

are in the habit of reading what is written about them, and they learn with surprise how miserable they are. This is the origin of much of the discontent amongst those who work, and discontent is the worst kind of misery.

But the evil does not stop at the creation of discontent. It is made worse by the clumsy efforts which are made to alleviate sufferings which do not exist. The volume of oxygen which is necessary in inspired air; the percentage of nitrogen, of carbon, and of carbohydrates in food; the employment of water for external application, these things are largely a matter of individual idiosyncrasy or the habit of a class. Persons who can afford to heat a continuous current of fresh air, who are so enfeebled that they must have a varied dietary, and regard perspiration as an unclean thing, are dangerous advisers of those who work, when they strive to engraft their own luxurious habits upon those who have neither the need nor the desire to adopt them.

From common men we obtain the conservation, from great minds the intellectual advancement, of the species, is a true saying, although it is Max Nordau who makes it. But those who save themselves from the penalties of idleness by what they are pleased to term "work" amongst the poor are not commonly credited with activity in either one or the other of these two spheres of human endeavour. They are, in part at least, celibate females who regard prolificacy as a proof of profligacy, and inculcate secretly the falser aspects of the Malthusian doctrine. They corrupt the life of the poor at its source, and bring dissension where harmony previously prevailed. Knowing nothing of motherhood, they instil the belief that the bearing of children is the last infamy that can be imposed upon a woman.

Hedged in from chance and sheltered from the vicissitudes of life, existence for them is a dull, joyless affair. Passionless themselves, they are insensible to that pleasure which lies in the indulgence of passion, even of those which are commonly described as low. Life for the poor is full of interest just because it is so uncertain. It is free from