

to think, our life is full of unsatisfied longings; and though we don't give them free play, we can't ignore them altogether. So we will not produce any more slaves for the capitalist; and I can tell you that there is not one decently educated young married woman of my acquaintance who is not of the same mind. You could go into a score of houses known to me in this town alone and find strong, vigorous women whose childlessness is their own possible protest against the existing wage slavery."

The birth-rate of England, France, and the United States, associated as it is in all these countries with the death-rate of the newly born, is to me one of the most depressing signs of the times. I cannot help realizing that in many cases sterility is not the deliberate protest of the wage slave; it is the selfish protest of the pleasure-seeker, and in a small minority of cases the genuine yet narrow fear of the theorist and his following, whose enthusiasms have outrun both knowledge and faith. Tolstoy went so far as to say that the man who enjoys association with his wife for any purpose save procreation is guilty of a crime. While many childless women live celibate lives, particularly in America, the great majority do not. In Milton's stately words they "of love and love's delight take freely," as though the Power that rules and guides the world could in the long-run be outwitted by what it has created.

To-day the civilized world is at the parting of the ways. War has riven asunder the ranks of the best and bravest, and has left in the hearts of the survivors so vivid a sense of the horrors of life, that many a man will hesitate to become a father lest his sons have to take their place in time to come on the fields of war, and his daughters, chance to be among the dwellers in a conquered city. All classes have been gathered to battle, one and all will feel the responsibility attending the failure of our civilization. While many will believe they are responding to a high instinct when they elect to follow the line of least resistance and leave the world a little poorer, the cumulative effect of such a decision is positively terrible to contemplate.

This social disease of race suicide has not been long established. It came into France, I believe, as a result of the law that divides the inheritance of the parents among the children equally; it has crept into England and America chiefly as a product of overmuch luxury and wealth. Apart from the calculated protest against social inequalities, it is due to the methods of life that soften women and make child-bearing a terror.

I am afraid that all classes suffer in some measure from what the French call "La peur de Vie." Life tends not only to baffle and confuse, but to terrify.



Somme Fight: The First Round: A Strong Left Lead.
—Horne in "To-day."

Trust in "Providence" is not what it was or what it should be. We lack the wide vision that can comprehend, however vaguely, "the far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves." We think of ourselves without realizing that we are units of the Great World Family, and that if we will do our plain duty we may rest well assured it will involve no responsibility too great for us. In short, we lack moral courage. The man at the helm in mid-ocean steers his appointed course, and does not doubt that

he will reach harbour at last. Can we not learn from him?

We cannot tell what the final harvest of war will amount to, but with the dead, the diseased, and the disabled, it will probably run into ten figures—more than five times the measure of human sacrifice demanded by all the great wars that shook the world from Blenheim to Omdurman. Even these monstrous figures do not tell the whole tale, for there will be among the dead thousands of men whose talent might have developed into genius, and there will be hundreds of thousands of widows left in the full flush of womanhood, with all their possibilities unfulfilled and, in countless cases, beyond the reach of fulfilment. To put it brutally, our civilization, that stands in bitter need of its best breeding stock, has deliberately slaughtered a very large percentage of it.

This, indeed, is race suicide in its worst form; and just as woman hopes, by her emancipation to dam the tide of war, so she must step into the breach and dam the tide of loss. Emancipation will do very little for women if when they have obtained it they find the best elements of the white races increasingly unable to stand the strain imposed by war. They will not forget that the black man's women are bought to tend his land and enable him to live in ease, or that the Mohammedan, in the enforced seclusion of the harem, may share his favours among four lawful wives and as many concubines as his purse can furnish. As the standard of civilization declines, woman, by reason of her physical weakness, must pay an ever-increasing penalty; only when it has risen to heights unreached before the war may she hope to come into her own and to realize ambitions that, dormant or active, have been with her through the centuries. The whole question of her future has been brought by the war outside the domain of personal or even national interest; suddenly it has become racial.

Down to a little while ago the solution was not in woman's hands; to-day it belongs to her, she has to decide not only for herself but for all white mankind. It is not too much to say that civilization as we know it will soon be waiting upon her verdict. If this statement seems too far reaching, if it seems to challenge probability, let those who think so turn to any good history of the world and see for themselves how each civilization has been overwhelmed as soon as it reached the limits of its efficiency and endurance. In the history of this planet, changes no less sweeping than that which I have indicated have been recorded; the Providence that has one race or colour in its special keeping is but the offspring of our own conceit. The real Providence that dominates the universe treats all the races on their merits. If and only if the best types of women will embrace motherhood ardently, bravely content to endure the discomforts and discover for themselves the infinite pleasure, can the world as we know it survive the terrible shock it has received. Even then the recovery will be slow, and the price to be paid will be bitter beyond imagining; but we shall in the end win through, though I who write and you who read may well have settled our account with mortality before the season of full recovery dawns upon a wasted world. Should we fail in our duty, then we must pass as Babylon and Egypt and Rome passed before us, to become no more than mere shadows of a name.

TOAD WIPED HIS EYE!

Many Marvels in the Daily Ablutions
of Lesser Creatures

HOW animals clean themselves may not at first seem a question worth study. But Frances Pitt, in no less a journal than the National review, insists that the majority of wild creatures rank cleanliness next to life itself. Few, except those who make it their business to watch animals and birds, have any idea of their elaborate toilets, how careful they are over their fur and feathers, and how much time and attention is given to the care of them. Even the smallest things, such as insects, are as particular as the bigger, from the fly which combs and grooms its wings with its legs, to the elephant bathing in a river and with its trunk pouring water over its broad back.

Perhaps the daintiest of mammals are the mice. They all wash frequently, and some of them spend quite half their time in cleaning. It is a treat to see the little harvest mouse, that fairy-like atom of reddish yellow fur, which next to the pigmy shrew is the smallest of European mammals, balance itself upon a straw, making fast by means of its prehensile tail, when it will sit up and proceed to wash its face with lightning speed. First it licks its forepaws, which are just like tiny pink hands, then it passes them over its head and down its nose; again

they are licked, again they move over the face, but this time they include the ears; and this is repeated again and again until it is satisfied that these parts are clean, when it twists round and licks its back. Next the stomach has to be attended to, then the hind feet have each to be done, and lastly the quaint little sensitive tail is untwisted and brought round to be attended to.

Rabbits and hares are strangely catlike when cleaning themselves. I have seen a rabbit—who



War Time Punishment: "If you're going to be naughty, you can't spit on William."

—H. Gerbault, in *Le Rire*, Paris

little suspected that he was being watched—stop eating the grass, sit up, and lick his paws, and then rub them over his nose, afterwards passing them behind first one ear and then the other, so as to pull them forward and down over the eyes. I had a tame hare who was a great pet, and I noticed that he always washed his face after a nap, also after a romp (he would play wildly when in the right humour) or any extra excitement. I also noticed that he often stopped to shake his forepaws and flip his hind ones, exactly as if they were damp, though this was impossible considering that he was running about indoors on carpeted floors! Wild hares and rabbits do this at every few steps, especially if the grass is damp, and by this means keep their feet wonderfully clean. Like a cat they seldom, unless hunted, get their feet dirty.

To go to very different creatures, I doubt if it is generally realized that even cattle and horses spend a good deal of time attending to their person. Cattle especially take a great deal of trouble, licking their coats most carefully, and a cow will often do for a neighbour the parts the latter cannot reach herself. I have often seen them standing face to face, or side by side, licking each other's heads and necks. And, of course, they do the same for their calves, indeed I do not know of any prettier sight than to see an old cow affectionately going over the coat of her calf.

By the way, there is one domestic animal which has a reputation for dirt which it really does not deserve, though I cannot say that it makes any elaborate toilet—that is the pig. The average pig, confined in a narrow sty, has little room in which to practise the virtue of cleanliness, but a pig that is at liberty is by no means such a dirty animal, and if it can get plenty of straw it will take the greatest care arranging its bed, gathering up the straw in mouthfuls and placing it carefully here and there. Pigs certainly like in hot weather to wallow in muddy places, but a coating of soil serves to keep the skin cool and supple.

To go to "lower creatures," such as frogs, toads, and snakes, their "clothing" is not of the type to need much attention, but I have seen a portly old toad wipe its eye with its paw, and have also seen a lizard rub her nose—after eating a slimy worm—from side to side on some ferns in the same way a bird cleans its bill when it has finished feeding.

The conclusion that one is forced to come to after even a hurried survey like this of the manner in which our common animals and birds clean themselves, is that the majority of wild creatures are so particular as to put to shame the human race with its much-vaunted cleanliness, but while they divide their time between finding food, cleaning, and resting—we have other things to do! Still it is better not to boast; a man would think he had done well if he washed his face three or four times in a day, but a mere mouse would, as a matter of course, do the same a score of times.