

SOME SOCIAL ASPECTS
OF
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN LIFE:

BY

A COLONIST OF 1839—C. H. SPENCE.

Reprinted from the *South Australian Register*.

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If a colonist is observant and thoughtful he has it in his power to contribute many valuable suggestions on economical and social questions to older communities than his own. If his field of vision has been limited and affairs appear on a small scale compared to theirs he has the counterbalancing advantage of seeing things with greater clearness and distinctness than can be done in a large, complex, and highly civilized society. He can distinguish the necessary from the useful, the useful from the agreeable; he has had so often to choose between these things for himself without regard to the opinions or prejudices of other people that he has learned their real comparative value. "When newly arrived English people wonder at so much being different from what it is at home while there is a good deal the same old colonists recall the time when the differences were much more marked than they are now or than they will ever be again; for they are gradually approximating to English ways of living so far as the difference of climate will allow.

The colonists who arrived in South Australia in the end of 1839 found that some little progress had been made in the building of the city of Adelaide, though in some of the back streets one could only trace them by seeing that the trees were felled, which was done before the houses were built; but as for cultivation there was nothing. A drought had caused a dearth in the older colonies of New South Wales and Tasmania, on which South Australia depended for bread, and the quartern-loaf rose from 2s. 9d. till it reached the price of 4s., while meat was also dear (9d. to 1s. per lb.) though not in the same proportion. Sheep and cattle could be transported on their

own legs, and the pluck and endurance of a small band of overlanders, as they were called, had already formed the nucleus of the flocks and herds which have since produced so much wealth to the colony. But the early pioneers did not themselves reap the full benefit of their adventurous efforts. The bold and the enterprising are rarely saving men in any country, and the alternations in a young and small community are so great and so sudden that the market is easily glutted, and the very success of the efforts leading to competition lessens greatly the individual chances of reward. It must have taken a large sum to keep a population of about 12,000 alive at these rates, especially as the profits upon all imported goods both to wholesale and retail traders were raised by the enormous expense of living. The Wakefield system of colonization had been extolled as sure to avert the crisis which all colonies had previously gone through, for the simultaneous arrival in due proportions of capital and labour was expected to secure steady industrial progress. But neither labour nor capital was employed to produce anything. Instead of the two male and two female immigrants being employed on the eighty-acre section they were ostensibly sent to cultivate for the purchaser, they were employed in building houses for themselves and others in Adelaide, and when that failed—when capital was drained for food supplies—on costly Government works paid for in bills on England, afterwards protested. It was well for South Australia that the crisis did come, that Government works were stopped, and people driven to the country. Everybody took simultaneously to farming and gardening, flocks and herds in-

creased in number—faster than the consumers of beef and mutton—and the result was a time of almost fabulous cheapness and an extraordinary scarcity of money. The necessities of life were produced in superabundance, the comforts were slowly reached, and the luxuries had to be done without. There was very little difference in the actual circumstances of different classes—some had property and some had none; but property was unsaleable for money, and barter only exchanged one unsaleable article for another. Nobody employed hired labour who could possibly do the work himself, and every one had to turn his or her hand to a great deal of miscellaneous work, most of which would be called menial and degrading in an older community, where large classes have been from time immemorial set apart for drudgery, and where other classes would rather sacrifice anything than take a part of it. Thus gradually the financial position of the colony improved by means of the well-directed industry of the settlers, and they owed much to the helpfulness and good management of the wives, sisters, and daughters of each household. Even before the discovery of the Burra Mine there was substantial progress made, and strangers from the 'other colonies were surprised at the extent of cultivation we had attained to. When the rich gold discoveries of Victoria drew away at least three-fourths of the male population there was left behind a body of capable women, whose independent character and various acquirements made them equal to keeping things surprisingly well attended to under trying conditions. The money gained at Eaglehawk or Bendigo was not needed to repair losses, but generally expended in enlarging the holdings and improving the comfort of the homes to which the great body of the adventurers returned.

In the early days of a free colony we see something of that Utopia where man learns the usefulness, the dignity, and the blessedness of labour, where work is paid for according to its hardness and its disagreeableness, and not after the standard of overcrowded countries where bread is dear and human life and strength cheap. And in such a colonial community we can also see that intelligence improves the quality of the work done; that the educated labourer has more foresight and endurance, more enterprise and resource, than the ignorant, and thus turns his work to better account. Perhaps never in any human society did circumstances realize the

ideas of the community of labour and the equality of the sexes so fully as in South Australia in its early days. The immigration was chiefly family immigration. The Wakefield system secured that the free immigrants should be equal in the two sexes, and although the voluntary settlers were not balanced by the same rule the disproportion on the whole was very slight compared to that in the other colonies. In the outside settlements men preponderated greatly; in the town and suburbs and in the agricultural districts the numbers were nearly equal. The consequence was that women were not so scarce as to be spoiled or so abundant as to be neglected. Every girl knew that if she was tolerably pleasant she could be married. Beauty and grace had of course their peculiar attraction here as elsewhere, but a certain degree of usefulness combined with good temper was recognised as the chief recommendation for a wife. In the early days of the colonies a wife was not looked on as a hindrance or an expense, but as a help and a comfort. Girls did not look for establishments; parents did not press for settlements; a trousseau might cost £15—it was handsome if it cost £25 ; there were no wedding presents, no cards ; the cake might be made at home or dispensed with altogether. There was only one carriage in the colony for many years, which, though belonging to a private person, was hired for such as wanted to do the thing genteelly. In a country with an unlimited extent of land only waiting for the plough or for pastoral enterprise starving was out of the question, and as for falling in social position, that depended on character and not on income; so that the good old natural fashion of young people taking a liking for each other, and after a somewhat short but happy courtship being bound together for life was followed with boldness and with success. They began life with youth and love and hope and trust, and what better beginning can there be all the world over ? A new-comer in the decade we speak of, between the financial crisis and the great exodus to the Victorian diggings, remarked, on the simplicity of our arrangements, " Why! it is nothing to get married here ! A few mats and cane-bottomed chairs, and the house is furnished." And there were many four-roomed cottages thus furnished, where there was as much happiness on the part of their young possessors as can be found in much more ambitious houses nowadays. If we go into society now and see the heads of families who take a prominent position it is not too much to say that a large proportion

of them began the world thus, and that the simplicity of tastes and the combined economy of the young people were the chief causes of their material prosperity.

The acquirements and accomplishments of colonial girls, though they might have looked meagre at a Cambridge middle-class examination, had this advantage—that they were adapted for the daily exigencies of life. They were varied and useful, and made them admirable partners for men who had to make their way in the world, either in town or country. Domestic servants were scarce, and wages, compared with prices, very high, and the colonists were poor, so that all ranks had to dispense with hired domestics at times, and every woman was bound to know something about household work. It is far too common nowadays to despise such unintellectual employment but the work must be done by some one, and it can be done in an intelligent as well as in a stupid, mechanical manner. Perhaps in time people may come to see that driving a pen over creamlaid notepaper and writing a nice little note is no more dignified than driving a smoothing-iron over linens and laces; that cooking a dinner so as to get the best meal for a family with the least waste is as intelligent a thing as defining the chemical constituents of meat, bread, and other eatables; that keeping a house clean and tidy is as good a work of art as making an indifferent drawing of it, and that the arrangements great and small which conduce to the comfort of a family every day and all day long, may require as much thought, and call forth as much talent as is required for the composition of one-half of our popular literature. So long as these things are looked on as inferior and only fit for what we are too apt to call "the lower orders" they will be done in an inferior manner. It is only by upholding the dignity of the work that the workers gain self-respect.

Mrs. Sutherland Orr, in the July number of the *Nineteenth Century*, takes up a somewhat striking view of this subject. She says that those who uphold the necessity for the higher education of women, and the opening up to them of new fields of labour, plead that the ordinary work will be done better; but Mrs. Orr asserts that even if they increased their capacity the highly cultivated women lose the time and the inclination for domestic work. This however, in our opinion, applies only to those who have talent sufficient to carry them into special pursuits. If a woman has a genius

for art or for literature, or perseverance and industry to qualify herself for a profession, she must depute to others those domestic duties which she has not time to discharge, but her intelligence will make her a better organizer, and will enable her to exercise more effective control over her subordinates than if she spends her time in the frivolities of dress and visiting or the whirl of dissipation. For the rank and file, those who have no special vocation, the higher education should improve the quality of the work which ordinary middle-class women have to do. The progress of civilization and the subdivision of labour, aided by machinery, withdraw many of the best class from domestic service. Where girls have homes the good pay and the comparative independence of factory life offer most powerful attractions. This tends to raise the wages of domestic servants all over the world. Their work will acquire more dignity as it is better paid; and the costly labour-saving machines which are introduced act both ways—towards the reduction of their number, and towards enabling people with small incomes to dispense with hired help altogether. But this steady wave of advance has ebbs and flows. Things which should move simultaneously precede or lag behind each other. The sewing-machine, born of the urgent needs of the American housewife, was invented before the middle-class woman was prepared for the leisure she might gain from it for better and wiser ends, and the accumulation of work, tasteless or otherwise, which it enables her to put on the garments of her family has led to the introduction of a style of dress elaborate costly, and inconvenient, under which the sensible groan, and against which the moralist preaches in vain. In going through a clothing factory one cannot help observing how quickly, cheaply, and well men's garments might be made, with no waste of stuff and at fairly remunerative payment for all the workers. But when watching the yards, we may say miles, of flouncing, kilting, ruching, puffing, and piping—the cutting up of stuff into small portions in order to stick it on again, so as to make the garments of little or no use to the poor to whom they ought to revert; the covering of cosily stuff with more costly trimming—one feels for the moment really sorry that the irresponsible machine should lend itself so fatally to the vagaries of fashion; that people who ride in carriages or sweep gracefully through drawing-rooms should set the fashion for the working women of the world; and that in order to have the dignity of a train all the pedestrians

should have to hold up a heavy trimmed skirt, which we should imagine doubles—at least to the middle-aged—the fatigue of walking. A protest has been made against it in a leading English periodical for the conservation of energy, as the writer is aware that any appeal about its expense and its want of beauty has no effect on the leaders of fashion or their blind followers. The main objection to us is its heavy cost both in time and money, and it is a question whether the very means by which so many young ladies of the present day fancy they are making themselves agreeable in the eyes of the other sex is not one of the greatest stumbling-blocks to marriage after the old simple fashion, with love and hope and the world for the winning.

In the old days of which we speak if the money could be found to buy a dress there was not much difficulty about the making. The style was simple, the material generally cheap and there was almost always satisfaction with the result. Did these Adelaide girls then enjoy life? What was their education? What were their amusements? The book education was perhaps superficial, but the education of circumstances was admirable. Few of them had such thorough teaching as the artisan and day-labourer's children can now obtain at a Government school, but young people can pick up much from intelligent parents, and books possessed or borrowed were much more carefully and profitably read than the abundant literature which is within easy reach at present. They had a knowledge of things—not of the mere names of things—a quickness of apprehension, a readiness and fearlessness of expression that made them acquit themselves very fairly in society. They did not like to fall below the place in the social scale which their parents had held in the old country, and that kept up a certain degree of genuine refinement of manner, while their definite and recognized occupations made them independent and full of resource. They lived their own life, and did not live merely to influence others. To say that men are to do all the work of the world and women merely to influence the manner in which they do that work is to make a division of sphere both unnecessary and mischievous. Women being the weaker are far more influenced by men than men by them. The stronger sex have also all the conventional authority which society and the laws give to them, and it is only by giving woman worthy occupation that you can prevent her from succumbing

entirely to the opinions, the tastes, and the wishes of others. She is naturally only too anxious to be agreeable and fearful of the responsibility of independent thought and action.

" But," says an English reader, " do you really think that such work as you describe—cooking, washing, ironing, child-tending, and needlework—is to be compared to the literary work, the art work, the charitable work of the great sisterhood of single women in the old country. Where in the colonies at that time was there really a worthy sphere for capable and educated women such as has been opened to them in the mother-country?"

For literature and art there was no market in South Australia; for the charitable work there was comparatively no need. We only maintain that the average woman stood very fairly in comparison with her analogue in England, and that the happier community is that where there is a fair share of work and the rewards of work for everybody, and not where such a phalanx of labourers need to dedicate their lives to the redressing of some of the evils of the social system, and so to relieve a small proportion of the sufferings of the poor, the ignorant, and the neglected. Honour to the heroic band who have done so much, though they lay bare much that they cannot cure, but let us hope that under our happier conditions a system will be provided which will require less charity because it is characterised by more justice. Better than the acquiring of colossal fortunes by individuals is the more equal distribution of wealth in a community, and although the prospect of a rise to a higher class is a wonderful stimulus to energy and thrift, it is perhaps of more consequence that the material and moral condition of the hewers of wood and drawers of water should be tolerably comfortable.

And as for our pleasures we had few, but they were keenly relished. There was no theatre worthy of the name, parties were rare, concerts rarer. Life was too busy to be cut up by dissipation, and although there was all the hospitality of a cheap country, and our houses had a wonderful elasticity in the way of accommodating guests, the sort of entertainments given were of a simple description. The delight of driving in a summer evening for a dozen miles to a country evening party in a spring-cart, with simple white muslin dresses done up in a square parcel and brothers requested not to crush them, and dancing till daylight to such music as the guests could furnish can scarcely be appreciated nowadays. The girls of the house, with perhaps assistance from brothers

or neighbours, had taken up the carpet, cleaned the room, set out sapper in the verandah, arranged a few flowers, made the creams and pastry, and either cooked or superintended the cooking of all that was on the table. The wine was of home manufacture, the fruit came from the garden, the poultry was furnished from the adjoining yard. Scarcely anything on the table had cost money, and yet to the eyes of all the party it looked very well, and was given with the most overflowing hospitality. When we see the very pretty floral decorations which are now *de rigueur* at such gatherings, and compare them with the single nosegay for a centrepiece which was usual then, we recognise the fact that the girls who had to prepare and cook food and take up carpets had not time for such pretty frivolities. And the young men who shared their hospitality knew that a wife from such a home would be no helpless Dora Copperfield or absorbed Mrs. Jellaby, but that his dinners and his buttons would be attended to. The simple dresses struck no awe into his soul as to their cost; and if he stayed all night and saw the girls in their morning dresses putting things straight, as he lent a hand he felt that there was no risk ran if he asked such a woman to share his fate but the greatest good-luck if she would accept his offer.

But civilization has marched on, and there is no going back. Not again can we hope to see what was only a transition state of society. It was perhaps only a half refinement; not that of highly educated people, which it appears to require at least a thousand a year to keep up, and for the preservation of which so many of our middle and upper class men and women in England, and here too in an increasing ratio, are doomed to celibacy. But what we would contend for is that it was a measure of education and refinement, not for our betters to descend to, but to which our working classes may rise. Why should it be regarded as the inexorable law of nature that useful labours should be disjoined from education and refinement, that the hardest and the most disagreeable work is to be solaced by the fewest and the coarsest of pleasures? It may seem altogether too remote to be spoken of yet, except in a whisper, but perhaps fifty years hence enlightened philanthropy, just legislation, universal education, and the sympathy of class with class may raise the standard for all, so that the labours, the habits, and the pleasures of working people may be somewhat like those of the early settlers of the better class in such a colony as this of South Australia.

SOME PRESENT SOCIAL ASPECTS OF COLONIAL LIFE.

In spite of what was said in a previous article on a few very pleasant phases of early colonial life we have no reason to fold our hands in idle regret for the irrevocable past. Along with some drawbacks there is much substantial advance. It is gratifying to see that the old dwellers in tents and in four-roomed cottages have now handsome mansions and can ride in easy carriages. We derive so much advantage in every way from the progress of the colony—from good roads and gas and water supply, and postal and telegraph facilities, and railway trains and fast steamers, and fine gardens, and abundant books—that it would be a retrograde movement to go back to the collection of scattered cottages and desolate-looking Park Lands of 1846 or thereabouts. At no time could the wages of the labouring classes purchase more than they can now, and we need have no quarrel with the prosperous on account of the prosperity in which all have some share. But in proportion as the conditions of life become more complex they should be met by more ingenuity, more culture, and a deeper sense of duty, and the suddenness of our accumulation of wealth has scarcely prepared our little community for some necessary modifications of our social arrangements.

The widespread movement which is going on all over the world for the admission of women to new fields of labour springs from more than a single cause. The marriage difficulty is the most apparent, and has been more fully discussed than any other. In all old countries men have to leave their homes to rough it in foreign lands where women of their own class cannot follow them, and Englishmen go on working in climates where wives and children sicken and die. Consequently there is an overplus of women, which reaches its greatest number in the British Islands, where the numerous colonies spread over all the world tempt the young and the adventurous. The pressure for the means of subsistence without sinking in the social scale makes serious discrepancies in the originally equal number of the sexes who are born, and all over England, and especially in rural and provincial society, the number of marriageable women greatly exceeds that of marrying men; and this is most seen in the middle and upper classes. Some political economists, like Mr. W. E. Greg, say that the superabundant women should be shipped off to the colonies where men preponderate; but "the penniless gentlewoman (as the *Quarterly Reviewer* justly remarks) would not go to the wilds even if she could, and

she is right; the work she could do is not in demand there, and marriage is an object not to be taken by assault, but to be approached indirectly." And even in the Australian colonies, where Mr. Greg sees that women are in the minority, in spite of the greatest material prosperity the marriage rate is at present below that of the British Islands. Mr. Hayter's statistics reveal the significant fact that in Victoria, the most populous and for its size the wealthiest of the group, the marriage and birth rate has steadily decreased for years, and that in 1876 the number of marriages to the thousand of the mean population, which in England is about 8.50, was only 5.96. Dr. Balls Headley wrote on "Victorian Matrimony" in the *Melbourne Renew*, and calculated how soon at this rate marriages would cease altogether. The *Argus* laid this result to the account of protection, whose back is considered broad enough for all such burdens; the *Age* went into some statistics to try to prove that there was an extra proportion of the population under the marriageable age; but we see no hint in any of these comments that a decreasing marriage rate combined with a decreasing birth rate must imply a great increase of immorality of the worst kind. It was that, and no fiscal laws, that caused the few marriages and the few births in Imperial Borne when all the wealth of the world was poured into her bosom. It is vice, and not poverty, that saps society at its roots; and public writers who ignore this effective marriage check show very little knowledge of social questions. When young men say they will not marry unless they have acquired such a competence as will enable them to surround a woman of their own rank with all the comforts and luxuries she has in her father's house the resolution appears proper and magnanimous; but if in the meantime instead of preparing for such a union by economy and self-restraint they are spending all or nearly all their income in selfish and often vicious pleasures they deserve no credit for their empty professions.

South Australia with her 8.01, where the sexes are most nearly balanced, compares favourably with Victoria, but still she does not come up to the English standard. In Queensland, where the disproportion of the sexes is greatest, the rate is higher, 8.63, than in any other of those on the continent of Australia and slightly higher than in Britain; but the highest rate is reached in New Zealand, where the number to the thousand of mean population is 8.94. But to all English ideas even the last is not what might be expected from the general prosperity of the colonies.

There is no doubt that marriage nowadays appears more formidable than in the early days

when women's wants were few and their acquirements useful. The very rich can always afford it; the industrious labouring class is safe enough, but the middle class is jammed between the upper and nether millstone. Perhaps the true theory is that there are more middle-class people than society wants or has room for, and yet they keep multiplying; for though prudential restraints act more powerfully on this class than on the two others, and marriages are fewer and later, it is encroached on from below by the successful, and from above by the unsuccessful, so that its numbers are swelled out of all proportion to the openings presented to them; and the amount of comfort and even luxury to which middle-class people have attained within the last thirty years is enormous. Young men say the girls are costly and useless; girls say young men are selfish, extravagant, and undomestic. If, however, a girl from a wealthy house falls in love with a poor man all her companions are more enthusiastic about the matter than his. They hope the parents will consent; they follow her with admiration and good wishes to her modestly appointed home. If young men of character were sufficiently in love to risk a refusal they would probably be astonished at their success. But who can tell by the nonchalant manner at present fashionable which girls would rather struggle on in life with a poor man than wait for a rich one? Although every one knows that all the young generation cannot begin as their fathers leave off after a life's hard work, the fear of presumption no doubt checks many a promising attachment on the part of really honourable men. But the fact is that the coming men—those who will take foremost places in Australia ten or twenty years hence—are for the most part not in society at all. They are to be found in warehouses, in offices, in Banks, even in shops, at stations and on farms; they are now poor, but their employers and their fellows know that they will not remain so. They are the young men who do not mind extra work, even without extra pay; who hail an occasional absence of one of the staff that they may take his place and so get an insight into all departments, and on any pinch would take any one else's work and do it as well or better than himself; who read and study in their well-earned leisure hours, and who resolutely live within their income, be it great or small.

In olden times in England and elsewhere when a man had made a large business he took

care to bring up one or more of his sons to help him during his life and to succeed him after death. Failing a son he saw great advantage in a son-in-law with a turn for business. Nowadays the rich merchant or manufacturer educates his son at schools and University, where a wealthy and leisured aristocracy give the tone to an aspiring plutocracy, and where the effective public opinion is in favour of out-of-doors sport and the most perfect and costly things in the way of amusement, and rather antagonistic than otherwise to study, and still more so to the steady regular work and the forethought and the organization by which great businesses are made and held together. And strange to say, not only the inexperienced girls but the shrewd fathers fancy there is more security for happiness in marriage with a man to whom £20,000 or £30,000 has been bequeathed than with one who has the capacity for acquiring twice as much with fair chances. The English *Spectator* says that it needs nearly as much ability to keep up a great business as to govern a State, and that as this talent is not hereditary such large concerns either fall to pieces in incompetent hands or have to be disposed of at a loss. In Australia there are not a few of our energetic pioneers who have not had sons or sons-in-law with the taste or capacity to keep in their grasp the great businesses left to them. And for this the misdirection of the education of those sons and sons-in-law is much to blame.

The movement for a wider range of employments for women arises in great part from another cause than the marriage difficulty. All the avocations which the middle-class woman used to pursue at home, by which she saved money if she did not earn it, are slipping one by one from her by the encroachments of machinery and the profitable subdivision of labour. In olden days women of all ranks spun and wove the thread of which the garments of the family were made. Now she scarcely even puts the material together, and if she does it is by the help of a machine which can put in from 300 to 1,000 stitches a minute instead of twenty-five. Even within the memory of the middle-aged there was brewing and baking, pickling and preserving, fine cooking and pastry-making, and some kinds of laundry and other work, that were rarely left to servants. In our early colonial days the sphere of work was widened beyond even that, and girls could and did hang paper, glaze windows, chop wood, and use hammer and nails very deftly. The enormous increase of wealth and the demand for everything

being of the best has tended to cause home-made things to be despised. Nothing struck the present writer so much on a visit to the old country as the change in the work of the middle-class women and the preference for the laundress's gloss, the confectioner's pastry, the manufacturer's pickles, the dressmaker's perfect cut and fit; and English society is consequently getting filled up with idle gentlewomen for whom there is no work and no room. The younger generation, seeing the pitiable condition of those who cannot dig and are ashamed to beg, are knocking vigorously at the doors which have so long been kept shut, but their eagerness is as great for the employment as for the remuneration. It is not the easy life or the life of luxury that is the best or the happiest—it is the *interesting* life, and to women as to men the most interesting life is one of gratified activity. The laundress who earns her children's bread by ironing flounces or picking out laces, and takes a pride in doing these things well, has a more interesting life than the wearer of them if the latter has no definite occupation and tries to kill time over weak or sensational novels, or moves from one scene of gaiety to another in the vain hope of being amused from outside. Life all amusement is more intolerable than life all labour. The sisterhoods and the various charitable pursuits of one class of female workers, the earnest studies of another, the various new avocations into which women are pressing are all evidences of their eagerness to serve in some way or other the community in which they live. Where means are sufficient they work for love; where a livelihood is needed they relieve their parents by working for money. In spite of the remonstrances of alarmed parents who object to the expense of the training, and perhaps think that the chances of marriage are lessened by an education which puts the girl intellectually above most of her equals in social position of the other sex; in spite of the half-jealous, half-tender opposition of most men, who regret that the winning grace of dependence should be sacrificed; in spite of the theories of economists, who insist that the competition of the women must lower the price of all work into which they enter, and increase the evil by reducing the number of marrying men, the urgency of the need keeps up a steadily increasing band of women eager for employment. Even in South Australia we see this band turning in the direction of education—for one male pupil teacher that offers there are three or four females. In early days there

were a few governesses, a few dressmakers, and no difficulty in getting servants if you could pay the wages. Now there are hundreds, we may say thousands, in factories, in shops, in photographers' rooms; there are ten times more women employed as dressmakers in proportion, and servants were never so scarce. A lady who advertised in this journal for a lady-help who could assist with children and was clever with her needle got twelve applications from most promising young women. If she had advertised for a cook, nursemaid, or needlewoman she might not have had one. A correspondent of the London *Spectator* said he advertised for a superior nurse, and got two unsuitable applicants he advertised for a nursery governess at the same salary for the same duties, only with the addition of teaching two little children, and the number of applications was forty-three. Just as in old days people who could not afford a first-class passage to Adelaide took an intermediate and paid double what the third-class did for the same food and the same attendance only having the private cabin with the power of shutting the door, so will middle-class girls do better work for the same pay as servants if they are not severed from the family they serve.

We are at present in a transition state. A few years hence every man with a life-income who has more than one or two daughters will bring them up to some remunerative employment. To save them from the humiliating position of seeing in marriage their only refuge from poverty and neglect, to allow them to take a dispassionate view of an offer and only to be attracted to the solemn life-union by love, the middle-class father will make it his business to provide them with a livelihood either by his savings or their own efforts. In spite of all sentimental objections our colonial experience proves that the useful woman was quite as affectionate a wife and mother as the useless ones. All the mischiefs past, present, and likely to be done by strong-minded women can scarcely compare with what have been inflicted on the other sex from time immemorial by weak-minded ones. If the French mother has an imperiousness and even *ferocite* about the marriage of her daughters, at least she does not, like the English mother, throw them out dowerless and helpless into the world. The first care of the French middle-class people is to secure a *dot* for their daughter before she reaches the age for marriage, and then to look out for some one of similar means and otherwise suitable to marry her before she has had any opportunity of falling in love elsewhere.

This very often results in failure, for middle-aged people who have outlived their illusions do not always know what best suits the young; but in the great majority of cases, especially among the bourgeois class, the marriages turn out happily. No wife is so useful as that of the Parisian shopkeeper—there is a community of interests between the partners for life, and she retains the absolute disposal of her portion of the joint capital. All over the world it is the idle classes who show the greatest failures, and whether it is the idleness of great wealth severed from the duties and responsibilities which ought to accompany it or the idleness of lazy drunkenness in the lowest strata of society the results in married unhappiness are equally disastrous. In the history of the idle classes, written for the amusement of their imitators and admirers, which forms the staple of modern fiction, we see the worship of money, the love of luxury, and the revolt against marriage all brought prominently forward. There may be some truth in the pictures, but the necessity for saying something new and startling in narratives where love, virtuous or the reverse, form, the leading interest naturally leads to much exaggeration. In the barriers between people who love each other the money question is made supreme, whereas Sir Walter Scott took birth, or political differences, or family arrangements more frequently as the hindrance than mere disparity of worldly means. And the rosewater descriptions of life, the furniture and decorations, the swift silent service which are *comme il faut* (one cannot get on without a French phrase in dealing with these books), the sordid descriptions of middle-class poverty with its necessary make-shifts, make that really more forbidding to the young and the impressionable than elegant vice or startling crime. We may be in a bad decade of the century in politics and in art—the loosening of the bonds of religious obligation has affected many classes injuriously—but we are not half so bad as the fashionable literature represents us, and we need some powerful satirist to make ridiculous what is so demoralizing. In reading a novel of Ouida or of Balzac one feels both irritated and depressed—the slapdash broad colours of the one, the microscopic and terrible analysis of the other, show the seamy side of the character of both men and women, while those who are not wicked are mostly fools. When clever and experienced men say that their descriptions are true to human nature, and extol Balzac's subtlety and insight, we do not wonder at those who have been sheltered by

their sex from actual knowledge of the evil that is in the world feeling heartsick and heartsore. But a greater genius than Balzac would see beauties as well as deformities; and as more intimate knowledge of any human soul makes us generally love it the better in spite of faults, so we believe that the cynic is the most short-sighted of observers. If the microscope is looked through with eyes of love and not of scorn how different its revelations ! Men and women live together in society, but they do not know each other until some great passion of love lays bare to each the inner and the better secrets of the heart. This and this alone explains the wonderful way in which lovers whom the world thinks commonplace are transfigured to each other when they really love. The girl who appears to other young men ignorant or frivolous or haughty shows tenderness, receptiveness, and submission; the lover who seems to other girls conceited or cynical or self-centred opens to the woman who is to share his life all the better and higher side of his character. What he would not wear on his sleeve for daws to peck at he reveals to her. The man thought niggardly is generous to her. The man believed to be flippant, to her shows himself earnest; and if the same kind of confidence and the same kind of sympathy are kept up throughout married life the characters grow from within outward, so that all eyes can see somewhat of their real beauty.

Robert Browning in his last address to his living wife—" One Word More," which concludes his " Men and Women"—regrets that he cannot, like Dante or Raphael, go out of his own line to give his special tribute to the object of his love; that he cannot like the poet paint a picture, or like the painter write a century of sonnets for her only; that he had only this one gift of verse to give her, only that she would see more in his fifty men and women than the world could do; and goes on to say that though the moon only shows one side to the earth, if the moon, according to the old myths, ever loved a mortal, she would turn that side which had never been seen by Galileo or Newton to the object of her passion.

"And, God be thanked, the meanest of His
creatures Boasts two soul-sides—one to
face the world
with And one to show a woman when he
loves her."

THE SOCIAL OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE.

There is an ever-recurring scare that every new improvement or reform which is pressed upon society—though it meets an acknowledged want and can scarcely be prevented—will be carried too far and may work greater evils than it cures. We have already mentioned the objection from the economic side to the competition of women in the fields of better-paid work that they will reduce the wages of the men whose privilege it has hitherto been to work for them, and thus make marriage more difficult than before. Labour-saving machinery has been thus feared as leading to over-production, and the sewing machine itself was expected to throw nine-tenths of the sempstresses out of employment and to reduce their miserable wages, and yet there is no doubt that it has been distinctly friendly to the whole class. When Thomas Hood wrote his powerful and pathetic " Song of the Shirt" in the Christmas number of Punch for 1843 it was no fancy picture that he drew. A woman brought up for some petty theft told the magistrate she made men's striped cotton shirts at 1 1/2d. each, and he asked how many she could make in a day, and she replied—"If I make a long day, working from 6 in the morning till 12 at night, I can make four." A middlewoman known to the writer, who had taken the work to and from the needlewoman for the wholesale houses, about 1841, said the pay used to be 2 1/2d. in her time, but the competition of women who could sew and could do nothing else reduced it after she left London for Australia. Now, going through an Adelaide factory, we see such working men's shirts made by one machinist and two quick or three slower tackers and finishers. The shirts are cut; the machine and the thread furnished by the wholesale house. The machinist gets 2s. 2d. a dozen, the tackers and finishers divide between them 4s. 4d., which makes the price for making each shirt 6jd. If they are clever hands they can each make 20s. or more a week in the working day of eight hours, and as there is only 10 per cent. of duty on ready-made clothing the payment in England cannot be much less than here. In every step of the process of making the cotton into garments there has been a great improvement in the condition of the labourer. The free workman has taken the place of the slave on the plantations. Factory and workshop legislation has reduced the hours of labour for all, and especially protected women and children from overwork, and provided for ventilation and healthier conditions for the spinners and weavers; and the sewing machine has improved the position of the needlewomen, and yet the

working man can buy for the same, or perhaps even less money, a shirt as good in material and very much better made than when it seemed to coat so many " human creatures lives."

What competition of an additional phalanx of women as workers could be as disturbing as this development of mechanical contrivance, which was so dreaded, but which turned out so beneficial ? And to tie the hands of half of the human race in order that there should be more work for the other half to do can scarcely be wise economy. Already a very large number of single women are earning their own livelihood in other ways than in the time-honoured ones of domestic service and of teaching, to the raising of the payment for these Branches of industry. And so far even Mrs. Sutherland Orr acknowledges that the movement has done nothing but good, although she dreads its being carried to extremes. She dreads the loss of the peculiarly feminine characteristics and the decomposition of society if all women leave their retired domestic sphere and rush into professions, and the ablest and the best forswear matrimony and maternity. But society has been threatened with subversion, as Mrs. Fawcett puts it, from every innovation, political and social, which an earnest minority has advocated, and yet it continues to stand firm. Society is too tough to be undermined and disintegrated by a fresh application of the principles of free trade. They are already free to discharge if they please many kinds of important unpaid work. Some women, no doubt, will blunder and rush into careers for which they are not fitted; but there is no need for legislating against that any more than for making laws to prevent deaf men from serving on juries or cripples from enlisting in the army. Things will find their level if they are only left alone. Mrs. Orr suggests that, in preference to leaving the domestic duties for rougher outside work, they women, should reconquer their own sphere by the better performance of household work; but that is really being done simultaneously with the opening of other fields, if we may judge by the enthusiasm about sick nursing and cookery and art needlework, and here in the colonies servants will always be so scarce and so dear as to make domestic duties honourable. There is no desire shown by the ladies of the movement to push men out of their employments or to step into professions by any easy path—all they ask is a fair field and no favour, and they are likely to get it, for the opening of the profession of medicine after so long a struggle is a decisive triumph. The question arises how far will existing social arrangements be altered or

modified by this change, the which will not be confined to England and America, but which is spreading and will spread further on the Continent and is even now felt in the colonies. We are not so far removed in Australia from the heart of civilization as not to respond spontaneously to so large a movement, and it has been already shown in the preceding articles that colonial society is quite changed from the primitive type when middle-class women had sufficient domestic employments to occupy their hands and to satisfy their hearts.

And first with regard to *education*, when an appreciable and increasing number of girls want their teaching for service and not for show the middle-class schools must present something better than the pretentious programme of the young ladies' seminary. The felt want in England has been met by the establishment of the Girls' Public Day Schools Company, Limited. The first of this Company's schools was opened at Chelsea in 1873, and now there are fifteen in operation with 2,000 scholars in attendance and capital subscribed for six more; the fees are from three to five guineas per term according to the age of the pupils, and there are only three terms in the year. There are no extras except books and new music. The instruction is thorough and up to the highest modern standards. There is a training college for teachers in connection with the school, and the Company pays a dividend of 5 per cent. on the subscribed capital. Each school is built to accommodate 250 pupils. The head teacher receives a salary of £250, with a capitation fee of 20s. each on each pupil over the number of 100 in attendance. The great City Companies have been liberal with scholarships, and the schools appear to be altogether successful. Such a Company has an element of strength which private schoolmistresses have not; it can lay down a course of instruction and discipline to be carried out regardless of the whims of wealthy and influential parents. In girls' schools as at present constituted accomplishments take a very disproportionate place. The Commission recently appointed to enquire into them reported that music alone occupied as much of a girl's time as was given to history, drawing, arithmetic, German, geography, writing, French, grammar, and the use of the globes all put together; that arithmetic at expensive schools occupied one-thirteenth part of the school hours, at the cheaper ones one-tenth, and in almost all cases was miserably ill-taught; and that after ten years spent in learning French the girls could not converse for five

minutes in the language, the jargon talked at school being utterly barbarous and ungrammatical. The teachers complained that all their attempts after wiser proportion in study were thwarted by the parents, especially by the mothers. " What is the use of arithmetic for Julia ? Her husband will keep her accounts for her after she is married." The great aim was to arm Julia with the showy accomplishments and the fashionable air which would catch the husband.

If the advanced schools for girls are opened here under the Education Department they are likely to absorb those who mean to turn their talents to account. If the Government does not undertake this task we may probably see some such expedient as a Joint-Stock Company resorted to. And one of the first fields of enterprise for our coming women will be teaching in an improved manner. The middle-class governess for country families, whose salary rarely exceeds £30 a year if she professes to teach music, and is considerably less if she has not that accomplishment, will have her position improved by the knowledge that in a State school she might rise to £200 and £250, and in an advanced school to still higher payment and a better social position. Certificated teachers will command good salaries from private employers, and there will be a recognised test of efficiency which will benefit the whole body of teachers. The Commission already quoted says that if governesses were better instructed there would be little need to employ masters for teaching even advanced classes of girls. It is because they do not know thoroughly the subjects in the curriculum that the master is resorted to. There need be little fear of any general entrance on the part of women into professions; the education is too long and too costly for any large number of parents to afford it to girls who may marry; but young women with exceptional ability and energy and patience will no doubt enter if the doors are open, and will probably succeed. These qualities are not so abundant in the world that we should war against the admission of such women. Much mechanical and light clerical work will be competed for successfully by young women. When arithmetic is properly taught to them they may be employed, as in France, largely in bookkeeping. The Civil Service may be invaded in other directions than the Telegraph Department, where in the central London office 800 girls are now employed with satisfactory results. It is just possible that the Civil Service might benefit from the admission of a

class whose ranks may be thinned by marriage, especially as the prettiest and the most attractive are often not the best workers. A stupid or idle boy is a fixture in a Government office, and he has no temptation to leave it. It was considered to be a piece of vanity and also of ignorance on Miss Martineau's part when she said that she in common with all literary women had many offers of marriage, for the male horror of blues is proverbial. But it was true so far. Miss Martineau was believed to be earning £1,000 a year by her pen, which she could do as well after marriage as before, and there is little doubt that under these circumstances she would have had many suitors even if she had been twice as deaf and dogmatic. Mrs. Garrett-Anderson carries on her large and lucrative medical practice, and Mrs. Allingham works at her exquisite water-colour painting as diligently as ever, and according to all accounts both ladies are most affectionate wives and mothers. There can be no doubt that women with such a career would only marry for love. The class of domestic servants who have gone amongst strangers to earn their own living are still full of family affections and amenable to words of love, so that in their case we see no narrowing and hardening of the nature. Those who think that all women need the sanctity of home and parental influence to keep them good and womanly should see their principles fully carried out in Spain, where it is not considered proper for a girl to go to service without either her mother, or her aunt, or other watchful relative going with her for her protection. As in the case of our domestic servants, as a general rule when the middle-class woman of the future consents to marry she must choose not between destitution and marriage but between the modest competence she can earn and the modest competence her lover offers. If love is cast in the balance the joint home will have wonderful attractions; if love is absent the independent life will be felt to be the best. And the savings she has or ought to have been making for sickness or old age will be thrown into the common stock or be secured for future needs. It is not the large income that makes marriage prudent—it is the habitual living within it on both sides; and when women become in any large measure independent workers they will learn the management of money and the value of small economies. An artisan earning fifty shillings a week and a domestic servant earning with her board and lodging twelve shillings who spend every penny as they earn it would run a great risk in

marrying. On both sides there should be savings, and both should do their part towards the providing the necessary furnishing of a household.

The influence of a large class of intelligent and educated women being engaged in independent work will be felt upon *Dress and Fashion*. Hitherto it has been absolutely powerless, for there is sufficient hostile criticism directed against women's advance in other directions without then running counter to society and making themselves conspicuous by dressing for convenience and beauty. The movement about twenty years ago was premature; the Bloomer costume, which a glance at an old number of the *Art Journal* shows as convenient, inexpensive, and modest, was put down not only by ridicule, which is legitimate enough, but by so-called gentlemen inducing women of bad character to wear it. We have little hope that the suggestion made in the August *Cornhill* of a recourse to the Greek costume will be followed; but in time the working women will be strong enough to please themselves and dress without slavish compliance with the dicta of fashion.

Society too will be modified. Working women cannot spare time for morning calls or strength for dissipation carried on to late hours. Mrs. Garrett - Anderson and Mrs. Allingham have adopted the French system of evening receptions; and although they cannot set any fashion for the upper ten thousand, middle-class people whose daughters have a career to follow out will adopt this inexpensive and eminently social manner of meeting their friends of both sexes. Men and women will have more common ground; if there will be less outward deference on one side and less softness on the other there will be more mutual respect and more thorough understanding. The standard of morals will be equalized in a large degree. Girls will not be surrounded with dulness which is called innocence. They will not be supposed to know nothing of the evil that is in the world, but will make it their business to discover through fathers and brothers whether a man's moral character is good or not, and consider it their duty to treat him accordingly. And fashionable society itself will stand in awe of this bar of judgment, which will be strong in literature, strong in art, and strong in morals, and the wealthy roue will no longer find entrance into decent circles even there.

As to *politics*, the woman's suffrage movement proceeds slowly—at the present rate of progress it will not be carried in ten years—

but if Lord Beaconsfield appreciates the reactionary effect of admitting a large class of the most Conservative electors to be found in Britain he may at the next critical juncture when he wants to out-manoeuver the Liberals throw in his powerful aid to a radical reform which would be of immediate service to him. The first admission of women to political privileges we confess to looking on with some alarm; but it will doubtless be carried, and women will in time be educated to exercise the franchise wisely. At present the mass of women do not wish for them, partly because they dread the responsibility, partly because they care little about politics either abstract or practical, but mainly because the other sex, by which they are so largely influenced, discourage and ridicule the strong-minded women who are eager for political rights, and in all movements there are always some people who come to the front to throw discredit upon the cause. The political power, when it is attained, although reactionary at first in general politics, will however be at once directed towards the reform of some injustices which press hard on women. The *Quarterly Review* for July contains this striking passage:—"Among the anomalies of a country like England, the stronghold of old customs, and the leader of modern progress, where liberty and prejudice are alike strong, there are few stronger than the over-protection of one and the over-neglect of another part of the female population; which gives the prosperous and pampered woman every indulgence, and the poor and forlorn woman no rights." That anomaly there is little doubt that any Parliament where women's votes have been felt will rectify. And when women have been generally trained to independent work some of the objections to divorce in certain cases will be removed, for she will not be so helpless for the maintenance of her children as she is now. Very probably one of the first laws which will be modified will be that which makes breach of promise actionable. As Mrs. Fawcett says—"No one, man or woman, ought to be forced into marriage by fear of social or legal penalties."

And this leads us to the last branch of the subject on which we mean to treat, *the marriage question and public morals*. It is a fact which is not sufficiently recognised that there are some men and a great many women who have a vocation for celibacy. Who has not often seen as old-maidish a woman as can be found in the ranks of spinsterhood who seems to have married because it was the thing to be married and

because she gained in social position and in material ease, but who was a cold wife and an indifferent mother ? Who on the other hand has not seen a motherly old maid who was the tenderest of aunts, the most sympathizing of friends, the most faithful of confidants. Fortunately for the old maid, if she has not children of her own she can fill up gaps made by death or parental incompetence, but we are always sorry for the husband and children of the woman who was married by mistake.

There are other women like Harriet Martineau, who rightly or wrongly feel their characters too distinctive and their objects in life too important to allow them to sink to a secondary place and merge their individuality in that of another. The removal of all artificial restrictions on woman's work will make it more honourable to be single, and therefore will remove the strongest temptation to a loveless marriage. In France, where the parents accumulate the *dot* and arrange the marriages of both sons and daughters, celibacy is rare. In the United States, except in the older ones where women are in a great preponderance, where the girls and the young men have the greatest freedom of intercourse and have the entire management of their own love affairs, marriage is all but universal. The half-and-half method of England results in an increasing ratio of celibacy in the middle and higher classes. The tendency of things in England and the colonies is in favour of the young folks managing for themselves, and marriage is a thing so momentous and so personal that it must be the better way. And this will tend to what is delicately called the "initiative" being occasionally taken by the weaker sex. When the girl has the advantage in wealth or rank, or even sometimes in intellect, the man she loves may not have the courage or the presumption to ask her, but she may legitimately go more than half-way if her heart is really implicated—of course running the risk of a rejection both painful and humiliating, and binding the man she has honoured to the secrecy which ought to be kept in all rejections of a man's love by the woman he has failed to win.

The eager partizans of women's rights assert that the opening of honest and remunerative employment to women must infallibly improve public morals greatly; that all mercenary love, whether temporary or for life, will be discouraged thereby; that the career open to talent will make it more pleasant and more honourable to be single than it has ever been; and that

men will find it cheaper and better to marry a helper than a hindrance, On the other hand the equally sincere and benevolent advocate of the old ways argues that when the competition is successful it will press hard on the earnings of the professional and other middle-class men who now wish to [marry, and that a movement which at its best tends to delay marriage cannot be expected to extinguish or even to diminish the greatest social evil under which we groan.

So long as human nature is what it is people cannot be made virtuous by Act of Parliament, or by the most favourable social arrangements, and a movement broadly beneficial may have some bad effects; but we may reasonably expect that women will not be dragged into hopeless vice by destitution, or by that cruel treatment of lesser sins which drives them to despair; that only those who love vice will follow it for a livelihood, and that all who can be saved will be redeemed. And with regard to the other sex, we can believe they will be induced to marry with more courage if they are confronted by women bright, capable, and self-reliant, who know the value of money by having to earn and administer it, who have some trained intelligence, and capacity for business, which will make them helpful always and in times of sickness or misfortune capable of adding to the family exchequer — who can take an intelligent interest in public matters without neglecting their household or their children, and whose ideas are not concentrated on dress, servants, and the keeping up appearances, but are turned towards rational objects in which the married pair may work hand in hand. These things may be called Utopian or premature, but no one can thoughtfully watch the stream of tendency all over the world without being convinced that they are at our gates, and the sooner our community is prepared for them the more wisely they will be met, and the less mischief will accompany the benefits they may be expected to bring.

HUSBANDS AND WIVES.

A very bright little woman said to us the other day, "Well, I may provoke my husband sometimes, but I am thankful to say I never bore him—and that would be infinitely worse." No doubt the rigid censor of morals might take exception to our friend's standard of conjugal

offences, as he would do to Julia Manning's reply to her father when he said she must be either a fool outright or more disposed to make mischief than he had thought. " Put the best construction on what I say and do, papa; I would not be thought a fool for the world." Still we would maintain that in the present phase of society in all ranks of life to be bored is the greatest evil under the sun, and a successful crusade against dulness would have as great moral effects as an equally successful battle with vice. It is the " weariness of this unintelligible world," it is "the dreary intercourse of daily life" that presses upon both the thinking and the unthinking men and women of our day. Our forefathers would stand any amount of monotony, and could find pleasures in what we and our children would consider intolerably slow. In the delightful life of Lord Macaulay we see the quiet homelife of the Puritan family of Zachary Macaulay, where public amusements were forbidden, where the gatherings were of grave people associated for great public objects and the young people only crossed the forbidden line which excluded novels, and the evenings were passed in reading aloud to each other. What wonderful familiarity with literature this family - reading gives — what scope for little jokes, quotations, and allusions—one can see by the letters which passed between the brother and his much-loved sisters. But such things have had their day, and the young man of our time would elevate his eyebrows at the suggestion that this would be a " good-enough line" for one evening in a month. He wants change, variety, amusement from outside, and when led by circumstances and by passions which still exercise a powerful spell over the human race he falls in love and marries, the difficulty is how to make his fireside attractive enough for him to prefer his home to any other place and his wife to any other woman.

Thackeray says there can be nothing more maddeningly irritating than to have to sit opposite to a handsome stupid woman (he does not say whether it would be better if she were ugly) at meals and at the hearth day after day who has nothing but " Yes, my dear," and " Exactly so, my love," to reply to any remarks of yours, while her own are so far removed from the objects, the amusements, or the perplexities of your life that you can only return the same unmeaning acquiescence. Better an occasional spar that shows that there are weapons common to both; better a pronounced difference of opinion with regard to people and things and ideas than that severance of interests which too often exists not only between husband and wife but also between the men and women of households in general. We do not think it is found

to so great an extent in America, but in England and in the colonies it begins to show itself strongly when the boys and girls are sent to different schools and take to quite different games and amusements. It receives a severe but temporary check at the time of life when both sets of young people are liable to the first stirrings of passion; when they seek each other's society in preference, and their intercourse is full of wonderful possibilities for the future; but it is too apt to recur when after the morning glory of even a love marriage is over, and the husband gets absorbed in his business cares, and the wife in her domestic duties, her social engagements, and the exigencies of keeping up appearances as to dress, furniture, and appointments satisfactory to that public opinion by which she is mainly influenced. As a rule our marriages are made from pure affection, and there is a romantic halo round them which is very good to begin life with; but it has to pull the young people through a good deal of tear and wear, and even the most conscientious do not foresee the directions from which their greatest dangers are likely to come.

On an engagement being suspected or announced the first topic for discussion by the world is the extent or limitation of worldly means—" Have they enough to live on ?" Next comes the Question of character—" Is he steady ? Has she a good temper ?" Next (perhaps after some other slighter matters) comes the question of tastes, but perhaps on that which appears the least important continuous married happiness depends more than on means, character, or temper. It ought not perhaps to do so, but when tastes are similar or when they are so far complementary as to fit into and expand the scope and modify the direction taken by each of the married people the alarming element of " boredom" is extinguished. If husband and wife read similar books, if they admire the same music or works of art—with some necessary shades of difference, for the simple echoing of opinions is not refreshing or stimulating—and have both an eye for the beautiful in nature, which makes a walk together pleasanter than a solitary stroll, husband and wife will continue to prefer each other's society to that of other people, even if fortune is adverse and tempers are imperfect. There is an element of inconstancy in human nature and a desire for change, which satirists and moralists are apt to exaggerate—but there is also a strong element of constancy Use and wont reconcile people even to things which are somewhat unpleasant; the ties of common interests, the joys and sorrows connected with the children who are equally dear to both, keep husband and wife together under

very unfavourable circumstances. If the elements of constancy and of change can be found in the same individual, if domestic intercourse has brightness and variety, and the family circle or the *tete-a-tete* by the fireside is considered worthy of as much intelligent effort as is made for casual acquaintances or for visitors whom they delight to honour, there need be little fear of waning love. True—a man may say that he wants his home to rest in, and that it is putting too severe a strain on him to expect him to give his best in the way of conversation to his wife and children; but a reasonable woman will allow the bow to be unbent, and know when her husband wants talk or music, absolute rest or a hand at whist. If he likes the latter game, which to many men is the best possible amusement, she should learn to play it and try to play it well. Those men however who speak most about the necessity of rest do not know the benefits of a change of direction for the mind, and that pleasant talk would carry them better out of their cares than a lounge or a snooze on the sofa. And curiously enough, though the husband has in his business life more variety of occupation and of society than his wife, he somehow expects her out of her narrower range of excitement to gather materials for amusing him; and a clever woman can make much out of very little in that way.

In all the social difficulties which present themselves we see that it is the constancy of the husband which with middle-class people is ever considered to be in danger. Except in the luxurious atmosphere of fashionable society—it is taken for granted that the wife will be faithful to her husband and her home, and that no dulness, no neglect, and almost no crime can lead a wife to break the solemn vows she has made; that women are naturally and absolutely much more constant than men are. Public opinion no doubt helps to strengthen the fact it is founded on, but we believe that a sympathy of tastes makes married people of both sexes forgive serious faults and cling to each other through evil report and good report. The weak point in the many novels which profess to show woman's unalterable love in spite of vice, of crime, and even of cruel wrong (which is a wonderful fact in life) is that in the conduct and the conversations they report there is rarely or never shown the element which holds them together. In an almost forgotten novel of George Henry Lewes's (George Eliot's husband), called "Rose, Blanche, and Violet," he points out that it was a sympathy of tastes and the power of charming and amusing that made his

very faulty hero keep his hold on his wife. But to read the fiction on this subject from otherwise competent pens one would think that the old proverb about the woman, the spaniel, and the walnut-tree was correct, and that the more a woman was beaten down and outraged the more she would love and respect her master. There is never an effect without an efficient cause, though it may not be at once apparent; and when love, as distinguished from duty, survives for an unworthy husband, it will be found in some such charm of which the world is ignorant.

But not to speak of such extreme cases, how is the wife best to secure fidelity to the fireside from the middle-class fairly educated husband of to-day? One mentor says, "Through the stomach: feed the creature well; give him good dinners." A second suggests care as to personal appearance—"Dress well for him." A third says, "Welcome his bachelor friends, and don't oppress him too much with your own relatives." A fourth, "Don't shut yourselves up too much together: go out, and receive guests at home." A fifth, "Keep rigorously within your income, for when poverty comes in at the door love flies out at the window; and a man in pecuniary difficulties almost always takes to drinking." A sixth says, "See that he goes to church, and get him to be religious, for domestic happiness can only be secured on the firm foundation of Christian principles." All these advices are good, but ours can be followed too. So far as the good dinners and the society do not interfere with the grand object of living within the income they are excellent things; but the most expensive society is often the most wearisome, and a plain dinner seasoned if not with "Attic salt" with fresh, bright, intelligent talk from the dearest woman in the world goes down more sweetly than an elaborate meal with perfect appointments eaten in silent dulness or with captious wrangling. Solomon's "stalled ox" perhaps is not a tempting kind of entertainment to our fastidious generation, and for "quietness," which in a rude age seemed the great desideratum for the enjoyment of a meal, we would substitute "cheerfulness" as a still better promoter of healthy digestion, but the principle is the same. When the morning newspaper, or the nursery duties, or the forenoon's shopping has suggested something in which paterfamilias will be interested—when no observation falls dead or flat, but is taken up and discussed and disputed or satisfactorily assented to—the family meals and the quiet

home evenings have joys in which no stranger is needed to intermeddle.

Punch some years ago gave us two sets of breakfast-table conversations to show how differently the pleasant people got on under exactly the same circumstances as the nagging and the selfish, and both were very amusing. *Punch* did not venture on the dead level of the ordinary commonplace couple's breakfast-table talk; it would have been equally instructive, but it would not have been amusing. If it were photographed faithfully, who would not recognise the trumpery domestic detail about some slight grievance in the nursery or the kitchen, responded to by an "umph" from the gentleman, or his real or affected groan at the request for money, reasonable or unreasonable? His silent reading of the newspaper, because his wife only cares for those parts which he shuns, and his occasional remark about some failure or some transactions about which she shows not only her ignorance but her utter incapacity for understanding the very insufficient sort of explanation which he impatiently gives; the way in which he shuts up all his business cares in his own breast, and goes forth to his work without the cheer or the sympathy which his wife would give if she only knew how? While sympathizing to a considerable extent with what we have called the half-jealous, half-tender protest on the part of most men against the higher education of women, and the opening to middle-class girls of independent careers which social pressure renders necessary and which must be conceded if society is to hold together at all, we cannot help confessing that both sexes have suffered a great deal from the want of an education and training which would make the marriage bond more coherent. It is not that the love of a marriage founded originally on affection is dead. In times of sickness, of adversity, and of bereavement it starts up fresh and strong and enduring; but what we want is to make the intercourse of daily life more pleasant and sympathetic. A man does not want to talk "shop"—indeed if his work is hard or exhausting he likes to shut it off from his home-life altogether as a general rule; but there are many occasions in which he would be glad to consult on business matters the only human being whose interests are identical with his own, but who living apart from the turmoil and the competition of life could take a dispassionate and a purely equitable view of any important question, and who if she only was

capable of understanding its bearings could help a man through a difficulty or nerve him to a sacrifice for which he alone would be unequal. A course of retrenchment for which she sees good reason can be entered into and carried out without the innumerable difficulties which beset a one-sided conviction, and what is more it is done with positive satisfaction and pleasure on both sides. How many men there are who would be saved from political dishonour, from commercial disgrace, and from paltering with conscience* in religious matters if their wives had the intelligence to comprehend fully the importance of honesty in all these great concerns and habitually made themselves acquainted with their husbands' feelings as well as their actions and could throw their influence into the right scale.

Mr. J. S. Mill has said that if a wife does not push her husband forward morally and mentally she always holds him back, and he pleads for the emancipation of women on the ground that in modern society all strong attachments are those formed between the sexes, because the old male friendships are dead or dying out. We are not so sure that he is right on the latter point, for club-life opposes a strong rivalry to the influence of women; but we know that there can be no more fatal mistake for a rising and ambitious young man to mate than either for the sake of beauty, or money, or a temporary advance in position, to marry a woman who socially and intellectually cannot rise with him. We see this mistake sometimes committed through overmastering passion, and we excuse it though we lament it, but when we see it committed open-eyed can scarcely be so charitable.

The higher education of women, which will also act as a powerful stimulant and corrective on that of men, is coming, and also the opening of independent careers to middle-class girls. In a brilliant little American comedy which we saw recently admirably acted by amateurs—supposed to be a satire on the woman's rights movement, but in reality meant to show the exaggerated fears of "Noodledom" of a reversal of the order of nature if any concessions are made to the weaker sex—"The coming woman" says that the life of "waiting for the coming man, who perhaps never comes or if he does had perhaps better have stayed away," is a wearisome and a humiliating one. We cannot in Australia escape the influence of the great wave which is surging from Russia in the old world to the furthest western settlements of the Anglo-Saxon in the

new. Many thoughtful people however look upon the movement with fear, lest education pursued for a direct object may fail in many important points in conducting to the beauty and the happiness of life. We want not only to increase the working power of the world by untying many fettered hands and cultivating many dormant capacities; we want to increase the pleasantness of the world for its whole body of inhabitants by retaining the woman's special gifts of observation, tact, and sympathy—the result, says Herbert Spencer, of the accumulated experience of uncounted generations of woman in rude ages, in which these qualities were her only armour and her only weapons against the tyranny and caprice of her absolute master. The book-knowledge may be pursued at the expense of the observing faculties, the eagerness for independence may injure the tact, and the sympathy may suffer, not from the increased knowledge (which *caeteris paribus* makes it larger and more delicate), but from its being turned mainly to self-regarding objects. None of these losses however are necessarily consequent upon the new movement, and as after all the old order of things is founded on the immutable laws of human nature, and far the greater number

of our girls will look forward to be wives and mothers, we feel convinced that in spite of slight and temporary reactions and a few blunders of individuals, the complete development of all that is best in the feminine nature will be really fostered, and that wider knowledge, and larger experience will make women not less but more pleasant in their domestic relations, as well as call forth fuller confidence and more faithful love from their husbands, their brothers, and their sons. The wisest states -men, economists, and philanthropists see in the cultivation of the taste for innocent amusement the greatest if not the only defence against the worst evils which beset our English and colonial communities. The Pulpit and the Press are comparatively powerless with the class of people who most need reform, but by substituting something which will contrast as pleasantly with the monotony of toil as vicious excess, and if possible something in which respectable women of their own class can participate, the demons of drink and vice and crime may be combated. And of this we are sure, that when we exorcise the fiend of dulness from the home he will carry with him to some distant limbo seven other spirits more wicked than himself.