

**THE UNIVERSITY
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VOL. XIX. NO 1**

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THE UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

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THE UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE is issued in February, April, October, and December, by a committee for McGill University; University of Toronto; and Dalhousie College.

Its purpose is to express an educated opinion upon questions immediately concerning Canada; and to treat freely in a literary way all matters which have to do with politics, industry, philosophy, science, and art.

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TO READERS

With this Number the Nineteenth Annual Volume of THE UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE begins. For these eighteen years the publication has almost supported itself. The yearly deficit has not averaged more than three hundred dollars, and some years there was a surplus. At one time the circulation had risen to 4,500 copies. During the war it fell off, and the cost of publication has doubled. Except during those years a small honorarium was given to the contributors, but now the practice has been resumed. No subsidy has been received from any source.

To "encourage Canadian literature" has been in every mouth. The only way to "encourage" writers is to read, and pay for, what they write. Neither the Magazine nor its contributors desire charity. All that is asked is that those who have been receiving the Magazine shall pay their accounts; and any other persons who feel qualified to read it will be welcomed as subscribers.

The first thousand copies of the usual size cost for printing alone a thousand dollars. They are sold for less than five hundred dollars. Advertisements and the lessened cost of succeeding thousands help to keep the balance. A thousand new subscribers would now yield seven hundred and fifty dollars, all of which would go to the writers, as the management is gratuitous. There must yet be that many persons of good will in Canada who would risk two dollars in so good a cause; and they would receive as compensation any entertainment they might derive from reading the Magazine.

WOMEN IN DEMOCRACY

IN the end the burden of the world falls upon the woman. Civilization has been created to protect her. When the system fails she is the first to suffer,—to suffer in her estate, her person, and, worse still, in her own nature. In all revolutions the record of this sudden degradation is the darkest page.

Civilization is merely a series of conventions built up by men; but they, and women too, have an incurable propensity for destroying the fabric by enquiring into the reason and the truth of them. In the best institutions there are evils which excite a bitter indignation when the mind is fixed upon the evil alone; in all things there is an element of absurdity and matter for laughter. When this tide of criticism—for laughter is the most subtle of all criticism—rises to a mad chorus the conventions fail, and humanity is compelled with infinite patience to build them up again. Reason and truth having done their worst, hope revives once more.

Women in democracy will begin the new life without the shelter of the convention, exposed to the fierce glare of material truth, devoid of those illusions which the human heart creates for its own comfort. Indeed, woman herself is a convention, a figment created in the mind of man, anthropomorphic as God is. Democracy is the raw fact and truth of life; all civilization is an attempt to shield us from it.

At a time in the history of the race so early that there were only two persons, a man and a woman in the world, and two personages, this question of truth arose. An injunction was laid upon the man, accompanied by the threat, that if he broke the convention, he would surely die that very day. The minor personage questioned the convention and denied the validity of the threat. Acting under this suggestion the man and the woman assumed the risk. The chief character

in the scene—not to designate him by the holy name—admitted the correctness of the reasoning; but to this speaker of the truth has ever since been ascribed the name of Enemy. The great Apostle must have had a similar suspicion lurking in his mind when he addressed to the Galatians that plaintive enquiry: Am I become the enemy because I speak the truth? With the advent of democracy women will be thrust out of the Garden which was created for them, and they will be compelled to face the naked truth of the world, unshielded by the shelter of the convention.

For civilization, I have said, is merely a series of conventions. It is only those who are well born, that understand them: those who are well bred, that learn them. And they extend to the finest details of life, but always for the protection of the woman, and therefore of the race. Society begins when there are two persons in the world. It is complete when a third person appears upon the scene. With every advance in morality a convention is created to reinforce that inner conscience which has been developed out of human experience, to protect the borderland until habit is transformed into righteousness, and transgression into sin. He who breaks one convention is guilty of all. The man who is late for dinner will lack in reticence towards the woman of the house. The soldier who will not salute the officer is on the road to mutiny; and he who will not make proper observance of the King is *in posse* attaint of treason.

Religion itself in the body of it is a series of closely knit conventional beliefs, any one of which can easily be made the object of a destructive criticism to the peril of the whole. A Church that is wise will go to the stake, and send to the stake, in defence of the furthest outpost, and not wait until the whole fabric is in ruin. In this there is a lesson, for Protestants who have succeeded so well in the task of destruction, and a warning for Catholics who are sore pressed by the spirit of the time. First, religion goes, then the beauty of life; and democracy will find itself without religion, without the art of form and colour, without skill in the use

of letters or perception of the harmony of sounds. Before final dissolution life with us will be brought under the hard, dry hand of the Puritan, untempered by the inner and disinterested spirit of puritanism. The thing arrives by different roads. The end is always the same.

Women in democracy will be ugly women; men will be even more ugly than they are now; worse still, the degradation will not be apparent. Beauty is not a thing of chance: it is the last work of creation. It comes through a long process of selection in which elements that are not too much alike and yet not too different are mated. The choice must be exercised within narrow limits, within the class, caste, or family. This law applies to all animals and explains the beauty of thoroughbreds as contrasted with the ugliness of mongrels. The union of two forms, each beautiful in itself, is not enough. They must have that close affinity which comes from blood relationship.

Beauty can exist only in families which are closed, whether they be of animal, gipsy, or royal blood. To keep the blood pure is a heavy obligation upon the members. They must resist the propensity for falling into indiscriminate love, and this restraint is fortified by many conventions and much carefulness by those who have beauty at heart. This passion for seemliness is the peculiar jest of the romantic novelist who makes his appeal to the multitude of mongrel birth. Amongst the animals the males endeavour to make themselves as beautiful as they can in poise and carriage by efforts which appear to us grotesque; and the female of our own species makes the best of the beauty which she has by devices that are only too easy for a fool to lampoon into the absurd.

The largest aspiration of the race is the desire to achieve the beauty of whiteness; and among the higher races it is held to be an ignoble thing for white to mate with black. The north-western corner of Europe is the subtle shrine in which this alchemy is performed, and thither all races have marched with blind and dogged steps, careless that extinction