

**ELLIS  
HAVELOCK**

THE TASK OF  
SOCIAL  
HYGIENE

**Havelock Ellis**  
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*The Task of Social Hygiene:*

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# **Havelock Ellis**

## **The Task of Social Hygiene**

### **PREFACE**

The study of social hygiene means the study of those things which concern the welfare of human beings living in societies. There can, therefore, be no study more widely important or more generally interesting. I fear, however, that by many persons social hygiene is vaguely regarded either as a mere extension of sanitary science, or else as an effort to set up an intolerable bureaucracy to oversee every action of our lives, and perhaps even to breed us as cattle are bred.

That is certainly not the point of view from which this book has been written. Plato and Rabelais, Campanella and More, have been among those who announced the principles of social hygiene here set forth. There must be a social order, all these great pioneers recognized, but the health of society, like the health of the body, is marked by expansion as much as by restriction, and, the striving for order is only justified because without order there can be no freedom. If it were not the mission of social hygiene to bring a new joy and a new freedom into life I should not have concerned myself with the writing of this book.

When we thus contemplate the process of social hygiene,

we are no longer in danger of looking upon it as an artificial interference with Nature. It is in the Book of Nature, as Campanella put it, that the laws of life and of government are to be read. Or, as Quesnel said two centuries ago, more precisely for our present purpose, "Nature is universal hygiene." All animals are scrupulous in hygiene; the elaboration of hygiene moves *pari passu* with the rank of a species in intelligence. Even the cockroach, which lives on what we call filth, spends the greater part of its time in the cultivation of personal cleanliness. And all social hygiene, in its fullest sense, is but an increasingly complex and extended method of purification—the purification of the conditions of life by sound legislation, the purification of our own minds by better knowledge, the purification of our hearts by a growing sense of responsibility, the purification of the race itself by an enlightened eugenics, consciously aiding Nature in her manifest effort to embody new ideals of life. It was not Man, but Nature, who realized the daring and splendid idea—risky as it was—of placing the higher anthropoids on their hind limbs and so liberating their fore-limbs in the service of their nimble and aspiring brains. We may humbly follow in the same path, liberating latent forces of life and suppressing those which no longer serve the present ends of life. For, as Shakespeare said, when in *The Winter's Tale* he set forth a luminous philosophy of social hygiene and applied it to eugenics,

"Nature is made better by no mean

But Nature makes that mean ...

This is an art

Which does mend Nature, change it rather, but  
The art itself is Nature."

In whatever way it may be understood, however, social hygiene is now very much to the front of people's minds. The present volume, I wish to make clear, has not been hastily written to meet any real or supposed demand. It has slowly grown during a period of nearly twenty-five years, and it expresses an attitude which is implicit or explicit in the whole of my work. By some readers, doubtless, it will be seen to constitute an extension in various directions of the arguments developed in the larger work on "Sex in Relation to Society," which is the final volume of my *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. The book I now bring forward may, however, be more properly regarded as a presentation of the wider scheme of social reform out of which the more special sex studies have developed. We are faced to-day by the need for vast and complex changes in social organization. In these changes the welfare of individuals and the welfare of communities are alike concerned. Moreover, they are matters which are not confined to the affairs of this nation or of that nation, but of the whole family of nations participating in the fraternity of modern progress.

The word "progress," indeed, which falls so easily from our lips is not a word which any serious writer should use without precaution. The conception of "progress" is a useful conception in so far as it binds together those who are working for common

ends, and stimulates that perpetual slight movement in which life consists. But there is no general progress in Nature, nor any unqualified progress; that is to say, that there is no progress for all groups along the line, and that even those groups which progress pay the price of their progress. It was so even when our anthropoid ancestors rose to the erect position; that was "progress," and it gained us the use of hands. But it lost us our tails, and much else that is more regrettable than we are always able to realize. There is no general and ever-increasing evolution towards perfection. "Existence is realized in its perfection under whatever aspect it is manifested," says Jules de Gaultier. Or, as Whitman put it, "There will never be any more perfection than there is now." We cannot expect an increased power of growth and realization in existence, as a whole, leading to any general perfection; we can only expect to see the triumph of individuals, or of groups of individuals, carrying out their own conceptions along special lines, every perfection so attained involving, on its reverse side, the acquirement of an imperfection. It is in this sense, and in this sense only, that progress is possible. We need not fear that we shall ever achieve the stagnant immobility of a general perfection.

The problems of progress we are here concerned with are such as the civilized world, as represented by some of its foremost individuals or groups of individuals, is just now waking up to grapple with. No doubt other problems might be added, and the addition give a greater semblance of completion to this

book. I have selected those which seem to me very essential, very fundamental. The questions of social hygiene, as here understood, go to the heart of life. It is the task of this hygiene not only to make sewers, but to re-make love, and to do both in the same large spirit of human fellowship, to ensure finer individual development and a larger social organization. At the one end social hygiene may be regarded as simply the extension of an elementary sanitary code; at the other end it seems to some to have in it the glorious freedom of a new religion. The majority of people, probably, will be content to admit that we have here a scheme of serious social reform which every man and woman will soon be called upon to take some share in.

*Havelock Ellis.*

# I

## INTRODUCTION

The Aim of Social Hygiene—Social Reform—The Rise of Social Reform out of English Industrialism—The Four Stages of Social Reform—(1) The Stage of Sanitation—(2) Factory Legislation—(3) The Extension of the Scope of Education—(4) Puericulture—The Scientific Evolution corresponding to these Stages—Social Reform only Touched the Conditions of Life—Yet Social Reform Remains highly Necessary—The Question of Infantile Mortality and the Quality of the Race—The Better Organization of Life Involved by Social Hygiene—Its Insistence on the Quality rather than on the Conditions of Life—The Control of Reproduction—The Fall of the Birth-rate in Relation to the Quality of the Population—The Rejuvenation of a Society—The Influence of Culture and Refinement on a Race—Eugenics—The Regeneration of the Race—The Problem of Feeble-Mindedness—The Methods of Eugenics—Some of the Problems which Face us.

Social Hygiene, as it will be here understood, may be said to be a development, and even a transformation, of what was formerly known as Social Reform. In that transformation it has undergone two fundamental changes. In the first place, it is no

longer merely an attempt to deal with the conditions under which life is lived, seeking to treat bad conditions as they occur, without going to their source, but it aims at prevention. It ceases to be simply a reforming of forms, and approaches in a comprehensive manner not only the conditions of life, but life itself. In the second place, its method is no longer haphazard, but organized and systematic, being based on a growing knowledge of those biological sciences which were scarcely in their infancy when the era of social reform began. Thus social hygiene is at once more radical and more scientific than the old conception of social reform. It is the inevitable method by which at a certain stage civilization is compelled to continue its own course, and to preserve, perhaps to elevate, the race.

The era of social reform followed on the rise of modern industrialism, and, no doubt largely on this account, although an international movement, it first became definite and self-conscious in England. There were perhaps other reasons why it should have been in the first place specially prominent in England. When at the end of the seventeenth century, Muralt, a highly intelligent Swiss gentleman, visited England, and wrote his by no means unsympathetic *Lettres sur les Anglais*, he was struck by a curious contradiction in the English character. They are a good-natured people, he observed, very rich, so well-nourished that sometimes they die of obesity, and they detest cruelty so much that by royal proclamation it is ordained that the fish and the ducks of the ponds should be duly and properly

fed. Yet he found that this good-natured, rich, cruelty-hating nation systematically allowed the prisoners in their gaols to die of starvation. "The great cruelty of the English," Muralt remarks, "lies in permitting evil rather than in doing it." <sup>1</sup> The root of the apparent contradiction lay clearly in a somewhat excessive independence and devotion to liberty. We give a man full liberty, they seem to have said, to work, to become rich, to grow fat. But if he will not work, let him starve. In that point of view there were involved certain fallacies, which became clearer during the course of social evolution.

It was obvious, indeed, that such an attitude, while highly favourable to individual vigour and independence, and not incompatible with fairly healthy social life under the conditions which prevailed at the time, became disastrous in the era of industrialism. The conditions of industrial life tore up the individual from the roots by which he normally received strength, and crowded the workers together in masses, thus generating a confusion which no individual activity could grapple with. So it was that the very spirit which, under the earlier conditions, made for good now made for evil. To stand by and applaud the efforts of the individual who was perhaps slowly sinking deeper and deeper into a miry slough of degradation began to seem an even diabolical attitude. The maxim of *laissez-faire*, which had once stood for the whole unfettered action of natural activities in life, began to be viewed with horror and contempt. It was realized that

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<sup>1</sup> Muralt, *Lettres sur les Anglais*. Lettre V.

there must be an intelligent superintendence of social conditions, humane regulation, systematic organization. The very intensity of the evils which the English spirit produced led to a reaction by which that spirit, while doubtless remaining the same at heart, took on a different form, and manifested its energy in a new direction.

The modern industrial era, replacing domestic industry by collective work carried out by "hands" in factories, began in the eighteenth century. The era of social reform was delayed until the second quarter of the nineteenth century. It has proceeded by four successively progressive stages, each stage supplementing, rather than supplanting, the stage that preceded it. In 1842 Sir Edwin Chadwick wrote an official Report on the *Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain*, in which was clearly presented for the first time a vivid, comprehensive, and authoritative picture of the incredibly filthy conditions under which the English labouring classes lived. The times were ripe for this Report. It attracted public attention, and exerted an important influence. Its appearance marks the first stage of social reform, which was mainly a sanitary effort to clear away the gross filth from our cities, to look after the cleansing, lighting, and policing of the streets, to create a drainage system, to improve dwellings, and in these ways to combat disease and to lower the very high death-rate.

At an early stage, however, it began to be seen that this process of sanitation, necessary as it had become, was far too

crude and elementary to achieve the ends sought. It was not enough to improve the streets, or even to regulate the building of dwellings. It was clearly necessary to regulate also the conditions of work of the people who lived in those streets and dwellings. Thus it was that the scheme of factory legislation was initiated. Rules were made as to the hours of labour, more especially as regards women and children, for whom, moreover, certain specially dangerous or unhealthy occupations were forbidden, and an increasingly large number of avocations were brought under Government inspection. This second stage of social reform encountered a much more strenuous opposition than the first stage. The regulation of the order and cleanliness of the streets was obviously necessary, and it had indeed been more or less enforced even in medieval times; <sup>2</sup> but the regulation of the conditions of work in the interests of the worker was a more

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<sup>2</sup> In the reign of Richard II (1388) an Act was passed for "the punishment of those which cause corruption near a city or great town to corrupt the air." A century later (in Henry VII's time) an Act was passed to prevent butchers killing beasts in walled towns, the preamble to this Act declaring that no noble town in Christendom should contain slaughter-houses lest sickness be thus engendered. In Charles II's time, after the great fire of London, the law provided for the better paving and cleansing of the streets and sewers. It was, however, in Italy, as Weyl points out (*Geschichte der Sozialen Hygiene im Mittelalter*, at a meeting of the Gesellschaft für Soziale Medizin, May 25, 1905), that the modern movement of organized sanitation began. In the thirteenth century the great Italian cities (like Florence and Pistoja) possessed *Codici Sanitarii*; but they were not carried out, and when the Black Death reached Florence in 1348, it found the city altogether unprepared. It was Venice which, in the same year, first initiated vigorous State sanitation. Disinfection was first ordained by Gian Visconti, in Milan, in 1399. The first quarantine station of which we hear was established in Venice in 1403.

novel proceeding, and it appeared to clash both with the interests of the employers and the ancient principles of English freedom and independence, behind which the employers consequently sheltered themselves. The early attempts to legislate on these lines were thus fruitless. It was not until a distinguished aristocratic philanthropist of great influence, the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, took up the question, that factory legislation began to be accepted. It continues to develop even to-day, ever enlarging the sphere of its action, and now meeting with no opposition. But, in England, at all events, its acceptance marks a memorable stage in the growth of the national spirit. It was no longer easy and natural for the Englishmen to look on at suffering without interference. It began to be recognized that it was perfectly legitimate, and even necessary, to put a curb on the freedom and independence which involved suffering to others.

But as the era of factory legislation became established, a further advance was seen to be necessary. Factory legislation had forbidden the child to work. But the duty of the community towards the child, the citizen of the future, was evidently by no means covered by this purely negative step. The child must be prepared to take his future part in life, in the first place by education. The nationalization of education in England dates from 1870. But during the subsequent half century "education" has come to mean much more than mere instruction; it now covers a certain amount of provision for meals when necessary, the enforcement of cleanliness, the care of defective conditions,

inborn or acquired, with special treatment for mentally defective children, an ever-increasing amount of medical inspection and supervision, while it is beginning to include arrangements for placing the child in work suited to his capacities when he leaves school.

During the past ten years the movement of social reform has entered a fourth stage. The care of the child during his school-days was seen to be insufficient; it began too late, when probably the child's fate for life was already decided. It was necessary to push the process further back, to birth and even to the stage before birth, by directing social care to the infant, and by taking thought of the mother. This consideration has led to a whole series of highly important and fruitful measures which are only beginning to develop, although they have already proved very beneficial. The immediate notification to the authorities of a child's birth, and the institution of Health Visitors to ascertain what is being done for the infant's well-being, and to aid the mother with advice, have certainly been a large factor in the recent reduction in the infantile death-rate in England.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The rate of infant mortality in England and Wales has decreased from 149 per 1000 births in 1871-80 to 127 per 1000 births in 1910. In reference to this remarkable fall which has taken place *pari passu* with the fall in the birth-rate, Newsholme, the medical officer to the Local Government Board, writes: "There can be no reasonable doubt that much of the reduction has been caused by that 'concentration' on the mother and the child which has been a striking feature of the last few years. Had the experience of 1896-1900 held good there would have been 45,120 more deaths of infants in 1910 than actually occurred." In some parts of the country, however, where the women go out to work in factories (as in Lancashire and parts of Staffordshire) the infantile

The care of the infant has indeed now become a new applied science, the science of puericulture. Professor Budin of Paris may fairly be regarded as the founder of puericulture by the establishment in Paris, in 1892, of Infant Consultations, to which mothers were encouraged to bring their babies to be weighed and examined, any necessary advice being given regarding the care of the baby. The mothers are persuaded to suckle their infants if possible, and if their own health permits. For the cases in which suckling is undesirable or impossible, Budin established Milk Depôts, where pure milk is supplied at a low price or freely. Infant Consultations and Milk Depôts are now becoming common everywhere. A little later than Budin, another distinguished French physician, Pinard, carried puericulture a step further back, but a very important step, by initiating a movement for the care of the pregnant woman. Pinard and his pupils have shown by a number of detailed investigations that the children born to working mothers who rest during the last three months of pregnancy, are to a marked extent larger and finer than the children of those mothers who enjoy no such period of rest, even though the mothers themselves may be equally robust and healthy in both cases. Moreover, it is found that premature birth, one of the commonest accidents of modern life, tends to be prevented by such rest. The children of mothers who rest enjoy on the average three weeks longer development in the womb than the children of the mothers who do not rest, and this prolonged

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mortality remains very high.

ante-natal development cannot fail to be a benefit for the whole of the child's subsequent life. The movement started by Pinard, though strictly a continuation of the great movement for the improvement of the conditions of life, takes us as far back as we are able to go on these lines, and has in it the promise of an immense benefit to human efficiency.

In connection with the movement of puericulture initiated by Budin and Pinard must be mentioned the institution of Schools for Mothers, for it is closely associated with the aims of puericulture. The School for Mothers arose in Belgium, a little later than the activities of Budin and Pinard commenced. About 1900 a young Socialist doctor of Ghent, Dr. Miele, started the first school of this kind, with girls of from twelve to sixteen years of age as students and assistants. The School eventually included as many as twelve different services, among these being dispensaries for mothers, a mothers' friendly society, milk depôts both for babies and nursing mothers, health talks to mothers with demonstrations, courses on puericulture (including anatomy, physiology, preparation of foods, weighing, etc.) to girls between fourteen and eighteen, who afterwards become eligible for appointment as paid assistants. <sup>4</sup> In 1907 Schools for Mothers were introduced into England, at first under the auspices of Dr. Sykes, Medical Officer of Health for St. Pancras, London. Such Schools are now spreading everywhere. In the end they will

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<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Bertrand Russell, "The Ghent School for Mothers," *Nineteenth Century*, December, 1906.

probably be considered necessary centres for any national system of puericulture. Every girl at the end of her school life should be expected to pass through a certain course of training at a School for Mothers. It would be the technical school for the working-class mother, while such a course would be invaluable for any girl, whatever her social class, even if she is never called to be a mother herself or to have the care of children.

The great movement of social reform during the nineteenth century, we thus see, has moved in four stages, each of which has reinforced rather than replaced that which went before: (1) the effort to cleanse the gross filth of cities and to remedy obvious disorder by systematic attention to scavenging, drainage, the supply of water and of artificial light, as well as by improved policing; (2) the great system of factory legislation for regulating the conditions of work, and to some extent restraining the work of women and of children; (3) the introduction of national systems of education, and the gradual extension of the idea of education to cover far more than mere instruction; and (4), most fundamental of all and last to appear, the effort to guard the child before the school age, even at birth, even before birth, by bestowing due care on the future mother.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> It is scarcely necessary to say that other classifications of social reform on its more hygienic side may be put forward. Thus W.H. Allen, looking more narrowly at the sanitary side of the matter, but without confining his consideration to the nineteenth century, finds that there are always seven stages: (1) that of racial tutelage, when sanitation becomes conscious and receives the sanction of law; (2) the introduction of sanitary comfort, well-paved streets, public sewers, extensive

It may be pointed out that this movement of practical social reform has been accompanied, stimulated, and guided by a corresponding movement in the sciences which in their application are indispensable to the progress of civilized social reform. There has been a process of mutual action and reaction between science and practice. The social movement has stimulated the development of abstract science, and the new progress in science has enabled further advances to be made in social practice. The era of expansion in sanitation was the era of development in chemistry and physics, which alone enabled a sound system of sanitation to be developed. The fight against disease would have been impossible but for bacteriology. The new care for human life, and for the protection of its source, is associated with fresh developments of biological science. Sociological observations and speculation, including economics, are intimately connected with the efforts of social reform to attain a broad, sound, and truly democratic basis. <sup>6</sup>

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waterworks; (3) the period of commercial sanitation, when the mercantile classes insist upon such measures as quarantine and street-cleaning to check the immense ravages of epidemics; (4) the introduction of legislation against nuisances and the tendency to extend the definition of nuisance, which for Bracton, in the fourteenth century, meant an obstruction, and for Blackstone, in the eighteenth, included things otherwise obnoxious, such as offensive trades and foul watercourses; (5) the stage of precaution against the dangers incidental to the slums that are fostered by modern conditions of industry; (6) the stage of philanthropy, erecting hospitals, model tenements, schools, etc.; (7) the stage of socialistic sanitation, when the community as a whole actively seeks its own sanitary welfare, and devotes public funds to this end. (W.H. Allen, "Sanitation and Social Progress," *American Journal of Sociology*, March, 1903.)

<sup>6</sup> Dr. F. Bushee has pointed out ("Science and Social Progress," *Popular Science*

When we survey this movement as a whole, we have to recognize that it is exclusively concerned with the improvement of the conditions of life. It makes no attempt to influence either the quantity or the quality of life.<sup>7</sup> It may sometimes have been carried out with the assumption that to improve the conditions of life is, in some way or other, to improve the quality of life itself. But it accepted the stream of life as it found it, and while working to cleanse the banks of the stream it made no attempt to purify the stream itself.

It must, however, be remembered that the arguments which, especially nowadays, are brought against the social reform of

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*Monthly*, September, 1911) that there is a kind of related progression between science and practice in this matter: "The natural sciences developed first, because man was first interested in the conquest of nature, and the simpler physical laws could be grasped at an early period. This period brought an increase of wealth, but it was wasteful of human life. The desire to save life led the way to the study of biology. Knowledge of the physical environment and of life, however, did not prevent social disease from flourishing, and did not greatly improve the social condition of a large part of society. To overcome these defects the social sciences within recent years have been cultivated with great seriousness. Interest in the social sciences has had to wait for the enlarged sympathies and the sense of solidarity which has appeared with the growing interdependence of dense populations, and these conditions have been dependent upon the advance of the other sciences. With the cultivation of the social sciences, the chain of knowledge will be complete, at least so far as the needs which have already appeared are concerned. For each group of sciences will solve one or more of the great problems which man has encountered in the process of development. The physical sciences will solve the problems of environment, the biological sciences the problems of life, and the social sciences the problems of society."

<sup>7</sup> This exclusive pre-occupation with the improvement of the environment has been termed Euthenics by Mrs. Ellen H. Richards, who has written a book with this title, advocating euthenics in opposition to eugenics.

the condition of life, will not bear serious examination. It is said, for instance, or at all events implied, that we need bestow very little care on the conditions of life because such care can have no permanently beneficial effect on the race, since acquired characters, for the most part, are not transmitted to descendants. But to assume that social reform is unnecessary because it is not inherited is altogether absurd. The people who make this assumption would certainly not argue that it is useless for them to satisfy their own hunger and thirst, because their children will not thereby be safeguarded from experiencing hunger and thirst. Yet the needs which the movement of organized social reform seeks to satisfy are precisely on a level with, and indeed to some extent identical with, the needs of hunger and thirst. The impulse and the duty which move every civilized community to elaborate and gratify its own social needs to the utmost are altogether independent of the race, and would not cease to exist even in a community vowed to celibacy or the most absolute Neo-Malthusianism. Nor, again, must it be said that social reform destroys the beneficial results of natural selection.

Here, indeed, we encounter a disputed point, and it may be admitted that the precise data for absolute demonstration in one direction or the other cannot yet be found. Whenever human beings breed in reckless and unrestrained profusion—as is the case under some conditions before a free and self-conscious civilization is attained—there is an immense infantile mortality. It is claimed, on the one hand, that this is beneficial, and need

not be interfered with. The weak are killed off, it is said, and the strong survive; there is a process of natural survival of the fittest. That is true. But it is equally true, as has also been clearly seen on the other hand, that though the relatively strongest survive, their relative strength has been impaired by the very influences which have proved altogether fatal to their weaker brethren. There is an immense infantile mortality in Russia. Yet, notwithstanding any resulting "survival of the fittest," Russia is far more ravaged by disease than Norway, where infantile mortality is low. "A high infantile mortality," as George Carpenter, a great authority on the diseases of childhood, remarks, "denotes a far higher infantile deterioration rate"; or, as another doctor puts it, "the dead baby is next of kin to the diseased baby," The protection of the weak, so frequently condemned by some Neo-Darwinians, is thus in reality, as Goldscheid terms it, "the protection of the strong from degeneration."

There is, however, more to be said. Not only must an undue struggle with unfavourable conditions enfeeble the strong as well as kill the feeble; it also imposes an intolerable burden upon these enfeebled survivors. The process of destruction is not sudden, it is gradual. It is a long-drawn-out process. It involves the multiplication of the diseased, the maimed, the feeble-minded, of paupers and lunatics and criminals. Even natural selection thus includes the need for protecting the feeble, and so renders urgent the task of social reform, while the more thoroughly this task is carried out with the growth of civilization, the more stupendous

and overwhelming the task becomes.

It is thus that civilization, at a certain point in its course, renders inevitable the appearance of that wider and deeper organization of life which in the present volume we are concerned with under the name of Social Hygiene. That movement is far from being an abrupt or revolutionary manifestation in the ordinary progress of social growth. As we have seen, social reform during the past eighty years may be said to have proceeded in four successive stages, each of which has involved a nearer approach to the sources of life. The fourth stage, which in its beginnings dates only from the last years of the nineteenth century, takes us to the period before birth, and is concerned with the care of the child in the mother's womb. The next stage cannot fail to take us to the very source of life itself, lifting us beyond the task of purifying the conditions, and laying on us the further task of regulating the quantity and raising the quality of life at its very source. The duty of purifying, ordering, and consolidating the banks of the stream must still remain.<sup>8</sup> But when we are able to control the stream at its source we are able to some extent to prevent the contamination of that stream by

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<sup>8</sup> Not one of the four stages of social reform already summarized can be neglected. On the contrary, they all need to be still further consolidated in a completely national organization of health. I may perhaps refer to the little book on *The Nationalization of Health*, in which, many years ago, I foreshadowed this movement, as well as to the recent work of Professor Benjamin Moore on the same subject. The gigantic efforts of Germany, and later of England, to establish National Insurance systems, bear noble witness to the ardour with which these two countries, at all events, are moving towards the desired goal.

filth, and ensure that its muddy floods shall not sweep away the results of our laborious work on the banks. Our sense of social responsibility is developing into a sense of racial responsibility, and that development is expressed in the nature of the tasks of Social Hygiene which now lie before us.

It is the control of the reproduction of the race which renders possible the new conception of Social Hygiene. We have seen that the gradual process of social reform during the first three quarters of the nineteenth century, by successive stages of movement towards the sources of life, finally reached the moment of conception. The first result of reform at this point was that procreation became a deliberate act. Up till then the method of propagating the race was the same as that which savages have carried on during thousands of years, the chief difference being that whereas savages have frequently sought to compensate their recklessness by destroying their inferior offspring, we had accepted all the offspring, good, bad, and indifferent, produced by our indiscriminate recklessness, shielding ourselves by a false theology. Children "came," and their parents disclaimed all responsibility for their coming. The children were "sent by God," and if they all turned out to be idiots, the responsibility was God's. But when it became generally realized that it was possible to limit offspring without interfering with conjugal life a step of immense importance was achieved. It became clear to all that the Divine force works through us, and that we are not entitled to cast the burden of our evil actions on any Higher Power. Marriage

no longer fatally involved an endless procession of children who, in so far as they survived at all, were in a large number of cases doomed to disease, neglect, misery, and ignorance. The new Social Hygiene was for the first time rendered possible.

It was in France during the first half of the nineteenth century that the control of reproduction first began to become a social habit. In Sweden and in Denmark, the fall in the birth-rate, though it has been irregular, may be said to have begun in 1860. It was not until about the year 1876 that, in so far as we may judge by the arrest of the birth-rate, the movement began to spread to Europe generally. In England it is usual to associate this change with a famous prosecution which brought a knowledge of the means of preventing conception to the whole population of Great Britain. Undoubtedly this prosecution was an important factor in the movement, but we cannot doubt that, even if the prosecution had not taken place, the course of social progress must still have pursued the same course. It is noteworthy that it was about this same period, in various European countries, that the tide turned, and the excessively high birth-rate began to fall. <sup>9</sup> Recklessness

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<sup>9</sup> In some countries, however, the decline, although traceable about 1876, only began to be pronounced somewhat later, in Austria in 1883, in the German Empire, Hungary and Italy in 1885, and in Prussia in 1886. Most of these countries, though late in following the modern movement of civilization initiated by France, are rapidly making their way in the same direction. Thus the birth-rate in Berlin is already as low as that of Paris ten years ago, although the French decline began at a very early period. In Norway, again, the decline was not marked until 1900, but the birth-rate has nevertheless already fallen as low as that of Sweden, where the fall began very much earlier.

was giving place to foresight and self-control. Such foresight and self-control are of the essence of civilization. <sup>10</sup>

It cannot be disputed that the transformation by which the propagation of the race became deliberate and voluntary has not been established in social custom without a certain amount of protestation from various sides. No social change, however beneficial, ever is established without such protestation, which may, therefore, be regarded as an inevitable and probably a salutary part of social change. Even some would-be scientific persons, with a display of elaborate statistics, set forth various alarmistic doctrines. If, said these persons, this new movement goes on at the present pace, and if all other conditions remain unchanged, then all sorts of terrible results will ensue. But the alarming conclusion failed to ensue, and for a very sufficient reason. The assumed premises of the argument were unsound. Nothing ever goes on at the same pace, nor do all other conditions ever remain unchanged. The world is a living fire, as Heraclitus

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<sup>10</sup> "Foresight and self-control is, and always must be, the ground and medium of all Moral Socialism," says Bosanquet (*The Civilization of Christendom*, p. 336), using the term "Socialism" in the wide and not in the economic sense. We see the same civilized growth of foresight and self-control in the decrease of drunkenness. Thus in England the number of convictions for drunkenness, while varying greatly in different parts of the country, is decreasing for the whole country at the rapid rate of 5000 to 8000 a year, notwithstanding the constant growth of the population. It is incorrect to suppose that this decrease has any connection with decreased opportunities for drinking; thus in London County and in Cardiff the proportion of premises licensed for drinking is the same, yet while the convictions for drunkenness in 1910 were in London 83 per 10,000 inhabitants, in Cardiff they were under 6 per 10,000.

long ago put it. All things are in perpetual flux. Life is a process of perpetual movement. It is idle to bid the world stand still, and then to argue about the consequences. The world will not stand still, it is for ever revolving, for ever revealing some new facet that had not been allowed for in the neatly arranged mechanism of the statistician.

It is perhaps unnecessary to dwell on a point which is now at last, one may hope, becoming clear to most intelligent persons. But I may perhaps be allowed to refer in passing to an argument that has been brought forward with the wearisome iteration which always marks the progress of those who are feeble in argument. The good stocks of upper social class are decreasing in fertility, it is said; the bad stocks of lower social class are not decreasing; therefore the bad stocks are tending to replace the good stocks. <sup>11</sup>

It must, however, be pointed out that, even assuming that the facts are as stated; it is a hazardous assumption that the best stocks are necessarily the stocks of high social class. In the main no doubt this is so, but good stocks are nevertheless so widely

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<sup>11</sup> Thus Heron finds that in London during the past fifty years there has been 100 per cent increase in the intensity of the relation between low social birth and high birth-rate, and that the high birth-rate of the lower social classes is not fully compensated by their high death-rate (D. Heron, "On the Relation of Fertility in Man to Social Status," *Drapers' Company Research Memoirs*, No. I, 1906). As, however, Newsholme and Stevenson point out (*Journal Royal Statistical Society*, April, 1906, p. 74), the net addition to the population made by the best social classes is at so very slightly lower a rate than that made by the poorest class that, even if we consent to let the question rest on this ground, there is still no urgent need for the wailings of Cassandra.

spread through all classes—such good stocks in the lower social classes being probably the most resistant to adverse conditions—that we are not entitled to regard even a slightly greater net increase of the lower social classes as an unmitigated evil. It may be that, as Mercier has expressed it, "we have to regard a civilized community somewhat in the light of a lamp, which burns at the top and is replenished from the bottom." <sup>12</sup>

The soundness of a stock, and its aptitude for performing efficiently the functions of its own social sphere, cannot, indeed, be accurately measured by any tendency to rise into a higher social sphere. On the whole, from generation to generation, the men of a good stock remain within their own social sphere, whether high or low, adequately performing their functions in that sphere, from generation to generation. They remain, we may say, in that social stratum of which the specific gravity is best suited for their existence. <sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *Sociological Papers* of the Sociological Society, 1904, p. 35.

<sup>13</sup> There is a certain profit in studying one's own ancestry. It has been somewhat astonishing to me to find how very slight are the social oscillations traceable in a middle-class family and the families it intermarries with through several centuries. A professional family tends to form a caste marrying within that caste. An ambitious member of the family may marry a baronet's daughter, and another, less pretentious, a village tradesman's daughter; but the general level is maintained without rising or falling. Occasionally, it happens that the ambitious and energetic son of a prosperous master-craftsman becomes a professional man, marries into the professional caste, and founds a professional family; such a family seems to flourish for some three generations, and then suddenly fails and dies out in the male line, while the vigour of the female line is not impaired.

Yet, undoubtedly, from time to time, there is a slight upward social tendency, due in most cases to the exceptional energy and ability of some individual who succeeds in permanently lifting his family into a slightly higher social stratum.<sup>14</sup> Such a process has always taken place, in the past even more conspicuously than in the present. The Normans who came over to England with William the Conqueror and constituted the proud English nobility were simply a miscellaneous set of adventurers, professional fighting men, of unknown, and no doubt for the most part undistinguished, lineage. William the Conqueror himself was the son of a woman of the people. The Catholic Church founded no families, but its democratic constitution opened a career to men of all classes, and the most brilliant sons of the Church were often of the lowliest social rank. We should not, therefore, say that the bad stocks are replacing the good stocks. There is not the slightest evidence for any such theory. All that we are entitled to say is that when in the upward progression of a community the vanishing point of culture and refinement is attained the bearers of that culture and refinement die off as naturally and inevitably as flowers in autumn, and from their roots spring up new and more vigorous shoots to replace them and to pass in their turn through the same stages, with that perpetual slight novelty in which lies the secret of life, as well as

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<sup>14</sup> The new social adjustment of a family, it is probable, is always difficult, and if the change is sudden or extreme, the new environment may rapidly prove fatal to the family. Lorenz (*Lehrbuch der Genealogie*, p. 135) has shown that when a peasant family reaches an upper social class it dies out in a few generations.

of art. An aristocracy which is merely an aristocracy because it is "old"—whether it is an aristocracy of families, or of races, or of species—has already ceased to be an aristocracy in any sound meaning of the term. We need not regret its disappearance.

Do not, therefore, let us waste our time in crying over the dead roses of the summer that is past. There is something morbid in the perpetual groaning over that inevitable decay which is itself a part of all life. Such a perpetual narrow insistence on one aspect of life is scarcely sane. One suspects that these people are themselves of those stocks over whose fate they grieve. Let us, therefore, mercifully leave them to manure their dead roses in peace. They will soon be forgotten. The world is for ever dying. The world is also for ever bursting with life. The spring song of *Sursum corda* easily overwhelms the dying autumnal wails of the *Dies Irae*.

It would thus appear that, even apart from any deliberate restraint from procreation, as a family attains the highest culture and refinement which civilization can yield, that family tends to die out, at all events in the male line.<sup>15</sup> This is, for instance, the result which Fahlbeck has reached in his valuable demographic study of the Swedish nobility, *Der Adel Schwedens*. "Apparently," says Fahlbeck, "the greater demands on nervous and intellectual force which the culture and refinement of the upper classes produce are chiefly responsible for this. For

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<sup>15</sup> See, on this point, Reibmayr, *Entwicklungsgeschichte des Talentes und Genies*, Vol. I, ch. vii.

these are the two personal factors by which those classes are distinguished from the lower classes: high education and refinement in tastes and habits. The first involves predominant activity of the brain, the last a heightened sensitiveness in all departments of nervous life. In both respects, therefore, there is increased work for the nervous system, and this is compensated in the other vital functions, especially reproduction. Man cannot achieve everything; what he gains on one side he loses on the other." We should do well to hold these wise words in mind when we encounter those sciolists who in the presence of the finest and rarest manifestations of civilizations, can only talk of race "decay." A female salmon, it is estimated, lays about nine hundred eggs for every pound of her own weight, and she may weigh fifty pounds. The progeny of Shakespeare and Goethe, such as it was, disappeared in the very centuries in which these great men themselves died. At the present stage of civilization we are somewhat nearer to Shakespeare and Goethe than to the salmon. We must set our ideals towards a very different direction from that which commends itself to our Salmonidian sciolists. "Increase and multiply" was the legendary injunction uttered on the threshold of an empty world. It is singularly out of place in an age in which the earth and the sea, if not indeed the very air, swarm with countless myriads of undistinguished and indistinguishable human creatures, until the beauty of the world is befouled and the glory of the Heavens bedimmed. To stem back that tide is the task now imposed on our heroism, to

elevate and purify and refine the race, to introduce the ideal of quality in place of the ideal of quantity which has run riot so long, with the results we see. "As the Northern Saga tells that Odin must sacrifice his eye to attain the higher wisdom," concludes Fahlbeck, "so Man also, in order to win the treasures of culture and refinement, must give not only his eye but his life, if not his own life that of his posterity." <sup>16</sup> The vulgar aim of reckless racial fertility is no longer within our reach and no longer commends itself as worthy. It is not consonant with the stage of civilization we are at the moment passing through. The higher task is now ours of the regeneration of the race, or, if we wish to express that betterment less questionably, the aggeneration of the race. <sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Fahlbeck, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

<sup>17</sup> Regeneration implies that there has been degeneration, and it cannot be positively affirmed that such degeneration has, on the whole, occurred in such a manner as to affect the race. Reibmayr (*Die Entwicklungsgeschichte des Talentes und Genies*, Bd. I, p. 400) regards degeneration as a process setting in with urbanization and the tendency to diminished population; if so, it is but another name for civilization, and can only be condemned by condemning civilization, whether or not physical deterioration occurs. The Inter-departmental Commission on Physical Deterioration held in 1904, in London, concluded that there are no sufficient statistical or other data to prove that the physique of the people in the present, as compared with the past, has undergone any change; and this conclusion was confirmed by the Director-General of the Army Medical Service. There is certainly good reason to believe that urban populations (and especially industrial workers in factories) are inferior in height and weight and general development to rural populations, and less fit for military or similar service. The stunted development of factory workers in the East End of London was noted nearly a century ago, and German military experience distinctly shows the inferiority of the town-dweller to the country-dweller. (See e.g. Weyl, *Handbuch der Hygiene*, Supplement, Bd. IV, pp. 746 *et seq.*; *Politisch-Anthropologische Revue*, 1905, pp. 145

The control of reproduction, we see, essential as it is, cannot by itself carry far the betterment of the race, because it involves no direct selection of stocks. Yet we have to remember that though this control, with the limitation of offspring it involves, fails to answer all the demands which Social Hygiene to-day makes of us, it yet achieves much. It may not improve what we abstractly term the "race," but it immensely improves the individuals of which the race is made up. Thus the limitation of the family renders it possible to avoid the production of undesired children. That in itself is an immense social gain, because it tends to abolish excessive infantile mortality.<sup>18</sup> It means that adequate

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*et seq.*) The proportion of German youths fit for military service slowly decreases every year; in 1909 it was 53.6 per cent, in 1910 only 53 per cent; of those born in the country and engaged in agricultural or forest work 58.2 were found fit; of those born in the country and engaged in other industries, 55.1 per cent; of those born in towns, but engaged in agricultural or forest work, 56.2 per cent; of those born in towns and engaged in other industries 47.9 per cent. It is fairly clear that this deterioration under urban and industrial conditions cannot properly be termed a racial degeneration. It is, moreover, greatly improved even by a few months' training, and there is an immense difference between the undeveloped, feeble, half-starved recruit from the slums and the robust, broad-shouldered veteran when he leaves the army. The term "aggeneration"—not beyond criticism, though it is free from the objection to "regeneration"—was proposed by Prof. Christian von Ehrenfels ("Die Aufsteigende Entwicklung des Menschen," *Politisch-Anthropologische Revue*, April, 1903, p. 50).

<sup>18</sup> It is unnecessary to touch here on the question of infant mortality, which has already been referred to, and will again come in for consideration in a later chapter. It need only be said that a high birth-rate is inextricably combined with a high death-rate. The European countries with the highest birth-rates are, in descending order: Russia, Bulgaria, Roumania, Servia, and Hungary. The European countries with the highest death-rates are, in descending order, almost the same: Russia, Hungary, Spain, Bulgaria, and Servia. It is the same outside Europe. Thus Chile, with a birth-rate which

care will be expended upon the children that are produced, and that no children will be produced unless the parents are in a position to provide for them. <sup>19</sup> Even the mere spacing out of the children in a family, the larger interval between child-births, is a very great advantage. The mother is no longer exhausted by perpetually bearing, suckling, and tending babies, while the babies themselves are on the average of better quality. <sup>20</sup> Thus the limitation of offspring, far from being an egoistic measure, as some have foolishly supposed, is imperatively demanded in the altruistic interests of the individuals composing the race.

But the control of reproduction, enormously beneficial as it is even in its most elementary shapes, mainly concerns us here because it furnishes the essential condition for the development of Social Hygiene. The control of reproduction renders possible, and leads on to, a wise selection in reproduction. It is only by such selection of children to be born that we can balance

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comes next after Roumania, has a death-rate that is only second to Russia.

<sup>19</sup> Nyström (*La Vie Sexuelle*, 1910, p. 248) believes that "the time is coming when it will be considered the duty of municipal authorities, if they have found by experience or have reason to suspect that children will be thrown upon the parish, to instruct parents in methods of preventive conception."

<sup>20</sup> The directly unfavourable influences on the child of too short an interval between its birth and that of the previous child has been shown, for instance, by Dr. R.J. Ewart ("The Influence of Parental Age on Offspring," *Eugenics Review*, October, 1911). He has found at Middlesbrough that children born at an interval of less than two years after the birth of the previous child still show at the age of six a notable deficiency in height, weight, and intelligence, when compared with children born after a longer interval, or with first-born children.

our indiscriminate care in the preservation of all children that are born, a care which otherwise would become an intolerable burden. It is only by such selection that we can work towards the elimination of those stocks which fail to help us in the tasks of our civilization to-day. It is only by such selection that we can hope to fortify the stocks that are fitted for these tasks. More than two centuries ago Steele playfully suggested that "one might wear any passion out of a family by culture, as skilful gardeners blot a colour out of a tulip that hurts its beauty."<sup>21</sup> The progress of civilization, with the self-control it involves, has made it possible to accept this suggestion seriously.<sup>22</sup> The difference is that whereas the flowers of our gardens are bettered only by the control of an arbitrary external will and intelligence, our human flowers may be bettered by an intelligence and will, a finer sense of responsibility, developed within themselves. Thus it is that human culture renders possible Social Hygiene.

Three centuries ago an inspired monk set forth his ideal of an ennobled world in *The City of the Sun*. Campanella wrote that prophetic book in prison. But his spirit was unfettered, and his conception of human society, though in daring it outruns

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<sup>21</sup> *Tatler*, Vol. II, No. 175, 1709.

<sup>22</sup> "Write Man for Primula, and the stage of the world for that of the greenhouse," says Professor Bateson (*Biological Fact and the Structure of Society*, 1912, p. 9), "and I believe that with a few generations of experimental breeding we should acquire the power similarly to determine how the varieties of men should be represented in the generations that succeed." But Bateson proceeds to point out that our knowledge is still very inadequate, and he is opposed to eugenics by Act of Parliament.

all the visions we may compare it with, is yet on the lines along which our civilization lies. In the City of the Sun not only was the nobility of work, even mechanical work,—which Plato rejected and More was scarcely conscious of,—for the first time recognized, but the supreme impulse of procreation was regarded as a sacred function, to be exercised in the light of scientific knowledge. It was a public rather than a private duty, because it concerned the interests of the race; only valorous and high-spirited men ought to procreate, and it was held that the father should bear the punishments inflicted on the son for faults due to his failure by defects in generation.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, while unions not for the end of procreation were in the City of the Sun left to the judgment of the individuals alone concerned, it was not so with unions for the end of procreation. These were arranged by the "great Master," a physician, aided by the chief matrons, and the public exercises of the youths and maidens, performed in a state of nakedness, were of assistance in enabling unions to be fittingly made. No eugenist under modern conditions of life proposes that unions should be arranged by a supreme medical public official, though he might possibly regard such an official, if divested of any compulsory powers, a kind of public trustee for the race, as a useful institution. But it is easy to see that the luminous conception of racial betterment which, since Galton rendered it practicable, is now inspiring social progress, was already burning brightly three centuries ago in the brain of this

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<sup>23</sup> E. Solmi, *La Città del Sole di Campanella*, 1904, p. xxxiv.

imprisoned Italian monk. Just as Thomas More has been called the father of modern Socialism, so Campanella may be said to be the prophet of modern Eugenics.

By "Eugenics" is meant the scientific study of all the agencies by which the human race may be improved, and the effort to give practical effect to those agencies by conscious and deliberate action in favour of better breeding. Even among savages eugenics may be said to exist, if only in the crude and unscientific practice of destroying feeble, deformed, and abnormal infants at birth. In civilized ages elaborate and more or less scientific attempts are made by breeders of animals to improve the stocks they breed, and their efforts have been crowned with much success. The study of the same methods in their bearing on man proceeded out of the Darwinian school of biology, and is especially associated with the great name of Sir Francis Galton, the cousin of Darwin. Galton first proposed to call this study "Stirpiculture." Under that name it inspired Noyes, the founder of the Oneida Community, with the impulse to carry it into practice with a thoroughness and daring—indeed a similarity of method—which caused Oneida almost to rival the City of the Sun. But the scheme of Noyes, excellent as in some respects it was as an experiment, outran both scientific knowledge and the spirit of the times. It was not countenanced by Galton, who never had any wish to offend general sentiment, but sought to win it over to his side, and before 1880 the Oneida Community was brought to an end in consequence of the antagonism it aroused. Galton continued

to develop his conceptions slowly and cautiously, and in 1883, in his *Inquiries into Human Faculty*, he abandoned the term "Stirpiculture" and devised the term "Eugenics," which is now generally adopted to signify Good Breeding.

Galton was quite well aware that the improved breeding of men is a very different matter from the improved breeding of animals, requiring a different knowledge and a different method, so that the ridicule which has sometimes been ignorantly flung at Eugenics failed to touch him. It would be clearly undesirable to breed men, as animals are bred, for single points at the sacrifice of other points, even if we were in a position to breed men from outside. Human breeding must proceed from impulses that arise, voluntarily, in human brains and wills, and are carried out with a human sense of personal responsibility. Galton believed that the first need was the need of knowledge in these matters. He was not anxious to invoke legislation.<sup>24</sup> The compulsory presentation of certificates of health and good breeding as a preliminary to marriage forms no part of Eugenics, nor is compulsory sterilization a demand made by any reasonable eugenicist. Certainly the custom of securing certificates of health and ability is excellent, not only as a preliminary to marriage, but as a general custom. Certainly, also, there are cases in which

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<sup>24</sup> Only a year before his death Galton wrote (Preface to *Essays in Eugenics*): "The power by which Eugenic reform must chiefly be effected is that of Popular Opinion, which is amply strong enough for that purpose whenever it shall be roused."

sterilization is desirable, if voluntarily accepted.<sup>25</sup> But neither certification nor sterilization should be compulsory. They only have their value if they are intelligent and deliberate, springing out of a widened and enlightened sense of personal responsibility to society and to the race.

Eugenics constitutes the link between the Social Reform of the past, painfully struggling to improve the conditions of life, and the Social Hygiene of the future, which is authorized to deal adequately with the conditions of life because it has its hands on the sources of life. On this plane we are able to concentrate our energies on the finer ends of life, because we may reasonably expect to be no longer hampered by the ever-increasing burdens which were placed upon us by the failure to control life; while the more we succeed in our efforts to purify and strengthen life, the more magnificent become the tasks we may reasonably hope to attempt and compass.

A problem which is often and justly cited as one to be settled by Eugenics is that presented by the existence among us of the large class of the feeble-minded. No doubt there are some who would regret the disappearance of the feeble-minded from our midst. The philosophies of the Bergsonian type, which to-day prevail so widely, place intuition above reason, and the

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<sup>25</sup> It may perhaps be necessary to remark that by sterilization is here meant, not castration, but, in the male vasectomy (and a corresponding operation in the female), a simple and harmless operation which involves no real mutilation and no loss of power beyond that of procreation. See on this and related points, Havelock Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, Vol. VI, "Sex in Relation to Society," chap. xii.

"pure fool" has sometimes been enshrined and idolized. But we may remember that Eugenics can never prevent absolutely the occurrence of feeble-minded persons, even in the extreme degree of the imbecile and the idiot. <sup>26</sup> They come within the range of variation, by the same right as genius so comes. We cannot, it may be, prevent the occurrence of such persons, but we can prevent them from being the founders of families tending to resemble themselves. And in so doing, it will be agreed by most people, we shall be effecting a task of immense benefit to society and the race.

Feeble-mindedness is largely handed on by heredity. It was formerly supposed that idiocy and feeble-mindedness are mainly due to environmental conditions, to the drink, depravity, general disease, or lack of nutrition of the parents, and there is no doubt an element of truth in that view. But serious and frequent as are the results of bad environment and acquired disease in the parentage of the feeble-minded, they do not form the fundamental factor in the production of the feeble-minded. <sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> The term "feeble-minded" may be used generally to cover all degrees of mental weakness. In speaking a little more precisely, however, we have to recognize three main degrees of congenital mental weakness: *feeble-mindedness*, in which with care and supervision it is possible to work and earn a livelihood; *imbecility*, in which the subject is barely able to look after himself, and sometimes only has enough intelligence to be mischievous (the moral imbecile); and *idiocy*, the lowest depth of all, in which the subject has no intelligence and no ability to look after himself. More elaborate classifications are sometimes proposed. The method of Binet and Simon renders possible a fairly exact measurement of feeble-mindedness.

<sup>27</sup> Mott (*Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry*, Vol. V, 1911) accepts the view that

Feeble-mindedness is essentially a germinal variation, belonging to the same large class as all other biological variations, occurring, for the most part, in the first place spontaneously, but strongly tending to be inherited. It thus resembles congenital cataract, deaf-mutism, the susceptibility to tuberculous infection, etc.<sup>28</sup>

Exact investigation is now showing that feeble-mindedness is passed on from parent to child to an enormous extent. Some

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in some cases feeble-mindedness is simply a form of congenital syphilis, but he points out that feeble-mindedness abounds in many rural districts where syphilis, as well as alcoholism, is very rare, and concludes by emphasizing the influence of heredity; the prevalence of feeble-mindedness in these rural districts is thus due to the fact that the mentally and physically fit have emigrated to the great industrial centres, leaving the unfit to procreate the race.

<sup>28</sup> "Whether germinal variations," remarked Dr. R.J. Ryle at a Conference on Feeble-mindedness (*British Medical Journal*, October 3, 1911), "be expressed by cleft palate, cataract, or cerebral deficiency of the pyramidal cells in the brain cortex, they may be produced, and, when once produced, they are reproduced as readily as the perfected structure of the face or eye or brain, if the gametes which contain these potentialities unite to form the ovum. But Nature is not only the producer. Given a fair field and no favour, natural selection would leave no problem of the unfit to perplex the mind of man who looks before and after. This we know cannot be, and we know, too, that we have no longer the excuse of ignorance to cover the neglect of the new duties which belong to the present epoch of civilization. We know now that we have to deal with a growing group in our community who demand permanent care and control as well for their own sakes as for the welfare of the community. All are now agreed on the general principle of segregation, but it is true that something more than this should be forthcoming. The difficulties of theory are clearing up as our wider view obtains a firmer grasp of our material, but the difficulties of practice are still before us." These remarks correspond with the general results reached by the Royal Commission on the Feeble-minded, which issued its voluminous facts and conclusions in 1908.

years ago Ashby, speaking from a large experience in the North of England, estimated that at least seventy-five per cent of feeble-minded children are born with an inherited tendency to mental defect. More precise investigation has since shown that this estimate was under the mark. Tredgold, who in England has most carefully studied the heredity of the feeble-minded,<sup>29</sup> found that in over eighty-two per cent cases there is a bad nervous inheritance. In a large number of cases the bad heredity was associated with alcoholism or consumption in the parentage, but only in a small proportion of cases (about seven per cent) was it probable that alcoholism and consumption alone, and usually combined, had sufficed to produce the defective condition of the children, while environmental conditions only produced mental defect in ten per cent cases.<sup>30</sup> Heredity is the chief cause of feeble-mindedness, and a normal child is never born of two feeble-minded parents. The very thorough investigation of the heredity of the feeble-minded which is now being carried on at the institution for their care at Vineland, New Jersey, shows even more decisive results. By making careful pedigrees of the

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<sup>29</sup> See, for instance, A.F. Tredgold, *Mental Deficiency*, 1908.

<sup>30</sup> The investigation of Bezzola showing that the maxima in the conception of idiots occur at carnival time, and especially at the vintage, has been held (especially by Forel) to indicate that alcoholism of the parents at conception causes idiocy in the offspring. It may be so. But it may also be that the licence of these periods enables the defective members of the community to secure an amount of sexual activity which they would be debarred from under normal conditions. In that case the alcoholism would merely liberate, and not create, the idiocy-producing mechanism.

families to which the inmates at Vineland belong it is seen that in a large proportion of cases feeble-mindedness is handed on from generation to generation, and is traceable through three generations, though it sometimes skips a generation. In one family of three hundred and nineteen persons, one hundred and nineteen were known to be feeble-minded, and only forty-two known to be normal. The families tended to be large, sometimes very large, most of them in many cases dying in infancy or growing up weak-minded.<sup>31</sup>

Not only is feeble-mindedness inherited, and to a much greater degree than has hitherto been suspected even by expert authorities, but the feeble-minded thus tend (though, as Davenport and Weeks have found, not invariably) to have a larger number of children than normal people. That indeed, we might expect, apart altogether from the question of any innate fertility. The feeble-minded have no forethought and no self-restraint. They are not adequately capable of resisting their own impulses or the solicitations of others, and they are unable to understand adequately the motives which guide the conduct of ordinary people. The average number of children of feeble-minded people seems to be frequently about one-third more than in normal families, and is sometimes much greater. Dr. Ettie Sayer, when investigating for the London County Council the family histories of one hundred normal families and one hundred families in which mentally defective children had been found,

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<sup>31</sup> Godden, *Eugenics Review*, April, 1911.

ascertained that the families of the latter averaged 7.6 children, while in the normal families they averaged 5. Tredgold, specially investigating 150 feeble-minded cases, found that they belonged to families in which 1269 children had been born, that is to say 7.3 per family, or, counting still-born children, 8.4. Nearly two-thirds of these abnormally large families were mentally defective, many showing a tendency to disease, pauperism, criminality, or else to early death.<sup>32</sup>

Here, indeed, we have a counterbalancing influence, for, in the large families of the feeble-minded, there is a correspondingly large infantile mortality. A considerable proportion of Tredgold's group of children were born dead, and a very large number died early. Eichholz, again, found that, in one group of defective families, about sixty per cent of the children died young. That is probably an unusually high proportion, and in Eichholz's cases it seems to have been associated with very unusually large families, but the infant mortality is always very high.

This large early mortality of the offspring of the feeble-minded is, however, very far from settling the question of

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<sup>32</sup> Feeble-mindedness and the other allied variations are not always exactly repeated in inheritance. They may be transmuted in passing from father to son, an epileptic father, for instance, having a feeble-minded child. These relationships of feeble-mindedness have been clearly brought out in an important investigation by Davenport and Weeks (*Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, November, 1911), who have for the first time succeeded in obtaining a large number of really thorough and precise pedigrees of such cases.

the disposal of the mentally defective, or we should not find families of them propagated from generation to generation. The large number who die early merely serves, roughly speaking, to reduce the size of the abnormal family to the size of a normal family, and some authorities consider that it scarcely suffices to do this, for we must remember that there is a considerable mortality even in the so-called normal family during early life. Even when there is no abnormal fertility in the defective family we may still have to recognize that, as Davenport and Weeks argue, their defectiveness is intensified by heredity. Moreover, we have to consider the social disorder and the heavy expense which accompany the large infantile mortality. Illegitimacy is frequently the result of feeble-mindedness, since feeble-minded women are peculiarly unable to resist temptation. A great number of such women are continually coming into the workhouses and giving birth to illegitimate children whom they are unable to support, and who often never become capable of supporting themselves, but in their turn tend to produce a new feeble-minded generation, more especially since the men who are attracted to these feeble-minded women are themselves—according to the generally recognized tendency of the abnormal to be attracted to the abnormal—feeble-minded or otherwise mentally defective. There is thus generated not only a heavy financial burden, but also a perpetual danger to society, and, it may well be, a serious depreciation in the quality of the community.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> It may be as well to point out once more that the possibility of such limited

It is not only in themselves that the feeble-minded are a burden on the present generation and a menace to future generations. In large measure they form the reservoir from which the predatory classes are recruited. This is, for instance, the case as regards prostitutes. Feeble-minded girls, of fairly high grade, may often be said to be predestined to prostitution if left to themselves, not because they are vicious, but because they are weak and have little power of resistance. They cannot properly weigh their actions against the results of their actions, and even if they are intelligent enough to do that, they are still too weak to regulate their actions accordingly. Moreover, even when, as often happens among the high-grade feeble-minded, they are quite able and willing to work, after they have lost their "respectability" by having a child, the opportunities for work become more restricted, and they drift into prostitution. It has been found that of nearly 15,000 women who passed through Magdalen Homes in England, over 2500, or more than sixteen per cent—and this

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depreciation must not be construed into the statement that there has been any general "degeneration of the race." It maybe added that the notion that the golden age lay in the past, and that our own age is degenerate is not confined to a few biometricians of to-day; it has commended itself to uncritical minds in all ages, even the greatest, as far back as we can go. Montesquieu referred to this common notion (and attempted to explain it) in his *Pensées Diverses*: "Men have such a bad opinion of themselves," he adds, "that they have believed not only that their minds and souls were degenerate, but even their bodies, and that they were not so tall as the men of previous ages." It is thus quite logically that we arrive at the belief that when mankind first appeared, "there were giants on the earth in those days," and that Adam lived to the age of nine hundred and thirty. Evidently no syndromes of degenerescence there!

is probably an under-estimate—were definitely feeble-minded. The women belonging to this feeble-minded group were known to have added 1000 illegitimate children to the population. In Germany Bonhoeffer found among 190 prostitutes who passed through a prison that 102 were hereditarily degenerate and 53 feeble-minded. This would be an over-estimate as regards average prostitutes, though the offences were no doubt usually trivial, but in any case the association between prostitution and feeble-mindedness is intimate. Everywhere, there can be no doubt, the ranks of prostitution contain a considerable proportion of women who were, at the very outset, in some slight degree feeble-minded, mentally and morally a little blunted through some taint of inheritance.<sup>34</sup>

Criminality, again, is associated with feeble-mindedness in the most intimate way. Not only do criminals tend to belong to large families, but the families that produce feeble-minded offspring also produce criminals, while a certain degree of feeble-mindedness is extremely common among criminals, and the most hopeless and typical, though fortunately rare, kind of criminal, frequently termed a "moral imbecile," is nothing

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<sup>34</sup> The Superintendent of a large State School for delinquent girls in America (as quoted in the Chicago Vice Commission's Report on *The Social Evil in Chicago*, p. 229) says: "The girls who come to us possessed of normal brain power, or not infected with venereal disease, we look upon as a prize indeed, and we seldom fail to make a woman worth while of a really normal girl, whatever her environment has been. But we have failed in numberless cases where the environment has been all right, but the girl was born wrong."

more than a feeble-minded person whose defect is shown not so much in his intelligence as in his feelings and his conduct. Sir H.B. Donkin, who speaks with authority on this matter, estimates that, though it is difficult to obtain the early history of the criminals who enter English prisons, about twenty per cent of them are of primarily defective mental capacity. This would mean that every year some 35,000 feeble-minded persons are sent to English prisons as "criminals." The tendency of criminals to belong to the feeble-minded class is indeed every day becoming more clearly recognized. At Pentonville, putting aside prisoners who were too mentally affected to be fit for prison discipline, eighteen per cent of the adult prisoners and forty per cent of the juvenile offenders were found to be feeble-minded. This includes only those whose defect is fairly obvious, and is not the result of methodical investigation. It is certain that such methodical inquiry would reveal a very large proportion of cases of less obvious mental defect. Thus the systematic examination of a number of delinquent children in an Industrial School showed that in seventy-five per cent cases they were defective as compared to normal children, and that their defectiveness was probably inborn. Even the possession of a considerable degree of cunning is no evidence against mental defect, but may rather be said to be a sign of it, for it shows an intelligence unable to grasp the wider relations of life, and concentrated on the gratification of petty and immediate desires. Thus it happens that the cunning of criminals is frequently associated with almost inconceivable

stupidity. <sup>35</sup>

Closely related to the great feeble-minded class, and from time to time falling into crime, are the inmates of workhouses, tramps, and the unemployable. The so-called "able-bodied" inmates of the workhouses are frequently found, on medical examination, to be, in more than fifty per cent cases, mentally defective, equally so whether they are men or women. Tramps, by nature and profession, who overlap the workhouse population, and are estimated to number 20,000 to 30,000 in England and Wales, when the genuine unemployed are eliminated, are everywhere found to be a very degenerate class, among whom the most mischievous kinds of feeble-mindedness and mental perversion prevail. Inebriates, the people who are chronically and helplessly given to drink, largely belong to the same great family, and do not so much become feeble-minded because they drink, but possess the tendency to drink because they have a strain of feeble-mindedness from birth. Branthwaite, the chief English authority on this question, finds that of the inebriates who come to his notice, putting aside altogether the group of actually insane persons, about sixty-three per cent are mentally defective, and scarcely more than a third of the whole number of average mental capacity. It is evident that these people, even if restored to sobriety, would still retain their more or less inborn defectiveness, and would remain equally, unfit to become the parents of the coming generation.

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<sup>35</sup> See e.g. Havelock Ellis, *The Criminal*, 4th ed., 1910, chap IV.

These are the kind of people—tramps, prostitutes, paupers, criminals, inebriates, all tending to be born a little defective—who largely make up the great degenerate families whose histories are from time to time recorded. Such a family was that of the Jukes in America, who, in the course of five generations, by constantly intermarrying with bad stocks, produced 709 known descendants who were on the whole unfit for society, and have been a constant danger and burden to society.<sup>36</sup> A still larger family of the same kind, more recently studied in Germany, consisted of 834 known persons, all descended from a drunken vagabond woman, probably somewhat feeble-minded but physically vigorous. The great majority of these descendants were prostitutes, tramps, paupers, and criminals (some of them murderers), and the direct cost in money to the Prussian State for the keep and care of this woman and her family has been a quarter of a million pounds. Yet another such family is that of the "Zeros." Three centuries ago they were highly respectable people, living in a Swiss valley. But they intermarried with an insane stock, and subsequently married other women of an unbalanced nature. In recent times 310 members of this family have been studied, and it is found that vagrancy, feeble-mindedness, mental troubles, criminality, pauperism, immorality

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<sup>36</sup> R.L. Dugdale, *The Jukes*, 4th ed., 1910. It is noteworthy that Dugdale, who wrote nearly forty years ago, was concerned to prove the influence of bad environment rather than of bad heredity. At that time the significance of heredity was scarcely yet conceived. It remains true, however, that bad heredity and bad environment constantly work together for evil.

are, as it may be termed, their patrimony.<sup>37</sup>

These classes, with their tendency to weak-mindedness, their inborn laziness, lack of vitality, and unfitness for organized activity, contain the people who complain that they are starving for want of work, though they will never perform any work that is given them. Feeble-mindedness is an absolute dead-weight on the race. It is an evil that is unmitigated. The heavy and complicated social burdens and injuries it inflicts on the present generation are without compensation, while the unquestionable fact that in any degree it is highly inheritable renders it a deteriorating poison to the race; it depreciates the quality of a people. The task of Social Hygiene which lies before us cannot be attempted by this feeble folk. Not only can they not share it, but they impede it; their clumsy hands are for ever becoming entangled in the delicate mechanism of our modern civilization. Their very existence is itself an impediment. Apart altogether from the gross and obvious burden in money and social machinery which the protection they need, and the protection we need against them, casts upon the community,<sup>38</sup> they dilute the spiritual quality of the community to a degree which makes it an inapt medium for any high achievement. It matters little how small a city or a nation is, provided the spirit of its people is great. It is the smallest

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<sup>37</sup> Jörger, *Archiv für Rassen-und Gesellschafts-Biologie*, 1905, p. 294. Criminal families are also recorded by Aubry, *La Contagion du Meurtre*.

<sup>38</sup> Even during school life this burden is serious. Mr. Bodey, Inspector of Schools, states that the defective school child costs three times as much as the ordinary school child.

communities that have most powerfully and most immortally raised the level of civilization, and surrounded the human species (in its own eyes) with a halo of glory which belongs to no other species. Only a handful of people, hemmed in on every side, created the eternal radiance of Athens, and the fame of the little city of Florence may outlive that of the whole kingdom of Italy. To realize this truth in the future of civilization is one of the first tasks of Social Hygiene.<sup>39</sup>

It is here that the ideals of Eugenics may be expected to work fruitfully. To insist upon the power of heredity was once considered to indicate a fatalistic pessimism. It wears a very different aspect nowadays, in the light of Eugenics. "To the eugenicist," as Davenport observes, "heredity stands as the one great hope of the human race: its saviour from imbecility, poverty, disease, immorality."<sup>40</sup> We cannot, indeed, desire any compulsory elimination of the unfit or any centrally regulated breeding of the fit.<sup>41</sup> Such notions are idle, and even the mere

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<sup>39</sup> I have set forth these considerations more fully in a popular form in *The Problem of the Regeneration of the Race*, the first of a series of "New Tracts for the Times," issued under the auspices of the National Council of Public Morals.

<sup>40</sup> C.B. Davenport, "Euthenics and Eugenics," *Popular Science Monthly*, January, 1911.

<sup>41</sup> The use of the terms "fit" and "unfit" in a eugenic sense has been criticized. It is said, for instance, that in a bad environment it may be precisely the defective classes who are most "fit" to survive. It is quite true that these terms are not well adapted to resist hyper-critical attack. The persistence with which they are employed seems, however, to indicate a certain "survival of the fittest." The terms "worthy" and "unworthy," which some would prefer to substitute, are unsatisfactory, for they

fact that unbalanced brains may air them abroad tends to impair the legitimate authority of eugenic ideals. The two measures which are now commonly put forward for the attainment of eugenic ends—health certificates as a legal preliminary to marriage and the sterilization of the unfit—are excellent when wisely applied, but they become mischievous, if not ridiculous, in the hands of fanatics who would employ them by force. Domestic animals may be highly bred from outside, compulsorily. Man can only be bred upwards from within through the medium of his intelligence and will, working together under the control of a high sense of responsibility. The infinite cunning of men and women is fully equal to the defeat of any attempt to touch life at this intimate point against the wish of those to whom the creation of life is entrusted. The laws of marriage even among savages have often been complex and strenuous in the highest degree. But it has been easy to bear them, for they have been part of the sacred and inviolable traditions of the race; religion lay behind them. And Galton, who recognized the futility of mere legislation in the elevation of the race, believed that the hope of the future lies in rendering eugenics a part of religion. The only compulsion we can apply in eugenics is the compulsion that comes from within. All those in whom any fine sense of

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have moral associations which are misleading. Galton spoke of "civic worth" in this connection, and very occasionally used the term "worthy" (with inverted commas), but he was careful to point out (*Essays in Eugenics*, p. 35) that in eugenics "we must leave morals as far as possible out of the discussion, not entangling ourselves with the almost hopeless difficulties they raise as to whether a character as a whole is good or bad."

social and racial responsibility is developed will desire, before marriage, to give, and to receive, the fullest information on all the matters that concern ancestral inheritance, while the registration of such information, it is probable, will become ever simpler and more a matter of course. <sup>42</sup> And if he finds that he is not justified in aiding to carry on the race, the eugenicist will be content to make himself, in the words of Jesus, "a eunuch for the kingdom of Heaven's sake," whether, under modern conditions, that means abstention in marriage from procreation, or voluntary sterilization by operative methods. <sup>43</sup> For, as Giddings has put it, the goal of the race lies, not in the ruthless exaltation of a super-man, but in the evolution of a super-mankind. Such a goal can only be reached by resolute selection and elimination. <sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Dr. Toulouse has devoted a whole volume to the results of a minute personal examination of Zola, the novelist, and another to Poincaré, the mathematician. Such minute investigations are at present confined to men of genius, but some day, perhaps, we shall consider that from the eugenic standpoint all men are men of genius.

<sup>43</sup> Sterilization for social ends was introduced in Switzerland a few years ago, in order to enable some persons with impaired self-control to be set at liberty and resume work without the risk of adding to the population defective members who would probably be a burden on the community. It was performed with the consent of the subjects (in some cases at their urgent request) and their relations, so requiring no special legislation, and the results are said to be satisfactory. In some American States sterilization for some classes of defective persons has been established by statute, but it is difficult to obtain reliable information as regards the working and the results of such legislation.

<sup>44</sup> When Professor Giddings speaks of the "goal of mankind," it must, of course, be remembered, he is using a bold metaphor in order to make his meaning clearer. Strictly speaking, mankind has no "goals," nor are there any ends in Nature which are not means to further ends.

The breeding of men lies largely in the hands of women. That is why the question of Eugenics is to a great extent one with the woman question. The realization of eugenics in our social life can only be attained with the realization of the woman movement in its latest and completest phase as an enlightened culture of motherhood, in all that motherhood involves alike on the physical and the psychic sides. Motherhood on the eugenic basis is a deliberate and selective process, calling for the highest intelligence as well as the finest emotional and moral aptitudes, so that all the best energies of a long evolution of womanhood in the paths of modern culture here find their final outlet. The breeding of children further involves the training of children, and since the expansion of Social Hygiene renders education a far larger and more delicate task than it has ever been before, the responsibilities laid upon women by the evolution of civilization become correspondingly great.

For the men who have been thus born and taught the tasks imposed by Social Hygiene are in no degree lighter. They demand all the best qualities of a selectively bred race from which the mentally and physically weak have, so far as possible, been bred out. The substitution of law for war alike in the relations of class to class, and of nation to nation, and the organization of international methods of social intercourse between peoples of different tongues and unlike traditions, are but two typical examples of the tasks, difficult but imperative, which Social Hygiene presents and the course of modern civilization renders

insistent. Again, the adequate adjustment of the claims of the individual and the claims of the community, each carried to its farthest point, can but prove an exquisite test of the quality of any well-bred and well-trained race. It is exactly in that balancing of apparent opposites, the necessity of pushing to extremes both opposites, and the consequent need of cultivating that quality of temperance the Greeks estimated so highly, that the supreme difficulties of modern civilization lie. We see these difficulties again in relation to the extension of law. It is desirable and inevitable that the sphere of law should be extended, and that the disputes which are still decided by brutal and unreasoning force should be decided by humane and reasoning force, that is to say, by law. But, side by side with this extension of law, it is necessary to wage a constant war with the law-making tendency, to cherish an undying resolve to maintain unsullied those sacred and intimate impulses, all the finest activities of the moral sphere, which the generalizing hand of law can only injure and stain.

It is these fascinating and impassioning problems, every day becoming of more urgent practical importance, which it is the task of Social Hygiene to solve, having first created the men and women who are fit to solve them. It is such problems as these that we are to-day called upon to illuminate, as far as we may—it may not yet be very far—by the dry light of science.

## II

# THE CHANGING STATUS OF WOMEN <sup>45</sup>

The Origin of the Woman Movement—Mary Wollstonecraft—George Sand—Robert Owen—William Thompson—John Stuart Mill—The Modern Growth of Social Cohesion—The Growth of Industrialism—Its Influence in Woman's Sphere of Work—The Education of Women—Co-education—The Woman Question and Sexual Selection—Significance of Economic Independence—The State Regulation of Marriage—The Future of Marriage—Wilhelm von Humboldt—Social Equality of Women—The Reproduction of the Race as a Function of Society—Women and the Future of Civilization.

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<sup>45</sup> This chapter was written so long ago as 1888, and published in the *Westminster Review* in the following year. I have pleasure in here including it exactly as it was originally written, not only because it has its proper place in the present volume, but because it may be regarded as a programme which I have since elaborated in numerous volumes. The original first section has, however, been omitted, as it embodied a statement of the matriarchal theory which, in view of the difficulty of the subject and the wide differences of opinion about it, I now consider necessary to express more guardedly (see, for a more recent statement, Havelock Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, Vol. VI, "Sex in Relation to Society," chap. x). With this exception, and the deletion of two insignificant footnotes, no changes have been made. After the lapse of a quarter of a century I find nothing that I seriously wish to withdraw and much that I now wish to emphasize.

# I

It was in the eighteenth century, the seed-time of modern ideas, that our great-grandfathers became conscious of a discordant break in the traditional conceptions of women's status. The vague cries of Justice, Freedom, Equality, which were then hurled about the world, were here and there energetically applied to women—notably in France by Condorcet—and a new movement began to grow self-conscious and coherent. Mary Wollstonecraft, after Aphra Behn the first really noteworthy Englishwoman of letters, gave voice to this movement in England.

The famous and little-read *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, careless and fragmentary as it is, and by no means so startling to us as to her contemporaries, shows Mary Wollstonecraft as a woman of genuine insight, who saw the questions of woman's social condition in their essential bearings. Her intuitions need little modification, even though a century of progress has intervened. The modern advocates of woman's suffrage have little to add to her brief statement. She is far, indeed, from the monstrous notion of Miss Cobbe, that woman's suffrage is the "crown and completion" of all progress so far as women's movements are concerned. She looks upon it rather as one of the reasonable conditions of progress. It is pleasant to turn from the eccentric energy of so many of the advocates

of women's causes to-day, all engaged in crying up their own particular nostrum, to the genial many-sided wisdom of Mary Wollstonecraft, touching all subjects with equal frankness and delicacy.

The most brilliant and successful exponent of the new revolutionary ideas—making Corinne and her prototype seem dim and ineffectual—was undoubtedly George Sand. The badly-dressed woman who earned her living by scribbling novels, and said to M. du Camp, as she sat before him in silence rolling her cigarette, "Je ne dis rien parceque je suis bête," has exercised a profound influence throughout Europe, an influence which, in the Slavonic countries especially, has helped to give impetus to the resolution we are now considering. And this not so much from any definite doctrines that underlie her work—for George Sand's views on such matters varied as much as her political views—as from her whole temper and attitude. Her large and rich nature, as sometimes happens in genius of a high order, was twofold; on the one hand, she possessed a solid serenity, a quiet sense of power, the qualities of a *bonne bourgeoise*, which found expression in her imperturbable calm, her gentle look and low voice. And with this was associated a massive, almost Rabelaisian temperament (one may catch glimpses of it in her correspondence), a sane exuberant earthliness which delighted in every manifestation of the actual world. On the other hand, she bore within her a volcanic element of revolt, an immense disgust of law and custom. Throughout her life George Sand developed her strong

and splendid individuality, not perhaps as harmoniously, but as courageously and as sincerely as even Goethe.

Robert Owen, who, like Saint-Simon in France, gave so extraordinary an impulse to all efforts at social reorganization, and who planted the seed of many modern movements, could not fail to extend his influence to the region of sex. A disciple of his, William Thompson, who still holds a distinguished position in the history of the economic doctrines of Socialism, wrote, under the inspiration of a woman (a Mrs. Wheeler), and published in 1825, an *Appeal of One Half of the Human Race, Women, against the Pretensions of the Other Half, Men, to retain them in Political, and thence in Civil and Domestic Slavery*. It is a thorough and logical, almost eloquent, demand for the absolute social equality of the sexes.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> The following passage summarizes this *Appeal*: "The simple and modest request is, that they may be permitted equal enjoyments with men, *provided they can, by the free and equal development and exercise of their faculties, procure for themselves such enjoyments*. They ask the same means that men possess of acquiring every species of knowledge, of unfolding every one of their faculties of mind and body that can be made tributary to their happiness. They ask every facility of access to every art, occupation, profession, from the highest to the lowest, without one exception, to which their inclinations and talents may direct and may fit them to occupy. They ask the removal of *all* restraints and exclusions not applicable to men of equal capacities. They ask for perfectly equal political, civil, and domestic rights. They ask for equal obligations and equal punishments from the law with men in case of infraction of the same law by either party. They ask for an equal system of morals, founded on utility instead of caprice and unreasoning despotism, in which the same action, attended with the same consequences, whether done by man or woman, should be attended with the same portion of approbation or disapprobation; in which every pleasure, accompanied or followed by no preponderant evil, should be equally permitted to women and to

Forty years later, Mill, also inspired by a woman, published his *Subjection of Women*. However partial and inadequate it may seem to us, this was at that day a notable book. Mill's clear vision and feminine sensibilities gave freshness to his observations regarding the condition and capacity of women, while his reputation imparted gravity and resonance to his utterances. Since then the signs in literature of the breaking up of the status of women have become far too numerous to be chronicled even in a volume. It is enough to have mentioned here some typical initiatory names. Now, the movement may be seen at work anywhere, from Norway to Italy, from Russia to California. The status which women are now entering places them, not, as in the old communism, in large measure practically above men, nor, as in the subsequent period, both practically and theoretically in subordination to men. It places them side by side, with like rights and like duties in relation to society.

## II

Condorcet, Mary Wollstonecraft, George Sand, Owen, Mill—these were feathers on the stream. They indicated the forces that had their source at the centre of social life. That historical movement which produced mother-law probably owed its rise, as well as its fall, to demands of subsistence and property—that is,

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men; in which every pleasure accompanied or followed by preponderant evil should be equally censured in women and in men."

to economic causes. The decay of the subsequent family system, in which the whole power is concentrated in the male head, is being produced by similar causes. The early communism, and the modes of action and sentiment which it had produced, still practically persisted long after the new system had arisen. In the patriarchal family the woman still had a recognized sphere of work and a recognized right to subsistence. It was not, indeed, until the sudden development of the industrial system, and the purely individualistic economics with which it was associated, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, that women in England were forced to realize that their household industries were gone, and that they must join in that game of competition in which the field and the rules had alike been chosen with reference to men alone. The commercial and industrial system, and the general diffusion of education that has accompanied it, and which also has its roots in economic causes, has been the chief motive force in revolutionizing the status of women; and the epoch of unrestricted competition on masculine lines has been a necessary period of transition. <sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> A period of transition not the less necessary although it is certainly disastrous and tends to produce an unwholesome tension between the sexes so long as men and women do not receive equal payment for equal work. "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever," as a working man in Blackburn lately put it, "but when the thing of beauty takes to doing the work for 16s. a week that you have been paid 22s. for, you do not feel as if you cannot live without possessing that thing of beauty all to yourself, or that you are willing to lay your life and your fortune (when you have one) at its feet." On the other hand, the working girl in the same town often complains that a man will not look at a girl unless she is a "four-loom weaver," earning, that is, perhaps, 20s. or 25s. a week.

At the present time two great tendencies are visible in our social organization. On the one hand, the threads of social life are growing closer, and organization, as regards the simple and common means of subsistence, is increasing. On the other hand, as regards the things that most closely concern the individual person, the sphere of freedom is being perpetually enlarged. Instead of every man digging a well for his own use and at his own free pleasure, perhaps in a graveyard or a cesspool, we consent to the distribution of water by a central executive. We have carried social methods so far that, instead of producing our own bread and butter, we prefer to go to a common bakery and dairy. The same centralizing methods are extending to all those things of which all have equal need. On the other hand, we exercise a very considerable freedom of individual thought. We claim a larger and larger freedom of individual speech and criticism. We worship any god we choose, after any fashion we choose. The same individual freedom is beginning to invade the sexual relationships. It is extending to all those things in regard to which civilized men have become so variously differentiated that they have no equal common needs. These two tendencies, so far from being antagonistic, cannot even be carried out under modern conditions of life except together. It is only by social co-operation in regard to what is commonly called the physical side of life that it becomes possible for the individual to develop his own peculiar nature. The society of the future is a reasonable anarchy founded on a broad basis of Collectivism.

It is not our object here to point out how widely these tendencies affect men, but it is worth while to indicate some of their bearings on the condition of women. While genuine productive industries have been taken out of the hands of women who work under the old conditions, an increasingly burdensome weight of unnecessary duties has been laid upon them. Under the old communistic system, when a large number of families lived together in one great house, the women combined to perform their household duties, the cooking being done at a common fire. They had grown up together from childhood, and combination could be effected without friction. It is the result of the later system that the woman has to perform all the necessary household duties in the most wasteful manner, with least division of labour; while she has, in addition, to perform a great amount of unnecessary work, in obedience to traditional or conventional habits, which make it impossible even to perform the simple act of dusting the rooms of a small house in less than perhaps an hour and a half. She has probably also to accomplish, if she happens to belong to the middle or upper classes, an idle round of so-called "social duties." She tries to escape, when she can afford it, by adopting the apparently simple expedient of paying other people to perform these necessary and unnecessary household duties, but this expedient fails; the "social duties" increase in the same ratio as the servants increase and the task of overseeing these latter itself proves formidable. It is quite impossible for any person under these conditions to

lead a reasonable and wholesome human life. A healthy life is more difficult to attain for the woman of the ordinary household than for the worker in a mine, for he at least, when the work of his set is over, has two-thirds of the twenty-four hours to himself. The woman is bound by a thousand Lilliputian threads from which there seems no escape. She often makes frantic efforts to escape, but the combined strength of the threads generally proves too strong. There can be no doubt that the present household system is doomed; the higher standard of intelligence demanded from women, the growth of interest in the problems of domestic economy, the movement for association of labour, the revolt against the survivals of barbaric complication in living—all these, which are symptoms of a great economic revolution, indicate, the approach of a new period.

The education of women is an essential part of the great movement we are considering. Women will shortly be voters, and women, at all events in England, are in a majority. We have to educate our mistresses as we once had to educate our masters. And the word "education" is here used by no means in the narrow sense. A woman may be acquainted with Greek and the higher mathematics, and be as uneducated in the wider relationships of life as a man in the like case. How much women suffer from this lack of education may be seen to-day even among those who are counted as leaders.

There are extravagances in every period of transition. Undoubtedly a potent factor in bringing about a saner attitude

will be the education of boys and girls together. The lack of early fellowship fosters an unnatural divergence of aims and ideals, and a consequent lack of sympathy. It makes possible those abundant foolish generalizations by men concerning "women," by women concerning "men." St. Augustine, at an early period of his ardent career, conceived with certain friends the notion of forming a community having goods in common; the scheme was almost effected when it was discovered that "those little wives, which some already had, and others would shortly have," objected, and so it fell through. Perhaps the *mulierculæ* were right. It is simply a rather remote instance of a fundamental divergence amply illustrated before our eyes. If men and women are to understand each other, to enter into each other's natures with mutual sympathy, and to become capable of genuine comradeship, the foundation must be laid in youth. Another wholesome reform, promoted by co-education, is the physical education of women. In the case of boys special attention has generally been given to physical education, and the lack of it is one among several artificial causes of that chronic ill-health which so often handicaps women. Women must have the same education as men, Miss Faithfull shrewdly observes, because that is sure to be the best. The present education of boys cannot, however, be counted a model, and the gradual introduction of co-education will produce many wholesome reforms. If the intimate association of the sexes destroys what remnant may linger of the unhealthy ideal of chivalry—according to which a woman was

treated as a cross between an angel and an idiot—that is matter for rejoicing. Wherever men and women stand in each other's presence the sexual instinct will always ensure an adequate ideal halo.

### III

The chief question that we have to ask when we consider the changing status of women is: How will it affect the reproduction of the race? Hunger and love are the two great motor impulses, the ultimate source, probably, of all other impulses. Hunger—that is to say, what we call "economic causes"—has, because it is the more widespread and constant, though not necessarily the more imperious instinct, produced nearly all the great zoological revolutions, including, as we have seen, the rise and fall of that phase of human evolution dominated by mother-law. Yet love has, in the form of sexual selection, even before we reach the vertebrates, moulded races to the ideal of the female; and reproduction is always the chief end of nutrition which hunger waits on, the supreme aim of life everywhere.

If we place on the one side man, as we know him during the historical period, and on the other, nearly every highly organized member of the animal family, there appears, speaking roughly and generally, a distinct difference in the relation which these two motor impulses bear to each other. Among animals generally, economics are comparatively so simple that it is possible to

satisfy the nutritive instinct without putting any hard pressure on the spontaneous play of the reproductive instinct. And nearly everywhere it is the female who has the chief voice in the establishment of sexual relationships. The males compete for the favour of the female by the fascination of their odour, or brilliant colour, or song, or grace, or strength, as revealed in what are usually mock-combats. The female is, in these respects, comparatively unaccomplished and comparatively passive. With her rests the final decision, and only after long hesitation, influenced, it seems, by a vaguely felt ideal resulting from her contemplation of the rivals, she calls the male of her choice.<sup>48</sup> A dim instinct seems to warn her of the pains and cares of maternity, so that only the largest promises of pleasure can induce her to undertake the function of reproduction. In civilized man, on the other hand, as we know him, the situation is to some extent reversed; it is the woman who, by the display of her attractions, competes for the favour of the man. The final invitation does not come, as among animals generally, from the female; the decision rests with the man. It would be a mistake to suppose that this change reveals the evolution of a superior method; although it has developed the beauty of women, it has clearly had its origin in economic causes. The demands of nutrition have overridden those of reproduction; sexual selection has, to a large extent, given place to natural selection, a process

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<sup>48</sup> See the very interesting work of Alfred Espinas, *Des Sociétés Animales*, which contains many fruitful suggestions for the student of human sociology.

clearly not for the advantage of the race. The changing status of women, in bestowing economic independence, will certainly tend to restore to sexual selection its due weight in human development.

In so doing it will certainly tend also to destroy prostitution, which is simply one of the forms in which the merging of sexual selection in natural selection has shown itself. Wherever sexual selection has free play, unhampered by economic considerations, prostitution is impossible. The dominant type of marriage is, like prostitution, founded on economic considerations; the woman often marries chiefly to earn her living; here, too, we may certainly expect profound modifications. We have long sought to preserve our social balance by placing an unreasonable licence in the one scale, an equally unreasonable abstinence in the other; the economic independence of women, tending to render both extremes unnecessary, can alone place the sexual relationships on a sound and free basis.

The State regulation of marriage has undoubtedly played a large and important part in the evolution of society. At the present time the advantages of this artificial control no longer appear so obvious (even when the evidence of the law courts is put aside); they will vanish altogether when women have attained complete economic independence. With the disappearance of the artificial barriers in the way of friendship between the sexes and of the economic motive to sexual relationships—perhaps the two chief forces which now tend to produce promiscuous sexual

intercourse, whether dignified or not with the name of marriage—men and women will be free to engage, unhampered, in the search, so complicated in a highly civilized condition of society, for a fitting mate. <sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> The subtle and complex character of the sexual relationships in a high civilization, and the unhappy results of their State regulation, was well expressed by Wilhelm von Humboldt in his *Ideen zu einen Versuch, die Grenzen der Wirksamkeit des Staates zu bestimmen*, so long ago as 1792: "A union so closely allied with the very nature of the respective individuals must be attended with the most hurtful consequences when the State attempts to regulate it by law, or, through the force of its institutions, to make it repose on anything save simple inclination. When we remember, moreover, that the State can only contemplate the final results of such regulations on the race, we shall be still more ready to admit the justice of this conclusion. It may reasonably be argued that a solicitude for the race only conducts to the same results as the highest solicitude for the most beautiful development of the inner man. For after careful observation it has been found that the uninterrupted union of one man with one woman is most beneficial to the race, and it is likewise undeniable that no other union springs from true, natural, harmonious love. And further, it may be observed that such love leads to the same results as those very relations which law and custom tend to establish. The radical error seems to be that the law commands; whereas such a relation cannot mould itself according to external arrangements, but depends wholly on inclination; and wherever coercion or guidance comes into collision with inclination, they divert it still farther from the proper path. Wherefore it appears to me that the State should not only loosen the bonds in this instance, and leave ampler freedom to the citizen, but that it should entirely withdraw its active solicitude from the institution of marriage, and both generally and in its particular modifications, should rather leave it wholly to the free choice of the individuals, and the various contracts they may enter into with respect to it. I should not be deterred from the adoption of this principle by the fear that all family relations might be disturbed, for although such a fear might be justified by considerations of particular circumstances and localities, it could not fairly be entertained in an inquiry into the nature of men and States in general. For experience frequently convinces us that just where law has imposed no fetters, morality most surely binds; the idea of external coercion is one entirely foreign to an institution which,

It is probable that this inevitable change will be brought about partly by the voluntary action of individuals, and in greater measure by the gradual and awkward method of shifting and ever freer divorce laws. The slow disintegration of State-regulated marriage from the latter cause may be observed now throughout the United States, where there is, on the whole, a developing tendency to frequency and facility of divorce. It is clear, however, that on this line marriage will not cease to be a concern to the State, and it may be as well to point out at once the important distinction between *State-regulated* and *State-registered* marriage. Sexual relationships, so long as they do not result in the production of children, are matters in which the community has, as a community, little or no concern, but as soon as a sexual relationship results in the pregnancy of the woman the community is at once interested. At this point it is clearly the duty of the State to register the relationship.<sup>50</sup>

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like marriage, reposes only on inclination and an inward sense of duty; and the results of such coercive institutions do not at all correspond to the intentions in which they originate."

<sup>50</sup> Such register should, as Bertillon rightly insisted, be of the most complete description—setting forth all the anthropological traits of the contracting parties—so that the characteristics of a human group at any time and place may be studied and compared. Registration of this kind would, beside its more obvious convenience, form an almost indispensable guide to the higher evolution of the race. I may here add that I have assumed, perhaps too rashly, that the natural tendency among civilized men and women is towards a monogamic and more or less permanent union; preceded, it may be in most individuals, by a more restless period of experiment. Undoubtedly, many variations will arise in the future, leading to more complex relationships. Such variations cannot be foreseen, and when they arise they will still have to prove their

It is necessary to remember that the kind of equality of the sexes towards which this change of status is leading, is social equality—that is, equality of freedom. It is not an intellectual equality, still less is it likeness. Men and women can only be alike mentally when they are alike in physical configuration and physiological function. Even complete economic equality is not attainable. Among animals which live in herds under the guidance of a leader, this leader is nearly always a male; there are few exceptions.<sup>51</sup> In woman, the long period of pregnancy and lactation, and the prolonged helplessness of her child, render her for a considerable period of her life economically dependent. On whom shall she be dependent? This is a question of considerable moment. According to the old conception of the family, all the members were slaves producing for the benefit of the owner, and it was natural that the wife should be supported by the husband when she is producing slaves for his service. But this conception is, as we have seen, no longer possible. It is clearly unfair also to compel the mother to depend on her own previous exertions. The reproduction of the race is a social function, and we are compelled to conclude that it is the duty of the community, as a community, to provide for the child-bearer when in the exercise of her social function she is unable to provide for herself. The woman engaged in producing a new member, who may be a source of incalculable profit or danger to the whole community,

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stability and their advantage to the race.

<sup>51</sup> As among geese, and, occasionally, it is said, among elephants.

cannot fail to be a source of the liveliest solicitude to everyone in the community, and it was a sane and beautiful instinct that found expression of old in the permission accorded to a pregnant woman to enter gardens and orchards, and freely help herself. Whether this instinct will ever again be embodied in a new form, and the reproduction of the race be recognized as truly a social function, is a question which even yet lacks actuality. The care of the child-bearer and her child will at present continue to be a matter for individual arrangement. That it will be arranged much better than at present we may reasonably hope. On the one hand, the reckless multiplication of children will probably be checked; on the other hand, a large body of women will no longer be shut out from maternity. That the state should undertake the regulation of the birth-rate we can scarcely either desire or anticipate. Undoubtedly the community has an abstract right to limit the number of its members. It may be pointed out, however, that under rational conditions of life the process would probably be self-regulating; in the human races, and also among animals generally, fertility diminishes as the organism becomes highly developed. And, without falling back on any natural law, it may be said that the extravagant procreation of children, leading to suffering both to parents and offspring, carried on under existing social conditions, is largely the result of ignorance, largely of religious or other superstition. A more developed social state would not be possible at all unless the social instincts were strong enough to check the reckless multiplication of offspring.

Richardson and others appear to advocate the special cultivation of a class of non-childbearing women. Certainly no woman who freely chose should be debarred from belonging to such a class. But reproduction is the end and aim of all life everywhere, and in order to live a humanly complete life, every healthy woman should have, not sexual relationships only, but the exercise at least once in her life of the supreme function of maternity, and the possession of those experiences which only maternity can give. That unquestionably is the claim of natural and reasonable living in the social state towards which we are moving.

To deal with the social organization of the future would be to pass beyond the limits that I have here set myself, and to touch on matters of which it is impossible to speak with certainty. The new culture of women, in the light and the open air, will doubtless solve many matters which now are dark to us. Morgan supposed that it was in some measure the failure of the Greeks and Romans to develop their womanhood which brought the speedy downfall of classic civilization. The women of the future will help to renew art and science as well as life. They will do more even than this, for the destiny of the race rests with women. "I have sometimes thought," Whitman wrote in his *Democratic Vistas*, "that the sole avenue and means to a reconstructed society depended primarily on a new birth, elevation, expansion, invigoration of women." That intuition is not without a sound basis, and if a great historical movement called for justification here would be enough.

### III

# THE NEW ASPECT OF THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT

Eighteenth-Century France—Pioneers of the Woman's Movement—The Growth of the Woman's Suffrage Movement—The Militant Activities of the Suffragettes—Their Services and Disservices to the Cause—Advantages of Women's Suffrage—Sex Questions in Germany—Bebel—The Woman's Rights Movement in Germany—The Development of Sexual Science in Germany—the Movement for the Protection of Motherhood—Ellen Key—The Question of Illegitimacy—Eugenics—Women as Law-makers in the Home.

### I

The modern conception of the political equality of women with men, we have seen, arose in France in the second half of the eighteenth century. Its way was prepared by the philosophic thinkers of the *Encyclopédie*, and the idea was definitely formulated by some of the finest minds of the age, notably by Condorcet, <sup>52</sup> as part of the great new programme of social

<sup>52</sup> In 1787 Condorcet declared (*Lettres d'un Bourgeois de New Haven*, Lettre II) that

and political reform which was to some small degree realized in the upheaval of the Revolution. The political emancipation of women constituted no part of the Revolution. It has indeed been maintained, and perhaps with reason, that the normal development of the revolutionary spirit would probably have ended in vanquishing the claim of masculine predominance if war had not diverted the movement of revolution by transforming it into the Terror. Even as it was, the rights of women were not without their champions even at this period. We ought specially to remember Olympe de Gouges, whose name is sometimes dismissed too contemptuously. With all her defects of character and education and literary style, Olympe de Gouges, as is now becoming recognized, was, in her biographer's words, "one of the loftiest and most generous souls of the epoch," in some respects superior to Madame Roland. She was the first woman to demand of the Revolution that it should be logical by proclaiming the rights of woman side by side with those of her equal, man, and in so doing she became the great pioneer of the feminist movement of to-day.<sup>53</sup> She owes the position more especially to her little pamphlet, issued in 1791, entitled *Déclaration des*

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women ought to have absolutely the same rights as men, and he repeated the same statement emphatically in 1790, in an article "Sur l'Admission des Femmes au Droit de Cité," published in the *Journal de la Société de 1789*. It must be added that Condorcet was not a democrat, and neither to men nor to women would he grant the vote unless they were proprietors.

<sup>53</sup> Léopold Lacour has given a full and reliable account of Olympe de Gouges (who was born at Montauban in 1755) in his *Trois Femmes de la Révolution*, 1900.

*Droits de la Femme*. It is this *Déclaration* which contains the oft-quoted (or misquoted) saying: "Women have the right to ascend the scaffold; they must also have the right to ascend the tribune." Two years later she had herself ascended the scaffold, but the other right she claimed is only now beginning to be granted to women. At that time there were too many more pressing matters to be dealt with, and the only women who had been taught to demand the rights of their sex were precisely those whom the Revolution was guillotining or exiling. Even had it been otherwise, we may be quite sure that Napoleon, the heir of the Revolution and the final arbiter of what was to be permanent in its achievements, would have sternly repressed any political freedom accorded to women. The only freedom he cared to grant to women was the freedom to produce food for cannon, and so far as lay in his power he sought to crush the political activities of women even in literature, as we see in his treatment of Mme de Staël.<sup>54</sup>

An Englishwoman of genius was in Paris at the time of the Revolution, with as broad a conception of the place of woman

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<sup>54</sup> It is noteworthy that the Empire had even a depressing effect on the physical activities of women. The eighteenth-century woman in France, although she was not athletic in the modern sense, enjoyed a free life in the open air and was fond of physical exercises. During the Directoire this tendency became very pronounced; women wore the scantiest of garments, were out of doors in all weathers, cultivated healthy appetites, and enjoyed the best of health. But with the establishment of the Empire these wholesome fashions were discarded, and women cultivated new ideals of fragile refinement indoors. (This evolution has been traced by Dr. Lucien Nars, *L'Hygiène*, September, 1911.)

side by side with man as Olympe de Gouges, while for the most part she was Olympe's superior. In 1792, a year after the *Déclaration des Droits de la Femme*, Mary Wollstonecraft—it is possible to some extent inspired by the brief *Déclaration*—published her *Vindication of the Rights of Women*. It was not a shrill outcry, nor an attack on men—in that indeed resembling the *Déclaration*—but just the book of a woman, a wise and sensible woman, who discusses many women's questions from a woman's point of view, and desires civil and political rights, not as a panacea for all evils, but simply because, as she argues, humanity cannot progress as a whole while one half of it is semi-educated and only half free. There can be little doubt that if the later advocates of woman's suffrage could have preserved more of Mary Wollstonecraft's sanity, moderation, and breadth of outlook, they would have diminished the difficulties that beset the task of convincing the community generally. Mary Wollstonecraft was, however, the inspired pioneer of a great movement which slowly gained force and volume.<sup>55</sup> During the long Victorian period the practical aims of this movement went chiefly into the direction of improving the education of girls so as to make it, so far as possible, like that of boys. In this matter an immense revolution was slowly accomplished, involving the

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<sup>55</sup> Concerning the rise and progress of this movement in England much information is sympathetically and vivaciously set forth in W. Lyon Blease's *Emancipation of English Women* (1910), a book, however, which makes no claim to be judicial or impartial; the author regards "unregulated male egoism" as the source of the difficulties in the way of women's suffrage.

entrance of women into various professions and employments hitherto reserved to men. That was a very necessary preliminary to the extension of the franchise to women. The suffrage propaganda could not, moreover, fail to benefit by the better education of women and their increased activity in public life. It was their activity, indeed, far more than the skill of the women who fought for the franchise, which made the political emancipation of women inevitable, and the noble and brilliant women who through the middle of the nineteenth century recreated the educational system for women, and so prepared them to play their proper part in life, were the best women workers the cause of women's enfranchisement ever had. There was, however, one distinguished friend of the emancipation of women whose advocacy of the cause at this period was of immense value. It is now nearly half a century since John Stuart Mill—inspired, like Thompson, by a woman—wrote his *Subjection of Women*, and it may undoubtedly be said that since that date no book on this subject published in any country—with the single exception of Bebel's *Woman*—has been so widely read or so influential. The support of this distinguished and authoritative thinker gave to the woman's movement a stamp of aristocratic intellectuality very valuable in a land where even the finest minds are apt to be afflicted by the disease of timidity, and was doubtless a leading cause of the cordial reception which in England the idea of women's political emancipation has long received among politicians. Bebel's book, speedily translated into

English, furnished the plebeian complement to Mill's.

The movement for the education of women and their introduction into careers previously monopolized by men inevitably encouraged the movement for extending the franchise to women. This political reform was remarkably successful in winning over the politicians, and not those of one party only. In England, since Mill published his *Subjection of Women* in 1869, there have always been eminent statesmen convinced of the desirability of granting the franchise to women, and among the rank and file of Members of Parliament, irrespective of party, a very large proportion have pledged themselves to the same cause. The difficulty, therefore, in introducing woman's suffrage into England has not been primarily in Parliament. The one point, at which political party feeling has caused obstruction—and it is certainly a difficult and important point—is the method by which woman's suffrage should be introduced. Each party—Conservative, Liberal, Labour—naturally enough desires that this great new voting force should first be applied at a point which would not be likely to injure its own party interests. It is probable that in each party the majority of the leaders are of opinion that the admission of female voters is inevitable and perhaps desirable; the dispute is as to the extent to which the floodgates should in the first place be opened. In accordance with English tradition, some kind of compromise, however illogical, suggests itself as the safest first step, but the dispute remains as to the exact class of women who should be first admitted and the

exact extent to which entrance should be granted to them.

The dispute of the gate-keepers would, however, be easily overcome if the pressure behind the gate were sufficiently strong. But it is not. However large a proportion of the voters in Great Britain may be in favour of women's franchise, it is certain that only a very minute percentage regard this as a question having precedency over all other questions. And the reason why men have only taken a very temperate interest in woman's suffrage is that women themselves, in the mass, have taken an equally temperate interest in the matter when they have not been actually hostile to the movement. It may indeed be said, even at the present time, that whenever an impartial poll is taken of a large miscellaneous group of women, only a minority are found to be in favour of woman's suffrage.<sup>56</sup> No significant event has occurred to stimulate general interest in the matter, and no supremely eloquent or influential voice has artificially stirred it. There has been no woman of Mary Wollstonecraft's genius and breadth of mind who has devoted herself to the cause, and since Mill the men who have made up their minds on this side have been content to leave the matter to the women's associations formed for securing the

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<sup>56</sup> Thus, in 1911 the National League for Opposing Women's Suffrage took an impartial poll of the women voters on the municipal register in several large constituencies, by sending a reply-paid postcard to ask whether or not they favoured the extension to women of the Parliamentary franchise. Only 5579 were in favour of it; 18,850 were against; 12,621 did not take the trouble to answer, and it was claimed, probably with reason, that a majority of these were not in favour of the vote.

success of the cause. These associations have, however, been led by women of a past generation, who, while of unquestionable intellectual power and high moral character, have viewed the woman question in a somewhat narrow, old-fashioned spirit, and have not possessed the gift of inspiring enthusiasm. Thus the growth of the movement, however steady it may have been, has been slow. John Stuart Mill's remark, in a letter to Bain in 1869, remains true to-day: "The most important thing women have to do is to stir up the zeal of women themselves."

In the meanwhile in some other countries where, except in the United States, it was of much more recent growth, the woman's suffrage movement has achieved success, with no great expenditure of energy. It has been introduced into several American States and Territories. It is established throughout Australasia. It is also established in Norway. In Finland women may not only vote, but also sit in Parliament.

It was in these conditions that the Women's Social and Political Union was formed in London. It was not an offshoot from any existing woman's suffrage society, but represented a crystallization of new elements. For the most part, even its leaders had not previously taken any active part in the movement for woman's suffrage. The suffrage movement had need of exactly such an infusion of fresh and ardent blood; so that the new society was warmly welcomed, and met with immediate success, finding recruits alike among the rich and the poor. Its unconventional methods, its eager and militant spirit, were felt to

supply a lacking element, and the first picturesque and dashing exploits of the Union were on the whole well received. The obvious sincerity and earnestness of these very fresh recruits covered the rashness of their new and rather ignorant enthusiasm.

But a hasty excess of ardour only befits a first uncalculated outburst of youthfulness. It is quite another matter when it is deliberately hardened into a rigid routine, and becomes an organized method of creating disorder for the purpose of advertising a grievance in season and out of season. Since, moreover, the attack was directed chiefly against politicians, precisely that class of the community most inclined to be favourable to woman's suffrage, the wrong-headedness of the movement becomes as striking as its offensiveness.

The effect on the early friends of the new movement was inevitable. Some, who had hailed it with enthusiasm and proclaimed its pioneers as new Joans of Arc, changed their tone to expostulation and protest, and finally relapsed into silence. Other friends of the movement, even among its former leaders, were less silent. They have revealed to the world, too unkindly, some of the influences which slowly corrupt such a movement from the inside when it hardens into sectarianism: the narrowing of aim, the increase of conventionality, the jealousy of rivals, the tendency to morbid emotionalism.

It is easy to exaggerate the misdeeds and the weaknesses of the suffragettes. It is undoubtedly true that they have alienated, in an increasing degree, the sympathies of the women of highest

character and best abilities among the advocates of woman's suffrage. Nearly all Englishwomen to-day who stand well above the average in mental distinction are in favour of woman's suffrage, though they may not always be inclined to take an active part in securing it. Perhaps the only prominent exception is Mrs. Humphry Ward. Yet they rarely associate themselves with the methods of the suffragettes. They do not, indeed, protest, for they feel there would be a kind of disloyalty in fighting against the Extreme Left of a movement to which they themselves belong; but they stand aloof. The women who are chiefly attracted to the ranks of the suffragettes belong to three classes: (1) Those of the well-to-do class with no outlet for their activities, who eagerly embrace an exciting occupation which has become, not only highly respectable, but even, in a sense, fashionable; they have no natural tendency to excess, but are easily moved by their social environment; some of these are rich, and the great principle—once formulated in an unhappy moment concerning a rich lady interested in social reform—"We must not kill the goose that lays the golden eggs," has never been despised by the suffragette leaders; (2) the rowdy element among women which is not so much moved to adopt the methods for the sake of the cause as to adopt the cause for the sake of the methods, so that in the case of their special emotional temperament it may be said, reversing an ancient phrase, that the means justify the end; this element of noisy explosiveness, always found in a certain proportion of women, though latent under ordinary

circumstances, is easily aroused by stimulation, and in every popular revolt the wildest excesses are the acts of women. (3) In this small but important group we find women of rare and beautiful character who, hypnotized by the enthralling influence of an idea, and often having no great intellectual power of their own, are even unconscious of the vulgarity that accompanies them, and gladly sacrifice themselves to a cause that seems to be sacred; these are the saints and martyrs of every movement.

When we thus analyse the suffragette outburst we see that it is really compounded out of quite varied elements: a conventionally respectable element, a rowdy element, and an ennobling element. It is, therefore, equally unreasonable to denounce its vices or to idealize its virtues. It is more profitable to attempt to balance its services and its disservices to the cause of women's suffrage.

Looked at dispassionately, the two main disadvantages of the suffragette agitation—and they certainly seem at the first glance very comprehensive objections—lie in its direction and in its methods. There are two vast bodies of people who require to be persuaded in order to secure woman's suffrage: first women themselves, and secondly their men-folk, who at present monopolize the franchise. Until the majority of both men and women are educated to understand the justice and reasonableness of this step, and until men are persuaded that the time has come for practical action, the most violent personal assaults on cabinet ministers—supposing such political methods to be otherwise unobjectionable—are beside the mark. They are

aimed in the wrong direction. This is so even when we leave aside the fact that politicians are sufficiently converted already. The primary task of women suffragists is to convert their own sex. Indeed it may be said that that is their whole task. Whenever the majority of women are persuaded that they ought to possess the vote, we may be quite sure that they will communicate that persuasion to their men-folk who are able to give them the vote. The conversion of the majority of women to a belief in women's suffrage is essential to its attainment because it is only by the influence of the women who belong to him, whom he knows and loves and respects, that the average man is likely to realize that, as Ellen Key puts it, "a ballot paper in itself no more injures the delicacy of a woman's hand than a cooking recipe." The antics of women in the street, however earnest those women may be, only leave him indifferent, even hostile, at most, amused.

It may be added that in any case it would be undesirable, even if possible, to bestow the suffrage on women so long as only a minority have the wish to exercise it. It would be contrary to sound public policy. It would not only discredit political rights, but it would tend to give the woman's vote too narrow and one-sided a character. To grant women the right to vote is a different matter from granting women the right to enter a profession. In order to give women the right to be doctors or lawyers it is not necessary that women generally should be convinced of the advantage of such a step. The matter chiefly concerns the very small number of women who desire the privilege. But the

women who vote will be in some measure legislating for women generally, and it is therefore necessary that women generally should participate.

But even if it is admitted—although, as we have seen, there is a twofold reason for not making such an admission—that the suffragettes are justified in regarding politicians as the obstacles in the way of their demands, there still remains the question of the disadvantage of their method. This method is by some euphemistically described as the introduction of "nagging" into politics; but even at this mild estimate of its character the question may still be asked whether the method is calculated to attain the desired end. One hears women suffragettes declare that this is the only kind of argument men understand. There is, however, in the masculine mind—and by no means least when it is British—an element which strongly objects to be worried and bullied even into a good course of action. The suffragettes have done their best to stimulate that element of obstinacy. Even among men who viewed the matter from an unprejudiced standpoint many felt that, necessary as woman's suffrage is, the policy of the suffragettes rendered the moment unfavourable for its adoption. It is a significant fact that in the countries which have so far granted women the franchise no methods in the slightest degree resembling those of the suffragettes have ever been practised. It is not easy to imagine Australia tolerating such methods, and in Finland full Parliamentary rights were freely granted, as is generally recognized, precisely as a mark of

gratitude for women's helpfulness in standing side by side with their men in a great political struggle. The policy of obstruction adopted by the English suffragettes, with its "tactics" of opposing at election times the candidates of the very party whose leaders they are imploring to grant them the franchise, was so foolish that it is little wonder that many doubted whether women at all understand the methods of politics, or are yet fitted to take a responsible part in political life.

The suffragette method of persuading public men seems to be, on the whole, futile, even if it were directed at the proper quarter, and even if it were in itself a justifiable method. But it would be possible to grant these "ifs" and still to feel that a serious injury is done to the cause of woman's suffrage when the method of violence is adopted by women. Some suffragettes have argued, in this matter, that in political crises men also have acted just as badly or worse. But, even if we assume that this is the case,<sup>57</sup> it has been one of the chief arguments hitherto for the admission of women into political life that they exercise an elevating and refining influence, so that their entrance into this field will serve to purify politics. That, no doubt, is an argument mostly brought forward by men, and may be regarded as, in some measure, an amiable masculine delusion, since most of the refining and elevating elements in civilization probably owe their origin not

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<sup>57</sup> It must not be too hastily assumed. Unless we go back to ancient plots of the Guy Fawkes type (now only imitated by self-styled anarchists), the leaders of movements of political reform have rarely, if ever, organized outbursts of violence; such violence, when it occurred, has been the spontaneous and unpremeditated act of a mob.

to women but to men. But it is not altogether a delusion. In the virtues of force—however humbly those virtues are to be classed—women, as a sex, can never be the rivals of men, and when women attempt to gain their ends by the demonstration of brute force they can only place themselves at a disadvantage. They are laying down the weapons they know best how to use, and adopting weapons so unsuitable that they only injure the users.

Many women, speaking on behalf of the suffragettes, protest against the idea that women must always be "charming." And if "charm" is to be understood in so narrow and conventionalized a sense that it means something which is incompatible with the developed natural activities, whether of the soul or of the body, then such a protest is amply justified. But in the larger sense, "charm"—which means the power to effect work without employing brute force—is indispensable to women. Charm is a woman's strength just as strength is a man's charm. And the justification for women in this matter is that herein they represent the progress of civilization. All civilization involves the substitution in this respect of the woman's method for the man's. In the last resort a savage can only assert his rights by brute force. But with the growth of civilization the wronged man, instead of knocking down his opponent, employs "charm"; in other words he engages an advocate, who, by the exercise of sweet reasonableness, persuades twelve men in a box that his wrongs must be righted, and the matter is then finally settled, not by man's weapon, the fist, but by woman's weapon, the tongue.

Nowadays the same method of "charm" is being substituted for brute force in international wrongs, and with the complete substitution of arbitration for war the woman's method of charm will have replaced the man's method of brute force along the whole line of legitimate human activity. If we realize this we can understand why it is that a group of women who, even in the effort to support a good cause, revert to the crude method of violence are committing a double wrong. They are wronging their own sex by proving false to its best traditions, and they are wronging civilization by attempting to revive methods of savagery which it is civilization's mission to repress. Therefore it may fairly be held that even if the methods of the suffragettes were really adequate to secure women's suffrage, the attainment of the franchise by those methods would be a misfortune. The ultimate loss would be greater than the gain.

If we hold the foregoing considerations in mind it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that neither in their direction nor in their nature are the methods of the suffragettes fitted to attain the end desired. We have still, however, to consider the other side of the question.

Whenever an old movement receives a strong infusion of new blood, whatever excesses or mistakes may arise, it is very unlikely that all the results will be on the same side. It is certainly not so in this case. Even the opposition to woman's suffrage which the suffragettes are responsible for, and the Anti-Suffrage societies which they have called into active existence, are not an

unmitigated disadvantage. Every movement of progress requires a vigorous movement of opposition to stimulate its progress, and the clash of discussion can only be beneficial in the end to the progressive cause.

But the immense advantage of the activity of the suffragettes has been indirect. It has enabled the great mass of ordinary sensible women who neither join Suffrage societies nor Anti-Suffrage societies to think for themselves on this question. Until a few years ago, while most educated women were vaguely aware of the existence of a movement for giving women the vote, they only knew of it as something rather unpractical and remote; its reality had never been brought home to them. When women witnessed the eruption into the streets of a band of women—most of them apparently women much like themselves—who were so convinced that the franchise must be granted to women, here and now, that they were prepared to face publicity, ridicule, and even imprisonment, then "votes for women" became to them, for the first time, a real and living issue. In a great many cases, certainly, they realized that they intensely disliked the people who behaved in this way and any cause that was so preached. But in a great many other cases they realized, for the first time definitely, that the demand of votes for women was a reasonable demand, and that they were themselves suffragists, though they had no wish to take an active part in the movement, and no real sympathy with its more "militant" methods. There can be no doubt that in this way the suffragettes have performed

an immense service for the cause of women's suffrage. It has been for the most part an indirect and undesigned service, but in the end it will perhaps more than serve to counterbalance the disadvantages attached to their more conscious methods and their more deliberate aims.

If, as we may trust, this service will be the main outcome of the suffragette phase of the women's movement, it is an outcome to be thankful for; we may then remember with gratitude the ardent enthusiasm of the suffragettes and forget the foolish and futile ways in which it was manifested. There has never been any doubt as to the ultimate adoption of women's suffrage; its gradual extension among the more progressive countries of the world sufficiently indicates that it will ultimately reach even to the most backward countries. Its accomplishment in England has been gradual, although it is here so long since the first steps were taken, not because there has been some special and malignant opposition to it on the part of men in general and politicians in particular, but simply because England is an old and conservative country, with a very ancient constitutional machinery which effectually guards against the hasty realization of any scheme of reform. This particular reform, however, is not an isolated or independent scheme; it is an essential part of a great movement in the social equalization of the sexes which has been going on for centuries in our civilization, a movement such as may be correspondingly traced in the later stages of the civilizations of antiquity. Such a movement we may by our efforts help forward,

we may for a while retard, but it is a part of civilization, and it would be idle to imagine that we can affect the ultimate issue.

That the issue of women's suffrage may be reached in England within a reasonable period is much to be desired for the sake of the woman's movement in the larger sense, which has nothing to do with politics, and is now impeded by this struggle. The enfranchisement of women, Miss Frances Cobbe declared thirty years ago, is "the crown and completion" of all progress in women's movement. "Votes for women," exclaims, more youthfully but not less unreasonably, Miss Christabel Pankhurst, "means a new Heaven and a new Earth." But women's suffrage no more means a new Heaven or even a new Earth than it means, as other people fear, a new Purgatory and a new Hell. We may see this quite plainly in Australasia. Women's votes aid in furthering social legislation and contribute to the passing of acts which have their good side, and, no doubt, like everything else, their bad side. As Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who devoted her life to the political enfranchisement of women, declared, the ballot is, at most, only the vestibule to women's emancipation. Man's suffrage has not introduced the millennium, and it is foolish to suppose that woman's suffrage can. It is merely an act of justice and a reasonable condition of social hygiene.

The attainment of the suffrage, if it is a beginning and not an end, will thus have a real and positive value in liberating the woman's movement from a narrow and sterilizing phase of its course. In England, especially, the woman's movement has in

the past largely confined itself to imitating men and to obtaining the same work and the same rights as men. Putting the matter more broadly, it may be said that it has been the aim of the woman's movement to secure woman's claims as a human being rather than as woman. But that is only half the task of the woman's movement, and perhaps not the most essential half. Women can never be like men, any more than men can be like women. It is their unlikeness which renders them indispensable to each other, and which also makes it imperative that each sex should have its due share in moulding the conditions of life. Woman's function in life can never be the same as man's, if only because women are the mothers of the race. That is the point, the only point, at which women have an uncontested supremacy over men. The most vital problem before our civilization today is the problem of motherhood, the question of creating the human beings best fitted for modern life, the practical realization of a sound eugenics. Manouvrier, the distinguished anthropologist, who carries feminism to its extreme point in the scientific sphere, yet recognizes the fundamental fact that "a woman's part is to make children." But he clearly perceives also that "in all its extent and all its consequences that part is not surpassed in importance, in difficulty, or in dignity, by the man's part." On the contrary it is a part which needs "an amount of intelligence incontestably superior, and by far, to that required by most masculine occupations."<sup>58</sup> We are here at the core of

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<sup>58</sup> *Revue de l'Ecole d'Anthropologie*, February, 1909, p. 50.

the woman's movement. And the full fruition of that movement means that women, by virtue of their supremacy in this matter, shall take their proper share in legislation for life, not as mere sexless human beings, but as women, and in accordance with the essential laws of their own nature as women.

## II

There is a further question. Is it possible to discern the actual embodiment of this new phase of the woman movement? I think it is.

To those who are accustomed to watch the emotional pulse of mankind, nothing has seemed so remarkable during recent years as the eruption of sex questions in Germany. We had always been given to understand that the sphere of women and the laws of marriage had been definitely prescribed and fixed in Germany for at least two thousand years, since the days of Tacitus, in fact, and with the best possible results. Germans assured the world in stentorian tones that only in Germany could young womanhood be seen in all its purity, and that in the German *Hausfrau* the supreme ideal had been reached, the woman whose great mission is to keep alive the perennial fire of the ancient German hearth. Here and there, indeed, the quiet voice of science was heard in Germany; thus Schrader, the distinguished investigator of Teutonic origins, in commenting on the oft-quoted testimony of Tacitus to the chastity of the German women, has appositely

referred to the detailed evidences furnished by the Committee of pastors of the Evangelical Church as to the extreme prevalence of unchastity among the women of rural Germany, and argued that these widespread customs must be very ancient and deep-rooted. <sup>59</sup> But Germans in general refused to admit that Tacitus had only used the idea of German virtue as a stick to beat his own fellow-countrywomen with.

The Social-Democratic movement, which has so largely overspread industrial and even intellectual Germany, prepared the way for a less traditional and idealistic way of feeling in regard to these questions. The publication by Bebel of a book, *Die Frau*, in which the leader of the German Social-Democratic party set forth the Socialist doctrine of the position of women in society, marked the first stage in the new movement. This book exercised a wide influence, more especially on uncritical readers. It is, indeed, from a scientific point of view a worthless book—if a book in which genuine emotions are brought to the cause of human freedom and social righteousness may ever be so termed—but it struck a rude blow at the traditions of Teutonic sentiment. With something of the rough tone and temper of the great peasant who initiated the German Reformation, a man who had himself sprung from the people, and who knew of what he

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<sup>59</sup> O. Schrader, *Reallexicon*, Art. "Keuschheit." He considers that Tacitus merely shows that German women were usually chaste after marriage. A few centuries later, Lea points out, Salvianus, while praising the barbarians generally for their chastity, makes an exception in the case of the Alemanni. (See also Havelock Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, Vol. VI, "Sex in Relation to Society," pp. 382-4.)

was speaking, here set down in downright fashion the actual facts as to the position of women in Germany, as well as what he conceived to be the claims of justice in regard to that position, slashing with equal vigour alike at the absurdities of conventional marriage and of prostitution, the obverse and the reverse, he declared, of a false society. The emotional renaissance with which we are here concerned seems to have no special and certainly no exclusive association with the Social-Democratic movement, but it can scarcely be doubted that the permeation of a great mass of the German people by the socialistic conceptions which in their bearing on women have been rendered so familiar by Bebel's exposition has furnished, as it were, a ready-made sounding-board which has given resonance and effect to voices which might otherwise have been quickly lost in vacuity.

There is another movement which counts for something in the renaissance we are here concerned with, though for considerably less than one might be led to expect. What is specifically known as the "woman's rights' movement" is in no degree native to Germany, though Hippel is one of the pioneers of the woman's movement, and it is only within recent years that it has reached Germany. It is alien to the Teutonic feminine mind, because in Germany the spheres of men and women are so far apart and so unlike that the ideal of imitating men fails to present itself to a German woman's mind. The delay, moreover, in the arrival of the woman's movement in Germany had given time for a clearer view of that movement and a criticism of its defects to form

even in the lands of its origin, so that the German woman can no longer be caught unawares by the cry for woman's rights. Still, however qualified a view might be taken of its benefits, it had to be recognized, even in Germany, that it was an inevitable movement, and to some extent at all events indispensable from the woman's point of view. The same right to education as men, the same rights of public meeting and discussion, the same liberty to enter the liberal professions, these are claims which during recent years have been widely made by German women and to some extent secured, while—as is even more significant—they are for the most part no longer very energetically disputed. The International Congress of Women which met in Berlin in 1904 was a revelation to the citizens of Berlin of the skill and dignity with which women could organize a congress and conduct business meetings. It was notable, moreover, in that, though under the auspices of an International Council, it showed the large number of German women who are already entitled to take a leading part in the movements for women's welfare. Both directly and indirectly, indeed, such a movement cannot be otherwise than specially beneficial in Germany. The Teutonic reverence for woman, the assertion of the "aliquid divinum," has sometimes been accompanied by the openly expressed conviction that she is a fool. Outside Germany it would not be easy to find the representative philosophers of a nation putting forward so contemptuous a view of women as is set forth by Schopenhauer or by Nietzsche, while even within recent years a

German physician of some ability, the late Dr. Möbius, published a book on the "physiological weak-mindedness of women."

The new feminine movement in Germany has received highly important support from the recent development of German science. The German intellect, exceedingly comprehensive in its outlook, ploddingly thorough, and imperturbably serious, has always taken the leading and pioneering part in the investigation of sexual problems, whether from the standpoint of history, biology, or pathology. Early in the nineteenth century, when even more courage and resolution were needed to face the scientific study of such questions than is now the case, German physicians, unsupported by any co-operation in other countries, were the pioneers in exploring the paths of sexual pathology.<sup>60</sup> From the antiquarian side, Bachofen, more than half a century ago, put forth his conception of the exalted position of the primitive mother which, although it has been considerably battered by subsequent research, has been by no means without its value, and is of special significance from the present standpoint, because it sprang from precisely the same view of life as that animating the German women who are to-day inaugurating the movement we are here concerned with. From the medical side the late Professor Krafft-Ebing of Vienna and Dr. Albert Moll of Berlin are recognized throughout the world as leading authorities on sexual

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<sup>60</sup> Thus Kaan, anticipating Krafft-Ebing, published a *Psychopathia Sexualis*, in 1844, and Casper, in 1852, was the first medical authority to point out that sexual inversion is sometimes due to a congenital psychic condition.

pathology, and in recent times many other German physicians of the first authority can be named in this field; while in Austria Dr. F.S. Krauss and his coadjutors in the annual volumes of *Anthropophyteia* are diligently exploring the rich and fruitful field of sexual folk-lore. The large volumes of the *Jahrbuch für Sexuelle Zwischenstufen*, edited by Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld of Berlin, have presented discussions of the commonest of sexual aberrations with a scientific and scholarly thoroughness, a practical competence, as well as admirable tone, which we may seek in vain in other countries. In Vienna, moreover, Professor Freud, with his bold and original views on the sexual causation of many abnormal mental and nervous conditions, and his psycho-analytic method of investigating and treating them, although his doctrines are by no means universally accepted, is yet exerting a revolutionary influence all over the world. During the last ten years, indeed, the amount of German scientific and semi-scientific literature, dealing with every aspect of the sexual question, and from every point of view, is altogether unparalleled. It need scarcely be said that much of this literature is superficial or worthless. But much of it is sound, and it would seem that on the whole it is this portion of it which is most popular. Thus Dr. August Forel, formerly professor of psychiatry at Zurich and a physician of world-wide reputation, published a few years ago at Munich a book on the sexual question, *Die Sexuelle Frage*, in which all the questions of the sexual life, biological, medical, and social, are seriously discussed with

no undue appeal to an ignorant public; it had an immediate success and a large sale. Dr. Forel had not entered this field before; he had merely come to the conclusion that every man at the end of his life ought to set forth his observations and conclusions regarding the most vital of questions. Again, at about the same time, Dr. Iwan Bloch, of Berlin, published his many-sided work on the sexual life of our time, *Das Sexualleben Unserer Zeit*, a work less remarkable than Forel's for the weight of the personal authority expressed, but more remarkable by the range of its learning and the sympathetic attitude it displayed towards the best movements of the day; this book also met with great success.<sup>61</sup> Still more recently (1912) Dr. Albert Moll, with characteristic scientific thoroughness, has edited, and largely himself written, a truly encyclopædic *Handbuch der Sexualwissenschaften*. The eminence of the writers of these books and the mental calibre needed to read them suffice to show that we are not concerned, as a careless observer might suppose, with a matter of supply and demand in prurient literature, but with the serious and widespread appreciation of serious investigations. This same appreciation is shown not only by several bio-sociological periodicals of high scientific quality, but by the existence of a journal like *Sexual-Probleme*, edited by Dr.

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<sup>61</sup> Both Forel's and Bloch's books have become well known through translations in England and America. Dr. Bloch is also the author of an extremely erudite and thorough history of syphilis, which has gone far to demonstrate that this disease was introduced into Europe from America on the first discovery of the New World at the end of the fifteenth century.

Max Marcuse, a journal with many distinguished contributors, and undoubtedly the best periodical in this field to be found in any language.

At the same time the new movement of German women, however it may arise from or be supported by political or scientific movements, is fundamentally emotional in its character. If we think of it, every great movement of the Teutonic soul has been rooted in emotion. The German literary renaissance of the eighteenth century was emotional in its origin and received its chief stimulus from the contagion of the new irruption of sentiment in France. Even German science is often influenced, and not always to its advantage, by German sentiment. The Reformation is an example on a huge scale of the emotional force which underlies German movements. Luther, for good and for evil, is the most typical of Germans, and the Luther who made his mark in the world—the shrewd, coarse, superstitious peasant who blossomed into genius—was an avalanche of emotion, a great mass of natural human instincts irresistible in their impetuosity. When we bear in mind this general tendency to emotional expansiveness in the manifestations of the Teutonic soul we need feel no surprise that the present movement among German women should be, to a much greater extent than the corresponding movements in other countries, an emotional renaissance. It is not, first and last, a cry for political rights, but for emotional rights, and for the reasonable regulation of all those social functions which are

founded on the emotions. <sup>62</sup>

This movement, although it may properly be said to be German, since its manifestations are mainly exhibited in the great German Empire, is yet essentially a Teutonic movement in the broader sense of the word. Germans of Austria, Germans of Switzerland, Dutch women, Scandinavians, have all been drawn into this movement. But it is in Germany proper that they all find the chief field of their activities.

If we attempt to define in a single sentence the specific object of this agitation we may best describe it as based on the demands of woman the mother, and as directed to the end of securing for her the right to control and regulate the personal and social relations which spring from her nature as mother or possible mother. Therein we see at once both the intimately emotional and practical nature of this new claim and its decisive unlikeness to the earlier woman movement. That was definitely a demand for emancipation; political enfranchisement was its goal; its perpetual assertion was that women must be allowed to do everything that men do. But the new Teutonic woman's movement, so far from making as its ideal the imitation of men, bases itself on that which most essentially marks the woman as unlike the man.

The basis of the movement is significantly indicated by the title, *Mutterschutz*—the protection of the mother—originally

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<sup>62</sup> This attitude is plainly reflected even in many books written by men; I may mention, for instance, Frenssen's well-known novel *Hilligenlei* (*Holyland*).

borne by "a Journal for the reform of sexual morals," established in 1905, edited by Dr. Helene Stöcker, of Berlin, and now called *Die Neue Generation*. All the questions that radiate outwards from the maternal function are here discussed: the ethics of love, prostitution ancient and modern, the position of illegitimate mothers and illegitimate children, sexual hygiene, the sexual instruction of the young, etc. It must not be supposed that these matters are dealt with from the standpoint of a vigilance society for combating vice. The demand throughout is for the regulation of life, for reform, but for reform quite as much in the direction of expansion as of restraint. On many matters of detail, indeed, there is no agreement among these writers, some of whom approach the problems from the social and practical side, some from the psychological and philosophic side, others from the medical, legal, or historical sides.

This journal was originally the organ of the association for the protection of mothers, more especially unmarried mothers, called the *Bund für Mutterschutz*. There are many agencies for dealing with illegitimate children, but the founders of this association started from the conviction that it is only through the mother that the child can be adequately cared for. As nearly a tenth of the children born in Germany are illegitimate, and the conditions of life into which such children are thrown are in the highest degree unfavourable, the question has its actuality.<sup>63</sup> It is the aim of the *Bund für Mutterschutz* to rehabilitate the

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<sup>63</sup> In most countries illegitimacy is decreasing; in Germany it is steadily increasing,

unmarried mother, to secure for her the conditions of economic independence—whatever social class she may belong to—and ultimately to effect a change in the legal status of illegitimate mothers and children alike. The Bund, which is directed by a committee in which social, medical, and legal interests are alike represented, already possesses numerous branches, in addition to its head-quarters in Berlin, and is beginning to initiate practical measures on the lines of its programme, notably Homes for Mothers, of which it has established nearly a dozen in different parts of Germany.

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alike in rural and urban districts. Illegitimate births are, however, more numerous in the cities than in the country. Of the constituent states of the German Empire, the illegitimate birth-rate is lowest in Prussia, highest in Saxony and Bavaria. In Munich 27 per cent of the births are illegitimate. (The facts are clearly brought out in an article by Dr. Arthur Grünspan in the *Berliner Tagblatt* for January 6, 1911, reproduced in *Die Neue Generation*, July, 1911.) Thus, in Prussia, while the total births between 1903 and 1908, notwithstanding a great increase in the population, have only increased 2.6 per cent, the illegitimate births have increased as much as 11.1 per cent. The increase is marked in nearly all the German States. It is specially marked in Saxony; here the proportion of illegitimate births to the total number of births was, in 1903, 12.51 per cent, and in 1908 it had already risen to 14.40 per cent. In Berlin it is most marked; here it began in 1891, when there were nearly 47,000 legitimate births; by 1909, however, the legitimate births had fallen to 38,000, a decrease of 19.4 per cent. But illegitimate births rose during the same period from nearly 7000 to over 9000, an increase of 35 per cent. The proportion of illegitimate births to the total births is now over 20 per cent, so that to every four legitimate children there is rather more than one illegitimate child. It may be said that this is merely due to an increasing proportion of unmarried women. That, however, is not the case. The marriage-rate is on the whole rising, and the average age of women at marriage is becoming lower rather than higher. Grünspan considers that this increase in illegitimacy is likely to continue, and he is inclined to attribute it less to economic than to social-psychological causes.

In 1911 the first International Congress for the Protection of Mothers and for Sexual Reform was held at Dresden, in connection with the great Exhibition of Hygiene. As a result of this Congress, an International Union was constituted, representing Germany, Austria, Italy, Sweden, and Holland, which may probably be taken to be the countries which have so far manifested greatest interest in the programme of sexual reform based on recognition of the supreme importance of motherhood. This movement may, therefore, be said to have overcome the initial difficulties, the antagonism, the misunderstanding, and the opprobrium, which every movement in the field of sexual reform inevitably encounters, and often succumbs to.

It would be a mistake to regard this Association as a merely philanthropic movement. It claims to be "An Association for the Reform of Sexual Ethics," and *Die Neue Generation* deals with social and ethical rather than with philanthropic questions. In these respects it reflects the present attitude of many thoughtful German women, though the older school of women's rights advocates still holds aloof. We may here, for instance, find a statement of the recent discussion concerning the right of the mother to destroy her offspring before birth. This has been boldly claimed for women by Countess Gisela von Streitberg, who advocates a return to the older moral view which prevailed not only in classic antiquity, but even, under certain conditions, in Christian practice, until Canon law, asserting that the embryo

had from the first an independent life, pronounced abortion under all circumstances a crime. Countess von Streitberg takes the standpoint that as the chief risks and responsibilities must necessarily rest upon the woman, it is for her to decide whether she will permit the embryo she bears to develop. Dr. Marie Raschke, taking up the discussion from the legal side, is unable to agree that abortion should cease to be a punishable offence, though she advocates considerable modifications in the law on this matter. Dr. Siegfried Weinberg, summarizing this discussion, again from the legal standpoint, considers that there is considerable right on the Countess's side, because from the modern juridical standpoint a criminal enactment is only justified because it protects a right, and in law the embryo possesses no rights which can be injured. From the moral standpoint, also, it is argued, its destruction often becomes justifiable in the interests of the community.

This debatable question, while instructive as an example of the radical manner in which German women are now beginning to face moral questions, deals only with an isolated point which has hardly yet reached the sphere of practical politics.<sup>64</sup> It is more interesting to consider the general conceptions which underlie this movement, and we can hardly do this better than by studying the writings of Ellen Key, who is not only one of its recognized leaders, but may be said to present its aims and ideals in a broader

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<sup>64</sup> I have discussed this point in *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, Vol. VI, "Sex in Relation to Society," chap. xii.

and more convinced manner than any other writer.

Ellen Key's views are mainly contained in three books, *Love and Marriage*, *The Century of the Child*, and *The Women's Movement*, in which form they enjoy a large circulation, and are now becoming well known, through translations, in England and America. She carefully distinguishes her aims from what she regards as the American conception of progress in woman's movements, that is to say the tendency for women to seek to capture the activities which may be much more adequately fulfilled by the other sex, while at the same time neglecting the far weightier matters that concern their own sex. Man and woman are not natural enemies who need to waste their energies in fighting over their respective rights and privileges; in spiritual as in physical life they are only fruitful together. Women, indeed, need free scope for their activities—and the earlier aspirations of feminism are thus justified—but they need it, not to wrest away any tasks that men may be better fitted to perform, but to play their part in that field of creative life which is peculiarly their own. Ellen Key would say that the highest human unit is triune: father, mother, and child. Marriage, therefore, instead of being, as it is to-day, the last thing to be thought of in education, becomes the central point of life. In Ellen Key's conception, "those who love each other are man and wife," and by love she means not a temporary inclination, but "a synthesis of desire and friendship," just as the air is a mixture of oxygen and nitrogen. It must be this for both sexes alike, and Ellen Key sees a real

progress in what seems to her the modern tendency for men to realize that the soul has its erotic side, and for women to realize that the senses have. She has no special sympathy with the cry for purity in masculine candidates for marriage put forward by some women of the present day. She observes that many men who have painfully struggled to maintain this ideal meet with disillusion, for it is not the masculine lamb, but much more the spotted leopard, who fascinates women. The notion that women have higher moral instincts than men Ellen Key regards as absurd. The majority of Frenchwomen, she remarks, were against Dreyfus, and the majority of Englishwomen approved the South African war. The really fundamental difference between man and woman is that he can usually give his best as a creator, and she as a lover, that his value is according to his work and hers according to her love. And in love the demand for each sex alike must not be primarily for a mere anatomical purity, but for passion and for sincerity.

The aim of love, as understood by Ellen Key, is always marriage and the child, and as soon as the child comes into question society and the State are concerned. Before fruition, love is a matter for the lovers alone, and the espionage, ceremony, and routine now permitted or enjoined are both ridiculous and offensive. "The flower of love belongs to the lovers, and should remain their secret; it is the fruit of love which brings them into relation to society." The dominating importance of the child, the parent of the race to be, alone makes the immense

social importance of sexual union. It is not marriage which sanctifies generation, but generation which sanctifies marriage. From the point of view of "the sanctity of generation" and the welfare of the race, Ellen Key looks forward to a time when it will be impossible for a man and woman to become parents when they are unlikely to produce a healthy child, though she is opposed to Neo-Malthusian methods, partly on æsthetic grounds and partly on the more dubious grounds of doubt as to their practical efficiency; it is from this point of view also that she favours sexual equality in matters of divorce, the legal assimilation of legitimate and illegitimate children, the recognition of unions outside marriage,—a recognition already legally established under certain circumstances in Sweden, in such a way as to confer the rights of legitimacy on the child,—and she is even prepared to advise women under some conditions to become mothers outside marriage, though only when there are obstacles to legal marriage, and as the outcome of deliberate will and resolution. In these and many similar proposals in detail, set forth in her earlier books, it is clear that Ellen Key has sometimes gone beyond the mandate of her central conviction, that love is the first condition for increasing the vitality alike of the race and of the individuality, and that the question of love, properly considered, is the question of creating the future man. As she herself has elsewhere quite truly pointed out, practice must precede, and precede by a very long time, the establishment of definite rules in matters of detail.

It will be noticed that a point with which Ellen Key and the leaders of the new German woman's movement specially concern themselves is the affectional needs of the "supernumerary" woman and the legitimation of her children. There is an excess of women over men, in Germany as in most other countries. That excess, it is said, is balanced by the large number of women who do not wish to marry. But that is too cheap a solution of the question. Many women may wish to remain unmarried, but no woman wishes to be forced to remain unmarried. Every woman, these advocates of the rights of women claim, has a right to motherhood, and in exercising the right under sound conditions she is benefiting society. But our marriage system, in the rigid form which it has long since assumed, has not now the elasticity necessary to answer these demands. It presents a solution which is often impossible, always difficult, and perhaps in a large proportion of cases undesirable. But for a woman who is shut out from marriage to grasp at the vital facts of love and motherhood which she perhaps regards, unreasonably or not, as the supreme things in the world, must often be under such conditions a disastrous step, while it is always accompanied by certain risks. Therefore, it is asked, why should there not be, as of old there was, a relationship established which while of less dignity than marriage, and less exclusive in its demands, should yet permit a woman to enter into an honourable, open, and legally recognized relationship with a man? Such a relationship a woman could proclaim to the whole world, if necessary, without

reflecting any disesteem upon herself or her child, while it would give her a legal claim on her child's father. Such a relationship would be substantially the same as the ancient concubinate, which persisted even in Christendom up to the sixteenth century. Its establishment in Sweden has apparently been satisfactory, and it is now sought to extend it to other countries. <sup>65</sup>

It is interesting to compare, or to contrast, the movement of which Ellen Key has been a conspicuous champion with the futile movement initiated nearly a century ago by the school of Saint-Simon and Prosper Enfantin, in favour of "la femme libre." <sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> It is remarkable that in early times in Spain the laws recognized concubinage (*barraganía*) as almost equal to marriage, and as conferring equal rights on the child, even on the sons of the clergy, who could thus inherit from their fathers by right of the privileges accorded to the concubine or *barragana*. *Barraganía*, however, was not real marriage, and in many regions it could be contracted by married men (R. Altamira, *Historia de España y de la Civilización Española*, Vol. I, pp. 644 et seq.).

<sup>66</sup> "La femme libre," in quest of whom the young Saint-Simonians preached a crusade, must be a woman of reflection and intellect who, having meditated on the fate of her "sisters," knowing the wants of women, and having sounded those feminine capacities which man has never completely penetrated, shall give forth the confession of her sex, without restriction or reserve, in such a manner as to furnish the indispensable elements for formulating the rights and duties of woman. Saint Simon had asked Madame de Staël to undertake this rôle, but she failed to respond. When George Sand published her first novels, one Guérout was commissioned to ascertain if the author of *Lélia* would undertake this important service. He found a badly dressed woman who was using her talents to gain a living, but was by no means anxious to become the high priestess of a new religion. Even after his disappointment Enfantin looked eagerly forward to the publication of George Sand's *Histoire de ma Vie*, hoping that at last the great revelation was coming, and he was again disillusioned. But before this Emile Barrault had arisen and declared that in the East, in the solitude of the harem, "la femme libre" would be found in the person of some odalisque. The "mission

That earlier movement had no doubt its bright and ideal side, but it was not supported by a sound and scientific view of life; it was rooted in sand and soon withered up. The kind of freedom which Ellen Key advocates is not a freedom to dispense with law and order, but rather a freedom to recognize and follow true law; it is the freedom which in morals as well as in politics is essential for the development of real responsibility.

People talk, Ellen Key remarks, as though reform in sexual morality meant the breaking up of a beautiful idyll, while the idyll is impossible as long as the only alternative offered to so many young men and women at the threshold of life is between becoming "the slave of duty or the slave of lust." In these matters we already possess licence, and the only sound reform lies in a kind of "freedom" which will correct that licence by obedience to the most fundamental natural instincts acting in harmony with the claims of the race, which claims, it must be added, cannot

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of the mother" was formed, and with Barrault at the head it set out for Constantinople. All were dressed in white as an indication of the vow of chastity they had taken before leaving Paris, and on the road they begged in the name of the Mother. They arrived at Constantinople and preached the faith of Saint-Simon to the Turks in French. But "la femme libre" seemed as far off as ever, and they resolved to go to Rotourma in Oceania, there to establish the religion of Saint-Simon and a perfect Government which might serve as a model to the States of Europe. First, however, they felt it a duty to make certain that the Mother was not hiding somewhere in Russia, and they went therefore to Odessa, but the Governor, who was wanting in sympathy, speedily turned them out, and having realized that Rotourma was some distance off, the mission broke up, most of the members going to Egypt to rejoin Enfantin, whom the Arabs, struck by his beauty, had called *Abu-l-dhuniéh*, the Father of the World. (This account of the movement is based on that given by Maxime du Camp, in his *Souvenirs Littéraires*)

be out of harmony with the best traditions of the race. Ellen Key would agree with a great German, Wilhelm von Humboldt, who wrote more than a century ago that "a solicitude for the race conducts to the same results as the highest solicitude for the most beautiful development of the inner man." The modern revolt against fossilized laws is inevitable; it is already in progress, and we have to see to it that the laws written upon tables of stone in their inevitable decay only give place to the mightier laws written upon tables of flesh and blood. Life is far too rich and manifold, Ellen Key says again, to be confined in a single formula, even the best; if our ideal has its worth for ourselves, if we are prepared to live for it and to die for it, that is enough; we are not entitled to impose it on others. The conception of duty still remains, duty to love and duty to the race. "I believe in a new ethics," Ellen Key declares at the end of *The Women's Movement*, "which will be a synthesis growing out of the nature of man and the nature of woman, out of the demands of the individual and the demands of society, out of the pagan and the Christian points of view, out of the resolve to mould the future and out of piety towards the past."

No reader of Ellen Key's books can fail to be impressed by the remarkable harmony between her sexual ethics and the conception that underlies Sir Francis Galton's scientific eugenics. In setting forth the latest aspects of his view of eugenics before the Sociological Society, Galton asserted that the improvement of the race, in harmony with scientific knowledge, would come about by a new religious movement, and he gave reasons to show

why such an expectation is not unreasonable; in the past men have obeyed the most difficult marriage rules in response to what they believed to be supernatural commands, and there is no ground for supposing that the real demands of the welfare of the race, founded on exact knowledge, will prove less effective in calling out an inspiring religious emotion. Writing probably at the same time, Ellen Key, in her essay entitled *Love and Ethics*, set forth precisely the same conception, though not from the scientific but from the emotional standpoint. From the outset she places the sexual question on a basis which brings it into line with Galton's eugenics. The problem used to be concerned, she remarks, with the insistence of society on a rigid marriage form, in conflict with the demand of the individual to gratify his desires in any manner that seemed good to him, while now it becomes a question of harmonizing the claims of the improvement of the race with the claims of the individual to happiness in love. She points out that on this aspect real harmony becomes more possible. Regard for the ennoblement of the race serves as a bridge from a chaos of conflicting tendencies to a truer conception of love, and "love must become on a higher plane what it was in primitive days—a religion." She compares the growth of the conception of the vital value of love to the modern growth of the conception of the value of health as against the medieval indifference to hygiene. It is inevitable that Ellen Key, approaching the question from the emotional side, should lay less stress than Galton on the importance of scientific investigation in heredity, and insist

mainly on the value of sound instincts, unfettered by false and artificial constraints, and taught to realize that the physical and the psychic aspects of life are alike "divine."

It would obviously be premature to express either approval or disapproval of the conceptions of sexual morality which Ellen Key has developed with such fervour and insight. It scarcely seems probable that the methods of sexual union, put forward as an alternative to celibacy by some of the adherents of the new movement, are likely to become widely popular, even if legalized in an increasing number of countries. I have elsewhere given reasons to believe that the path of progress lies mainly in the direction of a reform of the present institution of marriage.<sup>67</sup> The need of such reform is pressing, and there are many signs that it is being recognized. We can scarcely doubt that the advocates of these alternative methods of sexual union will do good by stimulating the champions of marriage to increased activity in the reform of that institution. In such matters a certain amount of competition sometimes has a remarkably vivifying effect.

We may be sure that women, whose interests are so much at stake in this matter, and who tend to look at it in a practical rather than in a legal and theological spirit, will exert a powerful influence when they have acquired the ability to enforce that influence by the vote. This is significantly indicated by an inquiry held in England during 1910 by the Women's Co-operative Guild. A number of women who had held official positions in the

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<sup>67</sup> *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, Vol. VI, "Sex in Relation to Society," chap. x.

Guild were asked (among other questions) whether or not they were in favour of divorce by mutual consent. Of 94 representative women conversant with affairs who were thus consulted, as many as 82 deliberately recorded their opinion in favour of divorce by mutual consent, and only 12 were against that highly important marriage reform.

It is probably unnecessary to discuss the opinions of other leaders in this movement, though there are several, such as Frau Grete Meisel-Hess, whose views deserve study. It will be sufficiently clear in what way this Teutonic movement differs from that Anglo-Saxon woman's rights' movement with which we have long been familiar. These German women fully recognize that women are entitled to the same human rights as men, and that until such rights are attained "feminism" still has a proper task to achieve. But women must use their strength in the sphere for which their own nature fits them. Even though millions of women are enabled to do the work which men could do better the gain for mankind is nil. To put women to do men's work is (Ellen Key has declared) as foolish as to set a Beethoven or a Wagner to do engine-driving.

It has probably excited surprise in the minds of some who have been impressed by the magnitude and vitality of this movement that it should have manifested itself in Germany rather than in England, which is the original home of movements for women's emancipation, or in America, where they have reached their fullest developments. This, however, ceases to be surprising

when we realize the special qualities of the Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic temperaments and the special conditions under which the two movements arose. The Anglo-Saxon movement was a special application to women of the general French movement for the logical assertion of abstract human rights. That special application was not ardently taken up in France itself, though first proclaimed by French pioneers,<sup>68</sup> partly perhaps because such one-sided applications make little appeal to the French mind, and mainly, no doubt, because women throughout the eighteenth century enjoyed such high social consideration and exerted so much influence that they were not impelled to rise in any rebellious protest. But when the seed was brought over to England, especially in the representative form of Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, it fell in virgin soil which proved highly favourable to its development. This special application escaped the general condemnation which the Revolution had brought upon French ideas. Women in England were beginning to awaken to ideas,—as women in Germany are now,—and the more energetic and intelligent among them eagerly seized upon conceptions which furnished food for their activities. In large measure they have achieved their aims, and even woman's suffrage has been secured here

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<sup>68</sup> It is worth noting that a Frenchwoman has been called "the mother of modern feminism." Marie de Gournay, who died in 1645 at the age of eighty, is best known as the adopted daughter of Montaigne, for whom she cherished an enthusiastic reverence, becoming the first editor of his essays. Her short essay, *Egalité des Hommes et des Femmes*, was written in 1622. See e.g. M. Schiff, *La Fille d'Alliance de Montaigne*.

and there, without producing any notable revolution in human affairs. The Anglo-Saxon conception of feminine progress—beneficial as it has undoubtedly been in many respects—makes little impression in Germany, partly because it fails to appeal to the emotional Teutonic temperament, and partly because the established type of German life and civilization offers very small scope for its development. When Miss Susan Anthony, the veteran pioneer of woman's movements in the United States, was presented to the German Empress she expressed a hope that the Emperor would soon confer the suffrage on German women; it is recorded that the Empress smiled, and probably most German women smiled with her. At the present time, however, there is an extraordinary amount of intellectual activity in Germany, a widespread and massive activity. For the first time, moreover, it has reached women, who are taking it up with characteristic Teutonic thoroughness. But they are not imitating the methods of their Anglo-Saxon sisters; they are going to work their own way. They are spending very little energy in waving the red flag before the fortresses of male monopoly. They are following an emotional influence which, strangely enough, it may seem to some, finds more support from the biological and medical side than the Anglo-Saxon movement has always been able to win. From the time of Aristophanes downwards, whenever they have demonstrated before the masculine citadels, women have always been roughly bidden to go home. And now, here in Germany, where of all countries that advice has been most freely and

persistently given, women are adopting new tactics: they have gone home. "Yes, it is true," they say in effect, "the home is our sphere. Love and marriage, the bearing and the training of children—that is our world. And we intend to lay down the laws of our world."

# IV

## THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN IN RELATION TO ROMANTIC LOVE

The Absence of Romantic Love in Classic Civilization—Marriage as a Duty—The Rise of Romantic Love in the Roman Empire—The Influence of Christianity—The Attitude of Chivalry—The Troubadours—The Courts of Love—The Influence of the Renaissance—Conventional Chivalry and Modern Civilization—The Woman Movement—The Modern Woman's Equality of Rights and Responsibilities excludes Chivalry—New Forms of Romantic Love still remain possible—Love as the Inspiration of Social Hygiene.

What will be the ultimate effect of the woman's movement, now slowly but surely taking place among us, upon romantic love? That is really a serious question, and it is much more complex than many of those who are prepared to answer it off-hand may be willing to admit.

It must be remembered that romantic love has not been a constant accompaniment of human relationships, even in civilization. It is true that various peoples very low down in the scale possess romantic love-songs, often, it appears, written by

the women. But the classic civilizations of Greece and Rome in their most robust and brilliant periods knew little or nothing of romantic love in connection with normal sexual relationships culminating in marriage. Classic antiquity reveals a high degree of conjugal devotion, and of domestic affection, at all events in Rome, but the right of the woman to follow the inspirations of her own heart, and the idealization and worship of the woman by the man, were not only scarcely known but, so far as they were known, reprehended or condemned. Ovid, in the opinion of some, represents a new movement in Rome. We are apt to regard Ovid as, in erotic matters, the representative of a set of immoral Roman voluptuaries. That view probably requires considerable modification. Ovid was not indeed a champion of morality, but there is no good reason to suppose that, before he appeared, the rather stern Roman mind had yet conceived those refinements and courtesies which he set forth in such charming detail. If we take a wide survey of his work, we may perhaps regard Ovid as the pioneer of a chivalrous attitude towards women and of a romantic conception of love not only new in Rome but of significance for Europe generally. Ovid was a powerful factor in the Renaissance movement, and not least in England, where his influence on Shakespeare and some others of the Elizabethans cannot easily be overrated.<sup>69</sup>

For the ordinary classic mind, Greek or Roman, marriage

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<sup>69</sup> See especially Sidney Lee, "Ovid and Shakespeare's Sonnets," *Quarterly Review*, April, 1909.

was intended for the end of building up the family, and the family was consecrated to the State. The fulfilment of so exalted a function involved a certain austere dignity which excluded wayward inclination or passionate emotion. These might indeed occur between a man and a woman outside marriage, but putting aside the very limited phenomena of Athenian hetairism, they were too shameful to be idealized. Some trace of this classic attitude may be said to persist even to-day among the so-called Latin nations, notably in the French tradition (now dying out) of treating marriage as a relationship to be arranged, not by the two parties themselves, but by their parents and guardians; Montaigne, attached as he was to maxims of Roman antiquity, was not very alien from the ordinary French attitude of his time when he declared that, since we do not marry so much for our own sakes as for the sake of posterity and the race, marriage is too sacred a process to be mixed with amorous extravagance.<sup>70</sup> There is something to be said for that point of view which is nowadays too often forgotten, but it certainly fails to cover the whole of the ground.

It is not only in the West that a contemptuous attitude towards the romantic and erotic side of life has prevailed at some of the most vigorous moments of civilization. It is also found in the East. In Japan, for instance, even at the present day, romantic love, as a reputable element of ordinary life, is unknown or disapproved; its existence is not recognized in the schools, and

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<sup>70</sup> Montaigne, *Essais*, Book III, chap. V.

the European novels that celebrate it are scarcely understood.<sup>71</sup> The development of modern romantic love in connection with marriage seems to be found in the late Greek world under the Roman Empire.<sup>72</sup> That is commonly called a period of decadence. In a certain limited sense it was. Greece had become subjugated to Rome. Rome herself had lost her military spirit and was losing her political power. But the fighting instinct, and even the ruling spirit, are not synonymous with civilization. The "decline and fall" of empires by no means necessarily involves the decay of civilization. It is now generally realized that the later Roman Empire was not, as was once thought, an age of social and moral degeneration.<sup>73</sup> The State indeed was dissolving, but

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<sup>71</sup> See e.g. Mrs. Fraser, *World's Work and Play*, December, 1906.

<sup>72</sup> A more modern feeling for love and marriage begins to emerge, however, at a much earlier period, with Menander and the New Comedy. E.F.M. Benecke, in his interesting little book on *Antimachus of Colophon and the Position of Women in Greek Poetry*, believes that the romantic idea (that is to say, the idea that a woman is a worthy object for a man's love, and that such love may well be the chief, if not the only, aim of a man's life) had originally been propounded by Antimachus at the end of the fifth century B.C. Antimachus, said to have been the friend of Plato, had been united to a woman of Lydia (where women, we know, occupied a very high position) and her death inspired him to write a long poem, *Lyde*, "the first love poem ever addressed by a Greek to his wife after death." Only a few lines of this poem survive. But Antimachus seems to have greatly influenced Philetas (whom Croiset calls "the first of the Alexandrians") and Asclepiades of Samos, tender and exquisite poets whom also we only know by a few fragments. Benecke's arguments, therefore, however probable, cannot be satisfactorily substantiated.

<sup>73</sup> As I have elsewhere pointed out (*Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, Vol. VI, "Sex in Relation to Society," chap. ix), most modern authorities—Friedländer, Dill, Donaldson, etc.—consider that there was no real moral decline in the later Roman

the individual was evolving. The age which produced a Plutarch—for fifteen hundred years one of the great inspiring forces of the world—was the reverse of a corrupt age. The life of the home and the life of the soul were alike developing. The home was becoming more complex, more intimate, more elevated. The soul was being turned in on itself to discover new and joyous secrets: the secret of the love of Nature, the secret of mystic religion, and, not least, the secret of romantic love. When Christianity finally conquered the Roman world its task very largely lay in taking over and developing those three secrets already discovered by Paganism.

It was inevitable, however, that in developing these new forms of the emotional life, the ascetic bent of Christianity should make itself felt. It was not possible for Christianity to cast its halo around the natural sexual life, but it was possible to refine and exalt that life, to lift it into a spiritual sphere. Neither woman the sweetheart nor woman the mother were in ordinary life glorified by the Church; they were only tolerated. But on a higher than natural plane they were surrounded by a halo and raised to the highest pedestal of reverence and even worship. The Virgin was exalted, Bride and Bridegroom became terms of mystical import, and the Holy Mother received the adoring love of all Christendom. Even in the actual relations of men and women, quite early in the history of Christianity, we sometimes

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Empire; we must not accept the pictures presented by satirists, pagan or Christian, as of general application.

find men and women cultivating relationships which excluded that earthly union the Church looked down on, but yet involved the most tender and intimate physical affection. Many charming stories of such relationships are found in the lives of the saints, and sometimes they existed even within the marriage bond.<sup>74</sup> Christianity led to the use of ideas and terms borrowed from earthly love in a different and symbolic sense. But the undesigned result was that a new force and beauty were added to those ideas and terms, however applied, and also that many emotions were thus cultivated which became capable of re-inforcing earthly human love. In this way it happened that, though Christianity rejected the ideal of romantic love in its natural associations, it indirectly prepared the way for a loftier and deeper realization of that love.

There can be no doubt that the emotional training and refining of the fleshly instincts by Christianity was the chief cause of the rise of that conception of romantic love which we associate with the institution of chivalry. Exalted and sanctified by contact with the central dogmas of religion, the emotion of love was brought down from this spiritual atmosphere by the knightly lover, with something of its ethereal halo still clinging to it, and directed towards an earthly mistress. The most extravagant phase of romantic love which has ever been seen was then brought about, and in many cases, certainly, it was a real erotomania which

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<sup>74</sup> I have discussed this phase of early Christianity in the sixth volume of *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, "Sex in Relation to Society," chap. V.

passed beyond the bounds of sanity. <sup>75</sup> In its extreme forms, however, this romantic love was a rare, localized, and short-lived manifestation. The dominant attitude of the chivalrous age towards women, as Léon Gautier has shown in his monumental work on chivalry, was one of indifference, or even contempt. The knight's thoughts were more of war than of women, and he cherished his horse more than his mistress. <sup>76</sup>

But women, above all in France, reacted against this attitude, and with splendid success. Their husbands treated them with indifference or left them at home while they sought adventure in the world. The neglected wives proceeded to lay down the laws of society, and took upon themselves the part of rulers in the domain of morals. In the eleventh, the twelfth, the thirteenth centuries, says Méray in a charming book on life in the days of the Courts of Love, we find women "with infinite skill and an adorable refinement seizing the moral direction of French society." They did so, he remarks, in a spirit so Utopian, so ideally poetic, that historians have hesitated to take them seriously. The laws of the Courts of Love <sup>77</sup> may sometimes

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<sup>75</sup> Ulrich von Lichtenstein, in the thirteenth century, is the typical example of this chivalrous erotomania. His account of his own adventures has been questioned, but Reinhold Becker (*Wahrheit und Dichtung in Ulrich von Lichtenstein's Frauendienst*, 1888) considers that, though much exaggerated, it is in substance true.

<sup>76</sup> Léon Gautier, *La Chevalerie*, pp. 236-8, 348-50.

<sup>77</sup> The chief source of information on these Courts is André le Chapelain's *De Arte Amatoria*. Boccaccio made use of this work, though without mentioning the author's name, in his own *Dialogo d' Amore*.

seem to us immoral and licentious, but in reality they served to restrain the worst immoralities and licences of the time. They banished violence, they allowed no venality, and they inculcated moderation in passion. The task of the Courts of Love was facilitated by the relative degree of peace which then reigned, especially by the fact that the Normans, holding both coasts of the Channel, formed a link between France and England. When the murderous activities of French kings and English kings destroyed that link, the Courts of Love were swept away in the general disorder and the progress of civilization indefinitely retarded.<sup>78</sup> Yet in some degree the ideals which had been thus embodied still persisted. As the Goncourts pointed out in their invaluable book, *La Femme au Dix-huitième Siècle* (Chap. v), from the days of chivalry even on into the eighteenth century, when on the surface at all events it apparently disappeared, an exalted ideal of love continued to be cherished in France. This conception remained associated, throughout, with the great social influence and authority which had been enjoyed by women in France even from medieval times. That influence had become pronounced during the seventeenth century, and at that time Sir Thomas Smith in his *Commonwealth of England*, writing of the high position of women in England, remarked that they possessed "almost as much liberty as in France."

There were at least two forms of medieval romantic love. The first arose in Provence and northern Italy during the twelfth

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<sup>78</sup> A. Méray, *La Vie au Temps des Cours d'Amour*, 1876.

century, and spread to Germany as *Minnedienst*. In this form the young knights directed their respectful and adoring devotion to a high-born married woman who chose one of them as her own cavalier, to do her service and reverence, the two vowing devotion to each other until death. It was a part of this amorous code that there could not be love between husband and wife, and it was counted a mark of low breeding for a husband to challenge his wife's right to her young knight's services, though sometimes we are told the husband risked this reproach, occasionally with tragic results. This mode of love, after being eloquently sung and practised by the troubadours—usually, it appears, younger sons of noble houses—died out in the place of its origin, but it had been introduced into Spain, and the Spaniards reintroduced it into Italy when they acquired the kingdom of Naples; in Italy it was conventionalized into the firmly rooted institution of the *cavaliere servente*

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