

Hypocrisy: Diagnoses and Palliatives



Hypocrisy: *Diagnoses*

Immorality does not consist in physical acts alone but, on the contrary, in liberating one's self from all moral obligations, which such acts impose.

Female dissimulation, worldliness and vice, are but the handiwork of generations of men, whose brutal sensuality and selfishness have led woman to seek reprisals.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. VI, No. 35, July 1890, pp. 353-64.

Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (DIAGNOSES AND PALLIATIVES) XII pp. 239-56.

That the world is in such bad condition morally is a conclusive evidence that none of its religions and philosophies, those of the *civilized* races less than any other, have ever possessed the *truth*. The right and logical explanations of the subject of the problems of the great dual principles — right and wrong, good and evil, liberty and despotism, pain and pleasure, egotism and altruism — are as impossible to them now as they were 1881 years ago. They are as far from the solution as they ever were. . . ¹

One need not belong to the Theosophical Society to be forcibly struck with the correctness of the above remarks. The accepted creeds of the civilized nations have lost

¹ From an *Unpublished Letter*, well known to Theosophists.

[This excerpt is from the only letter ever received from the Mahā-Chohan, an individual of spiritual attainment superior to that of Masters K.H. and M., and “to whose insight the future lies like an open page,” to use the expression of Master K.H. in his letter to Col. H. S. Olcott, “*formed in his own hand*,” as the Colonel says, in the early morning of November 10th, 1883, in his Camp on the Maidan outside Lahore (vide Vol. VI of the *Collected Writings*, pp. 22 *et seq.*, for facsimile of K.H.’s letter and pertinent data).*

Strictly speaking, the “letter” from the Mahā-Chohan is not actually a letter but, as stated in a few introductory lines signed by K.H., “an abridged version of the view of the Chohan on the T.S. from his own words as given last night.” As appears from one of the sentences in that communication, its date must be 1881, and we know from the same introductory note that it was forwarded by K.H. to A.P. Sinnett, the Master saying: “My own letter, the answer to yours, will shortly follow.”

Curiously enough, the original of this communication from Master K.H., recording the views of the Mahā-Chohan, has never been found. It is not among the other letters from the Adept-Brothers which were held by A.P. Sinnett in a special box and were later published as *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, all the originals of which are in the holdings of the British Museum. Sometime after its reception however, it was copied and “*cy-clostyled*” in London, and copies were sent to a few selected persons. One such copy was among the papers of C.W. Leadbeater, and another was found later in a manuscript volume in the handwriting of Miss Francesca Arundale. Using these copies, C. Jinarājadāsa published the text in the volume known as *Letters From the Masters of the Wisdom*, First Series, originally published in 1919 (4th edition being of 1948).

H.P. Blavatsky of course knew of this letter and either had the original or a copy thereof, for she quotes excerpts from it in several places (such as: *Lucifer*, Vol. II, August 1888, pp. 431-33, and her first statement issued in 1888 to the members of the newly-formed Esoteric Section). Passages from it appeared also in *The Path* magazine published by W.Q. Judge in New York (vide Volume VII, February 1893, opening article).

It is obvious from the context of this communication from the Mahā-Chohan, and from other statements in *The Mahatma Letters*, that the main purpose intended to be achieved at the time was to counteract Sinnett’s and Hume’s merely intellectual grasp of the teachings and their unfounded admiration for the achievements of occidental science, as contrasted with the higher spiritual objectives of the Movement which its real Founders had in view. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

*[See full text under the title “Mahā Chohan’s View on the TS” in our Masters Speak Series. — ED. PHIL.]

their restraining influence on almost every class of society, nor have they ever had any other restraint save that of physical fear: the dread of theocratic thumb screws, and hell tortures. The noble love of virtue, for virtue's own sake, of which some ancient Pagan nations were such prominent exemplars has never blossomed in the Christian heart at large, nor have any of the numerous post-Christian philosophies answered the needs of humanity, except in isolated instances. Hence, the moral condition of the civilized portions of mankind has never been *worse* than it is now — not even, we believe, during the period of Roman decadence. Indeed, if our greatest masters in human nature and the best writers of Europe, such acute psychologists — true vivisectioners of moral man — as Count Tolstoy in Russia, Zola in France, and as Thackeray and Dickens in England before them, have not exaggerated facts — and against such an optimistic view we have the records of the criminal and divorce courts in addition to Mrs. Grundy's¹ private Sessions “with closed doors” — then the inner rottenness of our Western morality surpasses anything the old Pagans have ever been accused of. Search carefully, search far and wide throughout the ancient classics, and even in the writings of the Church Fathers breathing such hatred to Pagans — and every vice and crime fathered upon the latter will find its modern imitator in the archives of the European tribunals. Yea, “gentle reader,” we Europeans have servilely imitated every iniquity of the Pagan world, while stubbornly refusing to accept and follow any one of its grand virtues.

Withal, we moderns have undeniably surpassed the ancients in one thing — namely, in the art of whitewashing our moral sepulchres; of strewing with fresh and blooming roses the outside walls of our dwellings, to hide the better the contents thereof, the dead men's bones and all the uncleanness, and making them, “indeed, appear beautiful without.” What matters is that the “cup and platter” of our heart remain unclean if they “outwardly appear righteous unto men”? To achieve this object, we have become past masters in the art of blowing trumpets before us, that we “may have glory of men.” The fact, in truth, that we deceive thereby neither neighbour nor kinsman, is a matter of small concern to our present generations of hypocrites, who live and breathe on mere appearances, caring only for outward propriety and prestige. These will moralize to their neighbours, but have not themselves even the moral courage of that cynical but frank preacher who kept saying to his congregation: “Do as I bid you, but do not do *as I do*.”

Cant, cant, and always cant;² in politics and religion, in Society, commerce, and even literature. A tree is known by its fruits; an Age has to be judged by its most prominent authors. The intrinsic moral value of every particular period of history has generally to be inferred from what its best and most observant writers had to say of the

¹ [A figurative name for an extremely conventional or priggish person, a personification of the tyranny of conventional propriety. A tendency to be overly fearful of what the respectable might think is also referred to as Grundyism. Although she began life as a minor character in Thomas Morton's play *Speed the Plough* (1798), Mrs. Grundy was eventually so well established in the public imagination that Samuel Butler, in his novel *Erewhon*, could refer to her in the form of an anagram (as the goddess Ydgrun). As a figure of speech she can be found throughout European literature. — *Wikipedia*.]

² [Singing in a whining way, from the Latin *cantāre*, to sing. Cant was at first a beggar's whine, hence hypocrisy. Cf. W.W. Skeat's *Etymological Dictionary of English*, 1835-1912. — ED. PHIL.]

habits, customs, and ethics of their contemporaries and the classes of Society they have observed or been living in. And what now do these writers say of our Age, and how are they themselves treated?

Zola's works are finally exiled in their English translations; and though we have not much to say against the ostracism to which his *Nana* and *La Terre* have been subjected, his last — *La Bête Humaine* — might have been read in English with some profit. With “Jack the Ripper” in the near past, and the hypnotic rage in the present, this fine psychological study of the modern male neurotic and “hysteric,” might have done good work by way of suggestion. It appears, however, that prudish England is determined to ignore the truth and will never allow a diagnosis of the true state of its diseased morals to be made — not by a foreign writer at all events. First, then, have departed Zola's works, forcibly exiled. At this many applauded, as such fictions, though vividly pointing out some of the most hidden ulcers in social life, were told really too cynically and too indecently to do much good. But now comes the turn of Count Leo Tolstoy. His last work, if not yet exiled from the bookstalls, is being rabidly denounced by the English and American press. In the words of *Kate Field's Washington*,¹ why? Does *The Kreutzer Sonata*² defy Christianity? No. Does it advocate lax morals? No. Does it make the reader in love with that “intelligent beast” Pozdnisheff? On the contrary . . . Why then is the *Kreutzer Sonata* so abused? The answer comes: “because Tolstoy has told the truth,” not as averred “very brutally,” but very frankly, and “about a very brutal condition of things” certainly; and we, of the 19th century, have always preferred to keep our social skeletons securely locked in our closets and hidden far away from sight. We dare not deny the terribly realistic truths vomited upon the immorality of the day and modern society by Pozdnisheff; but — we may call the creator of Pozdnisheff names. Did he not indeed dare to present a mirror to modern Society in which it sees its own ugly face? Withal, he offers no possible cure for our social sores. Hence, with eyes lifted heavenward and foaming mouths, his critics maintain that, all its characteristic realism notwithstanding, the “*Kreutzer Sonata* is a prurient book, like to effect more harm than good, *portraying vividly the great immorality of life*, and offering no possible remedy for it.”³ Worse still. “It is simply *repulsive*. It is daring beyond measure and without excuse; . . . the work of a mind . . . not only morbid, but . . . far gone in disease through unwholesome reflection.”⁴

Thus the author of *Anna Karenina* and the *Death of Ivan Ilyitch*, the greatest psychologist of this century, stands accused of *ignoring* “human nature” by one critic, of being “the most conspicuous case out of Bedlam,” and by another⁵ called “the ex-great artist.” “He tilts,” we are told, “against the strongest human instincts” because

¹ [A weekly journal published by Kate Field, 1838–96, born Mary Katherine Keemle Field; American journalist, lecturer, and actress, of eccentric talent.]

² [Full text in our Living the Life Series. — ED. PHIL.]

³ *Vanity Fair*

⁴ *New York Herald*

⁵ *Scot's Observer*

forsooth, the author — an orthodox Russian born — tells us that far better no marriage at all than such a desecration of what his church regards as one of the holy Sacraments. But in the opinion of the Protestant *Vanity Fair*, Tolstoy is “an extremist,” because “with all its evils, the present marriage system, *taken even as the vile thing for which he gives it us* [italics are ours] is a surely less evil than the monasticism — with its effects — which he preaches.” This shows the ideas of the reviewer on *morality!*

Tolstoy, however, “preaches” nothing of the sort; nor does his Pozdnisheff say so, though the critics misunderstand him from A to Z, as they do also the wise statement that “not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth” or a vile man’s heart and imagination. It is not “monasticism” but *the law of continence* as taught by Jesus (and Occultism) in its esoteric meaning — which most Christians are unable to perceive — that he preaches. Nothing can be more moral or conducive to human happiness and perfectibility than the application of this law. It is one ordained by Nature herself. Animals follow it instinctively, as do also the savage tribes. Once pregnant, to the last day of the nursing of her babe, *i.e.*, for eighteen or twenty months, the savage squaw *is sacred to her husband*; the civilised and semi-civilized man alone breaking this beneficent law. Therefore, speaking of the *immorality* of marriage relations as at present practised, and of unions performed on commercial bases, or, what is worse, on mere sensual love, Pozdnisheff elaborates the idea by uttering the greatest and the holiest truth, namely, that:

For morality to exist between men and women in their daily life, *they must make perfect chastity their law.*¹ In progressing towards this end, man subdues himself. When he has arrived at the last degree of subjection we shall have moral marriages. But if a man as in our Society advances only towards physical love, even though he surrounds it with deception and with the shallow formality of marriage, *he obtains nothing but licensed vice.*

A good proof that it is not “monasticism” and *utter celibacy* which are preached, but only *continence*, is found on page 84 where the fellow traveller of Pozdnisheff is made to remark that the result of the theory of the latter would be “that a man would have to keep away from his wife except once every year or two.” Then again there is this sentence:

I did not at that time understand that the words of the Gospel as to looking upon a woman with the eyes of desire did not refer only to the wives of others, but especially and above all to one’s own wife.

“Monastics” have no wives, nor do they get married if they would remain chaste on the physical plane. Tolstoy, however, seems to have answered in anticipation of British criticism and objections on these lines, by making the hero of his “grimy and revolting book”² say: →

¹ All the italics throughout the article are ours. [ED. *Lucifer*]

² *Scot’s Observer*

Think what a perversity of ideas there must be, when the happiest, the freest condition of the human being, that of (*mental*) chastity, is looked upon as something miserable and ridiculous. The highest ideal, the most perfect condition to be attained by woman, that of a pure being, a vestal, a virgin, provokes, in our society, fear and laughter.

Tolstoy might have added — and when moral continence and chastity, mistaken for “monasticism,” are pronounced far more evil than “the marriage system *taken even* as the vile thing for which he (Tolstoy) gives it us.” Has the virtuous critic of *Vanity Fair* or the *Scot’s Observer* never met with a woman who, although the mother of a numerous family, had withal remained all her life mentally and morally a pure virgin, or with a *vestal* (in vulgar talk, a *spinster*) who although physically undefiled, yet surpassed in *mental*, unnatural depravity the lowest of the fallen women? If he has not — we have.

We maintain that to call *Kreutzer Sonata* *pointless*, and “a vain book,” is to miss most egregiously the noblest as well as the most important points in it. It is nothing less than wilful blindness, or what is still worse — that moral cowardice which will sanction every growing immorality rather than allow its mention, let alone its discussion, in public. It is on such fruitful soil that our moral leprosy thrives and prospers instead of being checked by timely palliatives. It is blindness to one of her greatest social evils of this kind that led France to issue her unrighteous law, prohibiting the so-called “search of paternity.” And is it not again the ferocious selfishness of the male, in which species legislators are of course included, which is responsible for the many iniquitous laws with which the country of old disgraced itself? *e.g.*, the right of every brute of a husband to sell his wife in a market-place with a rope around her neck; the right of every beggar-husband over his rich wife’s fortune, rights now happily abrogated. But does not law protect man to this day, granting him means for legal impunity in almost all his dealings with woman?

Has it never occurred to any grave judge or critic either — any more than to Pozdnisheff — “that *immorality does not consist in physical acts alone but on the contrary, in liberating one’s self from all moral obligations, which such acts impose*”?¹ And as a direct result of such legal “*liberation* from any moral obligations,” we have the present marriage system in every civilized nation, viz., men “steeped in corruption” seeking “at the same time for a virgin whose purity might be worthy” of them;² men, out of a thousand of whom “hardly one could be found who has not been married before at least a dozen times!”³

Aye, gentlemen of the press, and humble slaves to public opinion, too many terrible, vital truths, to be sure, are uttered by Pozdnisheff to make the *Kreutzer Sonata* ever palatable to you. The male portion of mankind — book reviewers as others — does not like to have a too faithful mirror presented to it. It does not like to see itself *as it is*, but only as it would like to make itself *appear*. Had the book been directed against

¹ *Kreutzer Sonata*, p. 32

² p. 39

³ p. 41

your slave and creature — woman, Tolstoy's popularity would have, no doubt, increased proportionately. But for almost the first time in literature, a work shows *male kind* collectively in all the artificial ugliness of the final fruits of civilisation, which make every vicious man believe himself, like Pozdnisheff, "a thoroughly moral man." And it points out as plainly that female dissimulation, worldliness and vice, are but the handiwork of generations of men, whose brutal sensuality and selfishness have led woman to seek reprisals. Hear the fine and truthful description of most Society men:

Women know well enough that the most noble, the most poetic love is inspired, not by moral qualities, but by physical intimacy . . . Ask an experienced coquette . . . which she would prefer, to be convicted in the presence of the man she wishes to subjugate, of falsehood, perversity, and cruelty, or to appear before him in a dress ill-made. . . . She would choose the first alternative. She knows very well that we only lie when we speak of our lofty sentiments; that what we are seeking is the woman herself, and that for that we are ready to forgive all her ignominies, while we would not forgive her a costume badly cut . . . Hence those abominable jerseys, those artificial protrusions behind, those naked arms, shoulders and bosoms.

Create no demand and there will be no supply. But such demand being established by men, it

. . . explains this extraordinary phenomenon: that on the one hand woman is reduced to the lowest degree of humiliation, while on the other she reigns above everything . . . "Ah, you wish us to be merely objects of pleasure? Very well, by that very means we will bend you beneath our yoke," say the women [who] like absolute queens, keep as prisoners of war and at hard labour nine-tenths of the human race; and all because they have been humiliated, because they have been deprived of the rights enjoyed by man. They avenge themselves on our voluptuousness, they catch us in their nets . . . [Why? Because] "the great majority look upon the journey to the church as a necessary condition for the possession of a certain woman. So you may say what you will, we live in such an abyss of falsehood, that unless some event comes down upon our head . . . we cannot wake up to the truth. . . ."

The most terrible accusation, however, is an implied parallel between two classes of women. Pozdnisheff denies that the ladies in good society live with any other aims than those of fallen women, and reasons in this wise:

If human beings differ from one another by their internal life, that ought to show itself externally; and externally, also, they will be different. Now compare women of the most unhappy, the most despised class, with women of the highest society; you see the same dresses, the same manners, the same perfumes, the same passion for jewellery, for brilliant and costly objects; the same amusements, the same dances, music, and songs. The former attract by all possible means; the latter do the same. There is no difference, none whatever.

And would you know why? It is an old truism, a fact pointed out by Ouida,¹ as by twenty other novelists. Because the husbands of the “ladies in good Society” — we speak only of the fashionable majority, of course — would most likely gradually desert their legitimate wives were these to offer them too strong a contrast with the *demi-mondaines*² whom they all adore. For certain men who for long years have constantly enjoyed the intoxicating atmosphere of certain places of amusement, the late suppers in *cabinets particuliers*³ in the company of enamelled females artificial from top to foot, the correct demeanour of a *lady*, presiding over their dinner table, with her cheeks paintless, her hair, complexion and eyes as nature made them — becomes very soon a *bore*. A legitimate wife who imitates in dress, and mimics the *dé-sinvolture*⁴ of her husband’s mistress has perhaps been driven at the beginning to effect such a change out of sheer despair, as the only means of preserving some of her husband’s affection, once she is unable to have it undivided. Here, again, the abnormal fact of enamelled, straw-haired, painted and almost undressed wives and girls in good Society, are the handiwork of men — of fathers, husbands, brothers. Had the *animal* demands of the latter never created that class which Baudelaire calls so poetically *les fleurs du mal*, and who end by destroying every household and family whose male members have once fallen a victim to their hypnotism — no wife and mother, still less a daughter or a sister, would have ever thought of emulating the modern *hetaira*. But now they have. The act of despair of the first wife abandoned for a *demi-mondaine* has borne its fruit. Other wives have followed suit, then the transformation has gradually become a fashion, a necessity. How true then these remarks:

The absence of women’s rights does not consist in being deprived of the right of voting, or of administering law; but in the fact that with regard to matters of affection she is not the equal of man, that *she has not the right to choose instead of being chosen*. That would be quite abnormal, you think. Then let men also be without their rights. . . . At bottom her slavery lies in the fact of her being regarded as a source of enjoyment. You excite her, you give her all kinds of rights equal to those of man:⁵ but she is still looked upon as an instrument of pleas-

¹ [Non de plume of the English novelist Maria Louise Ramé, 1839–1908, although she preferred to be known as Marie Louise de la Ramée.]

² [*Demi-monde* refers to a group of people who live hedonistic lifestyles, usually in a flagrant and conspicuous manner.]

The term was commonly used in Europe from the late 18th to the early 20th century, and modern use often refers to that period. Its connotations of pleasure-seeking are often contrasted with wealth and ruling class behaviour. *Demi-monde* was often used as one of disapprobation, the behaviour of a person in *demi-monde* being contrary to more traditional or *bourgeois* values. Such behaviours often included drinking or drug use, gambling, high spending (particularly in pursuit of fashion, as through clothing as well as servants and houses), and sexual promiscuity. The term *demi-mondaine* referred to a woman who embodied these qualities; later it became a euphemism for a courtesan or prostitute.

Demi-monde is French for “half-world” and was coined by Alexandre Dumas fils in his comedy of the same title, published in 1855. — Cf. *Wikipedia*.]

³ [A small private room for guests in a restaurant; first known use, 1859.]

⁴ [Casual, unconsidered manner, flippancy, impertinence.]

⁵ This, only in “semi”-civilised Russia, if you please. In England she has not even the privilege of voting yet.

[Article written in 1890. Timeline of women’s voting rights in the United Kingdom of Great Britain are as follows:

1869: Britain grants unmarried women who are householders the right to vote in local elections.

1881: Some Scottish women get the right to vote in local elections.

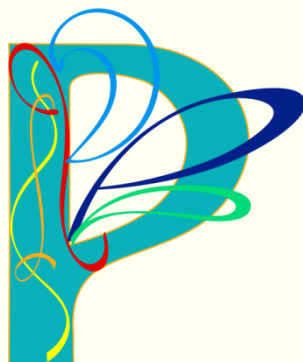
1894: The United Kingdom expands women’s voting rights to married women in local but not national elections.

1918: The United Kingdom gives a full vote to women of age 30 and older, and men age 21 and older. →

ure, and she is brought up in that character from her childhood. . . . She is always the slave, humiliated and corrupted and man remains still her pleasure-seeking master. Yes, to abolish slavery, it is first of all necessary that public opinion should admit that it is shameful to profit by the labour of one's neighbour; and to emancipate woman it is necessary that public opinion should admit that it is shameful to regard her as an instrument of pleasure.

Such is *man*, who is shown in all the hideous nakedness of his selfish nature, almost beneath the "animals" which "would seem to know that their descendants continue the species, and they accordingly follow a certain law." But "*man* alone does not, and will not, know. . . . The lord of creation — man; who, in the name of his love, kills one half of the human race! Of woman, who ought to be his help-mate in the movement of Humanity towards freedom, he makes, for the sake of his pleasures, not a helpmate but an enemy. . . ."

And now it is made abundantly clear, why the author of the *Kreutzer Sonata* has suddenly become in the eyes of all *men* — "the most conspicuous case out of Bedlam." Count Tolstoy who alone has dared to speak the truth in proclaiming the whole relation of the sexes to each other *as at present* "a gross and vile abomination," and who thus interferes with "man's pleasures" — must, of course, expect to be proclaimed a madman. He preaches "Christian virtue," and what men want now is *vice*, such as the old Romans themselves have never dreamed of. "Stone him to death" — gentlemen of the press. What you would like, no doubt, to see practically elaborated and preached from every housetop, is such articles as Mr. Grant Allen's "The Girl of the Future." Fortunately, for that author's admirers, the editor of the *Universal Review* has laid for once aside "that exquisite tact and that rare refinement of feeling which distinguish him from all his fellows" (if we have to believe the editor of the *Scot's Observer*). Otherwise he would have never published such an uncalled-for insult to every woman, whether wife or mother. Having done with Tolstoy's diagnoses we may now turn to Grant Allen's *palliative*.



1918: Women in Britain vote in a General Election for the first time on 14th December.
1928: The United Kingdom grants equal voting rights to women.

From http://womenshistory.about.com/od/suffrage/a/intl_timeline.htm

Hypocrisy: *Palliatives*

But even Mr. Quilter hastens while publishing this *scientific* effusion, to avoid identifying himself with the opinions expressed in it. So much more the pity, that it has seen the light of publicity at all. Such as it is, however, it is an essay on the “problem of Paternity and Maternity” rather than that of sex; a highly philanthropic paper which substitutes “the vastly more important and essential point of view of the soundness and efficiency of the children to be begotten” to that “of the personal convenience of two adults involved” in the question of marriage. To call this problem of the age the “Sex Problem” is one error; the “Marriage Problem,” another, though “most people call it so with illogical glibness.” Therefore to avoid the latter, Grant Allen. . . . “would call it rather the Child Problem, or if we want to be very Greek, out of respect to Girton, the Problem of Paedopoietics.”

After this fling at Girton, he has one at Lord Campbell’s Act, prohibiting certain too *décolleté* questions from being discussed in public: after which the author has a third one, at women in general. In fact his opinion of the weaker sex is far worse than that of Pozdnisheff in the *Kreutzer Sonata*, as he denies them even the average intellect of man. For what he wants is “the opinions of men who have thought much upon these subjects and the *opinions of women (if any) who have thought a little.*” The author’s chief concern being “the molding of the future British nationality,” and his chief quarrel with the higher education of women, “the broken-down product of the Oxford local examination system,” he has a fourth and a fifth fling, as vicious as the rest, at “Mr. Podsnap and Mrs. Grundy” for their *pruderie*, and at the “university” ladies. What, then, he queries:

Rather than run the risk of suffusing for one moment the sensitive cheek of the young person, we must allow the process of peopling the world haphazard with hereditary idiots, hereditary drunkards, hereditary consumptives, hereditary madmen, hereditary weaklings, hereditary paupers to go on unchecked, in its existing casual and uncriticised fashion, for ever and ever. Let cancer beget cancer, and crime beget crime: but never for one moment suggest to the pure mind of our blushing English maiden that she has any duty at all to perform in life in her capacity as a woman, save that of gratifying a romantic and sentimental attachment to the first black moustache or the first Vandyke beard she may happen to fall in with. . . .

Such weakness for *one* “black moustache” will never do. The author has a “nobler,” a “higher” calling for the “blushing English maiden,” to wit, to keep herself in readiness to become a happy and proud mother *for the good of the State*, by *several* “black” and fair moustaches, in sequence, as we shall see, if only handsome and healthy. Thence his quarrel with the “higher education” which debilitates woman. For

. . . the question is, will our existing system provide us with mothers capable of producing sound and healthy children, in mind and body, or will it not? If it doesn’t then inevitably and infallibly it will go to the wall. Not all the Mona

Cairds¹ and Olive Schreiners² that ever lisped Greek can fight against the force of natural selection. Survival of the fittest is stronger than Miss Buss, and Miss Pipe, and Miss Helen Gladstone, and the staff of the Girls' Public Day School Company, Limited, all put together. The race that lets its women fail in their maternal functions will sink to the nethermost abyss of limbo, though all its girls rejoice in logarithms, smoke Russian cigarettes, and act Æschylean tragedies in most æsthetic and archaic chitons. The race that keeps up the efficiency of its nursing mothers will win in the long run, though none of its girls can read a line of Lucian or boast anything better than equally-developed and well-balanced minds and bodies.

Having done with his *entrée en matière*, he shows us forthwith whither he is driving, though he pretends to be able to say very little in that article; only “to approach by a lateral avenue one of the minor outworks of the fortress to be stormed.” What this “fortress” is, we will now see and by the “lateral” small “avenue” judge of the magnitude of the whole. Mr. G. Allen, having diagnosed that which for him is the greatest evil of the day, now answers his own question. This is what he proposes for producing sound children out of sound — because *unmarried* — mothers, whom he urges to select for every new babe a fresh and well-chosen father. It is you see

. . . what Mr. Galton aptly terms “eugenics” — that is to say a systematic endeavour towards the betterment of the race by the deliberate selection of the best possible sires, and their union for reproductive purposes with the best possible mothers. [The other] leaves the breeding of the human race entirely to chance, and it results too often in the perpetuation of disease, insanity, hysteria, folly, and every other conceivable form of weakness or vice in mind and body. Indeed, to see how foolish is our practice in the reproduction of the human race, we have only to contrast it with the method we pursue in the reproduction of those other animals, whose purity of blood, strength, and excellence has become of importance to us.

We have a fine sire of its kind, be it stallion, bull, or bloodhound, and we wish to perpetuate his best and most useful qualities in appropriate offspring. What do we do with him? Do we tie him up for life with a single dam, and rest content with such foals, or calves, or puppies as chance may send us? Not a bit of it. We are not so silly. We try him freely all round a whole large field of choice, and endeavour by crossing his own good qualities with the good qualities of various accredited mares or heifers to produce strains of diverse and well-mixed value, some of which will prove in the end more important than others. In this way we get the advantage of different mixtures of blood, and don't throw away all the fine characteristics of our sire upon a single set of characteristics in a single dam, which may or may not prove in the end the best and fullest complement of his particular nature.

¹ [Alice Mona Caird (née Alice Mona Alison, married name Alice Mona Henryson-Caird), 1854–1932, Scottish novelist and essayist whose feminist views sparked controversy in the late 19th century.]

² [Olive Schreiner, 1855–1920, South African author, anti-war campaigner, and intellectual.]

Is the learned theorist talking here of men and women, or discussing the brute creation, or are the human and animal kinds so inseparably linked in his scientific imagination as to disable him from drawing a line of demarcation between the two? It would seem so, from the cool and easy way in which he mixes up the animal sires and dams with men and women, places them on the same level, and suggests “different mixtures of blood.” We abandon him willingly his “sires,” as, in anticipation of this scientific offer, men have already made animals of themselves ever since the dawn of civilization. They have even succeeded, while tying up their “dam” to a single “sire” under the threat of law and social ostracism, to secure for themselves full privileges from that law and Mrs. Grundy and have as great a choice of “dams” for each single “sire,” as their means would permit them. But we protest against the same offer to women to become *nolens volens* “accredited mares and heifers.” Nor are we prepared to say that even our modern loose morals would publicly approve of or grant Allen the “freedom” he longs for, “for such variety of experimentation,” without which, he says it is quite “impossible to turn out the best results in the end *for humanity.*” *Animal* humanity would be more correct, though he explains that it is “not merely a question of prize sheep and fat oxen, but a question of begetting the highest, finest, purest, strongest, sanest, healthiest, handsomest, and *morally noblest citizens.*” We wonder the author does not add to these laudatory epithets, two more, viz., “the most respectful sons,” and men “proudest of their virtuous mothers.” The latter are not qualified by Grant Allen, because, perchance, he was anticipated on this point by the “Lord God” of *Hosea*¹ who specializes the class from which the prophet is commanded to take a wife unto himself.

In a magazine whose editor has just been upholding the sacredness of marriage before the face of the author of the *Kreutzer Sonata*, by preceding the Confession of Count Tolstoy with an eulogy on Miss Tennant, “the Bride of the Season” — the insertion of “The Girl of the Future” is a direct slap in the face of that marriage. Moreover, G. Allen’s idea is not new. It is as old as Plato, and as modern as Auguste Comte and the “Oneida Community” in the United States of America. And, as neither the Greek philosopher nor the French Positivist have approached the author in his unblushing and cynical *naturalism* — neither in the Vth Book of the *Republic*, nor “the Woman of the Future” in the *Catéchisme Positiviste* — we come to the following conclusion. As the name of Comte’s “Woman of the Future” is the prototype of G. Allen’s “Girl of the Future,” so the daily rites of “mystic coupling” performed in the *Oneida*, must have been copied by our author and published, with only an additional peppering of still crasser materialism and naturalism. Plato suggests no more than a method for improving the human race by *the careful elimination of unhealthy and deformed children*, and by coupling the better specimens of both sexes; he contents himself the “fine characteristics” of a “single sire” and “a single dam,” and would have turned away in horror at the idea of “the advantage of different mixtures of blood.” On the other hand the high-priest of Positivism, suggesting that the woman of the future “should cease to be the *female* of the man,” and “submitting to artificial fecundation,” thus become “the *Virgin Mother without a husband,*” preaches only a

¹ i, 2

kind of insane mysticism. Not so with Grant Allen. His noble idea for woman is to make her a regular *brood-mare*. He prompts her to follow out:

. . . the *divine impulse of the moment, which is the voice of Nature within us, prompting us there and then (but not for a lifetime) to union with a predestined and appropriate complement of our being* . . . [and adds] *If there is anything sacred and divine in man surely it is the internal impetus which tells him at once, among a thousand of his kind, that this particular woman, and no other is now and here the one best fitted to become with him the parent of a suitable offspring. If sexual selection among us (men only, if you please), is more discriminative, more specialized, more capricious, and more dainty than in any other species, is not that the very mark of our higher development, and choosing for us anatomically the help most meet for in our reproductive functions?*

But why “divine”? And if so, why only in man when the stallion, the hog and the dog all share this “divine impulse” with him? In the author’s view “such an occasional variation modifying and *heightening the general moral standard*” is ennobling; in our theosophical opinion, such casual union on momentary impulse is *essentially bestial*. It is no longer love but lust, leaving out of account every higher feeling and quality. By the way, how would Mr. Grant Allen like such a “divine impulse” in his mother, wife, sister or daughter? Finally, his arguments about “sexual selection” being “more capricious and dainty in man than in any other species of animal,” are pitiable. Instead of proving this “selection” “sacred and divine” he simply shows that *civilized man has descended lower than any brute* after all these long generations of unbridled immorality. The next thing we may be told is, that epicureanism and gluttony are “divine impulses,” and we shall be invited to see in Messalina the highest exemplar of a virtuous Roman matron.

This new “Catechism of Sexual Ethics” — shall we call it? — ends with the following eloquent appeal to the “Girls of the Future” to become the brood mares of cultured society stallions:

This ideal of motherhood, I believe, under such conditions would soon crystallize into a religious duty. The free and educated woman, herself most often sound, sane, and handsome. would feel it incumbent upon her, if she brought forth children for the State at all, to bring them forth in her own image, and by union with a sympathetic and appropriate father. *Instead of yielding up her freedom irrevocably to any one man, she would jealously guard it as in trust for the community, and would use her maternity as a precious gift to be sparingly employed for public purposes, though always in accordance with instinctive promptings, to the best advantage of the future offspring.*

. . . If conscious of possessing valuable and desirable maternal qualities, she would employ them to the best advantage for the State and for her own offspring, by *freely commingling them in various directions with the noblest paternal qualities of the men who most attracted her higher nature*. And surely a woman who had reached such *an elevated ideal of the duties of sex as that* would feel she was acting far more right in becoming the mother of a child by this splendid athlete, by that profound thinker, by that nobly-moulded Adonis,

by that high-souled poet, than in tying herself down for life to this rich old dotard, to that feeble young lord, to this gouty invalid, to that wretched drunkard, to become the mother of a long family of scrofulous idiots.

And now gentlemen of the Press, severe critics of Tolstoy's "immoral" *Sonata*, stern moralists who shudder at Zola's "filthy realism," what say you to this production of one of your own national prophets, who has evidently found honour in his own country? Such naturalistic articles as "The Girls of the Future," published in the hugest and reddest *Review* on the globe, are, methinks, more dangerous for the public morals than all the Tolstoy-Zola *fictions* put together. In it we see the outcome of materialistic science, which looking on man only as a more highly developed animal, treats therefore its female portion on its own animalistic principles. Steeped over the ears in dense matter and in the full conviction that mankind, along with its first cousins the monkeys, is directly descended of an ape father, and a baboon mother of a now extinct species, Mr. Grant Allen must, of course, fail to see the fallacy of his own reasoning. *E.g.*, if it is an "honour for any woman to have been loved by Shelley . . . and to have brought into the world a son by a Newton," and another "by a Goethe," why should not the young ladies who resort to Regent Street at the small hours of night and who are soaked through and through with such "honours," why should not they, we ask, receive public recognition and a vote of thanks from the Nation? City squares ought to be adorned with their statues, and Phryne set up hereafter as an illustrious example to Hypatia.

No more cutting insult could be offered to the descent women and respectable girls of England. We wonder how the ladies interested in the Social problems of the day will like Mr. Grant Allen's article!



Hypereides defending Phryne before the Areopagus (1861) Jean-Léon Gérôme, Hamburg Kunsthalle

Suggested reading for students.



From our Living the Life Series.

- ATTUNE YOUR SELF WITH THE SELF IN ALL
- BLAVATSKY ON BUDDHISM
- BRAHMANISM IS THE ELDER SISTER OF BUDDHISM
- CAN THERE BE JOY WITHOUT LOVE?
- CHARITY EMPTIES HER PURSE WITH AN INVISIBLE HAND
- DELIGHT IN THE BEAUTY OF THE SOUL
- DENUNCIATION IS NOT A DUTY
- DISCORD IS THE HARMONY OF THE UNIVERSE
- EMERSON ON LOVE
- EVIL OMENS AND MYSTERIOUS DISEASES
- GODLESS BUDDHISM IS PHILOSOPHICAL AGNOSTICISM
- GOETHE'S MAXIMS AND REFLECTIONS
- HAPPINESS IS BUT A DREAM
- HARTMANN ON CHASTITY
- IMPRISONED IN THE NARROW VASE OF DOGMATISM
- JUDGE ON THE UNIVERSAL APPLICATIONS OF DOCTRINE
- JUDGE ON THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD
- LET EVERY MAN PROVE HIS OWN WORKS
- LET YOUR DAILY LIFE BE YOUR TEMPLE AND GOD
- LÉVI ON THE POWER OF MIND, UNRUFFLED BY DESIRE - TR. WAITE
- LODGES OF MAGIC
- MARCUS AURELIUS' MEDITATIONS - TR. CASAUBON
- MEDICINE OF THE MIND
- OCCULT LAWS AND PARADOXES
- OCCULT LAWS CAN BE ENTRUSTED ONLY TO THOSE WHO LIVE THE LIFE DIRECTED BY THEOSOPHY

LIVING THE LIFE SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- OPPOSITE AND OPPOSING FORCES ARE CONVERTIBLE
- PARADOX IS THE LANGUAGE OF OCCULTISM
- PHILOSOPHERS AND PHILOSOPHICULES
- PLUTARCH ON HOW WE MAY PROFIT FROM OUR ENEMIES - TR. HARTCLIFFE
- PLUTARCH ON HOW WE MAY SHOW OFF WITHOUT BEING ENVIED – TR. LANCASTER
- PLUTARCH ON LOVE - TR. PHILIPS
- PLUTARCH ON MAN’S PROGRESS IN VIRTUE – TR. TOD
- PLUTARCH ON MORAL VIRTUE
- PLUTARCH ON WHETHER VICE IS SUFFICIENT TO RENDER A MAN UNHAPPY
- PROCLUS ON THE GOOD, THE JUST, AND THE BEAUTIFUL
- PROVERBIAL WISDOM FROM THE HITOPADESHA
- PYTHAGOREAN ETHICS AFTER STOBAEUS
- PYTHAGOREAN SYMBOLS - TR. BRIDGMAN
- SENTENCES BY SECTUS THE PYTHAGOREAN - TR. TAYLOR
- SERJEANT COX ON THE NEGATORS OF SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION
- SEVEN OCCULT TAMIL PROVERBS
- SPIRITUALITY IS NOT A VIRTUE
- THE ENNOBLING POWER OF THORACIC EXPANSION
- THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS THE TEMPLE OF TRUTH
- THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU BY TOLSTOY
- THE KREUTZER SONATA
- THE NELLORE YANADIS
- THE NILGIRI SANNYASIS
- THE NOBLE AIM OF EDUCATION IS TO AWAKEN THE DIVINITY WITHIN
- THE POWER TO HEAL
- THE PRAYER OF THE TRUE PHILOSOPHER IS HIS ADORATION
- THE SAYINGS OF LAO TZU - TR. GILES
- THE SCIENCE OF LIFE BY BLAVATSKY AND TOLSTOY
- THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE
- THEAGES ON VIRTUE
- THEOSOPHICAL JEWELS - LIVE IN THE IDEAL
- THEOSOPHICAL JEWELS - THE RAINBOW OF HOPE
- THOU SHALT CROUCH AT MY FEET

LIVING THE LIFE SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- TRUTH DESCENDS LIKE DEW FROM HEAVEN
- WHAT SHALL WE DO FOR OUR FELLOW-MEN?



- BLAVATSKY ON MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND CELIBACY
— *in our Blavatsky Speaks Series.*
- FRANZ HARTMANN ON CHASTITY
- THE KREUTZER SONATA
— *in the same Series.*

