



THE MORAL EVOLUTION OF SEX

NATURAL science for women is not what they think at College—the dissecting of the frog for the anatomists. It is with the child, with the poet, and the naturalist, from Virgil to Darwin; it begins in gardening, in watching the living bees. And this vital science makes use of no hard names; its language indeed is simpler than the common. The 'Queen' is no queen but an imprisoned Mother; the 'Neuters' are no neuters, but the busy Sisters of the hive. For the first is the life-long imprisonment, the narrow home of motherhood; for the others the life of energy and of labour, for them the freedom, the sunlight, and the flowers. Here is your contrast of house-mother and new woman—sure enough as old as the world. Yet let us not overpity the queen-mother; what mother but will smile and say, 'Pity her? Rather envy her—was I not happiest with my babes?' Nor let us over-envy these free and happy workers—rich though they return to their hive. For one thing their vocation, like that of our emancipated women again, has been a temporal one, not a spiritual. Unlike the developed males, the drones, each carries her poisoned sting. But this sting is no new and strange weapon; it is part of the very organ of maternity, the

ovipositor, the egg-placer with which the queen places each egg in its appointed cell.

The parallelism of all this to human life is so obvious that this is perhaps the reason why the biologist never teaches it.

The passive Hausfrau of contemporary Germany, the New Woman of contemporary America or England, are each as old as civilisation. For oh, good lady friends, for whom human society stops exactly at your own particular level of Society, did you never see that every one of your domestics is a new woman, a worker-bee, who has gone out to labour in the world; that doctor and nurse, teacher and typist, dressmaker, mill girl, shop girl, and all the rest, are New Women proper, that is, Workers?—those who call themselves New and Advanced and what not, without working, being only mimics of the buzzing drones. The domestic is nearest the home, and so feels the instinctive feminine interest of this more than do her sister workers in the outer world. Her domestic functions too are also more normally feminine ones. She feeds the household, cares for the children and all the rest, like the good worker-bee, and so oftenest turns to marriage—oftenest too, to motherhood without marriage.

But the vast body of working women other than domestic, how shall we classify them? Obviously some have distinctly temporal functions, others distinctly spiritual ones. The dress-maker is the tire-woman of the domestic and the mother, the mill girl is the weaver-slave of all three, and so on. These women-workers merely replace men and machines in the factories, which are, as it were, the enlarged work-sheds lying behind the kitchen of the typical home.

But what of the spiritual functions? Leaving the domestic Martha and her handmaidens, what of Mary? Hers it is to be type of the spiritual calling, hers the deliberate choice of the better part which shall not be taken away from her—hers the prototype and ideal of all sisterhoods since her day.

Yet to one's own sister one says, 'Don't refuse love if it be offered you.' Why? Mary, type of sisterhoods, is not the

highest Mary, but surely it is she in whom purity and motherhood unite.

Again and again the painter has given us to understand the Madonna and Child not only as a religious symbol; but also, without halos, as a frankly human presentment, a frankly human ideal. But why dare we so seldom renew more of sacred legend with the same completeness, more of human life with the same sacredness, and so paint the Annunciation Lilies as brought by Youth to Maid! Such art is old, is dawning; and with the living science of which it is the forerunner it will frankly face the mysteries of sex, free from the false modesty of our passing age of mechanical art and analytic science.

What is the ideal of life? What but the blossoming of noble (that is, pure) individuality, human and organic, into fulness—that is, of love, of sex. What better symbol (that is, sign) of these than the lily? And what clearer word of literal revelation, what simpler, yet deeper word of initiation to both art and science was ever spoken than in the ancient counsel and command, 'Consider the lilies, how they grow'?

The theologian, who has seldom wearied of materialising the symbolic, may shudder at the 'Materialism' which considers the noble symbol he is wont profanely to ignore. But the lilies which are to be considered are none the less Real Lilies, and art and science are but ways of considering them aright: here at any rate 'Wer Wissenschaft und Kunst besitzt hat auch Religion.' Some day again with the renewal of Nature-Religion will return its corresponding Nature-Ritual, and, in no mere metaphor, plant its lilies amid our dying thorns.

Never was there such free discussion of sex questions as in these days; and much there is to alarm the timid, much indeed to repel the pure. But here as everywhere the road lies forward, not back. We must grapple with each question, whoever be shocked; not shirk it, gloss it, retreat from it, in our feeble virtue. Consider then the lily: face its elemental biologic-

moral fact. 'Pure as a lily' is not really a phrase of hackneyed sham-morals; for it does not mean weak, bloodless, sexless, like your moral philosopher's books, your curate's sermons. Its Purity lies in that it has something to be pure; its Glory is in being the most frank and open Manifestation of Sex in all the organic world. Its magnificent array is to show forth, not conceal: these wear their lucent argent for the passion-fragrant night, and these roll back their swart-stained robes of scarlet-orange to the sun-rich day; naked and not ashamed, glowing, breathing, warm, each flower showers forth its opulence of golden dust, stretches forth to welcome it in return. This, when we consider, is How they Grow.

What then is the elemental fact of sex and love? What but nature-mating—love-mating? This it is which covers even the bar-sinister with its gold.

For here primarily lies the secret of the strength and courage of William the Conqueror, here of the vivid heroism of Don John of Austria, and many a hero more; and in the converse ill-assorted 'mariage de convenance' lies half that of the sinister devilry of Philip II., of Pedro the Cruel, of mad czars and imbecile kinglets without end. Here, in the virtuous, prudent, timid, sordid cloistering of French maid and man, lies the old decadence of the nobles of France, the contemporary decadence of her wealthy and governing classes. And here in Scotland in the exceptional freedom in marriage choice, in love choice, illegitimacy and all, lies a root explanation of the organic vigour, of the 'ingenium perfervidum' of our strenuous race. There may, of course, be base-born children without wedlock, but there are also too many base-born with it.

Are we therefore attacking marriage—'sapping the foundations of morality,' as foolish people always say when they are asked to face facts? Not so, but defending marriage; making clear its fundamental and indispensable nature—the mutual selection of congruent types, at the culmination of organic an

psychic life. We are sinking, therefore, the foundations of morality.

And hence it is that romance and poetry are truly religious. For religion lies in idealising and consecrating life; and love is life, and life is love; so Robert Burns, human sinner, is also sacred bard. The Nature-Religions, like all others, are not dead, but are returning; and in ever purer forms. He was the fullest incarnation of Dionysos.

But since 'every clear idea is true,' i.e. has its truth, why then the social infamy of the bastard? First, because too often the psychical element is wanting, and then there is no marriage at all, but mere pairing of the lower animal sort; though perhaps even this is better than the pairing of the lower plant sort which is the ideal of the 'mariage de convenance.' Second, that mating, physical and psychic, can only be full and true when it is permanent, that is, when it goes on evolving throughout the lives it intertwines.

Hence, even apart from the claims and bonds of offspring and of society, the biological and psychic ideal is of permanent monogamy; the 'primitive promiscuity' of which we used to hear so much being but an ugly dream, a disease-utopia of city degeneration under domestication, never a history of the past.

Yet even lovers recognise in colder moments, and dramatist and moralist are constantly reminding them, that the complete ideal has many elements, and that, alas, complete marriage is therefore mathematically unattainable for humanity—no such ideally complete physical, psychical, social, and ethical culmination of life being even definitely imaginable. For, even granting the possibility of occasional perfection in either sex, we have a second improbability in the simultaneous occurrence of the ideally harmonious, yet contrasted type of the opposite sex, and a further improbability of their ever meeting. Hence appears one of the ways in which the ideal of celibacy is constantly re-affirming itself, and we understand better the monk and nun, the misogynist and new woman.

This idea of celibacy needs fuller analysis. How comes it that we humans develop it at all? It is 'not natural,' we say, when we remember the mighty urge of Nature. Yet it is in Nature; witness the very bees who were our text, for we were just now tracing the parallelism of bee-worker and woman-worker. In the maidenly reluctance which meets the masculine counsel, 'Do not refuse love if it be offered' with 'I'll never marry if I can help it'—there are many elements, but notably two. The reluctance to the loss of child-freedom, youth-freedom, the shrinking from the older and more passive maternal life—is one main element. But there is also an anticipation of the fuller maturity which lies beyond sex-love altogether, a recognition of a possibility (be this spiritual or social as education, religion, or temperament may determine) of a paradise 'in which there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, but in which we are as the angels of God in Heaven'—or in more modern and everyday (yet happily also not unspiritual) phrase—a 'Society of Friends.'

Is it not a little significant that it is the religious society of that name who, taking them all over, seem most nearly to have realised their heaven upon earth? For to them the secular life of good deeds and social intercourse is most normally accompanied by the spiritual life. Is not this not merely in, but also largely through, that measure of sex-equality and sex-fellowship beyond that of other faiths and churches, so that within any of the sisters or brethren in meeting assembled, there may arise the Spirit and awake the beatific Vision—

'Rare hours
In which the master of angelic powers
Lightens the dusk within.'

But life is mostly in the present and the actual, not in the ideal, and the question of questions, in which religion alone has so constantly failed, and which it is the task of science to help it to answer, is—What of the actual and practical present?

Return to this, and to the women-workers of respectively pre-

dominant temporal or spiritual calling. Or if the former be sufficiently discussed, what of the latter? What can we see or say of spiritualising the present?

Here appear, in catholic phrase, the secular orders—nursing the sick, helping the poor, teaching the children, and the like. And these good works satisfy many; witness not only the professed sisterhoods, or the incipient ones like Nurses, School-mistresses, or Parish Councillors; and thus assuredly may be lived most serviceable and happy lives.

Here, moreover, we are getting back to the fundamental domestic again, albeit now with spiritual bias. But here, as lover suggests lover of the opposite sex, so fellow suggests fellow; sister suggests sister of the opposite sex, that is, brother. Here was the limitation of the ancient religious orders; although, be it noted, vigorous attempts were made in the early monastic times to establish mixed convents. These, despite all difficulties, expressed the true ideal, which is of co-operation, not separation, of the sexes; and despite of failures and shortcomings it has been realised in many ways. Here of course is the great and pure, the ideal side of the Greek *Hetairæ*, of the ideal Abbey of *Thelema*; here too lies the reasonable and legitimate side of the contentions of the freest novelists.

The element of true union of the sexes, like the element of danger and confusion, is surely too obvious to need discussion: and the problem of morals, as of practical life, is not to retreat from its difficulties, but to surmount them, to bring them into a higher equilibrium, so making in short the difficulty an opportunity of higher things.

What, then, is the normal, the vital condition of the true fellowship, of the ideal sister and brotherhood? How shall we reach this fuller perfection of the human hive? Where has it been expressed in the world? Rarely, dimly, fantastically, if you will, yet surely in some measure in Chivalry, which was no mere temporal ordering of things, but in large measure also was the provisional Religion of Western Feudalism, and which grappled

more boldly than did the too passive orientalisms to which we have been wont to restrict the name, with the fundamental problems of our daily life.

In its noblest examples, the combination of activity with purity was practically reached; not evaded by help of separate cloister walls, as in the (so far profoundly less moral, however superficially more moral) discipline of monasticism. For here lies the vital element of chivalry, that each sex not only expresses its own quality, its own superiority over the other, but uses this to develop the other. The natural courage of the youth was not only developed by the danger of the quest, but refined by its discipline and patience. For the woman also this meant more than affection and constancy: for she might be not his lover, but his lady only, the serene expression of his ideals or their arousing voice, and thus suggest, not only his general line of action, but keep up his moral attitude in it.

We are reaching the fullest ideal of the woman-worker—she who works not merely or mainly For men as the help and instrument of their purpose, but who works With men as the instrument yet material of her purpose.

Here again of course we have new possibilities of good and evil; here are the clearest alternatives of witchcraft black and white, of Circe or Joan of Arc.

Do not let us be idolatrous, and take these again for solitary historic or legendary types. Look around you; are not all men swine and heroes? Not swine nor heroes, mark you, but swine and heroes—a good deal of both—the lower animal indeed in these days generally, but never wholly, predominant. Witch Joan gained her battles with the heroes she had created, and lost them again with swine; Witch Circe, for her part, made heroes swine, and yet they were delivered.

The rest of this essay is obviously for a woman to write. But if she say herself and her sisters are not witches of either type, it is obvious they must be a muddle of both types. And if so, what is the problem of general, of popular education? To go on blinking all sex-facts, all life-facts? to teach three R's or Latin and

Calculus? to pass Standards or Tripos Examinations? or to lead out young souls, to purify and strengthen their latent ethical and ideal life?

But how then shall we lead out these types? How deal with the moral mud of modern conditions—how crystallise, as Ruskin put it, the sand and soot and slush of our factory town into its elements—of opal, diamond, and snow?

Is chivalry over and done? Certainly not devilry at any rate. Was Circe ever more in evidence? Were ever we poor mariners and pilgrims more comfortable swine? We trow not. We do not intend it, but neither did the herd of Circe; her ideal was never definitely expressed to her men, though Joan's was. The utilitarian world thinks just now it is impartial, it has got beyond expressing any ideals; that is, it is fully, if tacitly, accepting the negative ones.

Is it possible or not possible then to restore moral ideals?—that is again to produce men and women of the highest type? And this for practical purposes in our everyday modern world? Higher Education, the thing itself, instead of the word? Obviously, yes. Your cynic who denies this is but an ignoramus, comprehensively ignorant of the nature of chivalry, of its civil history, its natural history alike, blind to the vital essence which lies under its quaint and outworn forms.

Every age of chivalry follows a period of decadence, of moral decline, and is the protest of the new order—is the expression of the new young life, breaking into the very citadel of evil, slaying its mightiest giants, its most infernal dragons.

The giant-killer, the dragon-slayer, is the son of a god very often—very often too the son of nobody in particular; which, as already noted, may amount to the same thing. He is Jack, Tom Thumb, Dummling, Gareth the scullion-knave, and so on. And the heroine, who is she? Very possibly the giant's own daughter, the heiress of the rascally or the sleeping king of the story; the Cinderella of the household, the beggar-maid of Cophetua; rarely has she the good pure pedigree of the peasant maid of Domrémy.

This, of course, should lead into an examination of the biological realities of pedigree, which like everything else has to be looked at along the lines of organic reality, and shows us pure blood and cur blood in palace and hovel alike. Yet after all, this matters little. Where there is human life, however fallen, there is hope. Are men curs and swine as some tell us? Shall we believe these decadent novelists, bemired half way between old ideals and new? It matters not; no brute wholly lacks courage, still less natural affection; and the possibilities of redemption, as the theologian at his best has always told us, are thus inextinguishable with life. The stuff of moral evolution is ever with us; this generation need not go to Hades; our children at least may make for Heaven.

Take another elemental illustration from the world of simpler life; consider what feeble propriety calls 'the pig,' so only seeing 'it' as 'dirty,' as 'shocking,' as a contrast to its anti-macassar lilies. But in the stronger language of hunt or farm, of heraldry or science, this is either boar or sow—elemental male, elemental female, beyond all other familiar creatures. For one, the swift and sharp-tusked, reckes not how many foes he fight, turns upon death amid a sheaf of spears; the other, many-breasted as Nature, many-childed as Charity, patiently yields the little ones her life.

Yet these creatures are not human, as our beast and bird friends are. Their courage is but brute courage, however better than none; their affection but brute affection. Why? Because the one is but blind Berserk rage, fighting for fighting's sake; the other mere instinct. It is as the male considers mate and by and by little ones, as he builds and feeds and watches the home that his brute courage refines. The wild boar is but of barbarian battle; finer fighters have been the Eagle of Rome, the Cock of Gaul.

This might be followed far; alike in natural and in civil history. But pass rather to psychology proper. The old school has talked its fill of Pleasure and Pain, but a new evolutionary school has left these vague generalisings, and begins anew

with the elemental emotion; that is, it tells us, Fear. But we again are wont to work at another problem—that of the organic Evolution of Sex. Supreme over the individual life to which the pre-evolutionary school and the earlier evolutionary ones alike too much confine themselves, is the sexual life; but this has its correspondingly supreme sexual emotion—which is other-regarding; that is, the stuff of Affection. Coming now to the self-regarding emotion of Fear, the rebound is Courage. So we would substitute for the outworn psychology of pleasure and pain something which is more akin to current phases of science; which, therefore, does not shrink from the criminologist's observant psychology of fear, from the modern novelist's or alienist's observant analyses of moral corruption; yet which does not stop there; but goes on to enunciate higher problems and better ideals, that is, more scientific and more practical ones. We seek then not only Science but Art, not only an 'experimental psychology' but an Evolutionist Education, in which the elemental lust of the flesh is disciplined into Love, and in which the perfect Love casteth out Fear.

Set then before man-child and maid-child, before lad and lass, man and woman, the elemental ideals of the sexes, of Courage and Affection; that is, let them, get them, set them to set these respective ideals before each other. And so animal masculine courage combines with affection to rise into Chivalry, magnanimous to others; the instinctive feminine affection rises through gain of courage into Purity, reverential of self.

How work this out in detail? It is incipient wherever children meet at play. Here and there a woman is sometimes facing it in her kindergarten; a schoolmaster in his athletic field, in his Boys' Brigade: but the elaboration, the development, the organisation of all this is the highest task of Educators, that is, of Women strengthened and trained by Men whom they have trained and strengthened. And here we are reaching the secret of the remoralisation of the sexes, of their highest individual possibilities, and this for and by lovers and celibates alike. Enough however if for the present we keep to the children. The boy's

sword, the girl's doll ; here Nature gives the starting-points of the Educator. Encourage, boldly develop, the game of war, let gun and trumpet have their little day, better now in nursery than later on Kaiser's throne. Drill and march, shamfight and snowfight ; for it means discipline and valour ; it means geography too ; in which is all the stuff of science ; it means history, in which is the stuff of literature. It means making not Latin grammarians only, mimics of the Latin pedants and versifiers of the Decline, but Roman boys ; who sit down to read their Cæsar together with some meaning, in the ancient hill-fort they have themselves held as Britons, or stormed as conquerors ; and whose next game may be to build a Roman wall or fill a moat. So onward through History, dramatised wherever possible ; thus even come fortification and engineering ; with practical energy and skill of peaceful handicraft—a preparation more vivid than that of our present Sloyd and polytechnics for the industrial world. Give them too with all this, story and song and ballad, give them individual banner and national flag, for here is the simplest concrete symbol of an ideal. These things done young enough, from war-game to peace-game the transition will be easy.

But the girls meanwhile ? Where are they ? Enjoying the fun, of course, first of all ; it is no new physiology that laughter is trophic. How their presence intensifies the fighting, here rewards the victor, consoles the vanquished, is surely an old story ; surely, too, how they teach fairplay and in turn learn it, as they learn courage also. Just as civilisation grows richer and softer, there is increasing need of a hardy upbringing for girl as well as boy. These elemental matters seen to, we are in a position safely to develop the domestic education and the culture education in which, on the whole, girls have such traditional advantages over boys, and to develop the kindergarten, which already is mainly feminine in type.

Of higher stages of this mutual education there is no space to speak ; but shall we set down the elements of all this, for those that love order and rules, that educate by Code ? Starting then

(1) with the moral ideals of Courage and Kindness, we would
(2) discipline this in a corresponding practical life-drama ; we
would supply the corresponding intellectual instruction as need
and opportunity arise : (3) all this, as far as reasonably possible
(and that is far), being carried on for and by both sexes. In
short, carefully reverse your present Codes ; defy them that
separate the children, that set but intellectual tasks, irrelevant
to their real life and interests, which are of Play : that either
starve practical activities or teach too tame and mechanical
skills ; that leave the untrained moral life, the inevitable sexual
interest to their fate amid evil chances.

All the land in these days is full of talk of a new Machinery of
Education ; but few care for the realities of it, few indeed know
that there are any. Yet here is a field of inquiry yet imagination,
of romance yet history, a field not indeed primarily of
legislation, but of everyday practical experiment in which
each of us may help ; and that in hope. 'For when a faithful
thinker, resolute to see every object in the light of thought,
shall kindle science with the fire of the holiest affections,
then will God go forth anew into Creation.'

The Authors of
'THE EVOLUTION OF SEX.'

