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WOMEN AS MORAL BEINGS.

Civilized races have evolved till they have accepted as a commonplace Kant's maxim that every human being ought to count both to himself and to others always as an end, never merely as a means. Few men may either formulate the principle or reflect deeply upon it; but it is the latent ideal which is arbiter wherever some fresh impact of forces enables a new class to enforce its will. The ideal is there. Individual actions are far from it. In every country, multitudes exist who are only means to the enjoyments and development of others. Still, between men, even thoughtful folk assume that the realization of the principle is only an affair of time and really wise energy. Except among extreme aristocrats, it is seldom maintained that apart from human will there are intrinsically insurmountable obstacles against social arrangements providing equal opportunities for all individuals to work out the best they have in them. Is this so between men and women? Can our world be so re-modelled that women no less than men shall have free scope for the satisfaction of many-sided human nature and aspiration? Success or failure in performing this practical task will be the final test common sense will apply to the ideal put into words by Kant. For, if the larger half of the race must be kept permanently subordinate to the other half; if, regardless of individual peculiarities, a great field of human ability, desire, and aspiration is to remain closed as it is now in all countries against women, only because they are women; then, to match facts, there must be a masculine plus a feminine character-goal, involving, instead of one kind of moral perfection, which conciliates renunciation and self-realization, two sorts, one mainly egoistic, the other altruistic. Either a double-sexed morality-standard must be faced by the ethical theorist as it has long been by the politician, or else his whole democratic doctrine of conduct is false.

No equivocal refusal to reckon with the actual tendencies and desires of actual women, such as the politician has recourse to, will meet the case. Even if there were only some women
who were fitted by nature and desire for useful activities from which they were to be debarred merely to suit the lower abilities and standards of others, either men or women, they would be peculiarly sinned against. Ideal right, as moderns accept it, demands that such a minority of gifted beings should not be balked and stinted of full self-development and opportunity to render their own complete meed of service to the human race. But if what is continually affirmed be true: that Nature has opposed the fullest possible development of individual women against the continuance and development of the race in such an insurmountable manner, that whether they be few or many or all who show ambition or aspiration, because they are women they must always be restrained and sacrificed for behoof of the race, then there are also insuperable obstacles in the way of practising ideal justice; then there is a permanent tragedy in the destiny of the sex. Nay I would go further. I would say then that this Nature itself, which evolves such a sort of woman and then sets at naught the fundamental principle of impartiality, the very main-spring in human conscience, is incurably evil. I would demand then, from the woman's point of view, whether humanity be worth preserving at all?

What is right for finite beings to do always depends upon what is possible; and yet the very Hall-mark of Humanity is to sit in judgment upon the possible. Shall the upshot be a moral pessimism which shall end in refusal on the part of the more intelligent and critical women to become mothers?

I am aware that what I have just said may seem so extravagant as to provoke a smile, or even, in some quarters, a sneer; but it will not excite either the one or the other from those who watch modern tendencies and also reflect upon them. In some of the countries where sentiment which is democratic has already far outstripped the political and commercial arrangements for acting in concord with it, insufficient increase in population is already attracting attention. In others as well as in these, it is noticeable that the population is recruited chiefly among the poorest, least capable classes, and that our more prudent and able women are not the ones who make the earliest marriages or rear the most children. Of course I do not sug-
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I suggest that this is due to the women alone or to any thought-out pessimism; nor do I imply that a diminished proportion of offspring from the more intelligent women may not have more than one sort of compensation and even profit. The work they do in elevating the position of the whole sex is I believe more valuable just now to the race than the loss of their progeny; and the children they do have may have more than compensate for fewness by their quality, especially where the number is limited through really ethical considerations; but I fear the considerations themselves are frequently only some aspect of the very real conflict there is between women's own well-being and the begetting and rearing of a family under existing circumstances. Women may not cool towards marriage and maternity from mature conviction that those are right who assert that their sex forever must bear virtually the whole burden of what Mr. Spencer names the "Antagonism between Individuation and Genesis"; but the working conviction that they have to do so, as society is constituted, is growing rapidly in the most unexpected quarters. It is at bottom the underlying fact that drives the educated women to demand a marketable career.

What then are the separate rights which modern women claim? They begin in the nursery. It is said girl children are not to be considered any less than boys in regard to the sort of food and clothing which makes for health and strength, in regard to physical exercise, to play, education or equipment for earning money. In adult life, women are to be specially trained for marketable careers and to be paid equally with men for equal work, quite regardless of sex. They are freely to choose their employments according to individual tastes, abilities and financial demand. In family life, wives are to be partners secured in financial rights and not under any sort of tutelage to husbands. There are to be proper educational facilities for the efficiency of women who choose the responsibilities of married life. The personal and financial claims of motherhood are to be somehow legally recognized as grounded in service to the community; and the wife's old age is not to be left at the mercy of a husband's commercial ability or of his caprice. If there be disloyalty or other trouble between a
married pair, the remedies and penalties, whatever they be, shall be equal for both. In state or civic affairs, women of appropriate ability are freely to direct and administer along with men; and are to be chosen by electors, who shall be women equally with men. In religious bodies, universities and professions, merit and not sex shall be the test of opportunity, office and privilege.

When we see collected together all these demands which have been made during last century, for the most part separately, we are able to realize both the vastness of the change which may be looming, the need to examine whether the items are compatible with each other and good in themselves, and the difficulty of deciding which claims should be pressed forward with most earnestness; for now that steam, electricity and printing have given peasant men, and women of all classes, the instruments for quickening moral sense into a power on their behalf, there is a portion of every nation, a portion which includes some of the ablest men, bent on solving the question what justice to women involves. The insinuating novel, the play and the news-sheet are perpetual generators of social knowledge and consideration for every sort of complaint. Gradually all classes are being stirred up to examine one claim after another. Women never can again be rendered isolated and dumb as they have been in the past. If man's soul is at bottom an ethical counterpart of woman's, sooner or later there must now come in him and in her a conscious sifting and balancing of ideals and aspirations until some programme of an accepted social order, modelled so as to give sufficient recognition to all the needs and claims I have detailed, shall emerge.

The central problem under all details is of course the reconciliation of women's functions in family life, in relation to offspring, with their aspirations as the peers of men. Some pioneer women have tried to ignore that any dilemmas arise from this, but though we may learn how to give both the married and the single woman a really ethical liberty, it will be by recognizing, not by ignoring that perfect womanhood entails power to become in due season a good wife and mother no less than to be a good public servant in industry or in politics. The
enthusiasm with which women enter into the controversy over special legal restrictions of their paid work shows that they will soon feel their way to the real battle-ground of woman's liberty, her right to requital for her mother-work. Under the present social order every sort of opportunity, even including a vote is based upon possessions. Under this order the lot of the exceptional woman who remains voluntarily always single is inextricably bound up with and modified by the lot of her mother, or her sister who marries. The peculiar difficulty of doing real justice to any women is due to the transitions they have to make to and fro between the spheres where competition decides remuneration of labor and the one where their requital is regulated by law, modified for good or ill by affections they can excite.

The abolition of slavery cleared the world for modern Western civilization. But this was nothing at first but the granting of rights to enforce money payments for labor, coupled with liberty to forsake one master for another as a means of remuneration. Even in the case of men, industrial and other legislation has had to follow; and experience has shown that ability on the part of workers to initiate laws for their own protection is the only means by which the individual's power to own the abilities and will of another—practical slavery—will ever be abolished. But if freedom for men is impossible without political abilities, women need them a thousand times more; for not only do they share, at least potentially, all the ordinary work-capacities of men, but they are able to perform, and unhappily able to be directly or indirectly forced to perform, parental functions other than those of men, which differ from theirs in hindering them as earning laborers. Moreover, apart from promptings of affection, they are under obligation, for the community's good, not to remove from the children or the father of the children they have born. Because parental and family labors are not moveable, they are not marketable; and the stationary character of mother-service is one of the causes for the assumption of existing law and of earlier morals that women ought to be mere life-servants of the father of their offspring and have no claim on the exchange
currency. Another view is rapidly spreading: that a mother serves her country and her race, and her husband is but her fellow-servant. If women are really moral beings in the same sense that men are, this is the only right view, and the fact that it has not hitherto been embodied in the politics of any nation is one reason why no empire and no civilization has ever yet been permanent, or successful from the point of view of equitable individual distribution of material benefits. Granting the wisdom of monogamy, it is by means of law that we must enforce the principle that wives are the fellow-servants of their husbands instead of serfs to them; for the immobility of women's family service deprives them as individuals of the ordinary market means of enforcing and regulating requital and choice of occupation. The wide social implications of ethics can have little concrete significance for the average woman until this view has been embodied, first in the laws and then in the customs, which irresistibly but silently mould her disposition from infancy to death. It is in a reformed constitution of the family that the foundations of women's freedom, and men's with it, must be laid. Greater justice there even in primitive times would have produced a happier world and a far less wasteful economic system than any the nations have really evolved. Let us therefore examine some of the defects of the family as it is now constituted and one or two of the difficulties in the way of cures.

Let me say first, however, to safeguard the susceptibilities of couples too happy to have strong fellow feeling for wedded blunderers, that I know full well there are thousands of instances, where personal wisdom and genuine love transforms the married partnership into a just and fruitful comradeship for the woman as well as for the man. Granting this however, and granting that increasing numbers of husbands and wives may elude existing tradition and law, by their own superiority, I say that the accepted constitution of the family tacitly, and just when it is least desirable, actually, involves the entire subordination of the wife to the will and purposes of the husband. It is true that in England, since 1891, when the Clitheroe case was tried, no husband may legally use brute force to detain
his wife. Yet still, unless one or both of them are so incurably wrong-headed as to break the family right up, the husband is legally master over the wife and over the children; and is financially master, unless she owns separate property or has ability to earn in the market. Taken together, the money control and the prior right in the children enables him to enforce his will in personal matters without any such publicity and suffering as she would incur, probably without fruit, if she were to resist him.

If a woman ought to have freedom of conscience anywhere it is where she can be most easily and fatally tempted to go astray: I mean in regard to her function of motherhood. Yet it is only quite recently and in very advanced circles, that unmarried women have been told anything about the subject which would enable them to realize how grave is the personal responsibility which rests on a wife in marriage. The teaching of orthodox churches follows St. Paul. It imbues ignorant girlhood with the religious conviction that once a husband has been accepted, he must be obeyed as implicitly as Christ; and this conviction is the very breath of the holy spirit to the average religious woman. The more sincere her religion, the more solemnly she resigns any conscience in conjugal relations on her marriage day. From personal confidences of women who have lived to repent, I know how far ignorance of physical matters and this false religious teaching sometimes carries women into bodily slavery. But the moral power of sacred tradition is perhaps on the wane. The law however is in brutal harmony with it. In 1888, it was decided by the Lord Chief Justice of England and five other judges against four, that although wilful communication of venereal disease may be the cruelty count in a divorce case, it is no crime nor even an assault against a wife; and that nothing else a husband chooses to do can be counted as rape. Actually, a wife is worse protected than a prostitute. In the celebrated case (See Westminster Review, March, 1890, also Justice of the Peace, March 9, 1889), Regina vs. Clarence, to which I have alluded, it was also incidentally laid down as law that a wife may not refuse marital rights to her husband, even if they both know
that her condition is such that she would suffer bodily harm. I will give an illustration from life of some fruits of this judge-made law when coupled with the wife's financial dependence and the prior right of the father to the children.

A wife had been medically warned, on the birth of her second child, that she ought not again to become a mother. The husband found this the reverse of a grievance; but he nevertheless claimed marital rights, accompanied by certain neo-malthusian practices. It was not till ten years after that the wife, suffering in health and in soul because she had come to count their life immoral, finally rebelled. The man then sought to coerce her by secretly conveying away and hiding her two boys. The woman, financially quite dependent on him, could not seek eminent advice, but a lawyer deeply convinced of the iniquity of our marriage laws gave an opinion to the effect that even if friends could have found the money, it would have been fruitless to bring such a case before the English Courts. There was no legal ground for separation, how then could a judge have favored the mother's claim to her boys. It is only optional for them to give the most innocent mother custody of her own children. The Infants Act, which Mr. Bryce and others sought to pass through Parliament, in 1884, attempted to give a joint guardianship to parents, during their marriage, but the Bill, which eventually did pass, left the father supreme unless the Courts ruled otherwise for some special reason. Both these children were boys. The youngest was as old as ten; and, according to the ruling in the Clarence case, a husband who tried to carry out Luther's shameful teachings in the most thorough-going manner would not be guilty of any offence against a wife. Perhaps, had this case actually been sifted in Court the husband might have brought evidence, or have urged motives for his actions which in the special instance might have modified our sympathy for the particular woman; and it is fair to add that while I have omitted details supplied to the lawyer which might have still further enlisted the sympathies on the woman's side, when friends intervened, the husband did support the wife financially and allow the boys to visit her at holiday times; but given the
exact truth of this wife's preliminary statement, it is a terrible condemnation of the law that a lawyer who had specially and sympathetically studied the laws relating to women counted that she was absolutely defenceless against the man.

It is perhaps not possible to guard against all the dilemmas that may arise, both for a man and a woman, for women may be the offenders no less than men, in the married relation; but in these dilemmas nature herself has allotted to women the severer penalties, especially for breaches of hygienic conditions. It is therefore most unjust for artificial law and financial conditions to be framed so as to accentuate women's natural disadvantages. This century has seen a harvest of various new "fruits of philosophy." Law was invoked against the pamphlet of that name. Apparently it was only against the pamphlet. Whatever may be the personal views on such subjects it seems clear that even in England, where we have never been subjected to a Code Napoleon, a man may coerce his wife's conscience for years, and is enabled to use punishments quite as severe to some women as the imprisonment or beating, which were declared illegal in 1891. A woman who knows the social odium, involving outlawry from the women's labor market, which she will probably meet as a wife not even legally licensed to live apart from her husband, and who knows also that that husband will be free to keep the children and educate them after his fashion, will be certain to suppress herself rather than face the only alternatives provided for her.

Sir Francis Jeune, President of the Probate Divorce and Admiralty Division, has recently added to the complexities of the existing law by his ruling in the Synge cases, one of which was brought by the wife for divorce, on the ground of adultery and desertion, the other, subsequently, for judicial separation. He ruled that refusal of marital rights is "reasonable ground for desertion." Whatever we may think as to the "reasonableness," which other laws remain as they are, the brunt of this new decision must fall upon women. In the particular instance, the wife had suspicions of her husband's physical condition which proved groundless. The President did not think them "bona-fide." But that does not alter the fact that owing
to the decision in this case, in future, any woman who acted upon similar suspicion which was genuine and perhaps correct would know beforehand that her husband's desertion of her as a consequence would probably be legally condoned, and that though he were an adulterer also she could not get a divorce because she had no plea either of legal desertion or legal cruelty.

The root question in regard to marriage, which we ought to face, is whether the old view is ethical that it should imply bodily slavery on the part either of man or woman. The alternative view is not "free-love." No one suggests that a wedded pair should be freed from their bonds because one of the two becomes incapacitated from conjugal relations by incurable illness. They take each other for "worse" as well as for "better." If the obstacles are ethical and spiritual should they not also take each other for "worse?" Marriage may be a sacrament, or a mere bargain in flesh and blood. Which shall we choose? Surely wedlock should necessitate the same intelligent reference to right and wrong, the same respect for individuality, the same mutuality of restraints which we expect in single men and women who would have married if they could. It ought not to be a license to wreck either the soul or the body of one person out of all the world. It is essential for the state to sanction and discipline, in the interests of all, a relationship which may lead to the introduction of new citizens into the community. But it is not in the interest of all for it to compel, ever so indirectly, either of the parties to obey each other regardless of consequences. So long ago as 1884, Mrs. Wolstenholme Elmy and others endeavored to push a Bill into Parliament, which would have freed marriage from this risk of bodily enslavement. Many members have approved the draft; but all said it was hopeless to introduce it in our men's parliament. I have only touched upon one aspect of the many problems involved, but it is enough to show clearly that greater attention to the whole subject is required; and I will now pass to the question what ability is granted to a mother to promote the well-being of her children after she has brought them into the world?
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A wife may assist her husband, directly or indirectly, in the business which supports the family. She may be thrifty and industrious in the household: she is expected to devote herself to forming a child’s manners and to details of animal comfort; but, however ignorant or grasping their father may be, she has neither financial nor legal power to insist that her girls and boys shall be fairly educated or equipped for life; nor can she secure that her partner shall give them the needed enjoyments and recreations which are in accord with his material circumstances. In fact, consistently with the law which denies a woman’s claim to intelligent foresight as to the number of her offspring or the physical circumstances attending their procreation, she has no determining power over their spiritual circumstances nor yet her own; and so far is this subordination carried that even after the father’s death, she is compelled, with or without his instructions to that effect, to bring up her children in his religion. As to her own efficiency as mother and citizen, during his life, by keeping his wife's purse empty, a husband may, and often does, exclude her from books, from lectures, and from all associations which would help to equip her for the higher duties of parenthood, or for civic responsibility. The law now admits women to some branches of local administration, and many consider that only women can do some of the work needed in the solution of the housing, the poor law, and other social difficulties. A wife may possess the ability, the leisure, and the aspiration to serve on some local body which sorely needs her help, but through his sole control of the family purse, the husband’s will and social views must always ultimately determine the wife’s doings, even apart from the disqualification of the woman through poverty if he happen to be inefficient as an earner. The evil sociological results of the age-long sacrifice of the women to the psychological solidarity of the family is too big a discussion to open; but I must repeat that the best individuals among men have now and always risen above this régime by refusing to use their great powers, but that the unjust, the tyrannical and the stupid are the ones whose vices receive aid from the gaps and injustices I am emphasizing in the accepted constitution of the family.
The moral progress of these higher natures must be registered in laws if only to avoid reaction in their sons.

Where widows are concerned it has been the same. The testamentary license husbands possess is not always used unfairly; but if the man be unjust or careless, the most virtuous and industrious wife can have no security. Either through his extravagance or by his deliberate choice, she may be left destitute after he has used up all her best years and energies to suit his individual purposes. It is often asserted that the family is an economic unit. There is little truth in this while there is a head of it who has unlimited testamentary power, and practically unlimited power over the income. The man who owns the family is now the unit, and he is the unit even when dead. This is one of the instances where the women of this country have lost old rights. Even the few privileged ones who thought they possessed inalienable rights to dower saw them all swept away in 1834, after the attack on the few political rights women had, in the Reform Bill of 1832. Many of us know of instances, quite as distressing if on a smaller scale, similar to the notorious one of the rich London draper, Peter Robinson, who, omitting to provide for his legal wife and children, left his great fortune to his illegitimate offspring.

It may seem that the proportion of women who openly resent their position within the family is very small. But in our luxurious age with its contrasting sordid poverty, this is one more evil symptom. Sometimes it indicates moral cynicism; sometimes sensuality; sometimes stupidity; rarely deliberate judgment after a varied contact with life. The truth is, people who move in educated circles in up-to-date towns are apt contentedly to estimate the women's world very falsely. Even in England it is still possible for women to suffer what amounts to enslavement of mind and body. Of course few men consciously adopt the rôle of a Mephistopheles, anywhere in life, but there are clever fiends and stupid persons among both sexes, and when they happen to be men they possess enormous legal and natural powers over wife and children. The majority may be morally in advance of the low standard embodied in the existing legalized constitution of the family, but under it, the
greater proportion of wives suffer wrong in some one direction, more or less grave in its social consequences, while all women, married and single, and all men suffer ethically from the immoral atmosphere the knowledge of the wife's position germinates. Even among the best women, few realize what they might achieve or what they might become in character, if family arrangements and traditions were improved; for a passive habit and inability to criticize or initiate are the cherished fruits of the present order. Preachers and social reformers inveigh against the merciless greed which still taints commercial and public affairs, even as it did when states were reared on a basis of avowed slavery. The callousness is bound to be there as a reaction from family life. We have not dug deep enough. Ethical freedom must begin with women, who can never be prevented from acting as natural educators. Our present family institution carefully saps the development of any social conscience in them, increasing the characteristic defects which would logically follow from the offices imposed by nature. Woman as she now is may operate as a force towards industry and enterprise in man, but that is not everything. In proportion as she is a slave, she is also a force often against her personal will, making for a predatory disposition towards other men and families. It is right for the community to regulate the conditions under which families shall be founded. It is a crime against all women if wedded life is made impossible for them unless they consent to forego their individuality and its fair influence over the individuality of the husband and offspring. It is nothing but cant to talk about the sacredness of family responsibilities and the glory of maternity for women while the personality of the wife is only permitted to have weight at the option of the individual man. So-called "sacred" maternity only drives the best and the worst emotions in the wife who is a slave to conspire in urging her to an indiscriminate cry "give, give." Even education often finds its outlet only in craving for luxury. The one source of power and sense of responsibility for women now is possession of a considerable personal fortune. This will enable even married ones to evade most kinds of restraint, good and ill; but it cannot present
them with the habit of mind and sense of duty towards all, which a far smaller money right would give, accompanied by political functions, and shared by other women, who would create a public opinion concerning many matters now falsely counted of no moment except to the individual.

I have tried to show how little right to a conscience the community grants to women in those very concerns which are popularly assumed to give womanhood its chief dignity. Redress of the laws relating to custody of children, to divorce, and to conjugal rights is urgently needed. Relief is even wanted for husbands, who already labor under various injustices due to the piece-meal character of attempts to remedy the wife's case. I cannot enter into details; but this is rather because I do see the difficulties of doing justice to both personalities, than because I do not. Discussion would be a long task, and I must limit myself to a part of the economic question. I turn to that in preference, because I am convinced that just among the particular couples, who most need better laws in regard to personal matters, reform would be a make-believe for the women unless the economic constitution of the family were also remodelled. I have however another motive for emphasizing this problem. I wish to point out that the reform of the economic constitution of the family, which has already been begun in England must be carried further if there ever is to be any single standard of fair pay for men and women within the remunerative labor market.

The Dower Act of 1833, which robbed widows of their ancient security of dower at the husbands' death, may be counted as the death-blow in England of the old view of the relation between husband and wife, which belonged to the period of domestic industries. The Married Women's Property Acts of 1870 and 1874 began a modern reconstruction of the economic constitution of the family to suit the migration of women's industries into factories. The Act which followed in 1882 is generally regarded as a perfect charter of liberty. It marked an ethical epoch. It was an incalculable boon to thousands of women to be at last permitted to regard themselves as responsible persons in money affairs. Indirectly it added to
the self-respect even of women who gained no money profit from it. But there are countless women whom it does not benefit. It helps the very fortunate and the very unfortunate. It does little for the average mass. It protects, as the old dower law did, women of rank and property. It protects women endowed with possessions apart from any matrimonial connection, fortunate souls who have some special marketable gift which can be utilized consistently with the duties of wife and mother. It also allows many poor victims of misfortune to rescue themselves by market labor when their husbands cannot or will not earn sufficient or give them enough for family needs.

But the majority of women have virtually no property to protect from a husband, either before or after marriage. Few can ply a business without failing in home duty; and even if they have earned before marriage, the keener their affections and sense of home duty the more they become absorbed during the whole middle culminating period of life in home work for husband and children. From the point of view of a high ideal of family life and motherhood, and also of civic duties for women, a law which stops short of protecting women's property acquired by outside labor or by gifts is only a law for exceptional women and for privileged ones. If it be a fact that mothers and wives are needed to perform higher service than factory labor for families, and if it be a fact that the best communities are composed of well-knit happy families, with mothers in them, who do not seek the risks of the coal-mine or the white-lead factory, and who do not weaken themselves by working longer hours in home or outside home for less wages than men, we must have adequate financial recognition of the married woman's social services; and it must be regardless of the possible idiosyncracies of her husband. She must come to play the part of his comrade and adviser, not of his whipping-boy.

I admit that real financial and legal equality between the sexes is no easy condition to achieve; but a great deal more might be done beneficially in this direction. Human necessities include the continuance of the race as well as provision of food
and luxuries. The maternal and the home services of women are in the last resort energy expended for the nation just as certainly as are defence of the country, road-making, or spinning yarn in factories, or trading. No matter what the industrial system of any nation, out of its capital and income regarded as a whole, a portion has actually to be used up every year, in reproducing and increasing its population, and in rearing the young up to working citizenship through a period of sixteen or seventeen years, which must elapse before they can labor profitably. Let us call this a fund for reproductive, as distinguished from productive services. The claims of teachers and domestic servants to their share of this fund achieved a market standard when domestic slavery was vanquished, and can be legally bargained for and enforced because they are transferable. In the case of mothers and wives, I have already pointed out how the welfare of the community combines with natural affection to forbid such a transfer; but why should lack of mobility in their services be a ground for denying their individual legal claim to a recognized portion of this reproduction fund? It really is a reason why they specially need, on moral and psychological grounds, the liberty independent possessions give. Our present plan of requiting only the interchangeable services of women in the market and leaving mothers only claims to maintenance at the hands of individual men, who may be good, bad or indifferent, both as husbands and as earners, leaves the most important of all public servants in a position of permanent precarious inferiority.

And I now wish to emphasize my second point. It unjustly complicates the whole system of remuneration for productive labor. Until the labor of mothers has separate recognition it will be impossible even approximately to pay justly for labor in the market. For if the mother's portion of the reproduction fund is not set apart from industrial capital and income, the other workers are really getting it divided among them at haphazard.

There is at present no sort of security that a woman's husband should receive and even be able to pass on to her what the nation really owes her for her life-work, whether estimated in
terms of her need or of the nation's need. Yet these needs have played a part in economics. It has been a popular superstition that the custom of markets has been to pay according to an impartial law of demand and supply; but as a matter of fact, the community has always excused itself for paying men higher rates than women on the score of the needs of the married man. Also however, it has paid the single man at the same rates as the father of a family without compelling him to save for matrimonial necessities, or to marry: in fact without interfering at all with his license to keep for mere bachelor uses the surplus he has been given on the family pretext. At the same time paying industries and professions have been artificially protected against the women, even when unmarried and without security of support from men. This has been done by laws in some cases, and also by refusal to lay out money in equipping daughters for marketable work, and by their early specialization to domestic labor, which was unpaid and which reacted by lowering the market value of paid female servants. But in the period of home industries the unpaid wives and daughters could help themselves straightway to many of the products of their own fingers, and the disparity between money earners and direct owners of industrial product was also lessened, because traveling and intellectual pursuits and recreations which are now easily purchaseable for money scarcely existed except for the very rich. The migration of home industries, and modern facilities for intercommunication, have sent many women into the market; but they are paid at rates which deny all power to save for sickness, for motherhood (as men can save for fatherhood), or for old age, and which are insufficient for complete personal maintenance while in the market. Even when indirect, the competition of the low life-standard which had to content women both as mistresses and servants in the patriarchal home has proved an economic danger to the middle and lower class men, who are still expected to find money for wife and children; and now we have the great cry for equalization of the earning capacity of women with that of men. I cannot now deal with the ethical aspects of industrial specialization among women; but what I wish to point out is that this equal-
The recognition of opportunity would enable single women like single men to share promiscuously in the family fund, or what I just now christened the fund for reproductive services. But what would it do for fathers? What would it do for mothers whose consuming needs become greater with wedded life than when they were free to earn outside home? Married women produce little consumers, who for many years can be regarded only as so much labor-capital invested speculatively for the community; but you do not offer them any means to meet the increasing cost of female help under the proposed régime; and they must fall into a far worse position than when they were single and able to earn. Justice to them and justice to their husbands demands monetary recognition of women's family services both during the actual period within which it is advisable that they should segregate themselves from hard outside work, and also on account of the depreciation of their individual earning ability through long absence from the competitive market and the physical wear of child-bearing. At bottom the market competition is a conflict of wills; but the home-keeping wife of the poor man, though a consumer and morally an earner, has no means whatever of rendering her will an effective force. She is non-existent for the husband's employer; she has no vote or legislative power, by which she might insist on her own labor being paid through taxation; and the unceasing wear and tear of her precarious existence, as a rule, prevents her even formulating the thoughts which should wring in the public ear and shame it into recognizing her enslavement. If her husband be a good man he divides his own earnings with her, and fully shares her burden; if not, so much the worse for her. But under existing economics there is no guarantee whatever that in his earnings hers shall be included for him to hand on. As to her old age, it is an unconsidered trifle.

Now I am aware that while we may easily expose the sores in the present social chaos it is as easy to picture new ones which would arise from the various remedies recommended by social doctors, individualist or collectivist. I have omitted to deal at all with some recent individualist prescriptions, and I have not space to offer my own tentative suggestions; but the
truth is, the doctor to whom I look most confidently is not any single theorizer, but the practical doings of the women's party which I discern, slowly beginning to cohere and to organize in every land for the attainment of knowledge and political power. I will not prophesy as to the uses women will make of such power, if they remain true to themselves; but it must be remembered that the power itself can never be achieved at all without a high moral discipline being gradually imposed upon women by women, from the point of view of collective welfare. Full political power for women means that they themselves will bring the social conscience to bear upon many details of conduct now counted optional. Those who consider that any collective solution of the wife's financial problem would necessitate official interference with married life omit to reckon up the evolution of women into self-regarding, public-spirited beings which is bound to accompany their attainment of ability to enforce the claims of independence upon the stronger sex. I see no need for police supervision of the family because the woman who is rightfully one of its heads, obtained her own remuneration from taxation; and I must say that the proposal seems unconsciously hypocritical, when we once realize that hitherto individual men have controlled without interference just so much as they could grab, of the wife's portion and the children's portions of the common fund essential for the continuance of the race, which has always been earned by women's labor no less than by men's; whilst they have fashioned laws which left wives and mothers in the hands of individuals helpless as to all conjugal matters, including the regulation of their own maternity. If such license in the sex which suffers least inconvenience from parenthood has been counted compatible with their individual ownership of the material means of family existence, and even inheritance of large fortunes, why interfere because the wife obtained secure money rights and control of her own person? There has been no interference even with the idlest parasitical men, beyond the reach of any public opinion, who daily beget legitimate or illegitimate children afterwards supported by the state.

Some persons who favor other reforms which defend man
from Nature's cruelties argue against security for motherhood on the score that it would interfere with natural selection. The defence of existing family economics on this ground is utterly fallacious. It is based upon a double confusion. Financial competition is itself an interference with the totally different sort of complex selection Darwin described between animals and species of animals. That will continue to operate somehow, independently of money and man's artificial contrivances and laws. But the unwisdom of his arrangements may make it operate harmfully. The disparity between the happiness and strength of women and men, throughout the earth, compared with that between females and males among animals, does not say much for the beneficence of the one-sexed individualism which has prevailed. The contrast between our armies of prostitutes, our miserable slums for toilers, and the male and female lives which are one riot of unscrupulous and effeminating luxury says just as little. It is impossible to prove from facts that the men who succeed best in financial competition under existing conditions are necessarily those best fitted individually to control the destinies of wife and children; and the comparative physical feebleness of the female sex at least suggests that the men who had almost all the power to select the women who should become mothers have selected very badly. But again it is a pure assumption that the efficient men who are fittest for general affairs are the ones who do most to re-populate a country under modern conditions. It is more probable that they are the ones who have to marry late; and even if present arrangements secure survival of the fittest for the existing social and economic environment that is not what any idealist can want. Our task is to secure survival of the fittest for improving that environment. Extreme wealth may make women physically and morally unfit or selfishly unwilling for the demands of motherhood, but the sanest and most dutiful parenthood is now found in the classes where, through inheritances or family history, marriage and parenthood are little dependent upon market capacity either in men or women. But unhappily these morally fittest men and women are but a small proportion of those who undertake family responsibilities. The highest rec-
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ord* of woman-wasting, infantile mortality, and at the same time the largest and unhealthiest families, are produced among the poverty-stricken masses. They are produced by just the persons who (especially the mothers) had the least chance, previously to marriage and in marriage, of ever fulfilling family obligations thoroughly. This is largely because, through the indifference of the community, women among the poor are permitted to lack any sort of individual standard of life, either mental or physical. Wise selection itself requires that women possess an individualized standard, especially after marriage. As it is, at the bottom of the social scale, we meet the full fruit of the prevalent doctrine that a wife is a mere instrument. If she is to feel the obligations of selection she must possess the material means to become a moralizing influence over men, and to rear only healthy happy children. A woman must experience tangibly that work in and for her family deserves remuneration in the opinion of the community as much as labor in the jute or cotton factory, or as her husband's in the carpenter shop. She must be a factor in the economics and politics of the nation in right of motherhood as well as on other human grounds. No blind trust in magic is more superstitious than the vague setting up of the struggle for existence against justice. This struggle is a universal condition alike for the down-going and the up-going person or race. No phase of collectivism will destroy nature's selecting work, certainly not honest paying for services we want from women. But fair requital of women may be just the one thing which will make man permanently winner instead of loser in the struggle with nature. Let us not forget, firstly that every providential arrangements of men is an interference with natural selection; secondly that the problem is to ensure the right sort of a selection: what ought to be instead of what now is.

Probably neither the sociological science nor the morality of this generation are ripe enough for working out a scheme to perfect our family economics. I have not mentioned, but I do not ignore, the logic which usually connects collective maintenance of children with that of mothers. Logic, however, is of

*See some figures in Westminster Review, May, 1901.
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no use unless it takes count of every factor before giving judgment. I have had to omit all real discussion of the psychological effect upon men of the wife's financial independence, and of the advisability on that account of blending individualism with collectivism in the family financial arrangements. Without entering on these points I will merely point out the distinction that the average woman has, in addition to the consumer's claim, which the child possesses, an earner's unsatisfied claim. It may be impossible to estimate how much the community owes a mother or housewife in terms of merit; and difficult to decide justly on any standard of needs; but both sorts of estimate are just as hard in relation to all other sorts of social service. My point is that at least it is possible to recognize that on both grounds, of merit and of need, she has some claim which she ought to be able to enforce. However it is done, this will probably be the first point in the reform of family economics which women will attack, once they realize the pernicious effects of expecting a domestic worker to be also a market earner as fully as they already discern the tyranny of limiting all women to family occupations. However sincerely they might wish it, I do not think it is within the power of men to remodel a community so as to give real liberty to women in the mass, until a mental aristocracy among women, of diverse gifts, ambitions, and social grades, have, among themselves, become somewhat clear as to existing causes of their own worst grievances and as to the more important remedies. But as a matter of fact, the proper adjustment of society so as to permit all women full development and use of their powers in the common service must finally involve a gradual reconstruction from the apex to the base. I believe the process would be at least as beneficial to men as to women, and that as soon as the foremost women are ripe, men will assist. But if it is impossible, if women as a whole can never secure equal control with men over their own bodies and souls, without introducing greater evils than their subjection, then our current conceptions of ethics are all wrong; then let moral philosophers and women imitate the sincerity of the men of the market-place and the law-court in all the empires which have gone to ruin, and face the fact
that evolution has crowned earth with a species, one-half of which is essentially and permanently inferior and subservient to the other, not entitled to equal liberty and enjoyment, but only to so much self-development and consideration as would facilitate their own obedience and the further development of the superior half.

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THE DARK AGES AND THE RENAISSANCE.

Not long ago, in speaking of the life work of Ruskin, I said that he, and his teachers and followers, did a work in England not other than that done by Goethe's generation in Germany. And I described this work as being to bring back God into the world.

We are to consider for a few moments the historical meaning and justification of such a judgment.

The paradox is here. The world—the Protestant world at least—believes, or believed when some of us were young, that European society had passed through its re-birth and reformation four hundred years ago, and had, on the whole, been steadily pursuing a course of moral, political and intellectual progress since that day. Some time before the prosperous re-birth lay the period known as the Dark Ages; and by assuming that this lay, as it were, behind the dawn of day, and was inaccessible to the light of reason, we were saved a good deal of very troublesome research. As Mr. Wicksteed points out in his most profound and delightful address—the Religion of Time and of Eternity—in our inquiries into the history of intelligence we* practically omitted the Middle Age, and probably too we localized it, so to speak, as something foreign, elsewhere than in England. The precise relation between the Dark Ages† and the Middle Age is something which one never could find out.

*Not Hegel, as he half suggests.
†I wish I knew the history of the phrase.