CHAPTER THE SIXTH

Women in a Modern Utopia

Section 1

But though I have come to a point where the problem of a Utopia has resolved itself very simply into the problem of government and direction, I find I have not brought the botanist with me. Frankly he cannot think so steadily onward as I can. I feel to think, he thinks to feel. It is I and my kind that have the wider range, because we can be impersonal as well as personal. We can escape ourselves. In general terms, at least, I understand him, but he does not understand me in any way at all. He thinks me an incomprehensible brute because his obsession is merely one of my incidental interests, and wherever my reasoning ceases to be explicit and full, the slightest ellipsis, the most transitory digression, he evades me and is back at himself again. He may have a personal liking for me, though I doubt it, but also he hates me pretty distinctly, because of this bias he cannot understand. My philosophical insistence that things shall be reasonable and hang together, that what can be explained shall be explained, and that what can be done by calculation and certain methods shall not be left to chance, he loathes. He just wants adventurously to feel. He wants to feel the sunset, and he thinks that on the whole he would

feel it better if he had not been taught the sun was about ninety-two million miles away. He wants to feel free and strong, and he would rather feel so than be so. He does not want to accomplish great things, but to have dazzling things occur to him. He does not know that there are feelings also up in the clear air of the philosophic mountains, in the long ascents of effort and design. He does not know that thought itself is only a finer sort of feeling than his--good hock to the mixed gin, porter and treacle of his emotions, a perception of similitudes and oppositions that carries even thrills. And naturally he broods on the source of all his most copious feelings and emotions, women, and particularly upon the woman who has most made him feel. He forces me also to that.

Our position is unfortunate for me. Our return to the Utopian equivalent of Lucerne revives in him all the melancholy distresses that so preoccupied him when first we were transferred to this better planet. One day, while we are still waiting there for the public office to decide about us, he broaches the matter. It is early evening, and we are walking beside the lake after our simple dinner. "About here," he says, "the quays would run and all those big hotels would be along here, looking out on the lake. It's so strange to have seen them so recently, and now not to see them at all.... Where have they gone?"

"Vanished by hypothesis."

"What?"

"Oh! They're there still. It's we that have come hither."

"Of course. I forgot. But still---- You know, there was an avenue of little trees along this quay with seats, and she was sitting looking out upon the lake.... I hadn't seen her for ten years."

He looks about him still a little perplexed. "Now we are here," he says, "it seems as though that meeting and the talk we had must have been a dream."

He falls musing.

Presently he says: "I knew her at once. I saw her in profile. But, you know, I didn't speak to her directly. I walked past her seat and on for a little way, trying to control myself.... Then I turned back and sat down beside her, very quietly. She looked up at me. Everything came back--everything. For a moment or so I felt I was going to cry...."

That seems to give him a sort of satisfaction even in the reminiscence.

"We talked for a time just like casual acquaintances--about the view and the weather, and things like that."

He muses again.

"In Utopia everything would have been different," I say.

"I suppose it would."

He goes on before I can say anything more.

"Then, you know, there was a pause. I had a sort of intuition that the moment was coming. So I think had she. You may scoff, of course, at these intuitions----"

I don't, as a matter of fact. Instead, I swear secretly. Always this sort of man keeps up the pretence of highly distinguished and remarkable mental processes, whereas--have not I, in my own composition, the whole diapason of emotional fool? Is not the suppression of these notes my perpetual effort, my undying despair? And then, am I to be accused of poverty?

But to his story.

"She said, quite abruptly, 'I am not happy,' and I told her, 'I knew that the instant I saw you.' Then, you know, she began to talk to me very quietly, very frankly, about everything. It was only afterwards I began to feel just what it meant, her talking to me like that."

I cannot listen to this!

"Don't you understand," I cry, "that we are in Utopia. She may be bound unhappily upon earth and you may be bound, but not here. Here I think it will be different. Here the laws that control all these things will be humane and just. So that all you said and did, over there, does not signify here--does not signify here!"

He looks up for a moment at my face, and then carelessly at my wonderful new world.

"Yes," he says, without interest, with something of the tone of an abstracted elder speaking to a child, "I dare say it will be all very fine here." And he lapses, thwarted from his confidences, into musing.

There is something almost dignified in this withdrawal into himself. For a moment I entertain an illusion that really I am unworthy to hear the impalpable inconclusiveness of what he said to her and of what she said to him.

I am snubbed. I am also amazed to find myself snubbed. I become breathless with indignation. We walk along side by side, but now profoundly estranged.

I regard the facade of the Utopian public offices of Lucerne--I had meant to call his attention to some of the architectural features of these--with a changed eye, with all the spirit gone out of my vision. I wish I had never brought this introspective carcass, this mental ingrate, with me.

I incline to fatalistic submission. I suppose I had no power to leave him behind.... I wonder and I wonder. The old Utopists never had to encumber themselves with this sort of man.

Section 2

How would things be "different" in the Modern Utopia? After all it is time we faced the riddle of the problems of marriage and motherhood....

The Modern Utopia is not only to be a sound and happy World State, but it is to be one progressing from good to better. But as Malthus [Footnote: Essay on the Principles of Population.] demonstrated for all time, a State whose population continues to increase in obedience to unchecked instinct, can progress only from bad to worse. From the view of human comfort and happiness, the increase of population that occurs at each advance in human security is the greatest evil of life. The way of Nature is for every species to increase nearly to its possible maximum of numbers, and then to

improve through the pressure of that maximum against its limiting conditions by the crushing and killing of all the feebler individuals. The way of Nature has also been the way of humanity so far, and except when a temporary alleviation is obtained through an expansion of the general stock of sustenance by invention or discovery, the amount of starvation and of the physical misery of privation in the world, must vary almost exactly with the excess of the actual birth-rate over that required to sustain population at a number compatible with a universal contentment. Neither has Nature evolved, nor has man so far put into operation, any device by which paying this price of progress, this misery of a multitude of starved and unsuccessful lives can be evaded. A mere indiscriminating restriction of the birth-rate--an end practically attained in the homely, old-fashioned civilisation of China by female infanticide, involves not only the cessation of distresses but stagnation, and the minor good of a sort of comfort and social stability is won at too great a sacrifice. Progress depends essentially on competitive selection, and that we may not escape.

But it is a conceivable and possible thing that this margin of futile struggling, pain and discomfort and death might be reduced to nearly nothing without checking physical and mental evolution, with indeed an acceleration of physical and mental evolution, by preventing the birth of those who would in the unrestricted interplay of natural forces be born to suffer and fail. The method of Nature "red in tooth and claw" is to degrade, thwart, torture,

and kill the weakest and least adapted members of every species in existence in each generation, and so keep the specific average rising; the ideal of a scientific civilisation is to prevent those weaklings being born. There is no other way of evading Nature's punishment of sorrow. The struggle for life among the beasts and uncivilised men means misery and death for the inferior individuals, misery and death in order that they may not increase and multiply; in the civilised State it is now clearly possible to make the conditions of life tolerable for every living creature, provided the inferiors can be prevented from increasing and multiplying. But this latter condition must be respected. Instead of competing to escape death and wretchedness, we may compete to give birth and we may heap every sort of consolation prize upon the losers in that competition. The modern State tends to qualify inheritance, to insist upon education and nurture for children, to come in more and more in the interests of the future between father and child. It is taking over the responsibility of the general welfare of the children more and more, and as it does so, its right to decide which children it will shelter becomes more and more reasonable.

How far will such conditions be prescribed? how far can they be prescribed in a Modern Utopia?

Let us set aside at once all nonsense of the sort one hears in certain quarters about the human stud farm. [Footnote: See Mankind in the Making, Ch. II.] State breeding of the population was a

reasonable proposal for Plato to make, in view of the biological knowledge of his time and the purely tentative nature of his metaphysics; but from anyone in the days after Darwin, it is preposterous. Yet we have it given to us as the most brilliant of modern discoveries by a certain school of sociological writers, who seem totally unable to grasp the modification of meaning "species" and "individual" have undergone in the last fifty years. They do not seem capable of the suspicion that the boundaries of species have vanished, and that individuality now carries with it the quality of the unique! To them individuals are still defective copies of a Platonic ideal of the species, and the purpose of breeding no more than an approximation to that perfection. Individuality is indeed a negligible difference to them, an impertinence, and the whole flow of modern biological ideas has washed over them in vain.

But to the modern thinker individuality is the significant fact of life, and the idea of the State, which is necessarily concerned with the average and general, selecting individualities in order to pair them and improve the race, an absurdity. It is like fixing a crane on the plain in order to raise the hill tops. In the initiative of the individual above the average, lies the reality of the future, which the State, presenting the average, may subserve but cannot control. And the natural centre of the emotional life, the cardinal will, the supreme and significant expression of individuality, should lie in the selection of a partner for procreation.

But compulsory pairing is one thing, and the maintenance of general limiting conditions is another, and one well within the scope of State activity. The State is justified in saying, before you may add children to the community for the community to educate and in part to support, you must be above a certain minimum of personal efficiency, and this you must show by holding a position of solvency and independence in the world; you must be above a certain age, and a certain minimum of physical development, and free of any transmissible disease. You must not be a criminal unless you have expiated your offence. Failing these simple qualifications, if you and some person conspire and add to the population of the State, we will, for the sake of humanity, take over the innocent victim of your passions, but we shall insist that you are under a debt to the State of a peculiarly urgent sort, and one you will certainly pay, even if it is necessary to use restraint to get the payment out of you: it is a debt that has in the last resort your liberty as a security, and, moreover, if this thing happens a second time, or if it is disease or imbecility you have multiplied, we will take an absolutely effectual guarantee that neither you nor your partner offend again in this matter.

"Harsh!" you say, and "Poor Humanity!"

You have the gentler alternative to study in your terrestrial slums and asylums.

It may be urged that to permit conspicuously inferior people to have one or two children in this way would be to fail to attain the desired end, but, indeed, this is not so. A suitably qualified permission, as every statesman knows, may produce the social effects without producing the irksome pressure of an absolute prohibition. Amidst bright and comfortable circumstances, and with an easy and practicable alternative, people will exercise foresight and self-restraint to escape even the possibilities of hardship and discomfort; and free life in Utopia is to be well worth this trouble even for inferior people. The growing comfort, self-respect, and intelligence of the English is shown, for example, in the fall in the proportion of illegitimate births from 2.2 per 1,000 in 1846-50 to 1.2 per 1,000 in 1890-1900, and this without any positive preventive laws whatever. This most desirable result is pretty certainly not the consequence of any great exaltation of our moral tone, but simply of a rising standard of comfort and a livelier sense of consequences and responsibilities. If so marked a change is possible in response to such progress as England has achieved in the past fifty years, if discreet restraint can be so effectual as this, it seems reasonable to suppose that in the ampler knowledge and the cleaner, franker atmosphere of our Utopian planet the birth of a child to diseased or inferior parents, and contrary to the sanctions of the State, will be the rarest of disasters.

And the death of a child, too, that most tragic event, Utopia will rarely know. Children are not born to die in childhood. But in our

world, at present, through the defects of our medical science and nursing methods, through defects in our organisation, through poverty and carelessness, and through the birth of children that never ought to have been born, one out of every five children born dies within five years. It may be the reader has witnessed this most distressful of all human tragedies. It is sheer waste of suffering. There is no reason why ninety-nine out of every hundred children born should not live to a ripe age. Accordingly, in any Modern Utopia, it must be insisted they will.

Section 3

All former Utopias have, by modern standards, erred on the side of over regulation in these matters. The amount of State interference with the marriage and birth of the citizens of a modern Utopia will be much less than in any terrestrial State. Here, just as in relation to property and enterprise, the law will regulate only in order to secure the utmost freedom and initiative.

Up to the beginning of this chapter, our Utopian speculations, like many Acts of Parliament, have ignored the difference of sex. "He" indeed is to be read as "He and She" in all that goes before. But we may now come to the sexual aspects of the modern ideal of a constitution of society in which, for all purposes of the individual, women are to be as free as men. This will certainly be

realised in the Modern Utopia, if it can be realised at all--not only for woman's sake, but for man's.

But women may be free in theory and not in practice, and as long as they suffer from their economic inferiority, from the inability to produce as much value as a man for the same amount of work--and there can be no doubt of this inferiority--so long will their legal and technical equality be a mockery. It is a fact that almost every point in which a woman differs from a man is an economic disadvantage to her, her incapacity for great stresses of exertion, her frequent liability to slight illnesses, her weaker initiative, her inferior invention and resourcefulness, her relative incapacity for organisation and combination, and the possibilities of emotional complications whenever she is in economic dependence on men. So long as women are compared economically with men and boys they will be inferior in precisely the measure in which they differ from men. All that constitutes this difference they are supposed not to trade upon except in one way, and that is by winning or luring a man to marry, selling themselves in an almost irrevocable bargain, and then following and sharing his fortunes for "better or worse."

But--do not let the proposition in its first crudity alarm you--suppose the Modern Utopia equalises things between the sexes in the only possible way, by insisting that motherhood is a service to the State and a legitimate claim to a living; and that, since the State is to exercise the right of forbidding or sanctioning

motherhood, a woman who is, or is becoming, a mother, is as much entitled to wages above the minimum wage, to support, to freedom, and to respect and dignity as a policeman, a solicitor-general, a king, a bishop in the State Church, a Government professor, or anyone else the State sustains. Suppose the State secures to every woman who is, under legitimate sanctions, becoming or likely to become a mother, that is to say who is duly married, a certain wage from her husband to secure her against the need of toil and anxiety, suppose it pays her a certain gratuity upon the birth of a child, and continues to pay at regular intervals sums sufficient to keep her and her child in independent freedom, so long as the child keeps up to the minimum standard of health and physical and mental development. Suppose it pays more upon the child when it rises markedly above certain minimum qualifications, physical or mental, and, in fact, does its best to make thoroughly efficient motherhood a profession worth following. And suppose in correlation with this it forbids the industrial employment of married women and of mothers who have children needing care, unless they are in a position to employ qualified efficient substitutes to take care of their offspring. What differences from terrestrial conditions will ensue?

This extent of intervention will at least abolish two or three salient hardships and evils of the civilised life. It will abolish the hardship of the majority of widows, who on earth are poor and encumbered exactly in proportion as they have discharged the chief

distinctive duty of a woman, and miserable, just in proportion as their standard of life and of education is high. It will abolish the hardship of those who do not now marry on account of poverty, or who do not dare to have children. The fear that often turns a woman from a beautiful to a mercenary marriage will vanish from life. In Utopia a career of wholesome motherhood would be, under such conditions as I have suggested, the normal and remunerative calling for a woman, and a capable woman who has borne, bred, and begun the education of eight or nine well-built, intelligent, and successful sons and daughters would be an extremely prosperous woman, quite irrespective of the economic fortunes of the man she has married. She would need to be an exceptional woman, and she would need to have chosen a man at least a little above the average as her partner in life. But his death, or misbehaviour, or misfortunes would not ruin her.

Now such an arrangement is merely the completed induction from the starting propositions that make some measure of education free and compulsory for every child in the State. If you prevent people making profit out of their children--and every civilised State--even that compendium of old-fashioned Individualism, the United States of America--is now disposed to admit the necessity of that prohibition--and if you provide for the aged instead of leaving them to their children's sense of duty, the practical inducements to parentage, except among very wealthy people, are greatly reduced. The sentimental factor in the case rarely leads to more than a solitary child or at most two to a marriage, and with a high and

rising standard of comfort and circumspection it is unlikely that the birth-rate will ever rise very greatly again. The Utopians will hold that if you keep the children from profitable employment for the sake of the future, then, if you want any but the exceptionally rich, secure, pious, unselfish, or reckless to bear children freely, you must be prepared to throw the cost of their maintenance upon the general community.

In short, Utopia will hold that sound childbearing and rearing is a service done, not to a particular man, but to the whole community, and all its legal arrangements for motherhood will be based on that conception.

Section 4

And after these preliminaries we must proceed to ask, first, what will be the Utopian marriage law, and then what sort of customs and opinions are likely to be superadded to that law?

The trend of our reasoning has brought us to the conclusion that the Utopian State will feel justified in intervening between men and women on two accounts, first on account of paternity, and secondly on account of the clash of freedoms that may otherwise arise. The Utopian State will effectually interfere with and prescribe conditions for all sorts of contract, and for this sort of contract

in particular it will be in agreement with almost every earthly State, in defining in the completest fashion what things a man or woman may be bound to do, and what they cannot be bound to do. From the point of view of a statesman, marriage is the union of a man and woman in a manner so intimate as to involve the probability of offspring, and it is of primary importance to the State, first in order to secure good births, and secondly good home conditions, that these unions should not be free, nor promiscuous, nor practically universal throughout the adult population.

Prolific marriage must be a profitable privilege. It must occur only under certain obvious conditions, the contracting parties must be in health and condition, free from specific transmissible taints, above a certain minimum age, and sufficiently intelligent and energetic to have acquired a minimum education. The man at least must be in receipt of a net income above the minimum wage, after any outstanding charges against him have been paid. All this much it is surely reasonable to insist upon before the State becomes responsible for the prospective children. The age at which men and women may contract to marry is difficult to determine. But if we are, as far as possible, to put women on an equality with men, if we are to insist upon a universally educated population, and if we are seeking to reduce the infantile death-rate to zero, it must be much higher than it is in any terrestrial State. The woman should be at least one-and-twenty; the man twenty-six or twenty-seven.

One imagines the parties to a projected marriage first obtaining licenses which will testify that these conditions are satisfied. From the point of view of the theoretical Utopian State, these licenses are the feature of primary importance. Then, no doubt, that universal register at Paris would come into play. As a matter of justice, there must be no deception between the two people, and the State will ensure that in certain broad essentials this is so. They would have to communicate their joint intention to a public office after their personal licenses were granted, and each would be supplied with a copy of the index card of the projected mate, on which would be recorded his or her age, previous marriages, legally important diseases, offspring, domiciles, public appointments, criminal convictions, registered assignments of property, and so forth. Possibly it might be advisable to have a little ceremony for each party, for each in the absence of the other, in which this record could be read over in the presence of witnesses, together with some prescribed form of address of counsel in the matter. There would then be a reasonable interval for consideration and withdrawal on the part of either spouse. In the event of the two people persisting in their resolution, they would after this minimum interval signify as much to the local official and the necessary entry would be made in the registers. These formalities would be quite independent of any religious ceremonial the contracting parties might choose, for with religious belief and procedure the modern State has no concern.

So much for the preliminary conditions of matrimony. For those men and women who chose to ignore these conditions and to achieve any sort of union they liked the State would have no concern, unless offspring were born illegitimately. In that case, as we have already suggested, it would be only reasonable to make the parents chargeable with every duty, with maintenance, education, and so forth, that in the normal course of things would fall to the State. It would be necessary to impose a life assurance payment upon these parents, and to exact effectual guarantees against every possible evasion of the responsibility they had incurred. But the further control of private morality, beyond the protection of the immature from corruption and evil example, will be no concern of the State's. When a child comes in, the future of the species comes in; and the State comes in as the guardian of interests wider than the individual's; but the adult's private life is the entirely private life into which the State may not intrude.

Now what will be the nature of the Utopian contract of matrimony?

From the first of the two points of view named above, that of parentage, it is obvious that one unavoidable condition will be the chastity of the wife. Her infidelity being demonstrated, must at once terminate the marriage and release both her husband and the State from any liability for the support of her illegitimate offspring. That, at any rate, is beyond controversy; a marriage

contract that does not involve that, is a triumph of metaphysics over common sense. It will be obvious that under Utopian conditions it is the State that will suffer injury by a wife's misconduct, and that a husband who condones anything of the sort will participate in her offence. A woman, therefore, who is divorced on this account will be divorced as a public offender, and not in the key of a personal quarrel; not as one who has inflicted a private and personal wrong. This, too, lies within the primary implications of marriage.

Beyond that, what conditions should a marriage contract in Utopia involve?

A reciprocal restraint on the part of the husband is clearly of no importance whatever, so far as the first end of matrimony goes, the protection of the community from inferior births. It is no wrong to the State. But it does carry with it a variable amount of emotional offence to the wife; it may wound her pride and cause her violent perturbations of jealousy; it may lead to her neglect, her solitude and unhappiness, and it may even work to her physical injury. There should be an implication that it is not to occur. She has bound herself to the man for the good of the State, and clearly it is reasonable that she should look to the State for relief if it does occur. The extent of the offence given her is the exact measure of her injury; if she does not mind nobody minds, and if her self-respect does not suffer nothing whatever is lost to the world;

and so it should rest with her to establish his misconduct, and, if she thinks fit, to terminate the marriage.

A failure on either side to perform the elementary duties of companionship, desertion, for example, should obviously give the other mate the right to relief, and clearly the development of any disqualifying habit, drunkenness, or drug-taking, or the like, or any serious crime or acts of violence, should give grounds for a final release. Moreover, the modern Utopian State intervenes between the sexes only because of the coming generation, and for it to sustain restrictions upon conduct in a continually fruitless marriage is obviously to lapse into purely moral intervention. It seems reasonable, therefore, to set a term to a marriage that remains childless, to let it expire at the end of three or four or five unfruitful years, but with no restriction upon the right of the husband and wife to marry each other again.

These are the fairly easy primaries of this question. We now come to the more difficult issues of the matter. The first of these is the question of the economic relationships of husband and wife, having regard to the fact that even in Utopia women, at least until they become mothers, are likely to be on the average poorer than men. The second is the question of the duration of a marriage. But the two interlock, and are, perhaps, best treated together in one common section. And they both ramify in the most complicated manner into the consideration of the general morale of the community.

Section 5

This question of marriage is the most complicated and difficult in the whole range of Utopian problems. But it is happily not the most urgent necessity that it should be absolutely solved. The urgent and necessary problem is the ruler. With rulers rightly contrived and a provisional defective marriage law a Utopia may be conceived as existing and studying to perfect itself, but without rulers a Utopia is impossible though the theory of its matrimony be complete. And the difficulty in this question is not simply the difficulty of a complicated chess problem, for example, in which the whole tangle of considerations does at least lie in one plane, but a series of problems upon different levels and containing incommensurable factors.

It is very easy to repeat our initial propositions, to recall that we are on another planet, and that all the customs and traditions of the earth are set aside, but the faintest realisation of that demands a feat of psychological insight. We have all grown up into an invincible mould of suggestion about sexual things; we regard this with approval, that with horror, and this again with contempt, very largely because the thing has always been put to us in this light or that. The more emancipated we think ourselves the more subtle are our bonds. The disentanglement of what is inherent in

these feelings from what is acquired is an extraordinary complex undertaking. Probably all men and women have a more or less powerful disposition to jealousy, but what exactly they will be jealous about and what exactly they will suffer seems part of the superposed factor. Probably all men and women are capable of ideal emotions and wishes beyond merely physical desires, but the shape these take are almost entirely a reaction to external images. And you really cannot strip the external off; you cannot get your stark natural man, jealous, but not jealous about anything in particular, imaginative without any imaginings, proud at large. Emotional dispositions can no more exist without form than a man without air. Only a very observant man who had lived all over the planet Earth, in all sorts of social strata, and with every race and tongue, and who was endowed with great imaginative insight, could hope to understand the possibilities and the limitations of human plasticity in this matter, and say what any men and any women could be induced to do willingly, and just exactly what no man and no woman could stand, provided one had the training of them. Though very young men will tell you readily enough. The proceedings of other races and other ages do not seem to carry conviction; what our ancestors did, or what the Greeks or Egyptians did, though it is the direct physical cause of the modern young man or the modern young lady, is apt to impress these remarkable consequences merely as an arrangement of quaint, comical or repulsive proceedings.

But there emerges to the modern inquirer certain ideals and

desiderata that at least go some way towards completing and expanding the crude primaries of a Utopian marriage law set out in section 4.

The sound birth being assured, does there exist any valid reason for the persistence of the Utopian marriage union?

There are two lines of reasoning that go to establish a longer duration for marriage. The first of these rests upon the general necessity for a home and for individual attention in the case of children. Children are the results of a choice between individuals; they grow well, as a rule, only in relation to sympathetic and kindred individualities, and no wholesale character-ignoring method of dealing with them has ever had a shadow of the success of the individualised home. Neither Plato nor Socrates, who repudiated the home, seems ever to have had to do with anything younger than a young man. Procreation is only the beginning of parentage, and even where the mother is not the direct nurse and teacher of her child, even where she delegates these duties, her supervision is, in the common case, essential to its welfare. Moreover, though the Utopian State will pay the mother, and the mother only, for the being and welfare of her legitimate children, there will be a clear advantage in fostering the natural disposition of the father to associate his child's welfare with his individual egotism, and to dispense some of his energies and earnings in supplementing the common provision of the State. It is an absurd disregard of a natural economy to leave

the innate philoprogenitiveness of either sex uncultivated. Unless the parents continue in close relationship, if each is passing through a series of marriages, the dangers of a conflict of rights, and of the frittering away of emotions, become very grave. The family will lose homogeneity, and its individuals will have for the mother varied and perhaps incompatible emotional associations. The balance of social advantage is certainly on the side of much more permanent unions, on the side of an arrangement that, subject to ample provisions for a formal divorce without disgrace in cases of incompatibility, would bind, or at least enforce ideals that would tend to bind, a man and woman together for the whole term of her maternal activity, until, that is, the last born of her children was no longer in need of her help.

The second system of considerations arises out of the artificiality of woman's position. It is a less conclusive series than the first, and it opens a number of interesting side vistas.

A great deal of nonsense is talked about the natural equality or inferiority of women to men. But it is only the same quality that can be measured by degrees and ranged in ascending and descending series, and the things that are essentially feminine are different qualitatively from and incommensurable with the distinctly masculine things. The relationship is in the region of ideals and conventions, and a State is perfectly free to determine that men and women shall come to intercourse on a footing of conventional equality or with

either the man or woman treated as the predominating individual. Aristotle's criticism of Plato in this matter, his insistence upon the natural inferiority of slaves and women, is just the sort of confusion between inherent and imposed qualities that was his most characteristic weakness. The spirit of the European people, of almost all the peoples now in the ascendant, is towards a convention of equality; the spirit of the Mahometan world is towards the intensification of a convention that the man alone is a citizen and that the woman is very largely his property. There can be no doubt that the latter of these two convenient fictions is the more primitive way of regarding this relationship. It is quite unfruitful to argue between these ideals as if there were a demonstrable conclusion, the adoption of either is an arbitrary act, and we shall simply follow our age and time if we display a certain bias for the former.

If one looks closely into the various practical expansions of these ideas, we find their inherent falsity works itself out in a very natural way so soon as reality is touched. Those who insist upon equality work in effect for assimilation, for a similar treatment of the sexes. Plato's women of the governing class, for example, were to strip for gymnastics like men, to bear arms and go to war, and follow most of the masculine occupations of their class. They were to have the same education and to be assimilated to men at every doubtful point. The Aristotelian attitude, on the other hand, insists upon specialisation. The men are to rule and fight and toil;

the women are to support motherhood in a state of natural inferiority. The trend of evolutionary forces through long centuries of human development has been on the whole in this second direction, has been towards differentiation. [Footnote: See Havelock Ellis's Man and Woman.] An adult white woman differs far more from a white man than a negress or pigmy woman from her equivalent male. The education, the mental disposition, of a white or Asiatic woman, reeks of sex; her modesty, her decorum is not to ignore sex but to refine and put a point to it; her costume is clamorous with the distinctive elements of her form. The white woman in the materially prosperous nations is more of a sexual specialist than her sister of the poor and austere peoples, of the prosperous classes more so than the peasant woman. The contemporary woman of fashion who sets the tone of occidental intercourse is a stimulant rather than a companion for a man. Too commonly she is an unwholesome stimulant turning a man from wisdom to appearance, from beauty to beautiful pleasures, from form to colour, from persistent aims to belief and stirring triumphs. Arrayed in what she calls distinctly "dress," scented, adorned, displayed, she achieves by artifice a sexual differentiation profounder than that of any other vertebrated animal. She outshines the peacock's excess above his mate, one must probe among the domestic secrets of the insects and crustacea to find her living parallel. And it is a question by no means easy and yet of the utmost importance, to determine how far the wide and widening differences between the human sexes is inherent and inevitable, and how far it is an accident of social development that

may be converted and reduced under a different social regimen. Are we going to recognise and accentuate this difference and to arrange our Utopian organisation to play upon it, are we to have two primary classes of human being, harmonising indeed and reacting, but following essentially different lives, or are we going to minimise this difference in every possible way?

The former alternative leads either to a romantic organisation of society in which men will live and fight and die for wonderful, beautiful, exaggerated creatures, or it leads to the hareem. It would probably lead through one phase to the other. Women would be enigmas and mysteries and maternal dignitaries that one would approach in a state of emotional excitement and seclude piously when serious work was in hand. A girl would blossom from the totally negligible to the mystically desirable at adolescence, and boys would be removed from their mother's educational influence at as early an age as possible. Whenever men and women met together, the men would be in a state of inflamed competition towards one another, and the women likewise, and the intercourse of ideas would be in suspense. Under the latter alternative the sexual relation would be subordinated to friendship and companionship; boys and girls would be co-educated--very largely under maternal direction, and women, disarmed of their distinctive barbaric adornments, the feathers, beads, lace, and trimmings that enhance their clamorous claim to a directly personal attention would mingle, according to their quality, in the counsels and intellectual development of men. Such

women would be fit to educate boys even up to adolescence. It is obvious that a marriage law embodying a decision between these two sets of ideas would be very different according to the alternative adopted. In the former case a man would be expected to earn and maintain in an adequate manner the dear delight that had favoured him. He would tell her beautiful lies about her wonderful moral effect upon him, and keep her sedulously from all responsibility and knowledge. And, since there is an undeniably greater imaginative appeal to men in the first bloom of a woman's youth, she would have a distinct claim upon his energies for the rest of her life. In the latter case a man would no more pay for and support his wife than she would do so for him. They would be two friends, differing in kind no doubt but differing reciprocally, who had linked themselves in a matrimonial relationship. Our Utopian marriage so far as we have discussed it, is indeterminate between these alternatives.

We have laid it down as a general principle that the private morals of an adult citizen are no concern for the State. But that involves a decision to disregard certain types of bargain. A sanely contrived State will refuse to sustain bargains wherein there is no plausibly fair exchange, and if private morality is really to be outside the scope of the State then the affections and endearments most certainly must not be regarded as negotiable commodities. The State, therefore, will absolutely ignore the distribution of these favours unless children, or at least the possibility of children, is involved. It follows that it will refuse to recognise any debts or

transfers of property that are based on such considerations. It will be only consistent, therefore, to refuse recognition in the marriage contract to any financial obligation between husband and wife, or any settlements qualifying that contract, except when they are in the nature of accessory provision for the prospective children. [Footnote: Unqualified gifts for love by solvent people will, of course, be quite possible and permissible, unsalaried services and the like, provided the standard of life is maintained and the joint income of the couple between whom the services hold does not sink below twice the minimum wage.] So far the Utopian State will throw its weight upon the side of those who advocate the independence of women and their conventional equality with men.

But to any further definition of the marriage relation the World State of Utopia will not commit itself. The wide range of relationships that are left possible, within and without the marriage code, are entirely a matter for the individual choice and imagination. Whether a man treat his wife in private as a goddess to be propitiated, as a "mystery" to be adored, as an agreeable auxiliary, as a particularly intimate friend, or as the wholesome mother of his children, is entirely a matter for their private intercourse: whether he keep her in Oriental idleness or active co-operation, or leave her to live her independent life, rests with the couple alone, and all the possible friendship and intimacies outside marriage also lie quite beyond the organisation of the modern State. Religious teaching and literature may affect these;

customs may arise; certain types of relationship may involve social isolation; the justice of the statesman is blind to such things. It may be urged that according to Atkinson's illuminating analysis [Footnote: See Lang and Atkinson's Social Origins and Primal Law.] the control of love-making was the very origin of the human community. In Utopia, nevertheless, love-making is no concern of the State's beyond the province that the protection of children covers. [Footnote: It cannot be made too clear that though the control of morality is outside the law the State must maintain a general decorum, a systematic suppression of powerful and moving examples, and of incitations and temptations of the young and inexperienced, and to that extent it will, of course, in a sense, exercise a control over morals. But this will be only part of a wider law to safeguard the tender mind. For example, lying advertisements, and the like, when they lean towards adolescent interests, will encounter a specially disagreeable disposition in the law, over and above the treatment of their general dishonesty.] Change of function is one of the ruling facts in life, the sac that was in our remotest ancestors a swimming bladder is now a lung, and the State which was once, perhaps, no more than the jealous and tyrannous will of the strongest male in the herd, the instrument of justice and equality. The State intervenes now only where there is want of harmony between individuals--individuals who exist or who may presently come into existence.

Section 6

It must be reiterated that our reasoning still leaves Utopian marriage an institution with wide possibilities of variation. We have tried to give effect to the ideal of a virtual equality, an equality of spirit between men and women, and in doing so we have overridden the accepted opinion of the great majority of mankind. Probably the first writer to do as much was Plato. His argument in support of this innovation upon natural human feeling was thin enough--a mere analogy to illustrate the spirit of his propositions; it was his creative instinct that determined him. In the atmosphere of such speculations as this, Plato looms very large indeed, and in view of what we owe to him, it seems reasonable that we should hesitate before dismissing as a thing prohibited and evil, a type of marriage that he made almost the central feature in the organisation of the ruling class, at least, of his ideal State. He was persuaded that the narrow monogamic family is apt to become illiberal and anti-social, to withdraw the imagination and energies of the citizen from the services of the community as a whole, and the Roman Catholic Church has so far endorsed and substantiated his opinion as to forbid family relations to its priests and significant servants. He conceived of a poetic devotion to the public idea, a devotion of which the mind of Aristotle, as his criticisms of Plato show, was incapable, as a substitute for the warm and tender but illiberal emotions of the home. But while the Church made the alternative to family ties celibacy [Footnote: The warm imagination of Campanella,

that quaint Calabrian monastic, fired by Plato, reversed this aspect of the Church.] and participation in an organisation, Plato was far more in accordance with modern ideas in perceiving the disadvantage that would result from precluding the nobler types of character from offspring. He sought a way to achieve progeny, therefore, without the narrow concentration of the sympathies about the home, and he found it in a multiple marriage in which every member of the governing class was considered to be married to all the others. But the detailed operation of this system he put tentatively and very obscurely. His suggestions have the experimental inconsistency of an enquiring man. He left many things altogether open, and it is unfair to him to adopt Aristotle's forensic method and deal with his discussion as though it was a fully-worked-out project. It is clear that Plato intended every member of his governing class to be so "changed at birth" as to leave paternity untraceable; mothers were not to know their children, nor children their parents, but there is nothing to forbid the supposition that he intended these people to select and adhere to congenial mates within the great family. Aristotle's assertion that the Platonic republic left no scope for the virtue of continence shows that he had jumped to just the same conclusions a contemporary London errand boy, hovering a little shamefacedly over Jowett in a public library, might be expected to reach.

Aristotle obscures Plato's intention, it may be accidentally, by speaking of his marriage institution as a community of wives. When

reading Plato he could not or would not escape reading in his own conception of the natural ascendency of men, his idea of property in women and children. But as Plato intended women to be conventionally equal to men, this phrase belies him altogether; community of husbands and wives would be truer to his proposal. Aristotle condemns Plato as roundly as any commercial room would condemn him to-day, and in much the same spirit; he asserts rather than proves that such a grouping is against the nature of man. He wanted to have women property just as he wanted to have slaves property, he did not care to ask why, and it distressed his conception of convenience extremely to imagine any other arrangement. It is no doubt true that the natural instinct of either sex is exclusive of participators in intimacy during a period of intimacy, but it was probably Aristotle who gave Plato an offensive interpretation in this matter. No one would freely submit to such a condition of affairs as multiple marriage carried out, in the spirit of the Aristotelian interpretation, to an obscene completeness, but that is all the more reason why the modern Utopia should not refuse a grouped marriage to three or more freely consenting persons. There is no sense in prohibiting institutions which no sane people could ever want to abuse. It is claimed--though the full facts are difficult to ascertain--that a group marriage of over two hundred persons was successfully organised by John Humphrey Noyes at Oneida Creek. [Footnote: See John H. Noyes's History of American Socialisms and his writings generally. The bare facts of this and the other American experiments are given, together with more recent matter, by

Morris Hillquirt, in The History of Socialism in the United States.]

It is fairly certain in the latter case that there was no "promiscuity," and that the members mated for variable periods, and often for life, within the group. The documents are reasonably clear upon that point. This Oneida community was, in fact, a league of two hundred persons to regard their children as "common." Choice and preference were not abolished in the community, though in some cases they were set aside--just as they are by many parents under our present conditions. There seems to have been a premature attempt at "stirpiculture," at what Mr. Francis Galton now calls "Eugenics," in the mating of the members, and there was also a limitation of offspring. Beyond these points the inner secrets of the community do not appear to be very profound; its atmosphere was almost commonplace, it was made up of very ordinary people. There is no doubt that it had a career of exceptional success throughout the whole lifetime of its founder, and it broke down with the advent of a new generation, with the onset of theological differences, and the loss of its guiding intelligence. The Anglo-Saxon spirit, it has been said by one of the ablest children of the experiment, is too individualistic for communism. It is possible to regard the temporary success of this complex family as a strange accident, as the wonderful exploit of what was certainly a very exceptional man. Its final disintegration into frankly monogamic couples--it is still a prosperous business association--may be taken as an experimental verification of Aristotle's common-sense psychology, and was probably merely the public acknowledgment of conditions already

practically established.

Out of respect for Plato we cannot ignore this possibility of multiple marriage altogether in our Utopian theorising, but even if we leave this possibility open we are still bound to regard it as a thing so likely to be rare as not to come at all under our direct observation during our Utopian journeyings. But in one sense, of course, in the sense that the State guarantees care and support for all properly born children, our entire Utopia is to be regarded as a comprehensive marriage group. [Footnote: The Thelema of Rabelais, with its principle of "Fay ce que vouldras" within the limits of the order, is probably intended to suggest a Platonic complex marriage after the fashion of our interpretation.]

It must be remembered that a modern Utopia must differ from the Utopias of any preceding age in being world-wide; it is not, therefore, to be the development of any special race or type of culture, as Plato's developed an Athenian-Spartan blend, or More, Tudor England. The modern Utopia is to be, before all things, synthetic. Politically and socially, as linguistically, we must suppose it a synthesis; politically it will be a synthesis of once widely different forms of government; socially and morally, a synthesis of a great variety of domestic traditions and ethical habits. Into the modern Utopia there must have entered the mental tendencies and origins that give our own world the polygamy of the Zulus and of Utah, the polyandry of Tibet, the latitudes of

experiment permitted in the United States, and the divorceless wedlock of Comte. The tendency of all synthetic processes in matters of law and custom is to reduce and simplify the compulsory canon, to admit alternatives and freedoms; what were laws before become traditions of feeling and style, and in no matter will this be more apparent than in questions affecting the relations of the sexes.