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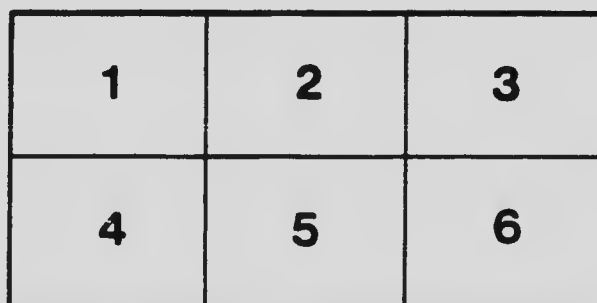
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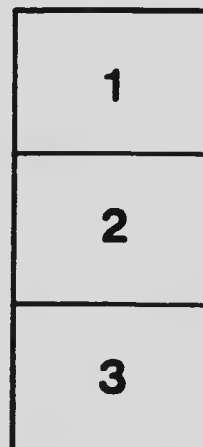
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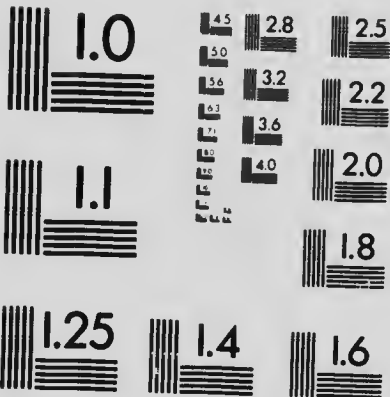
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The New Optimism

The New Optimism

By
H. de Vere Stacpoole



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The New Optimism

The New Optimism

PART I

ON THE BEACH

I WAS standing by the sea-wall, watching the green water foaming round the stakes of the break-water, when my companion, a charming and elegant woman, turned to me:

"What is there in water that fascinates one?" she asked.

"Do you feel the fascination?"

"Yes."

"Do you not know why you feel it?"

"No."

"Shall I tell you?"

"Yes."

"Because you were once a swimming reptile."

"Thank you."

"Oh, there is nothing to thank me for, though the fact is the most glorious in the universe."

The Beach
We Came
From

The Beach
We Came
From

"The fact that I was once a reptile?"

"Precisely."

She pondered on this for a moment, and then:

"I don't see where the glory comes in," said she.

"Nevertheless, it is there, for the fact is the master key to the meaning of the universe, the one light that shines in a world of darkness, and the one sure hope in a world of doubt."

"The fact that I was once a reptile?"

"And I—yes. I would not give what the webbing between my fingers tells me for all the promises of all the religions of all the countries on earth."

"Ancestral pride is evidently not your strong point."

"I don't know about that; but up to a year ago mental darkness was my portion. I had no religion."

"And have you any now?"

"No, but I have a certainty."

"Of what?"

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"Of the fact that the world has a meaning and life an aim. Shall we sit down on this seat and talk for a while, if I am not boring you?—and may I light a cigarette?"

"You are not boring me—yet. And if you can prove what you say, I shall not mind even if you bore me. But I must tell you, first of all, that, to me, the world seems absolutely without a meaning and life without an aim. I mean, of course, the general life of the world, which implies, as far as I can see, general suffering. If suffering did people good, then I could understand that we were placed here to grow and develop; but suffering and poverty, as far as I can see, only stunt and twist and spoil everything they touch."

"Precisely."

"Then, if you admit that, you must admit that the meaning and aim of the world is far from being glorious."

"Never. That is what I wish to disprove."

"Then disprove it."

The Beach
We Came
From

The
Growth of
the World

"TELL me," I said. "Why is it that an ordinary human being placed before a flower sees only a flower and nothing of the wonder that is in it?"

"Because flowers are so common."

"More than that—because a flower is of such slow growth. If one could see a seed sprouting, a stalk rising, a bud forming, bursting, and expanding all in five minutes, the wonder of the thing would bring one on one's knees. The world is just the same. We do not see the splendour and magnificence and meaning of it, because the growth has been so slow, because every-day jargon has blinded our eyes, and scientific jargon has dulled the poetic perception of the miracle in its entirety. It is by looking at bits of the world that men have come to confusion, instead of fixing their eyes on the world from its very beginning."

"Ah, but who can do that?"

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the World

"You can, and so can I, and so can anyone who has studied the development of the world from the very beginning."

"But I have never studied the development of the world."

"Well, then it is high time you began; and to assist you in your studies, I will give you a vague sketch of the facts, and when I have sketched those facts, I will expound to you in a few words the deduction which I draw from them and the reason why I have implicit faith that earth has a meaning and life an aim—both equally glorious.

"Now, mind, I have nothing to do with fancies, only facts. Hard, dry facts that no one can refuse."

"First, then, before the beginning of time there was neither sun, moon, nor planets; the whole of the solar system was a zone of incandescent gas."

"How do you know that?"

"I know it because all philosophy points to it, and because in the depths of space the telescope shews to me hundreds of solar systems in

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the World

the process of making. Perhaps you will take my word for the fact."

"Yes. Go on."

"This sea of gas, floating lost in the universe, was possessed of two movements: the movement of the atoms buzzing round each other, and a movement of rotation by which the whole sea whirled round its central point. Millions of years went by, and during those years our gaseous sea began to cool and shrink. But it did not shrink evenly. The great outer ring of the sea was left behind, still whirling and cooling and condensing, but it did not remain in the form of a ring. The atoms drew together, sucked toward a common point from every part of the ring, and the result was that a globe began to form like a great tumour on the attenuated ring; and as years went on, the ring gave up more and more atoms to the globe, till at last there was nothing left but the globe whirling along the path once occupied by the ring. This globe was

the first and outermost planet, Neptune.

"Meanwhile, the sea of gas was still contracting, and again the same thing happened. The outermost edge of the sea was left behind, in the form of a ring, a globe was formed and that globe was Uranus, the second furthest planet from us. Again the same thing happened, and Saturn was formed: and yet again, and Jupiter was formed: and yet again, and Mars was left behind in the shape of a whirling globe of fire, and then the Earth.

"The sea continued contracting, leaving Venus behind and then Mercury; and still it continued contracting, but now it was too small to throw off any more rings, and it consolidated to form one great central globe, the sun.

"The first great act of creation was accomplished, and on that vast day when, Mercury left definitely behind, the budding of worlds was finished, the sun and the planets around it might have been seen like

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a golden bee surrounded by its golden children, shining in the night of space.

"The earth was a much brighter place then, for it was simply a globe of incandescent vapour, and yet that glowing vapour held everything. Man and woman, and love and war, beauty and sorrow, Art, poetry, music, hunger, and cruelty.

"That mixture of the abstract and the concrete sounds like rant, but it is not. It is a bald statement of facts. Every thought that man has ever thought, every dream that man has ever dreamed was lying unborn yet in the essence of that globe of incandescent vapour. Every form that ever sketched itself on earth was there, too—from the daisy to the hippopotamus. But as yet there was nothing definite, nothing but the dance of the atoms and the atoms themselves.

"From the first moment of its separate existence this world *in posse*, consisting as yet of incandescent vapour, began to cool and shrink, and after the first million

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years or so it began to exhibit the first symptoms of thought and to storm at its own shrinking."

"Excuse me for a moment, but what do you mean by the first symptoms of thought?"

"The first and only symptom of thought is action, arising from opposing forces, and when the world, now condensed into a liquid form, began to exhibit tides and storms of molten matter, it began to exhibit action arising from opposing forces; and here let me say that the amount of work done by the world before life ever appeared upon it, the amount of work done by what we call senseless matter, and the amount of thought and ingenuity expended on that work put the much trumpeted wonder of life in the shade.

"Long, long before the first germ of life began to form, matter in its own mind had worked out the problem of the mountains and the seas; matter had kneaded the moon in its 'dull' hands and flung it up into the sky to be a lamp and a tide-maker; matter had worked out the whole

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Growth of
the World

The Germ
of Thought

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of Thought

problem of lighting and watering and warming the earth, so that when life appeared in its first humble and rudimentary form, it found a house built for it, water laid on for it, and all the lighting arrangements perfect.

"Yes, to me, sometimes, all that work done by matter on its own account is even more wonderful than all the work done by Life, for even had life never appeared on the world, the labours of 'dull matter' and 'brute force' would still have created the house of the earth."

"It was created for Life to live in?"

"I do not think so. I think the creation of the world was the result of the first vague struggle of the spirit of matter toward higher things. The senseless ferocity of blazing gas had calmed down, and the mind of matter, if I may use the term, had reached the dignity of expressing itself in form; and you will mark that the advance toward higher things was on the road from ferocity to kindliness; that the

triumph of matter was not so much in the creation of the forms of hills and plains and mountains and seas from whirling oceans of molten material, as in the creation of those conditions of mildness necessary for the existence of life.

"Yes, before life ever appeared, matter had developed abstract qualities, the benign had separated itself from the malignant, and, under the influence of the benign, Life first peeped out.

"We date everything from that first budding of matter into what we call life. Yet in reality it was the last stage of a long journey, the last act of a long series of actions and reactions, the last triumph of benignity over ferocity in the first stage of the evolution of the world."

"What do you mean by Benignity?"

"I use the word Benignity for all that makes for development of the simple into the complex, and the word Malignity for all that retards it. I will use the words Good and Evil if you like them better,

The Germ
of Thought

The
Benign

The
Benign

and say that Good in those days was anything that helped forward the evolution of matter, Evil anything that retarded it. The sunray falling on the first jelly-fish was good, the storm that injured it was evil; and Good was good just because it enabled matter to build one storey higher, and Evil was evil just because it tried to pull that storey down.

"Now you have followed me from the very beginning of the world to the first beginnings of life. Have I impressed you logically with one simple fact, that the journey of atoms from a mass of blazing gas to a world where life was just beginning to bud was along one path, and one path only, the path of development?"

"Of course it was."

"And of the other fact are you equally assured?—that the journey from a whirling lava storm to a solid world of comparatively quiet seas and hills and plains and mountains was a glorious journey and a benign?"

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<p>"Yes."</p> <p>"Then we will start with matter on the new journey on which it set forth a million million years ago, using for its carriage the first jelly-fish."</p> <p>"IT had laboured dimly to form the hills, the plains, and the seas, but that part of it which had laboured to form the seas, now that they were formed, found something more to 'o, found itself developing in a new and strange direction—that of life</p> <p>"The energy of matter that had already constructed the solar system and had evolved the rocks and the sea found itself at last held up, cribbed, cabined and confined, with nothing to do.</p> <p>"Men ask how did life appear in the world. For myself, I believe that life was created by the explosion, so to speak, of this world energy, which, bound down by the limitations it had reached in the inorganic world, burst the rigid</p>	<p>The Benign</p> <p>Life Appears</p>

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Life Appears	<p>bonds of its prison and found a new field for its labour in the construction of the higher organic world.—And, in parenthesis, let me say that I believe when this same energy reaches rigid limitations in the organic world, it will burst those limits and find its field in a world as yet unknown.</p> <p>“However that may be, I propose to deal only with known facts, and the surest fact on earth is this, that when the first vague sketches of life appeared in the sea, they existed not by the virtue of chemistry, nor the virtue of the life that was in them, but by the virtue of the steadily working benignity of the world energy that had constructed their home.</p>
Conditions	<p>“To me more wonderful than the creation of life is the creation of those external conditions that made life possible. They collectively formed the mould in which life was cast.</p> <p>“Now, in my sketch of the creation of the sun and planets I have just hinted what the brain can</p>

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scarcely guess—the scenes of fiery storm and horror that preceded the welding of the world into a solid whole and the birth of the conditions that made life possible. But these are less halting to thought than the scenes of ferocity that filled the earth when life awoke, raging and tempestuous, and form began to devour form as though the world energy were eating its way through all forms to reach the form of man. And that is, in fact, the truth. Man has been reached by teeth just as the hills have been reached by fire. And not only man. The dove that was once a pterodactyl, the dog that was once a wolf, the cat that was once a tiger, and a thousand other things once terrible, thoughtless and ferocious, all these have come along the very path that the hills and the seas came along in their making—the path from negation and through ferocity to the benign.

“Now, can you not see why the fact that I was once a swimming reptile,—just as you were—devour-

Conditions

Conditions

The
World
Spirit

ing other reptiles, is a fact that I would not barter for all fancies? for by its light and by what astronomy and geology and the other sciences tell me I can see that the world, taken as a whole, has a glorious and definite meaning.

“And the gist of the meaning is this: that side by side with the evolution of world forms, from the liquid lava wave to the solid rock, from the rock to the saurian, and from the saurian to man, has gone the evolution of world character and the development of a world spirit; and that the beauty of kindliness and benignity and good receives its deep, deep significance from the fact that all the labour of the world since the first cooling of its fires has been directed along the path leading to these three gods. Nothing is more clear than that, and nothing can be more definitely proved. There is no use at all in fixing your eyes on the Jurassic period and saying, ‘What monsters are here!’ or on a London slum and saying, ‘How terrible life is! It can have no

meaning!' There is no use in fixing your eyes on a thousand years of history and saying, 'I see no development. Men were as good then as they are now.' You must take a billion years in your purview, to see the amazing and glorious thing as it is, and then what you will see will be strangely like the growth and unfolding of a flower—or the flowering of a bramble."

The
World
Spirit

"**I** BELIEVE in dreams, but I have no faith except in hard facts. Those hard facts tell me that the sun, toward which everything grows to-day, is the same sun toward which the seas and the hills and the rocks grew before life exhibited itself first, and toward which life has grown since its birth; and that sun is the sun of Amelioration, Benignity, Good, and Gentleness. Let us call it by the great good word that embraces all these things: Good. Well, then, the world, since the beginning, has grown toward Good."

Hard Facts

Hard Facts

"Do you deny the soul?"

"I do not. I know nothing about it. I am quite content to live in a world that is slowly and steadily developing in benignity, and to assist that development in my small way by trying to develop the benignity in myself.

"I do not trouble about my soul one iota, but I am deeply concerned to keep on that upward path along which earth is ascending."

The
Imitation
of Earth

"Ah, but how can one do that?"

"By copying what the earth has done; by freeing oneself as much as possible from ferocity, hatred, lust, and cruelty."

"But you are neither ferocious nor cruel?"

"Perhaps not actively, but just as I carry in my material brain the eye of the extinct monster I once was, so do I carry in my mind the remnants of the passions of the reptile that once was me, the lust of the reptile and the hatred. I do not tear other human beings with my teeth, but I have torn them by deeds and words. I have been

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cruel—who has not? lustful—who has not? inspired by hatred—who has not? I have regretted these things—who has not?—and forgotten them—who has not?”

The
Imitation
of Earth

“But since I have taken a broad view of the world, since I have seen that all these things are part and parcel of the malignity from which earth is freeing herself in her journey toward the Benign, I have come to hate those things as a man on the road to some brilliant festival might hate the obstacles on his path.”

“But since you have no surety that you possess an individual soul, you have no surety of ever reaching the festival.”

“I cannot help that. My immediate aim is to keep up with the procession. I leave the rest to chance.”

“**A**LL that,” said she, “seems true. No one can deny that the world has developed; no one can deny that the world has developed along the path that leads to

The
Universal
Brain

The
Universal
Brain

gentleness and good. The world is like a big head, isn't it? With all its brains on the outside."

"Just. It began to think like a jelly-fish; then it went on to the consciousness of the first reptile; then it went on till it thought like an animal, and finished by thinking like a man. The world, as you say, is a big head, with its brains on the outside. But during the last hundred years an astounding development has taken place in the world of ethics. Philosophically speaking now, there is no such thing as an individual brain; every brain in the western world is only a cell in the universal brain. And the universal brain is developing on lines of its own, and in precisely the same way as the individual brain developed.

"A hundred—or shall we say eighty?—years ago, the brain of the world consisted of a number of isolated thought centres. A thought took six months to reach Australia from England, and two days to reach London from Manchester.

Then came railways, the printing-press, and the electric telegraph; and in a hundred years the universal brain has developed from almost nothing into a highly complex organism.

The
Universal
Brain

"This new power of man to think universally has not been recognized by philosophers for what it is. It is practically the fusion of all brains into one great brain and the creation of a new organism. Formerly there were men in the world—now there is Man. Roughly speaking, every brain in the western world is joining, now, with every other brain, and the universal brain thinks as a whole. You remember, I defined the Benign as that which assists the elevation of the simple to the complex, and if, as I fully believe, all evolution is the child of the Benign, ought we not to look at this evolution of the universal brain with a critical eye, to discover whether it is following in the same path as the world followed in its development from seas of fire to hills and plains; and as the indi-

**The
Universal
Brain**

vidual brain followed in its evolution from the brain of the saurian to the brain of the civilised man?

"What do we find?

"We find that the development of the universal brain has followed in exactly the same path that all matter has followed from the very beginning of things. The development has been extraordinarily rapid and the stride toward Good has been mathematically in keeping with the development. And it is absolutely truthful to say that since joining this great confederation of thought the individual brain of man has advanced on the road of ethical progress more in the last hundred years than in all the years between the birth of Christ and the eighteenth century.

"To see what has really happened, let us look far back over the civilisations of the world. Egypt was great, and vanished; Athens brought art and philosophy and culture to their highest pitch, and died; Rome arose, and fell thundering in ruins into the night of the

Middle Ages. For all these civilisations were in reality segregated communities, and even in the communities themselves thought was not universal. And if you watch civilisation rising from the mist of the Middle Ages, you will see that it rose not by the power of the word or of precept, but of the printing-press, the telegraph, and the train—that is to say, by the universalisation of thought.

“A hundred years ago men were still half bogged in the Middle Ages. Men, compared to what men are now, were stupid, brutal, and merciless. Brains there were, and clever brains, but the universal brain was not born. The individual brain has reached its limit of development as an individual brain and was preparing for its great development as a part of the universal brain.

“What happened was this. From the printing-press, from the steam-engine, and from the electric telegraph station all sorts of threads began to spin, joining mind to

The
Universal
Brain

mind. The minds of Birmingham became linked up with the minds of London, those of London with Paris. The remotest country village to-day thinks with the greatest town. A giant of thought has suddenly arisen in the place of a thousand pigmies; he has developed in the short space of eighty or a hundred years, and his development has been on the line leading to Beneficence. And this giant is a new creation, as important as the creation of earth from fire, and of life from earth.

“There have been, in fact, three creations. The creation of the material earth; the creation of life, which reached its ultimate form in men; and the creation of Man from the scattered tribes of men. Man the giant (whose brain extends to China and Peru, and which will eventually include China and Peru), and who feels in the London part of his brain a pain that exists in the Congo or Putumayo part of his brain. Man, who, though a giant, is still in his infancy and who, when

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he has reached his teens, will be a much more perfect being than he is now."

"Ah, but will he?"

"Look back at the earth struggling up from chaos, and always and always advancing toward the good; set back now, perhaps, for a million years by the ferocity of life fighting for its foothold in the age of the saurians and the monsters, breaking past that fearful period till those terrible forms are utterly destroyed and there is moulded from them the kindlier animals, and, from them, animals more kindly still; and until among them are seen the first vague forms of men.

"Then look at these forms of men, how steadily they have advanced in perfection and toward the good. Steadily, I say, though at times the advance has been set back for perhaps a thousand years—till the highest development of individual man was reached. That is to say, the highest development that men could reach toward the good as individual entities.

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Universal
Brain

**The
Universal
Brain**

"Then what happened? From purely material causes all these individual entities have become, or are becoming, fused into one great universal entity. The struggle of the world spirit to higher things found itself held up by the individual brain, just as before the birth of organic life it found itself held up by the limits of the inorganic world. It burst that boundary, and now it has burst the narrow limit imposed by the individual mind and has found a new outlet for its energies in the mind universal.

"And that mind, though recently formed, is developing hugely in the direction of the good. It may receive set-backs, but even in the hundred years since its birth, look at the beneficence displayed in its working, and look at the effect of that beneficence on the lives of the individual men it has taken into its great keeping.

"Since Man has arisen to take charge of the world, Justice and Mercy have marked his dealings

with men. All things have improved, and ferocity and injustice have found themselves under the sway of a cruel tyrant who is turning them into the wilderness to keep company with the tigers and the remnants of a world that was once all ferocity and cruelty.

"Since Man has arisen, he has taken war in his hand; he is weighing it and finding it wanting. He has taken superstition and is pulling its vile wings off. He is taking the unjust magistrate by his shoulders and shewing him the door; and he has put his heel on the tyrant king. He is freeing the individual man from the odious idea that the individual man is made of mud, to be burnt forever in hell if there is a flaw in his making. And he has taught humanity at large that it is an infamous thing to hang a poor devil for the theft of a sheep.

"Man is only a hundred years old, and he has done all that since his birth.

"The world spirit has been only a hundred years on this new path

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of development. Can you doubt, then, seeing its progression during a billion years, and how it has spread over ever new fields, that it will continue so to progress and so to spread into fields newer still?"

"I can not."

The
Craving for
Truth

"**YOU** are a philosopher," she said.

"No. I am a man who is sick of philosophy, at least transcendental philosophy. I want matter under my feet all the time. Philosophers make me giddy, swinging like spiders on threads over abysses of nothing, and weaving words into webs to catch—words which they mistake for thoughts.

"I am sick of religious theories, doctrines and dogmas, and gods. I want Truth that a plain man can understand. I never could understand the Christian creed as distinct from the teachings of Christ, and, what is more, I believe no one else can. Mahommedanism revolts me. Buddhism attracts me, yet I

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feel it to be as unfeeling to the truth-craving part of my nature as a soap-bubble to a starving man. Materialism that denies a god revolts me."

"But you say you are sick of gods."

"Yes, but I am more sick of materialists—all the rest of the religions are pretty much the same; they don't satisfy me. Nothing has ever satisfied me but the faith I have struck out for myself and the philosophy that a little child can understand."

"And that faith?"

"Is simply in the essential goodness of the world. That is what I have been driving at all the time since we began our conversation."

"But doesn't Christianity believe in that?"

"No; Christianity believes in the essential badness of the world."

"Of course!—I forgot. All men are sinners."

"Yes, that's it. Christianity believes that the world is bad to the core, and yet it believes that a God

The
Craving for
Truth

The
Essential
Goodness
of the
World

The
Essential
Goodness
of the
World

Who is all goodness made man right at once and thoroughly bad; left him in this condition for an indefinite time, and then sent His son down to redeem him.

"Now, I have a great reverence for other people's religious beliefs, but I have a greater reverence for honest thought, and I cannot—though I worship Christ—believe that the world followed that line of development."

"You worship Christ, yet you deny him!"

"No—I worship Christ because He was entirely lovable. He shines entirely alone in the world of the Western peoples, just as Buddha shines in the world of the Eastern. He was goodness itself made visible and audible. I worship all I can understand of Him. I cannot worship Him as a mystical figure sent suddenly to earth to be put to a cruel death in order that I might be saved, simply because my brain cannot understand that process and proceeding, and I cannot worship what I cannot understand. It is

my defect, perhaps, but that defect is shared by numerous people.

“And I speak for those people when I say that faith with us is impossible unless based on a sure foundation of reason; that we must understand before we can worship, that we do not deny God, but that we do not *see* Him, and that if He, the maker of the world, does exist as an individual entity, we have implicit faith that He is the fountain and origin of all goodness, and that goodness is His robe; that we worship goodness and humbly believe that if He does exist beyond the ken of our purblind eyes, He takes our worship of His robe as homage to Himself far more profound than homage exacted by fear or by superstition, and equal to the homage which great and saintly souls lay at His feet by virtue, perhaps, of their truer sight of Him.

“But we deny, utterly, the essential badness of man, and our denial is based on the sure fact that as man grows in stature, so, *pari*

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passu, he grows in goodness. We believe that man, unaided by miracles, can increase in goodness just by the virtue of the goodness that is in life, a seed in the cave man, a flower in the civilised; we believe that the printing-press, the telegraph, and the steam-engine have produced better ethical result than all the teaching of the Apostles, simply because those great fibres of communication have enabled men to develop by mutual touch and the good in each individual man to rush upward and find a vast field of new growth in the field of universal good, a field that shines now, like a star galaxy above the hell of darkness of a hundred years ago.

Left-offs
and
Fissures

"We believe that the minds of men, like the bodies of men, are filled with old left-offs and fissures, and that just as some men are born with the gills of fishes, through whose forms their beings once passed, so some men are born with the thoughts of the reptiles they once were, and that the hells of the

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priests and the sensuous and painted heavens, the asceticism that kills joy, the persecutions and mutilations, and mummeries and terrors under which men have groaned for two thousand years have arisen, not from Religion, but from old defects in the mind of man equivalent to defects in his body, like, for instance, the vermiform appendix. These defects have taken the good food that Christ gave the mind of man and turned it, not into nourishment, but into causes of inflammation. Saurian hatred is bound up with Religion; superstitions from the time of the cave men, a spirit of simian persecution from the times of the tree men, and lust; all these vile left-overs clinging to the mind of the individual man, as the Pineal eye and vermiform appendix cling to his body, have made Religion an impossible food for the advancement of ethics beyond a certain point.

"Now mark this. The universal mind knows not lust; hates persecution; abhors cruelty, and is

Left-overs
and
Flaures

Left-offs
and
Fissures

preparing to free itself from superstition.

"How do I prove this? Take the press of the civilised world, which is an expression of the universal mind. Where is the place of lust there? Where is the place of Cruelty? Where is the place of Hate? Where is the place of Tyranny? I tell you this, that the mind universal is as far above the mind individual as the mind of a man is above the mind of a chimpanzee—in ethics.

"An ordinary man dare not advance into the pure world of the mind universal one half of the thoughts, nay, one-fourth of the thoughts that fill his individual mind. He dare not preach the hatred that is in him or shew the lust that is in him, or the spirit of persecution, or even the spirit of intolerance; and the restraint upon him is not so much the fear of the police, or the fear of public censure, as a certain recognition in his own soul of ethical values and an instinctive horror of putting forth into

pure light his deformities,—a recognition, in short, of the essential goodness of the world. Of course there are extraordinary men not so affected—so are there murderers and thieves.

“Now, I wish to be perfectly explicit about Religion, or, rather, about the new Religion which the world has received from Man. The new Religion which has advanced the world more in a hundred years than all the priest-ridden religions advanced it since the dawn of Time.

“Its miraculous qualities arise from one fundamental fact. It knows not Individualism.

“It is a simple recognition of fundamental Rights. It is not the individual laying down the law for other individuals (as in the churches); it is the universe of Man recognising the laws that brought it into being, and imposing those laws on the individual. It does not teach; it accepts.

“The great teachers of the world laid down precepts, they formu-

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New
Religion

lated rules of conduct, and their scholars took precepts and formulæ and boiled men alive with them for coining, and hanged men with them for stealing, and burned women with them for witchcraft, and persecuted men with them for making the sign of the cross—or not making it, and twisted and be-devilled those precepts and formulæ into every shape that an individual mind could imagine.

“The new Religion does not discard these precepts.

“Its decalogue, in fact, is longer and more highly developed in parts than the old, but it does not preach its laws, it breathes them and lives by them.

“More than that: it lives by the spirit of good, not by the letter.

“The universal mind, for instance, denounces Theft, yet it recognizes that theft is a multifaced thing, some faces being almost innocent, others hideously cruel. A hundred years ago, a thief had only one face, one head, and one neck, by which he was hanged, if the

theft amounted to more than—six-and-eightpence, was it?

“—So, to come to the end of the matter, we have evolved a secular morality that knows no more of creeds, or threats of future punishments, or promises of future bliss than I know of Hindustanee; which lives above all men, yet touches all men; which abhors lust and cruelty and oppression; which teaches the kindness of Christ to men and of Buddha to animals, and before which Atheists and Christians, Jews and Gentiles all bow. A morality which, by the influence of the press, the telegraph, and the steam-engine, those three Apostles, will spread to the uttermost depth of China and to the last temple of that hideous black blot, India; and which, in the course of ages, will change the individual brain of man and raise it ethically far above its present advanced position. No; development has not ceased. Development has only begun. Give the world a thousand years more.”

“A thousand years!”

The
New
Religion

"I do not want to be unduly optimistical. I foresee set-backs even in the world of universal thought. Give it a thousand years under this new influence, and I foresee Man, individual man, on the heights immeasurably above us."

"And then?"

"And then—who knows? The world spirit that has reached so many limits, and broken through them to higher things, will reach the limit of perfection in man. If there is a field of perfection beyond, it will break those limits and flow on."

"And if there is no field beyond?"

"Then this whole business would be as senseless as a farce by M. Crebillon the younger—whom I hope you have never read."

PART II

THE HOME AS THE HIGHEST POINT
YET REACHED IN THE DEVELOP-
MENT OF THE WORLD

The
Advance
on
Material
Lines

I CANNOT deny the truth of what you have told me," she said. "I can see clearly the different steps up which the world has come, but does it not seem that this new universal mind which is the latest great stage in the advance of the world has, according to you, been produced by purely material causes? It is as much as to say that the printing-press, the telegraph, and the steam-engine have created Good—that they, surely, never could do?"

"They have not; they have only circulated thought; they have only created the platform for thought to spread on. They have only created conditions favourable to collective

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on
Material
Lines

thinking. Collective thought, infinitely more powerful and complex than individual thought, has worked purely on the material given to it by individual brains. It had no other origin or food. Had that material been essentially evil, or if the evil in it had been excessive in comparison with the good, the printing-press, the telegraph, and the steam-engine would have increased the evil in the world.

"But you have indicated one point I would like to dwell on. The absolute essentiality of material objects and conditions now in the advance of the 'spiritual' and intellectual world, and the absolute necessity of discarding dreams and fallacies. In the last great advance, Hoe's machine has done what all the doctrines could never have done, yet Hoe's object was not to construct a machine for the improvement of ethics. He was, in his labours, a materialist, pure and simple; his object was the improvement of a machine for the rapid production of printed stuff. He did not work

at all in the matter with an eye to great and abstract improvements. He just did his little job well and with all his energy.

“Stephenson, Watt, Wheatstone, —and ten thousand of others, including the whole army of Science, Invention, and Labour—whose combined work has produced the Universal Mind, who have, in fact, created Man, each one of these had only one object : the extension of material knowledge and the improvement of certain material objects and conditions. They were not idealists, they were not teachers; they laboured to produce no doctrines or airy formulæ. They were honest workmen in the cause of material progress, each with his eye fixed on his job.

“Contrast with these the preachers and teachers—all excellent, mind you, and making, in their way, for good, yet all, by their combined efforts, useless for the great uplift that was coming and that could only come through the work of Scientific men in the field of Science,

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and Mechanics in the field of material improvement.

"And this fact is a perfect lamp for all who would join in the work of world development. *He who would assist in the development of the world must work not in the field of dreams and theories, but in the field of matter.* That is the doctrine of the spirit of the world whose great hands laboured to make the hills and seas, and flung the moon to the skies for a lamp and a tide-maker, who moulded the chimpanzees into men, and men into civilised men. Dreams and theories and doctrines, preachers, transcendental philosophers and teachers, and even priests—we want all of them, but they are by-products. The work of the world remains the essential thing, and the pioneers of the world are the workers, not the dreamers.

"For, though the universal brain has subordinated the individual, as the whole organism subordinates the cell, the universal brain lives, alone, by the individual, and can only grow through material means.

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And though the universal brain is better, infinitely, than the individual, it can only exercise its power for good on the individual through material means.

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Advance
on
Material
Lines

“That an individual brain may participate in the life and light of the brain universal and feed on and increase with that life, and feed and increase that life, it must first of all receive that light and life; and, secondly, it must be in a condition to receive it, and this can only be done by material means. And I will show you what I mean by an instance. The man who is crushed beneath ruinous labour, the man whose poverty condemns him not to think, the man who shivers without a fire, who goes with an empty stomach—all of that vast crowd of what we call the Poor—each one of these is cut off, more or less, from the mind universal and can never receive its light except through material means. Preaching and teaching, dreams and theories are useless to these. To participate in universal thought—which is uni-

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Advance
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Material
Lines

versal good—they must first have the time to think in, they must be defended from the wolves that prey on thought, Cold and Hunger; they must be preached to practically by the two great Apostles, Wheat-flour and Firewood; they must be treated as Hoe treated the dull steel that made his press—lifted materially.

“Having lifted them thus with food and firewood, let Education have its say, and Eugenics, up to a certain point. But education is as useless to a work-broken or starving man as algebra to an ass. Since Man has awakened to life, he has begun to recognize this. The old religions of men looked on the poor as a necessary evil. “The poor are always with us.” But man, though still only a hundred years old, perceives that the Poor are his disease, that the criminals are his disease, and that the idle are his disease.

“The universal mind rejects Poverty just as it has rejected Hate, and Lust, and Intolerance; and its teaching in this respect is, ‘The poor shall not be always with us.’ That

is one of the greatest triumphs of the great good giant born of the fusion of intelligences; even though, as yet, the means toward this great end have not been discovered."

"What about Socialism?"

Socialism

"Socialism, Anarchism, and Syndicalism are as yet the most obtrusive results of this universal-mind disturbance, due to recognition of the evils that affect the body of Man. The giant, on opening his eyes, is furious at his rags and tatters, and the sores which they disclose. Man, newly awakened, is disgusted at his general condition—and that disgust is at the bottom of all the 'revolutionary' unrest which we see to-day in the western world.

"I spoke to you of set-backs. Should that unrest develop into a storm, the progress of the world would receive one of the set-backs it is well accustomed to."

"What do you mean by a storm?"

"I mean a revolution. An attempt by sudden and violent means

Socialism

to tear up the rags and heal the ulcers of Man. For instance, were Socialism in its extreme form to become the directing power of Man to-morrow, were every man in the world to be equalized materially, the world would be put back on its path of progress immeasurably."

"Why?"

"Because the Socialists' plan is constructed on a fallacy, and were it to be followed by Humanity, it would mean utter disruption of all social communities."

"What is the fallacy?"

The
Fallacy

"**T**HE fallacy is this: The idea that the individual is the essential cell of the community, and that the energy and life of any community spring from the individual. This is not so. The essential cell of the community is the Family, or, in other words, the Home, and all the energy and life of the community spring from the Home.

"The reason of this is simple.

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The Home is bisexual, the individual unisexual.

The
Fallacy

"All the vitality of a community arises from the interplay of the two sexes one upon the other, and this interplay, to be productive of communal life and good, must take place in the Home. Individual men and individual women utterly divorced from a home of any sort lose force and deteriorate, and become warped and dwarfed.

"Sexual force, that is to say, the force that draws man to woman, that produces Love and Children, and love of children, and the love of children for their parents and for each other—sexual force, the fiery grandfather of affection and filial love, can only be developed as a force for communal good and individual good in the Home.

"The Home is *everything*.

The
Home Is
Everything

"It is the foundation of the community, it is the essential cell of the world. You cannot injure the community without injuring the home, and you cannot injure the home without injuring the community.

The
Home Is
Everything

You cannot improve the condition of the community radically by pooling all the money and distributing it among the homes, or by pooling all the means of production and wealth creation and distributing work tickets to the Home-makers. Such a distribution of the means of living would leave utterly untouched the diseases that prey on the homes of the nation and would touch with a killing hand the *vitality* of the Home."

Its Con-
struction

"What do you mean by that?"

"Simply this. Every home is a tiny nation built exactly on the plan of the big nation, of which it forms a unit and which, in fact, is its counterpart in large.

"The home has its head, just as the nation has its head. Like the nation, it is bisexual; it has its exchequer, its fighting force, its ethical laws, its ambitions, its alliances, and its frontiers. It trades with other homes and combinations of homes just as the nation trades with other nations. It has its imports and its exports. It has

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its foreign loans and national credit. It has its internal and external politics. It has all these, whether it be a man and wife living in rooms or a family of twenty, and it is the fac-simile of the nation simply because the nation is not a differentiation of it but an aggregation of it. What is done to the nation is done to the home.

Its Construction

"A home, or a family, if you like the term better, is a ganglion of forces. Love and Pride, Economy (or the saving instinct) and Ambition, not to speak of Affection, are the best of these forces, just as the best forces in the nation are Love, Pride, Ambition, not to speak of Patriotism.

Its Power

"Inseparably connected with these fine forces are other most powerful forces: Greed, Ostentation, Chauvinism (for a family can be Chauvinistic as well as a nation), Love of Domination, etc.

"Now, the forcible toeing the line by *each family* to a fixed income and ambition would hit the life of the home a death blow.

Its Death Blow

**Its Death
Blow**

"I will give you one instance. Ambition would be torn up by the roots. God only knows all the fine things that are clinging to the roots of Ambition. Man knows a few of them. Fathers of families deny themselves and work hard that they may see their sons and daughters advance in the world; knowing, as they do, that material advance is bound up with good conduct, they look to their own conduct and the teaching of their children. Mothers do the same.

"Look at life as you know it, and tell me frankly, is not this true? That the destruction of Ambition in the family would tend largely to destroy the energy and life of the family and its power as a centre of force."

"It is true."

"Yet your Advanced Socialist, with his eyes fixed on what he calls 'the State,' does not reckon on this, and his theory, were it turned to practice, would destroy Ambition.

"Then, again, Pride, not pride in high deeds, but pure, low-down,

material pride—how nasty it is, but what a tremendous force it is! From the cock that crows to the State that prospers, it is ubiquitous as sodium. It is purely human and animal, yet it is one of the major forces that hold the family together and make it living.

Its Death
Blow

“Yet, if Ambition goes, material Pride must go—absolutely. Then take the Hoarding Instinct. This would be absolutely destroyed by your Advanced Socialist, yet without the Hoarding Instinct, which, in a more or less attenuated form, is the Saving Instinct, family morality would cut a poor show. Self-denial would vanish and that demi-virtue, Carefulness.

“You will notice that I am keeping entirely to material instincts and things, and I will rise to the height of saying that the teaching of the destruction of the Hoarding Instinct by Socialists is a blasphemous teaching, and the blasphemy is against the Holy Spirit of Good. I have left the individual for the family, but the destruction of this

**Its Death
Blow**

instinct would wreck the individual as well as the family.

"Ambition, Pride, the Hoarding Instinct, are not passions; they are Laws that govern the growth of life, and they are as immutable as the laws of gravity.

"Without going further, I shall content myself with the destruction of Ambition, Pride, and the Hoarding Instinct, and leave the family robbed of them by the Advanced Socialist—and withered in its growth. I shall come back to the point I started from—the Home. Your Socialist talks of the State.

"I say again—There is absolutely no such thing. There is only a collection of homes.

"Behind the word State he hides his absolute ignorance of fundamentals. He fancies, as I said before, that the nation is an aggregation of individuals, and on that assumption he concludes that each individual should be tuned to the pitch of the mass, so that all should sing in harmony.

"But the nation in reality is not

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an aggregation of individuals at all; it is an agglutination of Families or Homes.

Its Death
Blow

"The word State, as implying a homogeneous and isolated power, is philosophically meaningless. The State is not a separate entity from the Home. It is only, in the administrative sense, a name for the common executive which the homes of the nation have created to conduct their external affairs individually as between themselves, and collectively as between other common governments or executives.

"When the Advanced Socialist talks of the welfare of the State he is talking of the welfare of the majority of individuals. When he talks of the State seizing the common wealth, he means that the majority of individuals will seize it and distribute it among themselves and the minority. He has absolutely forgotten those separate hives of sex life, industry, ambition, antagonism to other hives, and energy, which are the real units of the nation, the Families, which are by

Its Death
Blow

their constituent vices and virtues the breeding-grounds of all social energy and virtues.

"And he would advance the world on its progress by seizing with the brute force of individuals dominion over the homes of the nation. He would allow an executive created by force to dictate to each home its foreign and domestic policy; he would limit its imports and exports, destroy its ambitions, plunder its hoard, and make slaves of its individuals.

"That is Socialism pure and simple. Arsenic could not be simpler or purer as a poison to the common good and the vitality of any social community."

Building.
Not
Breaking

"AND you?"

"I would push the world on, as I said before, by building from below and by purely material means. Instead of hitting the family a blow in its vital part, I would foster its wellbeing. I would give it drains and ventilation; I would, from the

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common fund that all the families have pooled in the taxes, make better the houses; I would even call upon the more prosperous families to help the poorer, but my one aim and object would be the protection of the family in all that makes for its vitality.

**Building.
Not
Breaking**

"I would foster family ambition and the saving and hoarding instinct, and cooking and household management and everything that would keep heads of families by the hearth instead of talking Syndicalism in pot-houses and scandal in clubs. I can not say all I would do, but broadly I would do everything possible for material betterment and everything possible for the betterment of Family Life.

"And that is what will happen, Socialism or no Socialism. We began by talking of the world as a globe of fire; we went on to hills and seas, saurians, animals, men, civilised men, Man with a universal mind.

"We have reached the world as it is—a collection of families or

**The
Danger
of Dreams**

molecules, constituting Man with a universal mind.

"That mind, new-born, is filled with dreams and illusions: Anarchism, Socialism, Syndicalism, and so forth.

"Let Man remember this: He was built out of facts, not theories; matter, not fancies; families, not individuals; and that to grow in the fashion that these new theorists would have him grow, he would have to destroy the molecules that constitute him and resolve himself into his original atoms."

"What is a molecule?"

"A molecule is a family of atoms."

“YOU are, then, opposed to any fixed plan for the betterment of the world. You would simply work by bettering material conditions?”

The
Human
Equation

“I am not opposed to any fixed plan. I only say this, that all the fixed plans I have seen are unworkable, and from one cause.”

“What is that?”

“The framers of them have forgotten that *any plan for the betterment of the world is absolutely unworkable that leaves out the Human Equation.*

“That is not a saying of mine. It is a Law. And, what is more, it is part of a universal law. You cannot improve the condition of vegetation unless you allow for the

The
Human
Equation

weakness as well as the virtues and strength of vegetable life, nor can you improve the condition of mankind unless you allow for its weaknesses and sins and follies as well as for its virtues and its strength.

"What I have said to you about Socialism is not an *ex-parte* statement by a man opposed to Socialism. I am opposed to nothing but error, and when I see Laws as fixed and as immutable as Bode's Law or the law of gravity disregarded by men who are proposing to reform the world, and when I point out these fatal flaws in their reasoning, that does not mean that I am opposed to all plans for reforming the world, but it does mean that I would test by everyday logic any plan for everyday use.

"Will it work? Will it perform the work for which it was invented as a kinetic engine?

"Those are the two questions on which the capitalist satisfies himself first before he invests his money in any invention in mechanics.

"Then he asks, will it wear without undue destruction of parts?"

"Then he satisfies himself as to its economics. Any plan of world reform which leaves out the Human Equation is equivalent to an engineering plan which leaves out consideration details like the Law of the Dead Centre or the Law of Expansion and contraction of metals.

"If you will examine any great engineering plan, whether it be the plan for a bridge or a marine engine, you will find that it is a simple bouquet of natural laws, all brought together by the engineer for a definite purpose, and every law is stamped with the + or - stamp of nature. They are the laws of weakness and the laws of strength, and these wonderful laws that preside over matter so interpenetrate one another that you cannot divorce them one from the other. They may be said to form alloys. Thus the law that rules over the breaking strain is at once the law of strength and weakness. The giant that lives in water springs into

The
Human
Equation

The
Human
Equation

steam under the conditions of the + law that gives him strength, but never for a moment does he escape from the - law of condensation which is ever ready to reduce him to water again in a twinkling. And so on.

"Now, the task of the engineer is *not* to eliminate the - laws from nature, but to account for them, and, if possible, to make them, by a trick of genius, work for him. The engineer does not attempt to destroy Inertia, the weakness that lives in the dead centre of things; he counteracts the idleness of inertia by means of the fly-wheel.

"The weakness of Steam under the law of condensation becomes in the hands of the engineer the strength of the steam-engine. The bursting power of steam, which is ever at war with the weakness of the boiler metal, he counteracts by the safety-valve. He must allow for everything, or his machine either will not work or bursts into a thousand fragments.

"And do you imagine for a mo-

ment that human passions and energy, strength and weakness, are less potent than the forces and weaknesses which the engineer has to account for in his plan? Do you fancy that Inertia is confined to metals, and friction to working parts of machinery? Do you fancy that the social engineer, dealing with powerful and explosive forces, can plot out a social machine without taking into consideration the weaknesses which are complementary to the forces with which he has to deal?

"Yet, in all the plans I have examined, from Socialism to Syndicalism, not one engineer has submitted to me a plan in which human passions and energy, strength and weakness, are allowed for.

"That is a fact.

"I shall give you just one little instance, taken from Syndicalism.

"We shall destroy all businesses, says the Syndicalist, by vexatious strikes. The capitalist, having vanished (struck out), the hands will work the business.

The
Human
Equation

Syndicalism

"Just so. But he forgets that all businesses, like all men, die in time. Suppose all businesses were converted into Syndicalist businesses worked by all the hands, in a world of Syndicalist businesses—they would not escape from the law of decay and death which hangs over everything material. Businesses would die, and new businesses would have to be born under Syndicalism, just as in our world. The competition would be just as keen and the factors of death just as potent. But the factors of life would not be as potent. How would a new business be born to live under Syndicalism?

"Let us suppose that six men, by energy, hard work, a little money, and self-denial (all necessary), found a small business. It grows and prospers, and in a year's time they find that they must introduce new labour to cope with the work. But the new hands are all Syndicalists. They don't want wages, they must have their share in the business. They are taken on, six of them.

"We now have twelve men working a growing and prospering concern. Unless they are absolute fools, they must recognize that expansion to them means simply more danger and worry, for expansion is impossible without more labour, and all the new labour introduced only sops up the profits like a sponge, and even were the profits to increase out of proportion to the total labour employed, that increase of individual profit would in the majority of businesses be small—in numerous businesses it would be non-existent. Why should they expand and risk what they have got—for all expansion in business means risk—simply to benefit potential labourers?

Syndicalism

"The law of Inertia comes at once into play, without any fly-wheel to counterbalance it. The business ceases to grow, and, a hundred to one, dies.

"That is only one of the flaws in the Syndicalist's design. His machine has not been constructed with a view to this and other human

The
Theories

weakness. In a world of automata it might work; in a world of flesh and blood it wouldn't. In short, Syndicalism could destroy all the businesses of the world quite easily, but it could not build them again.

"Syndicalism, Socialism, Anarchism cannot stand for a moment under the eye of analysis without tumbling to pieces as practical inventions.

"They seem daring and ingenious, but they are dishonouring to virile thought.

"Let us change for a moment and ask ourselves, not what we would say to the engineer who disregarded natural laws, but what would we say of a playwright who proposed to present life to us in a play constructed without a proper view to human passions, weaknesses, and fallibility, as well as to human virtue, altruism, etc.?

"We would say at once, It is not possible. He may write such a play, but it would have this fault: it would represent no society that ever lived in the world, and in a

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thousand years hence it would be as valueless as it is to-day.

"And that is, in fact, what you might say of all the Theorists in Humanity I know. They have written plays for men to act in that are quite valueless to-day, would be quite valueless a thousand years hence, and will be quite valueless a thousand years hence.

"They have left out Human Nature."

The
Theories

"THE Statesman who would leave the world better than he found it must take Human Nature as it is, and, instead of attempting to make it grow in direct violation of the laws that rule it, he must assist it to grow in accordance with those laws.

The Laws
of Nature

"Those laws are in the main good.

"As I have pointed out to you, they are the laws that cultivated crocodiles so that at last they became men, that cultivated a hell of fire until it became a habitable world, and that will cultivate men until they become better than present-day men.

"The Reformer must study those laws. He must look at the world

**The Laws
of Nature**

generously and widely, and from the very beginning of things. He must have communion with the great earth spirit which has brought all of us to where we are, and, humbling himself to the dust, study the working of that spirit through the ages.

"He will, unless he is blind, inevitably see one truth: that this great spirit has never meddled with the growth of life and thought, but has laboured Titanically to prepare the conditions favourable to that growth.

"It led life by the fin and claw till life developed hands and a mind wherewith to develop its own conditions favourable to growth. And all the improvements of the world since then have followed that law, the Law of Improvement of Conditions, not any vague Law for the Improvement of Life.

"When Life left the trees and found or dug caves to live in, it left behind it, as a record of its first shelter and home and improved condition, the first vague scratchings

of Art. You may be sure that could it have found a record we would discover also in those caves some sign of the first glimmer of Love.

"The cave was the first home of the germ of civilisation, and the man who built the first hut laid the foundations of all the palaces and cathedrals of earth.

"The man who improved the condition of the first square yard of land laid the foundation of all worldly prosperity, and the man who made the first hinge of hide for the first door destroyed a barricade and laid down the first condition for hospitality.

"Whenever man has fallen away from the teaching of this law, he has always fallen.

"Athens rose to the heights of the Acropolis, but she failed in the furtherance of those conditions necessary for the development of the world—witness her streets. Rome rose to splendour and fell in ruins simply because of her failure in the development of material conditions

The Laws
of Nature

Athens.
Egypt.
Rome

Athens.
Egypt.
Rome

to feed and foster Progress—witness her roads—made for armies to march on. Egypt destroyed herself with dreams of mysticism and power useless to the development of life—witness the Pyramids and the Sphinx.

The Work
of the
Barbarians

“All these so-called civilizations failed because they were inhuman in the path of progress.

“They were not developments, but essays in development. Their civilizations had no relation to the broad Human Family, and gave no platform for that family to develop on. Athens, Rome, Egypt carried Arts, Power, Mysticism to the heights, while down on the plains the tillers of the soil, the serfs, and the barbarians carried on Human Nature.

“Athens, Rome, and Egypt, like some modern philosophers, took no account of human weaknesses. Examine their laws and codes, their policy, and their view-points, and you will at once see that their platform was so narrow that only a class could stand on it, and that

The New Optimism

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their atmosphere was stifling to Man. Human nature could not develop in it. There was no liberty for growth. Human nature had reached a certain point; it made blind attempts to rise higher. It rose to heights of Egyptian power and mysticism, and fell; to heights of Athenian art and philosophy, and fell; to heights of Roman splendour, and fell. It was like an animal trying to leave a sea, and falling back at each attempt by reason of the crumbling of the shore under its weight.

"It had not found the resting-place of solid rock. The hard rock of Liberty and material good and material Reason and material development.

"At last it found the rock by the man's hand that could only find and cling to that rock. That hand was Bacon's. It was so essentially material and human that it could distinguish rock from friable sand, and so powerful that, having found a hold, it never let go.

"Bacon was the first modern man

The Work
of the
Barbarians

Bacon

Bacon

to seize the earth spirit's law that development is only possible when conditions for development have been already prepared.

"His 'Fruit' was another word for conditions.

"His genius recognized intuitively that the only way to develop Man is to let Man develop, and the only way to let him develop is to give him liberty, mentally and physically, and a safe and sheltered platform.

"Better his material conditions."

* * * *

"You asked me, was I opposed to any 'plan' for the Development of Humanity, and I replied, and reply, in effect, that I am not, always providing that it allowed for human development along human lines.

"That is the sum total of the matter, and the first essential of Man in his relation to the world."

PART III

WOMAN IN RELATION TO MAN

"AND what about woman's relationship to the world?"

"There is no such thing as woman."

"Oh! Oh!"

"There are only women. To talk of Woman as a being apart from man is absurd. When I used the word Man in talking of the universal mind, I included women. The word Man as used to represent men is a falsity in that it excludes women. The word Woman is absurd, however you take it.

"Men and women are cut out of the same piece of stuff—Human Nature. The woman is cut a bit smaller, and her outline is a bit different, that is all.

"Mentally it is just the same as physically. She is cut, as a rule,

No Such
Thing as
Woman

No Such
Thing as
Woman

a bit smaller, and the outline of her mind is a bit different. But it is only a difference in size and outline. The stuff is the same. And the outline of the one is complementary to the outline of the other; where the woman's outline sinks in the man's sticks out, and *vice versa*. Mentally and physically it is the same; they are, in fact, the two parts of that great jig-saw puzzle, Humanity.

"The Male and Female are not a necessity of Life. They are only a necessity of higher vegetable and animal life. A large number of lower organisms propagate unsexually—the monera, the amœbæ, foraminifera, radiolara, etc. These increase either by splitting in two or putting out buds. The Male and Female are not, then, a radical necessity of life, but they are a radical necessity in development and in progress from a lower to a higher form of life. The Male and Female are not, as I will try to point out, of the essence of life, but of the essence of the forms of life.

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"We must imagine that the first germ of life was sexless, a cellular structure that multiplied by splitting in two. We must imagine that because the rigid law of advance from the simple to the complex imposes on us the assumption that the first form of life must have been the simplest, and the simplest is the organism that develops by fission.

"There was a tremendous moment, then, when all earthly life lived and moved without sign of sex; cellular forms all alike, all developing alike, and by the same method.

"Had all these forms continued unchanged, the world would now be just as then. But a change came, due, we must suppose (from analogy), not to a change in the radical nature of these organisms, but to a change in the external conditions affecting some of them. The food environment, or the temperature environment, or the electrical environment surrounding some of these organisms, or some other unknown but always external influ-

No Such
Thing as
Woman

No Such
Thing as
Woman

ence, wrought a change in some of these lowly forms of life. The mother of Form—Differentiation—was the result.

“The organisms affected by Differentiation had to reproduce themselves by producing other organisms in a slightly different form, either lower than themselves, or on the same plane as themselves, or higher than themselves.

“Had they taken the first course, Differentiation would have meant destruction and death to all the organisms it touched. The second course was absolutely impossible. A simple organism cannot alter itself without ascending or descending; if it becomes the least degree more complex, it ascends; if it becomes the least degree less complex, it descends. It cannot alter its nature or its form in a horizontal direction. It is absolutely condemned to the vertical, and must go up or down.

“These basic simple organisms, then, that formed the foundation for all life, must have responded to

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their change in environment by ascending, that is, by becoming more complex. They must have done this, or else have descended to death. They were making for the great goal, Sex.

No Such
Thing as
Woman

"How they reached that goal may be a story yet to be read by Science, but reach it they did on the day that two of these simple-minded organisms reproduced themselves, not by individual fission, but by mutual union.

"It was not a radical change in the life of the organisms; it was only a radical change in the method by which that life was reproduced.

"It was a change in business methods. It was co-operation, pure and simple, between two organisms in the production of other organisms. Before that day, the whole business had to be done by one individual; after that day it was done by partners, one called Male, the other Female.

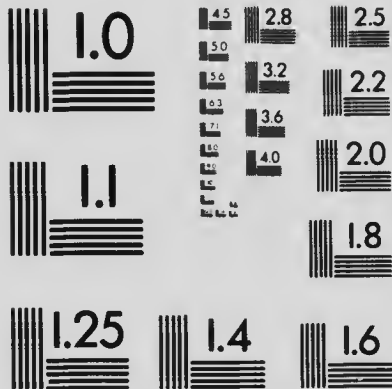
"Now, what is the essence of partnership? Mutual assistance. In a labour partnership where the

Sex a
Partnership



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Sex a
Partnership

business is in the least complex, two men would be of very little assistance to each other who insisted always on doing the same job, or the same part of a job. There must always be a top sawyer and a bottom sawyer, a man who does what the other cannot do, or gives what the other has not got.

"It is exactly the same in the business of life-production, and the instant that Form could demonstrate them, the two partners appeared, and the instant that the new business of Life originated by this partnership became acute and competitive, the partners found themselves leagued together not only for the production of life, but for the defence of that life.

"But that carries us beyond my immediate point, which is that the terms Male and Female do not connote separate origins for the objects they apply to, nor essential differences between those objects. The two partners are essentially the same, only that one has got his hands horny from doing the rough

jobs of the partnership and the other has kept her hands soft; one has developed mammary glands by doing her business in the partnership, the other has developed his biceps in doing his. One has developed certain attributes of mind in fighting the world, the other certain other attributes in keeping the home. One has developed certain organs for reproduction, the other—others.”

“Yet you deny the existence of Woman.”

“Absolutely. But I do not deny the existence of Sex, always holding that, though Sex is the most powerful factor in development, it has nothing to do with the essence of life. If it had, you would find men and women different from one another in essentials. They are not.

“As human beings they are exactly the same, *only* that you find some passions and attributes more developed in men, others more developed in women. But there is not a passion or attribute belonging

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Partnership

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Sex a Partnership	<p>to men that is not shared in by women, and <i>vice versa</i>."</p> <p>"But there is a vast difference between women and men."</p> <p>"Of course there is, but it is only a difference, not a division; moreover, it is only a surface difference, for the deeper you go into their natures, the less apparent is that difference. Use the touchstone of the profound emotions. Who has not seen a strong man weep like a woman, or a weak woman show the heroism of a man? Does sorrow affect men less than women? Does great joy affect women more than men?</p> <p>"Is love a thing apart from man, and is it woman's whole existence? It is not. That claptrap was born of Fancy, and the passion for saying a catchy thing. The love of men for women is just as powerful and as intimately connected with their existence as the love of women for men. Fidelity, the only true sign of real love, is exhibited by men in just the same proportion (allowing for the greater temptations of men) as it is by women.</p>

"No; men and women are absolutely the same as human beings in all things essential, and the man who denies that is the man who sees the world with only one eye, and only uses the surface of his brain.

"Men and women are *partners*. Partners in a difficult business. They have been partners for millions of years, and the differences between them are caused by the exigencies of the partnership.

"Even in those surface mental differences that mark sex a man will often approximate to a woman in some particulars, and a woman to a man. These surface differences are not unalterable.

"Take the love of gossip. Listen to the talk of army men and navy men and club men.

"Take vanity, and look at the nuts and the dudes and the macaronis.

"Take curiosity, and remember Coventry. Take love of dress—"

"And remember Mr. —," said she, laughing.

"Exactly. And let any one who

Sex a
Partnership

Men—
Women,
and
Women
—Men

Men—
Women
and
Women
—Men

would controvert me consider his friends and relations critically, and tell me, with his hand on his heart, are the males destitute of female attributes and the females of male?

"They are not. They are all human beings, and to class them philosophically under the two divisions, Woman and Man, is a profound error and a commonplace error.

"It has led men to look on women as mysterious beings with essential motive springs and essential mental clockwork quite different from that of men.

"It has led to frightful volumes of gas being generated in certain skulls, like the skull, for instance, of X——, and some of the leaders of the Feminist movement, and the escape of this gas is making an alarming noise.

"When Ellen Key, for instance, says that 'Human souls can be divided into organic and inorganic,' and that 'Ibsen makes the masculine soul inorganic, definitive, finished, determined; the feminine

soul, on the other hand, he more often makes organic, growing in evolution,' what does she mean?

"All this loose talk about souls being organic and inorganic I would not exchange for one small concrete fact—such as that Mrs. Jones is a better man than her husband, or that John Smith 'ought to have been born a girl,' facts that help to prove that not only are men's and women's bodies and 'souls' made of the same stuff, but that the sex difference is so unfixed a quality that we find women who are to all intents and purposes men, and men women.

"I will be bold enough to lay down a law based on experience, History, and Common-sense.

"There is not a womanly attribute of either body or soul that has not been born of the stuff that men are made of, and there is not an attribute of women that has not been developed to its womanly pitch *not* by virtue of any mysterious energy rising from the source of 'woman,' but by purely external

Men—
Women
and
Women
—Men

Condi-
tions,
Again

conditions. And the same with regard to men.

"There you have the old 'conditions' coming up again. Let us get at facts.

"The æsthetic sense is pre-eminently womanly. You will say, at once, 'This is not so. Women are rarely as good artists as men.' I was not talking of art, but of the æsthetic sense.

"Every male artist inherits this sense from his mother. I am speaking from long observation and experience. It is the woman in the artist that paints; the woman in the poet that feels; the woman in the novelist that colours the work. Every man has the æsthetic sense more or less developed, but women have it, *as a mass*, more developed than men. Who, for instance, puts the flowers in the cottager's window?

"I do not believe that the æsthetic sense in the greatest artist is more developed than it is in hundreds of thousands of women who never touch art. His power of

craftsmanship, purely material and mechanical, and his power of constructive imagination raise him to the heights, and these powers only come from the superior conditions favourable to them under which men have dwelt.

Condi-
tions,
Again

“Go into any house, and you can tell if a woman lives there. Some delightful trace or touch betrays the fact. It may be a few flowers—it may be this or that, but the æsthetic touch is there; and in the home it is chiefly the woman who brings it. Now, why has woman developed this delightful attribute? It is a property of the mind; but men have it, too. Why has she developed it out of proportion to the man’s development in this particular?

“Since she shares it with the man, it is a common attribute, and it is the purest common-sense to believe that she developed it simply because the conditions affecting her life were more favourable to its growth than the conditions affecting the life of the man.

Condi-
tions,
Again

"Though the first scratchings of art in the cave-men's dwellings were, most likely, the work of a man, who gave him the æsthetic basis of his artistic sense? Arguing from what we know—his mother.

"And why did his mother cultivate this sense more than his father?

"If you had seen his father tearing through forests after, and sometimes in front of, infuriated wild beasts, while his mother kept cave and looked after the children, you would have a complete and pictorial answer to that question.

"Even the weariness of the chase is disastrous to the æsthetic sense. Look at all the hunting men and women you know, if you doubt what I say.

"So, then, without any transcendental talk about 'souls' being organic or inorganic, we may say, arguing common-sensically, that women have developed one of the most distinguishing 'womanly' attributes, not because she is a woman, but because she is a human

being, and the conditions under which she has always lived have tended toward that development.

Condi-
tions,
Again

"Again—the love of a mother for her offspring, the one attribute of all attributes most distinctly and profoundly 'womanly': is it different in kind or essence from the love of a father for his offspring? Surely not, but it is more complex, more intimate, and more tender and more lovable, simply because the conditions under which it has grown have been more favourable to the development of this complexity, intimacy, and tenderness.

"It is the same beautiful thing, but more peculiarly cultivated, and it has grown in complexity while the man has been hunting, or trading, or fighting the world in some other way.

"Go through the whole category of those attributes whose superior development makes woman the flower of the earth. You will find not one which has developed on its own account owing to some mysterious chemistry of being peculiar

Condi-
tions.
Again

to Woman,—all have developed from the common soil of humanity, owing to the superior conditions for their development in women.

“And the chief of those conditions has been Protection. The old conditions come up again. The man when he was hunting and killing beasts for his wife and children, and fighting for their existence, never imagined that he was by his labours founding Art and Poetry. He was. He was giving their germs conditions to grow in. Love, tenderness, gentleness, affection, morality: all were there in the cave with the woman. She suckled them with her children; she trained them in their growth with kisses—and slaps. They were the man’s no less than the woman’s, common to both their natures, but he left them in the cave with her to take care of, while he went hunting.

“Conditions have made woman what she is: the best and most beautiful thing in the world. And now Feminists want to change those conditions, just as Socialists

want to change the conditions affecting man.

"Both strike at the Home."

"**W**OMAN must have a freer life.'

Feminism

"To evolve her genius, woman has but one need—Freedom.'

"She must be free to form her own ideas and morals.'

"Woman must reorganize the mind and soul of humanity, for man has disintegrated it.'

"Those are some of the teachings of the Apostles of Feminism. I take them from the work of a clever American woman, and they are a fair statement of the case for Feminism.

"To the first I give an unqualified assent.

"Freedom, within limits, is the basic condition of growth.

"But what does the Feminist mean by Freedom?

"The third dictum answers that.

"She must be free to form her own ideas and morals.'

Feminism

"One would fancy from that that 'woman' was an animal capable of evolving ideas and a moral code different from man. Since woman is just the same human animal, we may put this aside, and ask again what the Feminist means.

"She asks, in fact, that women may be free to change their morals (we shall leave the talk about ideas aside for the present) in any way they please.

"Now, morals cannot be changed in a horizontal direction. It's up, or down, or stationary. Any change in morals is for the better or for the worse.

"Does the Feminist ask for freedom to change her morals for the better? She has perfect freedom to do that; most men will applaud her, and most women, too.

"Does she ask for freedom to change her morals for the worse?

"If she is making that demand, let her frankly avow that what she wants is license, not freedom.

"There is a lot of difference between the two.

"I am not arguing to get the Feminist in a hole, but simply to clear the ground of brambles.

Feminism

"She does want license, as a matter of fact; one would be blind who looked at her programme and did not see that.

"And the license she wants is not the license to steal, or lie, or murder, or commit arson. When she talks of forming her own morals, she has one morality entirely and solely in view—the morality that presides over Love; and when she asks for license, it is license in Love.

"Men have more license in this matter than women. That is undoubtedly so.

"Men, since the beginning of the world, have had more license than women; but that license is a relic of barbarism. It was useful once, but it is becoming less useful every day, and *pari passu* men are becoming more moral."

"Useful once?"

"In this way. Men in the past were the fertilisers of the world.

Feminism

Who brought Roman blood to England, Norman blood, Norse blood? Men. Roman, Norman, and Norse women had nothing to do with the matter. Their duty was to stay at home and be moral. Armed and roaming men fertilised the world, just as bees fertilise a field of clover, crossed the races, and made the vitality of them.

“Roman, Norse, and Norman virtues that make England great were born of Roman, Norse, and Norman license. The same fact applies to all Europe. But the day of the free-lance in love is gone. He who was once a world-maker is now a world-curse. He is not now a world-maker, but a Home-wrecker and a woman-wrecker.

“Nations no longer require him for a fertiliser. Men no longer travel in masses, armed with spears; they go in railway carriages, accompanied by their families, and the world can get all the fertilisation it wants by immigration.

“License still lives among men, but it lives as a reptile; among

men it is dying, yet Feminists, when they ask for license, would give this dying thing a new birth among women. They forget that what was once a bad necessity is now a hideous and dying superfluity.

Feminism

I HAVE heard it stated by Feminists that motherhood is the right of every woman.

The Right
of Mother-
hood

"So is fatherhood the right of every man, and on that plea a man might base a very wide scheme of immorality.

"As a matter of fact, there is something else: the right of the child.

"A woman has *no* right to motherhood unless she can provide a home for her child. A father has no right to fatherhood who cannot do likewise. And by a home I do not mean shelter and food; I mean everything sacred that lies in that word Home. Love, affection, self-restraint, mutual respect, and family respect.

"Of course, if the Feminist says,

The Right
of Mother-
hood

Destroy the home, one has nothing more to say. She is logical.

"But to say, I shall increase license among women without injuring or destroying the home, at once reduces her to a person who is not logical.

"As a matter of fact, the Feminist movement, as far as its moral side goes, is confined to a certain number of men who desire the extension of license; to a certain number of women who do likewise; and to a certain number of women who feel acutely that women are put upon by men in the matter of morals. That men have set up a rule of conduct for women which they don't obey themselves.

"This is not so. The sternest moralists are women, and the morality of these moralists is not an abstract quality; it arises from a profound and intuitive motherhood instinct that tells them that license is death to the welfare of the child, whether it develops and is shown in the mother or the child.

"The child must restrain itself

and not steal the jam; the woman must restrain herself and not let her honour be stolen."

"And, you will say, the man must restrain himself and not steal her honour?"

"Certainly.

"And every man, who is a man and not a cur, obeys that law as far as in him lies.

"Man, you must remember, has a lot to fight against, and nothing so much as the old rules of license under which he has lived for ages.

"They used to be a royal robe; they are now a beggar's tatters. He is ashamed to be seen in them nowadays; he only puts them on in private; yet they are always crying to him to put them on, just as filth is always crying to a dog, Roll in me.

"That is all I have to say about the moral side of the Feminist people. Their claim for equal freedom with man in other respects is far more pleasant to notice. And it comes to this:

"Since the mass of women is

The Right
of Mother-
hood

Social and
Political

just the same as the mass of men, in the name of Humanity, why should not the woman mass have the same freedom in affairs as the man, politically and socially?

"Why should the women of the nation not be free to expand their mental and bodily energy in every social and political path in which the men expand it?

"Certainly they ought. But they can't.

"They could, in a nation whose units were individuals; they can't, in a nation whose units are homes.

"Every woman is a potential or actual queen-bee. Her duty is to found a hive, not to make honey. Like a man, she has only a limited quantity of energy.

"The little nation of the hive or home, which is, in very fact, the nation itself writ small, makes vast calls upon the man's energy and the woman's. Here alone is the national life as distinct from the national affairs.

"It is the germinal spot and centre of all national activity; it is

the primary school of all morality; and it is the supreme province of the woman. Here she is a world builder.

Social and
Political

"This is her kingdom. Her duties here are not only family, but national. There are no humble duties in a home: they are all great and national duties, directly determining the advancement of the world. Like all great duties, they imply great outputs of energy, self-denial, and restraint, and it is impossible for her to use her energies effectively in two directions. She cannot be at the hub of the wheel and the tire both at the same time. In other words, she cannot be at home and in parliament or the law courts, or the council chambers of the nation, or the studios or dentists' parlours at one and the same time.

"Woman must be free to create her own conduct and to seek her own experiences for self-development," runs another dictum of our Feminist sage.

"In the home she is only free to

Social and
Political

create her own conduct in a manner conducive to the well-being of the home. If she swerves from this law, she is a defaulter and an enemy to good. The same may be said of her freedom in self-development.

"Certainly she must be free to develop herself, and so must the man be free to develop himself.

"But the man who develops his muscles in golf at the expense of his business time and energy is a slacker and a defaulter and a home-injurer. And the woman who develops her political instincts or her mind power at the expense of her home time and energy is the same."

The
World-
Builders

"IT seems to me," said my audience, "that you look on women as though they were all married and with household duties to perform."

"I look on women as though they were all married women, or women preparing to enter that state. No other women are of any account at all as world-builders.

"They may be delightful, charm-

ing, pleasant, true women in every way, but if they are not married they are not true women-factors in the progress of the world. Simply because they have no hand in the physical building of the future.

"The child is the future made visible and concrete. When you lay your finger on a child you are touching not flesh only, but future ages.

"The unmarried woman-genius may influence the art or the thought of her time; the labourer's wife who produces a bouncing boy that lives has produced the future. More than that, she has sent forth her own attributes to dwell in the future. More than that, by her care and education of that child she is laying the foundation for vast world effects.

"That is the woman's triumphant position in the scheme of things. She is a partner in world-building, and the duties lying on her share of the partnership are patent and obvious to the meanest intelligence.

**The
World-
Builders**

The
World-
Builders

"They are both moral and material, and they imply in their performance one supreme virtue: self-sacrifice. Not freedom to develop according to inclination; not freedom to alter her morals; not freedom to imitate the worst faults of men; but slavery in the interests of her children, her husband, and her home.

"And what happy people these slaves are! Just as happy as the men-slaves who, under the domination of good conduct, love, and the hive instinct, often work themselves to death, like the bees, that others may live and prosper.

"But, as you say, all women cannot be mothers. Yet it is essential that the mothers of the nation should be protected at all costs from the disease which lurks under the specious word 'Feminism.'"

THEY have come a long journey together, the Man and the Woman, and all through that long journey across the ages they have been leading the child by the hand.

“And if the wicked and blasphemous people who talk of sex-hate had but the scientific and poetic perception enabling them to see those three grand and mysterious figures as they are on the shores of Time, we would be spared, perhaps, from the poisonous blight of sexism.”

YOU are so positive,” said she, “that I often haven’t dared to interrupt you, and you talk so quickly that all you have said, though I understood it at the time, is now a jumble in my mind.”

“I am positive, because there is no use at all in being negative. People who believe in what they

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Builders

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say are usually positive — even though they may be wrong.

“If I have talked too quickly, I shall write out what I have said and send it to you; then you can pick it to pieces as much as you please.”

THE END

NOTE TO PART I OF THE BOOK

IN my experience, judging from the men I have met in life and the men whose lives I have read about, the really strong men of the world have been men of strong belief—and mostly men with a strong belief in a personal God.

Faith is a very wonderful thing, call it what you please. There is in Faith an enormous dynamic energy the origin of which, analyse it as much as I will, leaves me utterly baffled and bewildered.

One might say that it is an orientation of the mind, a pointing of all the thoughts in one definite direction by which the mind, as a machine, gains harmony which is expressed in power of action, and I believe the co-ordination of the functions of the mind under a common governing belief does, in part, explain the miraculous power conferred on men by Faith.

Also one might say that the mind capable of great faith is essentially a positive mind, a direct mind, and a constructive mind.

Also one might say a great many things, and yet leave the foundation of the question as deeply involved in darkness as ever, and the mind of a Newman, a Gladstone, or a Cromwell the same towering mystery.

But the fact remains clear that the man without belief in something above and beyond this world, or in something *in* this world, some tide, or core, or essence of which his own little life is a part, loses the alliance of that power which we indicate in the word Faith.

There is no doubt at all that the western world has lost power, and that England is losing power daily by the steady loss of Faith.

The crude, hard faith in a personal God which is vanishing from among us is a dynamic force that is passing away, and it is being replaced by what?

It is being replaced by a good

many excellent things: by an increase of tolerance and sympathy; an increased consideration for the oppressed, and a re-valuation of all the considerations that come under the title Justice; but all these and many more good things that have sprung to growth in the universal mind leave the individual mind still lacking Faith.

Darwinism it was that struck the first real blow at a personal God, and men, in their minds at least, have nearly extinguished the chemical hell.

And Darwinism, destroying the old rigid, childlike faith, handed the world not Atheism, but a new Faith, which the world never seems to have grasped.

The Faith in a world ever progressing toward the good.

Once you have grasped the great truth that your life is a part of this miracle of growth, as long as you conform as far as in you lies to the growth of good in yourself, you will have a Faith that will fill you with new force.

And it is a faith that no one can refuse, for its teaching is written across the rocks and the stars, and so plainly that a child can read it, once it is pointed out to him.

Appendices

APPENDIX A

I HAVE said very little about Anarchism—merely mentioned it by name; yet the inquiries I have made into this subject reveal an organisation and a literature astonishing to the everyday mind. To use the words of that ardent bibliophile, H. Bourdin:

“To most people the word Anarchy is evil-sounding, but it is not the same to learned men and to collectors and lovers who acquire the desire of accumulating documents for history’s sake.

“The Anarchist literature has not a determined origin, being not the expression of a system invented and progressively elaborated, but the negation of all systems, produced by the desire to batter down the despotic in all its forms, the rules and duty imposed by prejudice or by force, and to give impulse to the free development of human-

ity. All acts which have been accomplished and all words which have been pronounced in hatred of this constraint and in favour of this freedom are consciously or unconsciously the production of Anarchy.

"It is astonishing when one glances at the huge quantity of literature of all kinds which has been printed in the space of the last half-century for the exposition of their ideal thought; no other party or sect, for whatever cause they had to defend, can be compared to this, except Christianity, which has taken about 2,000 years over it. Consider the difficulty which they have met in publishing clandestinely their periodicals, broadsides, etc., hunted by society as wild beasts; domiciliary perquisitions destroyed their works, which were merely their thoughts."

M. Bourdin has courteously allowed me to inspect the huge library of Anarchistical literature which he has collected, consisting of journals, broadsides, pamphlets, volumes, songs, theatrical plays, etc.

To give you an idea of the extent and nature of the Anarchistical press, I enumerate a few of the journals:

L'Anarchie, Journal de l'Ordre, May, 1850.

(In 1850, Anarchy had already a press.)

Le Libéraire, 1858-1861.

L'Egalité, 1869-1872.

L'Internationale, 1870-1873.

La Révolution Sociale, 1871-1872.

L'Ami du Peuple (Liège), 1873-1875.

Ni Dieu ni Maître, 1880. (You see we are getting on in titles.)

La Révolution Sociale, 1880.

Le Drapeau Noir, 1883.

L'Émeute, 1883-1884.

La Lutte, 1883.

Le Défi, 1884.

La Guerre Sociale, 1885. (Brussels).

La Révolte, 1894.

L'Antipatriote, 1899. (Cat out of the bag.)

Le Tocsin, 1892-1894.

La Débâcle, 1893.

L'Insurgé (Lyons), 1893.

Le Cyclone (Buenos Aires), 1895-1896.

La Cravache, 1898.

Le Cravacheur, idem.

Le Cri de Révolte, 1898-9.

Les Crimes de Dieu, 1898.

La Bastille, 1902-3.

Germinal, 1904-1910.

L'Anarchie, 1905.

L'Anarchiste, 1907.

L'Action Directe, 1907-1908.

La Mère Peinard, 1908.

La Révolution, 1909.

Les Révoltés, 1909.

La Bataille Syndicaliste, 1911.

The Anarchist (Glasgow), 1912.

And these are only a few of the journals in the great Bourdin collection.* I have only mentioned some of the French journals devoted to the cause; there are English and German as well, and there are sure to be Russian and Spanish and Italian journals to match.

It is a big movement. Give me the literature of a movement, and I will feel its pulse and tell you

* This collection is for sale, I believe.

about its constitution. The literature of Anarchism tells that it is very much alive.

What is Anarchism? It is really unconstructive Socialism and Syndicalism.

The Anarchists want to destroy society as it is, and let Human Nature ramp on the remains.

The Socialist wants to destroy society, and build it again on an anti-Human-natural plan.

The Syndicalist wants to destroy the Business World and to erect a new business world on an unbusinesslike basis.

Of the three, I prefer Anarchy.

It is the only one of the three dreams based on common-sense, for it frankly aims at Anarchy, and Anarchy is exactly what it would get were it to succeed.

* * * *

I have said "The three dreams," and though I have permitted myself to sneer at some points in the philosophy of some of these dreamers, I have no sneers at all to expend on their energy, and on their whole-

heartedness. They are all trying to express something, and that something is the Poverty and the Misery of the world.

Socialism, Syndicalism, and Anarchism are all one voice speaking in different tones.

And that voice is growing and must be answered, not by Repression, but by Philosophy.

The world is not all wrong, but it is not all right. Man is speaking in no uncertain tones, and he wants some reply more apposite to his argument than the glib chirrup of Pippa.

APPENDIX B

A PASSAGE FROM HAECKEL*

UNDER the title of *Design in the Living Organism*, the famous embryologist, Carl Ernst Baer, published a work in 1876 which, together with the article on Darwinism which accompanied it, proved very acceptable to our opponents, and is still much quoted in opposition to evolution. It was a revival of the old teleological system under a new name, and we must devote a line of criticism to it. We must premise that, though Baer was a scientist of the highest order, his original monistic views were gradually marred by a tinge of mysticism with the advance of age, and he eventually became a thorough dualist. In his profound work on *The Evolution of Animals* (1828), which he himself entitled *Observation and Experiment*, these two

* This translation from Haeckel's "The Riddle of the Universe" is taken from an edition published by The Rationalist Press in England, and Harper & Brothers in the United States of America, Copyright 1900, to whom grateful acknowledgment is made for permission for its use in this volume.

methods of investigation are equally applied. By careful observation of the various phenomena of the development of the animal ovum, Baer succeeded in giving the first consistent presentation of the remarkable changes which take place in the growth of the vertebrate from a simple egg-cell. At the same time, he endeavoured, by far-seeing comparison and keen reflection, to learn the causes of the transformation, and to reduce them to general constructive laws. He expressed the general result of his research in the following thesis: "The evolution of the individual is the story of the growth of individuality in every respect." He meant that "the one great thought that controls all the different aspects of animal evolution is the same that gathered the scattered fragments of space into spheres, and linked them into solar systems. This thought is no other than life itself, and the words and syllables in which it finds utterance are the varied forms of living things."

Baer, however, did not attain to a deeper knowledge of this great genetic truth and a clearer insight into the real efficient causes of organic evolution, because his attention was exclusively given to one-half of evolutionary science, the science of the evolution of the individual, embryology, or, in a wider sense, ontogeny. The other half, the science of the evolution of species, phylogeny, was not yet in existence, although Lamarck had already pointed out the way to it in 1809. When it was established by Darwin in 1859, the aged Baer was no longer in a position to appreciate it; the fruitless struggle which he led against the theory of selection clearly proved that he understood neither its real meaning nor its philosophic importance. Teleological and, subsequently, theological speculations had incapacitated the aging scientist from appreciating this greatest reform of biology. The teleological observations which he published against it in his *Species*

and Studies, in his eighty-fourth year, are mere repetitions of errors which the teleology of the dualists has opposed to the mechanical or monistic system for more than 2,000 years. The "telic" idea, which, according to Baer, controls the entire evolution of the animal from the ovum is only another expression for the eternal "idea" of Plato, and the *entelecheia* of his pupil, Aristotle.

Our modern biogeny gives a purely physiological explanation of the facts of embryology, in assigning the functions of heredity and adaptation as their causes. The great biogenetic law, which Baer failed to appreciate, reveals the intimate causal connection between the *ontogenesis* of the individual and the *phylogenesis* of its ancestors; the former seems to be a recapitulation of the latter. Nowhere, however, in the evolution of animals and plants do we find any trace of design, but merely the inevitable outcome of the struggle for existence, the blind controller, instead

of the provident God, that affects the changes of organic forms by a mutual action of the laws of heredity and adaptation. And there is no more trace of "design" in the embryology of the individual plant, animal, or man. This *ontogeny* is but a brief epitome of *phylogeny*, an abbreviated and condensed recapitulation of it, determined by the physiological laws of heredity.

Baer ended the preface to his classical *Evolution of Animals* (1828) with these words: "The palm will be awarded to the fortunate scientist who succeeds in reducing the constructive forces of the animal body to the general forces or life-processes of the entire world. The tree has not yet been planted which is to make his cradle." The great embryologist erred once more. That very year, 1828, witnessed the arrival of Charles Darwin at Cambridge University (for the purpose of studying theology!)—the "fortunate scientist," who richly earned the palm thirty years afterward by his theory of selection.

In the philosophy of history—that is, in the general reflections which historians make in the destinies of nations and the complicated course of political evolution—there still prevails the notion of a “moral order of the universe.” Historians seek in the vivid drama of history a leading design, an ideal purpose, which has ordained one or other race or State to a special triumph, and to dominion over the others. This teleological view of history has recently become more strongly contrasted with our monistic view in proportion as monism has proved to be the only possible interpretation of inorganic nature. Throughout the whole of astronomy, geology, physics, and chemistry there is no question to-day of a “moral order,” or a personal God, whose “hand hath disposed all things in wisdom and understanding.” And the same must be said of the entire field of biology, the whole constitution and history of organic nature, if we set aside the question of man for the mo-

ment. Darwin has not only proved by his theory of selection that the orderly processes in the life and structure of animals and plants have arisen by mechanical laws without any preconceived design, but he has shown us in the "struggle for life" the powerful natural force which has exerted supreme control over the entire course of organic evolution for millions of years. It may be said that the struggle for life is the "survival of the fittest," or the "victory of the best"; that is only correct when we regard the strongest as the best (in a moral sense). Moreover, the whole history of the organic world goes to prove that, besides the predominant advance toward perfection, there are at all times cases of retrogression to lower stages. Even Baer's notion of "design" has no moral feature whatever.

Do we find a different state of things in the history of peoples, which man, in his anthropocentric presumption, loves to call "the history of the world"? Do we find

in every phase of it a lofty moral principle or a wise ruler guiding the destinies of nations? There can be but one answer in the present advanced stage of natural and human history: No. The fate of those branches of the human family, those nations and races which have struggled for existence and progress for thousands of years, is determined by the same "eternal laws of iron" as the history of the whole organic world which has peopled the earth for millions of years.

Geologists distinguish three great epochs in the organic history of the earth, as far as we can read it in the monuments of the science of fossils—the primary, secondary, and tertiary epochs. According to a recent calculation, the first occupied at least 34,000,000, the second 11,000,000, and the third 3,000,000 years. The history of the family of vertebrates, from which our own race has sprung, unfolds clearly before our eyes during this long period. Three different stages in the

evolution of the vertebrate correspond to the three epochs: the *fishes* characterised the primary (palæozoic) age, the *reptiles* the secondary (mesozoic), and the *mammals* the tertiary (cænozoic). Of the three groups the fishes rank lowest in organisation, the reptiles come next, and the mammals take the highest place. We find, on nearer examination of the history of the three classes, that their various orders and families also advanced progressively during the three epochs toward a higher stage of perfection. May we consider this progressive development as the outcome of a conscious design or a moral order of the universe? Certainly not. (Certainly yes. Progression toward the benign is the core of all morality.—H. de V. S.) The theory of selection teaches us that this organic progress, like the earlier organic differentiation, is an inevitable consequence of the struggle for existence. (Struggle for improved conditions.—H. de V. S.) Thousands of beautiful and re-

markable species of animals and plants have perished during those 48,000,000 years, to give place to stronger competitors, and the victors in this struggle for life were not always the noblest or most perfect forms in a moral sense. (No, but they were the best condition-builders.—H. de V. S.)

It has been just the same with the history of humanity. The splendid civilisation of classical antiquity perished because Christianity, with its faith in a loving God and its hope of a better life beyond the grave, gave a fresh, strong impetus to the soaring human mind. The Papal Church quickly degenerated into a pitiful caricature of real Christianity, and ruthlessly scattered the treasures of knowledge which the Hellenic philosophy had gathered; it gained the domination of the world through the ignorance of the credulous masses. In time the Reformation broke the chains of this mental slavery, and assisted reason to secure its right once more. But in the new, as in

the older period, the great struggle for existence went on in its eternal fluctuation, with no trace of a moral order.

And it is just as impossible for the impartial and critical observer to detect a "wise providence" in the fate of individual human beings as a moral order in the history of peoples. Both are determined with iron necessity by a mechanical causality which connects every single phenomenon with one or more antecedent causes. Even the ancient Greeks recognised *ananke*, the blind *heimarmene*, the fate "that rules gods and men," as the supreme principle of the universe. Christianity replaced it by a conscious Providence, which is not blind, but sees, and which governs the world in patriarchal fashion. The anthropomorphic character of this notion, generally closely connected with belief in a personal God, is quite obvious. Belief in a "loving Father," who unceasingly guides the destinies of 1,500,000,000 men on our planet, and is attentive at

all times to their millions of contradictory prayers and pious wishes, is absolutely impossible; that is at once perceived on laying aside the coloured spectacles of "faith" and reflecting rationally on the subject.

As a rule, this belief in Providence and the tutelage of a "loving Father" is more intense in the modern civilised man—just as in the uncultured savage—when some good fortune has befallen him: an escape from peril of life, recovery from a severe illness, the winning of the first prize in a lottery, the birth of a long-delayed child, and so forth. When, on the other hand, a misfortune is met with, or an ardent wish is not fulfilled, "Providence" is forgotten. The wise ruler of the world slumbered—or refused his blessing.

In the extraordinary development of commerce in the nineteenth century the number of catastrophes and accidents has necessarily increased beyond all imagination; of that the journal is a daily witness. Thousands are killed every

year by shipwreck, railway accidents, mine accidents, etc. Thousands slay one another every year in war, and the preparation for this wholesale massacre absorbs much the greater part of the revenue in the highest civilised nations, the chief professors of "Christian charity." And among these hundreds of thousands of annual victims of modern civilisation strong, industrious, courageous workers predominate. Yet the talk of a "moral order" goes on.

Since impartial study of the evolution of the world teaches us that there are no definite aim and no special purpose to be traced in it, there seems to be no alternative but to leave everything to "blind chance." This reproach has been made to the transformism of Lamarck and Darwin, as it has been to the previous systems of Kant and Laplace; there are a number of dualist philosophers who lay great stress on it. It is, therefore, worth while to make a brief remark upon it.

One group of philosophers affirms, in accordance with its teleological conception, that the whole cosmos is an orderly system, in which every phenomenon has its aim and purpose; there is no such thing as chance. The other group, holding a mechanical theory, expresses itself thus: The development of the universe is a monistic mechanical process, in which we discover no aim or purpose whatever (except that it is ever growing toward the good.—H. de V. S.): what we call design in the organic world is a special result of biological agencies; neither in the evolution of the heavenly bodies nor in that of the crust of our earth do we find any trace of a controlling purpose (O blindness! before the wonder of development.—H. de V. S.)—all is the result of chance. Each party is right—according to its definition of chance. The general law of causality, taken in conjunction with the law of substance, teaches us that every phenomenon has a mechanical cause; in this sense there is no

such thing as chance. Yet it is not only lawful, but necessary, to retain the term for the purpose of expressing the simultaneous occurrence of two phenomena, which are not causally related to each other, but of which each has its own mechanical cause, independent of that of the other. Everybody knows that chance, in this monistic sense, plays an important part in the life of man and in the universe at large. That, however, does not prevent us from recognising in each "chance" event, as we do in the evolution of the entire cosmos, the universal sovereignty of nature's supreme law, *the law of substance*.

A NOTE ON THE PASSAGE FROM HAECKEL

I do not suggest, *I affirm*, with the support of all science at my elbow and all reason at my side, that the world in its development has exhibited only one constant direction, and that direction is toward what we call the good or,

in other words, progression toward the complex.

That the development of forms by natural selection is only a part of the real business of the universe, whose mighty labours have, from the very beginning of earthly things, been directed toward one distant ideal.

What is the Ideal? Who knows? We only know that on the covering directions of the sealed orders, which man may not open till he is fit to read them, are the words: Advancement, Love, Mercy, Kindliness, Protection, and every other word which the mind of man has marshalled under that mysterious and general term, The Good.

Blind matter carried those sealed orders in its body and the first fishes carried them under their fins, the first claw was made to catch them and to carry them through ferocious times, till the hand of the first monkey seized them "Advancement" was the only word on the cover then; but, age after age, hitherto invisible directions began

to appear letter by letter, till "Love" stood out, and "Mercy," and all those other words that form the basis of Progress.

Accident and the stress of growth have sometimes obliterated those words for years and centuries. Civilisations have misinterpreted some of those words and barbarisms have rubbed them out, schools of Religions and schools of thought have meddled with them and altered them, yet they have always returned, and not only returned, but brought other words with them.

The aim and object of life, Haeckel, are the carriage of those sealed orders, and the implicit obedience of the directions that appear age by age on their envelope, till, who knows, some day the word "Open" may be found there, and some glimpse of the great Ideal be permitted to the eyes of man.

APPENDIX C**THE MYSTERY OF ANALOGY AND
SIMILE**

MY companion likened the present-day world to a big head with the brains on the outside. The idea is absolutely just; we have even the two hemispheres of the brain in the eastern and western world. In future years, when telegraphy and telephony are more highly developed—and, who knows, telepathy also—the idea will even be more true than it is to-day.

In this connection: have you ever considered the deep mystery that lies in Analogy?

In the universe of mind and matter, why do we see the same idea repeated in widely different forms. The whole world of structure is a world of plagiarism. The skull and a nut are the structural outcome of the same idea, so are

the cockle and the almond—but imitations of structure are nothing to the fact that root ideas, like that governing the structure of the vertebrates, strike upward into the worlds of thought and action. We have vertebrates in businesses, business with brains, spinal cords, sympathetic nervous systems all complete. In states, armies, and more vaguely in philosophies, policies, and all structures of thought, whether they be theories, or poems, or plays, or novels, the vertebrate idea is found.

Why is the life history of a man so extraordinarily like the life history of a nation, and the story of a man's day a little poetical simile of a man's life?

Why does the poetical simile satisfy the mind when, for instance, we talk of a sea that smiles, or compare a sunset to the fading of a fortune?

Is it because we have struck, half-unconsciously, on the key to the riddle of the universe; that the conditions upon which the universe

of mind and matter clings, as snow clings to branches and twigs, are exceedingly few—are derived from the same trunk and strike upward, through the material and spiritual world, just as tree branches and twigs strike upward through denser and lighter layers of air.

The main trellis or branch conditions that run through everything are the conditions of Life, Death, Growth, and Decay. These are the four master branches. All others are the twigs subsidiary and derived from these. Think, if you can find a conception of the mind, exclusive of mathematical concepts, that does not embody these four in its essence, and is not, in fact, the child of these. And yet, these four are only one. For death is complementary to life; it is the absolutely faithful shadow of life. Nay, it is life itself, for life is perpetual change, and the essence of death is not death, but change.

And growth, what is it?—change; and decay, what is it?—change.

Change, then, is the one master

idea, the trunk from which all ideas spring—and what is the soul of change?—motion.

And what is motion?—it is the soul of the Universe.



