Those who do not like our ways will stop us—if they can. We have no respect for their liberty, and the folly is theirs if they have a care for ours. Together we will wrestle it out. Let our power and the genuineness of our satisfaction decide; liberty, at least, shall not obtain in the seats of authority. With this present issue of THE NEW FREEWOMAN, the distinguished American scholar who has done English-speaking peoples a service of inestimable value by his translation of Max Stirner's work into English as "The Ego and His Own," Mr. Steven T. Byington, opens a series of articles on "Interference with Environment," a series which we take to be concerned with the limitations of the liberty of the individual in the social community. We shall be among the most interested of Mr. Byington's readers and possibly among his critics. Be that as it may, we can prophesy in advance that our criticism will not be that liberty is laid in fetters. Our only concern is with the means and necessity for self-defence.



Opportunity, in the person of Dr. Ethel Smyth, the English composer, in the rôle of the "ye compleat suffragist," offers us an illustration of the wound-inflicting process which debate is in England. She answers the anti-suffragist view thus:—"Why dissemble? This is no longer a controversy. It is a fight to a finish against huge odds, and I am glad that objectionable phrase 'our friends the antis' has dropped out of currency. Writing from the lines of Torres Vedras, the Duke of Wellington mentions the bringing back by French sentries of our men's muskets, left behind during drunken bouts in the enemy's quarters, and adds, 'I am glad to think a pitched battle to-morrow will put an end to these disgusting familiarities.' Exactly, the duke was in grim earnest; a fighter, not a talker. As for us, some of our women have died; others are facing death and certain ruin of health; others have cheerfully exchanged ease and security for a doubtful future; others are looking on in agony while those they love and honour are enduring these things for their faith. We, like the duke, have no use for that tolerance which is the characteristic atmosphere of sham fights." Now, whose scalp *does* Miss Smyth want? It is quite evident she means to have at someone's. Does she really want to see definite

persons with names to them, cut up into little pieces? Or by a straining of the quality of mercy, merely laid in irons in deep dungeons? It is our unexaggerated belief that she—and others—*does* yearn, peak and pine after this latter. If only the Suffragists would be more explicit, the situation would be so very much jollier, even if more savage. Elsewhere Miss Smyth says "if men are face to face with the dread prospect of self-control, it is because syphilis is now such a menace to the State. . . ." If someone applied a little of the pressure of persuasion to Miss Smyth we might now get at what the suffragists mean: what they mean *to do*, that is, when they become part of the coercive State machinery. For candour's sake alone, it would be so interesting to have a plain statement. And we have been told such long, long years that they are going to do "things" by means of the vote that we may now without assertiveness, ask "How?"

In the same article Miss Smyth quotes Miss Pankhurst. "Under all the excuses and arguments against votes for women, sexual vice is found to be lurking; hence man's instinctive desire to keep women in a state of economic dependence"; and "once women are politically free they will become spiritually strong as well as economically independent, and no longer give or sell themselves to be the playthings of men." Perverse to naughtiness! "Once women are politically free they will become spiritually strong." Ye gods and little fishes! It becomes increasingly difficult to realise that Christabel Pankhurst is a comparatively young woman—she has such an incapacity for regarding her pet idea from the outside. She stands for it in that hard, dried-in fashion which ordinarily is found, in equal degree, only with extreme old age.

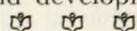


It is apparent from expressions of feeling similar to those to which Dr. Smyth gives publicity in the article to which reference has been made, that the hostility of advanced women towards men is a very real thing. Moreover it is growing as rapidly as literature for women is changing from what was, the standard literature for the schoolroom and the hearth. It will continue to grow until this question of supply and demand in sex matters has been finally thrashed out. An American correspondent in a personal communication urges a point of view which may be gathered from the following extract, and of which not the least valuable aspect is that it can leave none in doubt as to the matter which is under debate. Writing of the causes of prostitution, he says that it would be "more accurate to have said that religious superstitions and social customs were the cause, since we have historical accounts of prostitution as early as eighteen centuries B.C. I think it is perfectly true, however, that the repression of the sexual instinct in women (which lack now certainly is the mainstay of prostitution) has generally been brought about by the inhibition, for some reason or other—usually religious—of the exercise by women of their sexual faculties. And if women are not under-sexed, their sexual apathy is beautifully simulated. It is conceivable that this simulation may exist up to the point of yielding to man, but can it exist throughout the sexual act? Proof must, necessarily, be largely a record of personal experiences, and such a record might not, in good taste, be produced; but what else can be inferred when widely experienced male sexual varietists almost unanimously concur in the statement that only a small proportion of the women with whom they have associated (not prostitutes) experience a normal sexual orgasm, and that the sphincter of the vagina is rarely active? I trust you will pardon my plain speaking, but it has seemed to me that there are certain physical facts with which you are not familiar. It is, however, possible that, as a friend has just suggested to me, American women in this

respect are an exception. If that be true, it simply illustrates the fallibility of empirical generalizations." As far as the arguments contained in the above passages concern our own theory, i.e., that women consciously and subconsciously inflame the sex-ardour of men by a simulation of apathy, we can only say that the physical facts if they are as stated support our diagnosis. Regarding the cause which originally prompted such simulation there must necessarily be, at present, innumerable opinions, but as regards religious superstitions, it seems to us, that these exploit tendencies which have already come into existence, rather than actually call them there; and that therefore this apparent coldness regarding a matter which is, and always has been, women's chiefest concern, must have found its origin in something more fundamental: probably in the cunning of the under-dog which must, first, of necessity, seek to make itself of value to its more powerful superiors: and secondly, if its instinct is strong, to turn the superior power to its own service. This is precisely what women who felt and recognised their own relative inferiority have done, by bringing their own sex-impulses completely under control and exciting those of men to an abnormal degree—an activity which is the main concern of the womanly woman. It is ludicrous to assume, because of a certain trick of attitude, that the passive woman is aloof from sex: the mischief of her is, that she is not vitally interested about any single thing else. She has made it embrace her entire life, including her means to live, and her amusements. As the inhibitory discipline gradually grew into a habit and became more or less easy, its practice became more and more crowned with the success it was intended to achieve: it put power into the hands of the woman, and a refined pastime involving the subtle exercise of this power developed into an exquisite quasi-æsthetic pleasure. Refined love-making for the womanly woman was, is, the most alluring, subtle, choicest of choice pleasures. Common sex is dogs' fare by comparison; inhibition has thus been its own reward, and its method the method of allurements *par excellence*.

The subtlest sex-charm in women is an alert quietness—an attentive stillness. (The men who notoriously attract women use the same method.) It is used perfectly only by the adepts. The less adroit attempt unlimited variations upon it. Its motive, conscious or otherwise, is to attract sexually. If the continuous employment of a means ends by producing physical effects originally uncounted upon, these effects are accidental by-products which would be removed or altered by any alteration of the means which might become necessary to subserve the original motive. To the majority of women, the essential thing is that they shall be able to attract men: it a matter of infinitely less importance that men should be attractive to them. (If a man is satisfactory in other and, to them, more important ways, money, social standing and so on, they will make the best of his deficiencies, sexually.) It is therefore because of the fact that women attract men more when they appear reluctant to be attracted, that women appear reluctant. That there shall be no possibility of miscarriage in the issue, women actually create a super-layer of reluctance. Throughout the entire course of their sexual life they adopt and maintain an elaborate pose: married women even more than unmarried, and it is inevitable that so continuous a frame of mind should have a physical counterpart. The real test would be for men to become retiring. The genuine woman would then appear on the surface. As things stand now the miscalculations that are rife between men and women in relation to sex and to each other are due to the fact that respectively they are looking to sex to yield two totally different things: a man expects from it a physical and mental satisfaction, but a woman expects sex to yield her a man entire.

A man seeks to win a woman's co-operation in the attainment of a satisfaction at least for himself, but if possible and by preference, for both. A woman looks to sex to give her power: to win for her a dominion external to herself. She endeavours, by the complete disciplining of sex-impulses in herself, to use the man's undisciplined impulses for his own subjugation. This difference is the real ground of war between the sexes, because both have expectations based on delusions as to each other's motives, and in the eventuality both feel defrauded. When for instance before marriage, a man with devoted humility, offers himself to a woman, and weights his plea to be taken with substantial gifts, she imagines it to be but the prelude of a total surrender. She imagines (we speak of those on the "plane" of the "temperamental") that he is offering himself as a possession which she has only to be good enough to take and mould to her liking. Hence the belief of women that they can "reform" men; hence the nasty jog to women's vanity which marriage gives; hence the cry of the soulful woman—realising that "love" is not strong enough to eliminate the original Adam in a man—for an "affinity," a "twin-soul" which is the search for that particular native bent in the tree in the direction she means her "affinity" to take; she has understood what it is which causes friction and disillusionment: the disillusionment of "love" put on trial. No man ever eats the dust, after marriage, to the extent that any woman whatsoever, imagines he will before. No man *could* completely satisfy in a woman the craving for dominion which the delusive humility of a man's courtship awakens. When a woman commits the error—from a womanly point of view—of hunting down her man instead of drawing him in by fascination, she awakens the same instinct for dominion in the man. It is the lust to devour, to destroy, quickened into being by the suggestion of its possibility. It explains the cruelty of "love": Wilde's "Each man kills the thing he loves" is not descriptively accurate. It should be "A man is tempted to kill the thing which shows that it loves him." It is, broadly speaking, on a like principle with that which leads the boy to break his watch to come at its insides. It is the savagery of the interest in growth and development.



We appear to be getting a considerable distance away from the bases from which the above observations started: the physiological facts cited by our American correspondent, and the hot indignation against the lusts of men given utterance to, by Miss Pankhurst and Miss Smyth. We make immediate return to them however, in deductions which follow directly from the observations. The physiological details referred to doubtless are single instances taken from a large number of effects which a physician who was a psycho metrician might have indicated in advance of experience, as following inevitably upon a long continued emotional attitude. They are effects and not causes however and can be left out of account. The emotional cause from which they spring is however a phenomenon to be studied by those who concern themselves with "Woman Movements," "Prostitution," and the like. Those who are satisfied with things as they are, need take no note of any of these things, but those who propose a revolution by compulsory reform would get forwarder with more caution if they took the trouble to find out of what they were haranguing. They need first to analyse the meaning of the smirk on the face of the consciously "pure woman." In the main, with benefits accruing slowly from individual to individual, the rise to power of the protected pure woman represents the most successful swindle on record in history. "She," the type (which never exists, by the way), first puts the bridle on herself (it is her virtue; the poor inherit the earth); she stimulates desire in men to an exaggerated need; she

holds out promises of satisfaction which she cannot, and does not intend to, supply; she accepts gifts and binds her victim before she bestows the goods; the business transaction effected she does as she likes and will make repudiation of claims into a virtue; whereupon the "prostitute" supplies the needs the pure have created; she pays the pure one's extravagant debts; the pure one thereupon kicks her in private and prays over her in public; from flirting in the drawing-room, she comes to haggle over a "reference" in the kitchen; she flares over the story of the Piccadilly flat in the Albert Hall and buttonholes old friends in the lobby of St. Stephen's to get their promise to vote for a Bill to flog the lust out of men. She is Irony's masterpiece. She has indeed a case to state, but as yet she lacks the courage to state it. She is an old-seasoned cad, but even cads can put up a defence. At any rate, she is worth considering. Indeed, before the fight gets to that "finish" Miss Ethel Smyth speaks of, she will have been thoroughly overhauled, and we suggest that the women of the Woman Movement take stock of her points before they engage themselves too far in support of her interests.

## The Poet's Eye.

### III.

AS boys we—I and my friends—read Shakespeare with avidity, Virgil to the extent of getting at least two Books of *Æneid* by heart, Horace with pleasure, and Ovid's *Persephone Rapta* with delight. We liked very much the *Bacchæ* of Euripides—I mean that we used to sit down and take a read in these things sometimes apart from the mere exigencies of the school curriculum. A little later Herrick moved us to ecstasy and some of Donne; we liked passages of Fletcher, of Marlowe, of Webster and of Kyd. At that time we really loved the *Minnesingers* and fell flat in admiration before anything of Heine. The *Troubadours* and even the *Northern French Epics* we could not read—French poetry did not exist for us at all. If we read a French poem at all we had always to read it twice, once to master the artificial rhythm, once for the sense.

Between seventeen and eighteen we read Rossetti, Catullus, Theocritus, Bion, Moschus and still Shakespeare, Herrick, Heine, Elizabethan and Jacobean lyrics, Crashaw, Herbert and Donne. Towards eighteen we tried Swinburne, Tennyson, Browning and Pope. We could not read any of them—we simply and physically couldn't sit down with them in the hand for long enough to master more than a few lines. We never read any Tennyson at all except for the fragment about the Eagle; never read any Swinburne at all except for the poem that contains the words "I thank with faint thanksgiving whatever Gods there be" and the one beginning "Ask nothing more of me Sweet"; we also read a German translation of the ballad whose stanzas end: "This is the end of every man's desire. . . ." Of Browning we read sufficient to "get the hang" of "Fifine at the Fair," the "Blot on the Scutcheon" for the lyric "There's a woman like a dewdrop" and "Meeting at Night" and "Parting in the Morning" and "Oh, to be in England. . . ." I have a faint idea that we may have read "The Bishop Orders His Tomb" and parts of "Asolando." So that, as things go, we may be said never to have read any Browning at all.

But at any rate, the attempt to read Tennyson, Swinburne and Browning and Pope—in our teens—gave me and the friends I have mentioned a settled dislike for Poetry that we have never since quite got over. We seemed to get from them the idea that all poets must of necessity write affectedly, at great

length, with many superfluous words—that Poetry, of necessity, was something boring and pretentious. And I fancy that it is because the greater part of humanity got that impression from those poets that few modern men or women read verse at all.

To such an extent did that feeling overmaster us that, although we subsequently discovered for ourselves Christina Rossetti—who strikes us still as far and away the greatest master of words and moods that any art has produced—I am conscious that we regarded her as being far more a prose writer than a poet at all. Poetry being something pretentious, "tol-lol" as the phrase then was, portentous, brow-beating, affected—this still, small, private voice gave the impression of not being averse at all. Such a phrase describing lizards amongst heath as: "like darted lightnings here and there perceived yet nowhere dwelt upon," or such a sentence as "Quoth one, to-morrow shall be like to-day but much more sweet . . ."—these things gave an exquisite pleasure, but it was a pleasure comparable rather to that to be had from reading Flaubert. It was comparable rather to that which came from reading the last sentence of Herodias . . . "Et tous trois ayant pris la tête de Johanaan s'en allaient vers Galilee. Comme elle était très lourde ils la portaient alternativement." I do not presume to say exactly whence the pleasure comes except in so far as that I believe that such exact, formal and austere phrases can to certain men give a pleasure beyond any other. And it was this emotion that we received from Christina Rossetti.

But still, subconsciously, I am aware that we did not regard her as a poet.

And, from that day onwards I may say that we have read no poetry at all—at any rate we have read none unprofessionally until just the other day. The poets of the nineties—Dowson, Johnson, Davidson and the rest—struck us as just nuisances, writing in derivative language uninteresting matters that might have been interesting had they been expressed in the much more exquisite medium of prose. We got perhaps some pleasure from reading the poems—not the novels—of George Meredith, and a great deal from those of Mr. Hardy, whom we do regard as a great, queer, gloomy and splendid poet. We read also—by some odd impulse—the whole of Mr. Doughty's "Dawn in Britain," that atrocious and wonderful epic in twelve volumes, which is, we think, the longest and most queerly impressive poem in modern English. We read it with avidity; we could not tear ourselves away from it, and we wrote six reviews of it because no professional reviewers could be found to give the time for reading it. It was a queer adventure. . . .

That then is the history of twenty years of reading verse, and I think I may say that, for men whose life-business is reading, we have read practically no poetry at all. And, during those twenty years we should have said with assurance that Poetry was an artificial, a boring, an unnecessary, thing.

### IV.

But, about five years ago we—I and that group of friends—began to think of founding a periodical—one is always thinking of founding periodicals! We had then to think of what place verse must take in the scheme of things. With our foreign ideas in which academic palms and precedence figure more strongly than they do in the minds of most freeborn islanders it did not take us long to arrive at the conclusion that Poetry must have the very first place in that journal—not because it was a living force, but just because it was dead and must be treated with deference. Moreover, if I may make a further confession, our express aim in founding the periodical in question, was to print a poem by Mr. Hardy, a poem that other periodicals had found too—let us say—outspoken for them to print. Now it would

have been ridiculous to find an immense paper for the express purpose of printing one particular poem and not to have given that poem the utmost pride of place.

So we printed "A Sunday Morning Tragedy" first and the rest in a string after it. It seemed proper, French and traditional to do so.

And then, we began to worry our poor heads about poetry. We had, perforce, to read a great deal of it and much of what we read seemed to be better stuff than we had expected. We came, for instance, upon the poems of Mr. Yeats. Now, for ten or twenty years we had been making light of Mr. Yeats; we used to sniff irritably at "I will arise and go now," and to be worried by "The Countess Kathleen." Mr. Yeats appeared to be a merely "literary" poet; an annoying dilettante. I do not now know whether Mr. Yeats has changed or whether we have, but I am about in a moment to try to make an amende honourable.

At any rate, we came upon the work of Mr. Yeats, of Mr. De la Mare, of Mr. Flint, of Mr. D. H. Lawrence, and upon suggestions of power in Mr. Pound's derivations from the Romance writers. And gradually it has forced itself upon us that there is a new quality, a new power of impressionism that is open to poetry and that is not so much open to prose. It is a quality that attracted us years ago to the poems of Mr. Hardy and of George Meredith. (I know that my younger friends will start ominously at this announcement, that they will come round to my house and remonstrate seriously for many weary hours. But I must make the best of that.)

For the fact is that, in Mr. Yeats as in Mr. Hardy there are certain qualities that very singularly unite them—qualities not so much of diction or of mind, but qualities that can only be expressed in pictorial terms. For when I think of Mr. Hardy's work I seem to see a cavernous darkness, a darkness filled with woodsmoke, touched here and there with the distant and brooding glow of smothered flame. When I think of Mr. Yeats' work I seem to see a grey, thin mist over a green landscape, the mist here and there being pierced by a sparkle of dew, by the light shot from a gem in a green cap. (I have tried to write this as carefully as I can, so as to express very precisely what is in the end a debt of sheer gratitude. I mean that really and truly that is the sort of feeling that I have—as if I had discovered two new countries—the country of the hardly illumined and cavernous darkness, the country of the thin grey mist over the green fields, and as if those countries still remained for me to travel in. . . .)

It will at first sight appear that here is a contradicting of the words with which we set out—the statement that it is the duty of the poet to reflect his own day. But there is no contradiction. It is the duty of the poet to reflect his own day as it appears to him, as it has impressed itself upon him. Because I and my friends have, as the saying is, rolled our humps mostly in a landscape that is picked out with the red patches of motor-bus sides, it would be the merest provincialism to say that the author of Innisfree should not have sate in the cabins of County Galway or of Connemara or wherever it is, or that the author of the Dynasts should not have wandered about a country called Wessex reading works connected with Napoleon. We should not wish to limit Mr. Yeats' reading to the daily papers, nor indeed do we so limit our own, any more than we should wish to limit the author of that most beautiful impression, the "Listeners," to the purlieus of Bedford Street, where the publishers' offices are. . . .

What worried and exasperated us in the poems of the late Lord Tennyson, the late Lewis Morris, the late William Morris, the late—well, whom you like—it is not their choice of subject, it is their imitative handling of matter, of words, it is their derivative attitude. . . .

Reading is an excellent thing; it is also experience, and both Mr. Yeats and Mr. De la Mare have read a great deal. But it is an experience that one should go through not in order to acquire imitative faculties, but in order to find—oneself. Roughly speaking, the late Victorian writers imitated Malory or the Laxa Saga and commented upon them; roughly speaking, again, the poets of to-day record their emotions at receiving the experience of the emotions of former writers. It is an attitude critical rather than imitative and, to the measure of its truth, it is the truer poetical attitude.

The measure of the truth has to be found. It would be an obvious hypocrisy in men whose first unashamed action of the day is to open the daily paper for the cricket scores and whose poetic bag and baggage is as small as I have related—it would be an obvious hypocrisy in us to pretend to have passed the greater part of our existences in romantic woods. But it would be a similar hypocrisy in Mr. De la Mare, Mr. Yeats, or Mr. Hardy to attempt to render Life in the terms of the sort of Futurist picture that life is to me and my likes.

But to get a sort of truth, a sort of genuineness into your attitude towards the life that God makes you lead—to follow up your real preferences—to like, as some of us like, the hard, bitter, ironical German poets, the life of restaurants, of crowds, of flashed impressions, to love as we may love, in our own way, the Blessed Virgin, Saint Katharine, or the sardonic figure of Christina of Milan—and to render it—that is one good thing. Or again, to be genuinely Irish, with all the historic background of death, swords, flames, mists, sorrows, wakes and again mists—to love those things and the Irish sanctities and Paganisms—that is another good thing if it is truly rendered—the main thing is the genuine love and the faithful rendering of the received impression.

The actual language—the vernacular employed—is a secondary matter. I prefer personally the language of my own day, a language clear enough for certain matters, employing slang where slang is felicitous, and vulgarity where it seems to me that vulgarity is the only weapon against dulness. Mr. Doughty, on the other hand—and Mr. Doughty is a great poet—uses a barbarous idiom as if he were chucking pieces of shale at you from the top of a rock. Mr. Yeats makes literal translations from the Irish; Mr. Hardy does not appear to bother his head much about words; he drags them in as he likes. Mr. De la Mare and Mr. Flint are rather literary, Mr. Pound as often as not is so unacquainted with English idioms as to be nearly unintelligible.

(God forbid, by the bye, that I should seem to arrogate to myself a position as a poet side by side with Mr. De la Mare, or for the matter of that with Mr. Pound. But in stating my preferences I am merely, quite humbly, trying to voice what I imagine will be the views or the aspirations, the preferences or the prejudices, of the poet of my day and circumstances when he shall at last appear and voice the life of dust, toil, discouragement, excitement and enervation that I and many millions lead to-day.)

When that poet does come, it seems to me, that his species will be much that of the gentlemen I have several times mentioned. His attitude towards life will be theirs; his circumstances only will be different. An elephant is an elephant whether he pours, at an African water-hole, mud and water over his free and scorched flanks, or whether in the Zoological Gardens he carries children about upon his back.

FORD MADDOX HUEFFER.

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## “Androcles and the Lion.”

I ATTEND all theatrical performances which are managed by Mr. Granville Barker with a sinking at my heart. We have no English drama. We have Bernard Shaw and one play: “Nan.” It is improbable that Mr. Masefield will write another great play because he has no philosophy and works without a plan. His art is the triumph of courage over myopia: he leaps fearlessly into the darkness to achieve contact with reality, and when he finds it he clings to it overlong, knowing not where to find it again if he lets it go. After the truth of *Nan* came the vain repetition of *Pompey the Great*: he would not let the ecstasy of *The Everlasting Mercy* pass away but tried to hold it still in *The Daffodil Fields*. The writer without a philosophy has death in his heart, which presently creeps outwards to his hands, as we know from the late dishonoured work of Rudyard Kipling. So it would not be wise to look to Mr. Masefield for another great drama, and our repertory theatres have produced a school of plays which not only suit but richly deserve the short run system. We must look abroad for dramatic genius: to Ibsen, Tchckov, Gorki, and the Tolstoy of *The Powers of Darkness*. We must look abroad even for dramatic interest: Brieux is of course only a French predecessor of the Blue Book Supplement of *The New Statesman*, but we have no English playwright who feeds his audiences with such interesting facts. Even for bad plays we must leave home: Derondberg and Björnson are but Walter Melville and Cicely Hamilton in different skins—but how much better they do these things on the Continent.

But there was once a play called *The Marrying of Anne Leete*. There never was written anything quite like it except Tchckov's *Cherry Orchard*, which it resembled both in the fastidious hands it laid on the sterile and sentimental governing classes and in its Futurist technique. Unhappy people cried broken phrases through the twilight: and miraculously the colours of their souls made the pattern of England and we saw how foolishly and formally we had embroidered the fair texture of life. From the making of such masterpieces Mr. Granville Barker has turned away to become a theatrical manager, blood brother to Sir Herbert Tree. He now spends his days in selecting the Number 2 company for the Australian tour of *Fanny's First Play* and in injecting the passions of tragedy and comedy behind the marmoreal surfaces of Miss Lillah McCarthy. This is a dreadful thing. In the production of a work of art the mind must shrink back from the world of affairs and its demands on the attention as a writer at work disconnects his telephone bell. It is so largely a subconscious thing, born surprisingly of lying idly by the sea or solitary sleeping in the moonlight. When one comes to think of it, Ibsen was not a theatrical manager: he was a lonely man. . . .

And God hardly suited Mr. Barker to be a theatrical manager. He is so credulous of new things: he is like the madder sort of vegetarian who roves from diet to diet, ever ready to raise an altar to the unknown cereal. His faith in that pretentious person, Professor Reinhardt, compels the principal characters of *Androcles and the Lion* to make their entrance from the auditorium through the stage box: which distracts the audience's attention from the stage picture and confuses the actor by giving him a sense of the audience rather than the artistically necessary sense of the scene into which he enters. And he does not control his subordinates as he shows by the license he has given to Mr. Alfred Rothenstein, who has designed the stage setting. Mr. Rothenstein has a vivid and disreputable genius: by the lank hips and pale but lively flesh of a thin Cockney model he can tell all the base unconquerable magic of London. But he has wonderful flashes of folly: hence the curtain rises on a lion wandering up and down a washing-line hung with purple, white and green kimonos. It is supposed to be a wood. It is not. I have as good

a working imagination as any man in London, and I cannot make a wood out of those Suffragette kimonos, any more than I could discover a Harlequinade in that unskilful curtain raiser “contrived” by Mr. Barker and Mr. Dion Clayton Calthop, a gentleman who is an unfortunate after-effect of Peter Pan. He writes clucking articles on babies in South Kensington Gardens and Columbines and Harlequins in “The Daily Mail”: removing his brown boots and stupid socks he waggles his pink toes at himself to assure himself that his soul is still childlike. Mr. Barker has no right to contrive anything with him: still less to allow him to become dominated by his personality. For in *Harlequinade* the skeleton of Mr. Barker's wit was wholly obscured by the adipose tissue of Mr. Calthop's sentimentality. This little, London art, that is the feverish reaction of weakly people to some strong stimulus—the day before yesterday the Sicilian players, yesterday the Post Impressionists, to-day the Russian Ballet—has the irritating quality of a sick headache. One wishes it would stop. One wishes they would wipe it up. One wishes they would feed it more regularly so that it didn't cry so much. . . . It's a disturber of the peace in which great things are born: an activity from which one must turn away to save one's soul.

Against the background of broken light and perverse images of beauty shone the religious faith of Mr. Shaw, unintelligible to the average Pagan dramatic critic by reason of its Christian bias. Androcles is an early Christian Kypps, a simple soul. He, the tamest thing among men, is not afraid of the wildest thing among beasts because he loves it. He is the truly religious man fearing not the fiercest passion that may rise out of his humanity because he loves life. He is the middle-class man who will not practise asceticism, and who has made all revolutions since the beginning of time; who goes off with his lion friend, crying, “While we are together no slavery for me, no cage for him!” And there was genius in the picture of the martyrs so Christian that they talk no more of Christ than William Blake talked of God, which is a lesson in psychology to the Alice Meynell and Francis Thompson school of poets. There was, in the decision of Lavinia and Ferrovius, a splendid illumination on the duty of the soul. In her hour of martyrdom fear showed Lavinia that the stories and dreams of Christianity were but stories and dreams! Yet she chose to die for the passion she had poured into her worship of them, and for the great truth too great to be grasped by the little brain that lay behind them. And Ferrovius, finding that all his body was made for man, served man rather than the Christ for whose service he had not been made. It is the soul's duty to be loyal to its own desires. It must abandon itself to its master-passion. And how Mr. Shaw's religion conflicts with English idealism will be discussed in a forthcoming review of “The Quintessence of Women.”

REBECCA WEST.



**Notes on French Publications.**—“The Mercure de France” for September 1st contains an able and interesting article on “Clercs et Ecoliers au temps de Francois Villon,” by the distinguished scholar, Pierre Champion. The essay centres about the line “Tout aux tavernes et aux filles.” M. Champion's knowledge of fifteenth century Paris, its wines, its taverns, its customs and conditions, is intimate and extensive. One will read the Grand Testament with a good deal more ease and with a new enjoyment of the constant references to places and people after having read these explanations. Note also another article on “L'Art de Villon,” by the same author, in “La Revue Critique.”

## "The Horses of Diomedes."

By REMY DE GOURMONT.

(Translated by C. Sartoris.)

### V.—THE DRONE.

I would be a large drone, all velvet, which plunges and disappears in the bell of a foxglove.

"Tuesday, 13 May,  
**D**IOMEDES, my friend, you are like the others, you are afraid, you also. Why have I not seen you at my house, or in those friendly homes so hospitable to our fruitless pratings? Yes, we are two reapers who must join at dawn to mow the sorrowful tares or those fraudulent ears of barley whose grains fall into dust under the touch. Dust which contains an unknown source of life and renovation, dust useless to the reapers, but perhaps richer in mysteries than the most weighted ears and the purest flours. Is it I who frighten you, or so much vanity? But who knows which one of our words will be beautiful, which one of our actions pregnant? Perhaps the most despised. And perhaps the face of things will be changed because you picked a flower for my bodice in walking along the pathway. Can you measure the power of my smile even if it be equivocal, and if my shoulders are white will you not be satisfied, stronger and more courageous? Is it then impossible for you to kiss my hand so softly that I should be moved and ready to ascend to heaven?

"I wish to maintain the essential vanity of our relations. Let us leave the ears of corn full of blood for those who would die of another food. Are you reassured, at having but to flit on flowers? For, I know I have the air of an impudent devourer, I who am the most innocent of virgins. My sensual power escapes my will; it is all perfume; I am as candid as the lilac or the censer and naïve to the point of being without corporal modesty. Do you wish to see me disrobed? You will see a statue such as are in the museums.

"I seemed to divine that you were afraid of being gobbled up by the lioness, poor hero, so very precious! Do not tremble. I am not hungry. I only like your words and your air of being superior even to your fear. It is pleasant to me to listen to you. You relate what you will never do and perhaps are you capable of doing what you do not recount. You are whimsical and just sufficiently hypocritical to seem mysterious. That pleases me. I dream about you, having nothing to dream about myself. The harem which you have in your mind admits me behind a latticed window. I look without blushes and without emotion: the gestures I perceive seem to me obscure and I do not seek to uplift the veil you draw over the others. Do not think me shocked by these pastimes and the nudity of all these swimmers; only I will not enter your stream and I will not invite you to come and bathe with me in the small sacred lake where I cleanse my knees and my sins.

"Here, then, my friend, are two or three fine pages as you like them (I hope) of net embroidered with the greatest care, intended for you and to be put in a drawer under a sachet of white or blue heliotrope; then we will better understand each other and I would even tell you all I think if my thoughts were more tractable.

"My dear Diomedes, I must really be very fond of you or I must have great faith in your loyalty, or I must know you to be too timid or too proud to profit by an avowal. Or again, is it that I experience an absolutely feminine pleasure in humiliating myself before you? But you will know: I live in a solitude of soul like death. At certain hours I am a young girl, bored, alone, midway on the bridge, equally far away from the doll she despises and the man she

fears. For I also I am afraid, not of you, though perhaps like you, of the known or unknown robber. This is a phase that can last and become firm if one could add to it the cement of intellectual devotion and if the mortar should cling and harden.

"It will cling to me if one wishes it. I would wish to live in a fraternal and profound intimacy with a mind. I would be a large drone, all velvet, which plunges and disappears in the bell of a foxglove, then pushes the door ajar and goes out all sprinkled with gold dust. What a wonderful occupation for the springtime of my life, coming from the silk of the cocoon where in secret I accomplished my metamorphosis! The question pertains to a useless being, a being one terms as useless as wild oats; you see therefore that I do not esteem too particularly the function on which I have fixed my choice; unless, Diomedes, it should be very agreeable to feel the large drone pilfering in the bells of one's brain. I do not know, but that afterwards I would be more beautiful, all glittering with the golden dust which flowers the palace of intelligence.

"This dream done and undone, I have thought it would be more becoming to take a lover. It is sufficiently consistent with the custom and good morals. I would love him perhaps; it seems one has these surprises. Then, altogether given to the flesh and the particular pleasures it generates, I would bend my spirit to the images and my limbs to the gestures the most apt to stimulate the perfect blossoming of sexual instinct. Is that truly my vocation? I ignore it and I consult you Diomedes. Also on this doubt, that perhaps these two roads are not altogether irreconcilable enemies, that perhaps they cross each other here and there under the trees of the forest as in the labyrinths one sees painted on the threshold of old books. Men have told me they wished to find a double delight in woman's food and beverage, that she must be a fruit. But those men what would they be to me and what would they give me? They demand too much. I wish to reserve one half of myself—which one? You who desire neither one or the other, for fear that one should poison your will-power and the other, paralyse your strength, give me some advice as disinterested as your genius, and which will fall from a height, a boulder loosened from a crag by the wind.

"Yet I am afraid that you may encourage my solitude. You will judge that pride behoves me, that it should swell my heart at the same time as it closes my lips; far and from me, I must please you apart from others. Eyes which seem to you haughty must not soften even to dreams, nor must the heaven of desire enter through these windows; you would wish them closed, or their panes veiled with some muslin; in fine that I should be virginal. Am I not virginal being a virgin?

"I have anticipated all and await.

"Your friend,

"Belle.

"P.S.—Do not answer me. I wish to see you again before listening to you. Come Saturday to Cyrène's."

(TELEGRAM.)

"Tuesday, 13 May.

"Do not read my letter and bring it back to me sealed, Saturday at Cyrène's.

"Néo."

Diomedes found the two missives that evening, late, on returning home. Having read the telegram, he was moved to pity by the other one. Poor letter, it was heavy.

"If I do not read it, who will? One must read letters. An unread letter is absurd, as words said too low and not heard. There is in this letter a whole day, and perhaps a whole night of a woman. What does she want of me? It is the first time she writes me otherwise than with a few brief sentences on a card. Néo, the new, the unknown, the temptress.

Perhaps she has partly unveiled herself or having attempted to draw the drapery too lightly round her loins she has outlined her figure thinking she was hiding it better. Perhaps in reading the opposite of what she says, I will get to know a little of her soul. So little! But why this defence, this withdrawal, this gesture towards the lips which the letter has reached, this impatience of the hand that would fain take back what it has just given? What can she give me, pages of literature; offer, herself? Absurd, she is proud. But she knows I fear her and perhaps she wishes to play and make me recoil, then, tired of my cowardice, say good-bye to me and turn her head. If she should say to me soft, tender and childlike things? She is not child enough. Moreover I do not know her. On no woman have I less notion. I know only that she is beautiful, that she tempts me, that I fear her. To love her, would mean to renounce everything, that is to say renounce irony without which life is but a field, green or yellow or shorn according to the seasons and the appetites of the sheep. It is irony that varies the unity of things, in multiplying the aspects by the diversity of the smiles with which one hails them. Irony, it is the facet-wise eye of the dragon-fly which creates itself a palatial garden from a bramble-flower. Néobelle is an horizon. She is erect as a mountain, she is true and one must look her straight in the eyes and with serenity.

Oh! A mountain! A tree on a mountain and one which looks large because it is on the mountain. A tree, one embraces it; two arms are sufficient. A tree! Often what one takes for a tree is but a branch which hangs broken and which the wood-cutter will carry away on his shoulder and chop and throw into the fire. It is a branch, it is a scion, a shoot of the year that one breaks off to make a staff; it is a large hemlock that children tear up in returning from school to shape as a reedpipe or a peashooter.

It is a large hemlock. . . .

What can she have to say to me? She is there, enclosed as a mystery in the secret of this letter; I would see her if I had faith. I do not wish to see her. . . .

She is there, she is reclining. She sleeps smiling. She must be captured adroitly and only awakened in the joy or the horror of being possessed. . . .

He had already passed under the fold of the envelope, the small gold blade.

"Four sheets of white paper, perhaps perfumed! The host is empty. It is the deacon's mass. I will return her the letter unspoiled. Intactam intacta. The idea of this purely ceremonial liturgy inspires me with Latin puns. Child, what a commonplace snare! Diomedes or the test of discretion!"

Satisfied, he could laugh a little. He was less afraid. To play with Néobelle would be charming.

## VI.—THE MARIGOLD.

In this yellow distaff, she amuses herself by planting right in the centre of the forehead, a large golden marigold.

CHRISTINE would arrive. . . .  
 "If my history is written, mused Diomedes, it will be necessary to say that each time that I await Christine I am intensely bored. I am as bored as a god, tired of my universe, solitary in the midst of my web despite all the small flies which come to get caught and are all of them so similar! And the males likewise, all sex. . . . And I? Shall I leave this prison? Not yet, since I await Christine. So little, and Christine is such a frail shadow, almost incorporeal by dint of chaste silence. Silence is chaste.

Go out? One must return. One cannot always be out. Emerge from self? One would be cold. In self is warmth, one can lie down, one can wallow. The carpet is thick, the windows fast closed, the fire bright, the lamp softly shaded. Luxurious cell; but

just knocks at the door. The definition of love by Spinoza is not absurd: "Titillatio quaedam, concomitante idea causae externae." If the worthy philosopher had not warned us himself "that he calls titillatio or hilaritas the affection of joy when appertaining at the same time to the body and the soul," one could smile; but such as he thought it and wrote it in his specific tongue, this memorable proposition is but too true, it is absolute; it is terrible in its crude banality; and that is why I await Christine, exterior cause of joy without which to-day I cannot experience any joy: and that is why I also love Mauve, Fanette, and . . .

He stopped. He refused to think any more of the four sheets of white paper whose trick too quickly divined, humiliated him. And then, how mention her name, even in thought, after these two little frailties? Yet he did name her, but apart, with precautions, having first laid a carpet under her feet, the carpet of his inviolate cell. He ended by admitting that he loved Néobelle in a different way than Fanette, with another mind, with other senses. He admitted this almost without fear; he was becoming familiarised.

Néobelle brought him to himself. He mused and was astonished at living so little and so ill in the midst of so many almost sentimental agitations. He really did nothing in life but go and come, look, feel, compare. That is what one calls nothing: it is to live and it really is nothing. To compare ideas, to compare forms, to question oneself and answer by judgements which are, to-morrow, void and possibly false. He understood the vacuity of that formula: to enjoy life. Those only enjoy, who are not conscious of their bliss. The happy man has but the look of being happy.

"To go and come; I do not even go, I revolve. If I continue to muse, I will get to the place in the school where this signboard is hung on a nail: "Regret not having learnt a manual trade such as making wood-shavings! It is clean, it smells good, the children stop to watch the shavings come out of the jointing-plane, etc."

So, I know beforehand what I am going to think! It is whimsical.

The bell rang. It was Pascase.

Diomedes received him willingly. He was thinking no more of Christine, who was useless now since salvation had entered under the form of another human creature.

— Have you seen Mauve again?

Pascase answered abruptly, as if angry:

— No. Why?

— Because you will see her again. She has put you in her album; she will come across you one morning, in looking over it, and an hour after Mauve will be with you, with that radiant and impertinent air which you know. Admit that she pleases you also?

Pascase shrugged his shoulders. He was feverish, he moved round the room, seeming to breathe suspicion, his mouth puckered, his eyes restless. At last he sat down and said:

— Why speak to me of all these women, this Mauve, this Fanette, this Cyrène, this . . .

He was silent and Diomedes, himself unnerved, said, but quite softly:

— This . . . Finish. Ha, I presume you will not pronounce these syllables which are wanting to your enumeration?

— No, I will not pronounce them.

— Listen, Pascase, resumed Diomedes in a fraternal tone. I will not pronounce them either, the syllables, the two syllables you stop at; but I declare to you again, although they are agreeable to me they are not necessary to me. Suppose that I ignore them.

Pascase answered, now almost calm:

— It is I who would wish to ignore them, but I am absurd, probably ill, I cannot forget them or

pronounce them. Possibly this will seem to you a somewhat curious psychology, I came because I know she is coming and I wish to see her, I beg of you, let me see her.

— Truly, you are absurd, answered Diomedes, and for two reasons. First of all, you say to me to-day, the exact contrary of what you declared the other day with great tremblings. Secondly, there is no known reason for her coming to-day. However it is true that I have thought of her and that I desired her.

— I read your thought, said Pascase. And if you think of her it is perhaps because she thinks of you. There is a chance of her coming.

— And if she does come, and when you have seen her?

Pascase answered, with the dispassionate logic that he easily wielded, even during his extraordinary fits of nervousness :

— I have considered. I think I love her because I do not know her. Having seen her, I would probably not care for her. Then I will be peaceful and cured. If on the contrary, which is possible, she fascinates me, I will not be more unhappy than before.

— It is well reasoned, but what do you do with me in all these adventures?

— Nothing. I leave you.

— Still, I would not wish to lend myself to the ungraceful game either of being complacent or of being a bad friend. Why do you not take Christine without telling me?

— I am not a thief. Also, how? I can only know her through you. Refuse and all will be said.

— My friend, resumed Diomedes, are you then one of those before whom one must be silent? I spoke to you of a woman and your child's imagination sees her and your man's imagination desires her as if she was that one destined to you, the only one! Pure sentimentality! Are you no more afraid then, no more? She will not please you. She is a creature made, it would seem, for me alone, ordained for my pleasures according to the beauties of soul and flesh that fascinate me. Now, think that her hair, really quite ordinary, has shades like a pale brass helmet and that in this yellow distaff she amuses herself by planting, right in the centre of the forehead, a large golden marigold. Nothing more absurd; but I am accustomed to it. She does not talk, she hardly says yes, seldom no! Her thought is avowed by gestures, attitudes, smiles, that I alone can understand.

— I will understand them also. Love understands everything. Are you then, her only lover?

— No, answered Diomedes, I do not think so. Christine belongs, not like Mauve to those she chooses, not like Fanette to those who go to visit her: but to those who desire her with enough force to evoke her presence. However those who possess her with me, do not share her with me. She is different according to the hearts that call her. The lips, whose kiss she accepts, do not kiss the same shoulders, in kissing her shoulders; yet they are Christine's shoulders, and the fresh bosom of Christine, and her snow-white knees. Among the lovers whose love she suffers, some only know her face, others know but her knees, for a few she remains veiled; for others she remains robed; to others, dearer or more daring, or stronger in desire, she shows and gives herself nude, according to the candour of her eternal beauty. Nude, robed, or unrobed, she is Christine, and she is the Christine of whomsoever adores her fervently! All her appearances are chaste: she is always innocent and of a virginity continually renewed by grace. Each one of her lovers, sees her different, following the seasons and the hours; she is; sometimes, always and, sometimes, never the same; she is the field, the heath, the river, the sea; the clouds influence her, and the sun; her eyes which change their shade do not change

colour; a lover would recognise them, under the veil or under the shroud; but Christine is immortal.

— Immortal, said Pascase. So it is over? You have ceased to rail at me?

— I will answer you, said Diomedes, with the word that is familiar to you: I say what I think.

— Dreams. From what I gather, Christine is a young woman, rather pretty, tractable, silent and capable of a certain amount of fidelity. You do not care for her excessively and she visits you seldom. Let me see her, she may perhaps love me.

— Pascase, how must I speak if I would make you understand me? Must I repeat my discourse or instruct you by a decisive and even brutal affirmation?

— Neither one or the other, answered Pascase. You intermingle truth with so many dreams! Do you even know what is truth?

Diomedes answered smiling:

— No, my friend, I do not know.

The conversation drifted and Christine had really not come. They went out, and dined together, now mute like good and reasonable animals.

While eating small birds, swathed in lard and robed in vine leaves, Diomedes regretted having a friend. During the two years that he had known him, Pascase had made him pay for a few hours of agreeable conversation by many vexations. Without doubt he was a man of sure character, but of an extravagant mind, one of these beings who go straight ahead impetuously and hit themselves against trees, failing to think that there are trees in the forest. A sullen and obstinate intelligence, an obscure and sentimental heart, unbridled logic, no pliancy, a bar of iron which breaks without bending: Diomedes really did not enjoy such a nature. The history of Christine also worried him, he saw no solution of it.

Yet, he mused: it is rather diverting. A morbid or normal psychology? Morbid since it is interesting. Besides which, the normal cannot be perceived as it cannot be differentiated. How distinguish from the eighth, the ninth chime of twelve? Alone among the twelve the first and the last are dissimilar because they are either preceded or followed by silence . . .

But if Pascase be somewhat ill, perhaps am I somewhat faulty? We must see.

He looked at Pascase and thought him less unpleasant.

"After all a friend is useful to the mind as a garden is useful to children. The one like the others must be taken out and taken to play, and a friend's brain is full of alleys and pleasant lawns . . ."

At that instant, he looked again at Pascase and his own egoism almost frigtened him. He resumed:

"But I am also a garden for him, and perhaps a park, a whole country where he can drive, shoot, pick fruit, haymake, harvest. There are a thousand ways to work or to divert oneself. Is it my fault that Pascase always leads the same idea, along the self-same lane?"

This reflection comforted him. Becoming quite amiable, he wished to make small talk, affectionately:

— Pascase, do you not find these birds very pleasant?

## In Metre.

**The Dominant City.** By John Gould Fletcher. (Max Goschen. 2/6.)

**Fool's Gold.** By John Gould Fletcher. (The same.)

Mr. Fletcher's "music" is more comparable to that made by a truck-load of iron rails crossing a cobbled pavement than to the wailful sound of violins. Mr. Fletcher has not the faults of the mellifluous versifier, of the great horde of publishing authors whose product reminds one more of perfumed suet than of any other nameable commodity. Mr.

Fletcher has a fine crop of faults—mostly his own. He has such distinction as belongs to a man who dares to have his own faults, who prefers his own to those of anyone else.

Mr. Fletcher has apparently read a good deal of contemporary French work—and avowedly, for one volume begins with a salutation to the French Poets of To-day, and the other with a list of *Poètes Maudits*, including Corbière, de Lautréamont, Rimbaud, Laforgue and Aurier. I cannot see that his reading has harmed him or that he is guilty of what they call “servile imitation” of either one or all of his continental models. Mr. Fletcher is one of the very few men on this side of the channel who are in any sense in touch of the poetic activity on the other. And in a country where it is rank heresy to recognise any foreign discovery, whether in art or in science, there is little use in concealing the fact that Mr. Fletcher is a rank heretic.

To him French Poetry does not mean Verlaine and Baudelaire alone. It does not mean such fashions of the young Gautier as were imported to this island in “The Nineties.” The fashions of Verlaine, Baudelaire and the earlier Gautier are now accepted in England, they are respectable, they are “sanctioned by the tradition.” As for Mr. Fletcher, he saith “a *fico* for the tradition,” he biteth his thumb.

“The Nineties” never got even so far as “Emaux et Camées,” they stopped with “Elegies” and “Albertus.”

I doubt if they ever took pleasure in “L’Hippopotame.” At any rate, a good deal of Seine water has flowed seaward since the days of The Rhymers’ Club and France has not remained the France of Dowson and Arthur Symons.

I do not think Mr. Fletcher is an imitator, he is influenced, if you like, as all the younger Frenchmen are influenced. If you ask south of the channel *à quoi revent les jeunes gens?* you might find that their reveries are not unlike those of Mr. Fletcher, and that a good number of them have learned to express themselves better than he does. Still, if a poem by this author were read in the café du Châtelet it would not be regarded as an antique or a grotesque, which is more than can be said for nine-tenths of his English contemporaries.

It is not my intention to subject these two books to the measuring instruments which apply in my own school or in anybody else’s. It is enough that I have read “The Dominant City” without being bored to death, without being choked on gobbets of sham Keats, and on fricasseed Francis Thompson.

To the other Thompson, the half-forgotten fellow, and to the late suicided John Davidson our author is more nearly akin.

It is a pleasure, as it is a rarity, to find an author who really cares about anything, and it is quite impossible to read Mr. Fletcher without being convinced that he cares a great deal for the truth. About beauty, I am not so sure. It is quite possible that the sense of beauty may be drawn down upon the mind of the reader by keeping it, beauty, austere off the page. I am not sure that even this is Mr. Fletcher’s intention. His art is an art that dares to go to the dust-bin for its subjects. There are moods and times when no other sort of art seems worth the petrol to start it.

If one were to go through these two books with the usual sort of appraising one might note that the author has the following virtues—virtues I mean as the reviewers on the “Times” and “Spectator,” and the other echoes of the past, count virtues:

He has an abundant imagery. He gets it not out of books but from his own impulse and observation. “The Nation” would call it, at times, “bizarre.”

He has an ability to build his poems into a book, he sustains “the tone” throughout.

He shows, often at his roughest, a determination to fight out his own rhythms. He declines to accept the hackneyed cadence, though he does not always escape it.

He is obviously striving “to render his own time” if not in the syntax of his own time at least in a vocabulary of his own time. He is not afraid of the unused and of the unsanctioned. This tendency will not be accounted unto him for a virtue, by any of the above mentioned worthies.

“Fool’s Gold” lacks the unity of “The Dominant City,” yet there are within it touches of a thoroughly pleasing grimness.

E. P.

## Poems.

By RICHARD ALDINGTON.

AMALFI.

We will come down to you,  
O very deep sea,  
And drift upon your pale green waves  
Like scattered petals.

We will come down to you from the hills,  
From the scented lemon-groves,  
From the hot sun.  
We will come down,  
O Thalassa,  
And drift upon  
Your pale green waves  
Like petals.



ONEIRODOTES.

Tell me of Eos and of her wine-stained fingers  
Plucking the yellow fruits of the sky.  
Tell me of silence,  
Where Hylas stood  
By the slow dripping fountain-head;  
Where sharp drops gleam  
On moss, on orange lichen, and on ferns.

Tell me of the scarlet prows  
And the silver trumpets at Salamis.

Silver and ivory,  
Tell me your dreams.



BEAUTY, THOU HAST HURT ME OVERMUCH.

The light is a wound to me.  
The soft notes  
Feed upon the wound.

Where wert thou born  
O thou woe  
That consumest my life?  
Whither comest thou?

Toothed wind of the seas,  
No man knows thy beginning.  
As a bird with strong claws  
Thou woundest me,  
O beautiful sorrow.



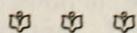
IN THE VIA SISTINA.

O daughter of Isis,  
Thou standest beside the wet highway  
Of this decayed Rome,  
A manifest harlot.

Straight and slim art thou  
As a marble phallus;  
Thy face is the face of Isis  
Carven

As she is carven in basalt.  
And my heart stops with awe  
At the presence of the gods,

There beside thee on the stall of images  
Is the head of Osiris  
Thy lord.



### THE MOURNING FOR BION

(From the Greek of Moschus.)

Make moan with me, glens and Doric waters; O rivers mourn for beautiful Bion. Weep with me, O trees, and grieve for him, you glades. Breathe from saddened clusters, O flowers. Flush crimson, mournful roses and wind-flowers; and, hyacinth, let thy letters speak, and write "alas" upon thy leaves. Dead is the beautiful flute-player.

Begin, O Sicilian Muses, begin his dirge.

You happy birds, that now lament among thick leaves, say to the Sicilian fountains of Arethusa, that Bion the shepherd is dead. Say that with him died music and Doric song.

Swans of Strymonus, weep by your waters and make musical your dirge from grieving mouths, as you sang in your own wretchedness. Say to the daughters of Oiagrus, say to all the dryads of Thrace, "Dead is the Doric Orpheus."

Begin, O Sicilian Muses, begin his dirge.

For this beloved one makes music no more to his flocks, neither plays upon his pipe, sitting under lonely oaks, but now he sings Lethean melody beside Ploutus. The mountains are silent. His heifers and bulls wander grieving, and will not feed.

Apollo himself mourned thy swift fate, O Bion; the Satyrs and the black-robed Priapids wept for thee; the Pans made moan for thy singing, and the Cranides lamented in the forests and became weeping waters. Echo lamented in the hills that in the silence she might mock thy lips no further. At thy fall the trees threw down their fruit and all their imperishable flowers. The sweet milk flowed not from the herd, nor honey from the hive—it had hardened into wax. It is unmeet to gather harvest of honey when thou art dead.

The dolphin did not mourn so much upon the sea-banks, nor did the nightingale so moan upon the promontories, nor the halcyon so cry "Kēux! Kēux!" in her pain, nor the bird of Eos so wail when she flew in the lonely hollow places about the tomb of Memnon, as all these lamented Bion. All the glad birds and the swallows, which he had loved and taught to speak, made moan as they sat upon the branches. The doves called softly, "Do you grieve, O sad ones? But we also."

Begin, O Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

Who now, O thrice-beloved, who shall put his mouth upon thy reeds? Who shall be thus daring? For till now thy lips and thy breath blew into it, and Echo keeps thy song still among the reeds. Shall I bear thy pipe to Pan? Even he would fear to press his mouth upon it, lest his prize were less than thine.

Galatea mourns thy song. Thou didst gladden her as she sat near thee upon the sea-beach, for thou sangest not as the Cyclops, whom this fair Galatea fled. And she yearned for thee more than for the sea. And now she rises up from the wave, and lies upon lonely sands, and remembers thy voice.

With thee, O shepherd, died all the gifts of the Muse, that maiden who loved kisses and young lips; and about thy body the Erotes mourned sadly.

Cypris loved thee far more than that kiss upon Adonis lately-dead.

Begin, O Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

This was a second grief to thee, O clearest of rivers, this was a new grief to thee, O Mela. Beside thee died Homer, that mouth sweeter than Calliope's; and it is told that thou didst weep for thy son with sorrowful waters, and fill all the ocean with thy voice. Now thou weepest another son and dost melt away in a new mourning.

Both were dear to fountains, for one drank of the springs of Pegasus, the other of Arethusa. One sang of the beautiful child of Tyndarus, of the great son of Thetis, and Atreidian Menelaus; the other made music, not of strife and sadness, but of Pan. In a clear voice he sang to the shepherds, and so singing led his flocks to pasture. He taught the kisses of youths, and received Eros and Aphrodite into his bosom.

Begin, O Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

Each noble city made threnody for thee, O Bion, each town. Askra grieved for thee far more than for Hesiod. The woods of Boeotia did not so regret Pindar, nor pleasant Lesbos Alcaeus, or the Tēian city so weep her singer. Paros mourned thee more than Archilochus; and Mytilene wailed thy lost music more than Sappho's. All the pastoral singers, whose mouths were clear with the Muses, mourned thy death. Sicelidas, the glory of Samos, mourned; and in Cydon, Lycidas, who of old was seen with bright laughing eyes, mourning poured forth tears. Among the men of Triopas, beside the river Alens, Philetas made threnody for thee; and in Syracuse, Theocritus. And I, no stranger to the ode, sing the melody of Ausonian sadness in pastoral song, inherited from the Muse, which once thou didst teach to me. Honoured by her, thou didst leave thy wealth to others, but thy song to me.

Begin, O Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

Alas, the mallows of the field, the golden parsley and the rich fair anethon perish, yet live again and bloom another year; but we men, howsoever great and mighty and cunning, when once we die are folded away in the hollow earth and sleep one eternal unawakening slumber. And thou art wrapped in silence, and wilt lie so in the earth; but the nymphs will yet permit the frog his song. How should I not be jealous? For his singing is unlovely.

Healing came, O Bion, from thy enchanted mouth. How might it run towards thy lips and not be sweet? And what mortal is so savage as not to mix and to give healing potions to the singer that his song might not cease?

Begin, O Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

But in justice all things come to the balance. And I lament thy end in this my mourning. And as Orpheus went down into Tartarus, and Odysseus and Heracles, so I, if I might, would go down to the dwelling of Ploutus to see thee. And if Orpheus played so that he was heard, I too will sing. He played the Sicilian song and sang the shepherds' music to Koré; and she also was of Sikilia and was gay in the valleys of Ætna, and knew the Doric singing. Not unrecompensed shall be this melody; for as once she sweetly gave back to Orpheus, the lyre-player, his swiftly-vanishing Euridice, so shall she send thee, Bion, back to the hills. For, if I am at all skilled in music, I will sing in such fashion unto Ploutus.

### INVOCATION.

O Anax Hyperion, golden Apollo, cease thy task of sending mortals light;  
And teach this generation not to write.

## Lego et Penso.

### OUR RIGHTS.

(The following paragraphs from Madame Bulteau's article with Mr. Benj. R. Tucker's comments thereon were omitted from Mr. Tucker's contribution in our last issue. By an oversight Mr. Tucker's statement that Madame Bulteau's article was given in full was allowed to stand. The paragraphs appearing below which were omitted on account of pressure on our space should be read to follow par. vi., page 115, in the previous issue.—Ed.)

"And why has adultery in woman been held so long for a grave offence? Because of its possible consequences? Evidently. Morals, like everything else, have been constructed by men, and the capital importance which they have given to feminine adultery is the necessary consequence of the imperative need of being sure of their paternity. Perhaps this need has some profound physiological cause which science will one day determine. Perhaps too it was born at the same time as the notion of possessing goods, the right to which is so sure that it continues to be exercised even after death. In short, there is probably a relation of cause and effect between the power to bequeath one's weapons, the scalps of one's enemies, or one's American railway shares, and the stamp of reprobation which so far has been placed upon erring wives. And who knows if the new and even greater indulgence that is being shown to these weak ladies does not announce, a little prematurely, the feelings and the judgments of a day when the laws will no longer permit the leaving of one's fortune to one's children?"

"However that may be, it is difficult to give the face of a crime to adultery in man, since he runs no risk of introducing into the home a little thief to steal the inheritance. The taste for equality will have to be developed still further in women, and they will have to use their revolvers on a considerable number of faithless husbands, before persuading them—and persuading themselves!—that the treason of the male is as serious as their own. For the right to constancy occupies even in delicate souls, a smaller place than the right to money.

"As for the virtues, their rôle is plainly to be seen. The greatest, naturally, are those that appeal to the greatest number, such as heroism or charity, that touching safeguard of the right to wealth, which by generous sacrifices, an exquisite goodness, prevents poverty for a moment from perceiving that it too has its rights.

"Then come the little virtues: submission favourable to the right of tyranny; patience, that permits the right to ill temper to display itself at leisure, economy, so helpful to the prodigalities of heirs; and, for reasons of the same type, fidelity, frankness, industry.

"They have done well, since men must live together, to so draw the line between good and evil that each individual might learn to respect the rights of others. They would do still better to convince each other that only the others have rights,—each none at all. Ah! if we could efface the images of that Eden, the road to which decidedly is lost! If we could renounce the belief that men and circumstances owe us something or other, that happiness is necessarily in reserve for us somewhere, that to have held a thing in our hands is a warrant for its eternal possession!

Mr. Tucker's comments on Madame Bulteau's entire article are as follows:—

The only criticism that I feel inclined to pass on this fine article is that "Fœmina," while denying

rights (for the most part triumphantly) seems also to counsel against self-assertion, and that, in saying that "only the others have rights," she not simply assails her main contention, but utters an absurdity, since all of us are others to some one, and therefore all have rights. The essence of the matter is that none of us have rights, and that what we call our rights are either pure fictions or else permissions from the mighty. And, this once established, we have cleared the field for consideration of the further question: What permissions shall we find it advantageous to grant to ourselves and to each other when we, the free,—that is, the mentally enfranchised—shall have become the mighty? To me it is obvious that the answer must satisfy at least two conditions: first, that the permissions shall be mutual, since no one wishes to participate in a one-sided contract; second, that they shall guarantee the greatest possible amount of liberty to each participant, since the desire to extend and assure our freedom is the chief motive of the contract. These permissions we may perhaps call our rights, in the absence of a better name; yet it will be necessary always to remember that the individual is prior to the contract, and may recede from it, after which recession he will be under free, beautiful, glorious, rich, contented! And why no obligation to respect anybody, nor will anybody be under obligation to respect him. But, while the contract lasts, it must ever be a healthy thing for the participants to insist upon their privileges, "Fœmina" to the contrary notwithstanding; for to do otherwise would be to cultivate that "little virtue," submission, which she describes as "favourable to the right of tyranny."

BENJ. R. TUCKER.

## The Stone Citizen.

IN a previous article on "The Evil that Words Do" I suggested that words, even dull and stupid ones, have the power to produce a world-full of mental perverses, and it is time that language retired from business for a century or two. Let me now tell a story illustrating how disaster to the human race lurks in a word always ready to overwhelm the dullard, reckless, weak and unwary.

There was once a great Toymaker. Being neither a precursor nor an initiator, nor a continuator, but a re-initiator, he lived surrounded by vestiges of the past in the form of multitudinous and vari-coloured wooden figures—puppets, dolls, mannikins—which toymakers in recent generations had fashioned. As time went on our Toymaker came to see the real character of these "creatures." He saw that they were the work of toymakers whose one object was to frighten sick persons out of their wits and the dead out of their graves. Accordingly the makers had given them repulsive bodies, stewed them in nineteenth-century pseudo-science, spewed a nasty mixture of Machine Age over them, soaked them in red catastrophe, stuffed them with evil words, punctuated their actions with lying speech, filled them with horrible thoughts, tied them together with social consciousness, taught them to gouge, murder, devour, cavil and lust after one another, labelled them MEN and set them loose upon Merry England.

When our great Toymaker came to see the real character of those abominations, he wept; for he was a maker of fair things. And he said: "I will work a miracle. I will change these pestiferous demons into clean Citizens. I will reshape them according to the best ancient models, dress them in all the colours of the rainbow, set them in jewelled cities, and fill them with the fragrance of the bones of their ancestors. I will breathe into their wooden lungs the passion of life. I will give them SOULS." His brain tottering with large

resolve he set feverishly to work to discover an elixir which should endow these putrescences with life. At last he found it; and he called it the science of CIVICS. Then our great Toymaker stretched out his frenzied hand and took the most hideous of the mannikins. Into its mouth he poured the potential principles of life. Never abating his ardour, he next polished it with the world's inheritance of culture and learning. Never ceasing his delirious efforts, he furnished it with a stock-in-trade of novel nomenclature. Politography, Politogenics, Eu-Politogenics, Eutopia, Hellenomorphic, Hebraomorphic, Latino-morphic, Techno-drama, Auto-drama, Polito-drama, Chrono-drama, Symbolo-drama, Syndrama, all these illustrious goods were stuffed in its knapsack. After this supreme achievement, he dotted it with pre- and suffixes, quaint bios, psychos, res, neos, abs, obs, graphys, osophys, olatrys, and the rest. Next he opened its skull and inserted the intelligence of a university professor, filled it up with metaphysical abstractions, and rubbed in a handful of the beginnings of Politics, History and Geography. Then he put the result into a civic shell and gazing admiringly at it exclaimed with feverish joy, "Behold the perfect Citizen! O Civic Consciousness! O Civic Perception! O Civic SOUL! What a comfort you will make of the civic process to man. You will stand for all time to prove that the term civilisation is but the *pons assinorum* of civics. Through you, henceforth, Civilisation shall be known as Civicisation." Then he departed in order to give the civic gases time to work.

After a time he was back again where he had had left the perfect Citizen and his Shell. And he noticed with amazement that a strange thing had happened. The expanse of heaven had turned grey, and the earth where green things once flourished was now a parched and pathless wilderness. Walking with its head bent was a strange creature of stone that carried on its back an immense load like that borne by Bunyan's Christian. This inert mass was fastened to the creature with powerful chains. And the extraordinary thing was that though the Citizen showed a consciousness of the great weight upon his back, he displayed no resentment against it. He seemed indeed to regard it as a part of himself. His thin and haggard face betrayed no signs of despair. Indeed he moved beneath the grey sky and amid the suffocating dust of the desert with the utter resignation of the blind. Our Toymaker sought to solve the mystery. He found that the Civic gases operating upon wood had petrified it, and in awakening the civic consciousness had placed the city upon the Stone Citizen's back and fastened it there with civic rights, duties, theories, ideas, thoughts, and ideals both Autergic and Eupsychic (to use our Toymaker's very words), doubly secured it with discipline and authority, set the Citizen oscillating in and reacting upon a narrow circumscribed environment, and had indeed so crushed out of the Stone Citizen the eternal elements of existence that he had completely lost all sense of the Universal. Civics had in fact annihilated Cosmics.

The foregoing story furnishes an analysis of the process and penalty of naming. It reveals how men are captured and half-paralysed by a word-trick. In England Civics has been flung down by a master-mind, and it threatens to become the worst of tyrants. Already we are obsessed by the fallacy that the Citizen is greater than the Individual, and actually believe that the Citizen is in danger of being dwarfed into an Individual rather than developed as a Citizen. We even uphold the insane view that the recognition by the Citizen of his duties towards the community is of far more importance than the recognition by the individual of his power of individual development. We do not see that the Citizen is a pestilential insect tolerated for his city-building, shelter-making, food-getting and species-producing energies, and as an

active agent of disease, pollution and death in the mechanical and social scheme of things. We believe on the contrary that civic life is soul life, and of course that soul life is founded in civic life. And we agree that no contribution to thought is amiss that enables men to see more clearly into the mystic recesses of the civic mind.

The crazy attempt to mould the Stone Citizen is reflected everywhere, especially by the Press. Take for instance some of the more or less popular weeklies. What are "The New Witness," "T. P.'s Weekly," "The New Age," "Everyman," "The New Statesman" but civic organs? They exist simply to express the views and opinions of the Stone Citizen in process of (so-called) development. Not one of them has discovered that the great thing is that human beings should be individuals not citizens. In fact everything published in their columns upholds the current fallacy that "the word Citizen so rich in noble associations and meaning," has fallen into disrepute, and encourages the belief that our individual existence ought not to be accentuated. They are all in the Geddesian universe, and they express its activities as follows. "The New Witness" (Geddes-Belloc Politogenics on non-party lines), "T. P.'s Weekly" (Geddesian Current Events Club), "The New Statesman" (Geddes-Shaw-Sidney-Webb Politoeugenics), "Everyman" (Le Play-Geddes Anthropogeography, Comte-Geddes Humanised-History), "The New Age" (Plato-Geddes Hellenomorphics with a dash of Euhysteria). For an example of how the Geddesian manna and quails descend upon these journals I will turn to the "New Age." It is well known that this unregenerate journal has acquired a reputation for mothering other persons' ancient schemes. Look how it has taken to one starved breast, that balderdash, Guild Socialism, the author of which is our old Fabian friend, Samuel Hobson. To balance the picture it now offered the other breast to a system of organisation devised seven years ago by a certain Marshal Bruce Williams. I do not suppose that the "New Age" knows that the Field Marshal is deeply indebted to Geddes for inspiration and ideas which of course the Field Marshal is not ready to acknowledge. In any case the "New Age" believes that it has found something worth working for, and so it has set its handy man J. M. (Julius McCabbage) Kennedy disguised as Romney to reconstruct the British Army with Williams' pale system for pink persons.

The tyrannical influence of the word Civics may be traced still further in the vast increase of artist-substitutes, and in the pot-and-pan consciousness exhibited in their work. Judging by this work it is not too much to say that all but a few present-day painters have become so polluted by the civic consciousness that they either do not care for or understand anything but civic stuff. The Royal Academy exhibition is a riot of the civic mind and a thing to be discussed by, and to amuse, vacuous crumpets. It contains a collection of specimens of painting as the Jermyn Street Museum does specimens of geology; and in the best and rarest examples we find attempts to idealise the common and the unclean from a civic gin bottle to a civic gin bibber. Even those paintings that reveal an effort to capture a fragment of the Cosmos have got the civic twist; they are clearly the product of artists who work without joy, and whose minds are stricken with palsy and famine. But the Royal Academy is not alone in this particular. I was strongly struck by the same fact at the Albert Hall where I went for further information concerning it. I found that the exhibition of the Allied Artists' Association was merely a trough of civic pigment in which painters had been busy making presentments of citizens, shells, streets, and so on. In order to satisfy my curiosity as to the working of the civic curse I skipped the interesting preliminaries and came to the notable "arrange-

ments" right away. First I went to Alfred A. Wolmark's "Decorative Arrangement," in which the painter's object was clearly a search for design and movement in colour. What struck me most was the apparent ease with which the painter obtained his effects; he can do anything with his materials. In this picture he has set the blues and greens and yellows expanding in all directions, yet held together by a cleverly designed frame; and he has demonstrated his tremendous feeling for quality of colour. Yet in spite of his evident power to go beyond the local and attain the universal he has not done so. The painter's love of the use of the human body for obtaining movement has prevailed over the artist's power to do without it. Why does not Mr. Wolmark discard ancient symbols and unveil new ones with his mastery of colour? Then I went to the three studies by Clarence E. King, a new-comer with extraordinary gifts. And it was depressing to me to find that this painter, who but a few months ago suddenly emerged into the world of painting without any previous training, and with the sensibilities of the mind of the artist at the highest, and who by so doing had utterly shattered the case for the Art School, had suddenly been touched by the civic curse as by a blight. In "The Valley" one could see that Mr. King had been impressed by the eternal theme of Love; but when he set to work to create a form to externalise his vision the law of every-day association had interposed. Association placed two figures in a poetic valley; mountains and clouds like great tongues of crimson fire to close it in; a river of cobalt blue to cleave the mountains; golden banks to embrace the river, and tall grasses passionate with scarlet asphodels to leap from the earth, forming fairy rings; and mystic trees with dark green leaves that sought each other like fingers, to spear the heart of luminous space. With his tremendous power of imagination and feeling for colour Mr. King should try to leave the world of conventional forms for a dream world of his own. If he desires to express Love then let him create new symbols. And then I went to Mr. Phelan Gibb's pictures. The same questions arose. Why does not Mr. Gibb with his immense ability create new symbols? His attempt to create form by extemporising on the female figure as in his "Huit Nus" leads nowhere. Mr. Gibb cannot change women into anything but women; it is impossible to create what already exists; re-modelling or re-creating is not creation. I have said so repeatedly. Surely Mr. Gibb is aware of this, for in his "Etude Gothique" he has simply banished the world of civic phenomena and created a Gothic symbol which has doubtless caused fossilised art journalists to explode like squibs. These three painters then, are capable of entering the widest universe and giving us something new, something the like of which we have never seen, something in the form of new symbols of eternal things for which we are all waiting.

Civics has also called forth the civic art-taster. Curious things are said by this crawling phenomenon. The "New Age" possesses a specimen, and I cannot do better than allow him to exhibit his own mind in working. His name is A. M. (Andy McTreacle) Ludovici. He is on the subject of "The London Salon," and he starts off with the heart-breaking announcement that everyone is not equipped to write a novel, and this because everyone does not have experiences. He follows this with the feebly sarcastic remark: "Let us enter this atmosphere (Allied Artists' Association) in which everybody's experience becomes of value; in which everybody, in fact, can experience things worth experiencing." So everybody does have experience and therefore everybody can write novels or paint pictures. McTreacle then argues that "simplicity" and "duty" should be the guiding principles of artists. He has learnt this "down the Exhibition Road, at the South Kensington Art School." And he assumes that if the Free Picture persons at the Albert Hall are not simple and dutiful it is because they are permitted freedom. "Really this is a foolish age!" he exclaims. Yes it is the New Age. Next on the way to the Albert Hall McTreacle passes one of Mr. Joseph Fels' land allotments run to seed, and he at once argues from Covent Garden produce to paintings. Having got the stink of the weeds in his nostrils he is in right mood for appreciating the picture show, and one follows him breathlessly, expecting him

to make vegetable soup of the whole thing. But no, his courage fails him, and McTreacle drops on his knees and begins to whine appreciation in a bastard mixture of languages. Says McTreacle, "perhaps it were best for all concerned not to be too particular about mentioning names this time." And thereupon he lets loose a column of sheer claptrap and foolishness which even prostituted profit-seeking journals might reasonably hesitate to print. Here is a sample or two. "Jean D. McIntyre is a serious, hearty painter." "Mervyn Lawrence is 'habile'." "Charles Ginner deserves notice as an honest, upright painter," and so on and so on and so on. McTreacle next finds his way to the Royal College of Art, where his theory that artists should be turned out as machine-made and offensively efficient as the Militia, has full play. Here are some of his soarings: "By far the rarest and most beautiful things are those which result from long and severe schooling." "We have lost the daring of the skilled artisan who dares to cut, pare, chisel, melt, mould, or otherwise fashion raw material." McTreacle has discovered that the process of moulding genius and stone is the same thing. He continues: "One of the chief joys experienced on entering the Royal College of Art, South Kensington, was the feeling that I was about to witness the work of a real school. . . . Once inside the galleries I was conscious of being at least in an atmosphere of orderly, well-trained scholars. The walls were crisp and bright with clear definite unmistakable lines, drawn with sure will-controlled hands, and guided by knowing brains. Here was the exhilarating performance of people who were not certain to botch everything they touched." After the booming of the School comes the naming of the scholars in the manner already described. The Editor of the "New Age" (writing as R. H. C.) recently presented a balance-sheet showing a year's deficit of over £1000. I do not say that the "New Age" or its reactionary prop is out to increase its circulation at any cost. But if uncharitable persons take a different view the "New Age" will be alone to blame.

I omitted to add a note in the last issue on the misuse of the the word Religion. An article in the "Times" of July 17th informs us that we are entering upon an exceptionally religious age. Also that "Forms of religion change." One man finds his religion in love, another in science, another in art. And the drama has begun once more to express a new religion. Here religion should be Faith. There is only one Religion, but many forms of faith. To be correct we should speak of a Faith drama or the Faith drama, not of a drama of religion. Art, Drama and Religion are one and the same thing.

HUNTLY CARTER.

## Aurel.

IN answer to the protest of a man-critic: "When will our lady-authors understand that this problem of marriage and love, round which the whole life of women turns, is not the pivot of literature?" Aurel, woman-author of "La Semaine d'Amour" ("Mercure de France") retorts: "No, certainly no; this problem is nothing, almost nothing, indeed it is only the very pivot of all life (*il touche seulement le centre de la vie*), so, this being her opinion, she chooses it deliberately for the pivot of her intellectual speculations.

Many a book has now come into the world bearing Aurel's signature<sup>1</sup>, and each one is more occupied than the foregoing with this question of the relationship between man and woman, and, especially, husband and wife, for Aurel is a champion of marriage and, somewhat after Mr. G. K. Chesterton's temper—with this difference that instead of "making it as plain as a pike-staff" she likes to involve the simplest thing in mystery—she is always rehabilitating the normal. Like a child with a box of bricks the result of the construction is not very surprising but the way she sets about it is most entertaining to watch.

Her literary career so far has been mainly after this fashion of her's of making original sport with commonplaces, for her first books were entirely purposeless whereas they have now become didactic. One forgave the Aurel of the old days (I speak of half a dozen years ago) for her word-chaos because of the

<sup>1</sup> Works by Aurel; Sans Halte; Les Jeux de la Flamme; Jean Lorrain sur la Riviera; Comment les Femmes deviennent écrivains; Pour en finir avec l'Amant; Voici la femme; Jean Dolent; Jean Dolent et la Femme; Le Couple; La Semaine d'Amour.

disinterested, purely literary gift of effusion which set it flowing. Her writings were often a tangled maze which commanded respect because of their sincerity. In those days Aurel wrote a language of her own which others had great difficulty in translating, yet,—perhaps for this reason—one felt she was “worth while.” Here and there were more luminous, more transparent passages of thought but, though you welcomed these glades in the jungle of her production, you returned to the wilderness without any more idea of criticising it than of criticising the jungle itself. There it was, to be taken or left, a fact, like any other natural phenomenon. Gradually, however, from book to book the riddle unfolds itself, and, proportionately, exposes itself to criticism. Her first books have been like those gauzy curtains they hang before the stage in Wagnerian opera through which you divine forms; then the curtain rises on a dusky scene; there follows daylight, and all is clear. For the time being, as far as this hermetic Aurel is concerned, we have only reached the very first pale moments of sunrise for—as I am glad to find—much in her last book is still occult. Let me say at once that I am sure Aurel has no desire whatever to mystify. Where she is involved and obscure she is so just from the same cause as in other moments she is simple and clear. She understands herself. The tongue in which she expresses herself is hers while she uses it, and perhaps the sense in which she uses it is as difficult and as dangerous to read as are thoughts on a silent face. She realises this (and if she did not are the critics not there to remind her?) sufficiently to warn her readers that “she does not always use words in their etymological sense but sometimes, as do the illiterate (*le peuple*), in their *apparent* sense.” The dictionary, she says, will not help us. Nor will it to elucidate certain forms of syntax of her invention, or certain forms of most intricate thought, all of which peculiarities have gained her many enemies. The English reader cannot blame her for these peculiarities because he has no right to do so; secondly, he will feel that it is not the consequence of any desire to startle—in which case it would be unpardonable—but that it is natural to her. She thinks that this kind of emphasis best expresses the moment by bringing it before the eyes: *la visionnant*—a word of her own, and, comparatively, an easy one to understand. (Aurel, extremely quick-witted herself, would wish for second-sight in her readers). She thinks that in this way “she marks an era and a style.” She thinks that “this form of emphasis is characteristic of woman.” So, at least, she speaks in her last book. I do not like explanations. I fear they are a bad sign. He who has faith in himself does not explain himself. Aurel was nearer sincerity in her earlier books, and when, in the preface to “*Les Jeux de la Flamme*,” she wrote: “*J’ai pu donner de ma franchise; cela ne m’a pas éclairée. Il faudrait livrer son dernier soupir pour ne pas garder de mystère.*” Here she was more innocent; she wrote before the critics came along; she did not realise that she was enigmatic not from what she kept in reserve only but also from what she revealed. “*Je n’ai pas cru à la clarté, ou je l’ai cru, du moins, la plus courte des qualités. . . . L’évidence n’est que ténèbres.*” She wrote innocently in those days and that innocence could not fail to captivate if only by reason of its ingenuousness.

Having fumbled over the many knots presented by her peculiar manner, one finds in Aurel a writer of the moralist order who is a little intoxicated with words and, as is often the case with the intoxicated, among much which is rambling and unintelligible there is much wisdom, wit and originality. Personally I will wade through many a massive page and refrain from quarrelling over debatable passages for that pathetic story about the little pink chemise in “*Le Couple*.” The moral of it is that women never capture men with the baits they use for the purpose. Here is a rough synopsis of it (the title is: “An excellent

plan for single enjoyment.”): “Having decided that white should robe death and pink life, Lilo is occupied in tacking together something pink and transparent through which her busy fingers gleam like birds caught in the dawn. On hearing a rap at the door she quickly hides her work, drawing it only half out of the work-basket when alone again so as to be the readier to hide it at the next interruption. While stitching she thinks: after a few months of intense emotion this couple [“*ces époux qui ont de l’à propos*,” are Aurel’s very words] has entered into mutual possession. But Lilo believes in other revels [you would think you were reading a sensualist—there is no idealist like Aurel or one as inclined for platonic love] where beauty rather than love—“that too gentle simpleton”—would bring on ecstasy. So, patiently, she tries on the pink gauze in which some day she may venture to be nude. When? she knows not. But she relies on an approaching journey, for change of country means change of habits. [Do not stop to muse; always proceed with Aurel.] The great thing is to be ready with a garment which will not alter her and be almost chaste. It has to be soft like a cloud and refrain from emphasising the form, sufficiently full and ample so that in its midst the human observes, while packing, that *lingeries* do not foresee the essential, and that their monotonous white is unsuited to bridal trousseaus. At last comes the departure for the [also] pink city of Taormina. The first stage is, as it happens, sleepy Avignon. During a momentary absence of Jean’s she draws forth the pink gauze. But what does he say there behind the door? “Dear, it is hot, very hot, *pourquoi ne serions nous pas nus?*” “Oh,” thinks she, “is it a question of climate?” So she puts the pink gauze back in the box and dons her usual garment not wishing to yield to the temperature what love had not claimed alone, asking herself whether there are moments deserving our entire sincerity, whether there is love deserving nudity?

The temptation to bathe in a mountain stream despite the absence of a bathing costume is also resisted, and so, stage after stage, the journey comes to an end without that pink gauze ever having been unfolded. On the return home it finds a use as a window-blind.

Of course I realise the many opportunities the relation of this little tragedy affords for facetiousness, and—there can be no doubt of it—Aurel does too. All she writes consists of mingled candour and reticencies, the bold confession of her acute, complex and modest sensibility. She would interchange reason and love and love and reason, a practical impossibility, but a theory giving boundless opportunities for literary development.

In “*La Semaine d’Amour*” she suggests friendship as the solution to the little problems the experience with the pink chemise instances and to the semi-intellectual, too conscious hypersensibility described in her previous books. It is not a discovery of any general value or interest but the occasion it gives to Aurel to reveal her own peculiar literary and psychological personality fully justifies a futile attempt to propose a general specific for so particular a state as is that of matrimony. The prescription is summed up in the following passage:

“It consists, in a word, in provoking the union of the secret intimacy between husband and wife through complete revelation of the soul, the free and gracious yielding to their intradermic love, instead of the whining, laborious embrace which only allies the epidermic bodies.”

This recipe for conjugal bliss suggests several obvious comments: that it has been discovered before; that it is too often put into practice to deserve putting into theory; that, though it cannot but be agreed with, friendship no more than love can be mechanically called forth into action, however much our reason may favour it; that friendship is not necessarily a substitute for love but easily its corollary; that every



## Correspondence.

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

### SALVATIONISM.

To the Editor of THE NEW FREEWOMAN.

MADAM,

The writer of a letter in the last issue of THE NEW FREEWOMAN calls attention to the sameness of the methods and sentiments of the Suffragettes and Salvationists. There is a similarity, and the Suffragettes seem to be going from bad to worse. Christabel Pankhurst's recent article in their paper might well have been written for the "War Cry," and Sylvia Pankhurst's detailed accounts of emotion and self-inflicted suffering is quite on the level of the Salvationist.

Your correspondent is not much better than either. The description of The Honest Farmer, etc., might be taken for a text.

I have my doubts of the honesty of any employer, and although I have lived all my youth in the country I do not remember having seen the jollity and freedom that our friend believes to exist. I have several times sought employment in the country with the hopes of improving my health and becoming the buxom lass one hears so much of.

I found that working for a wage is as bad in the country as in the town, and I found that the healthy, happy women were only in evidence on the golf links and tennis courts, while amongst the workers I came across ailing housewives, flabby anæmic servant girls, women working in the fields who were bent almost to deformity, and red-faced washerwomen whose legs almost broke down under them with varicose veins. I made up my mind that better conditions are not to be found in the country.

The healthy girl is the girl who can find work other than domestic service. The unhealthy one, whose ill-health makes her slow, takes domestic service because she does not require the speed that she did in the factory. Another thing which the advocates of domestic service seem to be ignorant of is that the domestic servant's outfit is beyond the means of the average East-end girl, and an exacting reference is usually needed. If she has not these means, it seems quite probable that she would choose to disappear rather than starve.

Another Salvationist suggestion is that hospitals must be opened for the tuberculous and cripples. Such a suggestion is thoughtless and callous. The people so inflicted do everything to keep out of these institutions. I have known them to starve and die for want of treatment rather than sink their last spark of individuality in these places.

The atmosphere of the general and fever hospitals is very different from those institutions for incurables. In the former, there is an attempt to study the temperament of the patient, and there is nearly always a cheerful outlook and hope of recovery. The hospital is a happy place when compared with the other institutions. To the inmates of these homes the place is merely a shelter, such as prison becomes to the criminal who has been several times convicted. The attendants seem as warders, the treatment feels as discipline, and the occupations become tasks.

Homes and sanatoriums are failures. These cases could be treated while at liberty under a better system. It is better to make rebels of people than willing domestic servants, and as well to end your days in prison as in an institution for incurable disease.

One thing about the Suffrage movement is hopeful. That is, some may become Freewomen.

R. G.

### THE ETIQUETTE OF DYING.

To the Editor of THE NEW FREEWOMAN.

MADAM,

I was interested in Mr. R. W. Kauffmann's article on this subject. I venture to think it was however devitalised by a certain doctrinaire opinion. Such a spirit is natural when a writer has seen death only under exceptional conditions—as in war—and not frequently, and as a simple matter of inevitable change. I am grateful to Mr. Kauffmann, however, because having seen many deaths in my years of work as a trained nurse, I have often in consequence felt that too little importance is attached to the manner of our dying. The "best deaths"—and in these I include what may be a long process of dying—I have watched, have been among good living Roman Catholics; it is well known that from childhood as much attention is paid to the subject of "making a good death" in that Church as to the question of living well. Here we may note one of the greatest (and possibly sole explanation) of the uses of dogma. For to watch a selfish person die is very hard and very sad. I cannot lay too much stress on the fact, one which many can confirm, that death is seldom QUIET; the petty things of life seem with a few exceptions to surge up as the most powerful factors; prices of commodities; old quarrels among the poor; anxiety about little things among the better classes. I am not a nurse now, but I look back on a varied experience as to class and of type of mind. In view of our entire ignorance of any complete Whole, may we not safely recall from Thomas Hardy's "Dynasts" the dying soldier's song with its refrain, "Good-bye, foolish life, good-bye"?  
J. WILSON.

### — Note. —

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Letters, &c., intended for the Editor should be personally addressed: Ainsdale, England.

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