

## WOMAN'S INTUITION.

How very odd that those who love and reverence womanhood most, should often be regarded by the self-constituted champions of the "women's cause" as its avowed enemies. And yet perhaps not so odd after all, if one remembers that the object of the women's advocates is, not to defend and uphold womanhood as such, but on the contrary to turn women, if possible, into feeble, second-rate copies of men. Between those who admire woman, as woman, and those who think so ill of their own sex that they want to abolish all its distinctive and essential features, there can in the nature of things be no possible sympathy, and no room for compromise, now or ever.

Happily, however, women have still a vast body of friends left—friends who will succeed in saving womanhood from the "advanced" women who would fain abolish it; and those friends are, as might naturally have been expected, the men. In spite of all that lady lecturers and anti-feminine old maids can do to unsex their sisters, men will for the most part continue to choose their wives—the mothers of future women—from the most womanly of their kind; and so will aid and abet in handing down to coming generations those fine and beautiful feminine qualities that the recalcitrant mannish women of our age are so anxious to disown in favor of male peculiarities. Men will protect women against the enemies of womanliness in their own sex. The celibate lady lecturer will die unrepresented; the woman with grace, tact, high emotional endowments, pure womanly gifts, will hand down her exquisite and charming qualities to other women, her likes, after her.

And these qualities, the finest flower and most ethereal outcome of our race, manly men are certainly the last persons to underestimate. What a vulgar, material view of humanity it is that treats the power to teach school or to earn a livelihood as the sole measure of efficiency in the race. What a vulgar, ma-

terial view it is that brings everything down to the rule of three in dollars and cents, and endeavors to exalt the harder mannish qualities at the expense of the softer, purer, and finer womanish ones. What a vulgar, material view it is that looks upon the shop and the factory as the sole end and aim of our race. It takes all sorts to make a world, says the quaint old English proverb, in homely words, but with wide human philosophy; and it takes men and women both, with all their specialities, to make the highest humanity. If the anti-feminine women could have their way, and could crush out womanhood, what a hard, gray world they would finally make of it—a world all speechifying, and conventions, and manufactories, and shops; a world of type-writers, clerks, and dry-goods women; a world governed throughout by the most narrow and rigid politico-economical laws; a world out of which all the grace and the softness would be gone; a world of self-supporting old maids and business men; a world without any real women, any home life, any disinterested emotion, above all, any round-armed babies. But, thank heaven, they can never have their way; for the men will go on marrying womanly women; and the womanly women will go on being the mothers of pretty girls, with all the inherited emotional wealth of a thousand generations in their bosoms.

The great part that woman plays in thus keeping up and improving the normal high standard of the species, is just this: she contributes in the main the emotional element. From the very nature of her bodily organization, woman is emotionally more resonant than man. Her frame is made up of sounding-boards. She has a greater number of nervous reservoirs, as it were, whence stores of emotional energy can be drawn to meet occasion; and in moments that conspicuously call forth this energy, one can see her whole bodily form vibrating to the particular chord that happens for the time being to be touched by circumstances. But this emotional endowment is not, we may be sure, a small matter in the economy of the race. It is the basis on which are reared the whole vast superstructures of the artistic, the musical, and the imaginative faculties. Not only do we owe to it the poetical element in man, the groundwork of the arts of painting, sculpture, music, and decoration, and of much

that is essential in literature as well, but we owe to it also, I believe, a large part of our practical gains, because without the emotional tinge and the faculty of imagination, no great work in any direction—not even in mechanics—was ever accomplished.

To be sure, I persist in believing that in the future, as in the past, the greater part of such gains, and of all other main gains of our kind, will be due directly to the brain of man rather than to the brain of woman. But since women almost undoubtedly transmit to their male offspring a certain proportion of their emotional endowment—exactly as they even transmit certain functionally-useless counterparts of their own distinctive feminine organization—it must necessarily result that where women are most purely womanly, there even the men will indirectly participate in the high emotional endowments of the women. And I believe that observation bears out this inference. Where women are least feminine, men are hardest and most practical; where the differentiation between the sexes is widest, the finest intellectual and emotional blends result from their intermixture.

Now, the intellectual quality in which woman is strongest is undoubtedly the intellectual quality nearest allied to the emotions; namely, intuition. And this is also the quality most peculiarly present in those high and exceptionally valuable individual organisms that we call geniuses. The genius is akin to the woman in this, that what he guesses and jumps at is almost more important than what he deliberately reasons and sees. His very *differentia* as a genius, indeed, is most often this: that he clears at a bound what other men would take long marches to get over. I well remember the greatest living mathematician saying to me one day that Laplace, in summarizing a mathematical argument, often wrote, "Hence it obviously follows that  $x = f \times ab^2 + y$ ," or whatever it might be; when he, the great living mathematician, could see the truth of the inference only after working out a page or two of elaborate calculations. Laplace's mind cleared at a bound the "obvious" intervening steps, which genius of a somewhat less exalted type could only slowly and cautiously creep over. That is exactly what we call intuition—the power of seeing implications, one knows not how. And it is this sort of intuition, coupled of course with high masculine qual-

ities—knowledge, application, logical power, hard work—that gives us the masterpieces of the world's progress; that gives us steam engines and locomotives, telegraphs and telephones, Hamlets and Richard Feverels, Newton's "Principia" and Spencer's "First Principles."

Whence does humanity derive this extremely important and especially progressive gift? To a large extent, I believe, from its feminine half. The most averagely masculine men are not remarkable in any way for intuition. On the contrary, the common male way of going about anything—the safe, ordinary, business-like way—is the way of direct observation and strict reasoning, the matter-of-fact way, the way that proceeds wholly upon known methods, a step at a time, and arrives at comparatively familiar results. It is as far removed as possible from the feminine intuitive way—an unsafe, precarious, unsatisfactory way, when ill-employed in incompetent hands; but a fruitful, and sometimes almost miraculous way, when guided by competent knowledge, balanced judgment, logical ability, and critical acumen.

And why have women this gift of intuition at all? Well, its origins are not single or simple; they go down a long way into the past of our species, and depend upon many converging factors. In the first place, woman's intuition is a variety of instinct; and instinct is the common endowment of all animals possessing nervous systems at all. From a certain point of view, we may regard it as a survival in humanity—a partially one-sided survival, affecting chiefly a single sex, though extending in its outlying modes to a portion of the other. Mr. Herbert Spencer (who, if I may venture to say so, appears to me somewhat to undervalue the female idiosyncrasy) seems to imply that because it is a survival, it is therefore a low and comparatively undesirable faculty. In this I cannot quite agree with him. Intuition in women is the instinctive, immediate, and unreasoned apprehension of certain implications of the facts presented. But it is not necessarily unreasoning because unreasoned, any more than the born mathematician's faculty is unreasoning because it proceeds by great bounds where slower thinkers in that particular direction proceed by cautious steps and inferences. On the contrary, intuition, when you can get it, is better than reasoning. Nor is

it perforce low because woman shares it with the lower animals; on the contrary, it is rather a noble common endowment that man, as male, has largely lost through the gradual evolution, training, and discipline of his logical faculties. It is well known that "counting boys," if they learn the accepted arithmetical methods, lose thereby their extraordinary natural and instinctive power of arriving at the solution of problems intuitively. In the same way, man, the male sex of humanity, in acquiring his high intellectual development, has lost to a great extent his instinctive intuition. But this is not necessarily all gain; quite otherwise; we may compare it to that short-sightedness which comes with too much "poring over miserable books"—a thing that nevertheless is no real advance upon the keen vision and quick perception of the bookless savage. The first root of woman's intuition, then, I take to be the common instinctive endowment of the higher animals; it is the specially human form of that instantaneous apprehension of the meaning of external signs that we see in all the quickest-witted beasts and birds, as well as in the sharp discriminativeness of hunting tribes for the signs of game, enemies, danger, or weather.

The second main root, I take it, is to be looked for in the domestic affections. Woman leads, and has always led, an almost wholly social life. Hence this prime endowment, dwarfed and shriveled in man, has expanded in her with use and exercise till its extreme manifestations sometimes strike the cumbrous and slow-going male intelligence dumb with astonishment. The innate faculty has been quickened and developed by the spur of affection. Woman passes her life in watching her husband and her children. She is quick to observe passing moods and indications; and the quicker she is, the more does she do to preserve her own life, her companion's, and her offspring's. Even her strong sexual jealousy, essential to her own protection in earlier times, has added its part to the sum. She has learnt to detect in a moment the merest shades of expression on the face of husband or lover, to jump at conclusions with unerring instinct, to interpret correctly signs and tokens so small and inconspicuous that even the man who gives them is himself supremely and happily unconscious of them. And it is worth while to note in passing

that the greatest triumphs of feminine intuition are almost always thus social and personal. They consist in marvelous reconstructions of character, motive, or passing mood, fetches of insight into the mind of others, which the woman in whom intuition is highly developed can often read like an open book.

Hence it is, I would say parenthetically, that women make such admirable novelists. They are to the manner born. Men, and especially men of intellect, rarely observe much the petty doings and sayings of others. But women instinctively and unconsciously observe all these things; they go through life reading the minds of others at every turn, and with a store of accumulated observation upon motive and character that serves them in good stead whenever they take deliberately to reconstructive imaginative work. Most male novelists begin to observe for the first time, for the purposes of their romances, after they take (more or less *contre cœur*) to the trade of novel-writing; most women novelists can draw at once upon a vast stock of arrears unconsciously assimilated.

Many other minor considerations come in to help the high development of intuition in women. For example, there is the fact that woman's world is mainly a world of people, while man's world is mainly a world of things. Then there is the love of approbation, which the principle of sexual selection has rendered so important for women; together with the shrinking from blame, which in early stages of human evolution meant the avoidance of danger from a husband's, father's, or master's sudden outbursts of savage anger. The woman who could quickest detect the signs of rising wrath, and either keep out of the way or soothe and quiet her irritated lord; the woman who could best discern the moments when he might most safely be caressed or cajoled, when favors might be asked or favors granted, was the woman who in the end recruited the species with like-minded descendants. A dozen other concurrent strands occur to me as I write, but I forbear to mention them all; the experience of readers in their own domestic circles will doubtless amply supply the deficiency. For what we all ask even now most decidedly of woman is responsiveness and sympathy, and these imply at once the power of reading and interpreting emotion. The most

beautiful woman who fails to respond, does not touch our hearts; what we like is the eye that meets our own in every passing mood—that thrills to our thrill, dims to our dimness, darts contagious fire (the phrase is Milton's, and may therefore pass muster, I hope, even in America) to our glance of meaning.

I hold, then, that female intuition is a noble original endowment of our kind, possessed by us in common with all other animals, and shared in a high degree by both sexes among more primitive humanity, as among existing savages. But while, with civilized men, the faculty has tended to die out, under the influence of deliberate education of the reasoning powers and handicrafts, with civilized women it has grown stronger and stronger, in virtue of its alliance with the domestic functions, and its importance in the strictly social life of the wife and mother. We have lost, while they have gained. And this differentiation itself, again, I hold to be of distinct value and importance to the species. It is not for nothing that in the course of evolution the sexes have diverged; they have diverged because each has its own useful and essential part to play in the economy of the community. Man has specialized himself on logical intelligence and practical handicraft; woman has specialized herself upon the emotions and intuitions, the home and the family. To say this is no more to belittle woman, than saying that a man is a sculptor or a poet is putting him on a lower rank than a manufacturer or an engineer.

Furthermore, I believe that in the highest minds a certain intermixture of this feminine element of intuition with the masculine element of pure reason is always present. Great wits jump; that is to say, they are essentially intuitive. They see at a glance what plodders take years and years to arrive at; they catch instinctively at principles or generalizations that the solid business man could never compass. And this ability, it seems probable, comes to them largely from the female side of their ancestry. There is, indeed, in all genius, however virile, a certain undercurrent of the best feminine characteristics. I am thinking now, not merely of the Raphaels, the Shelleys, and the Mendelssohns, but also even of the Newtons, the Gladstones, and the Edisons. They have in them something of the womanly, though

not of the womanish. In one word, the man of genius is comprehensively human. As he always results from a convergence of many fine stocks upon a single point, so also, it seems to me, he often results from a convergence of male and female qualities. He has reason like a man, but intuition like a woman. It has frequently been said, with obvious lop-sidedness, that great men owe their greatness to their mothers. One might almost as well say that a chemical compound owed its properties to one alone among its various constituents. But there is a certain *substratum* of truth for all that, perhaps, in the oft-repeated fallacy; great men do probably owe a large element of their greatness to the imaginative faculty and to the intuitive faculty that they derive from their mothers. I think I have observed this in life more than once myself—that men of genius were the sons of mothers in whom the feminine attribute of intuition was highly developed, and that they themselves highly inherited it. Goethe's well-known lines avow it. Certainly, there are whole types of genius in which intuition is a necessary factor—in which intuition gives the very key note of the genius. A woman says: "I don't know how I know it; but I know I know it." So there are great thinkers upon whom truths flash with intuitive certainty, whence or why they know not; great discoverers upon whom discoveries or inventions come at a burst with synthetic completeness; and great poets or artists upon whom works of art dawn suddenly with imaginative perfection. "How do you do it?" such men are sometimes asked; and I have heard them answer more than once: "I don't know how I do it; it comes of itself to me." That, I take it, is essentially a feminine gift to humanity. If we were deliberately to educate out the intuitive faculty in woman, I believe we should leave humanity so much the poorer, and should get only inferior copies of men, to be mothers of an inferior sort of men in future.

GRANT ALLEN.



## GOVERNMENT BY RUM-SELLERS.

WHY not government by rum-sellers ? Is not rum-selling a legitimate business ? Are not business men well fitted to govern a city ? Do we not need business talent to manage the finances and maintain a business system in so important a matter as the affairs of a great metropolis ? In spite of these logical questions, we do not wish a government by rum-sellers. The idea is unsavory. No pleasant associations are grouped about it. We instinctively picture a government of dirt and disorder when we use the phrase. Why is this ? A government of iron-sellers or wool-sellers would not sound so. What is there in the rum-seller that makes us cry, "*Habet fœnum in cornu*" ?

Let us first note that the term "rum-seller" has a meaning given it by usage, not the equivalent of its etymological signification. The rum-seller of etymology is any one who sells rum ; but the rum-seller of usage is one who sells intoxicating liquors of any sort at a public bar, to be there drunk. Saloon is a word that has had a like restriction in meaning, and now rum-seller and saloon-keeper are synonymous. These words represent the men we are now speaking about. The community generally shrinks from being under a government of these people. There must be a reason for this. The fact that they are in a legitimate business does not protect them from this general opprobrium. And they alone sustain this opprobrium. There is no other class of business men that begets such revulsion in the public breast. We would discover the cause of this phenomenon. In speaking of the class we must not pick out exceptional cases. We must leave those, and argue from the great majority. So doing, we think we can find the following facts to help us answer our main question.

The rum-seller or saloon-keeper is engaged in an immoral business. It is an immoral business because it makes drunkards and ruins families. We know by the observation of years