



Editor's Study

THERE are some things which only a woman can know—which certainly no man can ever know. She has a sequestered natural economy which affects her sentiments, in their primary field, so that no man, though having all the necessary words at his command to indicate her hope or fear, belief or doubt, pride or vanity, can quite clear them from the peculiar elements which make up her weather. The sky enclosing these elements and beneath which her plastic nature performs its miracles, so like those of Mother Earth, must have hung lower in the cruder ages of our human development, gradually lifting, giving freer play to these elements, and permitting the emergence of finer activities, just as, in its evolution, the physiological organism flowers into a brain.

Physiology, taken in its largest sense—that is, as holding within its scope of evolution all the intimations of psychical as well as of physical development—is a term of mighty significance. The modern student of psychology finds his clues in physiology. But knowledge of psychical action includes something not to be expressed in the technical terms and formulas of psychology.

Therefore we are baffled in all cases where our consciousness is incompetent to serve us—as when we would find out the mind of a dog. We have all been babes, but memory does not give back to us the mental world of the babe's plastic organism. Woman, so much nearer to the child in plasticity, and so radically different from him physiologically, must always remain more or less a mystery to man. The girl may inherit from the father, but she is nevertheless a girl and under the woman's sky. The father, teaching her, finds no difference between the laws of her mental operations and those of a boy's. The same text-books will serve both and mean the same things. Both will follow the same methods in logic or in contrivance. Ab-

stractions, and language expressing these, will be the same in the thought of both. But, passing from the abstract to the concrete, from the formal to the real, in any vital relation, the girl's sensibility and attitude are not those of the boy. It is a difference of quality, in the very apprehension of things. Woman's feeling toward the living world and toward the divine life has always been distinct from man's, in whatever forms it may have been expressed for her.

The distinction is mainly grounded in woman's closer alliance with Nature. The old naturalism clung about her long after man had left it behind him; indeed, she still held him to it by her very presence, a lure to his senses, a wonder to his soul, what was alien in her compelling intimacy, yet holding the mystery inviolate, and making it the prime suggestion of his art and of his faith.

But that was long ago; and the course of man's art, faith, and civilization marking his departure from the old naturalism, along with his arbitrary treatment of woman, deepened the chasm between him and her. His primitive intuitional sense of the wonder of woman was weakened. The filial sentiment survived, and the mystical association of womankind with the Virgin Mother conveyed an intimation of heavenly dignity. Chivalry, which easily dwindled to gallantry, had in it more of the pride of masterly protection than of any true appreciation of womanhood. Romantic love, with all its elemental strength, lacked the supreme exaltation, and the home which woman made had no such meaning for man as it has for the man of to-day.

In these conditions, we should not expect to find in literature any true representation of woman. If in Homer and the Greek tragedies certain figures stand out, like Andromache, Nausicaa, Antigone, and Electra, with everlasting appeal, it is the charm or pathos of the scene which affects us; there is no por-

traiture, and if there is a gleam of psychical illumination, it is due to the divination of genius. This divination reached its highest manifestation in the Shakespearian drama, because the poet's genius enabled him to transcend the demands made upon him as a dramatist and the limitations of the drama itself.

It was only when men began to write about women and to present them concretely in the eighteenth-century novel of society that the question was asked—Is there reality in the presentment? At least the outward habiliments of truth were supposed to be necessary—what the critics call *vraisemblance*. To that extent Richardson was successful in *Pamela*. He was a man of delicate sensibility, to whom women naturally unburdened their hearts. He knew of an actual story in all the main points suggesting the plot of his novel. He had made a careful study of epistolary composition with reference to a book which should consist of Familiar Letters—a guide to youth in all ordinary, and some extraordinary, circumstances of life. So Pamela came into being as a letter-writer in the trying situations which had been brought to the author's notice in real life. In stage representation the story would have been a sorry failure. But, in a book, its pathos could be made the most of and the distress of it prolonged and deepened for readers who were called upon to witness the struggles of an immortal soul in peril, so that both the sentimental and the didactic concern should have full time for development before the distress should be turned into triumph and virtue be rewarded—very strangely, as it seems to us—by Pamela's marriage to her tempter.

But did Richardson show any real knowledge of woman? He could put himself in Pamela's place or in Clarissa Harlowe's—but it was precisely himself that he put there. *Pamela* has justly been called the first analytical novel in the English language, and it is an interesting indication of the kind of illumination demanded by its large and admiring audience; but it does not give us a single disclosure of woman's real nature. Fielding, who had more genius, and whose characters were living human beings, allowed his worldly wisdom to limit his

creative purpose, giving it a second intention. Therefore, good as his own heart was, he could not interpret woman's. Scott's genius, despite the romantic investment of his fiction, was more spontaneous in its creation of character and showed a wonderful divination of Scotch women.

Almost it would seem that it is given only to genius to bridge the chasm. Thomas Hardy gets so close to Nature that he can fathom woman's heart, but his is so much the old naturalism that his creations seem to us remote and alien, and his genius is whirled onward by a dramatic tension, to strangely dark issues. George Meredith, in happier vein and with more of a sense of the human comedy, creates real women, sees them comprehendingly, and then disposes them according to his whim.

Genius is a quality of life as well as of art and literature—of life, that is, which does not smoulder, but vitalizes its embodiment, thus liberating its flame. If physiology flows in the brain, the brain in turn reinforces the vitality of the whole organism. So when human evolution reaches a pre-eminently psychical stage of development—as it seems to have done in our time—the liberated spirit reinforces every functioning of the social organism. The elemental is lifted to the psychical plane. The woman's difference from man remains, but the diversity is no longer teasing or bewildering, it is a luminous charm. Romantic love in the soul of man becomes not only creative, but interpretative; in plain human life it has that divination which belongs to genius. We are on the way to the new naturalism—first in life, then in the literature which discloses the truth of life.

The novelist of to-day invokes not the Muse but Psyche herself, who demands the essential truth concerning the human soul. Only creative realism can meet this demand. Its plain investment and clear embodiment get color and pulse and meaning directly from life. Formerly there was creation without realism, while now too often there is realism with no creative faculty or vision. When both are combined, we find—more frequently in the short story than in the novel—convincingly true interpretations of women by men and of men by women.

Editor's Drawer

The Goddess of Love

BY GEORGE WESTON

ON the top floor of Mrs. Mansfield's boarding-house lived a professor and an artist. Each was well advanced in years and each one wore that wistful look of resignation which only comes to gentle souls with whom the world has not gone well.

The artist's name was Thompson, and, having long ago discovered that fame and fortune were not for him, he earned his substance by lettering signs for dry-goods stores. When he was not engaged in illuminating such legends as "Very Special, \$1.98," and "A Bargain—Only \$2.49," he was forever to be found sketching the profile of a beautiful woman—a profile which bore a faint resemblance to that of Mrs. Mansfield, his landlady. At these times his expression was inclined to be sad, for not only had the widow refused his stammered proposal, but it was apparent that her heart was set upon the professor and that she preferred astronomy to art.

The professor's name was Hollis, and he lived all alone in an astronomical world. Every night, if the weather was fine, he carried his telescope to the corner of Union Square. There he mounted it upon a tripod, so that whosoever first paid him a fee of ten cents might gaze upon the heavenly bodies. After mounting his telescope, it was his habit to open a book and stand with his back against an electric-light pole, where he edified his mind and, at the same time, preserved that dignity which should always go hand in hand with the sciences. If one

wished to view the heavens, well and good. There was the telescope and there was the professor. If one did not wish to view the heavens—well and good too. It was not to be expected that every one should be astronomically inclined. The professor's hair was gray, and his shoulders were bent as though with the weight of knowledge; but (as Mrs. Mansfield often told herself) "put a new silk hat on him and a new coat and he'd look a gentleman anywhere."

If the night was cloudy the professor stayed in his room and worked and dreamed over his map of the stars; and if the clouds



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