MORALS AND FIG-LEAVES.

SHAME AS THE RESULT OF LONG EDUCATION.

Dresses but Morals that are Cut too Low

The Innocence of Ignorance

A Poor Protection

From "Fashion in the Arena."

Hebraic tradition of the origin of we are told that the Edenic when sins have proceeded the generations of beings we call man piece, were innocent of that the name "shame" until the ap- detected Mrs. Mother Eve into the apple eating. Weak men, as succumbed to her blandish- lipstock with her of the feast, with that for the first time they per- sakedness and made for them- ments, or, as one famous render- breeches of fig leaves. student of the development of ideas, this little incident in the tra- record presents a problem of great The

THE LEAF OF ADAMIC DAYS,

variety of counterparts at the present as well as in ages past, is the symbol of an idea that has no assured stability of form nor even a fixed basis; and to the student it is a perplexing, a baffling pursuit—this of endeavouring to grasp the substance of the idea which shadows itself so readily or shame. From the Puritan maiden who swathes herself from chin to sole, to the crescent slave-girl who will permit her body to be stripped before she will let her face be seen unveiled; from the Indian maiden of the North Pacific who goes unclad while mistress of herself, to the same maiden when she becomes a man's property and puts her loins from the many times transpiped Boston girl in her boudoir, to the same girl upon the bathing-beach, the chase of the idea is an interesting and not wholly satisfying one.

That there is something of actual import in the problem is evidenced by the frequent homilies upon different phases through the pulpit and public press. Dancing, theatre-going, *decolletage* dress, the nude in Art, each comes in for its share of a denunciation which is seldom discriminating, and always evades an assertion of fundamental principles and their reasons.

A study of the ideas and conditions of the period as well as of the present, brings a heavy weight of evidence to show that notions of modesty, even more than of morality, are mainly acquired variations and inventions based upon, a very few fundamental principles, these in themselves having little or no relation to modesty or morality in the abstract. Why else their great diversity and discordance from age to age, from year to year, even in nations of the same day? Is it not that we invent our notions from time to time, *teaching them as absolute truths to the* younger generation, rather than anything which we learn from Nature? If our modern morals are too *decolletée*, surely we alone are responsible for

THE PAUCITY OF FIG-LEAVES.

It can be justly asked "Is not the true state of affairs this—that not our dresses, but our morals are cut too low?" In an affirmative answer there is more than a grain of truth. If we would cut our morals so that they would fit our bodies more nearly, there would be less necessity for clothes to cover the balance. Would it not, then, be the higher and wiser policy to adopt a less *decollete* style for our morals and avoid the occasion for indelicacy in dress? But we preach and we practice a contempt of the body, we vilify and degrade the physical member of our human trinity, so that in sheer self defence against ourselves we must wear some form of the primeval fig-leaf. Does this seem an exaggeration, a vagary? Among the earliest ideas we inculcate in our child is an unreasoning, unreasoned contempt, a despising of certain portions and functions of the body. Year by year, we educate him faithfully in these notions, without logical reason assigned. If the child be a girl, we gradually increase the extent of the despicable portion, making the foundation of a "double standard of morality," which leads to some of the most wretched features of modern social life.

At puberty, when Nature rarely fails to impress new questionings over a wider range of thought, when the difference of sex and the origin of life and its functions become matters of inquiry—at the very time when Nature prompts a search for knowledge, we increase our efforts at repression, we withdraw (as we think) all knowledge that is sought; and, by a negative, if not an affirmative education, we inculcate a vicious, *quasi* knowledge of shame and evil which did not exist before. We do worse than that—we create the very shame and evil, till then non-existent. The child is surrounded by other children and by servants more viciously wise than himself, from whom he adds to his degrading learning; and thus, well-equipped to see harm, he fails not to find it. Unfortunately, not even here does our work end—we have repressed his natural tendencies, we have kept from him all wise counsel, we have turned his impulses into unnatural, secret, vicious channels, and we have set in train fresh proof of that maxim of human perversity, that

"STOLEN WATERS TASTE SWEET."

Right here lies a most certain truth—that we ourselves educate our children in evil. It is plain that if we taught them that a woman's bosom was a part of her body entitled to the highest honor and respect, without evil in itself and without reason for evil, no one would find shame in the sight of it. If we taught that a woman's leg was as honorable a portion of her as a man's is of him, and with no more evil in it, none would be found. We teach that they are full of evil and should be hidden from view—is it any wonder, then, that men want to see them? Is it strange that our young men—and all—crowd the spectacular drama, and find too often only a lustful pleasure in beholding the most beautiful outlines earth can show—the outlines of woman's form? It is our fault that they see aught but the beauty—it is our fault that aught but the beauty is to be seen.

Nature gives no reason why a woman's form is less worthy to be viewed than a man's. Nature makes what body, the model of human strength,—woman, of human beauty. Why should not both alike be viewed? In the days when woman's body was reverenced most in its beauty, and in its use by the ancient Greeks, its form and flesh were least concealed from view; and then, if we are to believe the national historians, was Greek modesty and purity the greatest. If the wondrously beautiful concepts of their sculptors, the objects of their adoration and of humanity's ideal of later generations, must now be passed with averted eye, may not one ask, "Whose the shame,—theirs or ours?" If *then* a woman as she approached that most sacred of her states, maternity, was an object of increased reverence, to be passed in the street by men with uncovered head and respectful bow, friend and stranger alike,—and *now* the pregnant woman upon the street is the object of rude gaze, of jesting or disapproving remark, of imputation of immodesty, from man and woman alike—is it captious to ask wherein our modesty excels

THE HALF-BARBARIC GREEK?

Would that here we might have an atavism!

Conceding that our daughters are contaminated by viewing the ballets, whence but from us did they get the idea of contamination? Do our innocent sweet endeavors to allure our sons, who but ourselves make our sons respond to her allurements? But one may question whether the ballet and spectacle need be so immodest to the looker-on. I remember one night at one of Kiralfy's most beautiful and imposing spectacles, I watched with interest a young man who had never seen such a performance. Of a really religious training, remarkably pure in thought as in life, he had reluctantly joined a party of friends at the theatre. When the curtain went down at the close of the first act, shutting out the hundreds of lovely female forms in the scenery and garb of Fairyland, he turned to me and said—"Is it not beautiful? Is it not exquisite? And they told me this was indecent and immoral! How I wish that I could bring my sister to see it!" I was satisfied with the effect on him. I was satisfied upon another point—that as there are ballets and ballets, so there are spectators and spectators.

To our customary notions of modesty and to our methods of imparting them, is due the great

POPULARITY OF "EROTIC FICTION."

Is it not strange that by far the majority of readers of the impure literature of the day are women—especially young women and girls? That it is so, book-vendors and librarians everywhere know. Let it be known that a book in a library is slightly improper and it is at once sought after by our innocent maidens. They "want to know, you know"—what? A more or less vague, indefinite something, which they know exists; unnamed, mysterious emotions which they feel impelled to taste, —a feast to which they go prepared by their mothers to receive only a ruinous excitement.

No one of discernment, who has had much to do with children in their bodily life, but knows that the majority are victims of most disastrous vices, over which their mothers throw fig-leaves, to hide them from their sight! Physicians combat these and their resulting evils with little zeal or success, knowing as they so well do, that their efforts are mainly thrown away, while the present notions of modesty continue to be accepted as the highest type of virtue. Rare is it now, and ever has been, that a woman "goes to her husband as unmarred as an ideal in a dream." When she does—in the sense in which the words quoted were used—the physician knows the chances are at least equal that there will be one more victim, willing or unwilling, to the vices which threaten to bankrupt the marriage and home relations—vices towards remedying which much could easily be done, were it not that the hands of physicians and sociologists are tied by those who believe we should follow "the strict rule of reserve in speech"—a fact, however unintentional, upholding of the hidden practice, howsoever hideous it may be.

NO GREATER MISTAKE

has the world ever made than its conventional accepting of innocence for virtue. Ignorance may be purity, it can never be virtue. No soul-sin, as we say, "virgin purity" can ever have the worth of mature purity, virtue. Nothing is so easy to sully innocence, nor so difficult as virtue. In this realm, ignorance is not bliss; it is the path to a very tormenting hell.

We fail always when we try to raise our children in innocence. We would be fortunate if we did nothing worse than fail. But in our serene ignorance of, or blind opposition to, the ways of Nature, we force them into a seeking and finding of a vicious knowledge, which arms them with the weapons that turn against virtue. What wonder then that they so often fall in the fight, are made prisoners by the powers of evil? The fig-leaves we have put on them are not code of mail—they simply serve to indicate to the enemy the vulnerable points. We teach them not the things to be guarded against, either in themselves or in others; and if our sweet daughter is tainted by the presence of the *rowe's* arm in the ballet, or if it is because we have not taught her to recognize and shun the *rowe*, nor to repel contagion when it is present. And if it is our son who is the *rowe*, as he may likely be with some other mother's daughter, I fear that there, too, we must bear the blame. For did not our conventional ideas of modesty prevent our rightly instructing him?

We do not need to educate our girls and our boys to be ignorant of what we need to wear fig-leaves. As was recently thought necessary, in one of our large cities, to put trousers on the Apollo Belvidere nor a gown on

THE VENUS DE MEDICI.

We can learn that lust is evil in things permitted, but for things forbidden. We can teach our sons and daughters such a harm where none exists. We can teach them the inherent nobility and decency of the human form. We can educate them in the essence of delicacy which is to think no indelicacy.

Those who fear to have such timbers taken away, lest harm come to the edifice, it will be an easy task to build one from a pea for the abolition of all modesty. For such and for those who form judgments from a casual glance, this article was not written.

TAXATION

All crops, grain, live stock, implements, machinery, buildings, fences, drains, household effects, factory products, stores and stock, and all other products of industry should be exempt from taxation; and one tax should be substituted, based on the value of unimproved land, to be levied on all land of value and according to value, without valuing any improvements on the land, and where mortgages exist on land the mortgage should be required to share the tax on the value of such land, the tax to be the same as on land held for the purpose of speculation.

Taxing the things that men can make discourages their production. Every farmer has paid to produce his barns, his stables, his fences, his crops, his live stock, and, having paid for them once, what right has the Government, whether federal, provincial or municipal, to take them away from him piece meal by imposing a yearly tax upon them? It is only robbery under another name. The present system of taxation is the meanest, a wickedest kind of robbery, and yet the farmers quietly acquiesce. If the mortgagee had to pay the tax on land, the money usurer's calling would be gone, and consequently every one of them will oppose any change in the method of collecting taxes on farm property. But labor ought to enjoy all the fruits of its toil, and not be discouraged by robbery. It is only justice that the exclusive occupant of a lot, whether a farm of 1,000 acres or more, or less, or a lot 50 x 100 feet in a city, should pay the yearly value of that exclusive privilege of occupancy into the public purse, and that done, there would be enough for public purposes. All taxation beyond that is plunder.—*Meat Trade Journal.*

WORKINGMEN PAY TAXES.

It is no unusual thing to hear working men say that the reason that they take no active part in the discussion on taxation and other important questions is "that they have to pay no taxes." Yet, if they were to study these questions they would ascertain that they pay nearly all the taxes. The landlord may pay the taxes on the house he rents to the laborer, but he includes the tax in the price of the rent. The merchant pays taxes, but he charges it up in the price of the goods which he sells to the laborer. The banker may pay a tax to the Government, but he gets it back in his rate of interest. The laborer may not borrow direct from the banker, but the landlord, the merchant and the contractor who does borrow it charges it up against the laborer. Therefore, do not be deceived because the tax collector does not call on you in person, for he gets into your pocket in some way, and gets nearly all the taxes collected.—*Workman and Farmer.*

GIVE US A PENNY.

ONCE again this journal feels constrained to urge on the Dominion Government the desirability of issuing a two-cent copper coin, and withdrawing from circulation the five-cent silver coins. The public advantages would be very great. In the first place there would be a large profit to the public treasury, for the two-cent bronze coins would cost only about one-third of their face value, and the difference between their cost and their face value would be so much profit for the public treasury. This, however, is only a trifling advantage, the real benefit arising from the greater exactness which would be introduced into the domestic transactions and purchases of the wage-earning classes. At present the universal price of all small commodities is five cents, and this is the case because the universal coin is the five-cent piece. If that coin were withdrawn from circulation and a two-cent bronze coin substituted; the universal price of all small commodities would be two cents, and the wage-earners would be benefited correspondingly. Those who are familiar with domestic transactions in the Old Country know that the same articles which are sold for a penny in England cost five cents, or two-pence-half-penny, in Canada. "Put a penny in the slot" and in England you can obtain a choice of a thousand-and-one useful articles. In Canada you can do nothing of the kind, for there is no penny; and the thousand-and-one articles cost two pennies and a half. The class which suffers is the wage-earners. There is no reason whatever why this should be the case. If the Dominion Government would issue a two-cent bronze coin, and gradually withdraw the existing five-cent piece the reform would be brought about unconsciously and imperceptibly, and every consumer would be benefited.—*Bobcaygeon Independent.*

SOCIETY has the first right to all property; individuals are allowed possession, but for the good of the community.

RUSHING CITYWARDS.

POPULATION ABANDONING THE RURAL REGIONS FOR THE CROWDED CENTRES.

One of the Most Remarkable Social Phenomena of the Century—Its Causes and Probable Results

Wa. Lawson, Current Leaves.

Among the social movements of the century not the least remarkable is the drift of population to the cities. It is being so to attract the attention of political economists and is by most of them considered an evil. As to the tendency in this country, while the census reports are not completed, it is reliably stated that in only one State, Nebraska, has rural population kept pace with urban. Supt. Porter recently said: "The most surprising fact which the forthcoming census will establish is the stupendous growth of urban population—the migration of the agricultural population to the cities. During the past decade this gain has been no less than sixty per cent. Speaking roundly it may be said that in 1790 one-thirteenth of the population was found in cities; in 1800 one twenty-fifth; in 1810 and also in 1820, one twentieth, in 1830, one-sixteenth; in 1840 one twelfth, in 1850 one-eighth, in 1860, one-sixth; in 1870, more than one-fifth; in 1880, half way between one fifth and one-quarter, while the eleventh census will show nearly three tenths, and in the State of Massachusetts that fully seventy five per cent. of the population reside in cities.

Most of the attempted explanations of this movement attribute it to a restless desire to get rich fast; and a growing contempt on the part of ambitious youth for the plodding methods of farm life, a contempt cultivated by the trashy literature so freely circulated over the country. Advocates of free trade attribute it to tariffs framed to enrich the manufacturing class at the expense of the farmers, rendering farming more and more unprofitable; to which theory Henry George adds, the effects of the taxing of personal property, which discriminate against the farmer by allowing a vast proportion of personal property in cities to escape taxation, while the farmer's property, being all in sight, is all listed by the assessor.

Allowing these explanations to stand or fall on their merits—being undertaken of directly criticizing them—I would call attention to the fact that the drift of population to the cities appears to have kept pace with the progress of improvements in labor-saving machinery—the transition from the scythe to the self-binder, and the flail to the steam threshers. The settlement of the great prairies of the West, where improved machinery can be worked to the fullest advantage, has no doubt been a factor in the operation, for it would seem that the greatest growth of urban population, compared to rural, has been contemporaneous with said settlement, as also with the greatest improvements in machinery. Carroll D. Wright tells us that in the last forty years man's power of production has increased sixteen fold. As population has not trebled in that time might not the optimist argue that the world is outgrowing the Malthusian theory, that population over tends to press against the limits of subsistence? Compare the fact of the slow increase of that part of the population whose energies are devoted to the production of food with the rapid additions to that portion of the population who are non-producers of food, and Malthus' bold or pessimistic in political economy would seem in danger of weakening. I believe Mr. Edward Atkinson tells us somewhere that seven men can now produce food for a thousand.

That some cause is operating powerfully to drive people from agriculture to city life is manifest. Or it may be a combination of causes such as those quoted above. The universal cry is that "farming doesn't pay; and whoever will compare the luxuries to be found in a large portion of city homes with the average comforts of the farmer, or the magnificent city edifices with the average farm buildings, will conclude that there is some ground for the complaint that the wealth of agriculture is being drained into the centres of population. The fact that the wealth thus concentrated in cities is not fairly distributed, and that the very deepest poverty is found in the largest and richest cities, does not mitigate against the idea that the farmer is being robbed. Our social system is not founded on justice, and nearly all attacks of social reformers are leveled at inequality of distribution. While the land on which cities are built is the private property of individuals, the enormous groundrents must, of course, be a terrible drain on the non-owners who have to pay them, and consequently suffer from the evils of such tendency.

There is, however, another feature to consider in the drift of population to the cities, and that is, that the social instinct appears to be strengthening. The tendency is evidently to escape from the isolation of farm life. The evolution of man has shown a steady progression from the primitive savage solitude to the coming state of social happiness, and the portentous increase of the population of cities means that a radical change in the social system is impending. Association, or the division of labor, is no doubt the prime factor in human progress, but it must be combined with a just distribution of the wealth produced; failing this, we stand the social pyramid on the apex, and every advance in the material progress, by adding to that broad upper surface, the great fortunes of the very rich, will only hasten and make more terrible the ultimate downfall.

Hence, the urgent need of the times is a spiritual and moral growth to keep pace with the rapid advance of material progress. This would prevent the impending catastrophe now hovering over our heads. Macaulay was strictly prophetic when he said that the Huns and Vandals of modern civilization would be generated in the slums of the great cities and the unprecedented additions to city populations, of men who, under our unjust system of wealth distribution, must be condemned to poverty, marks the dawning of the realization of his prophecy. Some system must speedily be inaugurated that will satisfy not only the demands of justice, but also the growing desire of all classes of men for the society of their fellows. This will involve the practical co-operation of all forms of industry, instead of the bitter competition of classes and of individuals that at present exists.

THE SINGLE TAX CLUB.

On there's many a club in this city of ours,
And never a night in the year
But you'll find if you seek, an assembly or clique
Together discussing the news of the week,
Or the gossip from far and from near

On our avenues wide and our boulevards grand
When the shadows of evening descend,
In the lighted halls where soft radiance falls,
On the glittering splendor of fair palace walls,
There are meetings of clubs without end.

In the brilliant displays of gay fashion's ways,
Everywhere you may witness a throng,
There they sumptuously dine on rare viands and wine,
And the mirth is so great and the wit is so fine
That life seems not a dirge but a song

But ah! there an club in this city of ours,
And it's not wholly void of renown,
Its members to greet, it's a treat, when they meet
In their plain little room in a hull off the street,
In the far business side of the town

Its a right loyal band of brave women and men
And their hearts are aglow with a flame
Which unceasingly burns and yet never expires,
For 'twas caught from the altar of Truth and its fires
They burn on through glory or shame.

In this club's modest halls, on the ungilded walls
The fair light of hope seems to shine,
And in truth there's no gloom, for the light-ness and bloom
Of high thoughts and grand themes gild the plain little room
With a radiance almost divine

They are pledged to each other, these intrepid hearts,
And they're pledged to a high holy cause,
They'll win a lost heritage, their's by their birth,
Banish woe and get sulk want from the face of the earth

Write anew their beloved country's laws.

To this favorite club oft we lovingly yearn
A light worthy offering to bring
All in vain—for alas and alas, at such times,
To the heart and the lip come the *foolishest* rhymes,
And thus the song that we sing.

I.

Oh, it meets in no palace,
It offers no "grub"
Our nice little, clear little,
Single Tax Club.

II.

It's not famous for "style,"
And yet it's no "scrub,"
This fine little, brave little
Single Tax Club

III.

Where so many revolve,
Of them all it's the hub.
This sweet little, bright little
Single Tax Club

IV

Oh, it's tender in years,
In fact, but a cub,
This young little, pert little
Single Tax Club.

V.

But it's growing apace,
And ah! there's the rub.
It's a live little, strong little
Single Tax Club

VI

Then up with its banner,
Beat the drum, rub a dub!
Hail the new little, true little
Single Tax Club

—*Mrs. M. Beck in N. Y. Standard.*

Of all gifts, imagination, being the greatest, is least worth having unless it is well backed either by moral culture or by other intellectual qualities.—*Jean Ingelow.*

It is impossible to study the story of labor without a certainty that the vote for women would carry an education and a power for justice and uniform unknown. For one reason, I count myself hereafter a worker for the cause.—*Mrs. Helen Campbell.*

CHARLES BRADLAUGH, who issues one of the very best Freethought journals in England, the *National Reformer*, announced, December 21st, that he had been obliged, after nine years' experiment, to close his book shop, at 63 Fleet street, as it did not pay. The Smiths, the book stand monopolists, do not sell the *National Reformer*, and hence it was no easy task to get its publication. As to the gossip that he is rich, Mr. Bradlaugh says; "I should be a very happy man if to-morrow I could assign all my assets, except my library, which I should not like to lose, to anyone who would discharge my liabilities." With the closing of the Fleet street place, the partnership of Mrs. Besant and Mr. Bradlaugh ceases.