

Woman's Page

Devoted to Ways and Means for Bettering Her Lot in the Various Walks of Life

CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOMED FOR THIS PAGE

Should Women Work?

To many who know that women have often to do double and treble work, may seem absurd to ask whether women should work. But I believe we need to have clearer ideas as to the excessive work imposed on so many women, the enforced idleness of some few, and also what is to be our ideal of women's work.

We need not be afraid of controversy. Every socialist is surely able to argue in a friendly spirit, and discussion is always a help to thought on social questions.

I want to attack the conclusion arrived at by the "Australian Socialist," (quoted—March 18, Woman's Page,) that "not until women are absolutely freed from the necessity of bread-winning will they be fit to become mothers and to bear healthy, strong and moral children and a race that is really worth propagating."

I fully sympathize with the Australian feeling as to the great importance of the maternal function. It seems to me that no work that men can do is quite so important as that which women do in bringing into the world healthy, happy, capable and upright children, free from the curse of feeble or diseased heredity.

But the most efficient mother is not the woman who is "freed from the necessity of bread-winning." Motherhood does not involve this dependence on others. On the contrary, the experience of life which women need as much as men, and in which they are so often deficient, can only be gained by girls taking their part in the industrial work of the world. The years between twenty and thirty in age are the best years for maternity; should a girl, then, have no advantages of training in, and practising some profession or handicraft in the earlier years of her adult life? If one has this training and this experience—which all thoughtful girls are now asking for—she will probably be able and willing, or possibly by circumstances obliged, to resume her occupation later when the cares of her children are less absorbing.

The ablest socialists of our time, such as Bernard Shaw, Sidney Webb, H. G. Wells and Dr. Eder, strongly advocate State Endowment of Motherhood, and the movement is being taken up by all the socialist women of England. But support of maternity does not mean support for life. If women are to be idle during the many capable years of their lives when they are not engaged in maternal duties, men will have to work the more to counterbalance this idleness, which does not appeal to me to be fair towards men.

Moreover, this total dependence of women on men would almost certainly mean that women should submit to having their thinking done for them as well as their work, in fact it is the old heaven ideal of woman's position; and surely we have had enough of exclusive masculine thinking and masculine ideas prevailing in the world. The evil of the economic dependence of women is thoroughly well shown up by Charlotte Perkins Gilman in "Woman and Economics"; and it was clearly seen by Frederick Engels, who said "The emancipation of women is primarily dependent on the re-introduction of the whole female sex into the public industries."

It is not industrial work which injures women, but over-work, whether in home or factory.

Let me add a question as to one almost exclusively feminine occupation; if some would kindly supply information, it may be of interest to many of us. I have continually heard of the evils of overwork among nurses. It is not surprising to find even such an admirable and necessary class of people as hospital nurses oppressed by over-work, since they are voteless citizens. Perhaps there is something of the feeling, rightly condemned by the Australian Socialist, that since these women are not mothers, their individual health does not matter; but in fact maternity is often later undertaken by them, and when they have been brought near to a break-down by long hours and strain in their professional duties, no doubt injury ensues to their children as well as

to themselves. But surely a trades-union would afford some protection. Is there no Union of Nurses in Canada?

DORA F. KERR
Kelowna, B. C., March 29th, 1909.

We have been holding the following piece of poetry for some time. It fits into what Comrade Kerr says.—Ed.

NURSING

By GEORGE ALLAN ENGLAND

(The public knows little of the Hospital Nurse's cruelly overworked condition. The public simply thinks the nurse is "picturesque." These verses are dedicated to all good hospital nurses in grateful remembrance for many kindnesses received at their hands, when I was down and out in more than one hospital ward.)

It's heaps o' fun, 'twixt you an' me,
This nursin' folks in hospitals—
Waitin' on doctors, patients, too,
Whenever any of 'em calls;
Twelve hours a day of work, or more,
Besides night duty, never done,
Lectures an' study, in between,
And then exams—it's heaps o' fun!

Nursemaid, chambermaid, any old kind
o' maid at all,
Tyin' up a bloody leg, or sweepin, of
the floor;
Runnin' here and rushin' there, at every
beck an' call,
An' all the time the head nurse shout-
in': "More! More! More!"

You've got to dust, an' sweep an' rub,
Cook grub, an' wash, an' sterilize;
Make out reports, o' course, an' mind
Some slip young medic, half your size;
Speak soft, whatever's handed you.
Breathe germs, an' never see the
sun—
Be sick, yourself, an' die—who cares?
A For you're a nurse. It's heaps o' fun!

Nursemaid, scullerymaid, any old kind
o' maid at all,
Scrubbin' out a greasy sink, or sop-
pin' up of gore;
Never mind your bone-ache, or your
shrinkin' from the raw—
Lots to do, so hustle, now, some More,
More, More!

A smallpox case to put to bed,
Consumptive's back to rub with booze,
Two dozen cots to make, just so;
A convalescent wants his shoes;
Some sheets to hem; thermometers
To stick in faces, one by one;
(Break one, it costs you two days' pay!
They're brittle, too!) It's loads o' fun!

Nursemaid, housemaid, any old kind o'
maid at all!
Standin' prim (you must not faint!)
A crimson gapin' wound for things that
can't be said in print;
No matter if you're seasick! Watch
some More, More, More!

A pretty apron, ain't it, though?
A new 'blue dress, an' frilly cap!
My! Ain't we picturesque? A nurse,
'Sides being dainty, has a snap!
To moisten fevered brows, an' be—
An angel—Lord! it takes the bun!
What if corrosive cracks our hands?
Gangrene and rot are heaps o' fun!

Nursemaid, cookmaid, any old kind o'
maid at all;
Nice to eat your supper after "scrog-
in' out a sore!—
Goin' on "pro?"—well, here's your luck!
When you've been there a while,
'You'll see what I'm a-tellin', and a
heap sight more!

As Little Children

MARY WISDOM

All afternoon the couplet "men are only boys grown tall, hearts don't change much after all," has kept running through my head.

We are older and bigger than we were a few years ago, but our hearts haven't really changed one bit. We have a veneer of self reserve and politeness, but it is only a crust, and a thin crust at that; underneath we have the same simple loving hearts we had in childhood.

Though the years have come and gone since then, we have learned fear. We are fearful what our neighbors and friends will think and say about us. If we could only forget our own self

conscience unimportant little selves, for a while. If we could only be children at heart once more, the most of our troubles and worries and cares would fade away and we would really see again that the sun is warm and bright, that the grass is green and velvety, that the flowers are nodding their gay, pretty heads for our benefit.

The rifling clouds would seem soft as the down on an angel's wing, while the song of the birds would be tuned to the melody in our own hearts.

Some people boast of the experiences of life. As for myself, I think they are something to be sad over. I think we should try and forget all the sad, bad things of life just as fast as we can. We should guard the portals of our hearts so that no unclean thing can enter therein. We should strive to be fresh at heart, kind in thought and gentle towards one another. Then will we renew our youth like the eagle and when the Master call us to enter the House not made with hands, we go gladly like trustful children going to meet a loved Father.

WELL TRIED RECIPES

M. WISDOM

NICE SUET PUDDING

Materials:—3 cups of flour, 1 cup of suet, pinch of salt, 2 teaspoonful of baking powder, 1 large cup of milk. Mix well together and steam two or three hours.

Sauce:—Large spoonful of butter, one of flour or cornstarch, one cup of boiling water, one lemon, grate the rind and add the juice, one cup of sugar. Boil gently, gently four or five minutes.

DELICATE CAKE (Good)

Materials:—1½ cup sugar, ½ cup of butter, 2 cups of flour, ½ cup of milk, Whites of four eggs, 2 teaspoonful of baking powder.

Preparations:—Stir all together and beat thoroughly, then add the whites of the eggs and beat again. Bake in a moderate oven.

MARBLE CAKE

Materials (light part):—1 egg, 1 cup sugar, 1 cup milk, ½ cup butter, 2½ cups flour, 1 teaspoonful of cream tartar, ½ teaspoonful soda.

(Dark part). Take half the mixture and add one teaspoonful of all kinds of spice and one tablespoonful of molasses.

ACROSTIC

C. P. CULLIFORD

See the toiling workers, heed their
wailing cry;
Onward, then ye Socialists, dare to do
or die,

Charge the tyrant masters, riding in
their might,
In the coming contest we will win the
fight.

Are the workers always to grovel in
the dust,
Like dumb-driven cattle, knowing
naught but lust?

Impending revolution! We feel it in
the air,
Socialists are striving here and every-
where,

To usher in a reign of love, when profits
all shall cease,
So speed away, and haste the day of
universal peace.

NOT DIFFICULT TO PLEASE

Mistress:—I am sure, Jenny, we will get on well together. I am not difficult to please.

Jenny:—I kent that the blessed meenite I clappit my twa een on yur man.

Socialists work by the ballot, not the bullet.

LEFT ON HER DOORSTEP

FOR THIS MOTHER

Mrs. A. G. Tuson, of Livermore, Cal., writes: "I picked up from my doorstep one day a little book in which I soon became very much interested. My little girl of five years of age had been troubled for a long time with loss of appetite, extreme nervousness and undue fatigue. She was all run-down and in a very delicate condition. This little book was very comprehensively written, and told of the new method of extracting the medicinal elements of the cod's liver from the oil, eliminating the obnoxious oil which is so hard for children to take.

"Just the thing," said I, "for my little daughter," and I immediately went for a bottle of Vinol. It helped her wonderfully. She has gained rapidly in flesh and strength, and she does not take cold half so easily.

"I am extremely grateful for the good it has done her, and I hope other mothers who have weak, delicate or ailing children will be benefited by my experience and just give Vinol a trial."

VINOL IS SOLD IN COWANSVILLE BY Geo. W. Johnston, Druggist

WOMEN

And International Socialism

GERALD O'CONNEL DESMOND

When the average old party politician speaks, he generally refers, in his opening remarks, to "The Ladies" and afterwards ignores any of the opposite sex who may be present altogether. When we socialists speak we address our audience, irrespective of sex distinction, as "Comrades," and generally devote quite a lot of time to the woman question.

One has to go farther than this to see the fundamental difference between the old parties and the socialist, so far as women are concerned. The old party politician, either knowingly or unknowingly, divides the female half of humanity into two divisions, the society lady, useless, pampered, petted, surfeited with stolen sweets; and the working class woman slave, the drudge of the home and the underpaid and overworked toiler of the factory and sweatshop.

The attitude of the old parties in regard to both of these classes is perfectly clear. The society lady is all right as she is. She has a life of ease, rich food, many and expensive clothes, jewels, servants and, in short, all that is supposed to stand for comfort and happiness. What need, therefore, has she for and further liberties, political or otherwise?

As for the other class, the women of the workers, politics is not their "proper sphere of life." They are not to be trusted with the ballot, because they are poor, uneducated, ignorant females—are "incapable of using it intelligently." They must "be kept in the position of life in which God placed them." They must "fulfil their true mission in the world," which is, not to vote or to take part in any public of political business, simply to increase sweatshops, dividends and reproduce the working part of the race.

The attitude of the socialist party, so far as our sisters are concerned is the exact reverse of this.

We are not in favour of any such divisions of female society. We do not believe that a certain small part of the women should be pampered, petted, served, dressed, fed and housed at the expense of their fellows. We would eliminate the society lady, and we eliminate, also, the other class, the female slave. Eliminate it by raising the working women to a higher level. As far as political and civil rights and liberties are concerned we stand for complete equality irrespective of all sex and distinctions.

In regard to the subject which is apparently of primary importance and interest to the women just now, the franchise, we have already declared ourselves to be with them, and ready to assist them to the best of our ability at all times. In the socialist party organization we practice this already. We admit and welcome the women, granting them equality with ourselves in all matters. Surely, then, we have a claim on them for assistance and support. Will the women recognize that claim? I, for one, think they will. Certainly the signs and omens are full of promise. We look to the women with confidence. They have taken their place in the rebellions of the past and they will surely not be found wanting now.

The socialist organization already contains many and splendid female workers, who, no longer content with the present industrial system which tends to make of them useless ladies or hopeless slaves, aspire to and fight for

the socialist ideal and its realization—the commonwealth in which the ornamental lady will give place to the useful women, and the slave and drudge to the happy and independent comrade of the home of industry, sharing alike every liberty and every privilege economic, civil, religious, social and political.

WITH THE SAGES

We are born to do benefits.—Shakespeare.

Hold on; holdfast out. Patience is genius.—Buffon.

To do it no more, is the true repentance.—Luther.

The secret of all true greatness is simplicity.—Jordan.

The man without a purpose lives, but enjoys not life.—Herbert.

One cannot injure another without a greater hurt to self.—Dr. Arnot.

After pleasure follows pain, and after pain follows virtue.—W. J. Locke.

What the world is for us depends on what we are ourselves.—Lewis G. Jones.

The day is always his who works in it with sincerity and great aim.—Channing.

He that will lose his friend for a jest deserves to die a beggar by the bargain.—Fuller.

What you were, others may answer for, what you tried to be, you must answer for yourself.—John Ruskin.

Mistakes are lessons of wisdom. The past cannot be changed. The future is yet in your power.—Hugh White.

When death, the great reconciler, has come, it is never our tenderness that we regret, but our severity.—George Eliot.

It is not enough to have earned our livelihood, the earning itself should have been serviceable to mankind.—H. L. Stevenson.

Set the allowance against the loss and thou shalt find no loss great; he loses little or nothing that reserves himself.—Quarles.

Every person has two educations; one which he receives from others, and one more important, which he gives himself.—Gibson.

Love feels no burden, thinks nothing of trouble, attempts what is above its strength, pleads no excuse of impossibility; for it thinks all things possible.—Thomas Kempe.

Gathering something from everyone thou passeth on the highway, and from every experience that sends thee, and out of the wide knowledge thus gained of human weakness and human needs, distill in thine own heart the precious oil of sympathy.—A. Fellows Johnston.

Society heaps great wealth on the few and great misery on the many. This produces over-fed, soft-muscled plutes, and under-fed, over-worked workers. Society then asks, "are these unequal?" Of course they are not. But the inequality between them is detrimental to the human race.

CONTENTED

O learn to be contented,
With your labor and your lot!
And never long to have the things,
You Made and haven't got!

Socialism is looked upon with favor by many men in capitalistic positions. They must keep their opinions to themselves, however, or lose their jobs.

PSALMS

PSALM 25.

3 Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.

4 Show me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths.

5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

6 Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving-kindnesses; for they have been ever of old.

7 Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O Lord.

8 Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

9 The meek will he guide in judgement: and the meek will he teach his way.

10 All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

PROVERBS

CHAPTER 14.

10 The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.

11 The house of the wicked shall be overthrown; but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.

12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death.

13 Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness.

14 The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways; and a good man shall be satisfied from himself.

15 The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going.

16 A wise man feareth, and and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.

17 He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly; and a man of wicked devices is hated.

UNDER SOCIALISM

There Ain't Goin' to be No Servant Girls

Few and far between are the crumbs of comfort seen as one looks over the world of capitalism. But there are two recurrent news items that cause me to chortle with glee and warm the cockles of my heart.

One is the wail raised by the gentlemen of commerce because it is so difficult to get American-born boys to be sailors. The other is the whining belch of our fine ladies because of the scarcity of servant girls.

Generally speaking, a common sailor is treated a little better than a dog. Most servant girls are treated worse than dogs.

"Domestics," they are called by their "mistresses," but few of them meet the kindness and consideration accorded domestic animals.

They cook the best food, and eat the leavings. They set the table in the dining room, and eat in the kitchen. They sweep and dust the parlor, but they must not sit there. They empty the slops and make the beds in fine chambers, but they sleep in attic or cellar, or in a cubby-hole under the stairs.

Every male member of the household has a right to insult her. No matter who or what he is—raw and driving youth, burly master, or drooling and senile grandpa. Driven to bay by these fine gentlemen, she may call for help. But there is no help. Only mistress can hear her cry. She knows "her boy" wouldn't do such a thing. "You are the brazen baggage." "Leave my house—hussy!" No reference. No "character." When attacked by foreman or employer, the factory girl may save her soul at the price of her place and bread, but many time the "domestic" must give up all on the altar of slavery.

One afternoon and one evening out every week. Last one to bed, first to get up. Fires, dishes, meals, slops, beds, sweeping, dusting, children, washing, mending, windows, scouring, scrubbing—all to be done for others, all to be done in the way that others say.

No, dear madam, my fine, fat old female with the double chin, there ain't goin' to be no servant girls in the world that is to be. It's a terrible thought. But take heart of hope. It may not be as bad as you fear. True, there shall be no servants, but it does not follow that there shall be no service. First of all, tools and machines, organization of labor, division and subdivision of labor, shall do many things now done by the domestic slave. And about machines and their labor there shall be no smell of servitude or slavery, no taint of the "genial."

True, brass and iron, cogs and levers and springs and steel can not do everything. There are left tasks that must be done, tasks that only human hands can do. That service shall be performed, dear lady.

But not by servants, not by slaves. It will be the service one equal performs for another. The obligation will be on the side of the one who receives the service.

Dear, dainty madam, in the day that is to be, if you want someone to take care of your dirty linen, you're going to be awful good to them. Yes, you really are; indeed, you are. You can't believe it, but it's true. And your not going to pay for their service with \$3 a week, and meanness, and asperity, and airs of superiority. In the day that is to be—not far off, dear, gentle lady—you will find that if you want service you will have to render service. You will find there are things that may not be bought with a bank check, however large.

Dear, pretty lady, do you know what you owe your servant girl? Do you know that your fine raiment is woven out of her rags? That your riches are coined out of her poverty? That your freshness and bloom are the health that was hers? That every minute of your leisure has been coined out of her life?

Beautiful mistress, in the world that is to be things will be very different. There ain't going to be no servant girls. In that world you, pretty creature, will have to be useful as well as ornamental. But, cheer up. It may not be as bad as you fear. You are going to lose your servant—that is sure.

Maybe you'll find a sister where once you had a slave. That would make it worth while, wouldn't it?

No servant to obey you; no slave to fear you, but a sister who shall love you—even you.

—BEN HANFORD in "Fight for your Life."